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Bald-On-Record Impoliteness Strategies Used By Senators During The Impeachment Proceedings Of The Second Deputy President Of Kenya In The Senate

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Abstract
The impeachment process serves as an important constitutional mechanism for ensuring accountability of public officials in cases of misconduct. Language is crucial in impeachment hearings, as the contentious nature of debates frequently challenges the boundaries of decorum in legislative language. This study sought to investigate the bald-on-record impoliteness strategies used by senators during the second Deputy President's impeachment motions in the Kenyan senate. The impeachment debate proceedings of the Deputy President were used for analysis. The data for the analysis was sourced from The Hansard Kenya, where 19 excerpts with impolite remarks made by senators were purposively sampled for examination. The utterances were sampled from the proceedings of Wednesday afternoon of 16th October 2024 and Thursday morning and afternoon sessions of 17th October, 2024. The researcher identified the indicators of bald-on-record impoliteness based on Culpeper's (1996) theory of impoliteness. The data was analysed qualitatively. A Guiding card facilitated the data analysis procedure. Findings indicated that senators used bald-on-record strategies such as unmitigated challenge/command, explicit accusation and being direct and unambiguous. The distribution of these sub-strategies varied significantly across sessions, with Thursday Afternoon showing the highest frequency, followed by Thursday morning and Wednesday afternoon, indicating an escalation in confrontational rhetoric as the debates progressed. Several situational and contextual dynamics enabled the use of bald-on-record impoliteness: the adversarial context, Power imbalances when senators acted as judges cross-examining witnesses and social identity. This research adds to the domain of Pragmatics, Sociolinguistics and Discourse Analysis by revealing how impoliteness strategies function as context-dependent communicative acts that shape power relations,interpretation process and social dynamics in political discourse.
Subject Area: Linguistics

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I. Introduction

This paper discusses how senators used bald-on-record impoliteness strategies during the impeachment debate of the second Deputy President of Kenya during the impeachment motions held from 16th to 17th October, 2024. This section is divided into: impoliteness, bald-on-record impoliteness and face

Impoliteness

Impoliteness in communication has gained considerable interest in sociolinguistics and pragmatics because of its significance in comprehending how individuals manage conflict and power relations. Impoliteness, first rooted in the concept of face, by Goffman (1967), which pertains to the self-image participants uphold during social interactions, arose as a counterargument to politeness theories like those proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Whereas Goffman, Brown and Levinson emphasised the mitigation of face-threatening acts (FTAs), Culpeper (1996) expanded the field by underscoring the intentional employment of language to attack face, especially in conflicting or competitive situations. This transition established the basis for perceiving impoliteness as a strategic, contextually dependent occurrence rather than a breach of social norms.

Locher and Watts (2005) posited that impoliteness is not intrinsically linked to particular verbal utterances but rather contextually determined, influenced by the perception of interlocutors and the prevailing situational norms. Language considered discourteuos in formal parliamentary debates may be perceived as

assertive or relavant in less organised contexts, illustrating the nature of interpretive frameworks. The adaptability of impoliteness strategies has been well explored in institutional discourse, especially within political contexts where power dynamics and identity assertion are predominant themes.

Watts (2003) posited that impoliteness, in the same way as politeness, is a socially constructed phenomenon that mirrors norms, values, and expectations inherent in particular cultural and institutional contexts. Spencer-Oatey (2008) developed the concept of rapport management, positing that impoliteness should be viewed as a disruption of interpersonal relations rather than a breach of fixed linguistic norms. This viewpoint facilitates the analysis of impoliteness in contexts characterised by power imbalances and conflicting interests, particularly within political discourse.

The formal structure and adversarial nature of parliamentary discourse makes it a significant area for the examination of impoliteness. Graham (2016) observed that Georgian parliamentary debates frequently employ strategic impoliteness to undermine opponents' arguments and strengthen political identities. This may encompass sarcasm, rhetorical questions, and explicit challenges, all intended to undermine opponents while appealing to the audiences both within and outside the parliamentary chamber. Gruber (2019) examined parliamentary interactions in the Austrian legislature, highlighting how Members of Parliament (MPs) strategically used coded language within institutional constraints to express impolite remarks, thereby balancing the necessity to maintain decorum with the obligation to critique or undermine opponents.

The cultural and political contexts significantly influence impoliteness strategies within parliamentary discourse. Mohammed (2019) compared impoliteness in Iraqi and British parliamentary discourses. The comparison included three aspects of impoliteness: the underlying elements influencing the communication and perception of impoliteness in these contexts; linguistic strategies employed by Iraqi as well as British legislators to express impoliteness in initiation turns; and the counter-impoliteness patterns accessible to politicians within the Iraqi and British parliaments. British MPs frequently employed humour and subtlety, whereas Iraqi MPs utilised direct confrontation. This illustrates their unique socio-political norms and institutional frameworks. The analysis indicated that face is essential during the interpretation and communication of impoliteness within these legislative discourses.

Ayansola and Agbara (2016) examined public letters authored by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo. The letters highlighted critical concerns that included corruption, nepotism, and security deficiencies in Nigeria. The impoliteness demonstrated in the letters reflects the power relations between Obasanjo and the receivers. They argued that impoliteness functions as a rhetorical device to confront authority and seek accountability, While Nyewusira and Nweke's (2012) study conducted in Nigeria, focused on analyzing the role of overt impoliteness in transactional politics within the context of the nation's governance system and political economy. Findings revealed the employment of overt impoliteness in transactional politics, seeing it as indicative of underlying societal tensions and the exertion of political authority. These studies offer essential information into the role of impoliteness as a mechanism for political manoeuvring; yet, research on parliamentary contexts in Africa is still scarce.

Tsoumou (2023) examined the function of impoliteness in digital legislative discourse in Congo-Brazzaville, revealing how language mirrors wider socio-political issues, especially in multilingual contexts. The research highlighted the application of bald-on-record impoliteness, like insults, as well as positive impoliteness techniques, such as disregarding social norms or showing disrespect towards others. The results indicated that impoliteness in politically polarized talks frequently stems from the intention to manipulate the narrative and establish superiority.

In Kenya, scholarly focus has largely been on politeness in parliamentary discourse, Indede and Karanja (2011) analyzed mitigation strategies employed in question sessions and highlighted the linguistic efforts to maintain decorum and avoid confrontations. The findings revealed that particular techniques are applied to mitigate FTAs therefore leading to successful communication. Owuor and Ngugi (2023) examined assertive language and metaphors in debates that members of the National Assembly used; findings revealed that MPs applied linguistic strategies such as directness in their speech, assertiveness, metaphors, and irony. Njuki and Ireri (2021) focused on politeness strategies aimed at minimizing conflict. This research revealed that members of National Assembly utilized positive and negative politeness strategies to reduce threats to face. Atieno, Muriungi, and Mukuthuria (2016) conducted an analysis of presupposition as a linguistic strategy employed by Kenyan members of parliament during motions to establish socio-political superiority. The findings revealed that speakers employed presupposition as a means to establish dominance in the debates. Little attention has been paid on impoliteness strategies in political discourse such as impeachment debates and the dynamics that shape the impoliteness strategies employed in these kinds of contexts.

Impoliteness strategies, particularly the bald- on- record strategy, are critical in analyzing parliamentary discourse, as they reflect deliberate linguistic choices to assert power or challenge opponents. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, bald –on- record impoliteness involves direct, unmitigated speech acts intended to maximize face-threatening effects, often used in confrontational settings

like debates to assert dominance or discredit adversaries. In political contexts, such strategies can escalate tensions but also serve as tools for public persuasion and signalling authority (Culpeper, 1996). While impoliteness has been studied extensively in Western parliamentary settings, its application in African contexts, particularly Kenya, remains underexplored, necessitating research into how cultural and political dynamics shape its use (Harris, 2001).

Bald-on-Record Impoliteness

Culpeper (1996) develops a framework for impoliteness by inverting Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, proposing five super-strategies that deliberately threaten the addressee's face wants. Among these, bald- on- record impoliteness stands out as the most direct form, where the speaker performs a face-threatening act in a clear, unambiguous, and concise manner without any attempt at mitigation or redress, particularly in contexts where face concerns are relevant and the threat is intentional. This strategy contrasts with polite bald –on- record usage in Brown and Levinson's model, which occurs in situations of urgency or efficiency where face threat is minimized; instead, Culpeper emphasizes its role in escalating conflict by maximizing damage to the hearer's positive or negative face.

Key indicators of bald- on- record impoliteness, as outlined by Culpeper (1996), include unmitigated commands or challenges that demand compliance without softening elements, such as hedges or politeness markers, thereby imposing directly on the hearer's negative face. Being direct and unambiguous further characterizes this strategy, as the speaker avoids vagueness or indirectness to ensure the face attack is overt and unmistakable, often heightening emotional impact in interactive settings. Explicit accusations represent another core indicator, where the speaker levels clear, unhedged blame or criticism, such as labelling the hearer with derogatory terms or faulting their actions outright, which intensifies the threat to positive face and can provoke defensive responses (Culpeper, 2011). These indicators collectively illustrate how bald-on-record impoliteness functions as a tactical tool in discourse, particularly in high-stakes environments where relational harmony is secondary to strategic goals.

Face

The concept of face, as foundational to politeness and impoliteness theories, originates from Goffman's (1967) sociological framework but was refined by Brown and Levinson (1987) into a dualistic model comprising positive and negative face. Positive face refers to an individual's desire for appreciation, approval, and social connection, encompassing wants such as being liked, respected, or included within a group. In contrast, negative face pertains to the desire for autonomy, freedom from imposition, and the right to act without undue interference from others. Brown and Levinson (1987) posited that communicative acts inherently threaten these face wants, prompting speakers to employ politeness strategies to mitigate such threats in cooperative interactions. This model has been widely applied in pragmatics to analyze how language maintains social harmony, but it also sets the stage for understanding deliberate disruptions through impoliteness.

Bald-on-record impoliteness directly undermines both positive and negative face by avoiding any attempt at mitigation, leading to escalated relational tension. For positive face, this strategy threatens the hearer's need for approval through explicit disapproval, ridicule, or derogatory labelling, such as calling someone incompetent or corrupt, which erodes their self-image and social standing without hedging (Culpeper, 1996). Similarly, it assaults negative face by imposing unmitigated demands, commands, or restrictions, like issuing direct orders or challenges that curtail the hearer's autonomy and force unwanted actions, thereby amplifying the sense of intrusion (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Culpeper, 1996). In high-stakes interactions, these threats can provoke defensive responses or escalate conflicts, as evidenced in Culpeper's (1996) analysis of real-world discourses, highlighting how bald-on-record impoliteness not only damages individual face but also disrupts broader social order.

II. Methodology

The target population for this study was all the impolite utterances made by senators during impeachment debates of the second Deputy President of Kenya. The data for the analysis was sourced from The Hansard Kenya, where the sample sizes, consisting of 19 excerpts with bald-on-record impoliteness used made by senators was purposively sampled for examination. The utterances were sampled from the proceedings of Wednesday afternoon of 16th October 2024 and Thursday morning and afternoon sessions of 17th October, 2024. Each utterance was carefully studied and interpreted and the main themes were identified. The utterances were coded using BoR (Bald-on-Record). The researcher identified bald-on-record impoliteness based on its the indicators as highlighted in Culpeper's (1996) theory of impoliteness. The data was analysed qualitatively. A Guiding card facilitated the data analysis procedure. Pertaining ethical consideration, there were no dummy names adopted for the senators as the data is available for public consumption from Hasard.

III. Bald-On-Record Impoliteness

Bald-on-Record Impoliteness involves direct face-threatening acts (FTAs) that attack the addressee's positive face (need to be liked) or negative face (need for autonomy) without mitigation (Culpeper, 1996). The following is a discussion of the indicators of bald-on-record impoliteness strategies that were indentified.

Unmitigated Commands or Challenges

Unmitigated commands or challenges are direct, confrontational demands that undermine the addressee's negative face by threatening their autonomy and freedom from imposition.

BoR 1
Sen. Cheruiyot (The Senate Majority Leader):
I want to tell Rev. Kobia, that he better resigns (Thursday, afternoon session Pg. 37).

Senator (Sen.) Cheruiyot explicitly demands for Mr. Kobia's, chair for National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC), resignation without hedging or mitigation. This direct demand threatens Mr. Kobia's positive face, his desire to be respected and valued in his professional role, by publicly implying incompetence or misconduct severe enough to justify stepping down. Delivered in a formal Senate setting, this face-threatening act leverages Cheruiyot's significant institutional authority as Majority Leader, amplifying its impact in Kenya's politically charged climate.

BoR 2
Sen. Omogeni:

I was trying to follow your answers during cross-examination and I do not know whether you were trying to drop this allegation or if you want to still maintain it. I want you to give a proper clarification that links the person against whom you have brought the Motion that is the Deputy President, with that allegation of Kshs5.2 billion. (Wednesday afternoon session, Pg. 109).

Sen. Omogeni's critique of Hon. Mutuse's (the motion mover) unclear cross-examination responses, noting uncertainty about whether Hon. Mutuse was "trying to drop" the allegation, threatens Hon. Mutuse's positive face, his desire for professional approval, by implying incompetence or evasiveness. The adversarial context of the impeachment, Sen. Omogeni's institutional authority, and the public scrutiny license this confrontational discourse.

BoR 3
Sen. Olekina:

I heard that there was a consent after the Deputy President filed an appeal of the case, whose judgment I believe, still stands. Do we have that consent? What circumstances led to that consent being agreed upon and the Kshs200 million returned to the Deputy President, yet the High Court had already determined that money was proceeds of corruption? Was it threats?(Wednesday afternoon session, Pg. 106).

Senator Olekina's challenge to the counsel of Deputy President Hon. Rigathi Gachagua poses a direct, unmitigated demand for evidence regarding a consent agreement tied to Kshs200 million, allegedly deemed proceeds of corruption, which relates to the Kenya Kwanza coalition agreement presented as evidence of Hon. Gachagua's shareholding arrangements. Sen. Olekina's provocative questions, particularly the insinuation of "threats," threaten the counsel's and Hon. Gachagua's positive face, their desire for professional and public approval, by implying incompetence, concealment, and coercive misconduct. The contentious nature of the impeachment, Sen. Omogeni's institutional power, and the intense public attention justify this type of direct challenge.

BoR 4
Sen. Cheruiyot:

Surely, does the President need to complain to you, Sen. Onyonka, to notice that there is a dysfunction in that particular office?(Thursday afternoon session Pg. 37)

Senator Cheruiyot's (Kericho County) challenge to Senator Richard Onyonka, in a direct and unambiguous way attacks Sen. Onyonka's positive face. By sarcastically questioning Sen. Onyonka's awareness of dysfunction in the Deputy President's office, Sen. Cheruiyot, as Senate Majority Leader, implies incompetence or negligence without mitigating language. This face-threatening act, delivered in the procedural Senate setting leverages Sen. Cheruiyot's leadership role as the Senate Majority Leader which grants him greater influence compared to Sen. Onyonka, enabling strategic impoliteness to challenge Sen. Onyonka's stance and sway Senate opinion in Kenya's polarized political climate. The rhetorical question's confrontational tone aligns with the contentious impeachment discourse.

BoR 5
Sen. Okiya Omtatah:

…is it okay that the Deputy President should be prosecuted using the same standard used for the President? (Thursday afternoon session, Pg. 46).

By questioning whether it is "okay" to prosecute the Deputy President using the same standard as the immune President, Sen. Omtatah of Busia County directly confronts the senators' judgment, threatening their negative face (autonomy) by implying they may be applying an unfair and inconsistent standard in the impeachment process. This utterance, made during the heated context of the impeachment debate, where power dynamics position senators as judges and cultural expectations in Kenya emphasize equitable justice, the senator draws on the procedural senate setting to pressure senators into reflecting on their decision-making.

BoR 6
Sen. Thang'wa:

Respect the Deputy President and the people of Murima (Thursday afternoon, Pg. 48).

Senator Thang'wa's (Kiambu County) directive to other senators is an unambiguous command, threatening the negative face of the targeted senators, their desire for autonomy. By explicitly ordering colleagues to show respect for Deputy President Hon.Rigathi Gachagua and the people of Murima (a reference to Hon.Gachagua's regional base), Sen. Thang'wa implies that pro-impeachment senators are disrespecting both Hon. Gachagua and his constituents hence challenging their conduct without mitigation. Uttered during the public Senate session of Hon. Gachagua's impeachment trial aired on Kenya's television stations, this direct question draws on Sen. Thang'wa's institutional role as a senator to push a strong moral and regional point, hitting hard in Kenya's tense political environment.

BoR 7
Sen. Okiya Omtatah:

I stand here to look at whether this House has complied with the Constitution. That is Article 150(2) on removal of the Deputy President from office (Thursday afternoon session Pg. 45).

Sen. Okiya Omtatah directly confronts the House's adherence to constitutional mandates in the impeachment process, thereby threatening its positive face by implying potential procedural and legal failures without making any effort to soften the challenge. As a senator, he holds procedural influence over the impeachment discourse which he uses in shaping his desired outcome as a senator opposed to the impeachment. He also exploits the intense atmosphere of the impeachment to his advantage to pressure the House and amplify his critique to compel senators to scrutinize their decision-making before a governmental and civic audience, highlighting responsibility and adherence to constitutional principles.

BoR 8
Sen. Kathuri:

I would request Kenyans from today that whatever decision will be made, they should maintain peace, love and unity as was envisaged since the independence in 1963(Thursday afternoon Pg. 59).

Sen. Kathuri's utterance directly asserts that "Kenyans should" maintain "peace, love, and unity" regardless of the Senate's decision. This directness, without hedging, threatens the positive face of Hon. Gachagua's supporters, particularly in the Mount Kenya region, by dismissing their intense emotional and political grievances. The reference to "since the independence in 1963" invokes Kenya's foundational unity post-colonialism, implying that current dissent undermines this historic ideal, further pressuring compliance. This operates within a power imbalance, where Sen. Kathuri applies his senatorial institutional authority to assert control over public sentiment, thereby reinforcing the Senate's legitimacy in a volatile political context marked by regional tensions and protests.

BoR 9
Sen. Kathuri:

As I finish, I encourage all of us from a Bible verse in the book of Thessalonians 5:18, which says that, in every situation, no matter what the circumstances, be thankful and continually give thanks to God, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Therefore, in whatever you do, thank God and whatever happens to you, thank God because we always should give thanks to God.
I thank you (Thursday afternoon session Pg. 60).

Senator Kathuri's, Meru County, concluding remark, "Therefore, in whatever you do, thank God and whatever happens to you, thank God because we always should give thanks to God," functions as a direct command. By explicitly instructing the senators to "thank God" in all circumstances, referencing Thessalonians 5:18, the senator imposes a specific behaviour, threatening the senators' negative face; their desire for

autonomy. This directive implies that the senators should conform to a prescribed moral and spiritual response regardless of their personal stance on the impeachment of Deputy President Hon. Gachagua, limiting their freedom to react independently. This command, uttered during the heated Kenyan Senate impeachment debate, taps into the deep Christian values of Kenya's largely religious community to influence senators' emotions and moral position.

Explicit Accusations

Explicit accusations involve direct and unmitigated claims of wrong doing that target the addressee's positive face; their need to be respected and valued. These overt attacks, devoid of softening or redressive strategies, challenge the addressee's integrity, character, or actions, aiming to maximize discomfort and reputational harm, particularly in public or formal contexts.

BoR 10
Sen. Cheruiyot's (Senate Majority Leader):

The Deputy President has committed crimes by continuously misleading members of the public through false, malicious, divisive and inciting remarks that are contrary to the provisions of Section 132 of the Penal Code and Section 29 of the Leadership and Integrity Act (Thursday afternoon session Pg 36).

Senate Majority Leader Cheruiyot's accuses Deputy President Hon. Rigathi Gachagua of misleading the public and being divisive. The direct, unmitigated attack on Hon. Gachagua's integrity, citing legal violations, maximizes face-threatening impact in the contentious Senate context. Cheruiyot's institutional authority and the adversarial impeachment setting, intensified by Hon. Gachagua's absence due to hospitalization, amplify the impoliteness, strategically thereby undermining Hon. Gachagua's social standing without redress.

BoR 11
Sen Nyamu:

As if that was not enough, he was in the Central Business District (CBD) the other day, addressing Nairobians in the Kikuyu language, assuming that all Marikiti traders are Kikuyus, nothing can be further from the truth. Sowing seeds of tribalism in Nairobi is very dangerous. (Thursday afternoon session, Pg. 51)

Nominated Senator Nyamu explicitly accuses Hon.Gachagua of promoting tribalism by addressing Nairobians in the Kikuyu language and assuming Marikiti traders are exclusively Kikuyu, a charge that directly attacks his integrity and leadership. The phrase "nothing can be further from the truth" asserts the accusation as an indisputable fact, while the grave claim of "sowing seeds of tribalism" labels Hon. Gachagua's actions as not only misguided but also socially dangerous, amplifying the severity of the offense. The reference to the specific incident in the CBD and the emotionally charged term "tribalism," a deeply sensitive issue in Kenyan politics, further intensifies the face-threatening act, positioning Hon. Gachagua as a divisive figure.

BoR 12
Sen. Tom Ojienda:

The other counts are those set out that relate to violation of the principles of national cohesion. They have been proven by the submissions made before this House this afternoon (Thursday afternoon session, Pg. 44).

This utterance by Sen. Tom Ojienda, who represents Kisumu County, asserts Hon. Gachagua's guilt without softening language, consequently threatening his positive face to be seen as a unifying leader. The accusation's weight is amplified by the tense atmosphere of the impeachment context, where Sen. Ojienda exploits prior submissions to challenge Hon. Gachagua's legitimacy, intensified by Hon.Gachagua's absence due to hospitalization and the Senate's continuation despite legal objections.

BoR 13
Sen. Osotsi:

That evidence of the coalition agreement of Kenya Kwanza was not sufficient and convincing (Thursday afternoon session, Pg. 66).

Senator Osotsi's statement, delivered in a direct and critical tone to the Deputy President's counsel, accuses the counsel of presenting inadequate and unpersuasive evidence, hence threatening his positive face by openly questioning his professional competence. The statement's blunt assertion, uttered during the Senate session in the intense atmosphere of an impeachment proceeding, capitalizes on the procedural, public platform to heighten its effect, openly challenging the counsel in front of senators and a wider audience.

BoR 14
Sen. Orobwa:

We have even seen repeated utterances of causing divisiveness in this country (Thursday afternoon session, Pg. 58).

The nominated Senator's statement explicitly accuses the Deputy President of making statements that foster division, threatening his positive face by definitely linking him to harmful behaviour. The phrase "repeated utterances" emphasizes a pattern of misconduct and "causing divisiveness," underscores its severe societal impact. The senator's position as a legislative figure addressing the Deputy President in the procedural Senate session amplifies the accusation's weight, leveraging the public and scrutinized context of an impeachment to challenge the Deputy President's credibility before peers and a broader audience. This public calling-out, without deference to the Deputy President's high office, underscores the senator's authority to hold a senior official accountable, intensifying the accusation's impact in a charged political setting marked by factional tensions and demands for accountability.

BoR15
Sen. Seki's:
I have a right to speak in this Assembly. You seem to be biased (Thursday morning session, Pg. 46).

Senator Seki Lenku's accusation directly and unambiguously threatens the Speaker's positive face by accusing him of bias. Sen. Seki's explicit assertion of his right to speak, coupled with the pointed claim of partiality, delivers a face-threatening act with maximum clarity. This is a serious accusation in the context of a highly polarized impeachment debate marked by intense public scrutiny, allegations of corruption and divisive politics against Hon.Gachagua. By publicly questioning the Speaker's fairness during this historic proceeding, Sen.Seki leverages his role as a representative of the Kajiado people to amplify the accusation's impact, disrupting the procedural decorum of the Senate session.

Direct and Unambiguous

The act of being direct and unambiguous, as an indicator of bald on-record impoliteness, entails delivering a clear, straightforward message without softening or mitigating strategies, intentionally maximizing the face-threatening impact by disregarding the addressee's positive face (desire to be liked). This approach involves explicit statements, judgments, or critiques that leave no room for misinterpretation.

BoR 16
Sen. Kajwang':

I am convinced that the Deputy Speaker has committed political adultery. Sorry the Deputy President (Thursday afternoon session Pg. 52).

The statement is unmitigated, lacking any hedging or politeness markers, and uses the provocative metaphor of "adultery" to openly criticize the Deputy President's political loyalty and integrity, making the face-threatening act clear and intentional. The speaker prioritizes clarity of offense over social niceties. The positive face is threatened because the accusation publicly undermines the Deputy President's moral standing, implying disloyalty or betrayal in a political context, which is particularly damaging in the formal setting of a parliamentary session. Sen. Kajwang' leverages his senatorial platform to challenge a higher-ranking figure in an adversarial political discourse.

BoR 17
Sen. Madzayo:
Naunga mkono Hoja hii inayohusu kumng'atua mamlakani Naibu wa Rais
Translation: I support this motion regarding the removal of the Deputy President from office(Thursday afternoon session, Pg. 38).

Through explicitly endorsing the motion to remove Hon. Gachagua without hedging or softening language, Sen. Madzayo threatens the Deputy President's public reputation and authority, signalling his unfitness for office in a formal Senate setting. This consequently threatens the Deputy President's positive face. As a senator acting in a quasi-judicial role during the impeachment trial, Sen. Madzayo leverages parliamentary privilege to amplify the statement's impact, aligning with the contentious rhetoric of Kenya's polarized political climate. The power imbalance is notable where Sen. Madzayo's surpasses Hon. Gachagua's position as a defendant in this context, enabling strategic impoliteness to bolster the impeachment case. This directness aligns with the confrontational discourse typical of such tense proceedings.

BoR 18
Sen. Thang'wa:
I stand to oppose and I will start from where I left by saying that... (Thursday afternoon session, Pg47).

Sen. Thang'wa declares, "I stand to oppose" without softening language. He signals a definite rejection of the case for Hon. Gachagua's removal, undermining the credibility of senators and National Assembly members who support the motion. Delivered in the setting where senators act as judges in the impeachment trial, this face-threatening act exploits Sen. Thang'wa's senatorial authority to assert a clear stance, amplified by the Kenya's polarized political climate. The power dynamics involve Sen. Thang'wa, engaging in intra-parliamentary rivalry with pro-impeachment colleagues, using strategic impoliteness to sway Senate opinion. The statement's directness aligns with the confrontational rhetoric typical of such proceedings, reinforcing Sen. Thang'wa's intent to challenge the impeachment process head-on.

BoR 19
Sen. Kajwang':
Mr. Speaker, Sir, we must deal with the law as is (Thursday afternnon session Pg. 52).

Senator Moses Kajwang's statement applies a directive, which prioritizes clarity over social harmony. It threatens the senators'negative face by imposing on their autonomy and questioning their procedural authority in a public, highly structured setting. The political tensions, Sen. Kajwang's combative style, and the Senate's polarized environment, suggest this was a calculated move to assert a legal principle, challenge perceived lapses, and resonate with both colleagues and the public.

Table 1: Frequency and Distribution of Bald-on-Record Impoliteness Strategies

Bald-on-Record Impoliteness	Wednesday Afternoon	Thursday Morning	Thursday Afternoon	Total Frequency	Percent
Unmitigated Command/Challenge	3	1	5	9	47.37
Explicit Accusation	0	0	6	6	31.58
Direct and Unambiguous	0	0	4	4	21.05
Total	3	1	15	19	100

The table above represents the frequency and distribution of bald-on-record impoliteness strategies used by senators during the impeachment debates of Kenya's second Deputy President, showing a total of 19 instances across three sessions. Unmitigated commands/challenges were the most frequent, comprising 47.37% (9 instances), followed by explicit accusations at 31.58% (6 instances), and direct and unambiguous statements at 21.05% (4 instances). Notably, the majority (15 instances) occurred during Thursday afternoon, suggesting heightened confrontational discourse at that time, while Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning saw minimal use (3 and 1 instances, respectively). This distribution indicates that bald-on-record impoliteness, particularly commands and accusations, was strategically employed in the more intense session which occurred on Thursday afternoon, as senators debated in order to proceed with the voting that would determine the Deputy President's fate. The social and dynamic factors such as power imbalance, adversarial nature and cultural expectations licensed the deployment of the bald-on-record strategies by the senators.

Conflict of Interest
The author declares no conflict of interest

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