

PRIN 2017: Designing effective policies for Politically Correct: A rhetorical/pragmatic model of total speech situation

On the importance of being rough. (Im)politeness in the public sphere

University of Palermo, June 15-16 2023

EN : The influential works of Goffman (1967), Lakoff (1973), Grice (1975), Leech (1983), and Brown & Levinson (1987) put emphasis on linguistic politeness, which can be defined as the way language is used in conversation to show consideration for the interlocutors and to adhere to the rules of what a society considers appropriate behavior (Terkourafi 2012). This approach to language finds reminiscence in Aristotle's theory which states that any orator, regarding any kind of persuasion, should always present benevolence, virtue and practical wisdom (*Rhetoric*, I,2, 1377b20-1378a8). However, since the seminal publication of Derek Bousfield (2008), *Impoliteness in interaction*, there has been a turning point in language studies with a growing interest in the concept of impoliteness (Culpeper & Terkourafi 2017; Terkourafi 2019; Domaneschi 2020; Piazza 2019; Di Piazza & Spina 2022).

Now more than ever, aggressive and non-harmonious interactions (Conley 2010; Pernot 2015) seem to have been normalized as a common practice in contemporary political discourse, compelling researchers interested in politeness theory to shed new light on impoliteness as an emerging strategy within the public sphere. Indeed, the rise of so-called populist leaders across Western World – such as Donald Trump in the U. S., Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, or Viktor Orbán in Hungary – is accompanied by a communicative style where face aggravating behaviour is a distinctive, key element of political success (Rosier 2006; Sedda, Demuru 2019); the Italian case, with Giorgia Meloni, Matteo Salvini and Beppe Grillo (especially his campaign “Vaffa Day” – “F**k off day”) is particularly relevant. Here, foul language, discriminative utterances or verbal aggressions have to be considered as defining components of deliberated strategies of self-presentation and political branding (Marrone 2001). While this type of persuasive practice might recall some ancient rhetoric styles and characters (f.e. the Gracchi, Diogenes – cf. Guérin *et al.* 2022), this also questions the meaning-making mechanisms of the public sphere (Habermas 1989; Serra 2020), that we intend here as a “discursive space”, deployed across multiple media and formats, where different images of the public opinion are shaped and managed by social actors (Landowski 1989; Hauser 1999) through both cooperative and polemic strategies.

Moving from these general observations, the symposium *The importance of being rough. (Im)politeness in the public sphere* proposes to broaden the view on (im)politeness by two complementary moves: firstly, by considering politeness and impoliteness as poles of a strategic field of discursive practices, emphasizing respectively continuity or discontinuity of discursive frames; secondly, by extending the domain of exercise of these strategies, and in particular of impoliteness oriented ones, from conversational frames to the public sphere (Landowski 1983; Fabbri 2009; Alonso Aldama 2018). Thus redefined, (im)politeness appears inextricably linked to power (Culpeper 2008; Bianchi & Caponetto 2020). By doing so, the event invites a reflection upon empirical cases of (im)politeness as a verbal practice (Piazza 2019a) and as a system of values (Cepollaro 2020): departing from a strictly linguistic and conversational approach, we aim to study (im)politeness in the public sphere from a transdisciplinary perspective, bringing together pragmatics, rhetorics and semiotics.

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The call for abstract is open to all, but it especially welcomes contributions from PhD students, post-docs and early-career researchers who wish to engage with the following topics:

- (Im)politeness and rudeness in language; critical and corpus-based approaches to (im)politeness; experimental approaches to (im)politeness; figurative language, narrativity and (im)politeness.
- Persuasion and (im)politeness; *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* in the (im)polite discourse; blaming, insults, slurs; argumentation in a polemical context; use of mockery; vulgarity and/or verbal violence.
- Face-keeping and face-aggravating practices as discursive and narrative construction of the simulacres of the enunciators; promotion of (im)politeness to an axiology/ideology where tone policing is a way of challenging political models from an apparently politically neutral standpoint; textual analysis found in mediated interactions or in media texts.

Confirmed invited speakers:

Juan Alonso Aldama (Paris Descartes University), Francesca Piazza (Università of Palermo) and Marina Terkourafi (University of Leiden).

(A complete list of invited speakers will be announced in March)

General informations:

- The symposium is scheduled for June 15-16 2023, at the University of Palermo, Italy.
- This symposium is mainly dedicated to PhD students, post-docs and young researchers. A registration fee of 20 € will be asked to the participants.
- A selection of works will be invited for submission to a topic-related call for papers in a double blind peer-reviewed journal.

How to submit a proposal:

- Please submit your paper proposal by **March 31st 2023** to politeness2023@gmail.com
- We will inform you about our decision by **April 15th 2023**.
- All paper proposals, in English, Italian or French, must be submitted to the Committee with the following information: title, author name, affiliation, email address, abstract (300 words maximum), selected bibliography.

Executive Committee:

Adriano Bertollini (UniPa) Enzo D'Armenio (FNRS-ULiège) Lucie Donckier de Donceel (UniPa, ULB) Stefania Garello (UniPa) Marco Giacomazzi (UniBo) Carlo Andrea Tassinari (UniPa, UNimes)

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IT: Gli influenti lavori di Goffman (1967), Lakoff (1973), Grice (1975), Leech (1983) e Brown & Levinson (1987) hanno messo in risalto la cortesia linguistica, che può essere definita come il modo in cui, durante una conversazione, il linguaggio viene impiegato per dimostrare considerazione per gli interlocutori e per seguire le norme comportamentali considerate appropriate in una società (Terkourafi 2012). Questo approccio al linguaggio trova riscontro nella teoria aristotelica che afferma che qualsiasi oratore, per qualsiasi tipo di persuasione, dovrebbe sempre mostrare benevolenza, virtù e saggezza pratica (Retorica, I, 2, 1377b20-1378a8). Tuttavia, con la fondamentale pubblicazione di Derek Bousfield (2008), *Impoliteness in interaction*, si assiste ad un cambiamento di rotta negli studi linguistici, con un crescente interesse per il concetto di scortesia (Culpeper & Terkourafi 2017; Terkourafi 2019; Domaneschi 2020; Piazza 2019; Di Piazza & Spina 2022).

Oggi più che mai, le interazioni aggressive e non armoniose (Conley 2010; Pernot 2015) sembrano essere state normalizzate come pratica comune nel discorso politico contemporaneo, costringendo i ricercatori interessati alla teoria della cortesia a gettare nuova luce sulla scortesia come strategia emergente nella sfera pubblica. Infatti, l'aumento dei cosiddetti leader populistici in tutto il mondo occidentale - come Donald Trump negli Stati Uniti, Jair Bolsonaro in Brasile o Viktor Orbán in Ungheria - è accompagnato da uno stile comunicativo in cui il comportamento scortese è un elemento distintivo e chiave del successo politico (Rosier 2006; Sedda, Demuru 2019); in questa direzione, il caso italiano, con Giorgia Meloni, Matteo Salvini e Beppe Grillo (soprattutto la sua campagna "Vaffa Day") appare come particolarmente rilevante. Qui, la parolaccia, le dichiarazioni discriminatorie o le aggressioni verbali devono essere considerate componenti definite di strategie deliberate di auto-presentazione e branding politico (Marrone 2001). Questo tipo di pratica persuasiva potrebbe richiamare alcuni stili e personaggi retorici antichi (ad esempio i Gracchi, Diogene - cfr. Guérin et al. 2022) e mette anche in questione i meccanismi di costruzione del significato della sfera pubblica (Habermas 1989; Serra 2020), che intendiamo come "spazio discorsivo", distribuito attraverso molteplici media e formati, in cui vengono plasmate e gestite diverse immagini dell'opinione pubblica da parte di attori sociali (Landowski 1989; Hauser 1999) attraverso strategie cooperative e polemiche.

Partendo da queste osservazioni generali, il simposio "The importance of being rough. (Im)politeness in the public sphere" propone di ampliare la visione sulla (s)cortesia attraverso due mosse complementari: in primo luogo, considerando la cortesia e la scortesia come poli di un campo strategico di pratiche discorsive, enfatizzando rispettivamente la continuità o la discontinuità dei quadri discorsivi; in secondo luogo, estendendo il dominio di esercizio di queste strategie, e in particolare di quelle orientate alla scortesia, ai quadri conversazionali alla sfera pubblica (Landowski 1983; Fabbri 2009; Alonso Aldama 2018). Così ridefinita, la (s)cortesia appare inestricabilmente legata al potere (Culpeper 2008; Bianchi & Caponetto 2020). In questo modo, l'evento invita a una riflessione sui casi empirici di (s)cortesia come pratica verbale (Piazza 2019a) e come sistema di valori (Cepollaro 2020): allontanandoci da un approccio strettamente linguistico e conversazionale, l'obiettivo del simposio è indagare la (s)cortesia nella sfera pubblica da una prospettiva transdisciplinare, unendo pragmatica, retorica e semiotica.

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La call for abstract è aperta a tutti, ma accoglie particolarmente contributi provenienti da dottorandi, post-doc ricercatori che desiderano confrontarsi sui seguenti argomenti:

- (S)cortesia e rudezza conversazionali; linguistica dei corpora e (s)cortesia; approcci sperimentali alla s(cortesia); linguaggio figurato, narratività e (s)cortesia.
- Persuasione e (s)cortesia; *ethos*, *pathos* e *logos* nel discorso (s)cortese; insulti, *slurs*; argomentazione in contesti polemici; usi delle parodie; volgarità o violenza verbale.
- Pratiche scortesie come costruzioni discorsive e narrative dei simulacri degli enunciatori; promozione della (s)cortesia come strategia per sfidare i modelli politici da un punto di vista apparentemente neutrale; analisi testuale in testi mediali o in interazioni mediate.

Invited speakers confermati:

Juan Alonso Aldama (Paris Descartes), Francesca Piazza (Università di Palermo) e Marina Terkourafi (Università di Leiden).

(Una lista completa dei relatori invitati sarà comunicata a marzo)

Informazioni generali:

- Il simposio si terrà il 15-16 Giugno all'Università di Palermo (IT).
- Il simposio è rivolto soprattutto a dottorandi, post-doc e ricercatori. Sarà richiesto un contributo di registrazione di 20 € ai partecipanti.
- Alcuni articoli selezionati saranno pubblicati in una rivista scientifica con *double-blind peer review*.

Come inviare una proposta:

- Inviare l'abstract entro il **31 Marzo 2023** a politeness2023@gmail.com
- L'accettazione sarà comunicata entro il **15 Aprile 2023**.
- Le proposte, in inglese, italiano o francese, devono includere le seguenti informazioni: titolo, nome dell'autore o dell'autrice, affiliazione accademica, indirizzo mail, abstract (300 parole massimo), bibliografia.

Comitato organizzativo:

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FR : Les importants travaux de Goffman (1967), Lakoff (1973), Grice (1975), Leech (1983) et Brown & Levinson (1987) ont mis l'accent sur la notion linguistique de politesse. Cette notion renvoie depuis lors à la façon dont le langage est utilisé, dans le contexte d'une conversation, pour exprimer un certain respect envers l'interlocuteur, et pour se conformer aux règles de bienséance d'une société donnée (Terkourafi 2012). Faire montre de politesse était déjà, à l'époque, lors des critères pour la persuasion. En effet, comme le soulignait déjà Aristote, tout orateur devrait faire preuve de bienveillance, vertu et sagesse pratique (*Rhétorique*, I, 2, 1377b20-1378a). Et pourtant, depuis la publication des travaux de Derek Bousfield (2008) sur l'« *Impoliteness in interaction* », de plus en plus d'études linguistiques manifestent un intérêt pour le concept d'impolitesse (Culpeper & Terkourafi 2017 ; Terkourafi 2019 ; Piazza 2019 ; Domaneschi 2020 ; Di Piazza & Spina 2022).

De nos jours, et peut-être plus que jamais, être impoli et ne pas respecter certaines normes de convenance (Conley 2010 ; Pernot 2015) semble être devenu une pratique courante du discours politique, et ce changement d'attitude face aux pratiques langagières amène les chercheurs et chercheuses à (re)considérer l'impolitesse comme stratégie discursive efficace. En effet, le succès des leaders populistes dans le monde occidental – nous pensons à Donald Trump aux États-Unis, à Jair Bolsonaro au Brésil, ou encore à Viktor Orbán en Hongrie – s'accompagne, d'une attitude langagière particulière : il semblerait qu'être impoli soit devenu l'une des clefs du succès politique actuel (Rosier 2006 ; Sedda & Demuru 2019). Et de fait, l'Italie contemporaine est, par exemple, particulièrement marquée par ce phénomène : nous pensons ici à des personnalités comme Giorgia Meloni, Matteo Salvini et Beppe Grillo (et en particulier sa campagne électorale « Vaffa day » - « *Va te faire foutre* »). Dans ces cas-ci, un langage inapproprié, discriminatoire, ou même agressif doit être appréhendé comme faisant partie d'une stratégie délibérée de présentation de soi et de *marketing* politique (Marrone 2001). Et, même si ces pratiques persuasives peuvent sembler rappeler l'attitude rhétorique de certaines figures classiques (*ex.* Les Gracques, Diogène, etc. – *cf.* Guérin *et al.* 2022), elles questionnent également les mécanismes d'interactions entre individus et communauté

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présents dans l'espace public (Habermas 1989 ; Serra 2020) ; espace public que nous considérons ici sous la notion d' «espace discursif », c'est-à-dire comprenant divers médias et formats au sein desquels différentes conceptions de l'opinion publique se manifestent et s'influencent, à travers des attitudes à la fois de coopération et de polémique, par les acteurs sociaux en présence (Landowski 1989 ; Hausser 1999).

Au départ de ces observations, avec le symposium *The importance of being rough. (Im)politeness in the public sphere*, nous souhaitons contribuer à la recherche sur la politesse et l'impolitesse dans l'espace publique selon une double approche. D'abord, en considérant les notions de politesse et impolitesse comme des pôles stratégiques des pratiques discursives, soulignant la continuité ou non de ces cadres de discussion. Ensuite, nous souhaitons étudier comment ces considérations, en particulier celles relatives à l'impolitesse, s'expriment non plus dans le cadre de la discussion, mais dans le cadre de la sphère publique (Landowski 1983 ; Fabbri 2009 ; Alonso Aldama 2018). Ainsi contextualisées, ces notions apparaîtraient alors comme des pratiques indéniablement liées à la notion de pouvoir (Culpeper 2008 ; Bianchi & Caponetto 2020). A travers cette double approche, nous espérons, lors de ce symposium, susciter une réflexion à partir de cas empiriques de politesse et impolitesse, considérés à la fois comme des pratiques verbales (Piazza 2019a) et comme représentants des systèmes de valeurs (Cepollaro 2020). Ce faisant, nous souhaitons étudier ces notions et leurs manifestations dans l'espace public selon une perspective transdisciplinaire, mêlant pragmatique, rhétorique et sémiotique.

L'appel à communication est ouvert à tous et toutes mais nous encourageons particulièrement la participation des doctorants, doctorantes, post-docs et jeunes chercheuses et chercheurs.

Les axes de réflexion proposés pour cet événement sont les suivants :

- Politesse et impolitesse ; approches innovantes sur ce même binôme ; langage figuratif ; narration et politesse et/ou impolitesse.
- Politesse et impolitesse dans la persuasion : *ethos*, *pathos* et *logos* dans le discours ; blâme et insultes ; argumentation en contexte polémique ; usage de la moquerie, de la vulgarité et/ou de la violence verbale.
- L'impolitesse comme construction narrative et discursive de simulations de la part de l'énonciateur ; valorisation de la politesse et/ou impolitesse comme manifestation de neutralité ou de défi vis-à-vis des modèles politiques ; analyse textuelle des différentes interactions médiatiques.

Conférenciers et conférencières annoncés :

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Juan Alonso Aldama (Université Paris Descartes), Francesca Piazza (Université de Palerme) et Marina Terkourafi (Université de Leyde).

(Une liste complète des conférenciers invités sera communiquée en mars)

Informations générales :

- Le symposium se tiendra les 15 et 16 juin 2023 à l'Université de Palerme, Italie.
- Le symposium s'adresse principalement aux doctorantes, doctorants, aux post-docs et aux jeunes chercheurs et chercheuses. Pour confirmer la présence et participation à l'événement, un forfait de 20€ sera demandé.
- La publication d'un numéro thématique dans une revue est envisagée. Des précisions sur ce point seront données par la suite.

Pour soumettre une proposition de communication :

- Les propositions de communication doivent être envoyées au plus tard le **31 mars 2023** à l'adresse politeness2023@gmail.com
- La notification d'acceptation sera envoyée aux participants au plus tard le **15 avril 2023**.
- Les propositions de communications, en anglais, italien ou français, doivent comprendre les informations suivantes : titre, nom de l'auteur, affiliation universitaire, adresse email, proposition (300 mots max.) et bibliographie indicative.

Comité organisateur :

Adriano Bertollini (UniPa), Enzo D'Armenio (FNRS-ULiège), Lucie Donckier de Donceel (UniPa, ULB), Stefania Garello (UniPa), Marco Giacomazzi (UniBo), Carlo Andrea Tassinari (UniPa, UNimes).

Comité scientifique:

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