

INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL SCHOOL

Faculty of Letters

Raluca OPRESCU (ANGHEL)

Politeness and Impoliteness in Online Communication

SUMMARY

Scientific supervisor

Prof.Dr. Răzvan Georgian SĂFTOIU

BRAȘOV, 2026

Abstract

The shift of verbal interactions to the virtual environment offers a new perspective on social norms grounded in (im)polite behavior. In digital communication, there are numerous situations in which a message is misinterpreted, different from the sender's intentions, and the success of the entire interaction episode is endangered. In such situations, the faces of those involved in the dialogue suffer and impolite verbal behavior may occur.

Based on the analysis of the data, I set out to identify verbal behavior with (im)polite potential and to examine how this potential is determined by the presence of linguistic particularities and nonverbal elements. At the same time, the speech acts that make up verbal interactions in communication within Facebook groups and forums on two directions (culinary and mountain-related) and their capacity to protect or threaten the individual's face were analyzed.

Is there a different concern, depending on the users' gender, for observing and maintaining social relationships? Does the type of virtual community and its mode of organization influence the verbal behavior of its interactants? These represent the main directions I have studied and that I have not found addressed in specialized works published over the last 15 years.

I consider that, in the context of digital communication, a work dedicated to the way in which (im)polite verbal behavior is concretized is welcome, through the application of pragmatic concepts to the study of virtual conversation in the Romanian language.

In analysing of the conversations from the selected virtual communities, the concept of politeness is applied from an interactional perspective, as a social practice, rather than as a linguistic phenomenon (Brown and Levinson 1978/1987). The construction and maintenance of face at the level of a community result from a continuous process of relational work (Locher and Watts 2005) that unfolds during verbal interaction.

Interpersonal relationships are formed through the way in which the members of a community interact verbally. Communication in the online environment has distinct characteristics compared to face-to-face communication. Although it benefits from the facilities offered by digital applications, which allow compression of distances in space and time, digital communication lacks the complete framework of direct interaction, consisting of the verbal sequence, supported by nonverbal and paraverbal elements. To compensate for this lack, digital communication has developed its own system of graphic elements (emoji, GIFs, stickers) and uses punctuation creatively to bring the written message closer to its spoken counterpart. Verbal interaction in the online environment combines the rigor and stability of writing with the freedom and dynamics of speech.

This work, structured into 7 chapters, represents a pragma-discursive analysis of the interactions in which behavior with (im)polite potential are constructed in online communication.

The first chapter presents the main characteristics of the digital environment in which the analyzed interactions take place. The scenario of human communication is the same in face-to-face interaction, but the characteristics of communication in digital media (CDM) – anonymity, asynchronicity and accessibility – influence how relationships are expressed through the posts made.

To maintain of relationships at the community level, solidarity among members is sustained through politic and polite verbal interventions. Although, from the very moment of joining the virtual group, agreement is expressed to comply with the rules aimed at avoiding impolite interventions, the fact that users have the possibility to hide their true identity and the existence of a temporal gap between posts create a favorable framework for the development of communication based on impoliteness.

In analysing conversations in virtual communities, I draw on concepts from pragmatics adapted to the digital environment, brought together under the notion of cyberpragmatics (Yus 2011). The researcher proposes the application of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986; 1995) to the analysis of verbal interactions. In the process of decoding the message, the decisive roles of the communicative context and the relationship between cognitive effect and the mental effort necessary for the success of the act of communication are emphasized.

For efficient communication, and relevant interventions, the receiver and the sender must appeal to shared knowledge which they activate during communication, thereby forming a common cognitive context.

Proposing an analysis of CDM from the perspective of relevance, Yus (2011, 2022) introduces two new concepts alongside the informational content itself encoded by the sender: contextual constraints and non-propositional effects. These accompany the verbal sequence and together constitute the communicative context. Contextual constraints are external to the act of communication and prior to the moment of message interpretation. They may be technical in nature, objective (usability, the level of digital literacy) or subjective (personality, age, gender, and cultural specificity). Within the category of objective contextual constraints falls the particularity of the Romanian alphabet, which contains diacritical marks. The use of diacritical marks in writing a message implies an additional time cost for the sender, but the cognitive effort of the receiver, necessary for decoding, is reduced. Non-propositional effects may be (un)intentional and accompany or replace the verbal sequence in interaction. They frequently appear in exchanges through which no information is transmitted, but affective states are present, being associated with feelings and emotions.

The analyzed fragments of verbal interactions are collected from conversations carried out in virtual communities in which a specific identity is constructed. The need to connect with fellow human beings, the establishment of social connections, offers feelings of safety and acceptance necessary for the formation of self-esteem. Through human activities, communities of practice have been created, formed of persons who share common interests and passions. Within the community, advice and information are offered with the role of mutual support among members.

In the virtual environment, interactions among members are carried out predominantly through written messages that use a language specific to the field of interest, sometimes emojis associated with a common passion, and thus a specific discursive practice develops, through the use of which belonging to the community is demonstrated in another form.

For the proper functioning of relationships among members, each participant has a double concern: the protection of their own face and the observance of the needs of the faces of the other participants in the interaction. By relating to the group, each individual's face manifests two aspects: the independent aspect (beliefs, convictions), which supports the image of autonomy, and the interdependent aspect (integration, adaptation to the specific nature of the community), which develops the image of affiliation.

Participation in the interaction within the community results in the constitution of a discursive identity created on the basis of the posts made and the reactions expressed to the posts of other participants. Identity within a community is the result of the sum of the virtual identity proposed by each member and the identity that is deduced from their manifestations in interaction; thus, a relational identity is created.

The corpus of the work is presented in the second chapter. To carry out the comparative analysis, I chose two types of virtual communities: Facebook groups and forums. Structurally and functionally, the two have multiple similarities. The defining differences derive from the rapidity with which replies are exchanged during interactions. The Facebook group, benefiting from the facilities of the network and application on the basis of which it was developed, allows for a much higher dynamism, which manifests itself through shorter replies. The forum uses technological applications that structure conversations into different topics and enable dialogic interaction. Unlike the Facebook group, in the forum communication is predominantly asynchronous, the temporal gap between replies allowing for more elaborate formulations, with greater concern for correctness of writing and accuracy of information.

The corpus consists of interventions or fragments of verbal interactions selected from the conversational activity in two Facebook groups (*GRUP JamilaCuisine* – source 1 and *Nu sunt singur pe munte* – source 2) and two forums (*ArtaCulinara.com* – source 3 and *carpati.org* – source 4). The choice is justified by the fact that they are different types of communities, with predominantly male or female audiences depending on their fields of interest: culinary and mountain-related.

Because the purpose of this work is to analyze (im)politeness in online communication, I resorted to qualitative methods (discourse analysis) and, punctually, for an additional degree of relevance, to quantitative methods.

In the third chapter, the ways in which linguistic particularities of online communication shape (im)polite behavior are studied. At the graphic level, abbreviations and word truncations most often become markers of the discursive practice specific to the respective virtual community and outline the feeling of solidarity among members, therefore characterizing politic and polite verbal behavior. The observance of orthographic particularities – the use of capital letters, the hyphen, and diacritical marks – reflects the sociolinguistic particularities of the sender (level of education, age, and gender) and demonstrates their concern for protecting the interlocutor's negative face. The morphosyntactic structure of utterances brings the writing of messages closer to their spoken version and is proof of the textual orality specific to communication in the online environment. The sentence structure of the sentence is greatly simplified, following the pattern of direct dialogue, and the definite article in the masculine form is absent, conveying the rapidity of speech. Respecting the specificity of the language of computer-mediated environments, which is dominated by neologistic terms from English, the vocabulary used in interactions within virtual communities is dominated by Anglicisms and by terms from the group's field of interest that have not been assimilated into Romanian.

CDM is characterized by the presence of nonverbal elements, analyzed in the fourth chapter, which are used especially to compensate for the deficit represented by the lack of face-to-face interaction, in which gestures, facial expressions, and paraverbal elements facilitate a correct and easy decoding of meaning. The main nonverbal elements used are graphic ones: emoticons, emojis, stickers, and GIFs, alongside textual alteration through the creative use of punctuation and letter types (capital letters, lowercase letters).

Emojis fulfill different roles in communication depending on the context in which they appear. They may directly convey the emotion that the sender intends: a frowning face, a smiling face with heart-eyes. In certain communicative contexts, they may be used to substitute the word that they represent graphically (🍎, 🍰, 🌸), adding a playful note to the message, and sometimes time can even be saved (when, through a simple emoji, an entire utterance is conveyed, e.g. ☕ – invitation to go out for coffee). An important function, from a pragmatic point of view, is to reduce illocutionary force. A directive speech act that conveys a request, if accompanied by a smiling face or by a face sending a hug, is more easily accepted by the receiver, because the threatening potential of the verbal act to the receiver's face is diminished. The emoji serves as an element that mitigates illocutionary force.

If emojis render, in most cases, the nonverbal aspects of face-to-face communication, textual alterations serve to compensate for the lack of paraverbal elements. The abundant use of punctuation marks emphasizes the intonation with which the reply would have been uttered, and writing a word only in capital letters suggests an aggressive tone.

Because both types of nonverbal elements used in communication in digital media have a direct or indirect connection with emotion, with the affective load of the message, their use is very important in decoding and interpreting a verbal behavior as politic, polite, or impolite.

The fifth chapter presents a diachronic overview of theories about politeness and impoliteness. Research in the field began with Cooperative Principle (Grice 1975) and the Politeness Principle (Leech 1983). The success of a verbal interaction consists in observing the informational purpose, through conversational maxims, and in the concern for maintaining social relationships by protecting the interlocutor's face.

The first wave of politeness theories approaches this pragmatic concept by focusing on the linguistic means used to preserve face. Through their theoretical approach, constructed from the sender's perspective, Brown and Levinson (1978/1987) present two types of face (positive and negative) which differ in the desire for involvement, respectively for independence. In order to avoid face-threatening acts, politeness super-strategies are proposed: positive politeness and negative politeness.

The second wave of politeness studies is represented by the discursive approach (Grainger 2011) and analyzes politeness as a process of double involvement of the sender's intentions and the receiver's interpretation, in a process of relational work between the interlocutors' face. A verbal behavior is not polite or impolite in itself, but depends on the way in which it is received according to the personal, cultural, and social particularities of those involved in communication.

Locher and Watts (2005) propose approaching politeness as part of a continuous process at the relational level that results in the discursive constitution of face. Its interpretation is made in the communicative context in which it appears and is determined by the relational work, a process in which the speakers are involved. From this perspective, Watts (2003) identifies three types of behavior: politic, polite, and impolite.

Impoliteness was initially considered the opposite of politeness, but over time, studies have nuanced the analysis. Gradually, impoliteness was no longer seen as the sender's simple intention to attack the receiver's face, and the analytical framework was extended to include the speakers' expectations shaped by situational context, desires, and beliefs.

In maintaining of relationships among community members, in verbal interaction both common ground (interests, concerns) that bring them close, and the particular aspects of each individual are

taken into account. If some of these characteristics are ignored, impolite verbal behavior appear, which endanger communication and acceptance at the community level.

Within the virtual community, great importance is placed on the interactional component of communication, alongside informational content.

A specific way of communicating in digital media to manifest solidarity and concern for protecting and (sometimes) flattering the interlocutor's face is the use of reaction buttons like and love. With minimal effort, support and appreciation are conveyed for a community member's previous post.

The emergence of impolite verbal behavior is favored by the anonymous nature of CDM which allows users to hide their true identity, a context that encourages more aggressive verbal behavior, without fear of consequences or direct association with the sender's real person.

Impolite behavior appears in interactions within virtual communities after they have passed the monitoring filters of administrators and moderators. The presence of this type of behavior affects the receiver's face, and is perceived as a manifestation of conversational impoliteness, but at the group level, most often, reactions of support for the user who was targeted by verbal aggression are produced and solidarity among members is consolidated.

The next analytical chapter of the work, the sixth, is dedicated to studying how speech acts and the interactions they constitute can render (im)polite behavior. Among the classifications of speech acts, I chose Weigand's (2016) taxonomy, which proposes, from a dialogic perspective, two types: initiative act and reactive act. Verbal interactions within virtual communities involve extensive dialogues on a range of topics of interest. This chapter analyzes how speech acts (Searle 1969) function in digital conversations as initiative or reactive acts (Weigand 2010). In their analysis, I simultaneously pursued the identification of the particularities that CDM has at the community level (utterance structure, use of emojis, creative punctuation) and the strategies for realizing (im)politeness.

In the seventh chapter, I analyzed how the interdependence among verbal acts in interactions can render (im)polite attitudes. The part dedicated to integrative analysis comprises four sections corresponding to the four sources of the corpus. From each of these, one verbal interaction or interaction sequence was analyzed, with the aim of studying the specific forms (im)politeness depending on the dominant gender of the members and the type of community.

In communities with a predominantly female audience, greater attention is paid to the transmission of emotion and the maintenance of relationships among members, unlike male-users communities, where the main concern is the consolidation of an authoritative position. By approximating the immediate, synchronous character of face-to-face communication, the Facebook group has shorter, more compressed interactions, unlike forums, where members show care about the quality and quantity of the information sent.

The final part of the work consists of conclusions and possible future research directions.

At the end, there are two annexes containing corpus material. The first annex includes images relevant to the interpretation of the examples and necessary for the constitution of the communicative context. The second annex comprises four sections, including the interactions analyzed in Chapter 7, drawn from the sources that constitute the corpus.

Communication in Virtual Communities

Following the study conducted over the seven chapters, the main particularities and trends in the use of polite or impolite verbal behavior in communication within virtual communities have been outlined.

In recent decades, people have been able to interact and create connections with others who share the same area of interest within digital communities, through CDM. The mode of communication in the virtual space approximates oral, face-to-face communication, but is carried out in writing, facing the rigor of text and the difficulty of conveying the affective component of the communicative act. Although it has this hybrid character – a combination of oral and written – CDM has managed to gather the characteristics that define it as a new form of communication: anonymity, asynchronicity, and accessibility. It allows participants to hide their true identities and interact very easily, even though they are not in a common situational framework at the same time. For the communicative act to be successful, interlocutors must share a cognitive context, which is possible insofar as their information bases have common elements and they overcome potential contextual constraints that endanger communication. The way users relate to communication, their concern for interaction efficiency, and their care for maintaining the receiver's face are reflected in the (im)polite verbal behavior they display.

The social component of personality manifests online through joining virtual communities that facilitate collaboration without limits of time and space. In community interactions, each member has an identity built from how they choose to present themselves, the virtual identity they create, and the identity that results from relationships with other members – the interactional identity. Depending on the degree of involvement in community activity, the user decides whether to pursue the creation of a positive face through integration into the group, or to define a negative face through the desire for independence. The anonymity of CDM allows users to hide behind artificially created virtual identities, and in these cases, impolite speech acts are more frequent, since it is not possible to associate the virtual entity with the real person.

The two types of virtual communities, forums and Facebook groups, are similar in function and organization but differ in the type of interactions: more extensive and focused on informational content in forums, and shorter and less formal in Facebook groups. The main characteristic that differentiates the two types of communities is the (relatively) synchronous nature of the group versus the asynchronous nature of the forum, which results in different interests: for informational quality of contributions versus speed of reply. In the case of Facebook groups, the rapid pace of interaction gives them a much more dynamic character, making them increasingly preferred over forums in recent times.

Corpus and Methodology

Starting from the reality that a large part of social connections takes place through social media platforms and within virtual communities, I set out to study the particularities of behavior with (im)polite potential depending on the type of virtual social group and the gender of the majority of the audience involved in interactions.

The corpus of the work is selected from real interactions specific to virtual communities. Each corpus source has its own particularities, and for this reason, the research questions, which respect the general characteristics of CDM, are adapted to the analyzed communicative context, aiming to

obtain results that provide an overall picture of the phenomenon of (im)politeness in virtual communities.

In this research, objectives, research questions, and analytical methods are closely aligned, ensuring the analytical approach is supported by relevant data and appropriate processing procedures. The material analyzed includes extracts from conversations collected from four types of virtual communities: a mountain forum, a culinary forum, a mountain Facebook group, and a culinary Facebook group. This structure allows for the analysis of differences by platform (forum vs. social network), as well as the particularities arising from the type of community (mountain interest vs. culinary interest) and the predominant gender of participants.

Objective 1 focuses on identifying the linguistic particularities of CDM in the analyzed virtual communities. In this regard, the main research question and associated sub-questions are:

- What are the linguistic particularities of CDM within the analyzed virtual communities?
 - To what extent do linguistic features and deviations from grammatical norms influence the perception of (im)polite behavior?
 - What differences arise in language use depending on the predominant gender of the group?

Extracts from the corpus were subjected to qualitative and comparative linguistic analysis to identify markers specific to a hybrid discourse (oral/written/computer-mediated) and recurrent linguistic forms.

Objective 2 aims to determine the role of nonverbal elements (emojis, GIFs, images) in constructing the (im)polite character of interactions. The main question and associated sub-questions are:

- To what extent do nonverbal elements used in CDM contribute to the construction of the (im)polite character of a verbal interaction?
 - What are the main functions of graphic elements (emojis, GIFs, images) in communication?
 - How do graphic elements contribute to the potential (im)politeness of an interaction?

The analysis is pragma-semantic and applied to multimodal conversational sequences, aiming to identify the functions of graphic elements and their impact on social relationships.

Objective 3 examines the influence of speech act particularities in CDM on their interpretation as (im)polite behavior. The main question and corresponding sub-questions are:

- How do the particularities of speech acts in CDM influence their interpretation as (im)polite behavior?
 - How does verbal interaction differ depending on the type of community (forum vs. Facebook group)?
 - What differences exist in the complexity of speech act structures between communities with predominantly male versus female members?

The methods applied include pragma-discursive analysis, supplemented by descriptive and comparative statistics, to identify conversational patterns specific to each community.

For studying verbal interactions in virtual communities, research methods at both the discursive and social levels can be associated. Discourse analysis represents a qualitative method that provides insight into how language use is influenced by and influences social relationships. In a virtual community composed of geographically distant users, verbal interactions are the means by which social connections with other members are established and maintained. The pragma-discursive approach correlates pragmatic analysis (e.g., cooperation, politeness, text interpretation in the

broader context, relevance within utterances, and the overall conversation) with discourse analysis, which studies how language is used in interactions to fulfill social purposes.

In virtual communities, language is used in real interactional contexts to convey both information and affective components, thereby creating social relationships. Discourse analysis was used to study how people create and maintain everyday interactions through language in its digital form. From this perspective, verbal interaction sequences, the organization of conversational exchanges, and the extent to which the principles of politeness and cooperation are respected in dialogue to maintain social connection were studied.

A qualitative approach to the data was chosen, considering that the emergence of politic or (im)polite verbal behavior is not conditioned by other factors involved in the communication process. In virtual communities, interactions can exist without markers of (im)politeness, but these were not included in the study. There are conversational situations in which one type of verbal behavior predominates, or a combination of behavior occurs, which can be analyzed quantitatively. Alongside the qualitative analysis, select interactions were analyzed quantitatively, yielding results relevant to understanding the emergence of (im)politeness markers.

The simultaneous or successive application of research methods highlights the dynamic nature of (im)politeness in digital communication. Within a discourse thread, the same verbal behavior may be perceived differently - as politic, polite, or impolite - by different receivers, depending on their individual, cultural, and social characteristics. Consequently, social relationships established between members of a virtual community can vary. At the group level, politeness in verbal interactions is not punctual; it unfolds as a continuous process that produces relational work (Locher & Watts, 2005).

A single conversation thread may be resumed after a longer pause. Bringing an older interaction back into focus is possible through its reappearance in the post stream or via a keyword search. For a conversation to be considered resumed, a new action - reaction pair at the level of verbal acts is required. In this regard, I applied the dialogic principle (Weigand, 2010), which governs the construction of verbal interactions, facilitating the study of how speech acts are organized in dialogue - i.e., initiative acts and reactive acts. The evaluation of a verbal behavior as politic, polite, or impolite is determined by the series of verbal acts that comprise it, their sequence (e.g., appreciation followed by request, or the adjacency pair: appreciation-thanks), linguistic particularities, and nonverbal elements, all considered relative to the conversational purpose. The nature of verbal interactions directly determines relationships among individuals at the community level.

Linguistic aspects in CDM

Over time, one of the essential elements around which communities have been formed is language. Individuals who shared the same language created a community that could function through interpersonal communication. From a descriptive perspective, the notion of community implies a shared trait or element among people, such as nationality, religious belief, or school affiliation. There is also a relational perspective, in which members recognize one another and relate to the community as a whole (Neely 2012).

An example of this is a community of practice (Wenger 1998), which brings together individuals with a shared passion who use communication to achieve both informational and relational goals (Swales 1990). Online communities are communities of practice. To be part of a virtual community, no specific rule must be met (descriptive aspect); inclusion occurs through recognition by other members

(relational aspect) based on shared interests and goals. Communities of practice predominate in the online environment, with interactions occurring in a digital setting. This new form of communication is characteristic of Web 2.0.

The concept of Web 2.0, or the "social web," which is bidirectional, emerged at the beginning of the 21st century and encompasses the part of the internet dedicated to human communication and interaction. Human interactions are encouraged and maintained through social media, whose primary purpose is to create social networks. The tools used to establish these networks have facilitated the formation and development of communities of practice, by promoting collaboration and participation in common activities and initiatives.

The term Web 2.0 was first used in 2004 by Tim O'Reilly, an entrepreneur from California, who organized a conference attended by leaders of companies whose business was conducted entirely online. The emergence of the social web is a natural consequence of the diversification of ways to use the internet. The functions previously performed by one-way online communication are symbolically referred to as Web 1.0.

The first discussions about internet emerged around 1980, but dedicated studies did not appear until after 2000, when the interactive aspect of the digital environment gained undeniable momentum. In recent decades, the role of CDM in interpersonal communication has grown, bringing notable dynamism to its characteristics. Web 2.0, with its relational component, allows users to participate directly in interactions and create digital content through their posts. Through digital communication - which fosters relationships - an ethics of collaboration is established, and the internet is used as a massive social platform. Unlike Web 1.0, Web 2.0 is about writing, not reading; about conversation, not passive consumption; about communities, not companies (Thurlow 2013).

By recognizing the importance of the internet as a medium that facilitates social relationships, attention has shifted from technology to people, making language an essential element (Stipiuc 2016).

At the beginning, digital communication was seen as a superficial domain, using a language lacking expressiveness, with abbreviations and emoticons. As the interactive dimension developed, the mode of communication attracted the attention of linguistics and pragmatics specialists (Yus 2011). Over the years, this form of communication has been labeled with various terms: "computer-mediated communication" (Herring 1996), "electronic language" (Collot & Belmore 1996), "electronic speech" (Davis & Brewer 1997), "netlish," "weblish," "netling," "cyberspeak" (Crystal 2001), "cyberlanguage" (MacFadyen & Doff 2004), and has been analyzed under the concept of "cyberpragmatics" (Yus 2011).

Since it concerns the use of language in interactions and human relationships, a pragmatic analysis can be applied to understand how the particularities of digital communication are reflected in the construction and maintenance of users' face and in the creation of polite or impolite verbal behavior. The aim of this research was to identify the particularities of Romanian in its online variant, i.e., "digital Romanian," at the level of virtual communities and to examine how these are manifested in different types of verbal behavior.

The most extensive part of the section dedicated to the linguistic perspective includes the analysis of examples from conversations in forums or Facebook groups, selected for their relevance to understanding how (im)polite verbal behavior are realized.

In recent decades, several studies have analyzed the particularities of online communication: Herring (1996), Davis & Brewer (1997) – electronic discourse; Crystal (2006) – Internet language;

Thurlow (2011, 2020); Bou-Franch & Graces-Conejos Blitvich (2019) – digital discourse. The linguistic features of digital Romanian have been studied by Trohin (2006), Mladin (2009 – cyberscript), Pomian (2009 – functional electronic style), Drulă (2014), Stipiuc (2016), Radu (2020 – cyberlanguage). Other authors have studied contemporary Romanian, with references to online language: Zafiu (2001 – transcribed orality), Guțu-Romalo (2005), and Milică (2009).

The analysis of CDM identifies linguistic features at multiple levels: graphic, orthographic, morphosyntactic, and lexical. Examples relevant to the specific interactions from the corpus were selected.

In both types of virtual communities (Facebook groups and forums), the text in verbal interactions retains characteristics that bring it closer to its oral variant, with features specific to orality predominating: the expressive use of lowercase/uppercase letters, deviations from standard writing norms, and English language influences at the vocabulary level.

Community members, regardless of the predominant gender, demonstrate concern for correct expression, and most writing errors are justified by the desire to respond as quickly as possible. This is why deviations from norms are more frequent in Facebook groups. Verbal interaction on forums is not under time pressure; therefore, writing with errors can be perceived as a lack of care or indifference toward the interlocutor, who must make an additional cognitive effort to correctly decode the message. Repeated postings containing norm violations or multiple writing errors within a single contribution can be interpreted as inappropriate or impolite verbal behavior, as the user does not show concern for protecting the negative face of other community members.

In virtual communities, markers of written orality are used to strengthen interpersonal relationships through polite behavior that support the speakers' positive face and reduce the potential aggressiveness of verbal acts. Negative behavior appears in interactions where power relations are negotiated and may endanger the connection between members. This type of verbal behavior is more formal in writing and more rigorous in expression, indirectly asserting the user's authority.

The analysis of linguistic features of communication in the Romanian online environment indicates that Romanian may be experiencing its most dynamic period of evolution in recent decades. Time will show whether the particularities of online communication will gradually converge with the official linguistic norm or whether these variants will become widely accepted. Internet language, through its graphic, morphosyntactic, and lexical features, conveys the characteristics of oral expression in writing. Therefore, online discourse combines features of oral and written discourse, offering a new form of discourse characterized by dynamism and contemporaneity.

Non-verbal Elements in CDM

Situated at the intersection between oral and written expression, communication in digital environments is not limited to the verbal sequence of the message.

The bond of a community – the element that makes social connection possible and sustains it – is communication. Although we often think of communication as language as a code, the process is much more complex. Alongside verbal communication, there are visual elements (facial expressions, gestures, body posture) and vocal elements (tone of voice, speech rhythm, pauses). The proportion of verbal elements is much smaller than it appears at first glance. The "7-38-55" formula (Mehrabian 1968) characterizes direct human communication: only 7% of a message is transmitted through

verbal elements, while tone, voice intensity, rhythm, and pauses account for 38%. What is conveyed beyond words, in addition to what is spoken, constitutes the nonverbal elements, 55%. In direct, face-to-face human communication, these three types of elements appear simultaneously. If communication is mediated by a phone call, the nonverbal dimension disappears, and visual information is absent. Written communication is dominated by words, and the additional information that paralinguistic elements (visual or vocal) would transmit is conveyed through punctuation marks.

In the structure of this study, a central place is occupied by the analysis of how nonverbal elements in CDM can influence the decoding of the received message, the establishment of relationships among community members, and the perception of a verbal behavior as polite or impolite. To ensure that the meaning of a message is fully understood, it must be interpreted as a whole, i.e., including both the linguistic component and paralinguistic/nonverbal elements (visual and vocal). The study of the importance of nonverbal elements begins with a theoretical approach to nonverbal communication in digital interactions, followed by an analysis of specific nonverbal elements. Among these, the most important, applied to examples from the corpus, are emojis, non-standard punctuation and orthography, and GIFs.

Graphic elements appear more frequently in familiar contexts with emotional content, when there are relationships of friendship or closeness among participants. Emojis contribute to building group solidarity and are used to maintain social relationships (Kelly and Watts 2015). They are less common in formal, official, task-oriented, or neutral workplace contexts.

Over time, several studies have identified the functions that these graphic elements fulfill in communication. Dresner and Herring (2010) argue that, depending on the context, emojis can act as *nonverbal indices of emotion*, *non-emotional indices*, or *mitigators of illocutionary force*.

Yus (2014) proposes a pragmatic analysis from the perspective of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986), examining how people filter information that is important to them depending on the context of the communication. The functions of nonverbal elements are defined with respect to the extent to which an emoji influences the (in)correct understanding of the accompanying text and produces an (in)appropriate interpretation of the sender's feelings and emotions. Emojis can provide the next possible pragmatic functions:

- to help clarify the message or the attitude inferred from the text, which would be difficult to identify without the emoji.
- to add intensity to the attitude/emotion already verbally encoded.
- to reduce the illocutionary force of a verbal act, thus decreasing the risk of threatening the individual's face.
- to contradict the explicit content of the statement. This function manifests in two forms: (a) humor and (b) irony.
- to add a feeling or emotion to the verbal content of the statement (e.g., a neutral piece of information is accompanied by an emoji that conveys emotion).
- to add a feeling or emotion parallel to the communicative act, reflecting how the interaction made the speakers feel (the social role of the emoji).
- to communicate the intensity of the feeling or emotion verbally encoded. The emoji produces a more precise interpretation of the extent of the emotion conveyed.

In CDM, emojis help convey the user's feelings and emotions, reducing the risk of misinterpretation. Although they may sometimes seem irrelevant, emojis are very useful for the receiver, as they clarify or emphasize certain aspects of the verbal content of the message.

Lo (2008) and Lour et al. (2010) argue that when users read a message containing only text without emojis, many fail to decode the emotional component (feelings) intended by the sender. The mental effort required is too high relative to the cognitive gain, making the statement insufficiently relevant. Combining visual elements with text creates a more positive attitude, than simple, neutral text. Users who employ emojis are perceived as extroverted and open. Messages containing emojis are easier to understand and usually have a positive impact on the receiver: 70% of messages with emojis convey positive emotions, 15% convey negative emotions, and 15% are neutral (Danesi 2017).

In the analyzed sources with predominantly female users, the role of textual alteration (e.g., punctuation, capitalization) is primarily to compensate for the absence of nonverbal elements (visual or vocal). There is a need to emphasize the affective load accompanying the written message or the user's desire to ensure that the message is fully understood. Users aim to create a pleasant atmosphere where marks of solidarity predominate. In strengthening close relationships within the community, nonverbal elements used in communication play a very important role.

In contrast, male users employ textual alteration to emphasize the message conveyed and to highlight the relevance of the information provided. Through their communicative interactions, they protect their own negative face, and often, the receiver's negative face is threatened. Nonverbal elements delineate the territory in which the sender maintains autonomy. Conversations in groups with a predominantly male audience are dominated by displays of power, which can manifest through formal, potentially conflictual, impolite, or aggressive behavior. While female participants focus on the affective load of the message, male participants are oriented toward establishing an authoritative position.

Regarding nonverbal elements in conversations on forums or Facebook groups, emojis and their more complex counterpart, GIFs, occupy a very important place. Their use creates a playful, relaxed tone and produces a high degree of expressivity. Analyzing their role in digital communication, it is evident that these graphic elements nuance or reinforce the meaning conveyed by the written message. Currently, communication on social media involves the use of emojis and GIFs, and their appearance is considered natural. This is perceived as a characteristic feature of digital communication. In addition to graphic elements, punctuation and non-standard orthography appear, used creatively. Textual alteration performs functions similar to those of emojis.

From the corpus analysis, it emerges that the use of nonverbal elements is much more frequent in Facebook groups than in forums. The dynamics of interventions in a Facebook conversation are much higher, often synchronous. Forums have a more formal character, where emojis or textual alterations appear much less frequently and are not as necessary as on Facebook, because messages are crafted without time pressure, and the entire information is conveyed through the verbal sequence.

The analysis of nonverbal element usage by user gender in the virtual group shows that female users prefer graphic elements more than male users. The role of emojis as emotion intensifiers is thus emphasized. For female users, personal involvement, affective aspects, and maintaining of social relationships matter most. Interventions in communities dominated by male participants are more formal, favoring direct approaches that aim to convince the interlocutor. Here, personal interest matters more than social cohesion.

Regardless of the type of nonverbal elements used, one can observe a dynamic evolution of the Romanian language in CDM, which should not be viewed as a threat to the standard language. Digital conversations today are intertwined with the creative use of punctuation and both static (emoji/emoticon) and dynamic (GIF) graphic elements.

CDM cannot be analyzed without paying close attention to the full range of nonverbal elements present in social media interventions, because graphic elements are part of online language. The interpretation of emojis and non-standard punctuation is directly associated with Web 2.0 communication, and their presence is evident.

Politeness and Impoliteness

Over time, studies on politeness were initially conducted from a pragmatic perspective, analyzing how communication fosters social relationships. Later, the sociocultural perspective became more prevalent, establishing politeness as a matter of reference to the norms specific to each social group. At the community level, polite communication fosters closeness among members and earns appreciation. Thus, one can speak of the discursive process of constructing one's image through the relationships established within the group (Locher and Watts 2005).

In analyzing the corpus, we adopted the postmodern/discursive approach to politeness (Grainger 2011), according to which the meanings of discourse result from negotiation between sender and receiver. Whether a verbal behavior is considered polite or impolite depends on the sender's intention and the receiver's interpretation, but it is also influenced by personal, cultural, and situational variables. Interactions within virtual communities are dynamic in terms of post frequency and the structure of the collective receiver (context collapse), which is why viewing politeness as the relational work (Locher & Watts 2005) is the most suitable approach for corpus analysis.

Interactions within virtual communities take place through CDM, which, through its particular features, mark the quality of relationships among members. The anonymity of communication allows users to create of virtual identities tailored to their intended purpose. Membership identity is composed of the public image the user constructs and the image resulting from their activity as a community member and participant in verbal interactions. The asynchronous nature and high accessibility of CDM facilitate interactions, on the one hand allowing the user to communicate without time pressure and, on the other providing access to information and conversation regardless of the temporal or spatial context of the interlocutors.

In virtual interactions, the concept of (im)politeness must be analyzed as a discursive practice, realized through verbal exchanges among users as community members. Verbal behavior are considered politic or (im)polite depending on the context in which they occur and the expectations of the receivers. Within communities, politeness becomes a social phenomenon that contributes to the formation and maintenance of connections among members. The relational work results from a continuous evaluation process of verbal behavior, in which protecting a positive face is achieved through solidarity, while consolidating a negative face creates a dominant position within the community.

Impoliteness in virtual community interactions represents a paradox. By imposing rules upon joining and by monitoring behaviour through administrators and moderators, one would expect verbal behavior to be polite. Nevertheless, the possibility of hiding one's true identity and the absence

of shared situational context favor aggressive verbal behavior, leading to the phenomenon of impoliteness.

Speech Acts and (Im)politeness

Social bonds among members are prioritized through the preference for politic and polite verbal behavior and through solidarity in the face of impolite behavior that threatens or attacks the negative face of certain users. CDM provides individuals the opportunity to interact on topics of common interest within virtual communities, regardless of spatial or temporal distance. The smooth functioning of these forms of human interaction is made possible through the use of positively connoted verbal behavior and the desire to neutralize negative behavior.

Social connection and communication represent the basic conditions for the functioning of a community. Regardless of the type of relationships on which it is based, a community presupposes interaction among its members, and communication is the primary form of social connection. The digital environment facilitates the activity of communities of practice, understood as groups of people who share an interest in a concept, a set of problems, or a passion for a field. During interactions, individuals deepen their knowledge and share experiences (Wenger 1998). Web 2.0 has favored the emergence of communities of practice organized in forums or social media groups. Relationships among community members are made possible through digital communication. This new type of communication, characteristic of recent decades, constitutes a dialogue among users. In virtual communities, rapid access to information and participant responsiveness are crucial. Electronic applications used on different devices mediate communication in such situational contexts. Beyond the technological component, communication in digital environments represents another type of interpersonal communication.

Verbal interaction promotes the creation of social relationships. Within interactions, the positions of those involved are negotiated, and various strategies are used to achieve the intended communicative goals. For verbal interaction to unfold effectively, the principles of cooperation (Grice 1975) and of politeness (Leech 1983) must be respected, as these are essential to the efficiency of dialogue. Each participant in communication attempts to meet the expectations of the interlocutors within the communicative context, while maintaining their own face and avoiding threatening others' social image.

In communication, there is no simple transfer of information. The purpose of a message is not only to convey content but also to elicit a reaction from the recipient. Thus, the act of sending a message prompts a response from the receiver, which in turn becomes an act on the part of the recipient. In forum or Facebook group communication, the initial post is the triggering action. Through this post, the author intends to provoke a reaction from the recipients/followers/ group members. Online, reactions can be nonverbal, such as a like or an emoji, or verbal, in the form of a written message posted independently or as a reply to the original message. Even if an intervention appears to be a simple thought or opinion, it is assumed to be made public with the goal of eliciting a reaction. In some cases, an idea or comment becomes the starting point for a genuine debate or case study. Speech acts can be analyzed individually, as elements of interaction, or at the level of the relationships they establish within complex structures over the course of a discourse thread.

In the study of (im)polite verbal behavior, interlocutors' intentions, and the interpretation of utterances, a classical concept in pragmatics is particularly important: the speech act. This is

considered the minimal unit of linguistic communication (Searle 1969). In this study, I aim to analyze whether (im)politeness present in virtual dialogues is influenced by speech acts through direct or indirect realizations, by the characteristics of verbal interaction depending on the type of community (forum vs. Facebook group), and depending on the type of audience (predominantly male vs. predominantly female). This analysis forms the basis for the study segment on differences in the complexity of verbal interactions in CDM across the four sources comprising the corpus.

For communication to be effective, the other's intention and the consequent reactions must be understood. Dialogue unfolds on this principle. Weigand (2010) considers humans as dialogic beings who act and react to negotiate mutual interests. She argues that the smallest autonomous unit in communication is the action-reaction sequence. Based on this relationship, dialogue is organized, around at least one pair of turns, each consisting of an action speech act and a reaction speech act.

Weigand (2016) introduces the concept of language as dialogue (DPAD 2023, 255) and, in this regard, proposes a taxonomy of speech acts from a dialogic perspective. In her theory, she builds on Searle's (1969) classification and attempts to define speech acts as functional acts. She also introduces the distinction between initiative acts and reactive acts.

Based on this taxonomy, I analyzed how initiative speech acts (request/demand, question, informing) and reactive speech acts (advice, agreement/disagreement; positively connoted acts: compliment, simple/complex praise, well-wishes, self-promotion, apology, gratitude; negatively connoted acts: insult, criticism) appear, and how they can be associated with either politic or (im)polite verbal behavior.

The relationships among community members are a direct result of how verbal behavior enacted through speech acts are interpreted.

In the culinary Facebook group, directive speech acts (request/question, advice) dominate, along with expressive acts (congratulations, gratitude). Interactions often consist solely of congratulations for a posted culinary success and the author's thanks in response. Alongside directives, representative speech acts are common, in which users provide recipes, share links to useful information, or even personal experiences.

In the Facebook group dedicated to mountain experiences, conversations are dominated by the accuracy of the information provided. The lexis is specialized, and posts offer information with the goal of persuading through representative speech acts. Alongside these, directive speech acts occur, in which users request advice or opinions, creating a context conducive to information exchange.

In interactions on the culinary forum, advice or representative speech acts that provide convincing information are rare. Images are the primary means of persuasion, and the abundance of images demonstrates that a simple representative verbal act (a recipe accompanied by a photo) generates an entire series of reactive acts, realized through images of the dishes prepared by forum members.

In the mountain forum, it is evident that participants pay close attention not only to the topic under discussion but also to consolidating an authoritative individual image. A single post may simultaneously contain multiple types of speech acts (representative, directive, expressive).

Regardless of the characteristics of the digital community (Facebook group or forum, predominantly female or male audience), there is a clear concern for polite exchanges and for safeguarding the interlocutor's face. Inappropriate or impolite verbal behavior are often motivated by the desire to respond as quickly as possible, which leads to neglecting grammatical norms, or by the

sender's intent to create an authoritative position within the community, cultivating a negative face, and showing little concern for maintaining social relationships.

Integrative Analysis

Regardless of their type, speech acts do not occur independently or in isolation. If this were the case, communication as such could not take place. The core sequence of dialogue - action and reaction - would not exist. All the intervention sequences analyzed, whether occurring on forums or Facebook groups, are in fact a series of logically linked speech acts, forming discourse threads that can branch into secondary threads addressing complementary thematic aspects. Within such a structure, the active elements of a text, the speech acts, are coherently related, demonstrating communicative interaction.

To study the role that speech acts play in constituting (im)polite verbal behavior, I selected four conversations from the corpus sources. The topics of interaction align with the specificity of each virtual community: the failure of the "Tăvălita" cake (source 1), avalanche risk (source 2), „Ce dulciuri ați făcut azi?” / "What sweets did you make today?" (fragment) (source 3), and mountain huts (source 4). In CDM, it is evident that interaction occurs not only at the verbal level; images also play a crucial role, with many situations in which actual dialogues are conducted through images, especially in Facebook groups. Beyond images/photos, digital communication often involves graphic elements or animations, such as emojis and GIFs.

From the four corpus sources, I selected significant interventions regarding speech acts and their interactions, excluding posts that contained identical or very similar messages. Within the same discourse thread, many comments repeat propositional content. This may occur intentionally, to reinforce a previously expressed idea and integrate it into the verbal interaction, or accidentally, as virtual community applications sometimes allow other messages with the same content to be posted while a response is being typed.

In the culinary Facebook group, expressive speech acts (gratitude and congratulations) are frequent, showing attention to relational work at the community level. Polite and polite verbal behavior are appreciated and reinforced by the reactions of recipients. In the mountain Facebook group, verbal interaction is dominated by representative speech acts that demonstrate the commenter's authority in the field and the desire to impose their opinion, sometimes leading to relational mismanagement (Spencer-Oatey 2000), and resulting in the failure of politeness and negatively affecting relationships among community members.

This type of verbal interaction is typical of virtual communities with predominantly male audiences, where the goal of the initial post may be achieved, but relational activity is neglected. Solidarity at the community level is not prioritized, and the needs and individual particularities of speakers are ignored. Participants focus on protecting their negative face and constructing a dominant position within the community, without aiming to strengthen the sense of group belonging, showing that individuality takes precedence.

Members of the culinary forum, on the other hand, are concerned with maintaining and enhancing community relationships. Female users place greater importance on positive, supportive, and appreciative reactions than on providing information or consolidating an individual power position within the group. In this context, they use expressive speech acts that convey polite and polite behavior. The sense of affiliation is reinforced, and users prefer the status of engaged

community member, participating in social relationships alongside others who share common interests.

Based on the corpus analysis, I observed that there are similarities between virtual communities depending on the majority gender of users - female or male - as well as the type of community, Facebook group or forum.

In communities with a majority of female members, there is a strong focus on group cohesion and the familiarity of relationships among users. Communities composed predominantly of male users are structured around verbal interactions that establish dominance, which may risk harming social relationships. The differences between types of virtual communities stem from the (relatively) synchronous nature of Facebook groups, which favors short replies, versus the asynchronous nature of forum dialogue, which allows much longer posts.

In the culinary Facebook group, the fact that, following an intervention - whether or not it is followed by comments - other posts appear showing the same dish demonstrates group cohesion and a desire to share common experiences. This action goes beyond the verbal level, reaching the practical dimension of activity within the virtual community.

Users in the mountaineering group express concern about building and maintaining a negative individual image and about consolidating authority in the field. This is possible through the relevance and accuracy of the information provided. Most photo posts trigger a series of expressive acts of appreciation, but verbally, these reduce to just a few words.

The forum "Arta Culinară" exemplifies the resilience of discourse threads over time. This is possible because photos of prepared dishes are continuously posted. Each new image creates a branch of the main discourse thread, generating a new series of expressive speech acts: appreciations, congratulations, and thanks.

"Carpați.org", a forum dedicated to mountaineering, is characterized by very long posts, compared to the other sources analyzed. The conversations analyzed average 153 words per intervention. Information is carefully selected, often accompanied by links to authorized sources. Discussions have a neutral tone, with expressive acts appearing mainly when contradictory perspectives arise, supporting one's own idea.

The four sources analyzed provide different models of verbal interaction, determined by the gender composition of the user group and the dynamics of turn-taking. Each virtual community, whether a forum or a Facebook group, develops its own interaction pattern, evolving over time alongside users' communication and relational styles, and the technical features of the platform interface.

In verbal interaction within a virtual community, positive behavior and solidarity among members represent the norm, while negative behavior (negative comments) is the exception.

Conclusions

The primary aim of this study was to analyze (im)politeness in online communication. The research focused on how linguistic features, the presence of nonverbal elements, and types of speech acts used in interactions can influence the perception of verbal behavior as politic or (im)polite. To nuance the analysis, a secondary goal was to identify possible differences in verbal

(im)polite behavior across different types of virtual communities (Facebook groups and forums) and between user groups by gender.

The corpus analysis yielded the following results:

- Lexical choices and concern for the correctness of message writing determine the perception of verbal behavior as (im)polite. The words a user selects and the form in which they are used, as well as the attitude toward respecting grammatical norms, define the user's negative face and influence the nature of relationships established with other community members.
- Nonverbal elements play a dual role: in constructing the meaning of an utterance and in establishing relationships among members. The presence of emojis and the graphic expressiveness of written text are automatically associated with CDM, but they are perceived differently in verbal interactions. The degree of familiarity a user has with this hybrid (verbal and nonverbal) mode of communication, influenced by contextual constraints and concern for maintaining solidarity in the community, determines whether nonverbal elements are interpreted as: playful details, necessary for conveying emotion and mitigating illocutionary force, or merely optional elements.
- Speech acts create an interactional pattern at the community level, supporting solidarity or establishing power positions in member relationships. Responding to another user's post demonstrates the sender's concern for being active in the community. The type of speech act offered as a reaction, being voluntary, indicates, on one hand, a desire to protect the sender's negative face or support the positive face of the interlocutor through polite verbal behavior. On the other hand, offensive speech acts threaten the receiver's negative face, leading to impolite verbal behavior.

The results were obtained through the analysis presented in the chapters dedicated to relevant aspects of online communication, leading to the following conclusions:

1. The linguistic features of CDM are determined by the proximity of online written communication to face-to-face interaction. The language of virtual interactions is defined by its hybrid nature, situated between the dynamism of speech and the rigidity of writing. Herring (1996), Baron (2000), Crystal (2006), and Yus (2011) argue that this mediated form of communication combines oral and written language registers. Because the digital environment lacks strict prescriptive norms, verbal interactions show greater freedom in writing: forms of address specific to direct dialogue, truncated word forms, and the disregard of standard writing and expression rules.

Using a communication style closely aligned with oral speech directly fosters a familiar atmosphere, creating a sense of security and cultivating solidarity and supportive relationships within the community while maintaining and protecting members' face. The preference for a highly oralized written style is often perceived as a sign of politic and polite verbal behavior, due to its role in consolidating community relationships.

Formal verbal behavior emerges from careful expression, attention to writing correctness, lengthy posts providing details and explanations, and specialized neologisms. This directly supports maintaining distance between members and consolidating an authoritative position, a behavior considered politic and sometimes impolite.

Features that approximate CDM to direct oral interaction are more common in Facebook groups, where replies are shorter and, reactions occur quickly, reflecting the synchronous nature and adding dynamism to communication. In contrast, written dialogue in forums consists of longer, more

elaborate interventions, allowed by the asynchronous nature of forum communication, which does not impose time pressure.

2. CDM approximates face-to-face communication through the way oral features of direct dialogue are rendered in writing. However, since interactions among users occur in written form - through verbal elements - there is a need to compensate for the absence of visual (facial expressions, body posture) and vocal (intonation, speech rhythm, and pauses) cues. To address this, CDM incorporates nonverbal elements that accompany or partially/fully replace verbal sequences, such as emojis, GIFs, and textual alteration. The role and significance of these features have been studied over the past decades, depending on the community or type of human interaction: Dresner and Herring (2010) theorize the role of nonverbal elements in CDM, Danesi (2017) considers them "graphic gestures," Sampietro (2019) analyzes their relational function, and Yus (2025) proposes a pragmatic perspective.

Graphic elements and textual alterations are frequently used in digital interactions to complement the communicative context and maintain relationships among members, thus becoming defining components of CDM.

The presence of these features in human communication enhances expressiveness, nuances the meaning of the accompanying message, adds emotional value, and also saves time. Used to convey emotion, they play a key role in maintaining community solidarity and perform a phatic function. Female users employ them more often to convey the affective component of the message, and interpreting them contributes to perceiving verbal behavior as polite. By protecting the positive face of other members, social cohesion is maintained.

The graphic aspect of emojis and GIFs is associated with a playful and emotional attitude. For this reason, they are less frequently used in male users' dialogues, who prefer formal connections and the construction of a negative face. For these users, personal interest and individuality are prioritized.

Within Facebook groups, emojis are used more frequently to maintain rapid interaction, where nonverbal elements can replace a single word or an entire verbal sequence.

3. Analysis of the speech acts composing the verbal interactions extracted from the corpus led to the conclusion that there are specific conversational patterns depending on users' gender and the type of virtual community. From this perspective, a clear similarity is observed among communities based on their dominant audience.

Interactions in culinary communities (both Facebook groups and forums) are dominated by expressive speech acts (thanks and congratulations), showing attention to relational work at the community level. Concern for protecting the positive face of interlocutors is manifested through a conversational pattern consisting of an expressive speech act (praise, compliment) followed by a directive act (request). To strengthen a sense of community belonging, visual elements such as images illustrating culinary achievements play an important role, serving as triggers for conversational threads based on adjacency pairs like appreciation-thanks. Relationships among members are further supported through directive initiative acts (requests) to which representative speech acts (recipes, useful links, sharing personal experiences) are provided as responses.

On the other hand, communities composed predominantly of male users prefer representative verbal acts, which convey information and support opinions. Users feel the need for extended

responses to demonstrate expertise and establish themselves as authoritative figures within the group. Expressive acts are rare, with interactions favoring a neutral atmosphere that consolidates the individual's negative face, potentially affecting relationships within the community. Supporting a dominant position is valued over fostering solidarity.

Although there are differences in the preference and frequency of expressive, directive, or representative speech acts depending on users' gender, it is evident that in virtual community verbal interactions, politic and polite behavior predominates, and impolite behavior is avoided whenever possible.

Bibliografie

- Baron, Naomi S. 2000. *Alphabet to Email: How written English evolved and where it's heading*. London: Routledge.
- Bou-Franch, Patricia, Garces-Conejos Blitvich, Pilar. 2019. *Analyzing Digital Discourse: New Insights and Future Directions*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brown, Penelope, Stephen Levinson. 1978. „Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena”, în Esther N. Goody (ed.), *Questions and Politeness. Strategies in Social Interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 56-289.
- Brown, Penelope, Stephen Levinson. 1987. *Politeness. Some Universals in Language Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Collot, Minela, Nancy Belmore. 1996. „Electronic language: A new variety of English”, în Susan Herring (ed.), *Computer-Mediated Communication: Linguistic, Social and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, 13-28 Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Crystal, David. 2001/ 2006. *Language and the Internet*, ediția a II-a. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Danesi, Marcel. 2017. *The Semiotics of Emoji. The Rise of Visual Language in The Age of The Internet*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Davis, Boyd H., Jeutonne P. Brewer. 1997. *Electronic Discourse: Linguistic Individuals in Virtual Space*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- DPAD = *Dicționar de pragmatică și analiza discursului*, Liliana Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu (coord.), Iași: Institutul European, 2023.
- Dresner, Eli, Susan Herring. 2010. „Functions of the non-verbal in CMC: Emoticons and illocutionary force”. *Communication Theory* 20(3): 249-268.
- Drulă, Georgeta. 2014. *New Media – Trends and Challenges*. București: Editura Tritonic.
- Grainger, Karen. 2011. „'First order' and 'second order' politeness: Institutional and intercultural contexts”, în Linguistic Politeness Research Group (eds.), *Discursive Approaches to Politeness*, 167-188. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Grice, Herbert P. 1975. „Logic and conversation”, în Peter Cole, Jerry Morgan (eds.) *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, 41-58. London/ New York: Academic Press.
- Guțu-Romalo, Valeria. 2005. *Aspecte ale evoluției limbii române*. București: Humanitas Educațional.
- Herring, Susan C. (ed.). 1996. *Computer-Mediated Communication: Linguistic, Social and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Kelly, Ryan M., Leon A. Watts. 2015. „Characterising the inventive appropriation of emoji as relationally meaningful in mediated close personal relationships”. *Proceedings of Experiences of Technology Appropriation: Unanticipated Users, Usage, Circumstances, and Design*, Oslo. University of Bath. <https://researchportal.bath.ac.uk/en/publications/characterising-the-inventive-appropriation-of-emoji-as-relationally-meaningful-in-mediated-close-personal-relationships>, accesat la data de 17.05.2022.
- Leech, Geoffrey. 1983. *Principles of Pragmatics*. London/New York: Longman.
- Lo, Shao-Kang. 2008. „The Nonverbal Communication Functions of Emoticons in Computer-Mediated Communication”. *Cyberpsychology & Behavior* 11(5): 595-597.
- Locher, Miriam A., Richard J. Watts. 2005. „Politeness theory and relational work”. *Journal of Politeness Research: Language, Behaviour, Culture* 1: 9-33.
- Lour, Tainyi, Ling-Ling Wu, Hsi-Peng Lu, Yu-Hui Tao. 2010. „The Effect of Emoticons in Simplex and Complex Task-Oriented Communication: An Empirical Study of Instant Messaging”. *Computers in Human Behavior* 25(5): 889-895.
- MacFadyen, Leah P., Sabine Doff. 2006. „The Language of Cyberspace”. *Encyclopedia of Human-Computer Interaction*, 396-403. IGI Global.
- Milică, Ioan. 2009. *Expresivitatea argoului*. Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”.
- Mladin, Constantin-Ioan. 2009. „Spre o recodare a modului de comunicare scripturală. Sau despre triada democratică a cyberlimb@jului”, în Luminița Botoșineanu, Elena Dănilă, Cecilia Holban și Ofelia Ichim (eds.), *Distorsionări în comunicarea lingvistică, literară și etnofolclorică românească și contextul european*. Iași: Editura Alfa.
- Neely, Erica L. 2012. „Two Concepts of Community”. *Social Philosophy Today* 28: 147-158.
- Pomian, Ionuț. 2009. *Stilul funcțional electronic*. Revista DACOROMANIA, serie nouă, XIV, 2. Cluj-Napoca: 139-150. http://www.dacoromania.inst-puscariu.ro/articole/2009_2_3.pdf, accesat la data de 30.11.2020.
- Radu, Anamaria. 2020. „Cyberlimb@j în spațiul lingvistic românesc”, în Corin Braga (ed.), *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România*, Elena Platon (ed.), vol. II. *Patrimoniu și imaginar lingvistic*, 394-405. Iași: Polirom.
- Sampietro, Agnese. 2019. „Emoji and rapport management in Spanish WhatsApp chats”. *Journal of Pragmatics* 143: 109-120.
- Searle, John R. 1969/1989. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spencer-Oatey, Helen. 2000. „Rapport Management: A Framework for Analysis”. *Culturally Speaking: Managing Rapport Through Talk across Cultures*, 11-46. London: Continuum.
- Sperber, Dan, Deirdre Wilson. 1986/1995. *Relevance. Communication and Cognition*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Stipiuc, Andrei Sebastian. 2016. *Cum scriem pe Facebook. Limba textelor produse de utilizatorii români ai rețelei sociale*. Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”.
- Swales, John M. 1990. *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thurlow, Crispin, Michele Poff. 2013. „Text messaging”, în Susan Herring, Dieter Stein, Tuija Virtanen (eds.), *Pragmatics of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 162-189. Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter.

- Trohin, Elena. 2006. *Particularități lingvistice ale comunicării în Internet*, teză de doctorat. Chișinău. <https://ro.scribd.com/document/83176349/Particularit%C4%83%C5%A3i-lingvistice-ale-comunic%C4%83rii-in-Internet>, accesat la data de 2.12.2020.
- Watts, Richard J. 2003. *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Weigand, Edda. 2010. *Dialogue: The Mixed Game*. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Weigand, Edda. 2016. „The Dialogic Principle Revisited: Speech Acts and Mental States”, în Alessandro Capone, Jacob L. Mey (eds.), *Interdisciplinary Studies in Pragmatics, Culture and Society*, 209-233. Cham: Springer.
- Wenger, Etienne. 1998. *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yus, Francisco. 2011. *Cyberpragmatics: Internet-mediated communication in context*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Yus, Francisco. 2014. „Not all emoticons are created equal”. *Linguagem em Discurso*. 14(3): 511-529.
- Yus, Francisco. 2022. *Smartphone communication: Interactions in the app ecosystem*. London: Routledge.
- Zafiu, Rodica. 2001. *Diversitate stilistică în româna actuală*. București: Editura Universității din București.

