



Online Politeness and Identity Construction of Young Saudi Adults

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The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University.

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Abstract

People often use language not only for communication but also for enacting various identities to reveal diverse background information about themselves such as their geographical origin or their gender. To this end, tribe, gender, region or a country-specific dialect, accent, sociolect, vocabulary or phrases are used to construct various identities not only in face-to-face communication but also in online communication. Thus, this study aimed to investigate the strategies used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their different socio-cultural identities in online communication on a social website. It also aimed to study the strategies used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication. The study also examined in what sense the online identity construction and politeness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths were similar and, at the same time, different, inter-regionally as well as cross-culturally.

To this end, 158 Saudi Arabian young adults (88 males and 70 females, aged 18–30 years, from different regions in Saudi Arabia) were selected as participants in the study. This age group was chosen as the focus of investigation as young people are more commonly involved in online interactions and communications. They took part in the study by registering on a social networking website (www.ksayouth.net) and then posting and commenting on one another's posts online.

Employing a sequential explanatory design (quantitative study followed by qualitative study), the study found that Saudi Arabian youths used linguistic strategies such as region-specific words and phrases to construct regional identity, using last name as tribe name to construct tribal identity, and using religious words and expressions to construct religious identity. They constructed gender identities through linguistic strategies such as using real names (in the case of males) and using nicknames (in the case of females) due to Saudi Arabian cultural norms. They also used nonlinguistic strategies such as posting region-

specific images, images of region-specific forts/castles, and images of region-specific food dishes.

The study also found that the Saudi Arabian youths mostly used positive politeness strategies, including seeking agreement, giving (or asking for) reasons and presupposing /raising /asserting common ground. Negative politeness was the second most used politeness strategy employed by the participants. The youths used some new Saudi Arabian culture specific politeness and impoliteness strategies which were not described in previous literature (Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987; Culpeper, 1996). These new strategies of politeness included: kinship non-familiar; thanking God; invocation to God; using honorific titles; courtliness; describing the other using clever and strong animal terms; comforting someone with prayers; supplicating to God; appreciation; and swearing by God. They also used some new strategies of impoliteness such as: invoking God's curse, describing the other using derogatory animal terms; using honorific titles to insult; and using religiously and socially derogatory terms. These findings imply and reflect various nuances of Saudi Arabian youths as well as the Saudi society and culture in general and as such represent new contributions offered by this study.

The study also found that Saudi Arabian youths are more polite in their face-to-face communications than they are in their online communications. It was also found that Saudi Arabian youths, both males and females, who used nicknames were impolite in their social media communications. This finding may be attributed to the participants hiding behind their keyboards and not interacting with their interlocutors face to face. This study is the first of its kind in this area, and provides practical methods to partially identify online communicators and is a sound basis from which further research can take place.

Keywords

Identity Construction, Online Communication, Social Media, Saudi Youths, Politeness Strategies

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Abbreviations

CCSARP: Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns

CMC: Computer-Mediated Communication

CMD: Computer-Mediated Discourse

CP: Cooperative Principle

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FTA: Face-Threatening Acts

H: Hearer

OSN: Online Social Network

S : Speaker

SNS: Social Network Site

Arabic Transliteration Chart used in this Study

Arabic Alphabet			Romanisation
ا	أ	إ	a
ب	ب	ب	b
ت	ت	ت	t
ث	ث	ث	thea
ج	ج	ج	je
ح	ح	ح	ha
خ	خ	خ	ka
د	د	-	da
ذ	ذ	-	thae
ر	ر	-	ra
ز	ز	-	za
س	س	س	sa
ش	ش	ش	sh
ص	ص	ص	sa
ض	ض	ض	dh
ط	ط	ط	d
ظ	ظ	ظ	thea
ع	ع	ع	a
غ	غ	غ	g
ف	ف	ف	fa
ق	ق	ق	qa
ك	ك	ك	k
ل	ل	ل	l
م	م	م	m
ن	ن	ن	n
ه	ه	ه	h
و	و	-	waa
ي	ي	ي	y

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Human life cannot be separated from communication, and language is one of the effective ways to communicate that has been used for millennia. Language is also used by people for enacting multiple activities and identities (Gee, 2014). By using language, people perform various activities such as requesting, commanding and questioning. They also use their language to enact their identity. Using language, people show who they are (religious identity, ethnic identity, gender identity, wealth and education) and where they are from (accent, dialect) to show the geographic origin of the person. Thus, when an individual greets someone, using a specific phrase or accent, s/he is telling others about her/his identity. For example, in Saudi Arabia the greeting ‘Assalamualeikum’ [peace be upon you] is used to show religious identity; voice and tone is used to show gender; and accent is used to show the geographic origin of the person or regional identity. This identity construction does not happen only in the real world, it also happens in virtual worlds. People always take their identity with them and use language to construct and enact that identity while travelling as well as while moving to different locations. In our contemporary world, a vast portion of communication takes place online (Olson, 2013). In current times, online chat rooms and discussion groups have grown exponentially in popularity and significance, becoming enriched in depth and range. Thus, the analysis of these environments has increasingly become instrumental in literature and practice. People use language to construct their identity in online communication as well. Being a part of the society, where people often try to show a ‘good’ face of themselves, they also use various politeness strategies.

Politeness is seen as ‘socio-culturally appropriate behaviour’ (Mills, 2003) or ‘a matter of abiding by the expectations of society’ (Yu, 2003). In other words, being polite is to follow the rules, norms and expectations of society. Being polite or impolite is also a part of the identity construction process. By being polite or impolite, a person tries to construct her/his typical socio-culturally positive/negative identity which is appreciated/discouraged by her/his speech community. Thus, politeness or impoliteness is a part of one’s identity which people construct through their communication. These strategies of being polite/impolite and constructing identities happen in all cultures and societies. However, the way the identities are constructed and the way people try to be polite/impolite can differ from culture to culture and society to society. According to Locher, Bolander and Höhn (2015) ‘natural language is full of *variation* in need of explanation’ (p. 2). For example, there are phonological features (e.g. accents, tone, rhythm and intonation), vocabulary and syntax that might index social and/or regional belonging and there are also different ways of expressing oneself depending on who addresses whom in what context and for what purpose (Hymes, 1974). Therefore, scholars (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; De Fina, 2010; Hariri, 2017; Locher, 2008; Mendoza-Denton, 2002; Nureddeen, 2008; Spencer-Oatey, 2007 and Thurlow & Mroczek, 2011) have attempted to explore this phenomenon of how people from diverse cultures construct identities, communicate and how different activities are done differently in different communities and societies and within different spaces such as real-world/virtual world.

Politeness can be studied as a socio-psychological notion due its socio-cultural nature. That is, making your speech socio-culturally appropriate in order to show one’s well-mannered, civilised personality. Or it can be studied as a theoretical, linguistic notion in a sociolinguistic theory of politeness according to Watts (2003). In this research, (im)politeness is examined from

both perspectives. That is, responses of participants in online communication are looked at from perspectives of socio-cultural appropriateness and are checked to see if a particular response from a participant is socio-culturally appropriate/inappropriate in different Saudi Arabian communities, regions and tribes. The responses of the participants are also studied in terms of (im)politeness as a theoretical, linguistic notion in a sociolinguistic theory of politeness. To this end, Brown and Levinson's (1987) model has been employed to study the strategies used by the participants to be polite/impolite in their online communication. The choice of this model was due to its having been widely recognised as the most fully elaborated work on linguistic politeness, as it provides "a systematic description of cross-linguistic politeness phenomena which is used to support an explanatory model capable of accounting for any instance of politeness" (Grundy, 2000, p. 126).

Thus, the study analyses the identity construction process and strategies in online communication on a social website, particularly by Saudi Arabian young adults. It also investigates the use of various strategies by these participants in their online communication on a social website for being polite/impolite as the phenomenon of politeness exists in online communication as well as in real-life communication, based on Brown and Levinson's Politeness (1978, 1987) and Culpeper's Impoliteness (1996) frameworks.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As online communication is gaining significance in everyone's life, research on the nature of this communication also appears to be gaining momentum. In what terms the online communication is similar to and, at the same time, different from the face-to-face, real-life communication has been the topic of research interest (Adel, Davoudi, & Ramezanzadeh, 2016; Park, 2008; Schallert, Chiang, Park, Jordan, Lee, Cheng, Song, 2009; Sifianou, 2015) to gain

further insight into the relationship between human communication and the medium employed. The nature and concept of politeness, following the popular models proposed by Leech (1983), Grice (1975), and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) have been explored by researchers. Leech (1983) argued that there is an “essential asymmetry in polite behaviour, in that whatever is a polite belief for the speaker tends to be an impolite belief for the hearer and vice versa” (p. 169). On the other hand, the model of Brown and Levinson (1978) is primarily dependent on the concept of “face” introduced by Goffman (1955). Thus, researchers are interested in exploring the nature of politeness and factors governing it in online communication and to see if these are, in any way, the same or different from those of real-life/face-to-face communication.

Observing the nature of the online environment, researchers (Harrison & Barlow, 2009; and Luzón, 2013) have questioned whether the online conversers employ the same or different politeness strategies from those they use in real-life/face-to-face communication. It is also an area of investigation to explore if the online interlocutors try to construct their identities to show who they are (e.g. gender, age, and from which specific culture, country, region, tribe, and socioeconomic background they come, to mention a very few identities) in the same way they do in real-life/face-to-face communication. In the real-life communication, interlocutors are face to face and are often known to each other in some way, which may influence their use of politeness strategies in the interaction. However, in online communication, people are not face to face and often they do not know each other in the same sense that they know each other in real life, which may affect and influence their use of politeness strategies. In real-life communication, people try to be polite by different linguistic and nonlinguistic means in order to show others their good face. It is also important to investigate if the online interlocutors do the same. Studies by Holmes (1993) and Lakoff (1973) reported that men have a tendency to be impolite and they

often make use of swear words in comparison to their female counterparts. However, Bassiouney (2009) and Kharraki (2001) have reported the opposite to those claims for the concept of politeness in Arab culture where gender is not a strong governing factor in the employment of politeness strategies but rather it is the social status, power, socio-cultural rules, and geographical origin of the individual. In this respect, the present study takes this complex nature of politeness in Arab culture as the problem for investigation to gain detailed insight into how Saudi Arabian young adults view this complex phenomenon of politeness in their interaction in online communication on a social website. The study also investigates how these young adults employ various politeness (and also impoliteness) strategies, how they construct and show their various socio-cultural, political, regional, and tribal identities and how (im)politeness and identity construction are interlinked in Saudi Arabian speech communities.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it will assist individuals who are interested in cross-cultural studies to know how people from different sociocultural backgrounds communicate in virtual worlds and how these communications help us to understand the culturally diverse world in which we live. The study will also be important for those who are interested in understanding the nature of human communication and factors affecting and governing this communication. Graham (2007) and Locher and Watts (2005) believe that our understanding on this issue is still not sufficient and more clarification is needed. Furthermore, Graham (2007) and Hairetdin (2018) found that there have not been many studies on impoliteness, particularly in the context of computer-mediated communication. Therefore it is hoped that this research will contribute to the studies on all the facets of politeness, especially in CMC. It may be of interest for researchers in the field of linguistics, sociolinguistics, sociology, anthropology, and communication science to

see and understand how young adults in Arab societies such as Saudi Arabia, that are often unexplored, communicate in their real-life and in online communication on a social website which may be a relatively more free place for them to express themselves. The study may also help researchers in comparing and contrasting ways of communication in each culture and factors affecting the communication in each culture. Besides its contribution to intercultural communication, the significance of this study derives from the fact that it is the first study to: a) focus on Saudi young adults' use of politeness strategies in real life and in online communication on a social media website in light of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, and b) investigate Saudi young adults' linguistic behaviour in realising different identities in online communication on a social website through their specific linguistic choices.

An extensive literature review (through searching different research databases such as ERIC, DOAJ, Web of Science, Saudi Digital Library, SCOPUS, EBSCO Host and various journals on Elsevier, see Table 1) has yielded multiple studies on politeness in other societies (more than 1000 research articles and books). Only a few studies (less than 100) such as Al-Shawali (1997), Enssaif (2005), Al-Qahtani (2009), Tawalbeh and Al-Oqaily (2012), Samarah (2015), and Alshamari (2015) were found to investigate different aspects of politeness in Saudi Arabia but no study, to this date, has been found on politeness and identity construction in online communication in Saudi Arabia.

Table 1: *Databases*

Databases	Studies on Politeness in General	Studies on Online Politeness	Studies on Politeness in Saudi Arabia
ERIC	174	76	0
EBSCO	56	6	0
DOAJ	237	7	0
SCOPUS	1726	62	1
Web of Science	1842	64	0
Saudi Digital Library	857	11	2

Thus, this study attempts to fill this gap in the literature on politeness strategies among Saudi Arabian societies in online communication. The study is also expected to test the universality of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory in Arab culture, specifically with regard to interaction on a social website by Saudi young adults as this has not been tested yet on these types of data.

This study is also significant for various practical reasons. It might assist foreign firms, new immigrants or Muslims from Western society and other foreign societies in terms of politeness and how to communicate effectively and culturally appropriately with people from different regions and backgrounds in Saudi Arabia. The study will be helpful for such people in understanding what is acceptable and what is frowned upon in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It will help them to understand what is acceptable and unacceptable regarding politeness in each specific region, with specific genders, and with people from different socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. Moreover it will assist, in the same way, non-Arab firms who wish to market their products in Saudi Arabia. Also, foreign students who want to learn how to communicate with male/female Saudi students in a polite way, avoiding impolite words, will benefit from this study. Similarly, new Muslims visiting Saudi Arabia for performing Hajj/Umrah (Religious Pilgrimage to Macca and Madeena by Muslims around the world) can benefit from the information provided by the study on how to communicate with the locals.

Furthermore, this study may also be employed by translators/interpreters during their translating work from Arabic language to English. The information provided by this study will assist them to harness the politeness strategies used by people of different genders from different regions and socio-cultural and economic backgrounds in the Kingdom.

The study may be helpful for people connected with the media to use Arabic language in newspapers, magazines, radio and TV in such a way that when they interview a local Saudi, they would know the strategies to use for politeness and against impoliteness. The study will also be helpful for social media in determining policies on polite/impolite behaviours in different regions of Saudi Arabia as it will provide an opportunity for social media networks such as Facebook to understand the linguistic features of Saudi society. This thesis offers a sample single-page guide to polite expression online in Saudi Arabia for immigrants, salespeople from overseas firms or visitors. Another single-page guide (at a higher level) is offered to translators, and a further single-page guide is offered for media personnel (see [Appendix J](#)). These artefacts of the study are summarised in the following table (Table 2).

Table 2: *The Artefacts of the Study*

No.	Possible Beneficiaries of the Study	Nature of the Contribution
1	Researchers/academics	1) Bridging the gap in literature on the topic of politeness and identity construction strategies on a social website amongst the youth in Saudi Arabia. 2) Testing of the universality of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to interaction on social website by Saudi youngsters as this has not been tested yet on these types of data.
2	Foreign firms, new immigrants or Muslims from Western society and other foreign societies	Assisting in how to communicate effectively and culturally appropriately with people from different regions and backgrounds in Saudi Arabia.
3	New Muslims/pilgrims visiting Saudi Arabia for performing Hajj/Umrah	Assisting in how to communicate with the locals in a culturally appropriate manner.
4	Translators/interpreters	Assisting in familiarising themselves with various strategies used by people of different tribes, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds while communicating so that faithful translation is achieved.
5	Media personnel	Assisting in understanding what is acceptable with which people and what is frowned on in different tribes and regions in Saudi Arabia so as to avoid miscommunication.
6	Immigrants, salespeople from overseas firms or visitors	Guide to polite expressions for effective and appropriate communication in different tribes and regions in Saudi Arabia.

1.4 Saudi Arabia: A Brief Background to the Country and the Society

This section provides a brief background to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in order to shed light on various aspects such as regions, religion, the society and culture and how all of these

factors are interrelated and crucial for the topic under investigation. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) was founded in 1932 and is located in south western Asia, lying at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa, with the Red Sea to its west, and the Arabian Gulf to its east.

It consists of five geographical regions, namely the east, north, south, west and central regions (see Figure 1). The population of the Kingdom is approximately 30.7 million (General Authority for Statistics, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2014) and, since its inception in 1932, it has had considerable global influence via its administration of the birthplace of Islam and its large reserves of oil (Blanchard, 2016). In Saudi Arabia, the citizens are mostly Muslims, with Islam playing a key role in the behaviour, norms, attitudes and social practices of the people (Al-Saggaf, 2012; Almunajjed, 1997).

Despite the dominance of religion, every Saudi citizen takes on more than a single identity in that they identify themselves based on their regional origin (Najd, Hijaz and Asir), their religion, and their tribe—the dominating identity at a specific time—is determined largely by the present external conditions (Beranek, 2009).

In Saudi Arabia, gender segregation is a significant cultural aspect and women in Saudi Arabia are not permitted to mingle with men who are not related directly to them, particularly when they are alone (Al-Bukhari, 1987; Al-Saggaf & Begg, 2004; Almakrami, 2015; World Trade Press, 2010). The objective behind the above discussed gender segregation is to steer clear and keep away from adultery and to prevent other men from devaluing the honour of the male leader in the family (Almunajjed, 1997). Another important cultural aspect in Saudi Arabia is the tribal system, where tribes are important to the Saudi people in identifying themselves and the structure of their social interactions (Aldraehim, Edwards, Watson & Chan, 2012; Al-Saggaf, 2012; Bittles, 2008).

Moreover, each Saudi tribe is led by a designated leader who is responsible for regulating the rules and authority of the tribe on the basis of particular values and norms (Al-Saggaf & Begg, 2004) that may be unique to that tribe. According to Almakrami (2015), individuals belonging to one Saudi tribe often have strong relationships, have special social occasions and gatherings, and they have common concerns and responsibilities. The Saudi tribal culture enables the tribal members to live in proximity as descendants of tribes, and they recognise the value of sharing and living with immediate family (grandfather, sons, wives and children) (Long, 2005). Thus, both conscious and unconscious attempts are made by every member of a tribe to identify themselves as a member of a specific tribe through the use of specific vocabulary, dialect or clothing. This attempt to construct identity warranted the investigation conducted through this research.



Figure 1. Saudi regions

1.5 Aims of the Study

The aims of this study are articulated through the research questions which examine:

1. The strategies used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their different socio-cultural identities in online communication on a social website.
2. The strategies used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication.
3. In what sense these online identity construction and politeness strategies are similar and, at the same time, different, inter-regionally as well as cross-culturally.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

While seeking answers to the research questions, mixed method research design was used as such design has been successfully used by scholars like Das and Herring (2016), Mills (2003) and Culpeper (2011). Riazi & Candlin (2014) have argued that MMR [mixed method research] helps researchers to incorporate relative assets of quantitative and qualitative research in a single research design. Out of different paradigms informed by the MMR, this study aligned itself with pragmatism as it focuses on what works in the research and it also believes in the centrality of the research questions. Focusing on theoretical aspects underlying main research questions, Brown and Levinson's (1978) politeness theory was employed in this study to determine the strategies of politeness adopted by the Saudi youth in their social website interactions. The choice of Brown and Levinson's (1978) model was deliberate as it is considered to be the most influential and comprehensive to study the phenomenon of politeness. It has already been successfully used theoretically and empirically in many disciplines to study politeness (Atawneh, 1991; Atawneh, A., & Sridhar, S. 1993; Elarbi, 1997; El-Shafey, 1990; Mills, 2003; Watts 2003).

Therefore, this study intended to test Brown and Levinson's politeness model (1978, 1987) in Saudi Arabian society.

While studying politeness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths, the Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) coding manual proposed by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) was used to code the politeness strategies adopted by the participants in their comments and reactions on the social website. Various researchers have assessed different languages successfully using this model (Olshtain, 1989). Therefore, this manual was adopted with some modifications to accommodate the data of the study. More specifically, Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) framework was used to analyse the social media network structure through the use of four types of coding:

1. Subject line
2. Openers
3. Body text
4. Closing remark.

Added to the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978/1987), the study also considers factors contributing to the politeness perception on the basis of prior literature. Studies in literature concerning the analysis of politeness, in the context of CMC, are still few and far between as the majority of studies address face-to-face interactions. More current studies have discussed (im)politeness theories in the CMC context (e.g. Abdul Halim, 2015; Adel et al., 2016; Chejnova, 2014; Lorenzo-Dus, Blitvich & Bou-Franch, 2011; Graham, 2007, 2008; Neurater-Kessels, 2011; Sifianou, 2015). To study impoliteness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths, Culpeper's (1996) framework of impoliteness was utilised. Culpeper's (1996) model of impoliteness builds on Brown and Levinson's model of politeness. Culpeper

argues that impoliteness is a complex behaviour which can be easily misunderstood if the listener fails to comprehend the speaker's intention. The listener may consider the speaker's behaviour as impolite. Another contention of Culpeper (2011) is that the concept of impoliteness is creative whereby impoliteness behaviour is not always restricted to verbal strategies. There can be non-verbal strategies or behaviours which would be considered impolite, such as the acts of burping, farting, or making gestures like raising the middle finger. This wider interpretation of impoliteness than Brown and Levinson makes Culpeper's model more suitable for this study as it intends to investigate both verbal and non-verbal forms of (im) politeness in the online discourse of Saudi Arabian youths. Therefore, as Culpeper's impoliteness model is much wider and multi-disciplinary, it was chosen for this research due to this comprehensiveness. The study also aimed to examine identity construction strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths. To this end, the approaches of Block (2006), Ochs (1993), and Bucholtz and Hall (2005) to phenomena of identity and identity construction were used as a theoretical framework. Content analysis of the material taken from the social website posts, comments and replies to comments was conducted by using Creswell and Clark's (2007) thematic analysis framework.

1.7 Summary

This chapter has offered an overview of the aims and objectives of the study. It has also provided adequate background to the study, and the research questions of the study have been specified. Furthermore, the significance of the study has been summarised and the need for the present study elaborated. The next chapter will discuss the extensive literature review that was undertaken as part of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a thorough review of the literature related to the study's objectives. The significance of conducting this study lies in the fact that, in Saudi society, it is evident that computer and internet use is proliferating. Along with this proliferation is the increase in computer-mediated communication use. This marks the importance of learning more about Arabic language and its use online. More importantly, technological innovations are significantly transforming our world in terms of the social, psychological and cultural ways and, as such, the literature review conducted in this study investigates the issues with regard to the use of politeness strategies online.

The first part focuses on literature concerning language and identity construction; politeness; impoliteness and computer-mediated communication; politeness theories and Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) politeness strategies; and impoliteness and strategies of impoliteness presented by Culpeper (1996). The second part focuses on Saudi Arabia and online communication on social networks.

2.2 Language and Identity Construction

Language is often used by people to reveal their various identities such as place of origin, social class background, ethnicity and gender. The term 'identity' according to Goffman (1959) refers to the presentation of self. Joseph (2004) believes that language and identity are inseparable as language is used by a person to show his/her multiple identities. To put it in other words, language of an individual may reveal from which ethnic background she/he comes, for example Asian/African, and whether the speaker is male/female. Several studies (Labov, 1966; Mendoza-Denton, 2002; Milroy & Milroy, 1978; Milroy, 1980; Trudgill, 1974) have been

conducted on the way language has been utilised to construct different identities. Their findings revealed that identity construction takes place in a social context and social categories such as social class, age, sex and ethnicity govern the process of identity construction. Locher et al. (2015) elaborate on the same and state that natural language is full of variation in need of explanation. That is to say, there are different features of language such as phonological—accents, tone, rhythm and intonation—as well as vocabulary and syntax which might index social and/or regional belonging of an individual. Also, there are multiple ways of expressing oneself depending on who addresses whom in what context and for what purpose (Hymes, 1974, p. 2). That is why Bucholtz and Hall (2005); Mendoza-Denton (2002); Spencer-Oatey (2007); Locher (2008); De Fina (2010); Nureddeen (2008); and Thurlow and Mroczek (2011) have attempted to explore this phenomenon of language and identity construction in different worlds such real-life communication and virtual communication. In light of such arguments, I believe that Saudis also use their different language varieties with distinctive features such as unique region-related accent, gender-specific tone, and tribe-specific vocabulary to reveal their multiple belongings which, as Locher et al. (2015) argue, need to be explored in detail to be explained.

Arguing about these functions of language, Gee (2014) elaborated that language is employed by people to conduct different activities and to establish different identities. This is done in face-to-face interactions in real-world situations as well as in online/virtual communication. The advent of the internet has also transformed traditional conditions of the development of identity as the corporeal entity is not present in the social encounters in the online environment. Thus, individuals can interact with one another in a fully detached text mode revealing nothing of their physical characteristics.

In the case of Saudis, they abide by their Islamic identity, and their culture, tribes and regional places (belonging to particular regions in Saudi Arabia). This identity construction is done by using language and various aspects of language such as specific vocabulary, specific accent, tone and pronunciation as well as nonlinguistic aspects like dressing a certain way, and revering or symbolising a specific bird or animal (such as the camel) as the distinctive identity of specific tribe and region (Brosh, 2013). Core to the effort of developing a new national culture, the Al-Saud (the current Royal family/ruling dynasty) have also attempted to develop a Saudi identity that goes beyond regional and tribal identities (Teitelbaum, 2002) and in this case, it has largely succeeded as the new generation possess a conscious collective image of themselves as a nationwide, inter-state Gulf grouping with a distinct identity from the sub-state groupings based on tribes and regions (Yamani, 2000). Similar findings were also reported by Mendoza-Denton (2002), Bucholtz and Hall (2005) and Nureddeen (2008). The idea that identity is developed through language is acknowledged to be in oppositional ways. Any distinct identity development may be done deliberately and intentionally (in parts) with partial consciousness. This may be to some extent as a result of others' perceptions and representations and it may be to some extent affected by general ideological processes and material structures which may be important to interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Following this notion of Bucholtz and Hall (2005), this study also provides a description of the way Saudi youths develop their online identity and the linguistic strategies they use in the online environment.

2. 3 Approaches to Identity

The phenomenon of identity has been examined from different perspectives. Harrison (1998) argues that “an individual can have an identity as a woman, a Briton, a Black, a Muslim” (p. 248). The poststructuralists view identity as “socially constructed, a self-conscious, ongoing

narrative an individual performs, interprets and projects in dress, bodily movements, actions and language” (Block, 2006, p. 39). A similar approach is adopted by Ochs (1993) who views identity as a “social construct that is both inferred and interactionally achieved” (p. 291). Bucholtz and Hall (2004) believe that identity is constructed through the actions of an individual and is “an outcome of language use” (p. 376). In a similar vein, Bucholtz and Hall’s (2005) approach to identity is that the phenomenon of identity is relational and socio-cultural which “emerges and circulates in local discourse contexts of interaction” (p. 586). However, De Fina, Schifffrin, and Bamberg (2006) look at identity as a phenomenon that is “performed”, enacted and embodied through a variety of means such as by using ethnicity and gender-specific words as well as other nonlinguistic markers such as specific dress. Thus, these means are employed to enact and perform a specific identity of an individual. To sum up, an individual uses language to construct his/her sense of self in relation to others. She/he, thus, constructs and negotiates her/his different identities through interaction. These approaches of Block (2006), Ochs (1993), and Bucholtz and Hall (2005) to the phenomena of identity and identity construction are used as a theoretical framework in this research as they match the objectives of the study.

2.4 Identity Types

Identity has been classified into different groups. Block (2006) lists different individual/collective identity types based on social variables such as ethnicity, tribe, gender, race, social class and region/nationality. These types are tabulated below with some modifications by adding tribal identity and regional identity to make the categorisation relevant to the present study.

Table 3: *Individual/Collective Identity Types*

No.	Ascription/Affiliation	Based on
1	Ethnic	A sense of a shared history, descent, belief systems, practices, language and religion, all associated with a cultural group
2	Racial	Biological/genetic make-up, i.e. racial phenotype (NB often conflated with ethnicity)
3	Tribal	A sense of shared history, descent, belief systems, practices and language all associated with a specific tribe
4	National	A sense of a shared history, descent, belief systems, practices, language and religion associated with a nation state
5	Regional	A sense of a shared history, descent, belief systems, practices, language, religion and tribe all associated with a specific geographical region in a nation
6	Gendered	Nature and degree of conformity to socially constructed notions of femininities and masculinities
7	Social Class	Associated with income level, occupation, education and symbolic behaviour
8	Language	The relationship between one's sense of self and different means of communication: language, a dialect or sociolect

Although identities have been categorised in this way in Table 3 above, it should be noted that one identity cannot stand independent of another. To summarise, identities are complex, variable, elastic and subject to manipulation (Maalouf, 2000) and “are anchored in relation to variables like age, gender, social class, occupation, locality, tribe, clan, religion, sect, ethnicity, nationality” (Suleiman, 2003, p. 5). Some of these identity types are briefly described in the following sections.

2.4.1 Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity implies an individual's construction of a "sense of self within her/his social world that pertains to ethnic group membership" (Noels, 2014, p. 89). Individuals are categorised into different ethnic groups such as Arab, Asian, African, Black, Hispanic or American based on their colour, language use and place of origin. Bucholtz (2010) and Bucholtz and Lopez (2011) researched the connection between language and ethnicity. Turner and Brown (1978) have also studied the crucial relationship between language and the social identity of an individual and have reported that people are encouraged to maintain a distinct social identity. In the Saudi Arabian context, one can notice people of different ethnicity working and living in Saudi Arabia and their distinct identity can be noticed through their language use. Listening to people and their tone, accent and vocabulary use, one can identify if that person is from the Indian subcontinent, from Africa, from China or from Western countries as their language use reflects their ethnic backgrounds. Betancourt and López (1993) argue that ethnicity is used in reference to groups that are characterised in terms of a common nationality, culture, or language. El-Hazmi et al. (1995) also believe that there is variability between different tribes, communities, and ethnic groups within the same country and this variability is reflected through their use of different languages, ways of dress and other cultural-custom markers of their identity. This phenomenon of identity construction through language use is the focus of attention and investigation in this study. I intend to show how individuals use language to reveal, construct and express their different identities, including ethnic identity.

To summarise Turner's (1999) assertion, an individual attempts to define himself/herself "in terms of some social group membership with the associated value connotations and

emotional significance” (p. 8) through the use of language which is identical with that social, ethnic group to which she/he belongs.

2.4.2 Regional Identity

The geographical origin of an individual is reflected in the language use of a person and gives him/her his/her regional, national identity. This is often observed through the use of a region-specific accent or dialect by an individual. Burbano-Elizondo (2006) argues that this membership of a specific region of an individual enables them not only in identifying the overt referential meanings coded in those region-specific linguistic utterances but also in identifying other implicit meanings. Therefore, Johnstone (2004) regards regions as meaningful places, which people construct as their reference points. Looking at the Saudis and their language use, it is noticed and reported that people from different regions in Saudi Arabia try to reflect their regionality by using their region-specific dialect of Arabic. For example, expressions such as **دا** (this) and **“دحين”** (now) are markers of the west region whereas **ريال** (man), **“صح”** (really) are markers of the east region in Saudi Arabia. Locher et al.’s (2015) argument that natural language is full of variation and in need of explanation is suitable for this discussion. Different language features such as region-specific accents, tone, rhythm, region or tribe or gender-specific vocabulary and syntax which Locher et al. (2015) discuss are noticeable in the language use of Saudis from different regional backgrounds and this is something which I intend to elaborate on in detail in this study.

The regional variation at the local level has also been investigated by sociolinguists in their analysis of the various given languages spoken in specific towns/cities (Culpeper, Haugh & Kádár, 2017). Sociolinguistic studies have also focused on sub-local variation, exemplified by the classical study of Milroy and Milroy (1978) of Belfast, which showed the contrasting

language varieties in three inner-city working-class regions (Milroy, 1980; 1981). The existence of supranational regions was also suggested, varying in cultural values and pragmatic norms. For instance, in Kasper's (1990) and Galtung's (1981) studies, they contended that culture sharing does not indicate language sharing, and this holds true for the other way around.

In the context of Saudi Arabia, the regionality aspects of Arabic language have been researched by many scholars. Al-Shahrani (1988) studied the dialect of Asir province. Nadwi (1968) studied the dialects of Ghamid and Zahran. Omar (1975) studied the Hijazi: dialects. Cantineau (1937) studied the Shammar dialect. Abboud (1964, 1975, 1978, 1979) studied the Najdi dialect. All of these studies have reported and explained how people from different regions in Saudi Arabia use their regional dialects to construct and demonstrate their regional identity. Omar (1975) reported that people in the Hijaz region speak Hijazi dialect with distinct words that demonstrate their Hijazi identity, with examples including هادا/hada (meaning "this"), كثير/katheer (meaning "more" or "much"), ايوه/ayiwa (meaning "yes" or "that's right") and دحين/daheen (meaning "now"). Albalawi (2015) also summarised the Balawiy tribe specific dialect from the north region. The Balawiy dialect includes words such as "نجيب/njeeb (meaning "bring" or "give me"), and عقبين/akbin (meaning "after"). Al-Azraqi (1998) also found words such as "لبيه/labbe:h (meaning "yes") being used in Asir province as a dialect of the region.

2.4.3 Gender Identity

The phenomenon of gender identity necessarily requires a feminist perspective (Mikkola, 2017). Various feminist researchers such as Frank and Treichler (1989), Lakoff (1975), Miller and Swift (1977) and Pauwels (1998) have argued that there exists a language of women which is different from that of men. Lakoff (1975) and Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) assign features such as shyness, lower self-confidence, diffidence, and lack of strong opinion to the

language of females. Deborah Tannen (1995a) also elaborates on distinct communication patterns used by men and women where people of male gender tend to use a direct and forceful style whereas people of female gender prefer an indirect and friendly style. Scholars such as Savicki (1996) have also reported such gender differences in an online context. According to Savicki (1996), it was noticed that females attempted to avoid or reduce tension in their online communication whenever any arguing situation evolved. Herring (2000) also concluded that females thanked, appreciated and apologised more than males. This distinct use of language by females to construct their gender identity is noticed in most of the languages with features such as tone, distinct vocabulary reserved only for female use, and topics of their discussion. In this respect, Baxter (2010) reported that women were seen monitoring their language during interactions. In the case of Saudis, one can easily identify the gender difference in the use of expressions such as **اسفه** (meaning “sorry”, used by females) and **اسف** (meaning “sorry”, used by males).

2.4.4 Social Class Identity

Categorisation of people based on features such as income, education, material possessions, neighbourhood, and profession in a social hierarchy constitute the social class of an individual and the members belonging to each social group try to identify themselves with that group by using the distinctive language which is a marker of that social class group. In this respect, a study was conducted in the United States by Gee, Allen and Clinton (2001) to investigate how teenagers from two different social classes used language to fashion themselves as members of two different social classes. They reported that teenagers belonging to the working class used different language. Their language was similar to other teens from working-class families and it was different from the language used by other teens from upper-middle

class. Class identity is not overtly noticeable in Saudi Arabian society as people believe and practice Islam which teaches equality. However, as the education and riches flow in different directions, today one can notice some social classes based on wealth and education in the Saudi Arabian society. Cordesman and Burke (2002) have noted that the rich Saudis seem to be getting richer while the middle class seems to be declining in per capita income and poorer Saudis seem to be getting poorer in relative terms. Hamdan (2005) has also shown that, like any other women, women from rich Saudi families attempt to maintain their class through the use of a very carefully chosen and polished Arabic. Such use of language by the members of such social class groups to identify with one particular group and to differentiate from another is also an example of how language is used to maintain social class identity.

2.4.5 Religious Identity

An individual often reveals his/her religious identity through the use of language. Thus, an Arabic-speaking person is often identified as a Muslim whereas a Hebrew-speaking is often identified as a Jew (Jaspal & Coyle, 2010). Routine greetings such as “Assalamualeikum” (meaning “peace be with you”), “God bless”, and “Shalom” (meaning “peace”) are used consciously or unconsciously by an individual to construct his/her religious identity, in this case, Muslim, Christian and Jewish identity respectively. Not only language but other symbols and artefacts such as skull cap, full veil, holy cross or church, synagogue, mosque, and temple are also used to construct religious identities. The use of religious expressions in the interaction of Saudis is a noticeable phenomenon. Alenezi, Kebble, Fluck, Yang, and Bown (2018) assert that people in Saudi Arabia use religious expressions to affirm their religious identity as Saudi Arabia is a deeply religious society. One can hear expressions such as “God willing”, “God bless you”, “Peace be with you” so often in the conversations of Saudi Arabian people. Bajri’s (2005) study

also found that Saudi speakers employ blessing expressions such as “Allah yirḡaḡalēki **الله يرضى عليك** (May God be pleased with you), “Allah yijzakxēr **الله يجزاك خير** (May Allah reward you with His blessings)” often in their polite requests. Following these studies, in this research I attempt to elaborate on how such religious expressions are used by Saudis as markers to enact religious identity.

2.4.6 Tribal Identity

Tribes often take pride in maintaining their distinct tribal identity. Members of different tribes communicate in the language which is shared by them and celebrate different rituals which differentiate them from others. They also have their own distinct attire and dances as markers of their tribal identity. Tribesmen often preserve these elements of their tribal identity. The opposition of native Indian tribes in America and Canada to the imposition of the English language and these people’s organised and conscious efforts to preserve and teach their languages to their next generations as a sign of their distinct identity are current examples of this (Brady, 1995; Vaughan, 2010). Research studies by scholars such as Horse (2001, 2012), Lomawaima and McCarty (2006), Byrd (2011), Jacobs and Merolla (2017), and Smith (2017) provide detail on such education policies of American Indian tribes in recent decades.

Tribes in Arab countries also speak and maintain their distinct language varieties and customs to show their unique tribal identity. Al-Rasheed’s (2008) study elaborates on tribal affiliations of Saudis through different means such as tribe-specific language and attire. Studies by Almakrami (2015) and Maisel (2013) also expand on the rank of different tribes such as Anazah, Shammar, and Mutayr in social hierarchy in Saudi Arabia. Thus, in the Saudi Arabian context, it is noticed that different tribes do maintain distinct language in order to identify themselves as a specific group. Their distinctive tribe-specific dances and distinct tribe-specific

attire at different social functions and events are linguistic and nonlinguistic markers which they use deliberately and sometimes unconsciously to construct their tribal identity and to show to which tribe they belong. This use of linguistic and nonlinguistic markers to identify oneself with a specific group of people is also the focus of investigation in this study. Linguistic markers include using tribe, region, gender-specific words, and phrases whereas nonlinguistic markers implies the use of various pictures, images, and symbols related to their tribe, gender, and region. I will provide further details with regard to these markers in later chapters.

2.4.7 National Identity

Each nation is different and each has different elements that comprise its national identity. These elements include the national flag, national bird, national animal, national flower, and national language (Gellner, 1983; Katartzi, 2018; Skey, 2011). Citizens often take pride in these elements of their national identity and use them to show their national identity both consciously and unconsciously (Kolstø & Blakkisrud, 2017; Paxman, 1999; Şenışık, 2018; Smith, 1993). Suleiman (2003), in his study, elaborates on the role of national language in unifying people across states and in nation building. He asserts that there exist some type of intimate connection between the language spoken and the identity of a person as belonging to a nation. In the context of Saudi Arabia, as Aldraheim et al. (2012), Al-Saggaf (2012), and Bittles (2008) report, a systematic attempt has been made to construct Saudi national identity among the Saudis. The way Saudis dress, the version of Arabic spoken by Saudis and the construction of different monuments in the country are attempts to construct, develop and project a distinct Saudi national identity different from other neighbouring Gulf countries and their citizens such as Emiratis and Qataris as they too take pride in reflecting their national identity through different linguistic and nonlinguistic means. Details regarding these linguistic and nonlinguistic means used to construct

the Saudi national identity by the Saudi youths on social media will be elaborated on in the data analysis chapters.

2.5 Strategies of Identity Construction: Linguistic and Nonlinguistic

Individuals construct their various identities consciously or unconsciously using different linguistics and nonlinguistic strategies. The linguistic strategies include use of gender, tribe, region, religion, nation-specific word or phrase or dialect or accent. The following diagram (Figure 2) shows which different identities were constructed in this study using different linguistic strategies.

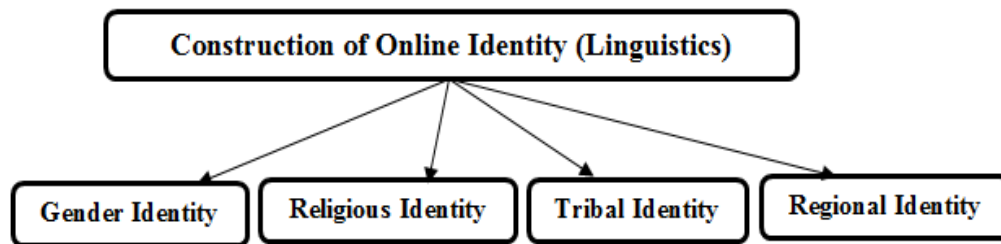


Figure 2. Identities constructed through linguistic means

To illustrate this, the difference in pronunciation of certain words such as *dance*, /dɑ:ns/ vs /dæns/ mark speakers either as British or American. Within Britain, the Scottish and Welsh dialects are markers of regionality (Stuart-Smith & Haddican, 2009). A similar scenario occurs in Saudi Arabia with speakers from Hejaz and Najd regions speaking different dialects of Arabic language to represent their regional identity. The word **هـ** (meaning “this”) is pronounced as /da:/ by west region tribes whereas it is pronounced as **هـ**/thea/ by centre-region tribes (Abboud, 1979; Omar, 1975).

The nonlinguistic strategies used by Saudi Arabian online users in this study to construct different identities included using pictures related to gender, tribe, and region. They also included pictures of flowers, cars, animals, historical monuments or architecture. The following diagram illustrates this use of different nonlinguistic strategies to construct identities.

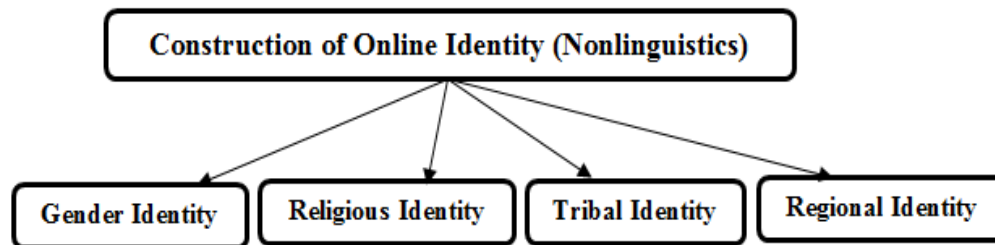


Figure 3. Identities constructed through nonlinguistic means

Elaborating on the metaphorical use of animals, Alharthi (2015) of Oman observes that the gazelle is metaphorically used in classical Arabic poetry to connote the desirable beloved female. Brosh (2013) also states that Arabs have “revered gazelles for years as creatures of striking beauty and astounding speed” (p. 22). Certain birds and animals are also used to construct national identity. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the falcon and camel serve as symbols of national identity. Saudis perceive falcons as symbols of force and courage. Brosh (2013) also states that the camel has been essential in Arabian culture for thousands of years. Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015) describe camels as symbols of “humility, willingness to serve and obstinacy” (p. 67), the horse as a “symbol of power” (p. 69) and the snake as a symbol of “danger, charm and sexual energy (especially male)” (p. 73).

Historical monuments such as forts, castles, heritage sites, rivers and mountains also play an important role in forming and constructing national identity. Dianina (2010) argues that these historical elements of national identity are perceived as a matter of pride by the citizens. Fromm

(2016) believes that such historical monuments play a vital role in preserving past culture and that they matter in order for individuals to retain their identity. For this reason, individuals respect and celebrate their cultural and historical heritage, customs and traditions as they are reflections of people's roots, pride and past glory. Pocius (2004) elaborates on how historical sites and artefacts in a particular region or nation become central to that region's identity as well as national identity. According to Khan (2013), there are approximately 4000 archaeological and 1500 rock art sites located in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which form different regional identities. He also describes the use of certain geometric shapes such as those representing Bedouin folk dances, branded camel figures, and the names of tribes and persons engraved as tribal symbols by different Bedouins in the Kingdom.

Food is also one of the shared items connected with ethnic identity. Teughels and Scholliers (2016) argue that food, like language, also serves as a means of cultural expression and plays a very important role in the construction of national, ethnic and regional identities. In the Saudi Arabian context, coffee is an inseparable part of Saudi culture. It is a symbol of generosity and hospitality. Clothing is also a means of cultural communication. Clothing facilitates social rituals and ceremonies expressing social, tribal, regional, national, cultural and religious sentiments. Martinez (2017) has extensively researched and elaborated on how clothing has been used for centuries to construct different tribal identities in the Saudi Arabian context.

Flowers are often associated with new life and growth and they have a different significance in each country and culture. Saudi females often prefer red roses and often use them to construct their gender identity by using pictures of different flowers as their profile pictures on different social media sites. Stanger, Alnaghaimshi and Pearson's (2017) study concluded similar

finding in respect to Saudi Arabian female Facebook users. Helal (2017), an Arab American contributing writer, also elaborates on how images of eyes are used as profile pictures by Arab females to construct their gender identity on different social networking sites.

2.6 Online Identity Construction on Social Media: Some Studies

Online community life has become an important aspect of our social life, with identity being a core part of this. In this respect, Segalin et al. (2017) analysed the profile pictures of Facebook users and concluded that “extroverts and agreeable individuals used warm coloured pictures and to exhibit many faces in their portraits, showing their inclination to socialize” (p. 23). However, individuals who were concerned about online identity theft and crime used pictures of indoor places. Shafie, Nayan and Osman (2012) examined Malaysian students’ online identity and visual impression management, focusing on their choice of Facebook usernames, language and profile pictures. The results revealed that the students used pictures and information which showed their real identities and ideal-self online. It was also found that the males were more comfortable than females in using their real names and their own pictures as their profile names and pictures. In a similar study, Jusoh and Al Fawareh (2017) also found that Jordanian Arab male Facebook users were more daring than the females in sharing personal information online such as using real names and photos. They also noted that Jordanian Arab female Facebook users were more conservative than the males when they appeared online.

Wang, Moon, Kwon, Evans and Stefanone (2010) reported that physical attractiveness was very important in online communication and found in their study that it was especially males who preferred attractive images online. Chen and Gonglue’s (2011) study also revealed that Chinese social media users revealed less personal information online by employing external entities such as cars and mobiles as their profile pictures. A study by Al-Saggaf (2011) also

reported that Saudi Arabian females were cognisant about their privacy in online communication. A study by Aljasir et al. (2013) found that Saudi female Facebook users tried to hide their profile for different reasons such as hiding from their nuclear family and their employers. In the studies by Al-Saggaf (2016) and Stanger et al. (2017) about Saudi Arabian youths' online participation, it was concluded that most participants were uncomfortable with disclosing their personal information in public. Stanger et al. (2017) also reported that Saudi Arabian youths, particularly females, preferred to use a fake identity and pseudonym online in order to protect their privacy. The females often used only their first names for their profiles and used pictures of babies, landscapes, and flowers rather than uploading their own, real pictures. The Saudi youths also preferred using a pseudonym for their online profiles in order to express their views more freely. A study by Abokhodair, Abbar, Vieweg and Mejova (2017) also concluded that privacy was highly gendered among in Qatari and Saudi Arabian females using social media due to their socially constructed role within the society. Similar findings were reported by Strong and Hareb (2012) about the female Emiratis' privacy issues on Twitter. To sum up, online privacy issue governs the nature and use of social media among the Saudi Arabian youths, especially females.

It is to be noted here that the research so far on the phenomenon of identity has been largely focused on the fields of sociology, psychology, anthropology, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, cultural and communication studies. However, as social media platforms dominate the ways of interactions among the youngsters (Almakrami, 2015), this phenomenon of online identity construction requires distinct examination through new perspectives and through new lenses of sociology, psychology, discourse analysis, and cultural studies fitted for this digital era,

focusing on the strategies used for constructing different identities such as regional, gender, tribal, and religious.

Online communication on a social website is mediated by technology and this may provide a sense of freedom, as reported above, which motivates the limited expression of some individuals who have something to hide about themselves (Suler, 2002). Moreover, the anonymity in such an environment enables individuals to hide a part of themselves (Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006) while presenting and interacting with others, and thus, allow them to stretch the truth to a certain extent (Yurchisin, Watchravesringkan, & McCabe, 2005) to make themselves more socially desirable.

2.7 Identity Construction Strategies and First Research Question of this Study

After offering a background to the notion of identity and strategies used by people to construct their multiple identities, I will attempt to elaborate on my first research question in the study: What strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their different socio-cultural identities in online communication on a social website? My first research question is an attempt to expand on Locher et al.'s (2015) argument that variations in language use are employed to index different social and regional belonging or identities of an individual. I attempt to answer what linguistic strategies Saudi Arabian youths use to show their regional, religious, gender and tribal affiliation. That is, which distinctive accents, vocabulary and tribe-, region-, and gender-specific phrases and tones are used by these youths to construct their tribal, gender, religious and regional identities? Not only the linguistic means but nonlinguistic markers such as a region-specific animal, historical monument, tribe or region-specific attire, dances and cuisine are also used as markers to identify oneself with a specific group of people and thereby construct that group identity. This identity construction is not limited to face-to-face communication but

also takes place in virtual world which scholars like Bucholtz and Hall (2005), Locher (2008), De Fina (2010), and Thurlow and Mroczek (2011) have attempted to explore. With their work in the background, I also attempt to answer how this identity construction takes place among the Saudi Arabian youths in their social media communication through different linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies and markers. The next section continues with the present line of discussion by providing an overview of the (im)politeness theories.

2.8 Notions of Politeness and Impoliteness

The terms politeness and impoliteness are two sides of a coin (Eelen, 2001). In other words, there are two sides of language use. One is positive which implies politeness; whereas the other is negative which implies impoliteness. Brown (1980) defined politeness as “a special way of treating people, saying and doing things in such a way as to take into account the other person's feelings” (p. 114). According to Blum-Kulka (1982), politeness generally implies caring and compassionate forms of behaviour. Lakoff (1989) terms it as “a means of minimising confrontation in discourse” and impoliteness as “strategies oriented towards antagonising face” (p. 102). For Culpeper (1996), impoliteness refers to a collection of strategies “to have opposite effect to politeness which is social disruption” (p. 350). Locher and Bousfield (2008) believe that impoliteness is behaviour that is face-aggravating in a particular context. In other words, politeness deals with face-saving acts, caring for the other's face whereas impoliteness deals with face-threatening acts or attacking/threatening the other's face. The following sections elaborate on these theories and notions of politeness and impoliteness.

2.8.1 Politeness Theories

In pragmatics, politeness is among the many aspects whose use in a specific language is identified by a peripheral environment. Such a peripheral environment is the environment in

which the communication occurs, which is formed by the participants' social status. In this regard, Grundy (1995) stated that factors or determinants of the requirement to use politeness strategies in a specific interaction include distance, power and imposition. Imposition is described as the action that goes against the autonomy and freedom of the addressee and is often relayed in the form of an order, while power is described as comprising participants' societal position, and age, and distance is described as the evaluation of the other's place in the world, familiarity level, and/or solidarity towards the addressee. Moreover, a politeness systems theory was also presented and discussed by Scollon and Scollon (1995), where they noted three politeness systems, namely the deference politeness system, the solidarity politeness system and the hierarchical politeness system. The theory followed the basic notion of caring for the face of others as in the previous theories. Along a similar line of study, Grainger (2011) also put forward a politeness theory. In the first phase of this theory, the classic view of politeness or the Gricean approach takes place. In this phase, Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory and Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle are pioneering milestones of development. Such principles are based on Goffman's (1983) premise that argues the notion of face and which conceptualises politeness as a rational agent action characterised by positive and negative face wants (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

In relation to the above, Brown and Levinson (1987) described face-saving or mitigating the impact of actions that threaten the face of the addressee to mitigate conflicts is the model's core focus. They proposed various redressive strategies such as minimising the threat to the hearer's positive face, entailing utterances which express interest for the hearer's needs and wants, contain in-group identity markers, optimism, humour and avoidance of disagreement.

They also proposed different approaches to gauge the potential weight of the face-threatening act (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Moreover, the Principle of Politeness (PP) was developed by Leech based on Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle (CP) and establishes a post-factor description of language behaviour. In this area of study, there are a few theoretical works that have had a permeating influence in the determination or the categorisation of politeness. Despite the fact that Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model and Leech's (1983) politeness principle have been based on the study of politeness, critics have pointed out certain drawbacks.

First, the politeness models propose that the term politeness exists in all human societies but the predicted polite behaviour has not been categorised by lay members of the speech circles (Watts, 2003). The second drawback comes from Locher and Watts (2005) who described Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model as a theory of facework that mitigates face-threatening actions, and the third criticism lies in equating indirectness to politeness that appears to be an over-generalised and simplified notion, specifically when explaining overly polite or impolite behaviour/interaction that is distinct from what society expects (Watts, 2003).

Progressing to the second phase of the politeness theory—this is also referred to as the discursive approach to the concept, and a postmodern view of politeness. This initiated with the study of Watts (1992), and the developments in the past ten years by other studies (e.g., Locher, 2004& Locher & Watts, 2005 as cited in Locher, 2008; Watts, 2003).

The third wave is referred to as the interactional approach (Arundale, 1999, 2006) that has its basis on the co-constituting communication model. It contends that (im)politeness is an interactionally achieved behaviour that occurs in a collaborative, non-summative way via the participants' interaction (Haugh, 2007). This phase focuses more on the sociological aspect of

politeness. According to Grainger (2011), the interactional approach is compatible with both the postmodern method and the Gricean method as it is the combination of both. Stated clearly, the interactional approach acknowledges the classical as well as the postmodern views in their interpretation of (im)politeness. This line of reasoning relates significantly to the studies conducted by Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975), Brown and Levinson's notion of face (1978), and Leech's Politeness Principle (1983). The scholars' theories are summarised in the following figure (Figure 4).

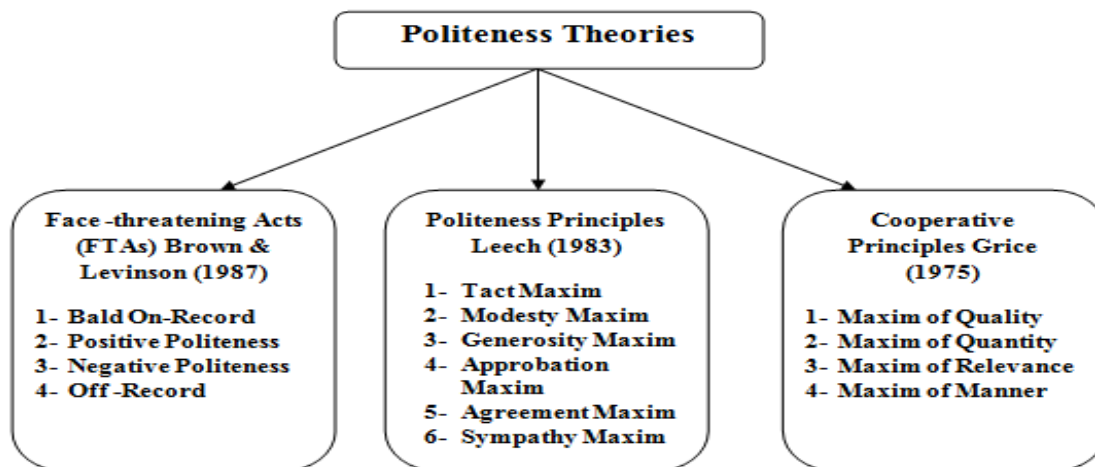


Figure 4. Politeness theories

In this study, the theoretical framework has its basis on Brown and Levinson's (1987) four strategies: bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off-record. Added to the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson, the study also considers factors contributing to the politeness perception on the basis of prior literature. The theory of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) is considered to be the most influential politeness framework to date (Abdul Halim, 2015). Studies in the literature concerning the analysis of politeness, in the context of CMC, are still few and far between as the majority of studies

addressed face-to-face interactions. More current studies discussed (im)politeness theories in the CMC context (e.g., Graham, 2007, 2008; Neurater-Kessels, 2011; Abdul Halim, 2015; Chejnova, 2014; Sifianou, 2015; Adel et al., 2016). Graham (2007) elaborated on how expectations of (im)politeness were negotiated in the CMC context. Neurater-Kessels (2011) concluded that impolite moves frequently involve face-threats. It also summarised how the communicative setting and medium influence the realisation and interpretation of impolite behaviour. A study by Chejnova (2014) concluded that students employed a wide variety of both negative and positive politeness strategies to mitigate their requests. Sifianou (2015) viewed impoliteness as being different in nature from politeness. Impoliteness was expressed verbally contrary to politeness which was mainly seen in terms of non-verbal action. The findings of these studies contributed to interpreting politeness in such CMC contexts.

2.8.2 Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies

Brown and Levinson's theory (1987) illustrates the face-saving view based on Goffman's (1955) face premise that concludes with being embarrassed/humiliated or, in other words, losing face. Brown and Levinson (1978) explain face as "the public self-image that every member wants for himself" (p. 66). In this regard, Abdul Halim (2015) indicated that face refers to something in which one is emotionally invested, and it can be sustained, improved or lost. On the basis of Brown and Levinson's (1987) study, an individual has two types of face-a positive and a negative face. The former refers to the individual's desire to be appreciated in social interactions, while the latter refers to the desire to be free from imposition and action. It develops the "face theory" by proposing that any speech contrary to the politeness rules in society may be deemed as a threat to the face. In this context, impoliteness is a face-threatening behaviour as it goes against the established rules in society (Duthler, 2006). The theory also posits that the

majority of speech acts such as requests, offers and compliments are threats to the hearer's face or the speaker's face, in an inherent fashion, and politeness rectifies such face-threatening acts (FTA). Moreover, the politeness strategies are created to save the hearer's face, where "face" is the speaker's sense of linguistic and social identity or the public self-image that every societal member wants to claim (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Furthermore, a person's "face" was similarly described by Goffman (1967) as the most personal possession of the person and it forms the core of her/his security and pleasure. Brown and Levinson (1987) described face as an individual's emotional investment that can be lost, maintained or enhanced and thus, it must be constantly maintained when interacting with others. They explained that every culture has varying degrees of politeness and ways in which one has to be polite to others. But every individual desires to be appreciated and protected (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008) which is expecting respect to one's face.

In summary, face is categorised into positive face and negative face (Wilson, Kim & Meischke, 1991). The individual's positive face requires appreciation and approval, to be liked and honoured, and is a multi-dimensional concept that relates to various characteristics, actions and possessions that an individual wants others to appreciate (Wilson, Kim & Meischke, 1991). On the other hand, an individual's negative face requires freedom from intrusion/imposition (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008). It is a one-dimensional concept that pertains to a very limited aspect of a hearer's self-image, focusing on the unimpeded desires (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Every utterance is deemed to be a threat to the face (a face-threatening act) to the negative face or the positive one. More frequently, the breach of one's positive or negative face is unavoidable. Thus, it is important for people to employ politeness strategies to mitigate FTAs. FTAs are described by Brown and Levinson (1987) as acts that go against the hearer's desire to maintain his/her self-

esteem. Their model has been applied by a few studies on small datasets from distinct domains (Burke & Kraut, 2008), and despite the criticisms to it, it has been supported by other studies by using it as a framework to analyse politeness strategies employed by email writers of Arab descent (e.g., Najeeb, Maros & Nor, 2012). A similar strategy is undertaken in this research in that it uses the model of Brown and Levinson (1978) but with different data sourced from the online communication of Saudi Arabian young adults on a social website.

There are four primary categories of FTAs in politeness strategies established by Brown and Levinson (1987): bald on-record, negative politeness, positive politeness, and off-record or indirect strategy. A brief explanation of each is presented in the following sections.

2.8.2.1 Bald On-Record Strategy

In this strategy, the (S) speaker makes no effort to mitigate threats to the (H) hearer's face, the major reason for this being when the speaker desires to efficiently conduct an FTA more than to satisfy the hearer's face, to a level where she/he uses the bald on-record strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Bald on-record sub-strategies are:

- A) Non-minimising of FTA
 1. In cases of great urgency or desperation
 2. In the case of channel noise, or where communication difficulties put pressure on S to speak with maximum efficiency such as in calling across a distance
 3. Task oriented, in this kind of interaction face redress will be irrelevant
 4. S perceives H face as small, either because S is powerful and does not fear retribution or there is non-cooperation from H
 5. S wants to be rude without risk of offending, so S does not care about maintaining face
 6. Sympathetic advice or warnings
 7. Granting permission for something that H has requested
- B) FTA-oriented
 1. Welcome
 2. Farewell
 3. Offers

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 94–101)

2.8.2.2 Positive Politeness

This strategy of positive politeness is often observed in groups of friends or in groups where members know one another. The strategy is used to mitigate the distance between members by expressing friendliness and at the same time, real interest in the hearer's need is respected.

Positive politeness sub-strategies are:

1. Notice, attend to H (her/his interests, wants, needs, goods)
2. Exaggerate (interest approval, sympathy with H)
3. Intensify interest to H
4. Use in-group identity markers
5. Seek agreement
6. Avoid disagreement
7. Jokes
8. Assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern for H's wants
9. Offer, promise
10. Be optimistic
11. Include both S and H in the activity
12. Give (or ask for) reasons
13. Assume or assert reciprocity
14. Presuppose/raise/assert common ground

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 101–129)

2.8.2.3 Negative Politeness

This strategy is described as a redressive action that is meant to be addressed to the addressee's negative face—her/his desire to be free of action, unobstructed and her/his attention unrestricted (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This strategy acknowledges the face of the hearer and the speaker by focusing on both. Negative politeness sub-strategies are:

1. Be conventionally indirect
2. Be pessimistic
3. Minimise imposition
4. Give difference
5. Go on record as incurring debt, or as not indebting H
6. Apologise
7. Impersonalise S and H

8. State the FTA as general rule
9. Nominalise

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 129–210)

2.8.2.4 Off-Record Strategy

Under this strategy, a communicative act is conducted off-record if it is made in a way that it is impossible to relay a single communicative intention to the act (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and hence, if a speaker is inclined to conduct an FTA, but at the same time steer clear of the responsibility of doing so, she/he can do it off-record or leave the addressee to decide on the way to interpret it. Off-record strategy sub-strategies are:

- 1- Invite conversational implicatures.
 - a. Give hints
 - b. Give association clues
 - c. Presuppose
 - d. Understate
 - e. Overstate
 - f. Tautologies
 - g. Contradictions
 - h. Be ironic
 - i. Use metaphors
 - j. Use rhetorical questions
- 2- Be vague or ambiguous (violate manner maxim).
 - a. Be ambiguous
 - b. Be vague
 - c. Over-generalise
 - d. Displace H
 - e. Be incomplete, use ellipsis

(Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987, pp. 211–227)

2.8.3 Leech's Theory (1983)

According to Leech (1983), there are several scales entailed when identifying the type and degree of politeness and they include cost-benefit, optionality, indirectness, authority, and social distance. The complex nature of the relationships between maxims and scales forms the politeness style and the level in terms of nuances. In other words, a speaker needs to follow complex maxims and scales of politeness in order to produce an utterance which would be pragmatically acceptable as well as polite at the same time which is not that easy a task. Another structural feature that stands out in Leech's (1983) study is his differentiation between relative and absolute politeness, where he described the former as occurring in a specific setting/culture, and the latter is interlinked to a particular action of the speaker. The notion of absolute politeness indicates that speech acts are intrinsically polite or impolite according to their illocutionary force. Leech (1983) further explained the significant of absolute politeness when he stated that general pragmatics may reasonably limit attention to the absolute sense of politeness. He brought out four major illocutionary functions, namely competitive, convivial, collaborative and conflictive, and relates them to politeness types (Leech, 1983). For instance, competitive illocution, in the form of ordering, is inherently impolite and it needs mitigation, convivial illocution in the form of thanking is inherently polite and it needs to be improved for positive effect. Also, the conversational-maxim view of politeness provides a parsimonious (in Lakoff's (1975) view), and a comprehensive (in Leech's (1983) view) model of politeness, and it establishes rules, strategies, maxims and scales as the primary basis of politeness. These elements are deemed to constitute a significant set of considerations for pinpointing politeness occurrence. Leech (1983) places politeness in the more general interpersonal rhetoric framework, which is linked with social goals as opposed to illocutionary ones (the former being what position the speaker

undertakes, while the latter is what a speaker attempts to convey via a speech act). In the interpersonal rhetoric domain, Leech (1983) laid down three maxim sets that are linked to the following three principles: the cooperative principle, the politeness principle, and the irony principle. In this, his cooperative principle matches Grice's (1975) principle, where generally the politeness principle aims to minimise the expression of impolite belief (Leech, 1983). Leech (1983) further provided six maxims and their relationships with the politeness principle:

1. The tact maxim that minimises the cost and maximises the benefit to the hearer
2. The generosity maxim that minimises the benefit and maximises cost to the speaker
3. The approbation maxim that minimises dispraise of and maximises praise to the hearer
4. The modesty maxim that minimises praise to and maximises dispraise of the speaker
5. The agreement maxim that minimises the disagreement between speaker and hearer, and maximises agreement between self and other
6. The sympathy maxim that minimises the antipathy and maximises sympathy between speaker and hearer

2.8.4 Grice's Theory (1975)

The cooperative principle for Grice (1975) posits that the participants to the conversation try to work together to make sure of efficient relaying of information. In this context, four fundamental conversational maxims were proposed to constitute cooperative principles, these being: maxim of quantity (the informative contribution of the individual), maxim of quality (the truthful contribution of the individual), maxim of relevance (the relevant contribution of the individual), and maxim of manner (the clear contribution of the individual). Any notable acknowledged deviation from the cooperative principles and its maxims leads to conversational implicature. Cooperative principles and the maxims present what is inferred in conversation and thus, they are invaluable in the pragmatic analysis of verbal interactions. In this background, politeness, being a conversational maxim, can be considered to be an extension of

the cooperative principles, wherein Grice's (1975) maxims are supported by other pragmatic principles. Stated differently, the conversational maxim view of politeness develops principles that concern the interpersonal aspects of talk to support the cooperative principle. The Gricean maxims are:

1. Maxims of Quality: "Don't say what you believe is false. Don't say something you lack adequate evidence for".
2. Maxims of Quantity: "Make your contribution as informative as is required. Don't make your contribution more informative than is required".
3. Maxims of Relevance: "Be relevant".
4. Maxims of Manner: "Be brief. Be orderly. Avoid obscurity of expression. Avoid ambiguity".

Grice (1975)

The theories of politeness proposed by Grice (1975), about the cooperative principle, and by Leech (1983) about the politeness principle, have been important. Along with Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) politeness theory, these theories are summarised and the differences between them are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: *Politeness Theories*

Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) Politeness Theory	Leech's (1983) Politeness Theory	Grice's (1975) Politeness Theory
<p>Four strategies: bald on-record, positive politeness , negative politeness and off-record .</p>	<p>Six maxims: tact maxim, modesty maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, agreement maxim and sympathy maxim.</p>	<p>Four maxims: maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relevance and maxim of manner.</p>
<p>Work consists of two parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fundamental theory relating to the nature of “politeness” and how it functions in interaction. 2. A list of “politeness” strategies with examples from three languages: English, Tzeltal, and Tamil” (Kitamura, 2000). <p>Has been used in three cultures: Western culture, Mexican culture, Asian culture.</p> <p>“Can be a powerful tool to analyse ‘politeness’ phenomena, not only in goal-oriented interaction, but also in non-goal oriented interaction of this nature” (Kitamura, 2000 ,p. 7).</p> <p>“Introduced ‘universal’ principles such as ‘face’, and although they have been criticized for being too concerned with proving the universal validity of some aspects of politeness” (Barešová, 2008,p.27).</p> <p>Face saving most objections concern the notion of face, particularly the individualistic aspect of this concept (Kasper 2004 , p. 379).</p>	<p>Politeness principle “maintains social balance and friendly relations, which contributes to enhancing cooperativeness and thus provides a stable and suitable environment for effective discourse” (Barešová, 2008, p. 20).</p> <p>Leech realises that his PP maxims do not apply to all cultures in equal measure, and states that one of the main purposes of socio-pragmatics is to analyse in different societies the interplay between the various CP and PP maxims (1983, p. 80).</p> <p>The politeness principle has been criticised for lacking an explicit definition of politeness (Watts, 1992, p. 6).</p> <p>“Leech claims that the PP is a regulative principle and explicitly denies any moral or ethical nature for it” (Eelen, 2001, p. 1).</p>	<p>“Perceives that the need to make each other understood forces the communicators to cooperate” (Barešová, 2008, p.17)</p> <p>“Real language use does not always strictly comply with Grice’s Cooperative Principle”(Barešová, 2008, p. 17).</p> <p>“Grice’s own definition of the cooperative principle is ambiguous and inconsistent” (Thomas & Fraser,1994, p. 760).</p> <p>“Grice never intended his use of the word ‘cooperation’ to indicate an ideal view of communication” (Lindblom, 2006, p.176).</p> <p>Direct and indirect interpretations (Eelen, 2001).</p> <p>Conversational maxim, Interpersonal rhetoric, English language.</p>

The above has provided a brief critical introduction to different theories of politeness. Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness has been selected for this study as it is the one that has been used the most by different researchers (e.g., Ferguson (1967, 1976, 1983) focused on Syrian Arabic; Davies (1987) focused on Moroccan Arabic; Farghal & Borini (1996) focused on Egyptian Arabic; Al-Nasser (1993) focused on Iraqi Arabic; Al-Ammar (2000) focused on Saudi Arabic; Emery (2000) focused on Omani Arabic; Bataineh and Bataineh (2005, 2006, 2008) and Jarbou (2002) focused on Jordanian Arabic) to test the politeness phenomenon with different data including Arabic data from different Middle Eastern countries. Brown and Levinson's (1978) theory of politeness is one of the only theories which attempts to elucidate how people produce politeness. The model is regarded as comprehensive, and has its roots in established and respected research. The very fact that from its original formulation in 1987, Brown and Levinson's model continues to influence new research justifies its use for any study on politeness. It has also been very influential as a framework for the empirical inquiry of different speech acts which this study intended to explore in the online discourse of Saudi Arabian youths. The model is also regarded as a very useful analytical framework for understanding politeness phenomena, and as this study wanted to analyse Saudi Arabian youths' comments on a social media networking site, its choice is justified.

The choice of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model was also justified because it is widely and successfully used for the study of politeness over different languages and cultures. However, as mentioned in section 1.3, this model has not yet been tested with online data particularly from the Saudi Arabian cultural context. This necessitates the need to study the online data from Arab learners to see the applicability of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model to investigate if it was adequate to address various tribal and cultural aspects from the Saudi Arabian context. Therefore

this study has chosen to test the said model using online data from the Saudi Arabian cultural context as a first attempt in this domain.

2.8.5 Notion of Impoliteness and Culpeper's (1996) Framework

There has been scarcity of research on the phenomenon of impoliteness as most of the studies in the past few decades have focused on politeness, particularly on Brown and Levinson's (1978) theory of politeness. According to Eelen (2001, p. 90), Brown and Levinson's (1978) strategies of positive and negative politeness “stipulate how to be polite rather than impolite”. Most of the researchers have also simply adopted the Brown and Levinson's model for analysis, and thereby restricted their research focus to strategies of politeness. This lack of research on impoliteness led to the shifting of focus to impoliteness in order to understand what constitutes impoliteness and impoliteness phenomena in discourse.

In the field of linguistics, the first introduction of impoliteness developed in a fitful manner, after which it gained ground in the mid-1990s. The first research to focus comprehensively on the phenomenon of impoliteness, investigating how it operates in practice and offering a theoretical basis was that of Culpeper (1996) entitled “Towards an anatomy of impoliteness”. He begins the article by describing impoliteness as the use of strategies which are designed to have the “opposite effect—that of social disruption—these strategies are oriented towards attacking face, an emotionally sensitive concept of self” (1996, p. 350).

In recent times, the generation of several review articles on the topic (e.g., Blitvich, 2010; Culpeper, 2013; Dynel, 2015) indicates its coming of age. In this regard, impoliteness has become one of the top researched topics in 21st century pragmatics (Sinkeviciute, 2015). More specifically, an utterance is deemed to be impolite if it clashes with the expectations of individuals as to how it should be and how one thinks it should be (Culpeper 2011). Culpeper et

al. (2017) further argued that if impoliteness is generally considered (without modifier linguistics), then it has been investigated from an extensive range of disciplines, with each approaching different labels based on how they deal with language. For instance, different studies found hostile interpersonal communication and these include: hostile interpersonal communication in communication; verbal aggression in social psychology; verbal abuse in sociology; verbal conflict in conflict studies; and rudeness in history (Culpeper et al., 2017). To sum up, linguistic impoliteness covers an extensive range of social relationships and situations, with the inclusion of the means of achieving impoliteness in its entirety, or in predominant linguistics as with the digital media of text messaging in the form of Twitter, blogs, emails and the like (Culpeper et al., 2017). Studies of this calibre have also focused, despite of the lack of exclusivity, on communicative behaviours that are aligned with its background in pragmatics (Culpeper et al., 2017).

2.8.6 Nature of Culpeper's (1996) Framework for Impoliteness and Justification for its Use in this Study

Culpeper (1996) was the first scholar to elaborate comprehensively on impoliteness in his path-breaking paper "Towards an anatomy of impoliteness" focusing on how it operated. He argued that a satisfactory explanation of the dynamics of interpersonal communication necessitates deliberation of intimidating as well as co-operative communication. Therefore, impoliteness as the reverse of politeness theory was proposed. Culpeper believed that Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness was capable of intensifying and accounting for impoliteness by theorising face redress and FTAs. However, such expansion, according to Culpeper (1996), included structuring a framework for impoliteness in relation to politeness since impoliteness "is very much the parasite of politeness" (p. 355). He argued that an adequate

account of the dynamics of interpersonal communication requires consideration of hostile as well as co-operative communication. Therefore, he proposed the inclusion of impoliteness as the reverse of politeness theory. He argued that some intents are polite; however, no amount of polite purpose could eliminate the impoliteness of some acts such as the request: “Do you think you could possibly not pick your nose?”. The super-strategies, proposed by him, are opposite to those of politeness in terms of their tendency to attack “face”. His five impoliteness super-strategies are in parallel with Brown and Levinson's (1987) four politeness super-strategies; however, they have the opposite effects on interaction.

Table 5: *Brown and Levinson's (1987) and Culpeper's (1996) Strategies*

No.	Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Strategies	Culpeper's (1996) Impoliteness Strategies
1	Bald on-record politeness: Face-Threatening Act (FTA) is performed in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible	Bald on-record impoliteness: FTA performed in a direct, clear unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimised
2	Positive politeness: The use of strategies designed to redress the addressee's positive face-wants	Positive impoliteness: The use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face
3	Negative politeness: The use of strategies designed to redress the addressee's negative face wants	Negative impoliteness: The use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants
4	Off-record: An FTA is performed where there is more than one unambiguously attributable intention so that the actor cannot be held to have committed himself/[herself] to one particular intent	Sarcasm or mock politeness: The FTA is performed with the use of politeness that is obviously insincere, and thus the politeness remains a surface realisation
5	Withhold the FTA	Withhold the act: The absence of politeness where it is expected

Culpeper (1996) has added a fifth category to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies. He argues that some aspects of politeness have not been represented properly in Brown and Levinson's politeness model. Therefore, Culpeper believes that Brown and Levinson's model is not adequate to address impoliteness. It should be noted that Brown and Levinson's model of politeness fails to adequately cover aggressive, careless, insulting, offensive and subversive speech acts that are often noticed online in the online interactions of youngsters. For Brown and Levinson (1987), impolite speech acts are abnormal, anomalous and of little concern as they exclude the standard expectations of pleasant behaviour. Online communication is an unavoidable reality today and in such communication, there are people who are not afraid to attack others in order to please themselves. And such speech acts are very difficult to cover accurately under any of the strategies of politeness as the theory of politeness mostly focuses upon politeness and requests. Dalton (2013) finds one more fault in the theory of politeness. He states that politeness theory is silent about how a system of posting a topic on social media can theoretically work as an interactive or social prototype which is the main concern in this research. Understanding such limitations of politeness and the need for an impoliteness framework to study online impoliteness, I have used Culpeper's framework for the study of impoliteness strategies employed by the Saudi youths in their online interactions. While following the framework, I also share Beebe's (1995) observation that impoliteness is not just the opposite of politeness. It is independently goal driven. Therefore, my focus will be not only on the impolite expressions but also on what constitutes impoliteness in the Saudi Arabian culture and context.

2.9 Language, Saudi Arabian Culture and Norms of Politeness and Impoliteness

Language and culture are closely interconnected (Mahadi & Jafari, 2012). Culture has been broadly defined as shared norms, values and markers that a specific group/community share (Stanger et al., 2017). It is a collective phenomenon, owing to the fact that it is shared or partially shared with people who live in the same social environment, where it is mutually understood. It comprises unwritten social rules (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010, p. 6). Moreover, the shared values, practices, symbols and rituals of a culture make the individuals practising it stand out from other social groups (Stanger et al., 2017). It should be noted that the cultural norms govern the use of language and its appropriateness with people in different contexts. Saudi Arabian culture is very particular about it and details how language should be used with people based on their place in the family and society, social status, age, and gender. As a cultural norm, basically, humility is of utmost importance (Al-Bukhari, 1987; Almakrami, 2015). From a religious perspective, in Islam, being humble is a must in any interaction with people; while based on social norms, an individual should show dignity. This is evidenced by Samarah (2015) when he described humility among Arabs as something that does not equate to loss of dignity or face, but is something that displays a greater level of respect on the basis of religious and social standing. “Face” is very important in Arab culture. It denotes “respect”, “honour”, “dignity” and even “shame”. It makes people abide by the cultural codes of politeness as Arabs believe that to show respect to others implies paying respect to the self. That is why they have their own, distinct strategies of showing politeness and impoliteness. Bataineh (2013) reports that significant numbers of studies have been conducted on Arabic politeness—a topic that can be traced back to the work conducted by Ferguson on Syrian Arabic (1967; 1976; 1983). This was extended by other authors who were dedicated to the same line of study including work by

Davies (1987); Farghal and Borini (1996); Al-Nasser (1993); Al-Ammar (2000); Emery (2000); Bataineh and Bataineh (2005, 2006, 2008); and Jarbou (2002).

A study by El-Shazly (1993) showed that Arab speakers of English have a noticeable affinity towards using conventional indirectness. A study by Al-Ammar (2000) on realisations of requesting behaviour among Saudi female learners at Riyadh College of Arts also revealed that the subjects varied their requisite behaviour based on social situations. In research such as that of Tawalbeh and Al-Oqaily (2012) which focused on comparing Saudi students with their American counterparts, it was found that the Saudi Arabian participants varied their strategies based on social variables such as power and distance. Directness was the main strategy used by the Saudi Arabian participants while interacting with close friends to show closeness as opposed to impoliteness.

In a related study, Al-Qahtani (2009) also examined the differences in the use of politeness strategies among females between spoken Saudi Arabic and spoken British English in the speech acts of offering and testing with the application of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness. Findings of her study revealed that there is high applicability of the model in the Saudi context and there existed significant differences among the Saudi Arabic group and the British English group among females based on their politeness strategies use in offers. Similar findings were also reported by Al-Shurafa (1997) focusing on the Hijaz Saudi dialect. Thus, Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness has been successfully tested on some regional dialects in Saudi Arabia. However, it has yet to be tested on language use in online communication by Saudi young adults, which is the focus of this research.

2.9.1 Religious Expressions and Politeness in Saudi Arabian Culture

Another important aspect of Arab politeness and impoliteness is the influence of religion on the choice and use of language. In Arabic language, religious terms are often used to show politeness—this may be assumed as an expression of positive politeness (Emery, 2000). In this case, blessings are utterances that are aligned with the Islamic tradition; for instance, Bajri (2005) provided the following:

- “Allah yixalīk” الله يخليك (May God preserve you)”

According to Bajri (2005) the Saudi speakers employ blessings expressed in their politeness requests, for example:

- “Allah yirzaʕalēki” الله يرضى عليك (May God be pleased with you), bring me a glass of water, please”
- “Allah yijzakxēr” الله يجزاك خير (May Allah reward you with His blessings)”

The strategy of swearing by God is a known characteristic used in Islamic societies when stressing heartfelt apologies.

- “sāmiḥni, wallāh(i) ma kangaṣdi” سامحيني؛ والله ما كان قصدي (Forgive me. I swear by God I did not mean it.)”

(Bajri, 2005)

Religious expressions do form a significant part of politeness strategies among the Saudi people. These expressions and the norms of their use are explored in this research with the aim of elaborating on the nature of concepts of politeness and impoliteness in Saudi Arabian culture comprehensively.

2.9.2 Gender and Intricated Politeness Norms in Saudi Arabian Culture

Saudi Arabian society is composite of different tribes. It is governed by specific norms about politeness and impoliteness prevailing in these tribes and Saudi Arabian society in large. The head of the tribe commands respect and expects polite behaviour from the rest of the tribesmen. That is why Hofstede (1984) described the Arab culture as collectivistic, with family being the core of the community values that the Arab people hold in esteem and to which they are committed. In fact, the Arab is loyal to family, community, country friends and outsiders (Samarah, 2015). According to Bassiouney (2009), Arabs hailing from different countries consider themselves based on their tribe, their families and their country in that order. In Saudi Arabian culture, a characteristic of being social and polite is interrelated with a person's visits to their relatives at regular intervals (Almakrami, 2015). Saudis are also a religious society who pay attention to visiting relatives, meeting at mosques and attending social events (Al-Saggaf, 2012) and also have specific norms of politeness and impoliteness for the same.

Focusing on the place of gender in the Saudi Arabian community, it should be noted that gender segregation is a specific part of Saudi culture and it affects every aspect of public and social life, including norms of politeness and impoliteness (Al-Saggaf, 2012). Women in the country are not allowed to mix with men who are not their relatives, particularly when they are on their own, in other words, only unmarried kin are allowed by religion to have physical contact with them (Al-Bukhari, 1987; Almunajjed, 1997; Al-Qardawi, 2007; Al-Saggaf & Begg, 2004; Dakir & Shah, 2012; Padela & del Pozo, 2011; World Trade Press, 2010a). The primary aim behind gender segregation is to steer clear of adultery and to stop other men from breaching the family honour, or that of the lead male's honour (Almunajjed, 1997). The females are expected to be more polite to males. However, the social status is more dominant than the gender

in the norms about politeness in the Saudi Arabian context as a mother, with her higher social and religious status in the Arab culture, can be impolite to her sons but vice versa cannot be tolerated.

Moving on to tribal reputation, Saudi culture places high emphasis on family reputation or tribal reputation—with personal reputation in high regard (Almakrami, 2015). In this respect, women's reputation is held in high regard in Saudi Arabia, with tarnished reputation leading to serious outcomes for the women and their families (Almakrami, 2015). For instance, distributing women's photographs is forbidden and is deemed to be a form of attacking the individual's or her family's reputation that could even involve blackmailing (Al-Saggaf & Weckert, 2011). A recent case in point (2 February 2014) is when a popular Saudi newspaper, *Okaz*, reported the arrest of a Saudi man for threatening a Saudi girl so she would continue their illicit sexual relationship. He threatened to post her personal pictures on Facebook and Twitter (Okaz, 2014). This situation can sometimes have dire consequences in that Saudi females behaving in an unacceptable manner in a way that creates personal and family stigma could be killed by the male members of her family. This is done in order to remove the shame she has brought on the family although a man doing wrong may often get away with his crime (Almakrami, 2015). This can be exemplified by the case, in 2008, where a young Saudi woman was murdered by her father for breaching the norms by talking to a male stranger through Facebook (Danielwicz-Betz, 2013). Elaborating on gender and norms of face, politeness and impoliteness in the Saudi Arabian context, Stanger et al. (2017) state that the main critical value in Saudi Arabian culture is family honour, where family members are expected to display behaviour that protects the family honour at all times. The master/leader of the family is often the father/oldest son and all of the decisions about family representation and honour in the society have to go through his

approval. In this background of the social setting of Saudi Arabia, the positive/negative outcome of female behaviours and actions affect the individuals as well as the whole family, and if the family honour is breached, then everything is considered lost. In fact, dishonour is significantly related to the misbehaviour of the female members when it comes to their chastity—any misbehaviour by a female member could lead to suspicion about her morality, the result of which the family will have to face (Al Lily, 2011). This leads to other practices and behaviours as well such as honour killing and boycotting.

Reputation is the core of self that affects the centre of the Saudi identity (Solove, 2007) and hence a tarnished reputation is deemed to harm a conservative, religious, tribal and socially committed country (Almakrami, 2015). In this regard, if a Saudi tribe member misbehaves in a manner that is not accepted in society, the negative outcome or social stigma reflects on the tribe as a whole, and not merely on the misbehaving member (Al-Saggaf & Weckert, 2011). In other words, individuals, families and tribes have a basic fear of stigma scourge and this is not easily understandable (Almakrami, 2015).

Moreover, speaking openly about sex, using obscene words and drinking alcohol are not acceptable in the Saudi Arabian society and these could engender divine retribution and social stigma among other societal members (Al-Saggaf, 2012). In addition to the mentioned values, other values are also shared, including modesty and honour (Bassiouny, 2009), as advocated by the Islamic religion and since the Islamic religion is the religious platform and guidance for day-to-day lives in the Arab region, it plays a key role in forming the lifestyles of Muslims (Stanger et al., 2017) as well as their attitudes and behaviours. On the basis of Michell and Al-Mossawi's (1999) study, the influence of religion is reflected in every Muslim's life, whether in Islamic countries, or living in wider communities, which in turn influences their social norms, language

use, behaviour and relationships. In this respect, Almakrami (2015) states that Islam plays a key role in the behaviour, norms, attitudes and practices in the Saudi Arabian society (Al-Saggaf, 2012; Almunajjed, 1997). In Saudi Arabia, religious declarations known as fatwas are acknowledged and accepted as a law source (Amoudi, Albar, Bokhari, Yahya & Merdad, 2016). More importantly, the primary sources of the life practices in Saudi Arabia are the Quran, the Holy book revealed to Prophet Mohammad, and the Hadith, which holds Prophet Mohammad's (peace be upon him) sayings and practices (Nigosian, 1987; World Trade Press, 2010a) and these form the basis for various norms about how the language should be used politely. Saudi Arabia represents other Islamic countries although it has earned the moniker of being one of the most conservative cultures in the world, with a distinctive combination of Islamic and Arab traditions (Burkhart & Goodman, 1998; Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993). It is therefore not surprising that religious values are interlinked with cultural values and, in the majority of cases, they difficult to separate, resulting in a culture that is rife with complexity (Stanger et al., 2017). According to Al-Saggaf (2011) the culture in Saudi Arabia is naturally religious, with religion and culture not only forming the attitudes and practices of its people, but also developing the reality of their daily lives.

2.9.3 Kinship Terms and Expression of Politeness in Saudi Arabian Culture

Another important aspect of Saudi Arabian culture is the use of kinship terms such as brother, sister, son, daughter, uncle, grandfather, and grandmother to express politeness. An example of how kinship functions within a culture was explored by Gaby (2017) who examined it in terms of Kuuk Thaayorre, an Australian Aboriginal language. In this language, kinship is categorised into different terms such as referential terms and vocative terms. The first one refers to the individuals in light of their relationship to a specific ego (e.g., my father), while the second

one refers to the relationship between the speaker and addressee (e.g., Father!). This is an important cultural category in the speech community as kin terms can be utilised to refer to any individual in the community, namely those who are related to the speaker and those who are non-relatives (Sharifian, 2017). A related study was conducted by Kronenfeld (2015), who illustrated the relationship between culture and kinship language and noted that the focus of both has been on formal semantic analysis and use of kinship terminologies in the field of linguistic anthropology. In his article, “Culture and kinship language”, Kronenfeld (2015) explores kinship terms in different languages and cultures such as Hawaiian, Cheyenne, Iroquois, Dravidian, Crow, and Omaha. Based on the finding of his study, language serves as an invaluable laboratory for examining the language-culture relationship (Kronenfeld, 2015). Kinship terms play vital role in making the expressions polite and vice-versa in Saudi Arabian culture. Hariri (2017, p. 16) reports that terms such as “أخ/أخت” /sister/brother” are deliberately used to make polite expressions, even with people not personally known, as it creates social harmony and intimacy through religious bonds as Islam preaches that all Muslims are brothers and sisters to each other and this is often deliberately reflected in the interactions of Saudis.

2.9.4 Animal Terminologies and Expression of Politeness and Impoliteness in Saudi

Arabian Culture

Historically animals have been used metaphorically to point out positive and negative aspects in human beings. For example, Arabs often associate horses with positive values such as courage, strength and obedience. They also associate horses with the negative characteristic of being short-tempered. Scholars such as Kiełtyka and Kleparski (2007) have reported how names of certain animals have been used in metaphorically denoting certain derogatory characteristics. Holes, Athera and al-Turbānī (2009) have also reported animal imagery by Bedouin poets in

Arabic poems wherein they compare politicians with falcons, sparrows, ostriches and mules. Peled-Shapira (2009) also reported animal metaphors in the works of Communist exiled Iraqi writer Ghā'ib Ṭu'mah Farmān where animals were used to depict the relationship between intellectuals and Iraqi authorities. Maalej's (2004) study has also elaborated on how Arabs used culturally tainted Arabic expressions such as bitch, camel, snake, hen, goat, storm, pan, and grain of wheat to express anger and impoliteness. This is also true with the Saudi Arabian people. The Saudis are also often observed using various animal terms such as fox, camel, and crawling creature to express positive and negative aspects of someone's behaviour as a norm of politeness and impoliteness in the Saudi Arabian culture. For example, they make metaphoric use of the word fox to talk about someone's shrewdness in politeness whereas the expression crawling creature is used to express impoliteness to someone.

2.10 Politeness, Impoliteness and Computer-Mediated Communication

Communication is indubitably a part of human existence through which social hierarchies are developed (Katerenchuk & Rosenberg, 2016). Research (Yaman, Hakkani- Tür & Tür, 2010) has found people modifying their communicational behaviour according to their collocutor. Such modifications reflect information concerning the participants to the conversation, whereas in our era, interactions have been shifted to the internet (Boyle & O'Sullivan, 2016). In this context, computer-mediated communication is defined as any interpersonal exchange through the use of technology/media such as the internet and text messages using mobile technology (Boyle & O'Sullivan, 2016). It enables the individual to access received and reciprocated messages throughout the day in varying contexts without having to depend on face-to-face interactions (Boyle & O'Sullivan, 2016). Researchers have reached a consensus as to the commonalities between computer-mediated communication and face-to-face communication, with Locher et al.

(2015) contending that computer-mediated communication and face-to-face communication may not be truly separated as the separation between interactants brought norms to the keyboard and online interactions are inseparable. Despite the truth to this statement, there are digital communication aspects that are different from those of face-to-face interaction (Culpeper et al., 2017) as in the later research Locher & Watts (2008) laid stress on the notion of appropriateness. The development of the internet has shifted a huge part of social interactions online and, through this means, people have made web communication a daily habit unconsciously (Katerenchuk & Rosenberg, 2016).

As the phenomena of “politeness” and “impoliteness” also exist in the virtual world, scholars (e.g., Adel et al.; 2016, Harrison & Barlow, 2009; Park, 2008; Sifianou, 2015; Schallert et al.; 2009) have attempted to study it through computer-mediated communication. In this respect, the study by Schallert et al. (2009) revealed that synchronous computer-mediated discourse offered higher opportunity for information seeking, information providing, and social comments while asynchronous discussions developed the environment for generation of discussion, sharing of experience, explanation of ideas and evaluation of self. Li’s (2012) study analysed the discourse employed in Wiki in the context of English as a foreign language in China and found that participants employed positive, negative and other strategies to create a friendly and united environment. Similar findings were reported by Luzón (2013) focusing on the use of (im)politeness strategies in the context of blog discussions among academic individuals. A study by Sifianou (2015) also concluded that the novel medium, online chatting, influenced the use of politeness strategies.

After exploring these studies, as Boyle and O’Sullivan (2016) point out, politeness in conversations is a way to see the dominance, in which prominent tools are used for cataloging

(im)politeness (Culpeper et al., 2017). The majority of digital media now possess a range of tools to inform others of one's behaviour as encoded into the media through spam filters, terms of service, blocks and report-abuse buttons, among others. Several ways also exist to reflect positive reactions and these include "like", "favorite", and "share" buttons, establishing a sub-text that (im)politeness may be continuously evaluated and declared on the web. Despite the fact that such (im)politeness is perpetually present in face-to-face interactions, in these actual interactions, there are no buttons that request our explicit sharing of our (im)politeness evaluation in our interactions (Culpeper et al., 2017). Also, both face-to-face and virtual communications place stress on the tone of communication in the way messages are received and interpreted and how they assist development of tasks and relationships (Wei, Crowston, Eseryel & Heckman, 2017). This can be explained based on the politeness theory—a theory that posits the way people phrase communications while taking the feeling of others into consideration (Brown & Levinson, 1987), thereby contributing to social relationship development as explained by Wei et al. (2017). Researchers revealed that politeness theory is particularly invaluable in the analysis of relational communication in the context of computer-mediated communication (Morand & Ocker, 2003). Although there have been many studies in this area, in the context of Saudi Arabia, studies of this calibre are still few. This may partly be because, in the context of Arab societies, the Islamic religion has a say in almost all aspects (Samarah, 2015). According to Samarah (2015), the discussion of politeness involves distinguishing between religion and social factors, and the roles both play in the Arab culture. He added that an individual has two primary demands from different directions, namely from religion and from society, and therefore an individual has to know their relationship to politeness in the culture of Arabs. In the next section,

I will briefly shed light on the use of social media in Saudi Arabia before moving to politeness and impoliteness on these platforms.

2.10.1 Social Media Use in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Social network sites are socio-technical systems that enable their users to extend their communities and develop and maintain novel relationships. More specifically, a social network site is defined as a web-based service allowing the following activities: constructing a public or semi-public profile within the system boundary, listing other users with whom a connection is shared, and viewing and traversing their list of connections in the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Similarly, Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre (2011) defined social media as an interactive web platform through which individuals and communities are able to share, co-develop, discuss and change user-generated content. Social network sites, in their web-based service function, enable individuals to develop a profile, list users whom they are connected with, and view the connections of others in the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). The majority of traditional computer-mediated communities only display general and limited information concerning the self, including picture, location, recent posts and membership period (Almakrami, 2015). In this regard, the way the person thinks about his or her personality can be viewed from his/her profile through posts, photos and comments (Kaskazi, 2014). This may be the reason why online social networks have shown increased proliferation and have penetrated all aspects of daily life in such a way that they have become similar to watching TV and using the phone (Boyd, 2014). Some individuals view them as facilitating meaningful relationships that link people, firms and other community social groups. The relationships nurtured may be with friends, colleagues, and co-researchers, among others. Technology-wise, some of the important

places where the communicative events occur are the social networking media, i.e., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, StumbleUpon, YouTube and various social websites (Theodoropoulou, 2015).

As the focus of this research is to find the ways through which Saudis construct their identities online, a social website has been selected as the focus social networking site. Although everyone constructs his/her identity in both the real and the virtual world, Saudi youth is selected to be examined here as they extensively utilise the social media and are engaged most of the time in online communication. Studies (Boyd, 2014; Nyland, Marvez, & Beck, 2007) have reported that adolescents and youth are strongly attracted to online social networks participation. According to the report from BBC News (2015), online network sites such as Facebook users in Saudi Arabia constitute 10% of the Arab region, while the country has the highest per-capita YouTube use compared to any country around the world. Such wide use of social networking sites and websites for online interactions by youth encourages the phenomenon. Focusing on Saudi Arabia and the Arab region in general, Facebook was found to be the top social networking site used by almost 91% of the people surveyed (Mourtada & Salem, 2014). This was followed by other social networking sites such as Google+ (70%), YouTube (60%), Twitter (57%), LinkedIn (37%) and Instagram (22%). This reflects the extent to which Saudi people use social media websites.

It is for these reasons that this study focuses on Saudi youth, as they are reported to be utilising the social media often (Boyd, 2014; Hargittai, 2008; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Nyland et al., 2007). Other studies by scholars such as Gross and Acquisti (2005), Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield (2006) and Stutzman (2006) have reported teens and youngsters constitute a significant portion of online social networks users, as evidenced by the fact that 80%–90% of college students and teens have online social networks profiles. Again, focusing on Saudi youths,

Saudi Arabia is considered to be the largest social media market, with social media use encouraged through the high level of smartphone ownership and use (BBC News, 2015). Saudi Arabia boasts 2.4 million users constituting over 40% of all active Twitter users located in the Arab region (Go-Gulf, 2013), with clerics and royal family members among the top Twitter users (BBC News, 2015).

With this background, it should be noted that although there have been studies on the use of social media in the Saudi Arabian context, the phenomena of politeness and impoliteness have not been at the centre of any noticeable research study. This is the main motivating force behind this research study.

2.10.2 Politeness and Impoliteness on Social Media: Some Research Reports

Social networking services provide novel ways for communication and interaction. Features which are noticeable in face-to-face communication, however, are not present in online written communication (Fahmee & Yong, 2016) and the only recourse for the users is to depend on visuals to develop and interpret meaning online (Maros & Rosli, 2017). In this regard, it becomes necessary to understand the way language via politeness is developed to mitigate the risk of being rude while getting the correct message across in online social sites such as Twitter (Maros & Rosli, 2017). This is because text relays meaning similar to spoken conversation (Herring, 2010). In addition to this, social networking services provide users with ample control over the presentation of themselves when they interact online (Stanger et al., 2017). Moreover, social media platforms make it possible for users to communicate and interact with others online on an extensive scale compared to off-line interactions (Stanger et al., 2017) and these services are distinct in that information flow is controlled by users within the platforms framework (Stanger et al., 2017). Therefore, comprehending the needs, behaviours and types of engagement

of users has become crucial for developers of social media, for planning businesses through an online marketing strategy, and for researchers of online interaction and online identity (Stanger et al., 2017).

Focusing on specific interactions, online offences were listed by Dans (2016) after which the community was requested to act with kindness in communicating through social media. According to Pookulangara and Koesler (2011), the social network use of a consumer is affected by her/his culture, which is logical when a media environment depends on the generated content of the users. Meanwhile Kwon and Wen (2010) claimed that social factors and affective factors (factors that relate to feelings, attitude and moods) are crucial in explaining the social networking services use among people. Several prior studies dedicated to computer-mediated communication concentrated on the language and linguistics area, particularly on Facebook owing to the enriching data collected (Maros & Rosli, 2017). Data obtained from the context of the Middle East evidenced that social networking platforms and applications are widely used throughout the region, particularly among male youth. Also, more than 135 million internet users using social networking were reported in the Arab region in 2013 alone. Almost two thirds of the social media users were male users, and were below the age of 25 (GO-Gulf, 2013). This gender variation is greater when compared internationally.

On the basis of the survey published by VitalSmarts as reported by Bennet (2013), over 88% were of the consensus that people are not as polite when they use social media, 75% experienced online conflicts and arguments online as witnesses, and five users have limited in-person contact with others because of what was said online (Bennet, 2013). In fact, users have become used to adopting brevity when communicating through writing and directness, and this could have a potential counteracting negative impact in social media communication.

A number of politeness-dedicated studies have been carried out from different perspectives; for instance, the pragmatic perspectives of Twitter were examined by Oliveira (2010), where he claimed that the sphere of Twitter is not a place for the politeness concept. In the realm of the virtual world, the messages' disembodiment results in lessened political instances in what is known as a control form of indiscipline and resistance (de Oliveira, 2010). Consequently, the users have no recourse but to accept the rules and prevent themselves from sending problematic messages that could be detrimental to themselves and others (Maros & Rosli, 2017). Studies of this nature also include Oktaviani and Latturakhmi's (2013) study in which interviews were conducted with different generations (youth and lecturers) to examine the way social media use has changed their language use and the politeness perception through the use of Goffman's face concept (1967) and the FTAs of Brown and Levinson. Based on the study's findings, media use, including social network sites, have to be monitored effectively as it may affect the language habit of the new generation and, ultimately, change their cultural perception of politeness. This was further extended by Rentel (2014) who focused on Twitter in his study of private communication, examining 50 Italian private tweets. Based on the highlighted findings, there is a high rate of hedging strategies employed to mitigate claims, where meta communication works towards building relationships, asking questions to be polite, and using gratitude expressions to apologise to relay esteem for the addressee.

In Malaysia, several studies have been devoted to language and politeness in social media networking focused on the nationals, and these included Maros and Rosli (2017), Thayalan, Shanti, & May Liu Siaw Mei (2012) and Nabila (2014). More specifically, Maros and Rosli (2017) examined language in Twitter updates among Malaysian female undergraduates and the findings revealed that the participants used four politeness strategies, these being, in order of

frequency: positive politeness, bald on-record, off-record and negative politeness. Positive politeness was the most used owing to the CMC nature that advocates interpersonal communication and expression. In Nabila's (2014) study, a study of language and politeness strategies among Malaysian online users also showed positive politeness to be the top used strategy in politeness use in their chats. Moreover, positive politeness covers the following sub-strategies: giving gifts to the hearer, offering sympathetic advice, and impersonalising the speaker/hearer. The study noted two stereotypical types of politeness, namely females are more polite than their male counterparts, and the youth use more positive politeness strategies in comparison to their older counterparts. Finally, Malaysian news bloggers were considered polite by Thayalan et al. (2012) through their use of positive and negative politeness strategies. They observed nine tactics used to save face, with using jokes and in-group markers among the top. To preserve a harmonious virtual communication, some bloggers functioned as the gatekeepers of the group.

In the Saudi Arabian context, Hariri (2017) investigated and analysed the key areas of politeness in email correspondence between Saudi Arabian students and lecturers. A total of 140 emails formed her research data. Her findings revealed that there was no clear-cut boundary between the politeness classifications as were implied in Brown and Levinson (1987). These findings are important for the purpose of my study as I intend to test the same Brown and Levinson (1987) model for social media data in the Saudi Arabian context and to see to what extent the strategies of politeness suggested by Brown and Levinson are relevant in the Saudi Arabian cultural context.

2.11 Research Question about Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies in Saudi Youths'

Online Communication

Politeness and impoliteness are complex, comprehensive, culture-specific and context-specific phenomena and need broad and thorough investigation to understand in specific cultures and contexts. What is polite in one culture or context may be construed as impolite in another and therefore one needs to be very careful about culture-specific and context-specific communications. In the sections above, I have attempted to sum up the complex phenomenon of politeness and impoliteness in the Saudi Arabian culture. Many factors such as culture and religious norms, gender, age, and social status of an individual govern the phenomena of politeness and impoliteness in the Saudi Arabian context as mentioned in section ([2.9](#)).

Therefore, I attempted to test this phenomenon of politeness and impoliteness against existing notable theories in the field, namely Brown and Levinson' (1987) theory of politeness and Culpeper's (1996) theory of impoliteness. The second research question of my study—Which strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication?—revolved around this. I explored the politeness and impoliteness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths in their online communication to be polite and impolite with their fellow interlocutors. In order to categorise the politeness strategies they used, Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness was employed as it is a widely used theory that has been applied to data from different cultures. As the phenomenon of politeness is incomplete without the study of impoliteness, so Culpeper's (1996) theory of impoliteness was utilised to categorise the impoliteness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths in their online communication. The combination of these two theories was needed as the communication is not either polite or

impolite only and involves both elements and thereby needs to be studied using these two theories to gain a thorough understanding of the notions.

The need to formulate a research framework which combines both theories is justified to understand the notions of politeness and impoliteness thoroughly in the Saudi Arabian culture and particularly in the online communication context. The new contribution to these two theories, in terms of Saudi Arabian cultural context specific strategies of politeness and impoliteness will also be detailed in the findings and discussion sections of this research.

2. 12 Language, Gender and Notions of Politeness and Impoliteness

Language and gender have been researched extensively to conclude that women do use language differently to men (Lakoff, 1975). In addition to this, the gender-politeness/impoliteness interrelationship, characterised by complexity, has been examined from several research angles in the last four decades, specifically in the linguistic fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistics (Culpeper et al., 2017). Pioneering studies of politeness that preceded Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) and Leech's (1983) study included Lakoff's (1975) study that laid stress on the overreaching invaluable need to explore linguistic politeness (Culpeper et al., 2017). To date, the theoretical and methodological explorations in the areas of gender and language show that this increased interest in the study of this relationship will contribute to the literature on the politeness topic (Culpeper et al., 2017). More recently, gender has been extensively conceptualised as a characteristic that is both negotiated and performatively constituted as opposed to inherently possessed that can simply be considered from the context of sex classification (Butler, 1990). In fact, pioneering studies on gender and politeness show a tendency to focus on gender differences in the use of politeness (Coates, 2004), frequently citing Brown and Levinson's (1978) method.

The change in the way gender is theorised is a significant marker of the distinction between the social and biological form and a disregard of binaries deadlock and sweeping statements of the way the genders generally talk (Culpeper et al., 2017). Higher sophistication attributed to the theoretical development and methodological framework has led to the provision of deeper insight into the nuances and complexity of the gender and (im)politeness interrelationship (Culpeper et al., 2017). Evidently, the most influential work in the field is attributed to Butler's (1990) theory of gender performativity that is based on Austin's (1962) theory of language ability to describe the world and to shape it. Based on Butler (1990), gender is a verb and it refers to something that people do and not something they inherently have. Butler (2011) further claimed that the interactants of linguistic resources draw on the enacting of gender's effects on the generation of social reality, whereby stress is laid on the relational nature of the gender enactment and its significance in research. In this, it emphasises the important points of overlap between gender and (im)politeness (Culpeper et al., 2017).

With regard to the assessments of whether particular linguistic behaviour types are considered to be polite or otherwise are determined to be interactionally realised and socially integrated (Culpeper et al., 2017). Lakoff's (1975) significant contribution to the study of gender and (im)politeness lies in the fact that he was the initial instigator of the field and his demonstration of the issues raised has remained important even today. Recent research on gender and impoliteness also includes the work by Mills (2002). Mills (2002) has investigated the effect of impoliteness on groups. Her work also elaborates on the role gender plays in conventions about who can be impolite to whom, and who needs to repair the damage (2002). This is essential to see whether these arguments are true with Saudi Arabian women and their language use online.

It is generally said that women are more polite than men (Holmes, 1995). Women are often portrayed as “being nice” and “cooperative” and tend to use positive politeness strategies more than men. In the Saudi Arabian context, Al-Shloul (2016) compared the politeness and impoliteness strategies used by males and females and concluded that the participants used politeness strategies more than impoliteness strategies. It was also reported that males used negative politeness strategies more, whereas females used positive strategies more. The findings of this study are also important as they report the online polite and impolite behaviour of the Saudi youths which is also the concern of this study.

2.13 Language, Identity and Notions of Politeness and Impoliteness

Language used to construct the identity of an individual has been elaborated on in the earlier sections. While discussing the phenomena of identity, politeness and impoliteness, it is interesting to note that despite the conceptual proximity of identity to face, (im)politeness research has largely ignored the concept until recent times and this may be attributed to the traditional approach of the two fields (Culpeper et al., 2017). In fact, politeness literature mostly depended on the framework proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) that is top-down oriented (Culpeper et al., 2017). In this regard, discursive identity models have been significantly affected by constructionism and are bottom-up oriented (Culpeper et al., 2017). This leads to a crucial issue of misalignment until the introduction of discursive approaches in the millennium (Eelen, 2001; Mills, 2003; Watts, 2003) that took a bottom-up approach to (im)politeness studies (Culpeper et al., 2017). It was also around these years that scholars began incorporating the identity concept into their (im)politeness accounts (Culpeper et al., 2017), with identity being a part of the individual’s behaviour and social positioning in culture and social communication.

Identity based on Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) study is the social position of the individual and others (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005), indicating that as opposed to the self being considered as a self-contained entity manipulated by the individual, it should be viewed as relational. This means that it constitutes interaction with others. Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) study deemed identity as constructed inter-subjectively and not individually, and it is interactionally emergent and not appropriated in an a priori fashion.

Therefore, language analysis allows the tracking of the ways of which identity is developed, with evaluation being a major concept, where individuals develop hypotheses on the types of language and behaviour suitable in their community of practice. In turn, behaviour will be aligned to what is believed as the potential evaluations (Culpeper et al., 2017), in what is evidently where the importance lies relative to the politeness analysis, that is, in essence, evaluative (Eelen, 2001).

With any interaction (offline or online), a part of the individual's behaviour is the creation of identity and the development of relationship with the audience (Culpeper et al., 2017), necessitating the examination of computer-mediated identities as one of the elements of digital (im)politeness (Culpeper et al., 2017).

However, in contrast to the identity construction in a face-to-face context, CMC users frequently have more control over the presentation of self. In the realm of the internet, the possibilities of developing alternative identities is among the most major features but in face-to-face interactions, limitations are placed on the person's identity development at one point in time; in other words, individuals are not able to change their physical appearance when they want to in that instant. Nevertheless, Reid (1994) indicated that anonymity and physical distance in cyberspace allows social experimentation and examination of both identity and self (Baker,

2001). In this context, users can create and modify online content and create and explore identities that they could adopt that they may never be able to offline. Simultaneously, other users can equate the discrepancies between both identities (online and offline). This leads to the addressing of the issue that academic research may discuss the identity in terms of its mutability perspectives and multi-faceted nature but users may interpret this to be far more simple (Culpeper et al., 2017).

The difficulty lies in the classification of online identities in the digital context owing to the nature of the different media and the layperson's understanding and expectations of individuals' participation in the digital realm (Culpeper et al., 2017). Similarly, Graham's (2015) impoliteness study considered the concept as an element of transition to becoming member of the in-group in an online literary discussion board. Also, Haugh et al. (2015) examined the identities of the "newbie", an inexperienced newcomer, on a discussion board, while Kleinke and Bös (2015) examined strategies of rudeness among in-group and out-group members which implies interactions between members of the same group and members from different groups respectively. On the whole, the topic is still largely unexplored. According to Locher et al. (2015) in their investigation into how the identity and relationships work on Facebook, studies dedicated to the identities individuals claim in computer-mediated communication and community/group are still lacking.

2.14 Research Question about Comparative Analysis of Identity Construction and (Im)politeness Strategies

As one of the aims of my research study, different identity construction strategies, namely linguistic and nonlinguistic as well as politeness and impoliteness strategies, will be compared, analysed and discussed inter-regionally as well as cross-culturally. In this respect, the

third research question of my study—In what sense are these online identity construction and politeness strategies similar and, at the same time, different, inter-regionally as well as cross-culturally?—was intended to offer in-depth analysis and thorough understanding of these phenomena. After analysing and categorising different online identity construction strategies, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, I will discuss them in terms of their similarities and differences inter-regionally and cross-culturally. The studies from across the cultures will be the foundation for this analysis and discussion which will be elaborated on in the discussion section of this research.

To sum up, in this study, not only online identity construction strategies will be compared and analysed inter-regionally and cross-culturally but also the politeness and impoliteness strategies. I will also discuss how the politeness and impoliteness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths are similar and different not only inter-regionally, based on the data collected from the participants through interviews, but also cross-culturally based on literature on the topic. These politeness and impoliteness strategies, along with Saudi Arabian culture specific strategies will be elaborated on and discussed as a new contribution of the study in the findings and discussion sections of this research.

2.15 Research Questions

- 1- What strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their different socio-cultural identities in online communication on a social website?
- 2- Which strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication?
- 3- In what sense are these online identity construction and politeness strategies similar and, at the same time, different, inter-regionally as well as cross-culturally?

2.16 Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempt to define and describe important concepts, notions, terms and theories related to the topic investigated. I also reviewed and reported on important research studies which have been undertaken by scholars on identity, identity construction, the role of language in the construction of various identities such as social class identity, regional identity, tribal identity, religious identity, gender identity, notions of politeness and impoliteness, and theories of politeness and impoliteness. I began by defining the concept of identity and then elaborating on how language and other nonlinguistic means are used by people to construct their regional, religious, tribal, and gender identities. Adequate theoretical background to the same was also offered in the introductory section. Later I moved to the notions of politeness and impoliteness. I defined the notions in light of the views of notable research scholars in the field and then moved to the theories of politeness and impoliteness. As the central focus in the study, Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness was elaborated on, explaining the strategies and sub-strategies. This was followed by the introduction to the theory of impoliteness by Culpeper (1996). The reasons for selecting Culpeper's framework were also discussed, providing justification for the same.

As the concepts of politeness and impoliteness are culture dependent, background was provided as to the notion of politeness and impoliteness in the Saudi Arabian culture and context. It was elaborated on as to what constitutes polite behaviour and what is impolite in Saudi Arabian culture. I also reported on the research findings of scholars on the topics of social media, the use of social media in the Saudi Arabian context, the phenomena of politeness, and politeness and impoliteness in the interactions on social media and the strategies used by online users to be polite and impolite due to their gender. With this background, it is clear that although there have

been many studies on politeness and impoliteness, on identity construction and on social media, these have been conducted as separate research topics (see Significance of the study, section [1.3](#)). Therefore, this study is justified and aims to bridge the gap in the literature on this topic, focusing on Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives details on the research methodology selected, the research design applied, the participants of the study, the data collection instruments used and the procedures followed while collecting techniques and analysing the data. These have been organised under different sections. Section [3.2](#) elaborates on the research method used and the research design applied in the current study. Section [3.3](#) provides details on the participants of the study. Section [3.4](#) elaborates on the data collection instruments used in the study to collect the research-related data. Section [3.5](#) gives details of the ethical considerations taken into consideration while collecting the data. Section [3.6](#) describes the procedures followed while collecting and analysing the data.

3.2 Research Methodology and Research Design

The present study examined three main aspects: first, to determine the linguistic strategies used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their various social identities in online communication on a social website; second, to investigate the strategies used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication; and finally, to determine in what sense are these online identity construction and politeness strategies similar and, at the same time, different, inter-regionally as well as cross-culturally. The choice of mixed methodology was made with the basic assumption that the use of quantitative as well as qualitative approaches would better answer the research questions than the use of individual methods (Creswell, 2012). According to Creswell (2003, p. 16), in a mixed method approach, a researcher bases knowledge claims on pragmatic or rational grounds. Dornyei (2007, p. 44) also believes that mixed methods approaches allow for “some sort of combination of qualitative and

quantitative methods within a single research project”. This combination helps the researcher to apply multiple research methods which may be beneficial in avoiding any limitations that may arise from depending exclusively on one particular research method. Adopting mixed methods also offers different perspectives on a dataset due to the combination of different approaches. It is assumed that quantitative analysis helps the researcher to gain information about the frequency of patterns observed in the collected data whereas a qualitative analysis offers in-depth knowledge about any specific feature of the data. As this study included the investigation of the phenomena of identity construction as well as politeness and impoliteness, the mixed method was selected. Previous (im)politeness studies by scholars such as Das and Herring (2016), Mills (2003) and Culpeper (2011) have also adopted a mixed methods approach. To seek answers the research questions, a sequential explanatory design was used: a quantitative study followed by qualitative study was employed as it suited the aims of the study as well as the nature of this research. The study first conducted a quantitative analysis of identity construction strategies and politeness and impoliteness strategies. It then employed a qualitative approach to gain a thorough understanding of these strategies. Therefore, the choice of sequential explanatory design is justified. Riazi & Candlin (2014) argue that MMR or mixed method research enables researchers to focus on the comparative assets of quantitative and qualitative research and then incorporate these in a single research design so that the positive aspects of each method are maximised and the weakness in them are minimised. They have also elaborated on different paradigms informed by the MMR namely “critical realism, critical theory or transformative learning, and pragmatism as potential foundations for MMR research” (P.140). Out of these three paradigms, this study aligned itself with pragmatism. This choice of pragmatism was due to the reason that it focuses on what works in the research and it also believes in the centrality of the research questions. The

researchers following this paradigm of MMR choose their research questions as a springboard to select appropriate research method and approach. This, in turn, helps them to investigate their research questions in better ways by mixing methods rather than opting for only one method which may not adequately address their research problems. That is why MMR design was utilised in this research study to investigate the stated research questions of this study. In this regard, Ivankova, Creswell and Stick (2006) also argue that the mixed-methods sequential explanatory design implies “collecting and analysing quantitative and then qualitative data in two consecutive phases within one study” (p. 1). Thus, the method consisted of two main sequential phases: 1) a quantitative study, and 2) a follow-up qualitative study. This is summarised in the following figure (Figure 5):

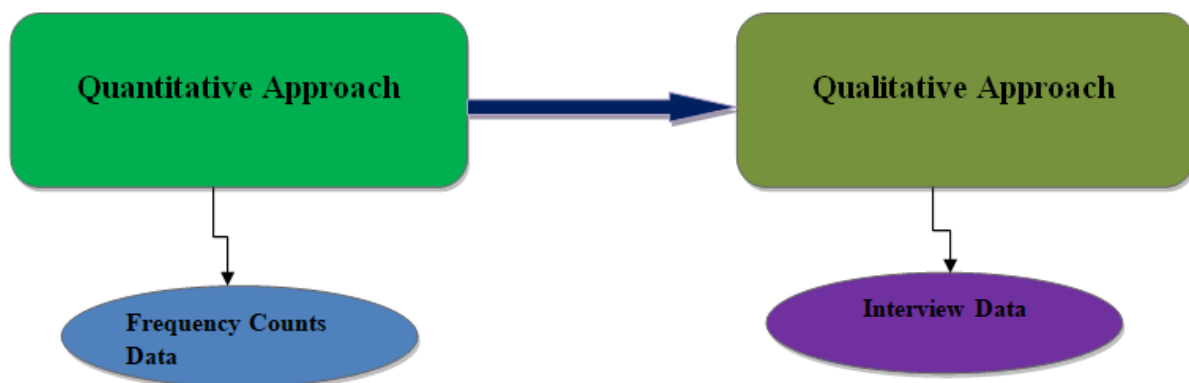


Figure 5. Research methodology and the research design of the study

The analysis of the first phase informed the writing of the interview questions for the second phase. In the first quantitative phase, an online observation was used to answer research questions one and two. At the same time, a quantitative analysis was conducted of the posts and responses to the posts on the social website by the participants with focus on frequency counts of typical recurring expressions by some participants to deconstruct their identity construction process through such means. In the second phase of the research, semi-structured interviews

were conducted to answer research question three. These qualitative data provided more in-depth information of the phenomena investigated in the study.

3.3 The Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were online social website users. They were Saudi Arabian young adults (male, female) and the most common age range of participants was between 18 and 30 years. Algabbaa's (2015) study considers Saudi Arabian young adults below the age of 30 years. They were chosen as the focus group of investigation being more commonly involved in online interactions and communications through social media and social websites. This fact has been supported by previous studies which have claimed that adolescents and youth are strongly attracted to Online Social Networks (OSN) participation (e.g., Boyd, 2014; Hargittai, 2008; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Nyland et al., 2007). Other studies such as Gross and Acquisti (2005), Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield (2006) and Stutzman (2006) stated that teens and young adults constitute a significant portion of OSN users, as evidenced by the fact that 80%–90% of college students and teens have OSN profiles.

The participants' selection process went through inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria included: a) any Saudi young adults from 18 to 30 years of age, and the exclusion criteria included: b) unable or unwilling to provide their consent, c) non-Saudi young adults. A total of 158 participants (88 males and 70 females) took part in the study. They were from different regions: East, North, South, West and Centre of Saudi Arabia. The decision to involve participants from all the Saudi regions was purposeful in order to make the data more diverse in nature. Participants took part in the study by registering to the social networking website (www.ksayouth.net), posting and commenting to others' posts online.

This Facebook-like social website (described below in section [3.4.1](#)) was created by the researcher to collect the research data from the selected participants. Existing social media websites such as Facebook were not selected as it raised ethical questions of data protection of the participants as Facebook kept the data on its backup servers even after deleting online profiles. However, the creation of the Facebook-like social networking website served the purpose of data collection and was helpful in observing ethical considerations as the complete website was deleted permanently as soon as the required research data were collected.

Of these 158 participants, five participants (three males and two females) were selected for interviews as representative of each tribe, gender and region. There have been previous studies with a similar nature of research. For example, Huber (2015) collected 400 posts from 40 mixed gender (male and female) participants. Saidi and Khosravi (2015) included 60 participants (30 male, 30 female). Izadi and Zilaie (2012) collected data from 25 participants of both genders. Theodoropoulou's (2015) study included 400 online users.

The details of the participants such as gender and region-wise distribution are tabulated below in Table 6.

Table 6: *Details of the Participants of this Study*

Region of the Participants	Gender of the Participants		Total Number of Participants	Average Age
	Male	Female		
Centre	17	17	34	28
West	16	9	25	29
North	26	23	49	26
South	16	9	25	29
East	13	12	25	27
Total	88	70	158	-

3.4 The Data Collection Techniques

The research data of the study were collected by means of a social network website and semi-structured interviews. These are explained below.

3.4.1 Social Network Website

As the study aimed to investigate the identity construction strategies and (im)politeness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths online, the data collection was centred on a social network website. Social media networks Facebook and Twitter were not selected due to privacy concerns and the rules regarding the same of the Australian government as these social media platforms would have kept a backup of the data of the participants and it was not possible to delete the participants' data from these websites after the completion of the research study. Due to such privacy concerns, a private social network website (www.ksayouth.net), similar to Facebook, was created only for the purpose of this research and it was closed immediately the data collection process was complete. The website was an open and public website meant for Saudi youths to share, comment, and post the content of their interest on the topic posted for discussion. The users of the website were only those who were participants who joined the study.

After the website was created, the participants were invited to join the website by logging onto it. The advertisement for the same was put up on different online platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The announcement that was put up to recruit the participants is attached in [Appendix C](#). After the participants joined the website, I posted different topics and invited participants to comment on the same. They were also invited to post topics of their choice. The details of the topics posted is attached in [Appendix A](#). After two months from the first post on the website, data collection started in the form of screen shots of the participants' comments to answer research questions 1 and 2. The cut-off time for discussion and commenting

on any topic was two months from the first comment on the topic by participants. These comments of the participants, collected from the website in the form of screen shots, formed the core of the data of the research study for content analysis. Content analysis as a methodology originated with studies of newspaper content. According to Krippendorff (2004), it was traditionally utilised in the communication field. Various studies such as those of Berelson (1952), Kolbe & Burnett (1991), and Harwood and Garry (2003) have successfully used content analysis to achieve the aims of their studies. Following these studies, sample captures of the comments by the participants to different topics are attached in [Appendix D](#).

As social media research is gaining momentum, the data collection from these social media websites has emerged as a new data collection technique. Scholars such as Angouri and Tseliga (2010), Al-Shloul (2015), Culpeper (2011), Graham (2007), Hammod and Abdul-Rassul (2017), Hardaker (2010), Herring, Job-Sluder, Scheckler and Barab (2002) and Morand and Ocker (2003), to mention only a few, have successfully used social networking websites to collect the research data.

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Following the quantitative content analysis of the social network website data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five randomly chosen participants as a follow-up qualitative study. A semi-structured interview uses a combination of unstructured and structured interview questions. In other words, it contains tightly controlled as well as open uncontrolled questions. Alshenqeeti (2014) argues that as qualitative researchers aim to offer thorough descriptions of entities and actions in their natural settings, the role of interviews as data collection for the same has been instrumental. Corbetta (2003) explains that in semi-structured interviews “the wording of the questions are left to the interviewer’s discretion”

(p. 270). Therefore, the interviewer is free to ask the questions she/he considers appropriate. She/he can give explanation to the respondent and can also ask for clarification if the answer is not clear. She/he may ask the respondent to explain further if and when necessary. Another benefit is that the interviewer can inquire about some specific details to explore new ideas which were not thought of initially (Gray, 2004). David and Sutton (2004) also believe that semi-structured interviews give a sense of order to the researcher, whereas Kajornboon (2004) believes that a researcher conducting semi-structured interviews is more free than the one conducting a structured interview. That is why Patton (2002) recommends semi-structured interviews to probe, explore and ask questions which will elucidate and illuminate a particular topic and its details in order to get thorough understanding of it.

With such benefits in mind, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five participants (three males and two females). These participants were representatives of all the five regions and different tribes in Saudi Arabia. The interviews were conducted via Skype and were audio recorded. A female moderator was used to conduct interviews with female participants as Saudi Arabian culture does not permit a man to interact with a female who is a stranger. The questions for the interview were provided in advance and a pilot study was conducted with one male and one female student to make sure that there was no difficulty or ambiguity in the final draft of the questions. The questions were asked in Arabic as most of the participants did not understand and speak English well. An attempt was made to clarify any questions the respondents did not understand correctly. The questions of the interview are attached in [Appendix B](#).

The responses of the participants were subsequently transcribed verbatim and translated into English for data analysis. Regarding transcription, Dornyei (2007) believes that transcribing

interview data implies transforming “the recording into a textual form” (p. 246). As the focus here was on gaining deeper understanding about identity construction strategies and politeness and impoliteness strategies from the participants, a conversation analysis type detailed description was not undertaken. The translation of the interview data as well as that of the website data were checked for accuracy by an expert and were approved with 97% of accuracy.

3.4.3 Committee to Substantiate Translation and Findings on Regional, Tribal words

The study focused on regional, tribal and gender specific words used by participants in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to construct their various associated identities. These words have special regional, tribe specific meanings which are quite different from the Standard Arabic and these people use such words to show their distinct identity. Unfortunately, not much work has been done on these tribe or region specific words which people use to reflect their identities. Therefore, it was quite difficult to verify the authenticity of such words used by the participants online to show their specific local identities. To overcome this problem, the researcher set up a committee to validate the findings of this study. Five people were chosen as representatives from different regions (one from each region in Saudi Arabia). They belonged to different tribes (Alahmari, Alqahtani, Alasmariy, Alsharani, and Algamdia) and comprised both males and females. They were asked to validate the translation of the words, keeping in mind aspects such as appropriateness to the region, gender, tribe of participants. They verified the words and the tribesnames which were used by the participants. They verified that the words used by the participants were identical with the tribes of the participants. That is, those words were generally used by the members of those tribes to which those participants belonged. They were also requested to authenticate the accuracy of the translation of these words locally in terms of tribe

and regional meanings. That is, they were requested to confirm if those words' translations were faithful and correct translations in relation to their meanings in their regions or in their tribes.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are important while carrying out a study that involves participants. With this in mind, all the necessary steps were taken to ensure the research followed all the ethical procedures recommended by the university. In this respect, the first step was to seek approval from the university's ethics committee. After the approval was obtained, the social networking website (www.ksayouth.net) was created to collect the research-related data and the participants were invited to join the website. It was voluntary for the participants to join and also to leave at any point if they felt uncomfortable with any part of the data collection. They were made aware that they had the right not to answer the questions or to stop the data collection procedure at any point in the process. Also, during interviews, participants were interviewed individually through Skype so that their confidentiality could be maintained. All the required consents were obtained from the participants before collecting the data from them. In this respect, Page (2014) states that obtaining consent is a process through which researchers allow the contributors to "negotiate, document and agree their contribution to a research project" (p. 64). Eckert (2013) also points out that participants should be conscious of the research requirements, agree to take part and formally give their consent before joining in the research study as a way of "establishing and maintaining trust" (p. 14).

With this in mind, a brief explanation of the aims, nature and scope of the research was provided to the participants and they were made aware of the role of their contribution in the research. The detailed invitation is attached in [Appendix E](#). Once the participants had joined the study after reading the invitation, they were sent the consent form electronically and were asked

if they agreed with what it said. They were asked to continue to contribute only if they agreed with the details in the consent form. A copy of the consent form is attached in [Appendix F](#). During the data analysis stage, the names and all other private and identifying information, which was provided by the participants in their profiles, were removed so as to protect their privacy and assure their anonymity. The interview participants were coded as P1, P2, and P3.

The data collected from the participants was stored in electronic files accessed by a password-protected computer in the School of Education. OneDrive, an online document storage system for PhD students was used to store the data. To protect the privacy of the participants, these electronic files will be deleted from computer hard-drives and servers, and electronic ‘rubbish bins’ will be emptied. All files will be held securely for a minimum of five years following the publication of reports or articles resulting from data generation and then will be securely deleted from servers and those in physical form will be destroyed.

3.6 Procedures of Data Collection and Data Analysis

As stated above, mixed methods were used for the data collection and data analysis. This approach consisted of two main sequential phases: 1) a quantitative study (data collected from screen captures), and 2) a follow-up qualitative study (interview data). As a part of the quantitative data collection, a private social networking website was created only for the purpose of this research. The participants (Saudi youths) were invited through electronic newspapers as mentioned above. A notice was placed on the website, indicating that the content on the website would be used for research purposes but no identity of any participant would be exposed in any way. Those participants who agreed with the content of the consent form were chosen as the research participants. As part of the data collection, I posted different content (see [Appendix A](#)) related to the topic of research and waited for the participants to write their comments or share

the post or post their own content. After two months from the first post on the website by myself, I started collecting the data in the form of screen captures of the participants' comments in order to answer research questions 1 and 2. The cut-off time for discussion and commenting on any topic was two months from the first comment on the topic by participants.

In online research, data are highly manipulated by users and the information on the internet is not secure: resources can suddenly be removed or be blocked depending on users' choices. It is possible that although participants had agreed to provide their comments and to participate in this project, they could delete their comments at any time and could withdraw at any time not only their participation but also their website membership. If they had removed their comments after participating in this study, the researcher needed to ascertain whether they had also withdrawn their participation from this study. Therefore, in order to monitor online data and to provide information about this project to the participants, I, as a participant observer, regularly participated in some activities such as writing comments, sending internal messages and responding to questions during the data collection and analysis procedure. However, when the conversation was initiated by the participants, I informed them in advance that the content of the conversation might be used for the study.

The study's collection of data involved two strategies, namely frequency counts and interviewing. The first stage of this study was frequency counts. To analyse collected asynchronous web content data, the computer-mediated discourse analysis approach (Herring 2004) was used. Screen captures were taken of website pages to collect asynchronous web content data. The discourse analysis and interactional approach of Bucholtz and Hall (2005) was used to study identity construction strategies and Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) model of Cross Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) coding manual was adopted to

code the politeness strategies used by the participants while commenting and reacting on the website. The second stage was interviews. The results from research questions 1 and 2 were used to design interview questions to answer research question 3. Interviews were conducted in order to gain more details on participants' use of specific strategies and the underlying reasons behind these by using the Skype audio-calling service.

Thus, during the analysis stage, the collected data were examined in three steps to answer the research questions:

The first step was to answer question 1. Thematic analysis of the content taken from the social website posts, comments and replies to comments was undertaken using the procedures from Creswell and Clark (2007, pp.72–74). The content was analysed at different levels such as phonological level (pronunciation of words in different regions), morphological, syntactic level, semantic level, pragmatic and discourse level and extra linguistic level (focusing on use of a specific picture in the profile, appreciating some pictures or figures associated with and revered by a specific tribe to show their identity through such extra linguistic features) in order to count frequencies of such use. Additional data were gathered from the use of different emoticons by participants associated with specific groups and an effort was made to see which emoticons were used more often by whom and what this revealed about their different identities. An attempt was also made to look for positive or negative reactions, coding themes, phrases, terms, and keywords. All of the above elements were used for the construction of various social, regional, and ethnic identities on the social website and its analysis was based on the researcher's knowledge and contributed to a data dictionary about Saudi Arabian language contents founded on elements drawn from the literature. Gee's (2014) approach to discourse analysis was also utilised at this stage. This is because Gee (2014) sees discourse as a process of identity

construction and discourse analysis as the process of deconstructing these strategies used by interlocutors to construct their various identities via language use. These analyses produced a set of the themes and tables explaining their relationships.

In the second step, to answer question 2, a content analysis of posts, comments, replies to comments and posts on the social website was undertaken to see which strategies and sub-strategies were being used by members of specific groups of the participants to be (im)polite, while commenting, posting, reacting to comments and posts on the social website through different speech acts such as requesting, apologising, complaining and complementing. The coding manual provided by Blum Kulka et al. (1989) was used for coding the strategies and Excel was used for frequency counts of different politeness strategies and sub-strategies.

In the third step, the researcher's personal knowledge about perceptions of politeness in different regions and tribes and speech communities in Saudi Arabia was also used at this stage. Interviews were conducted with the participants to gain more details on their use of specific strategies and the underlying reasons behind this use as well as to discover the relationship between their being polite/impolite and their specific cultural, regional identity (if any) behind such use. Inter-regional and cross-regional comparison of respondents' politeness strategies was undertaken at this stage to gain more understanding of this use of identity construction online and offline. The phenomenon of identity construction was studied using the interactional approach (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) that sees identity as emerging in interaction.

This entire process of data collection and data analysis is summarised in the following figure (Figure 6).

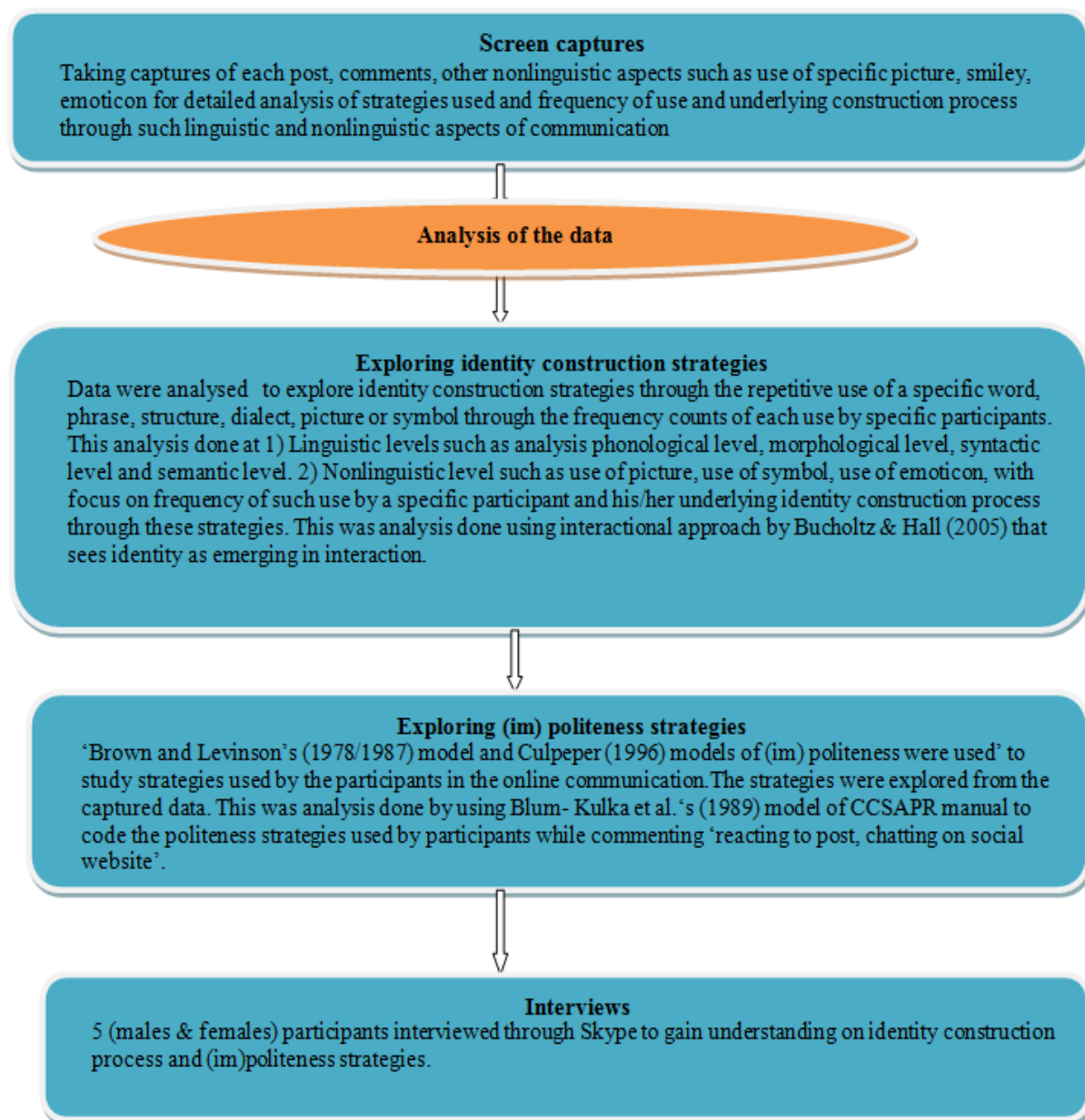


Figure 6. Summary of data collection and analysis steps

As shown in Figure 6, first of all screen captures were taken of participants' comments. These comments were analysed to find out different identity construction strategies, politeness strategies and impoliteness strategies. Based on these findings, interview questions were designed to gain more details on politeness/impoliteness and identity construction strategies.

The findings obtained from each type of data are presented in separate chapters. Each chapter presents results in a thematic form which makes it more systematic, academic and easier for non-expert readers who may be interested in reading only specific results. In addition, each chapter answers one of the research questions. This makes the thesis more systematic both from the researcher's point of view as well as for readers.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have described the methodological framework of the research and all other data collection related aspects. Details about the participants, the data collection instruments used and the choice of the same were summarised in light of the views of some scholars. I also provided details on how the data were collected and what steps and procedures were followed while collecting the research-related data. The ethical considerations were also outlined in the chapter. Some theoretical details about data analysis were also offered. The next chapter will elaborate in detail on the theoretical frameworks followed as well as the steps and procedures of the data analysis.

Chapter 4: Identity Construction Strategies: Data Analysis, Results and Discussion (Research Question 1)

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the methodology was outlined and discussed including the data collection instruments used, ethical considerations observed, and the process and procedures followed while collecting the data. In this chapter, the techniques and procedures of data analysis are outlined and discussed. Following this, the results of both the quantitative and qualitative analyses are presented and discussed in the light of the aims of the study, research questions raised and the available literature on the topic to draw implications.

4.2 Data Analysis

The study involved two types of data: quantitative data (discussion logs captured from a Saudi Arabian social networking website) and qualitative data (from interviews). As discussed in the previous chapter, the data centred on a social network website and the interviews. The quantitative data were collected in the form of screen captures from a private social network website (www.ksayouth.net/), which was similar to Facebook. Follow-up qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed at five levels. First, the quantitative data were analysed to gain a thorough understanding of how the Saudi Arabian youths constructed their social, gender, tribal, religious, and regional identities and which different linguistic strategies they employed to construct these identities. This was intended to gain answers to the first research question in the study—What strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their different socio-cultural identities in online communication on a social website? The detailed analysis of this is presented in sections [4.3.1](#) and [4.3.2](#), and the subsequent results obtained are listed under sections [4.3.1.1](#), [4.3.1.2](#), [4.3.1.3](#),

[4.3.1.5](#), [4.3.1.7](#), [4.3.2.1](#), [4.3.2.3](#), [4.3.2.5](#), and [4.3.2.7](#) below. As this research question involved the investigation of not only the linguistic strategies but also the nonlinguistic strategies, so the data were analysed to this end to seek answers to this nonlinguistic strategies aspect in research question 1. At this level, the data were analysed to gain understanding into how the participants used different nonlinguistic strategies to construct their various identities online. To this end, the images posted by the participants as well as images used in their profile pictures were analysed. These images were classified under different categories such as region-specific images, tribe-specific images, gender-specific images, and religion-specific images. These classified images were then analysed to see which nonlinguistic strategies were used by the participants to construct their various identities. The detailed analysis of the nonlinguistic strategies used to construct various identities and the results obtained are given below in section [4.3.2](#) and its sub-sections.

At the third level, the data were analysed to gain a thorough understanding of the politeness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths online. The aim at this stage was to find answers to the second research question of the study—Which strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication? As the study aimed to identify the strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths for being polite as well as for being impolite, the data were analysed at this stage following prominent frameworks in politeness and impoliteness research. To analyse the data related to politeness strategies, the framework of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) was used to see if the Saudi Arabian youths followed the same politeness strategies as proposed and outlined by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) in their theory of politeness. Blum and Kulka's (1989) noted CCSARP coding manual was used to this end. A further investigation was conducted in order to determine whether the Saudi Arabian

youths used any new or different Saudi culture and context specific politeness strategies. The detailed analysis of all the related data and their findings are presented in Chapter 5.

The second research question was also directed at the impoliteness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths. Therefore, the data were analysed at a fourth level in order to study the impoliteness strategies employed in the online interactions by the Saudi Arabian youths. This detailed analysis of impoliteness strategies and their results are presented in Chapter 5. As online communication is often seen as highly impolite, the aim was to see if the Saudi youths too were impolite in their online interactions. To this end, topics related to impoliteness were posted and the comments of the Saudi youths on these topics were captured and analysed. To study the impoliteness phenomenon, Culpeper's (1996) framework was used to see which impoliteness strategies were more common among the Saudi Arabian youths for communicating impoliteness. It was also studied to see if these impoliteness strategies were the same as suggested by Culpeper (1996) or whether there were different Saudi Arabian culture and context specific impoliteness strategies which the Saudi Arabian youths used in their online commenting.

During all these levels, the comments of the Saudi Arabian participants were saved in the form of captured images and were studied meticulously to see if there were any region-specific, tribe-specific, religion-specific, or gender-specific words, phrases, or dialects which participants used to show their regional, tribal, religious, or gender identities. These words were classified in tables under specific headings such as tribe-related vocabulary, gender-related vocabulary, and region-specific vocabulary. Then their counts in the comments were noted and recorded in the table to see which words and phrases were more commonly used and by whom. The comments were also studied to see and note polite and impolite words used by the participants. These words were classified under different strategies of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978,

1987) and impoliteness strategies suggested by Culpeper (1996). The Saudi Arabian culture and context specific polite and impolite words, which the participants had used but could not be classified under any of the strategies by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Culpeper (1996) were written as a new contribution of this study and an addition to Brown and Levinson's theory as well as Culpeper's framework of impoliteness.

As the third research question of the study was aimed at gaining a thorough understanding of different aspects of politeness, impoliteness, linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths in their online commenting on the social media website, some participants were interviewed in order to collect the data related to this research question. The research question—In what sense are these online identity construction and politeness strategies similar and, at the same time, different, inter-regionally as well as cross-culturally?—was also aimed at finding out if the Saudi youths were aware that they were constructing different identities and that they were being polite or impolite and that they were using respective strategies. To this end, the related data were analysed at the fifth level. At this level, the interview transcriptions were prepared from the recorded Skype audio- files in mp3 format. Each of the participants' responses was analysed and interpreted individually and then collectively, looking for commonality and distinctiveness in their responses. The data were analysed and reviewed time and again to identify thematic patterns in their responses to record the results and findings.

Each of these analyses at these levels is presented below and the findings are discussed in light of the aims of the study, research questions and the literature on the topic.

4.3 Screen Capture Data for Linguistic Strategies of Identity Construction: Analysis and Findings

The data from the screen captures for identity construction strategies were analysed at linguistic as well as at nonlinguistic levels to see which linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies were used by the Saudi youths to construct their various identities online. These data analysis steps at linguistic and nonlinguistic levels are summarised in the chart below (Figure 7).

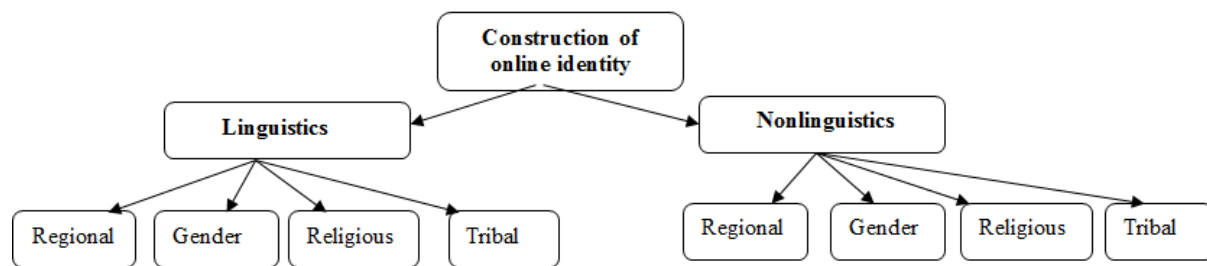


Figure 7. Summary of linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies of online identity construction at different levels

The data collected in the form of screen captures from a total of 158 participants (88 males and 70 females) commenting on different topics posted on the social media website formed the corpus of this study. These captures were taken as part of the first level of analysis, quantitatively focusing on the frequency counts of typical recurring expressions by some participants to deconstruct their identity construction process through such means. Results of the analysis revealed various expressions, phrases, and words/vocabulary used by the participants to construct their regional, tribal, religious, and gender identities. These linguistic strategies that were used by the participants to construct their various identities are elaborated on and discussed in the following sections.

4.3.1 Linguistic Strategies used by the Participants to Construct Regional Identity

As the data analysis process began to decode various linguistic strategies used by the participants to construct their identities, the first focus was on identifying the region-specific

words, phrases, and dialects observed in the comments of the participants. Therefore, each comment from the corpus was captured time and again to see if there were any words, phrases, or dialects belonging to different regions in Saudi Arabia. Firstly, all the words, phrases, and dialects specific to the east region were noted and written in a table. Then the words specific to the west region were noted and written in the table, then the central region specific words were recorded followed by words specific to the south and north region. At this time an attempt was also made to check and count the frequency of these words (see [Appendix G](#), which shows the topics-wise region-specific words used by the Saudi Arabian youths to construct their regional identities). Table 7 below shows the region-wise use of region-specific words and linguistic markers to construct regional identity.

Table 7: *Region-Wise Use of Region-Specific Words and Linguistic Markers to Construct Regional Identity*

No.	Regions in Saudi Arabia	Region-specific words used with counts	Total counts
1	East	صح / really (11), محق / worst (7), حمولته / family (1), ربال / man (3), جذي / like that (1), شدةعوه / What's the matter (1)	23
2	West	دا / this (9), دحين / now (19), كثير / more (7), هذا /this (10), يابوي / o my father (1), كدا /like that (1), تنبكبك / crying (1), البزوره / children (3), خوي / friend (1), يا حج / O Haj (4), هيا / try to solve this (1), دى / this (1), يعمي / O my uncle (2), عانه / look (1), الديقيس / under stairs (1), كثيره / more (1), بهرجة / show (1), ايوه / yes (1)	65
3	Centre	دا / this (25), تدر عمين / walk without thinking (2), معتنس / you are right (3), زلابه / bad man (2), بذي / like this (1), تدر عم / walk without thinking (6), الدر عمه / walk without thinking (1), أقديت / you are right (1)	41
4	South	كهل / old fool (6), الهوايش / crawling creatures (4), الجنوبي / southern (1), تشتي / what you want (1), قده / ability (1), أين / where (1), ارحب / welcome (1), أفغر / dull person (1), القحم / old man(2)	18
5	North	عويد /Owaid (1), انهج / I go (3), بحر / look (5), هلون / like that (2), تسبدي / My liver (1), بعدحيي / my life (1), هذي /this (2), حيل / more/ (2), اللحين / now (2), وشتعمل / what are doing(1).	20

The topic-wise use of these linguistic strategies, in the form of region-specific words and phrases is presented below in Figure 8.

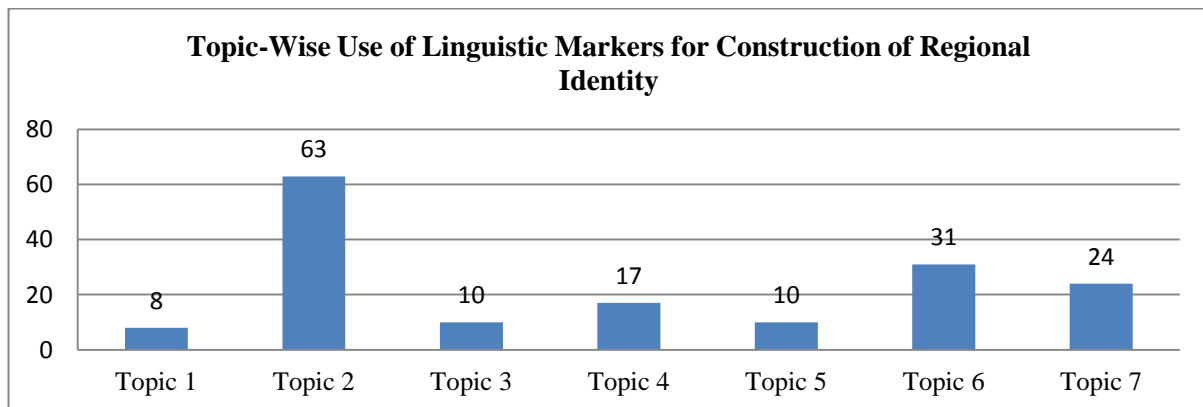


Figure 8. Topic-wise use of linguistic markers for construction of regional identity

To explore how the Saudi Arabian youths constructed their various identities through different linguistic markers such as by using region-, tribe-, or gender-specific words, different topics were posted on the social networking website created for the data collection purpose only. Of the different topics posted, seven were selected, randomly, for data corpus and then analysis of these data. These seven topics were:

1. Generation gap among Saudis
2. Saudi people's perceptions of Trump during presidential election
3. Importance of English language education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
4. Enquiry about the best internet company in the Kingdom
5. Complaining about policeman fining a man wrongly
6. Apologising to a fellow passer-by who was hit by mistake
7. Old countryman enjoying his laptop while smoking

Participants posted their comments on these topics. When these comments were captured and analysed for region-specific words, results were obtained which are presented in [Table 1](#) of [Appendix G](#) and Figure 8 above. In the topic about generation gap, Saudi youths had used eight region-specific words. In the comments on the second topic about Trump, the participants had used 63 region-specific words to construct their various regional identities. In the third topic on the importance of English language education in Saudi Arabia, the participants used 10 region-specific words; in the fourth topic, they used 17 region-specific words; in the fifth one, they used 10 region-specific words; in the sixth topic, they used 31 region-specific words; and in the seventh topic, participants used 24 region-specific words revealing their regional and geographical origin through language use. With these results as a basis, the researcher set up a committee to substantiate the new findings in this study. The committee was comprised of five persons, one from each region, and they agreed that the words and tribe names belonged to their regions.

When the data were analysed region-wise, the following results were obtained, as represented in Figure 9 below.

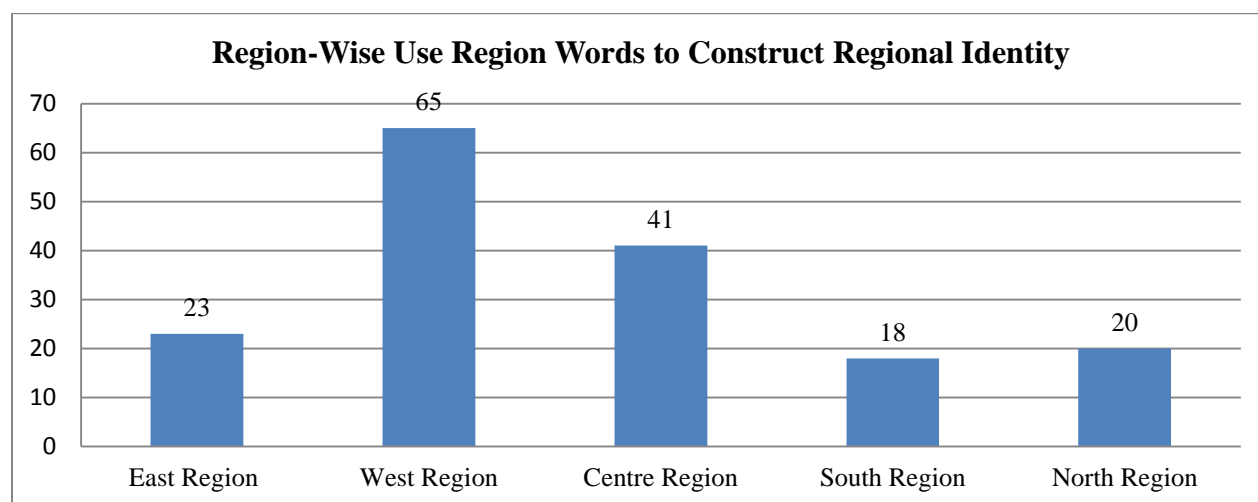


Figure 9. Region-wise use of region-specific words and linguistic markers to construct regional identity

As seen in Figure 9 above, participants from the west region used a maximum of 65 linguistic markers to show their regional background in their comments. The west region-specific words used by the participants in the comments included: **دا** / this (used 9 times), **دحين** / now (used 19 times), **كتير** / more (used 7), and **هدا** /this (used 10). Some of the comments are given below highlighting the region-specific linguistic markers/words used by the participants in their comments. All of the words found in this study that were related to the west region were confirmed by a person living in the west region. This person's name is Ahmed, aged 35, and he stated that 98% of these words are accurate and used in the west region (see [Appendix H](#)). The comments of the participants were selected randomly as they contained various region-specific words and as these comments revealed the regional backgrounds of the participants.

These comments were transliterated (see page xvi for the transliteration chart used in this study) and translated as follows:

Comment 1

P:103 ايوه الكلام دا صحيح الانقليزي مهم في (حياتنا) حيتنا وفي كل وقت

Transliteration: Aywahalkalam **da** sayhayh alanglayazy amaham faey hayatana waa faey keel waqat.

Translation: **Yes. This** is correct. English language is important in our life and always.

This first comment has the word ‘دا’ which is transliterated as “da” and translated as “this”. The word is common in the west region and anyone who hears this word can say that the person using it is from the west region.

Comment 2

P:11 طز فيك ياشيخ دحين وقت شيشه

Transliteration: Tawaz fayak yaa shayak **dahyana** wakat shyshah.

Translation: O’ Shaiky Screw you **now** the time for shyshah (smoking).

The second comment has the word ‘دحين’ which is transliterated as “dahyana” and translated as “now”. This word is mainly used in the west region of Saudi Arabia and is considered as belonging to the west region dialect. The following comment also contains the same word which shows that the participant who posted this comment is from the west region.

Comment 3

P:108 دحين أصبح الكمبيوتر مهم في حياتنا اليومية وهذا نموذج لذلك

Transliteration: Dahyana asbah alkmpuotar maham faey hyatana alywmayah waa hada namwthaej lethaelak.

Translation: Now computers have become inseparable part of our daily life and **this** is an example of that.

Comment 4

P:117 تحياتي لك يا حج كل دى في وقت واحد شيشه وكمبيوتر

Transliteration: Tahyaty laak yaa **haj** kaal **dah** faey waqt wahad shysha and kmpuotar.

Translation: My regards for you **Haj** all of **this** at the same time. Shishah (smoking) and computer.

This comment highlights further west region-specific words used only in the west region which are ‘دى’ (transliterated as “**dah**” meaning “**this**”) and ‘يا حج’ (transliterated as “Ya Haj” and meaning “O Haj” (old person). These words are typically west region-specific words and show that the participants using them are from the west region. Thus, language is used to reveal the regional identity of an individual.

The following comment also shows another west region-specific word ‘هيا’ which is transliterated as “Haiya” and means “try to solve it”. This is a west region-specific word only and used solely by people from a west region background in their communication.

Comment 5

P:139 هيا حالها شيشة وكمبيوتر بس بصراحه حلوه الصورة

Transliteration: Haya helhaa shysha waa kmpuotar bas bsraha halwah alsworah.

Translation: **Try to solve it.** Shishah (smoking) and computer. But really it is nice picture.

Centre region participants used 41 linguistic markers or centre region-specific words such as / ذا / meaning “this” which was used 25 times by the participants in their comments on the topics mentioned above. The other centre region-specific words included- / تدرعين / walk without thinking (2), / معتس / you are right (3), / ذي / this (1), / زلابه / bad man (2), and / بذى / like this (1). Some of the comments are given below, highlighting the region-specific linguistic markers/words used by the participants in their comments. These comments were transliterated and translated.

The comments were selected randomly for the presence of centre region-specific words for showing centre-region background. The first comment shows the word **ثا** which is transliterated as “thae” which means “this/these”. It is used by people from the centre region only. The second comment also includes another centre region-specific word which is **زلابه** which is transliterated as “**zlabah**” and refers to a bad and weak person who does not trust himself/herself. This is a centre region-specific expression only and any Saudi listening to this expression can say that the person is from the centre region. The third comment is also representative of a word from the centre region which is **بذي** and is transliterated as “**bethaey**”. The word means “this” and is considered as a centre-region dialect word. Thus, the use of it in the comment reveals the centre-region background of the person. The fourth comment includes the word **معتس** which is transliterated as “**maatass**” and means “**you are right**”. This is used when people discuss something and one of them uses this expression to show agreement with the counterpart. Like the earlier comments, this too is a centre region-specific word and is reflective of centre-region identity. The fifth comment also uses another such affirmative expression from the centre region **أقديت** which is transliterated as “Aqdayat” and means “you are right” or “I agree with you”. It too is a centre region-specific expression and shows the centre region geographical origin of the participant using this word in the comment. In this respect, the researcher contacted Ibrahim, aged 29, from the centre region. He agreed that these words are more popular among people in the centre region, and that 97% of these words are accurate (see [Appendix B](#)). To sum up, the comments below are marked with different centre region-specific words which have been highlighted in bold.

Comment 1

P:111 لا يوجد اي اختلاف فقط هناك رافيهه عند الشباب وفي الوقت/ مما جعلهم غير يتهوون في القرارات

Transliteration: Laa ywajad ayy aktalafa faqat hanak rafahyah annd alshabab waa feey alwaqt **thae** mama jalaham gayar yahtmwana feey alqararat.

Translation: No difference between the generations but the young generation are living a better life **these** days and they don't care about the decisions they take.

Comment 2

P: 69 اياه والله صادقہ ياختي تافهين والواحد منهم زلابہ ما يدافع عن نفسه

Transliteration: Aya waa Allah yaa aktay tafahayan waa alwahaad manham **zlabah** maa ydafa ann nafsah.

Translation: By God. You are right my sister. Some of them are trifle and **bad and weak who do not trust themselves** and cannot defend themselves.

Comment 3

P:110 هههه التطور ما هو بذي الطريقة التي جعلنا أغرب البشر شيشة وكمبيوتر ما تمشي مع بعض وبعد كبير بالسن

Transliteration: Hhhh altatwoar maa hwow **bedh** altryqah alteay tgalana agrab albshar shyshah waa kmpuotar maa tamshay maa bathe waa baad kabyer basan.

Translation: Hhhh... One does not expect the development in **this** way which makes us a strange human being. Shishah (smoking) and computer do not work together particularly in old age.

Comment 4

P: 141 ذا مجنون رسمي الله ياخذہ وانا معتس يا اخت تواصيل

Transliteration: Thae majnwan rasmay Allah yaktheah waa anna **maats** yaa akat twasyfa.

Translation: He is officially a lunatic. May God take him and **you're right**. I agree with you sister Twasyaf.

Comment 5

أقديت يوم تعذر للرجال وتقول انا اسف واعتذر عن الخطاء وانا مستعد اشترى جوال لك **P:27**

Transliteration: **Aqdayat** yoom aatethaert waa taqwal anna assafa waa aatether ann alkata waa mastaad ashtry jwoal lak.

Translation: **You are right.** When you apologise, you will say I'm sorry for the mistake and I will buy a new mobile for you.

Participants from the east region used 23 east region-specific words to show their east-region identity through their language in the comments on the topics. Some of the main east region-specific words used included صح / really (used 11 times), امحق / worst (used 7 times), ريال / man (used 3 times), جذي / like that (used 1 time), شدعوه / and what's the matter (used 1 time).

Some of the comments are given below, highlighting the region-specific linguistic markers/words used by the participants in their comments. These comments were transliterated and translated as follows:

Comment 1

P: 61 فيظل الطفره التي تشهدها دولتنا (والله الحمد) والله الحمد نقدر نقول ان الانجليزي ليس عقبه في التعليم **صح** ان بعض الاشخاص لا يحبون تعليم اللغه الانجليزية

Transliteration: Faey theal altafrah aleatey tashadah dwlatana waa Allah alhmud naqdar naqwal anna alangalayzy layasa aqabah feey altalyam **soug** anna bedh alashkas laayahbwan talya alanglayazay.

Translation: With reforms in our country, thank God, we can say that the English language is not difficult for the learners but **really** some people dislike to learn it.

The first comment is used here as it contains an east region-specific word. The participant used “**صح**” which is transliterated as “sough” which means “really”. This word is used only in the east region.

Comment 2

P:53 امحق شركات اتصالات كلها مثل بعضها

Transliteration: **Amhaq** shrekat atesalat kaalah matheal badheaha.

Translation: **Worst** telecommunication companies. All of them are the same.

This comment too is east region-specific as it is marked with an east region-specific word “امحق”, transliterated as “amhaq” which means “worst”. The word is east-region dialect and anyone using it is understood as being from the east region. The participant using this is from the east region as he/she has used the word from the east region, thereby revealing his/her east-region identity.

Comment 3

P: 152 شذوه عاد يعني اللي يشيش يكون جاهل بالتكنولوجيا!! الصورة توضح مدى الفجوة بين جيل الاجداد وجيل الشباب

Transliteration: Shadawah aad yannay allay yshaysh ykwean jahal betknologya..!!

alswrah tawadhh madaa alfajwah bayan jayal alajdad waa jayal alshabab.

Translation: **What is the matter** a person smoking Shishah

is ignorant about the technology..! The picture describes the extent to which there is a gap between the grandparents’ generation and the younger generation.

This comment too is east region-specific as it contains an east region-specific word which means “what’s the matter” in English. Comment 4 and comment 5 below also show east region-related words which are highlighted in bold. In comment 4, the word ‘ريال’, transliterated as “raial”, means “man” and is very common among natives of the east region. The use of ‘جذي’ (qasday) meaning “intentionally” is also a reflection of east regionality of the person posting the comment. These words reflect and show that the participants using them are from east region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Comment 4

P: 146 اقول وبدون تردد انا اسفه واعتذر منك طبعا ريال او حرمه

Transliteration: Aqwal waa bdwan traded assafah waa atathaer manke tabaun **raial** awo hwrmah.

Translation: Without any hesitation, I'm sorry. I apologise to you, **man** or women.

Comment 5

P: 23 الاعتراف بالغلط ماهو عيب واقول لها اعذريني والله ما كان قصدي جذي

Transliteration: Alaatrafa balgalat mahow ayab waa aqwal laha Allah maa kan qasdaya **chathae**.

Translation: Admitting a mistake isn't a flaw. Forgive me, by God, it wasn't my intention did **like that**.

The participants from the south region used 18 region-specific words each. The south region participants used words such as كهل / old fool (used 6 times), الهوايش / crawling creatures (used 4 times), الجنوبي / southern (used 1 times), تشتي / what you want (used 1 time), قده / ability (used 1 time), أين / where (used 1 time) to reveal their south-region identity through the language. Some of the comments are given below, highlighting the region-specific linguistic markers/words used by the participants in their comments. These comments were transliterated and translated. The first comment is marked with the south-region specific word “كهل” transliterated as alkahal and translated as “old fool”. The use of this word is often interpreted as derogatory and impolite and it is used in the south region with the intention of insulting someone. The comment also shows another south region-specific word “تشتي” which is pronounced “teshtay” and which refers to the choices or means “what you want” in this context. The third comment is marked with another south region-specific word “قده” transliterated as “qadah” which means “one can” in this context. These words are south region-specific and are used by the people who dwell in the south region and therefore reflect their geographical origin

through the use of such words. The researcher contacted Ibrahim, aged 37, from the south region. He confirmed that these words are used by people in the south region and they 98% are accurate (see [Appendix H](#)). The fifth comment has two south region-specific words “اين” and “ارحب” which mean “where” and “welcome” respectively. The use of these words by the participants is reflective of their geographical background which shows that the person using them belongs to the south region. Thus, the participants used various south region-specific words to show their south-region background, as shown in the comments below.

Comment 1

P: 46 بالعمر هذا الواحد يبحث عن العباده والكهل هذا جالس يشيش قلعه تقلعه

Transliteration: Balamar hathae alwahad yabathathea ann alabadah waa **alkahal** hathea jalas yshayah qalah tqalah.

Translation: In this age, a person generally is busy with worship and prayers but this **old man** is set for smoking talk in this life.

This first comment is from the participant from the south region as she/he used a south region-specific word in the comment, namely “الكهل” meaning “old man”. This word is mainly used in the south region only and is indicative of their south region identity.

Comment 2

P:140 اختي بارك الله فيك زي ما افادوك حسب المنطقه و راح تلقي ماهو تشتي لك

Transliteration: Akteay barak Allah faeyak zay maa afadawak hasab almndqah waa rah telqy mahow **teshtay** laeak.

Translation: Sister, may God bless you, like what they said based on the region and you can find **what you want**.

The second comment has the word “تشتي” which is translated as “**what you want**”. This word is mainly used in the south region of Saudi Arabia and is considered as belonging to the south region dialect. The following comment also contains the same word which shows that the participant who posted this comment is from the south region.

Comment 3

P: 96 ماشاء الله اختي موضوع جدا مهم ولكن المشكله ما احد قدّه اعطاك الافضل

Transliteration: Mashallah akteay mawdhewoa maham jedan waa lakan maa ahead **qadah** aataek alafdheal.

Translation: God be exalted my sister. Your question is very important but the problem is no **one** can give you the best opinion.

The above comment also shows another south region-specific word “قدّه” which is translated as “one can”. This is a south region-specific word only and used by the people from a south-region background only in their communication.

Comment 4

P:140 اتركوكم منه هذا خبل هذا كهل ومثل الهوايش

Transliteration: Atrkwkom mannh hathae kabal hathae kahal waa matheala **alhawyash**.

Translation: Leave him, this is dementia, old stupid like **crawling creatures**.

Comment 4 above and comment 5 below also show south region related words which are highlighted in bold. In comment 4, the word “الهوايش”, translates as “**crawling creatures**” and is very common among the natives of the south region. The use of “ارحب” meaning “**welcome**” is also reflection of south regionality of the person posting the comment. These words reflect and show that the participants using them are from south region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Comment 5

P:157 الاعتذار شي اساسي/اين حصل الخطاء واقوله ارحب انا اعتذر

Transliteration: Alatahaer sheay asasay ayan hasal alkta waa aqwal **arhab** anna atathaer.

Translation: Apologising is important *where* there is a mistake. **Welcome**, I'm apologising.

The participants from the north region also used 20 north region-specific words such as **انهج** / I go (used 3 times), **بحر** / look (used 5 times), **هلون** / like that (used 2 times), **تسبدي** / My liver that (1), **بعدي** / my life that (1) to construct their north-region identity through language. These words are specifically used by people from the Alshammari tribe to construct their north-region identity through language. The researcher asked Mezna, aged 41, from the northern region and she confirmed that these words are 98% accurate and more popular among people from this region (see [Appendix H](#)).

Some of the comments are given below to highlight the region-specific linguistic markers/words used by the participants in their comments. These comments were transliterated and translated as follows:

Comment 1

P:55 التقنيه الحديثه و السريعه لها سبب كبير في هذي (الفجوة)الفجوه و لكل جيل مواهب و منافع و ايضا عيوب و (لكن)لاكن على حسب اما تكون (المميزات) المميزات اكثر ولا العيوب اكثر و سبب هذي (الفجوة)الفجوه انغجار التقنيه و التواصلات الحديثه والتعليم الجيد و (لكن)لاكن في جيل زمان لم يكن هناك تعلم لهذيه الدرجه مان التعلم ضعيف لهذا التعلم بين الحيلين بينهما فرق كبير

Transliteration: Altaqnyah alhadyatheah waa alsryaha laha sabab kabyar faey **hathaey** alfjwah waa lekal jayal mwahab waa manafa waa aydhan aywab waa lakan alla hesab amma takwan almmyzat akthear waa laa alayab waa sabab hatheay alfjwah anfjar altqnyah waa altwasal alhdytheah waa altalyam aljyad waa laykan feey jayal zaman lama ykwan hanak talyam lehathey aldrajah maa altalyam theayaf leahethea altalyam byan aljylayan byanham farq kabyar.

Translation: Each generation has plus and minus things and technology is mainly responsible for **this** generation gap.

This first comment is by a participant from the north region as she/he used the north region-specific word in the comment “هذي” meaning “this”. This word is mainly used in the north region only and is indicative of their north region identity.

Comment 2

P: 42 ليش ما يخافون الله العسكر من عمايلهم الشينه وكيف بيون يواجهون ربهم

Transliteration: Layash maa yakafawan rabaham alaskar maan amylaham **alshyanh** waa kayaf yabwan ywjhwan rabham.

Translation: Why such dishonest policemen do not fear Allah **for unethical** actions? How will they justify such actions to Allah?

This second comment too reflects that the person posting is from the north region as she/he used the word “الشينه” which is a north-region dialect word. It means “unethical” and is used only by the north-region residents in their communication.

Comment 3

P:14 هلون ومن قبل سياسة دول وماشراتها مجهولة الى الان

Transliteration: **Halwan** waa maan qabal syasat aldwal waa mashratah majhwalah alla alaan.

Translation: **Like that** in the past, the country’s policy and predictions are uncertain right now.

Comment 4

P:136 متأسفه يا بعد تسبدي انا اسفه

Transliteration: Mtassafah yaa baad **tsabaday** anna assafah.

Translation: Sorry, you are more precious than **my liver**. I’m sorry.

Comment 5

P:99 انا اسفه يا بعد حيي

Transliteration: Anna assafah yaa **baad hieey**.

Translation: I'm sorry. You are more **precious than my life**.

The words “هلون”, “تسبدي”, and “بعد حيي” are also north region-specific words and are noticed in the communications of the northerners only in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Their meanings have been highlighted in bold in the comments above. It can be said that the north-region participants revealed their regional background through the use of such north region-specific words. Thus, one can say that language use indeed reveals the geographical origin of the person as people use their language to construct their regional identities.

4.3.1.1 Results of Research Question 1 [Regional Identity Construction Strategies]

At the first level of data analysis, the data were analysed in order to find answers to research question 1—What strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their different socio-cultural identities in online communication on a social website? From the analysis of the data above, the following findings were obtained:

- 1- Participants used linguistic strategies such as using region-specific words and phrases such as صج / really (used by participants from the east region), دحين / now (used by participants from the west region), نا / this (used by participants from the centre region), كهل / old fool (used by participants from the south region) and العنزي / Alanazi (tribe name used by participants from the north region).
- 2- Of the region-specific words used for construction of regional identity, most were used by the participants from the west region (65 counts), followed by the centre region participants (41 counts), east region participants (23 counts), south region participants (18 counts) and north region participants (20 counts).

- 3- Of the different region-specific words used to construct different regional identities, the word *هنا*/this was used the most (26 counts), followed by words *الآن*/ now (19 counts, *هنا* /, this (9 counts), *صحيح*/ really (11 counts) *كثير*/, more (7 counts) in their order of highest use.

The top five region-specific words used by the participants to construct their regional identity are tabled below (Table 8) along with the region of their use and the total number of times (counts) they were used.

Table 8: *Top Five Region-Specific Words in their Order of Use in the Comments for the Construction of Regional Identity*

No.	Region-Specific words	Region of Use	Counts
1	<i>هنا</i> /this	Centre region	25
2	<i>الآن</i> / now	West region	19
3	<i>هنا</i> / this	West region	9
4	<i>صحيح</i> / really	East region	11
5	<i>كثير</i> / more	West region	7

4.3.1.2 Linguistic Strategies used by the Participants to Construct Tribal Identity

After analysing the data for regional identity construction linguistic strategies in section [4.3.1](#), during the first level of data analysis, the focus was shifted to find out the linguistic strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths to construct their tribal identities. Arabs are tribal communities and they are divided into various tribes. They take pride in their tribes and use tribe-specific words, dress, and customs to distinguish themselves from other tribes. The focus in this study was to see if the participants also used tribe-specific words online to identify themselves with the members of a specific tribe. To this end, comments from the participants were analysed time and again to find the use of any tribe-related words, dialect and phrases and then such words and phrases were categorised along with their counts in the form of a table. These words and phrases were later classified into specific tribes and were further categorised to understand how many tribes were represented by the participants while taking part in the study

and while commenting. Their comments were studied to see which tribe they belonged to and how they tried to show their tribal identity through the use their tribe specific word/phrase (see [Appendix G](#)).

The following figure(Figure10) shows the tribe-related words used by the Saudi Arabian youths to construct their tribal identities while commenting on different topics.

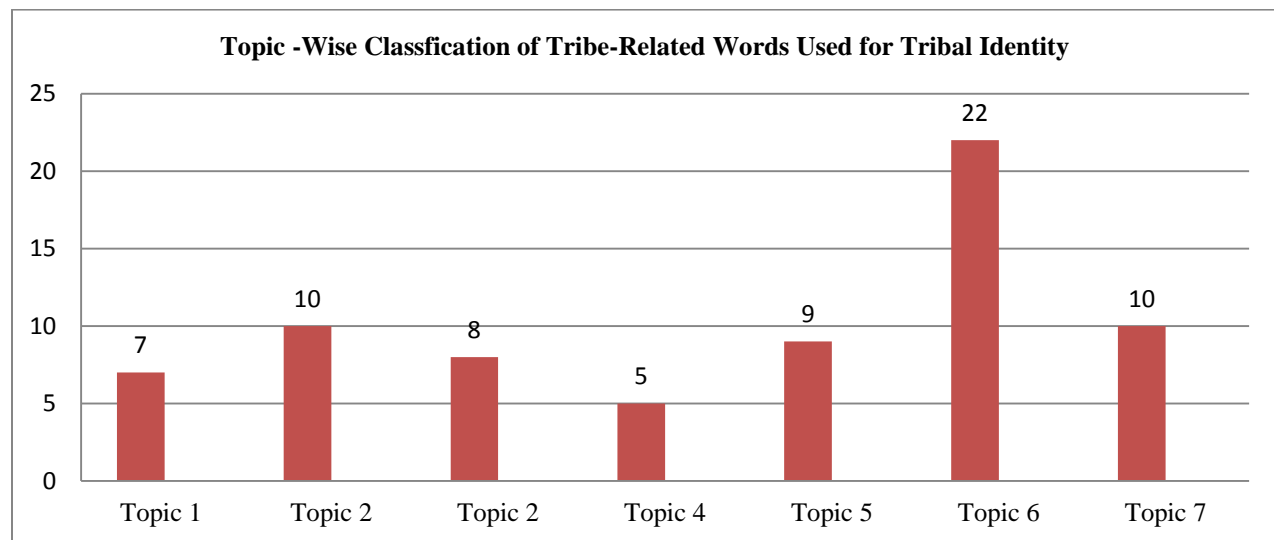


Figure 10. Topic-wise classification of tribe-related words used for tribal identity

As can be seen from Table 8 and Figure 10 above, the maximum number of tribe-related words (22 counts) were used by the participants in topic six while commenting on the topic about apologising to a person who was hit by accident while walking in a corridor. These tribe-related words were mostly names of the tribes which participants had used in their profile names. The top used words are summarised below (Table 9) in the order of their occurrence.

Table 9: *Most-Used Tribe-Related Words and Linguistic Markers used to Construct Tribal Identity*

Sr. No.	Tribes in Saudi Arabia	Tribe-Related Words Used and Counts	Total Counts
1	Alanazi	Tribe name in profile (24)	24
2	Alshammari	Tribe name in profile (10), use of tribe-related word: Owaid (1)	11
3	Alqahtani	Tribe name in profile (5)	5
4	Alharbi	Tribe related name in profile (4)	4
5	Aldossari	Tribe name in profile (4)	4
6	Alahmari	Tribe related name in profile (3)	3
7	Alzahrani	Tribe name in profile (3)	3
8	Alrwiliy	Tribe name in profile (2)	2
9	Alotaibi	Tribe name in profile (2)	2
10	Small family	Tribe related name in profile (2)	2
11	Alshahrani	Tribe name in profile (1)	1
12	Albalawi	Tribe name in profile (1)	1
13	Alasmariy	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	1
14	Alhazmai	Tribe name in profile (1)	1
15	Algamdia	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	1
16	Alawni	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	1
17	Alharthy	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	1
18	Althagafi	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	1
19	Alshamsi	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	1
20	Bahrani	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	1
21	Bedouin	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	1

As noted in Table 9 above, a total of 21 tribes were revealed by the participants through their use of language. The most used tribe-related words (24 counts) came from the participants from the Alanazi tribe, followed by the Alshammari tribe (11 counts), the Alqahtani tribe (5 counts), the Alharbi tribe (4 counts), the Aldossari tribe (4 counts), the Alahmari tribe (3 counts),

the Alzahrani tribe (3 counts), the Alrwiliy tribe (2 counts), the Alotaibi tribe (2 counts) and the remaining tribes with one count each. The most common linguistic strategy used by the participants to construct their tribal identity was using the tribe name as their last name in their profiles. For example: ABC *Alanazi*, XYZ *Althagafi*, BCD *Alqahtani*, MNP *Alotaibi*, PQR *Albalawi* in addition to linguistic strategies, pictures of various tribe-related dress, food, celebrations, and customs were also posted to construct tribal identities. These will be discussed separately in a later section concerning nonlinguistic strategies.

4.3.1.3 Results of Research Question 1 [Tribal Identity Construction Strategies]

As a part of research question 1, the data were analysed to find answers to the tribe-related identity construction strategies. From the data analysis of the tribe-related information in the comments of the participants, the following findings were obtained.

Participants used linguistic strategies such as using tribe name as a last name as in : ABC *Alanazi*, XYZ *Althagafi*, BCD *Alqahtani*, MNP *Alotaibi*, PQR *Albalawi* to construct and reveal their tribal identity online.

- 1- Most of the tribe-related words were used by the participants belonging to Alanazi tribe (24 counts), followed by Alshammari tribe participants (11 counts), Alqahtani tribe participants (5 counts), Alharbi tribe participants (4 counts), Aldossari tribe participants (4 counts), Alahmari tribe participants (3 counts) and Alzahrani tribe participants (3 counts).
- 2- A total of 21 tribes were revealed by the participants through their use of language online when commenting on different topics posted on the social media website created for the data collection purpose.

- 3- The top five tribes with the most tribe-related words noted on the social media website were: Alanazi tribe, Alshammari tribe, Alqahtani tribe, Alharbi tribe, and Aldossari tribe. These are tabulated below in Table 10 along with the tribe-related words counts they received online.

Table 10: *Top Five Tribes along with the Tribe-Related Word Counts Found in the Online Comments*

No.	Tribe Name	Tribe-Related Word Counts Recorded
1	Alanazi	24
2	Alshammari	11
3	Alqahtani	5
4	Alharbi	4
5	Aldossari	4

4.3.1.4 Linguistic Strategies used by the Participants to Construct Religious Identity

After analysing the data to find out the linguistic strategies used by the Saudi youths to construct regional and tribal identities, the focus in the next level was to find out the linguistic strategies used by the participants to construct their religious identity. To this end, the comments of the participants, collected in the form of screen captures, were analysed looking for words, phrases, and expressions denoting or showing the religious aspect of Saudi people. As mentioned in the literature review section [2.4.2](#), Saudi society is deeply religious and their day-to-day conversations are marked with different religious expressions which indicate their distinct Arab Muslim identity. At this level of data analysis, such religious expressions were noted and tabulated. First they were categorised topic wise. Then the top/most used words and expressions were listed to draw appropriate conclusions about the Saudi youths' religious identity construction process. The religious words and expressions used to construct religious identity in each topic are summarised along with their counts (see [Appendix G](#)).

This topic-wise classification of religious words, phrases and expressions used to reflect religious identity by the Saudi Arabian youths can also be summarised as follows in Figure 11.

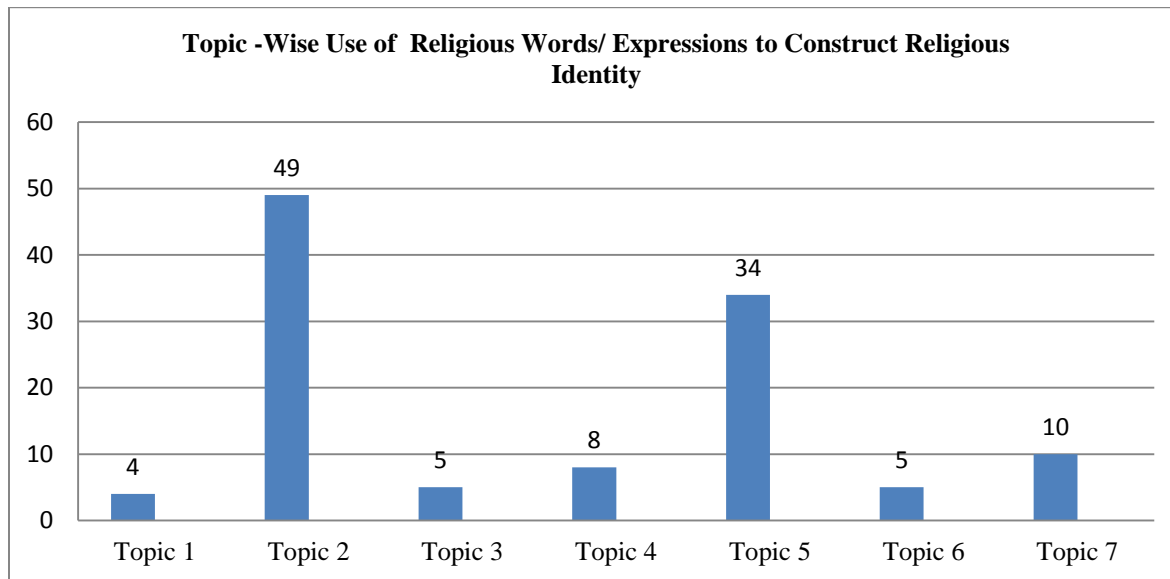


Figure 11. Topic-wise use of religious words/expressions to construct religious identity

As can be seen from [Table 3](#) of [Appendix G](#) and Figure 11 above, the maximum number of religious words, phrases and expressions (49 counts) were used by the participants in topic number two about Saudi youths' perceptions about President-elect Donald Trump. The second most topic with regard to the number of religious words, phrases and expressions (34 counts) was topic five which was about a policeman fining a man wrongly while sparing another person he knew. Both of these topics rated highly in the use of religious words and expressions as both topics reflected Saudi people's strong belief in Allah. In the topic about Trump, they were commenting by making references to Allah as their Ultimate Protector while in the topic about the policeman, they were talking about the results and punishments for such actions by policemen in the light of Islam. As Saudi society is deeply religious, their interactions always include a lot of religious words and expressions that show their distinct religious identity. The most used religious words and expressions are tabulated in Table 11 below for a quick overview.

Table 11: *Most-Used Religious Words, Phrases and Expressions to Construct Religious Identity by the Saudi Youths*

No.	Top-Used Religious Words, Phrases, Expressions	Total Counts
1	الله /the God	39
2	المسلمين / Muslims	06
3	ماشاء الله / God be Exalted	05
4	والله / By God	05
5	الله يستر / God save us	05
6	الاسلام / Islam	05
7	اخي / brother[fellow Muslim]	05

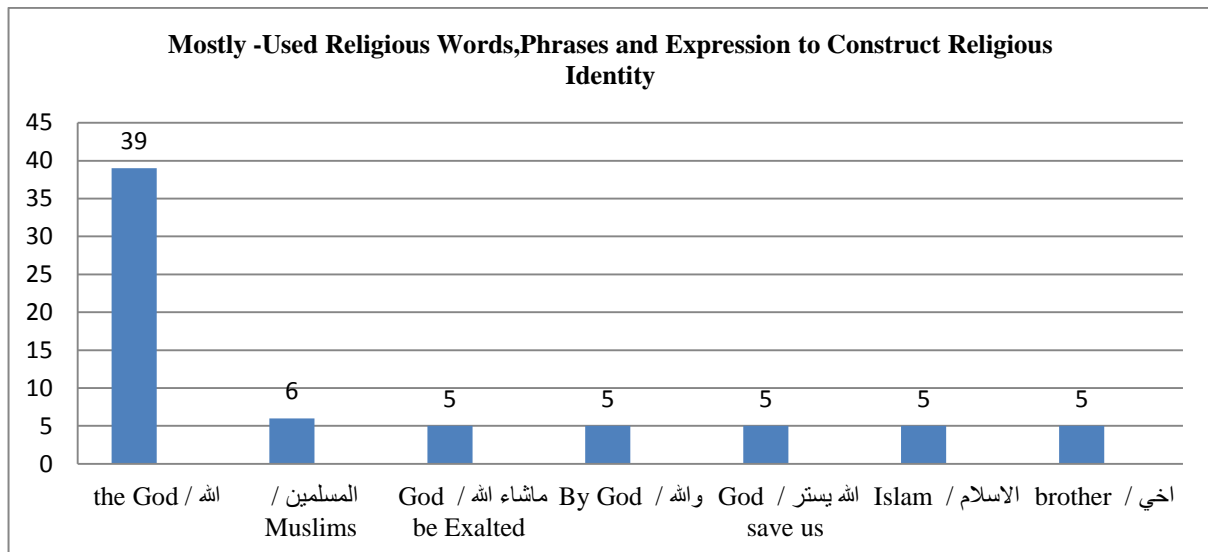


Figure 12. Most-used religious words by the Saudi Arabian youths

As seen in Table 11 and Figure 12 above, the Saudi Arabian youths used different religious words, phrases and expressions to construct their religious identity. The most used religious words were الله /the God which was used 39 times in the online commenting. The second most used religious word was المسلمين / Muslims (used 6 times) and other words, phrases and expressions such as ماشاء الله / God be Exalted, والله / By God, الله يستر / God save us, الاسلام / Islam, and اخي / brother which were used 5 times each. The use of such words is a very normal and

routine part of Saudi Arabian culture. One can hardly find any conversation in which the word related to God (Allah-الله) is not mentioned. This religious nature of Saudi Arabian people is noticeable not only among the older generation but even among the youngsters. The Saudi youths are brought up in such an atmosphere where religion and its related words are an inseparable part of their daily life. This religious aspect is also a cultural phenomenon and is preserved and passed on from generation to generation. As the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is blessed with the Holy Mecca and Blessed Madina, the holy cities of Islam, the Saudi people enjoy special status in the eyes of Muslims. Therefore, the reflection of religious words and expression in their communication is bound with this status. This is the land where Islam flourished and then spread to the rest of the world. Therefore, the natives of this place should reflect the ideals of Islam and the frequent mention of religious words in their speech is part of this ideal.

Some of the comments wherein the religious words, phrases and expressions were used by the participants are given below, highlighting the religious word, phrase, expression and linguistic markers used by the participants in their comments.

Comment 1 shows that the participant used the name of God “Allah” to construct religious identity; comment 2 shows that the participant used the word “Muslims” to construct religious identity; comment 3 shows that the participant used the words “God protect us” to construct religious identity; comment 4 shows that the participant used the words “God be exalted” to construct religious identity; and comment 5 shows that the participant used the words “I swear by God” to construct religious identity. These comments were transliterated and translated as follows. Comment 1 shows the supplicating expression الله يخلف عليه , translated as “May God replace him”. This is often used by the Saudis while cursing someone who is an

enemy or poses a threat to them and their families' lives. One can hear this expression when a Saudi is angry with someone to an extreme extent. The kind of rhetoric Trump used about Muslims and Saudi Arabian people, before election, made the Saudi youths so angry that they resorted to such cursing language which is reflected in this comment. The second comment uses the word Muslims with the impolite language for Trump. The third comment also shows the supplication to God to protect them against any evil. The expression- الله يكفينا meaning "May God protect us" is a very common religious expression among the Saudi Arabian people. They use it whenever they discuss any impending or prospective calamity. This is one of the teachings of Islam which teaches that Muslims should always pray to God as the God is the Ultimate Protector. Although this expression is normal and in use among Muslims it is used more frequently by the Saudi Arabian people due to their deep belief in God and in the preaching of Islam. Comment 4 included the religious expression ماشاءالله which is very frequent in the language of Saudis. One out of 10 normal sentences of any Saudi would surely include this expression. It is the expression used for appreciation of God the Most High. It has different meanings such as praising the God for any beauty you see or good creation noticed as it is believed that the God is the one who created all these and therefore, the God should be thanked and remembered with different adjectives. In the present context, it means "the God be Exalted" as it is due to God's grace that the present government has opened different schools in Saudi Arabia. The last comment includes the religious expression والله meaning "By God". This is a swearing expression which is used by the Saudi Arabian people so frequently to swear and to show the sincerity and truthfulness in what they are saying in order to convince the listener to believe in him or her. This is probably the most used expression in the speech of Saudis when they discuss and try to persuade someone about something. The use of such religious words and

expressions thus makes them bit different in their conversations from others as their expressions are marked most of the time with many religious words and expressions which shows their distinct religious identity.

Comment 1

متخلف الله يخلف عليه

Transliteration: Matkalafa **Allah** yakalfa alyah.

Translation: He is a mindless delinquent. **God** replace him.

Comment 2

وش حقه على السعوديه راح يطلع مع هالمجنون والاهبل ولكن انه لقطة لليي كرهون المسلمين

Transliteration: Wash haqdah alla alsaudyah rah yatla maa hamajnwana

waa alahabal anah laqatah llay ykrah **almusliman**.

Translation: More hatred for Saudi people from this crazy and in addition, he is a puppet for the people who hate **Muslims**.

Comment 3

بحر لأفعاله الله يكفيننا شره يكفي انه معترف من قبل انه يغار من السعوديه

Transliteration: Baheer lafalalah **Allah** ykfayana sharah yakfay anah mataraf

maan qabal annah yqar maan alsaudyah.

Translation: Look at what he did, **God protect us** from his evil. It is enough to look at the past and learn from the past that he is jealous of Saudi Arabia.

Comment 4

ماشاء الله الدوله ماهي مقصره في المدارس والتعليم بس مين بيغى يتعلم هذا هو السبب

Transliteration: **Mashallah** aldwlah maa qasarat faey almdaras waalatalyam bas maayan yabga ytalama hada whoo alsabab.

Translation: **God be Exalted**, the government has opened many schools but people don't want to study, that is the problem.

Comment 5

اسف واعتذر والله ماشفتك

Transliteration: Assafa waa atathaer **waa Allah** maa shafatak.

Translation: Sorry and I apologise. I swear **by God**, I didn't see you.

4.3.1.5 Results of Research Question 1 [Religious Identity Construction Strategies]

The first research question was intended to find answers to the question of how the Saudi Arabian youths constructed their different identities and what strategies they used to construct these identities. After analysing the data for regional and tribal identities, the data were analysed for religious identity construction strategies. From the analysis of the data related to religious words, phrases and expressions used by the Saudi Arabian youths in the online comments on the different topics posted on the social media website, the following findings are revealed:

- 1- Saudi Arabian youths use various religious words, phrases and expressions not only in their day-to-day communication but even on social media as well to show their deep belief in the Islamic teachings.
- 2- Their language use is full of words and expressions such as الله /the God, ماشاء الله / God be Exalted, والله / By God, الله يستر / God save us, الاسلام / Islam, اخي / brother.
- 3- They use such religious words, phrases and expressions to show their religious identity which is Saudi Arabian Arab Muslims.

4.3.1.6 Linguistic Strategies used by the Participants to Construct Gender Identity

After analysing the data concerning regional, tribal and religious identities construction strategies to answer the first research question, the comments by the Saudi Arabian youths to

different topics posted online on social media website were analysed to see how the Saudi Arabian youths constructed their gender identities. To this end, each comment was analysed looking for words and expressions that revealed the gender of the participants or the words which were female or male specific. First such gender-specific words were categorised topic wise. Then they were categorised gender wise and then the most common words were listed to see the findings of the data analysis. [Table 4](#) of [Appendix A](#) summarises such gender-specific words and expressions used to construct gender identity in each topic along with their counts.

This topic-wise classification of gender-specific words and other linguistic strategies used to construct gender identity by the Saudi Arabian youths is summarised in the following Figure 13.

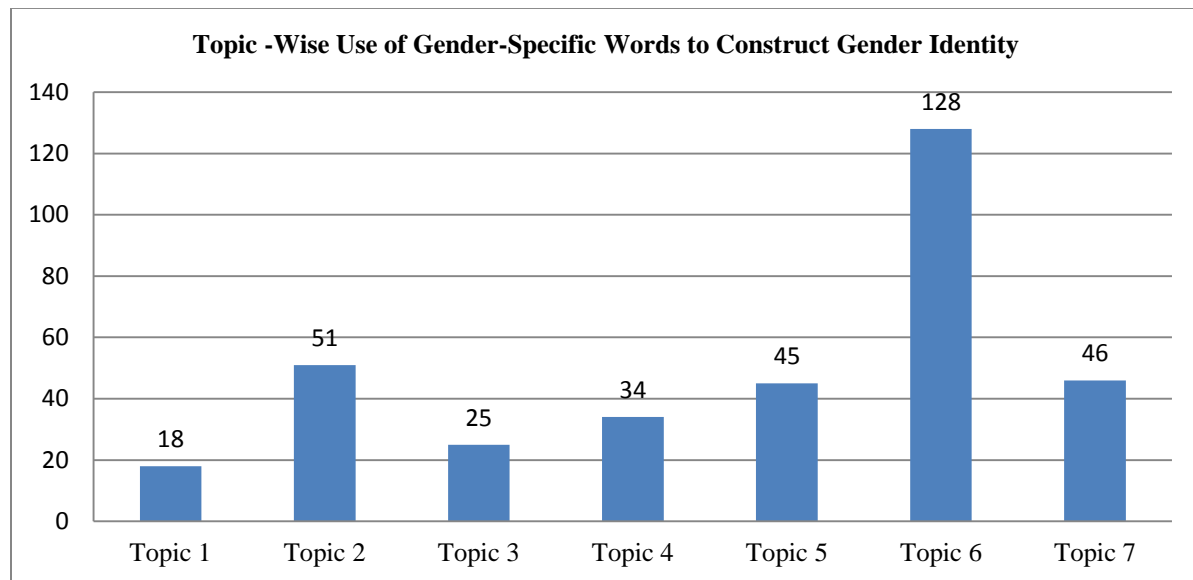


Figure 13. Topic-wise use of gender-specific words to construct gender identity

As shown in Figure 13 above, the maximum number of gender-specific words (128 counts) were used by the participants in topic number six. This was followed by topic number two (with 51 counts), topic number seven (with 46 counts), topic number five (with 45 counts), topic number four (with 34 counts), topic number three (with 25 counts) and topic number one

(with 18 counts). These gender-specific words included words used by male-only and female-only genders as well as real names (mostly used by males) and nicknames such as بنت العز / rich girl (mostly used by females). The choice of nicknames by females and real names by males speaks a lot about Saudi Arabian society and culture as females are not often allowed to use their real names on social media sites. Some of the top used words by male and female gender participants are tabulated below in Table 12 to understand the findings.

Table 12: *Most Used Gender Identity Words to Construct Gender Identity by the Saudi Youths*

No.	Gender	Most Used Gender-Specific Words	Counts
1	Male	Masculine names/nicknames (137) اسف / Sorry (32) العزیز / Dear (2) اعذرني / forgive me (1) وهو / he (1)	173
2	Female	Feminine names/nicknames (143) اسفه / Sorry (16) متاسفه / Sorry (3) اعذرني / forgive me (2) العزیزه / my dear (2)	166

This gender-wise use of top gender-specific words is shown in the following Figure 14.

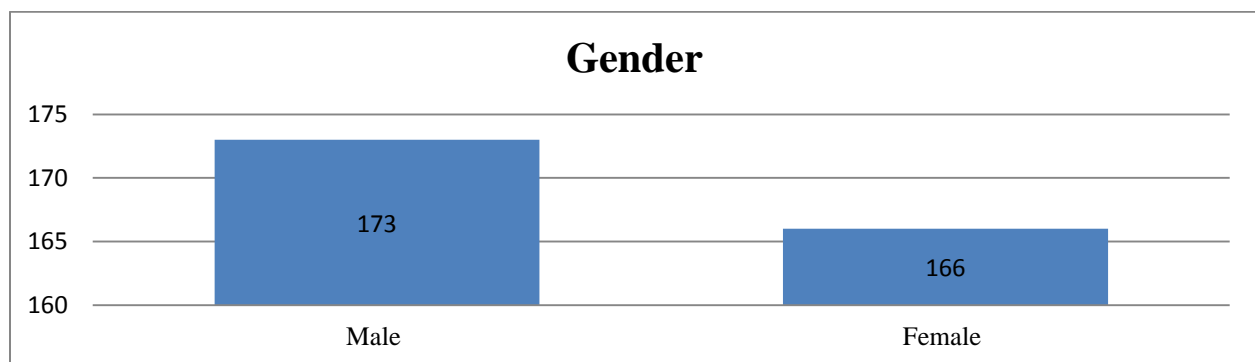


Figure 14. Gender-wise use of top gender-specific words

The top five counts of male gender-specific linguistic strategies are shown in the following Figure 15.

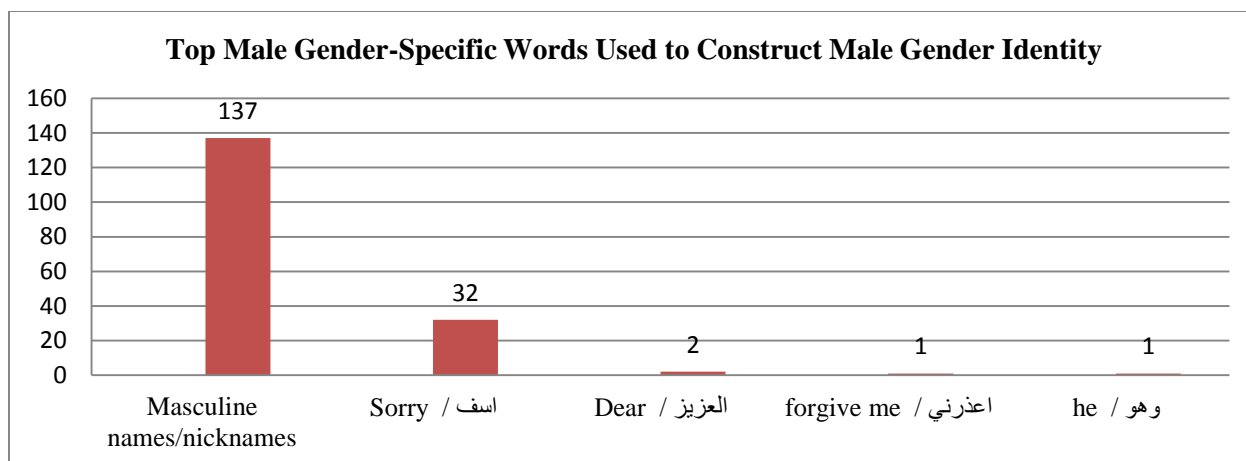


Figure 15. Top male gender-specific words used to construct male gender identity

The top five counts of female gender-specific words used to construct female gender identity are shown in the following Figure 16.

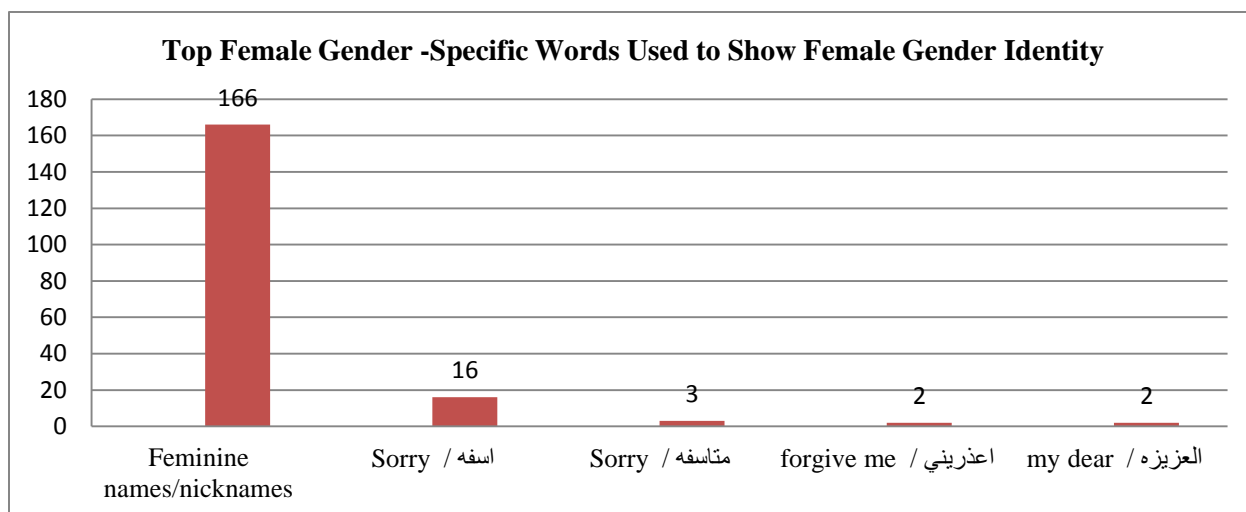


Figure 16. Main words used by the females to construct gender identity

As seen in Table 12 and Figures 13, 14, 15 and 16 above, the Saudi Arabian youths used different strategies to construct their male and female gender identities. The most common strategy used was using real name by males; whereas females used nicknames as in Saudi culture females are not allowed to use social media sites with their real name as it is considered a disgraceful act in terms of the honour of the family. Therefore, females often use nicknames such

as Desert Rose and Arabian Deer. Another strategy of constructing gender identity is adding a suffix to words such as **اسف** / Sorry (masculine active participle) and **اسفه (اسفة)** / Sorry (feminine active participle). It should be noted that in Arabic language gender is based on the subject and all nouns are masculine unless they have a feminine ending. The first comment shows that the person commenting is male as he used the word **منور** meaning “illuminating”. A female participant might have added the feminine marker suffix to it to show her female gender. In the second comment, the masculine expression “my brother” is used to show the male gender of a person. The third comment is also by a male as he uses the word **اسف** meaning “I’m sorry”. The female counterpart would use it as **اسفه (اسفة)** to construct her female gender. The other form used for male gender construction is **متاسف** which also means “I’m sorry” and is used in the fifth comment.

The most general feminine form is **ة** which is added at the end of a masculine noun or adjective to make them feminine. The other feminine form **ي (ya)** is also used to mark female gender. This can be seen in comment number six wherein the participant writes **انتبهي** meaning “**be careful**” but said by a female with the suffix- **ي**. Comment seven also shows the word **مجربته** which ends with **ها (ha)** showing the female gender of the person writing the comment. Similar is the case of **غظانه (غلطانه)** meaning “forgive me” used by a female as it reflects the feminine ending at the end of the word. Thus, the language use shows whether the participant is male or female. Some of the comments, wherein such gender-specific words were used by the participants when commenting, are given below, highlighting the gender-denoting word in **bold**. These comments were transliterated and translated.

Comments from Male Participants

Comment 1

منور ياحج شيشه وكمبيوتر ماتمشي ههههههه

Transliteration: **Munawwar** yaa haj Shishah

waa kmpuotar maa tamshay hhhhhhh.

Translation: **Illuminating** O you Hajj (Old person who performed Hajj). Shishah (smoking) and computer do not go together.

Comment 2

لا والله ماهقيت واناخوك وراذا الوجه علاقات وتطور لله يستمر منه ومنخشته الشينه

Transliteration: Laa waa Allah maa haqyat **waa anna akwak** war thae alwajah alaqat waa tatwar Allah yastar mannah waa maan kashatah alshyanah.

Translation: O God, never. I don't see, **my brother**, any relation or development from this face. May God save us his ugly face.

Comment 3

حسب عمر الرجال اذا كان كهل اوقحم اقول انااسف ماعليش اعذرني اماذا كان شباب اقول اسف ياابوالشباب

Transliteration: Hasab ammar alrjaal athae kaan kahale awo qaham aqwal **assafa** maa alysh aatherny amaa atha kaan shabab aqwal assafe yaa abo Alshabab.

Translation: Depending on age. For old, I'm **sorry**, never mind and forgive me. For young, sorry (abo alshabab).

Comment 4

أقديت يوم(تعذر) تعذرللرجال وتقول انااسف واعتذر عن الخطاء وانا **مستعد** اشترى جواللك

Transliteration: Aqdayat yoom aatethaert waa taqwal anna assafa waa aatether ann alkata waa **mastaad** ashtry jwoal lak.

Translation: You are right. When you apologise, you will say I'm sorry for the mistake and **I will** buy a new mobile for you.

Comment 5

فيذا الوقت اكون غلطان واقول له انا متاسف وبس ولا تدر عم مره ثانية

Transliteration: Faey thae alwakat akwan qltan waa aqwal lah ann **mtassafa** waa basse waa laa tdrame maarh theanyah.

Translation: I made a mistake. I'm **sorry**. I'll not be walking without thinking again.

Comments from Female Participants

Comment 6

الشركات عندنا ماهي زي بعض منها ماهو حلو ومنها ماهو زباله عاد انت انتبه من الدرعه وحددي ايشركه تخدم المنطقة الا انتي عايشه فيها

Transliteration: Alsherkat andan maahay zay badh manhaa helow waa manhaa zbalah ade antey **antabhay** maan altederamh waa hadeday ayy sherkh tkdam almndqah alee antey ayshah fayahha.

Translation: Our companies are not the same. Some of them are good and others rubbish. We should **be careful** to walk without thinking and identify which company covers your dwelling area.

Comment 7

اختي العزيزه عندك شركة زين مره حلوه مجربتها

Transliteration: Akteay alazyzah andak sherkat zain marah helouh **magrbthaa**.

Translation: My dear sister, you have Zain Company. It is nicer. **I used it**.

Comment 8

اسفه حبيبي ماكان قصدي اذا كانت بنت اما اذا كان ربال نفس الشئ

Transliteration: Assafah **habybaty** maa kan qasday athae kan banat amm athea kan raial nafas alshaay.

Translation: (For woman), I'm sorry **my dear**. It wasn't my intention. (For man), same.

Comment 9

للاسف حبييتي كلها شركات بلف وسرقه اشتركي باي شركه لانك بالاخير منتوفه،منتوفه

Transliteration: Lealasafa habybatey kelah sherkat baleef waa sarqah **ashtarkey** bay shrekah
leank balekyer mantwfa mantwfah.

Translation: Sorry my love all companies are scam and thieves. Your **contract** with any company may be stolen.

Comment 10

اقول لها اسفه جداجدا وانا غلطانه

Transliteration: Aqwal laha assfah jedan jedan waa anna **galtanh**.

Translation: I'm extremely sorry and **I made a mistake**.

4.3.1.7 Results of Research Question 1 [Gender Identity Construction Strategies]

From the analysis of the gender-related words in the comments data, the following findings are obtained.

- 1- Saudi Arabian youths use different linguistic strategies to construct their gender identities online including using real names (in the case of males) and using nicknames (in the case of females) due to Saudi Arabian cultural norms.
- 2- In addition to the use of real and nicknames as a gender identity construction strategy, other gender-specific words were also used by males (اسف / Sorry) and females (by adding a suffix to show feminine gender- اسفه / Sorry).
- 3- It is clear that male and females use different language and construct their respective gender through the use of gender-specific language.

4.3.2 Data Analysis of Screen Captures at Nonlinguistic Levels for Identity Construction

Strategies

As a part of the data analysis process, after analysing the data at linguistic levels to see the region, tribe, religion and gender-specific words, the screen captures of the comments were analysed at nonlinguistic levels. It is known that people use various nonlinguistic means such as specific dress, food, and specific celebration in a specific way, pictures of various places and people to show their belonging to a specific group of people or belonging to a specific region, tribe, belief or gender. Therefore, the data in the form of pictures/images collected from the social media website, wherein the Saudi Arabian youths posted different pictures/images, was analysed step-by-step, focusing on region, tribe, religion and gender aspects. This was with the aim of seeing how the Saudi youths constructed their regional, tribal, religious and gender identities using various nonlinguistic means. The analysis was undertaken with the aim of seeking answers to the first research question—What nonlinguistic strategies did the Saudi youths use to construct their various identities? This analysis and its results are presented one by one in the following sub-sections.

4.3.2.1 Non-linguistic strategies used to construct regional identity

The images and pictures collected from the Saudi youths' postings on the social media website created for the purpose of data collection were analysed to see if these images reflected any regionality aspects. Based on the regionality criteria, these images were classified under different sections such as images of region-specific modern architecture, images of a region-specific food dish, images of a region-specific fort/castle, images of region-specific old architecture, images of traditional home stuff, images of traditional dance, images of region-specific mountains/hills, images of region-specific rivers/lakes/gardens, images of region-

specific historical monuments and images of region-specific traditional dance. Then their frequency was counted to draw proper conclusions. The following table (Table 13) offers an overview of such images' classification.

Table 13: *Classification of Region-Specific Images Posted by the Participants to Show their Regional Identity*

No.	Regions	Region-Related Images	Counts		Total Counts
			Male	Female	
1	East	Image of fort/castle	1		3
		Image of modern architecture	2		
2	West	Image of specific historical monument		1	4
		Image of modern architecture		1	
		Image of food dish		1	
		Image of specific sport club	1		
3	Centre	Image of fort/castle		2	5
		Image of modern architecture	1		
		Image of old architecture		1	
		Image of food dish		1	
4	South	Image of food dish	1		2
		Image of specific mountain/hill	1		
5	North	Image of fort/castle		1	15
		Image of specific historical monument	1		
		Image of specific old architecture	2		
		Image of specific modern architecture	2	1	
		Image of specific food dish	1		
		Image of specific mountain/hill/river	2		
		Image of specific present/past leader/personality		1	
		Image of traditional home stuff		3	
		Other nonlinguistic markers	1		

As is shown in Table 13 above, the participants from different regions used different region-specific images to construct their regional identity through different nonlinguistic means. The highest number of region-specific images were posted from the north region participants (15 counts) followed by centre (5), west (4), east (3), and south (2). This is shown in the following Figure 17.

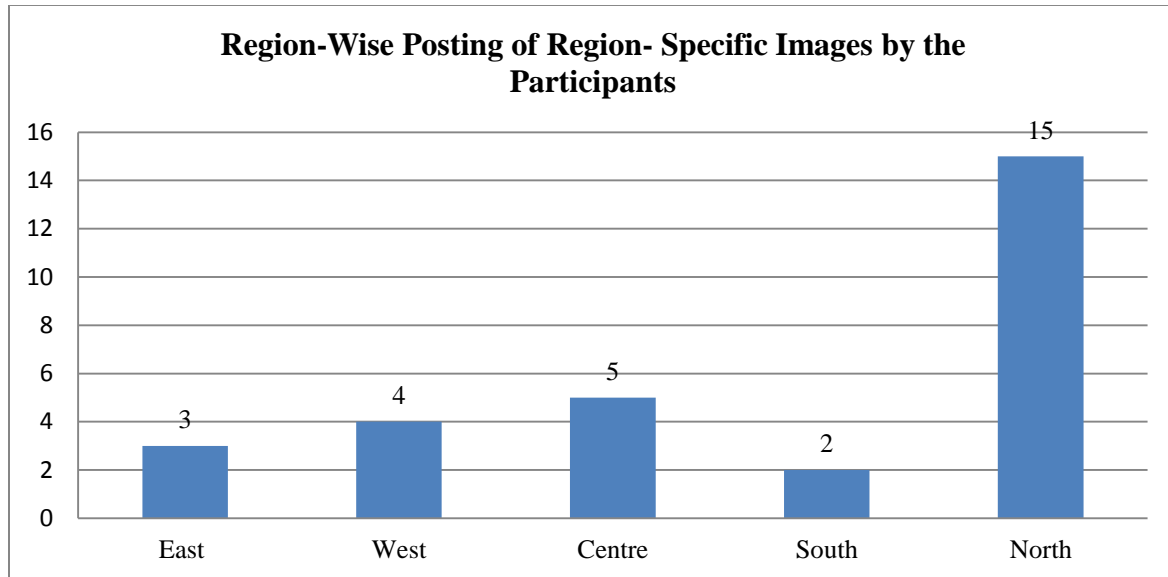


Figure 17. Region-wise posting of region-specific images by the participants

When the images were analysed, focusing on the content, the following results were obtained which are shown in the following Table 14.

Table 14: *Top-Used Region-Specific Images by the Participants*

No.	Region-Related Images Posted by Participants in Order to Construct Regional Identity	Counts		Total Counts
		Male	Female	
1	Image of modern architecture	5	2	7
2	Image of fort/castle	1	3	4
3	Image of food dish	2	2	4
4	Image of old architecture	2	1	3
5	Image of specific mountain/hill/river	3	0	3
6	Image of traditional home stuff	0	3	3
7	Image of specific historical monument	1	1	2
8	Image of specific sport club	1	0	1
9	Image of specific present/past leader/personality	0	1	1
10	Other nonlinguistic markers	1	0	1

As seen in Table 14 above, the images about regional-specific modern architecture were used the most (5 counts by males and 2 counts by females, 7 counts in total). These were followed by images about region-specific forts/castles with 4 counts (1 male and 3 females), images about regional food dishes 4 counts (2 males and 2 females), images of old architecture 3 counts (2 males and 1 female), images of region-specific mountain/hill/river 3 counts (posted by males), images of region-specific traditional home stuff 3 counts (all posted by females).

The top used region-specific images are shown in Figure 18 below.

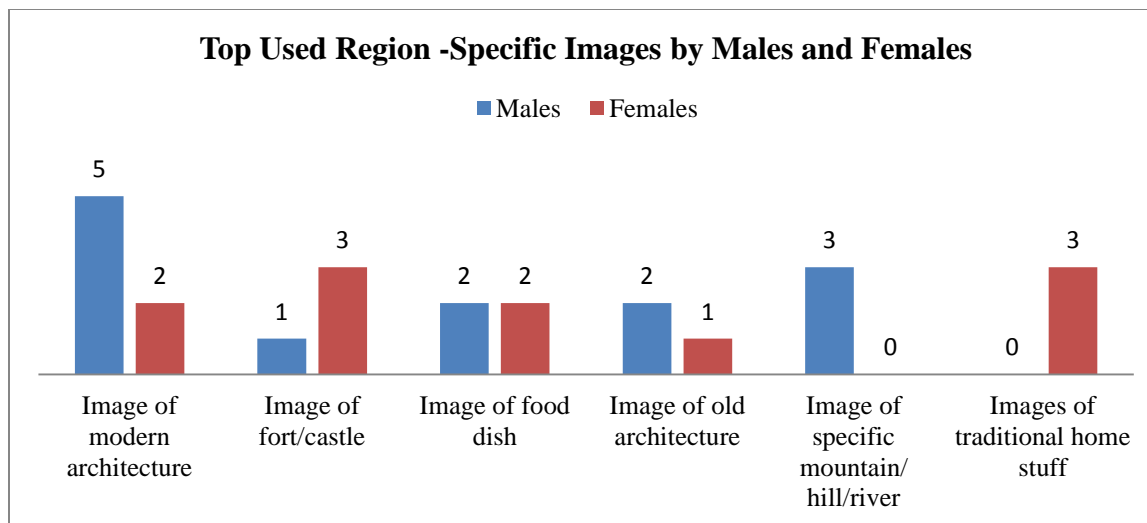


Figure 18. Top used region-specific images by males and females

4.3.2.2 Results of Research Question 1 [Nonlinguistic Strategies used to Construct Regional Identity]

From the analysis of the region-specific images, the following results were obtained:

- 1- Saudi Arabian youths used different nonlinguistic strategies such as posting region-specific images of old/new architecture, images of region-specific forts/castles, and images of region-specific food dishes.
- 2- The regional identity of a person is constructed online not only through linguistic means but also through nonlinguistic means such as images and pictures.
- 3- The top used images for regional identity construction included images of modern architecture, fort/castle, food dish, old architecture, rivers, mountains, hills and traditional stuff.
- 4- Male participants preferred posting images of modern architecture and images of mountains, rivers and hills whereas female participants preferred to post images of forts/castles and images of region-related traditional stuff.

4.3.2.3 Nonlinguistic Strategies used to Construct Religious Identity

The nonlinguistic data, collected in the form of images and pictures from the postings of the participants on the social media website, was analysed at the next level to find out the nonlinguistic strategies used for constructing religious identity as this was one of the aims of the study. Therefore, all the religion-specific images were classified along with the counts for which they were used. The following Table 15 offers an overview of this.

Table 15: *Classification of Religious-Specific Images Posted by the Participants to Show their Religious Identity*

No.	Images Related to Religion/Religious Places	Gender		Total Counts
		Male	Female	
1	Images related to Holy Kaaba	8	5	13
2	Images related to Holy Madinah	1	1	2
3	Image of praying man/girl/baby	1	0	1
4	Images about Holy Qur'an	0	1	1
5	Image of compassion for animals	0	1	1
6	Images of religious words	1	3	4

As is shown in Table 15 above, the participants used different religious images to construct their religious identity through various nonlinguistic means. Most of the images (13 counts) were about Holy Kaaba which is a sacred and revered place for Muslims around the globe. They were used by 8 males and 5 females. The other religious images (4 counts) included pictures of various religious words which were mostly used by the females (3 counts and 1 count by males). These religious images that were used to construct religious identity by males and females are shown in the following Figure 19.

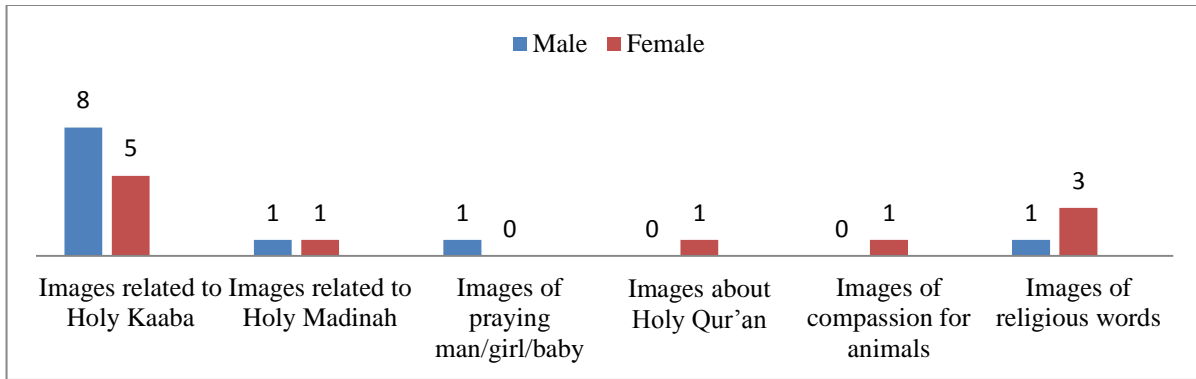


Figure 19. Religious images used to construct religious identity by males and females

4.3.2.4 Results of Research Question 1 [Nonlinguistic Strategies used to Construct Religious Identity]

From the analysis of the religion-specific images, the following results were obtained-

- 1- Saudi Arabian youths used different nonlinguistic strategies such as posting images related to Holy Kaaba, Holy Madinah, religious words, images of children praying, and images about the Holy Qur'an to construct their religious, Muslim identity.
- 2- Individuals constructed their religious identity not only through linguistic means such as using religion-specific words but also by using images of sacred, holy places and books as well as praying practices and dress.
- 3- The most used images were about Holy Kaaba which is sacred to every Muslim.

4.3.2.5 Nonlinguistic Strategies used to Construct Gender Identity

After analysing the data, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, for understanding the strategies used by the participants to construct their regional, tribal, and religious identities, the nonlinguistic data of images were analysed to see the nonlinguistic strategies employed by the males and females to construct their respective gender identity as this was one of the aims and research question of the study. While doing so, the images posted by the participants were

classified gender wise to see how they helped in creating their gender identity. This classification is summarised in Table 16 below to offer an overview.

Table 16: *Classification of Gender-Specific Images Posted by the Participants to Show their Gender Identity*

No.	Images Posted to Construct Gender Identity by Males and Females	Gender		Total Counts
		Male	Female	
1	Images about nature and natural beauties such as rivers, gardens, greenery	10	10	20
2	Images of veiled girls/free girls	-	12	12
3	Images of flower	-	10	10
4	Images of castle/ adventure place/trips	10	-	10
5	Images of food/drink dishes	5	5	10
6	Images of child	2	7	9
7	Images describing old people/parents	3	6	9
8	Images of royal white falcon/shaheen/wild/brave birds	6	1	7
9	Images of camel/black horse/other domestic animal	5	-	5
10	Images of national monument/flag	3	2	5
11	Images of couples	-	4	4
12	Images of heart	-	2	2
13	Images of lion /wild animals	2	-	2
14	Images of wild dove/yamama/feminine tender, beautiful birds	-	2	2
15	Images of luxury cars	1	-	1

As seen in Table 16 above, the male and female participants used different nonlinguistic strategies to construct their respective gender identity through images. The most used images included images about nature and natural beauties such as rivers, mountains, gardens, greenery places. They were posted 20 times by the participants (10 males and 10 females). Images of

veiled girls/free girls were the second highest posted pictures with 12 counts all by the females. As the females are not easily allowed to post their real pictures online, they used such pictures of veiled girls to show their conditions as well as free girls enjoying themselves to show their wish to enjoy themselves in the same way as those girls. As flowers are often associated with females due to beauty, the images of flowers were the next highest used images with 10 counts, all from females. Castle/mountain tracking or visits to adventurous places are traditionally male-dominated activities, at least in the Arab countries. Thus, the next highest used images were about these activities, all used by the males (10 counts) to reveal their masculine gender. The images about various foods and drinks were shared by males and females (10 counts: five males and five females). The images related to drinks were often used by the males while images about food were used by the females. The images about the child and parents (9 counts) were mostly used by the females as the female nature is associated with compassion and love. These are shown in the form of Figure 20 below.

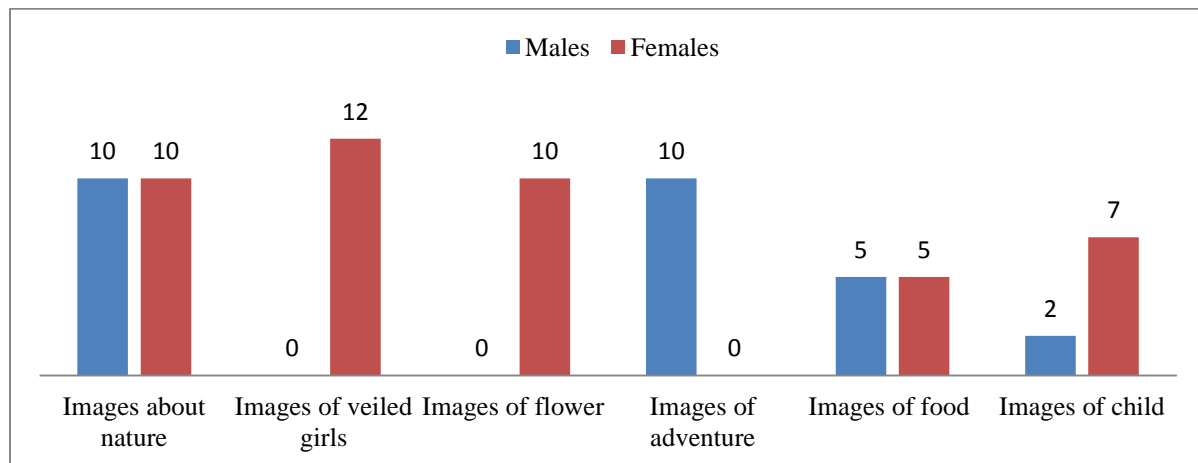


Figure 20. Images posted by males and females

Top used pictures by each gender is tabulated below (Table 17).

Table 17: *Top Used Images by Each Gender to Show their Gender Identity*

No.	Images Posted by Males	Counts	Images Posted by Females	Counts
1	Images about nature and natural beauties such as rivers, gardens, greenery	10	Images of veiled girls/free girls	12
2	Images of adventurous place/trips	10	Images of flower	10
3	Images of royal white falcon/ shaheen/ wild/ brave birds	6	Images of child	7
4	Images of food/drink dishes	5	Images describing old people/ parents	6
5	Images of camel/black horse/other domestic animal	5	Images of couples	4

These top used pictures by each gender are shown in the following Figures 21 and 22.

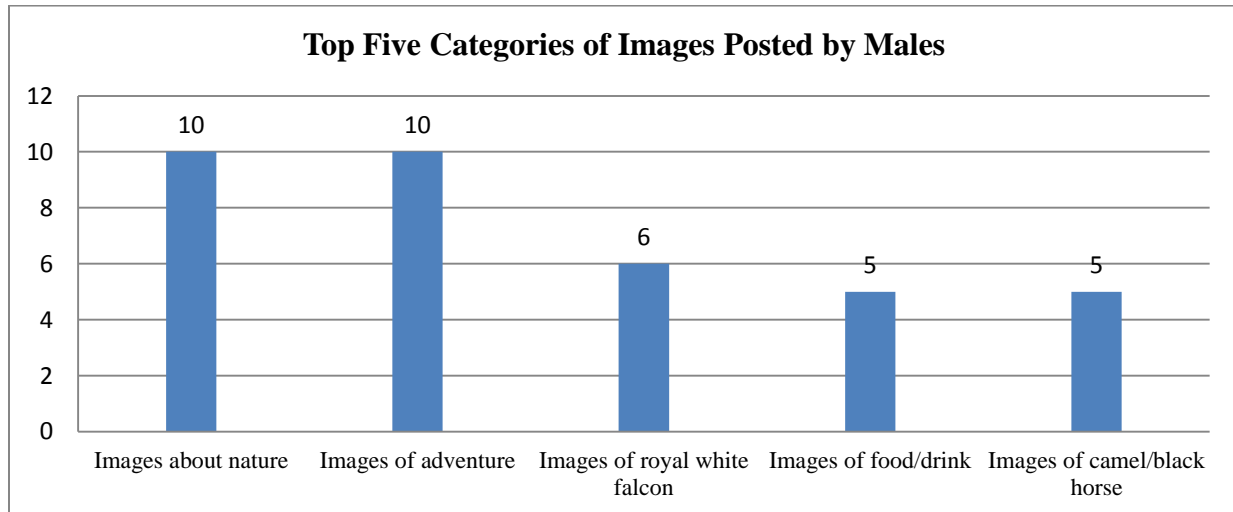


Figure 21. Top five categories of images posted by males

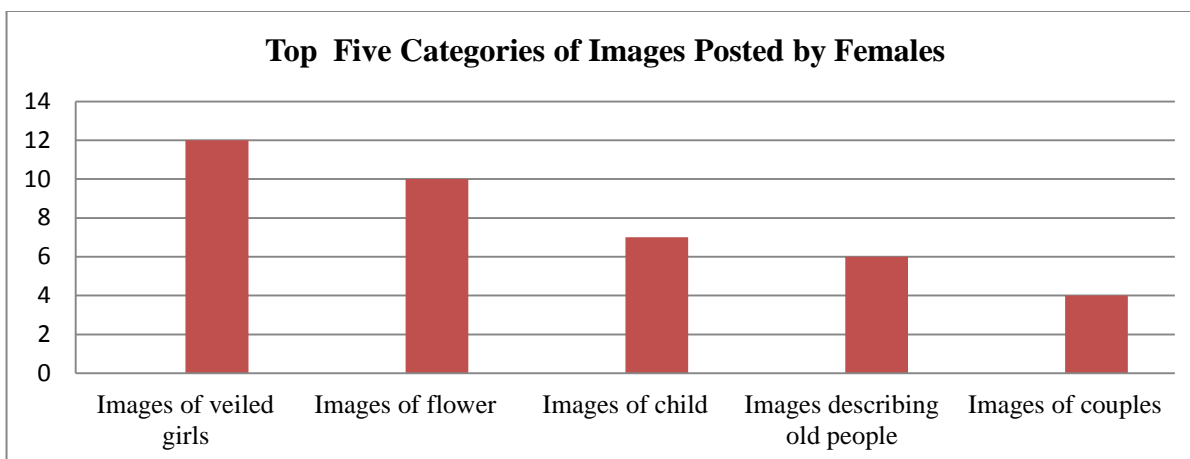


Figure 22. Top five categories of images posted by females

4.3.2.6 Results of Research Question 1 [Gender Identity Construction Nonlinguistic Strategies]

From the analysis of the gender-specific images, the following results were obtained:

- 1- Saudi Arabian youths used different nonlinguistic strategies such as posting images related to nature and natural beauties such as rivers, mountains, gardens, and greenery, images of veiled girls/free girls, images of flowers, images of castle, mountain tracking or visits to adventurous places, images about various foods and drinks, and images about the child and parents to construct their male and female gender identity.
- 2- The choice of images posted by males and females speaks a lot about the status of males and females in Saudi society and their presence and freedom on social media.
- 3- Individuals constructed their gender identity not only through linguistic means such as using gender-specific words but also by using images.

4.3.2.7 Nonlinguistic Strategies used to Construct Tribal Identity

After analysing linguistic and nonlinguistic data for understanding the strategies used by the participants to construct their regional, tribal, religious, and gender identities, the nonlinguistic data of images were analysed to find out the nonlinguistic strategies employed by

the Saudi youths to construct their tribal identities. To this end, tribe-related images, posted by the participants, were classified based on tribes to see how the participants constructed their tribal identities. From the analysis of the region-specific images, the following results were obtained which are summarised in the following Table 18.

Table 18: *Top Used Images by Participants to Show their Tribal Identity*

No.	Images Related to Tribe	Counts
1	Image of tribe names	4
2	Image of cultural/tribal celebration	1
3	Image about man of tribe	1
4	Image of tribal hero	1
5	Image of poet	1
6	Image of tribe place	1

These results are also summarised in the following Figure 23.

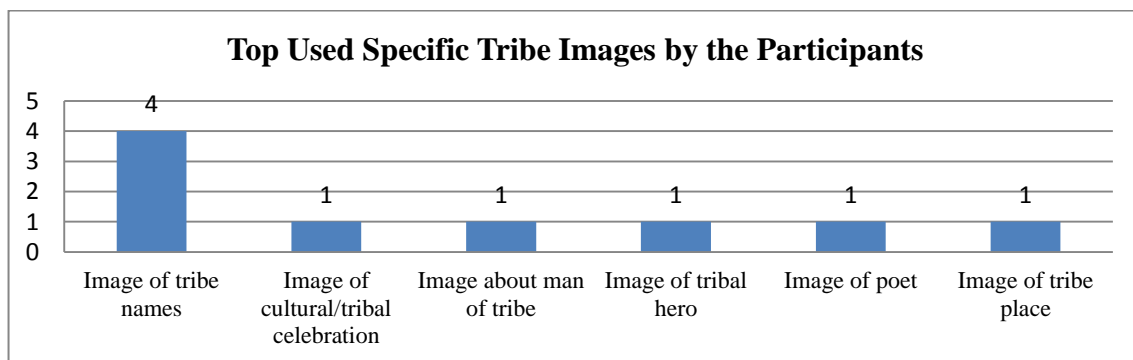


Figure 23. Types of tribe-related images posted by the Saudi youths

As seen in Table 18 and Figure 23 above, the Saudi youths employed different nonlinguistic strategies to construct their tribal identities though images. These images included images about tribes' names, tribal celebrations, tribal heroes, and tribal poets. Of the participants, 4 posted images about different tribe names, and 2 posted images for the Alanazi tribe name. The

Alanazi tribe lives in the north region and it is the biggest tribe in the Arabian Peninsula. One posted an image of the Alshammri tribe's name which is the second largest tribe in the Arabian Peninsula. One image was posted about the Alhrbi tribe's name which is found mainly in the centre region. One image was posted about cultural/tribal celebration, and this was about the tribal dancing from the south region. The image depicted dancers from south region dancing with daggers. It was from the Algamidi tribe and it was used by the participant to construct his tribal identity. Other images included the image of Sadwan Alawajay, a Sheikh from the Alanazi tribe from the north region. He was a hero during his time and his image was posted by a male participant to construct his tribal identity. Other tribe-related images posted by the participants included: 1) image of a Bedouin hunter with lion showing the courage of the Bedouins; 2) image of poet Kalaaf ibn Hathal from the Alotibai tribe; and 3) image of a small tribal village. These were used to construct different tribal identities.

4.3.2.8 Results of Research Question 1 [Tribal Identity Construction Nonlinguistic Strategies]

From the analysis of the tribe-related images, the following results were obtained:

- 1- Saudi Arabian youths used different nonlinguistic strategies such as posting tribe-specific images of tribe name, images of cultural/tribal celebration, image of tribe head, image of tribal hero, image of tribal poet and image of tribal village to construct their tribal identities.
- 2- The choice of images posted by the participants reflects the Saudi youths' feeling of taking pride in their tribes and tribe-related artefacts.
- 3- The Saudi youths employed not only linguistic but also nonlinguistic strategies to construct their tribal identities.

The present study aimed to examine the different strategies adopted by Saudi youths in constructing their different identities and these involve tribal, regional, gender identity, and politeness/impoliteness strategies when interacting online. On the basis of the analysis of the research data and the obtained findings, it can be stated that construction of identity is intentional and is conducted through the use of language and other methods, such as using specific dress images and symbols. More specifically, in linguistic strategies, identity construction is made through the use of distinct words, phrases, and dialects whereas in nonlinguistic strategies, it is made through the use of distinct dress, symbols and pictures. Such identity construction is notable not only in daily face-to-face communication but also in online interactions. With the permeation of technology into daily lives and its influence on every aspect of life, identity construction and strategies utilised for online communication need examination to provide insight into the way technology influences our presentation of ourselves via communication. Moreover, identity construction by means of the nonlinguistic method was adopted by the study participants through their use of images/pictures, revealing their religious identity, gender identity, and tribal identity.

4.4 Research Question 1: Discussion of the Findings of Identity Construction Strategies

It has been argued that people use language consciously or unconsciously to reveal their geographical origin. From the speech of an individual, one can guess and say where that person comes from as his/her accent and dialect reveal/show his/her regional origin or background. Thus, people use language to show where they come from. In this research, I wanted to see if this regional identity construction process also happens in virtual reality or in online communication. According to the findings arrived at, based on the analysis of the data, it can be clearly said that the identity construction process happens in online communication too, through different

linguistic strategies. These strategies include using region-specific words or phrases to show where that participant belonged (see Table 7). Through the use of such region-specific words and phrases, participants were attempting to identify and associate themselves with other members sharing same geographical origin. Burbano-Elizondo (2006) and (Milroy, 1980, 1981) have reported that people from different regions use region-specific linguistic utterances to reflect the individual's membership of a specific region. In the Saudi Arabian context this regionality aspect of Arabic language was studied by researchers such as Nadwi (1968) who studied the dialects in the south region of Saudi Arabia. Al-Shahrani (1988) also reported that people from Asir province use their region-specific dialect to show their Asir-region identity. Similar findings were also reported by Omar (1975) about the west region-specific words and dialect for west-region identity construction. Omar's (1975) results about how Hijazi people use Hijazi words such as (هاذا/this), (كثير/ more, much), (ايوه/ yes) and (دحين/now) to construct their regional identity also are in line with my findings as similar words were used by the participants from the west region for construction of their regional identity in their online commenting. Similar findings were also reported by Cantineau (1937) and Abboud (1964, 1975, 1978, 1979) about the centre and north region dialects to construct their respective regional identities through their region-specific words and phrases.

One of the aims of the study was to find the linguistic strategies used by the participants to construct their identities such as tribal identity. That is, to see how tribal background and tribal information of an individual is revealed and reflected through his/her language use not only in face-to-face communication but also during online interactions. From the analysis of the data collected in the form of comments from the Saudi youths, it was revealed that language reflects

the tribal background of an individual along with his/her regional background, as seen in the previous section.

The notable thing about Saudi tribes is that most of them are region specific. In this matter, due to lack of relevant literature and reliable sources, the researcher formed a committee to substantiate the new findings in this study. The committee was comprised of five persons, one from each region, and they agreed that the tribe names belong to their regions. For example, Alahmari, Alqahtani, Alasmariy, Alsharani, Algamdia, Alzahrani and Alharthy tribes are often found residing in the south region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Ibrahim, aged 37, from the south region, confirmed that these tribes belong to his region and therefore this assumption was 100% accurate. The (Alanazi, Alshammari, Albalawi, Alrwailly, Alotaibi and Alzahrani) tribes are found in the west region and the north region. Mezna, aged 41, from the north region, confirmed that these tribes belong to her region and that this assumption was 98% accurate. The centre region tribes include Aldossari, Alharbia, and Alawni and Ibrahim, aged 29, confirmed that these tribes belong to the centre region and that the assumption was 94% accurate. The east region tribe includes Alshamsi, and Younes, aged 39, from the east region confirmed that this tribe does not belong to the east region, rendering this assumption only 10% accurate—the majority of this tribe belongs to the United Arab Emirates. They are predominant in these regions in addition to their presence all over the country in different cities and villages. Scholars such as Al-Rasheed (2008) report that tribal affiliation becomes the first important marker of a narrow identity that defines the individual and anchors him/her in an old hierarchy of noble tribes, whose prestige and standing stem from their early historic support for the message of the Prophet. While this identity of an individual in Saudi Arabia is constructed on the basis of kinship and blood ties, the tribe acquires local significance in the war on blasphemy and the purification of

the land from polytheism according to Al-Rasheed (2008). Saudi Arabia is a very young country with an old history and culture (Maisel, 2013). The population appears very homogenous, predominantly Arab and Muslims (Maisel, 2013). According to Almakrami (2015), the tribes in Saudi Arabia are usually big and consist of hundreds of members and the culture encourages people to generally know and connect with all members of their tribes. In Saudi Arabia, the importance of tribe is a sensitive issue. There are two statuses of the tribes in Saudi Arabia—high status (noble) and low status tribes in the social hierarchy. Individuals from high status or noble tribes marry from each other's tribe and low status tribes marry from tribes of their status only. However, people take pride in their tribal background irrespective of its status (although noble) status tribes often try to show their tribal background more than the others as social pride. Each tribe is headed by the Shaikh and all the members of that tribe are supposed to follow him and he commands respect. Each tribe also has its own distinct habits, customs, rituals, foods, attire and legendary heroes, and the members of the tribes often show pride in these aspects and show and reflect them consciously in their day-to-day living as well as in their virtual presence on social media.

The study intended to see how Saudi Arabian youths constructed their various religious identities. From the results, it was seen that the participants used different religious words and expressions to construct and show their religious identity. These results are a reflection of Saudi culture as one can hear such words and expressions in the daily conversations of Saudi people. Often the religious words and expressions are used to show the politeness aspect as well as sincerity on the part of the speaker. For example, the expression, والله / By God shows that the speaker is truthful. The expression اخي / brother is used to show politeness in the speech of the speaker. As stated earlier, the Saudis are a deeply religious society and the same reflects in their

language use as concluded by Al-Saggaf (2012). The findings of the study are similar to the views expressed by researchers such as Almakrami (2015) and Bajri (2005) who stated that Saudis often use blessing expressions such as “Allah yirḡaḡalēki ‘ الله يرضى عليك ‘ (May God be pleased with you), bring me a glass of water, please”, and “Allah yijzakxēr ‘ الله يجزاك خير ‘ (“May Allah reward you with His blessings”) to express politeness.

Also, the aim of the study was to see how males and females constructed their gender identity online. It also attempted to see who uses real names more and who uses nicknames more in the Saudi Arabian context. The findings revealed that males used real names more than females. Females used nicknames more due to social and cultural restrictions and norms. They also used gender-specific language through suffixation to show distinct genders of males and females through the use of their gender-specific language.

Talking about language and gender, Tannen (1995) elaborates on distinct communication patterns used by men and women where people of male gender tend to use a direct and forceful style whereas members of female gender prefer an indirect and friendly style. Scholars such as Savicki (1996) have also reported such gender differences in an online context, concluding that people of female gender attempted to avoid or reduce tension. Baxter (2010) also concluded that women constantly monitor their language. In the case of Saudis and the findings of this study, one can easily identify the gender difference in the use of expressions such as (انتبهني / be careful, غلطانه / I used it, مجربتها / my dear, اشتريكي / contract, الوحدہ / she, اعذريني / Forgive me, اسفه / sorry, I غلطانه / I made a mistake, مستعده / ready, متأسفه / sorry, سامحيني / forgive me) used by females and (منور / Illuminating, واناخوك / my brother, اسف / Sorry, مستعد / I will , متاسف / sorry) used by males to show their masculine identity. These findings are in line with the findings reported by Bamman, Eisenstein and Schnoebelen (2014) and Acton (2011). In his study, Aba-alalaa (2015) mentioned

female words such as ‘حبيبتى/ ḥabībti/ dearest’ (p. 74). In Arabic language, the suffixation helps in denoting and identifying the gender as is seen in the examples such as (اعذريني/ **Forgive**, اسفه/**sorry**) where suffixes (ي) and (هـ) are used to show feminine gender of the language user.

Another notable finding of this study was that female participants used nicknames in their profiles. This was for many reasons. The main reasons are cultural and religious norms. In a similar study, Almakrami (2015) found that the females preferred considerably higher levels of secrecy than the males. Almakrami (2015) noted that “many of the Saudi female participants showed a significant desire to remain anonymous on Facebook (by using false details)” (p. 153). It is to be noted that internet use by males is culturally more acceptable than females in Saudi Arabia (Al-Kahtani, Ryan, & Jefferson., 2006; Pengiran-Kaharab, Syed-Ahmadac, Ismaild, & Murphy, 2010). According to Almakrami (2015) the tribal reputation and Saudi culture place a high emphasis on family reputation. Thus, women’s reputation is held in high regard in Saudi Arabia, with a tarnished reputation leading to serious outcomes for the women and their families (Almakrami, 2015). Thus, any real photo of a female on social media may bring a bad name for the family and to the whole tribe. Therefore, distributing women’s photographs is forbidden and is deemed to be a form of attacking the individual’s or her family’s reputation that could even involve blackmailing (Al-Saggaf & Weckert, 2011).

To sum up, in this section I attempted to uncover various linguistic strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths to construct their regional, tribal, religious and gender identities. It was revealed that participants used region-specific words, phrases and dialects to show to which region they belonged. They also used tribe-specific names in their profiles to denote their tribal background and belonging. From the data analysis, it was found that the online language use in the commenting of the Saudi Arabian youths is marked with religious expressions which reflect

the deep religious influence on the lives and communication of the Saudi Arabian youths. The participants also used the language related to their gender to show to which gender they belonged.

After this discussion of the data relating to the linguistic strategies used by the participants to construct their various identities, in what follows I will elaborate on the nonlinguistic strategies used by the participants to construct their regional, tribal, religious and gender identities.

Individuals construct their various identities consciously or unconsciously using different linguistics and nonlinguistic strategies. The linguistic strategies include use of gender-, tribe-, region-, religion-, and nation-specific words or phrases or dialect or accent. The nonlinguistic strategies include using pictures related to gender, tribe, and region that may include pictures of flowers, cars, animals, historical monuments or architecture. Elaborating on the metaphorical use of animals, Jokha Alharthi of Oman observes that the gazelle is metaphorically used in the classical Arabic poetry to connote the desirable beloved female (2015). Brosh (2013) also argues that Arabs have “revered gazelles for years as creatures of striking beauty and astounding speed” (p. 22). Certain birds and animals are also used to construct national identity. Using real photos of girls to show gender identity is not normal in Arab countries. This is due to the cultural restrictions as reported by Almakrami (2015). He reports that the distribution of photographs of women is forbidden in Saudi Arabian society. Similar findings were also reported by Al-Saggaf and Weckert (2011).

In the case of Saudi Arabia, the falcon and camel serve as symbols of national identity. Saudis perceive the falcon as symbol of force and courage. Brosh (2013) argues that the camel has also been essential in Arabian culture for thousands of years. Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015)

describe camels as symbols of “humility, willingness to serve and obstinacy” (p. 67), the horse as “symbol of power” (p. 69) and the snake as a symbol of “danger, charm and sexual energy (especially male)” (p. 73). Flowers are often associated with new life and growth and they have different significance in each country and culture. Saudi females often prefer red roses and often construct their gender identity by using pictures of different flowers as their profile pictures on different social media sites. Stanger, Alnaghaimshi and Pearson’s (2017) study concluded that Saudi Arabian female Facebook users used pictures of flowers as their profile pictures to construct their female identity. Helal (2017), an Arab American contributing writer also elaborates on images of eyes used as profiles pictures by Arab females to construct their gender identity on different social networking sites. Martinez (2017) has extensively researched and elaborated on how dress has been used for centuries to construct different identities in the Saudi Arabian context.

The images used by participants to construct their religious identity included images of holy places, books, and praying practices. In our daily life, people often reveal their religious identity through the use of language (Jaspal & Coyle, 2010). Not only language but other symbols and architecture such as skull cap, full veil, holly cross or church, synagogue, masjid, and temple are also used to construct religious identities. With regard to Saudi Arabia, most of the Saudis follow Islam and their religious identity is also noticeable from their conversations as they are marked with the use of religious terminologies. However, when it comes to online communication, various holy and sacred places and things also serve as nonlinguistic markers to construct the religious identity of an individual. This has been noted in the results of this study.

The results of this study speak for themselves. They reveal the status and level of freedom the females experience not only in day-to-day life but also on social media as they have

to use images of other females and flowers to create their female identity. These results are contrary to Kim and Papacharissi (2003) who investigated the cross-cultural differences in online presentation at the Yahoo homepage in both the Korean collectivistic society and the US individualistic society. Their results indicate that Americans talk and present themselves in a direct and personal manner. However, Saudis do not do this due to cultural norms.

Chapter 5: Politeness/Impoliteness Strategies Used by the Saudi Arabian Youths Online: Data Analysis, Results and Discussion [Research Question 2]

5.1 Introduction

After analysing the data for finding out linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths for identity construction, the data were analysed at the third level to gain a comprehensive understanding of the politeness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths. This was aimed at answering the second research question of the study—Which strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication? To this end, first the data were analysed for studying politeness strategies using the framework of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). Blum and Kulka's (1989) CCSARP Coding manual was also used at this level to code the strategies used by the participants to be polite. An attempt was made to see under which categories of Brown and Levinson the polite expressions of Saudi Arabian youths came. These expressions were compared with the strategies of politeness of Brown and Levinson (1978; 1987) namely bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off-record. The expressions of Saudi Arabian youths which could not be classified under these strategies and their sub-strategies, were noted under a new strategies section and an appropriate term was used to describe these new strategies. These new strategies will be discussed in the following sections. But first, the general analysis of politeness strategies found in the selected topic is offered in the [Table 5](#) (see [Appendix G](#)).

5.2 Analysis of the Data for Studying Politeness Strategies used by the Saudi Arabian Youths Online

Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) have proposed four primary categories of face-threatening acts in politeness strategies, namely bald on-record, negative politeness, positive

politeness and off-record. Following the table of general data analysis of politeness (see [Appendix G](#)), it can be said that the Saudi Arabian youths employed the positive politeness strategy more than other strategies. It was used 259 times through different words and expressions.

The second most frequently used politeness strategy, following Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), was negative politeness which counted for 102 words and expressions. The remaining two strategies, namely bald on-record and off-record, counted for 20 and 12 counts respectively in the selected data. These data are presented in the form of a chart below (Figure 24) to offer an overview of politeness strategies use among the Saudi Arabian youths in their online communication:

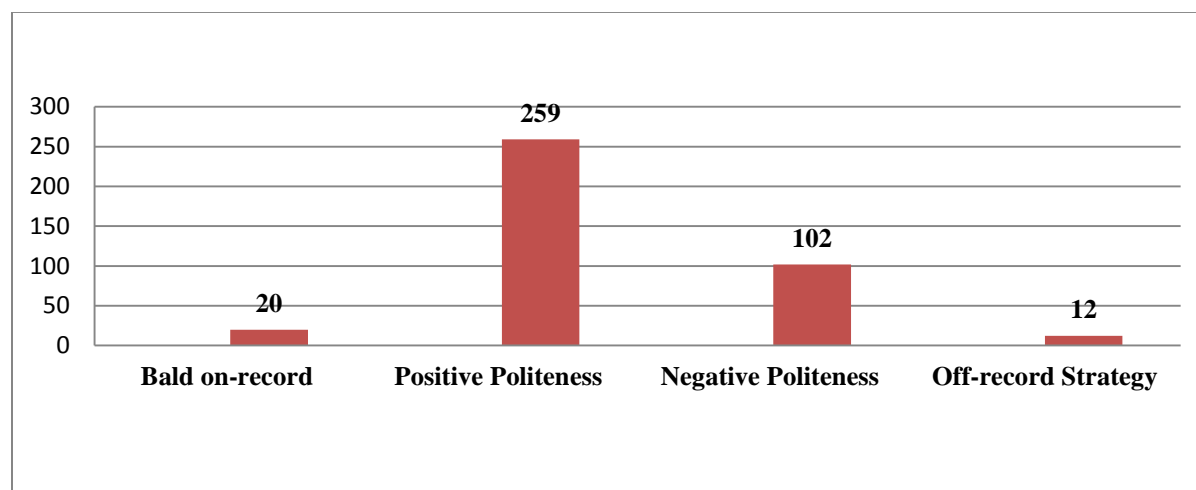


Figure 24. Counts of politeness strategies used by the participants

Figure 24 above shows that positive politeness is the most used politeness strategy. The percentage of this use is illustrated in the following chart (Figure 25) to get an understanding of the most and least used strategies among the Saudi Arabian youths.

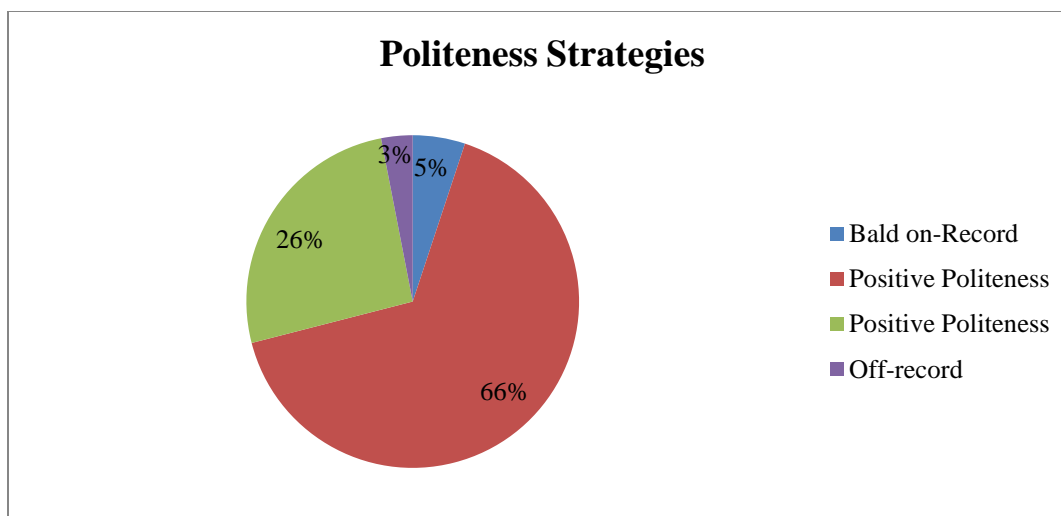


Figure 25. Percentage of politeness strategies used by the participants

As Figure 25 above shows, positive politeness strategies use accounted for 66% among the Saudi Arabian youths while commenting and interacting online on a social networking website. This was followed by negative politeness which accounted for 26%. It should be noted here that Brown and Levinson sub-categorise positive politeness into different strategies such as: 1) Notice, attend to hearer (his/her interests, wants, needs, goods); 2) Exaggerate (interest approval, sympathy with hearer); 3) Intensify interest to hearer; 4) Use in-group identity markers; 5) Seek agreement; 6) Avoid disagreement; 7) Presuppose/raise/assert common ground; 8) Jokes; 9) Offer, promise, include both speaker and hearer in the activity; 10) Give (or ask for) reasons; and 11) Give gifts to hearer (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation). The politeness strategies according to Brown and Levinson (1987) are discussed in the following sections.

5.2.1 Bald on-Record Strategy

Figure 25 above shows that the bald on-record politeness strategy was used by 5% of Saudi Arabian youths. This strategy includes two main sub-strategies, namely non-minimising of

FTA, and FTA-oriented strategies. Under the first category of non-minimising of FTA, there are different sub-strategies such as: in cases of great urgency or desperation; in the case of channel noise, or where communication difficulties exploit pressure to speak with maximum efficiency such as in calling across a distance; task oriented, in this kind of interaction face redress will be irrelevant, speaker's want to satisfy hearer's face is small, either because the speaker is powerful and does not fear retribution or non-cooperation from the hearer, the speaker wants to be rude without risk of offending, so the speaker does not care about maintaining face; sympathetic advice or warnings; and granting permission for something that the hearer has requested. The FTA-oriented strategies include sub-strategies such as welcome, farewell and offers.

When these strategies were studied further to find the counts for each sub-strategy among the Saudi Arabian youths, the following results were achieved (as shown in Table 19 below):

Table 19: *Top Five Counts of Bald on-Record Strategies*

No.	Sub-strategies	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
A) Non minimising of FTA				
1	In cases of great urgency or desperation	1	3	4
2	Speaker wants to be rude without risk of offending, so speaker does not care about maintaining face	1		1
3	Sympathetic advice or warnings	7	6	13
B) FTA-oriented				
1	Welcome		1	1
2	Farewell		1	1
Total		9	11	20

The top five counts of the bald on-record strategy are shown in the following chart (Figure 26):

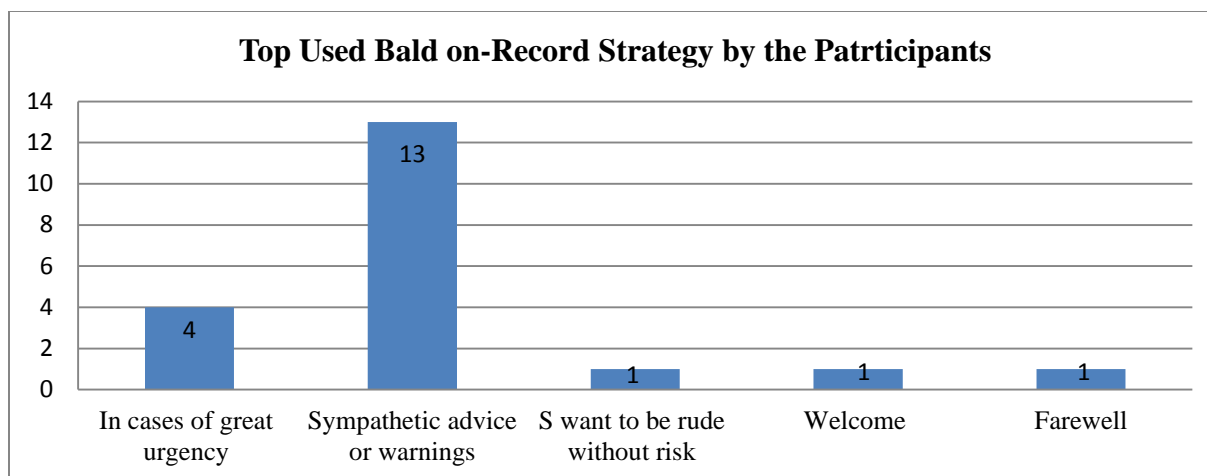


Figure 26. Top used bald on-record strategy by the participants

From Table 19 above it is seen that the Saudi youths used “sympathetic advice or warnings” 13 times in their commenting on the social networking website. It was used 7 times by males, while females used it 6 times. The comment below reflects this advice:

لازم الواحد دحين يعرف انه غلطان ويعترف بخطائه ولا ينظر لغيره

Transliteration: Lazam alwahad dahyan ayaraf annah galtan waa yatrafa bkatah waalaa yanthear lgyrah/

Translation: It is necessary to admit the mistake if you made it rather than complaining to others.

The person commenting is giving advice bald on-record to admit the mistake he made while complaining about the police officer. This language use reflects the aspect of politeness about bald on-record.

عندي استفسار لو سمحتوا ايش افضل شركة اتصالات بخصوص خدمة الانترنت

Transliteration: Anday asatfasaar lwaa samhatwaa a'yash afadhel shrkt atsaalat baksawaasa kedamt alentrnt

Translation: Excuse me. I have a question. Which is the best internet company?

“In cases of great urgency or desperation” was the second most used bald on-record politeness strategy which was used by one male and by three females, totalling 4 counts. The

expression is in the comment- ايش/ a'yash/ which shows this desperation. Thus, it can be said that the bald on-record strategy is deemed to be the third most commonly utilised strategy by Saudi youths, who are strangers to each other (no intimate or close relationships). This may be attributed to the reason that Saudi youth do not feel the need to decrease the threat to the hearer's face, convinced that speaker and hearer are in complete understanding they will not embarrass each other intentionally. Moreover, the Saudi youth may have established ways to understand and communicate with each other online that is clearly foreign to older people who face different situations and who have a higher tendency to decrease the threat to the hearer's face.

Thus, from the result, it is also evident that the participants used the following items with their percentage frequency in their online communication: "sympathetic advice or warnings (65%); "in case of great urgency/desperation" (20%); "speaker wants to be rude without risk of offending, so speaker does not care about maintaining face" (5%); "you're welcome" (5%); and "farewell" (5%). The above items were utilised in the stories-sharing concerning themselves and opinions-sharing.

5.2.2 Positive Politeness

When the positive politeness strategies were studied further to find the counts for each of Brown and Levinson's sub-strategies among the Saudi Arabian youths, the following results were achieved.

Table 20: *Details of the Use of Sub-strategies of Positive Politeness among the Saudi Arabian Youths*

No.	Sub-strategies	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Seek agreement	26	23	49
2	Give (or ask for) reasons	26	8	34
3	Presuppose/raise/assert common ground	17	12	29
4	Exaggerate (interest approval, sympathy with hearer)	8	8	16
5	Notice , attend to hearer (his/her interests, wants, needs, goods)	4	4	8
6	Include both speaker and hearer in the activity	4	4	8
7	Give gifts to hearer (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)	5	3	8
8	Requesting and apologising	3	4	7
9	Avoid disagreement	1	2	3
10	Offer, promise		2	2
11	Intensify interest to hearer	1		1
12	Use in-group identity markers		1	1
13	Jokes	1		1
Total		141	118	259

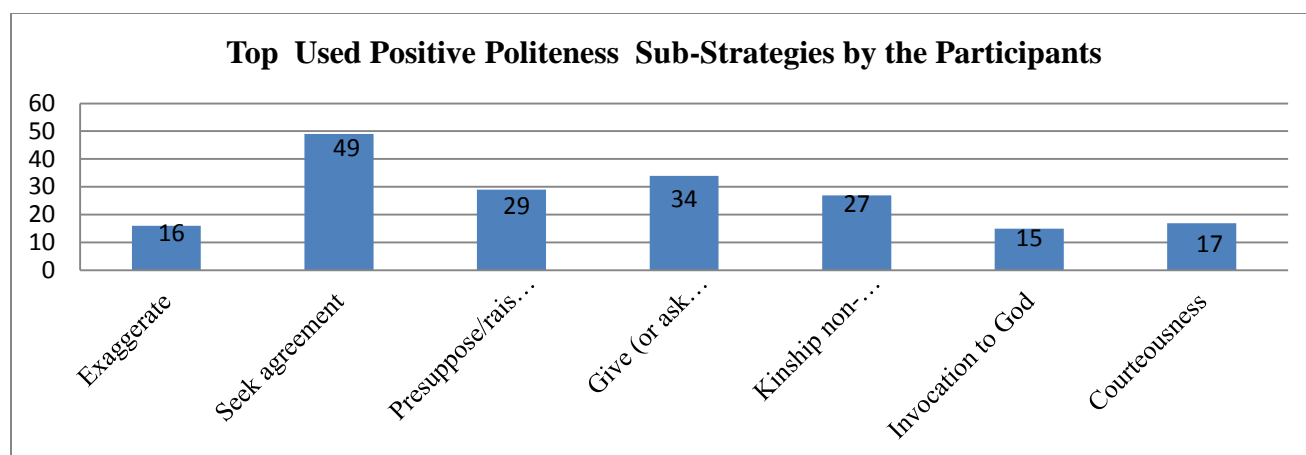


Figure 27. Top seven counts of positive politeness strategies

As Table 20 above shows, “seeking agreement” was the most used sub-strategy among the Saudi youths in positive politeness which was used 49 times. It was used 26 times by the males, while females used it 23 times. For example, this can be seen in the following comment:

وانا مع الاخت نواف العالمية

Transliteration: waa anna maa alekat Nouf Alalmyah

Translation: I agree with sister Nouf Alalmyah

In the comment above, the participant seeks agreement with another participant showing positive politeness. This tendency of seeking agreement may be attributed to the Saudi people’s tendency to steer clear of being in conflict with others as they live in the same close-knit community. Hence, seeking agreement is used to end the dialogue as a part of using compliments.

“Giving or asking reasons” was the second most used sub-strategy of positive politeness. It was used 34 times. Male participants used it 26 times whereas female participants used it 8 times. This is seen in the following comment of a participant wherein she/he is giving reasons for why some police officers work in a biased way by punishing some but releasing others whom they know or who have big, powerful connections with working elites in the government:

الواسطه هي المشكله عندنا

Transliteration: Alwastah heey almshkalah andan

Translation: These powerful connections are our problem.

“Presuppose/raise/assert common ground” was the next sub-strategy in its order of use. It was used a total of 29 times. Male participants used it 17 times while females used it 12 times. This is seen in the following comment of a participant wherein she/he asserts common ground so as to be polite positively.

حسب ما ارى انه لا يمكن

Transliteration: Hasab maa araa annah laa ymkan

Translation: Based on what I see, we can't.

The “notice or attend to the hearer (his/her interests, wants, needs, goods)” sub-strategy was used 8 times (4 times by males and 4 times by females). The following comment shows this wherein the participant pays notice to the interest of the other, thus showing the aspect of positive politeness in his/her comment.

غزو التكنولوجيا و(مواكبة)مواكبت المجتمع لهذا (الغزو)الغزوا مستمر

Transliteration: Gazwo altnlogay waa mwakabat almjtmah lehathae algazwo mstmar

Translation: Conquer the technology and keep up with the society to continue this invasion

The sub-strategy “Include both speaker and hearer in the activity” was also used 8 times (4 times by males and 4 times by females). This is noticed in the comment below where the participant included the other participant in the conversation as “our” rather than arguing “you” or “me”. This is when they are discussing the best internet company in the Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia. Such inclusive use of “our” shows another aspect of positive politeness in the comments of Saudi Arabian youths.

الشركات عندنا

Transliteration: Alsherkat andan

Translation: Our companies.

In addition to these sub-strategies, Saudi Arabian youths also used some new sub-strategies of politeness. These will be detailed below in section [5.6.1](#) as a new contribution of this research.

Focusing on the data in Table 20, it is observed that the total frequency of positive politeness among the Saudi youths was 141 items (54.4%) among males, and 118 items (45.5%) among females, indicating that the former outnumbered the latter while applying positive politeness strategies. Evidently, the participants used “seek agreement” (18.9%) in their conversations with others and this often happens in disagreements in online communication.

Moreover, the participants also used “give (or ask for) reasons” (13.1%) when they provided reasons or requested them in their online communication. This is the same for the use of “presuppose/raise/assert common ground” (11.1%) while commenting on social media; the participants are trying to steer clear of disagreeing with each other.

5.2.3 Negative Politeness

As noted in Figure 25 above, negative politeness strategies were used by 26% of the participants in their online commenting to different posts on the social media website. Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) have sub-categorised the negative politeness strategy into different strategies such as: 1) Be conventionally indirect; 2) Be pessimistic; 3) Minimise imposition; 4) Give difference; 5) Go on record as incurring debt, or as not indebting the hearer; 6) Apologise,

7) Impersonalise the speaker and the hearer; 8) State the FTA as a general rule; and 9) Nominalise. When these negative politeness strategies were studied further to find the counts for each sub-strategy among the Saudi Arabian youths, the following results were achieved.

Table 21: *Negative Politeness Strategy*

No.	Sub-strategies	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Apologise	28	44	72
2	Give difference	12	9	21
3	Be pessimistic	3	3	6
4	Be conventionally indirect	2	1	3
Total		45	57	102

The top four counts of the negative politeness strategy are shown in the following chart (Figure 28):

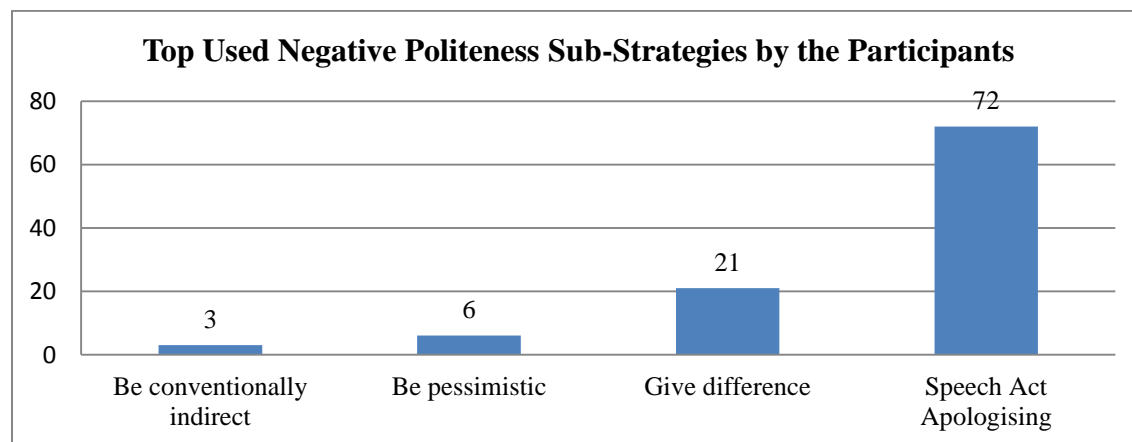


Figure 28. Top used negative politeness strategy by the participants

As seen in Table 21 above, “apologising” was the most used negative sub-strategy among the Saudi Arabian youths. It was used 72 times by the participants. Males used it 28 times while females used it 44 times. The higher counts for females show that females often tend to apologise more than males. The following comment illustrates this speech act of apologising as

an aspect of negative politeness wherein a person apologises to the other for breaking his/her mobile phone unintentionally when she/he hit her/him by mistake.

انا متاسف جدا

Transliteration: Anna mtassafa jedan

Translation: I'm extremely sorry.

“Give difference” was the second most used negative politeness sub-strategy which was used 21 times. Males used it 12 times while females used it 9 times. This is reflected in the following comment wherein the participant gives his/her different opinion saying that although powerful connections are the real problem in maintaining law and order rules equally, we should not lose hope and pray to such people not to do so when they oppress you by encroaching on your rights. The comment thus reflects the negative politeness aspect in the language use of the user.

الواسطه هي المشكله عندنا ولكن عليك بالدعاء عليهم اذا انت مظلوم

Transliteration: Alwastah heey almshkalah andan waa lakan alyk badaa alyhaoum ethae annt mathelom

Translation: These powerful connections are our problem but we should pray to them if you are oppressed.

“Be pessimistic” was another sub-strategy of negative politeness which was used 6 times by the Saudi Arabian youths. It was used 3 times by the males and 3 times by the females. This is seen in the following comment wherein the person commenting is pessimistic about the change in the behaviour of the corrupt police officers who fine some but let others go despite their crimes:

انت اخدت المخالفه ولكن خليها على الله لان ما راح احد يصدقك في الموقف دا وكثير ما نشوف هذا التصرفات

Transliteration: Annta akatheat almkalfah waa lakan kalyha alla Allah leen maa rah ahad
ysdqak faey almwqaf da waakateear maa nshwaf hada altsaraf

Translation: You took the fine. Leave it to God. Because no one will believe you in this
situation and we see such behaviours becoming very common.

Another sub-strategy of negative politeness, “be conventionally indirect”, was used 3
times. It was used 2 times by males and once by a female. It can be seen in the comment below
wherein the person commenting is indirectly saying the person complaining about a corrupt
police officer deserves the fine as he had made the mistake. This reflects another aspect of
negative politeness.

الله يعين دامي مخالف استاهل

Transliteration: Allah yaan damany mkalafa astahal

Translation: God help you. If one has made the mistake, one deserves the punishment.

5.2.4 Off-record Strategy

The off-record politeness strategy was the least used strategy among the Saudi Arabian
youths when commenting on the social networking website. Although this strategy includes
various sub-strategies, only sub-strategies such as be ironic (5 counts: 3 by males and 2 by
females); use rhetorical questions (4 counts: all by females); overstate (1 count by a female); use
metaphors (1 count by a male); and over-generalise (1 count by a female) were used by the Saudi
Arabian youths in the online commenting. Table 22 summarises this use of off-record politeness
strategies among the Saudi youths.

Table 22: *Off-Record Strategy Sub-Strategies Use among the Saudi Arabian Youths*

No.	Sub-strategies	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Be ironic	3	2	5
2	Use rhetorical questions		4	4
3	Overstate		1	1
4	Use metaphors	1		1
5	Over-generalise		1	1
Total		4	8	12

The sub-strategy “be ironic”, which was used 5 times, can be seen in the comment below:

يسعدلي جوه عليل جداً

Transliteration: Yasadleey jawah alyal jedan

Translation: He looks in quite a nice mood.

“Use rhetorical questions” was used by 4 participants and is reflected in the following comment:

دحين وقت شيشه

Transliteration: dahyana wakat shyshah

Translation: Now the time for shyshah (smoking)?

The “overstate” sub-strategy was used by 1 participant which is shown in the following comment:

اللغة الانجليزية اسهل لغه من حيث سرعة تعلمه

Transliteration: Alagah alanglayzyah asahal lagah maan hayathea sarat talmahaa

Translation: English language is very easy to learn

The top five counts of off-record strategy are shown in the following chart (Figure 29):

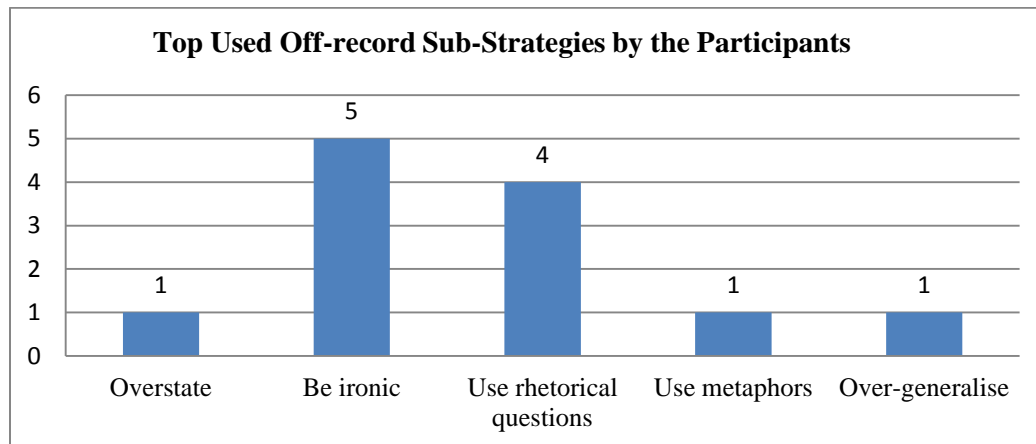


Figure 29. Use of off-record sub-strategies among the Saudi Arabian youths online

5.3 Analysis of the Data for Studying Impoliteness Strategies used by the Saudi Arabian Youths Online

After analysing the data for exploring the politeness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths in their online commenting, the data were analysed at the fourth level to gain a thorough understanding of the impoliteness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths. The analysis was aimed at finding answers to the second research question of the study—Which strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication? While analysing the data to this end, the impoliteness strategies were studied by applying Culpeper's (1996) framework. Culpeper (1996) believes that impoliteness implies linguistic behaviour which includes speech acts that are offensive to the faces of others. Culpeper established five primary categories of impoliteness strategy: Bald on-record Impoliteness; Positive Impoliteness; Negative Impoliteness; Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness; and Withhold Politeness. The topic-wise

analysis and the counts for each type in each of the topics is provided in [Table 6](#) of [Appendix G](#), and is summarised in the form of a chart in the following Figure 30:

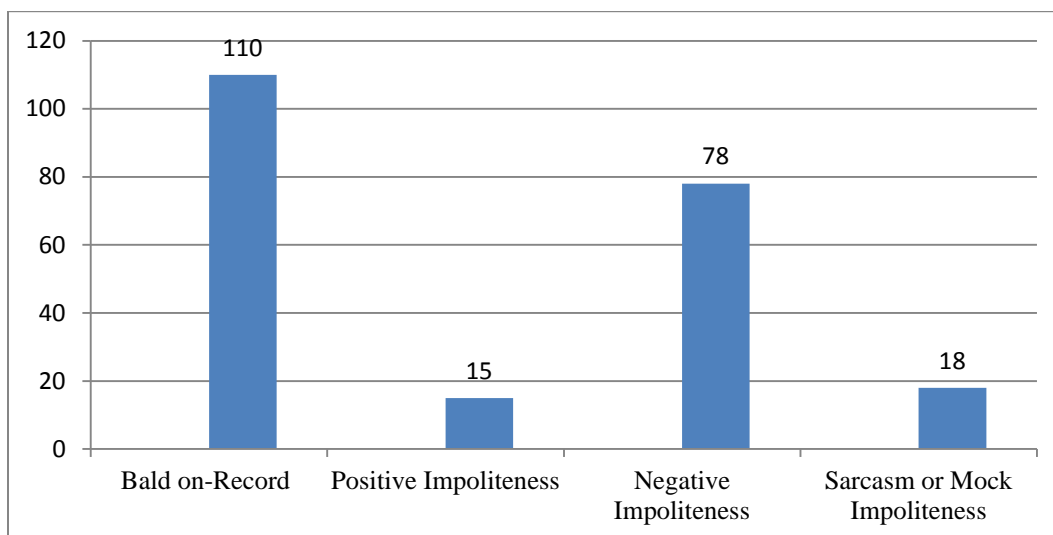


Figure 30. Overviews of impoliteness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths

As shown in Figure 30, the bald on-record impoliteness strategy was the most used impoliteness strategy among the Saudi Arabian youths when commenting online. It was used 110 times by the participants while commenting to the seven topics. The second most used impoliteness strategy was negative politeness which was used 78 times. Sarcasm or mock impoliteness was third in order of use as it was used 18 times by the participants. The least used impoliteness strategy was positive impoliteness which was used 15 times. The details of each of these sub-strategies and the counts they received are given in the following sections.

5.3.1 Bald on-Record Impoliteness

From the data shown in Table 23 and Figure 31 below, it is noticed that the Saudi Arabian youths used the bald on-record impoliteness strategy more often compared to other impoliteness strategies. This strategy received 110 counts, implying that it was used by 50% of the participants. The main sub-strategy of the bald on-record impoliteness used by the participants was “direct FTA in clear, unambiguous way without concern for the hearer’s face”.

This was used by 49 male participants and 61 female participants. It is quite surprising to note that this sub-strategy of impoliteness was used more by the females than males as it is often perceived and argued that women are more polite than men. However, these data prove this to be opposite in this case as women were seen being more impolite. This is shown in the following Table 23.

Table 23: *The Use of Sub-strategy of Bald on-Record Impoliteness among Saudi Youths*

No.	Sub-strategies	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Direct FTA in clear, unambiguous way without concern for the hearer's face	49	61	110
Total		49	61	110

This is also summarised in graphical form in the following chart (Figure 31):

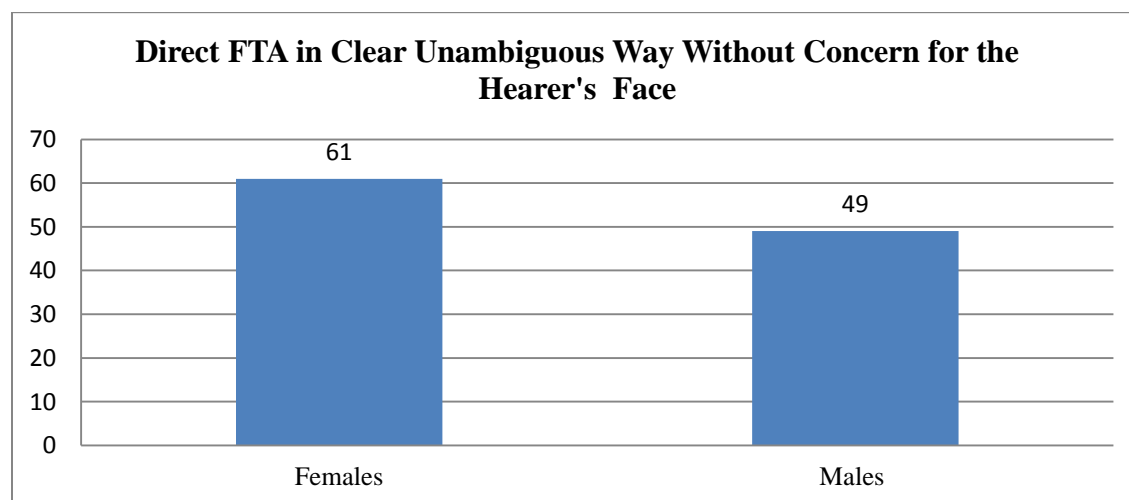


Figure 31. Use of sub-strategy “direct FTA in clear, unambiguous way without concern for the hearer’s face” among Saudi Arabian youths

This use of “direct FTA in clear, unambiguous way without concern for the hearer’s face” as a sub-strategy of bald on-record impoliteness was noticed in many examples such as:

Impolite Expression 1:

خرابيط/ karabyat/Rubbish thing

Impolite Expression 2:

متخلف/ Matkalafa/Mindless delinquent

Impolite Expression 3:

اي تطور اي طقاع/Which development which farts

Impolite Expression 4:

تنهق مثل الحمير/Don't pray like a jackass

Impolite Expression 5:

كل زق/Eat poo

As noticed in the expressions above, in the first example, a participant used the expression meaning “rubbish thing” while arguing with another participant online. In the second example, the participant used another impolite expression meaning “mindless delinquent”. The participant was referring to Trump with impoliteness due to his anti-Islam rhetoric in his speeches during the presidential campaign. Therefore, the study participant described Trump with such an impolite expression which is a direct FTA in a clear, unambiguous way without any concern for the hearer’s face. In the third example, a participant in response to an image of an old countryman enjoying using a laptop while smoking describes the image as “farts” which is a clear impolite expression. In examples four and five, participants are seen to be highly impolite to a participant who complained that he was charged wrongly by a policeman. The participants called him “jackass” and told him to “eat poo”.

All of these expressions, used in comments by the participants, were direct, clear and unambiguous and made in a way without showing any concern for the hearer's face.

All these examples reflect the use of Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategy (bald on-record impoliteness) by male/female Saudi youths in their online communications. The bald on-record impoliteness strategy was used in a direct, clear, unambiguous and short way in conditions where 'face' was irrelevant or minimised. As shown above, the bald on-record impoliteness strategy is the strategy most commonly employed by Saudi youths in social website communication. Based on these results, the frequency (110) and percentage (50%), the males used the strategy 49 items (45%) and the females used it 61 items (56%). The participants' comments were direct, clear, unambiguous and made in way without concern for the hearer's face because the participants had the space to write what they wanted to without any concern for others. The results showed that females used the bald on-record impoliteness strategy more than the males. The reason Saudi females are unable to communicate with males (not relevant) face-to-face is based on cultural norms (which are not relevant to them). The females are free to communicate online with irrelevant people. As such, they can be impolite in their social media communications. On the other hand, the males also had the space to be impolite on social media. Moreover, it was found that the participants in this study who used impoliteness were influenced by the topic.

5.3.2 Positive Impoliteness

The participants in the study used positive impoliteness with a frequency of 15 total counts. It was the third most used impoliteness strategy after bald on-record impoliteness and negative impoliteness. The participants used different sub-strategies of positive impoliteness while commenting online. These details along with their counts are given below in Table 24:

Table 24: *Positive Impoliteness Strategies Use among the Saudi Youths*

No.	Sub-strategies	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Ignore, snub the other, fail to acknowledge the other's presence	1		1
2	Exclude the other from an activity	1	1	2
3	Seek disagreement, such as selecting a sensitive topic	5	6	11
4	Call the other names	1		1
Total		8	7	15

As seen in Table 24 above, positive impoliteness was used 15 times by the participants in order to be impolite online. Males used it 8 times while females used it 7 times. The most used sub-strategy under positive impoliteness was “seek disagreement, such as selecting a sensitive topic”. This was used 11 times. Males used it 5 times while females used it 6 times. Thus, these results showed both males and females sought disagreement while commenting online. However, females used this strategy more than the males. These sub-strategies could be seen in examples such as:

انا اخالفكم الراى اللغه ليست مهمه

Translation: I disagree with you. English language is not important.

In the comment above, a participant does not agree with the view that English is an important language in the Saudi Arabian context. The participant reports the disagreement with “I disagree”.

The other sub-strategies used were “exclude the other from an activity”, “ignore, snub the other, fail to acknowledge the other's presence” and “call the other names”. These were seen in the examples such as:

دحين اخذت المخالفه ولا تجلس تتبكيك هنا / Now you got the fine. So don't cry here.

يا ابو بكيكه/yaa abo bkbakah/ O' crying.

In the examples above, a person who paid the fine was snubbed as well as was called with derogatory names such as “O’ Crying”. Such use was indeed with the intention of being impolite to the other person.

5.3.3 Negative Impoliteness

The negative impoliteness strategy was the second most used strategy of impoliteness among the Saudi Arabian youths. It was used 52 times when commenting online. Unlike the bald on-record impoliteness strategy where participants used only one sub-strategy, Saudi Arabian youths used different sub-strategies of negative impoliteness. These are summarised below in their order of use from high to low in the following Table 25:

Table 25: *Negative Impoliteness used by the Saudi Arabian Youths along with their Counts*

No.	Sub-strategies	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Frighten the other	3		3
2	Condescend, scorn or ridicule, emphasise your relative power	16	11	27
3	Emphasise your relative power	2		2
4	Invade the other's space—literally or metaphorically		1	1
5	Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect	8	11	19
Total		29	23	52

As the data in Table 25 show, different sub-strategies were used by the participants to be impolite under the negative impoliteness strategy. The most used sub-strategy by the Saudi

youths under this strategy was “condescend, scorn or ridicule, emphasise your relative power”. This was used 16 times by male participants and 11 times by female participants, totalling 27 counts of use. Saudi males used it more than Saudi females. The second most used negative impoliteness sub-strategy was “explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect”. This was used 11 times by females and 8 times by males, totalling 19 counts. This was opposite to the first sub-strategy as this sub-strategy was used more by females than by males. However, the overall pattern of use of different sub-strategies of negative impoliteness was that it was used more by males, unlike the bald on-record impoliteness where females used that strategy more. This gender-wise use of negative impoliteness strategies is summarised in the chart below (Figure 32).

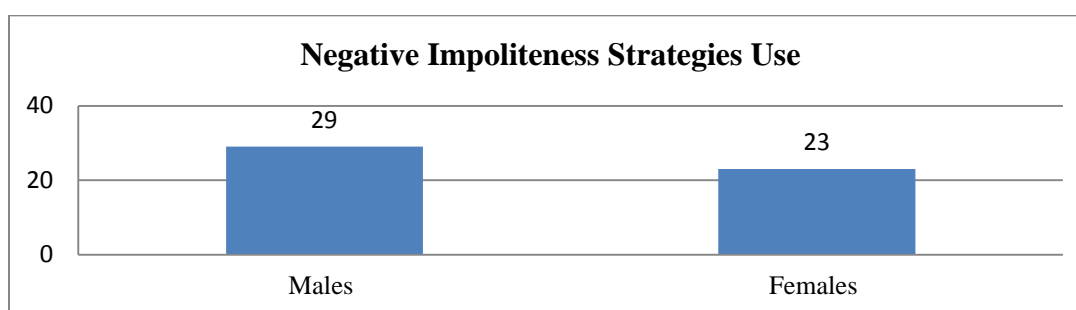


Figure 32. Use of negative impoliteness strategies by Saudi males and females

The participants used different negative impoliteness expressions to express their impoliteness online. They used different sub-strategies of negative impoliteness to this end. Some of the examples, used by the participants, along with the sub-strategies, are given below:

1) Condescend, scorn or ridicule, emphasise your relative power:

Impolite Expression 1:

هههه يالعين ام الكيف ياشيخ

Transliteration: Hhhh..yalaan aom alkyafa yaa shyka

Translation: Hhhh..damned the mother of mood, O Shaikh.

In this expression, the participant ridiculed the old man from a village who was seen smoking Shishah while playing with his laptop. As such a scene is uncommon, the participant was trying to ridicule him, implying that such a thing was not expected at such an old age from him as playing with a laptop while smoking Shishah is often associated with youngsters. What the participant was meaning is that the old man from the village was imagining himself to be young.

Impolite Expression 2:

دحين اخذت المخالفه ولا تجلس تتبكبك هنا

Translation: Now you got the fine. So don't cry here.

In this expression, a participant ridicules a man who is complaining about the policeman who fined him but let the other person go despite the similar crime.

Impolite Expression 3:

شيشه وكمبيوتر ما تمشي ههههههه

Translation: Shishah (smoking) and computer do not go together.

In this expression, the participant ridicules the old countryman enjoying his laptop while smoking Shishah. The two actions of smoking and working on a laptop in old age by an ignorant village man are ridiculed.

2) Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect

Impolite Expression 1:

/الحقد موجود

Tranliteration: alhaqd mawjwad

Translation: You are filled with hatred.

Impolite Expression 2:

غير متزن

Translation: Extremist

Impolite Expression 3:

عنصري

Translation: Racist

Impolite Expression 4:

مليان غل

Translation: Has meanness

Impolite Expression 5:

الوقت يبغى كل شي على مزاجه

Translation: wants everything like his mood

The above expressions show how participants associated someone with negative aspects. In the first expression, a participant associates Trump with someone filled with hatred. In the second expression, he is associated with “extremist”. In the third expression he is associated with “racist”. In the fourth expression he is associated with “meanness” and in the fifth he is associated with someone who has a fickle nature who wants everything his own way. These expressions show the negative impoliteness expressed through “explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect” strategy by the participants.

The other sub-strategies used by the participants included: frighten the other (3 counts); emphasise your relative power (2 counts); and invade the other’s space—literally or metaphorically (2 counts). These strategies could be seen in the examples such as:

Frighten the other:

الاستهتار من بعض السفله بكبير السن غير مقبول

Transliteration: Alastahtar maan badh alsafalah bkbyar asaan gyaar maqbawal

Translation: Disrespect from some tacky people for the old man is unacceptable.

Emphasise your relative power:

انت يلي تقول تتبكبك خليك رجال ولا تنهق مثل الحمير من بعيد الرجال ما قال شي خطأ

Transliteration: Anta yalay taqwal tetbkbak kalyak rajal waa laa tanhaq matheal alhamyar
maan bayyad alrjaal maa qala shaay kata

Translation: You said crying. He didn't say anything wrong but you being a man, should be jackass and not praying for him.

Invade the other's space—literally or metaphorically:

قلت الحيا موجوده حتى هنا

Transliteration: Qlaat alahay amwjwdah haata haana

Translation: Not even a minimum of modesty is found here.

As is seen in the example above about frightening others, a participant used an impolite expression to threaten another participant, saying he would not accept any comments about the old man with the laptop. In emphasising relative power, a participant was seen scolding the other participant for making a ridiculous comment. However, the participant used impolite language himself during this course of action. In the third comment, a participant invades the space of others by stating that the others are not polite and no modesty was seen there.

The above data reflect the use of Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategy (negative impoliteness strategy) by male/female Saudi youths in their online communications. Based on the results, the negative impoliteness items occurred with a frequency of 52 counts. Negative impoliteness in this study was the second most frequently chosen strategy based on Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategy. The results show that the "condescend, scorn or ridicule, emphasise

your relative power” item was the most frequently used by participants at 27 counts. Males used this strategy 16 times and the women used it 11 times. The second most frequent strategy used by the participants was “explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect”, which occurred in 19 comments. The males used it 8 times while the females used it 11 times.

5.3.4 Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness

“Sarcasm or mock impoliteness” was the third impoliteness strategy used by the Saudi Arabian youths. This was used 18 times by the participants. It was used 14 times by males and 4 times by females. The following Table 26 shows these details:

Table 26: *Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness Strategy Use among the Saudi Youths*

No.	Sub-strategies	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere	14	4	18
Total		14	4	18

As seen in Table 26 above, the sub-strategy of “sarcasm or mock impoliteness”, “use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere” was used 18 times by the participants. The comments below show this use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere.

لش ما سحبت عليهم بالذيب

Transliteration: Layash maa sahabat alyham yaa thaeyab

Translation: Why you didn't escape from them, O' wolf.

As seen in the example above, in Saudi Arabian culture, the sarcasm or mock impoliteness strategy happens normally as an indirect way to show one's reduced respect for

others. This is reflected in the example above. The “withhold politeness” strategy was not used by the participants.

5.4 Results of Research Question 2 [Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies Used by the Saudi Arabian Youths]

From the analysis of the data about politeness and impoliteness, the following results were obtained.

Following Brown and Levinson’s (1978/1987) model, Saudi Arabian youths were found using positive politeness strategies the most (259 counts).

- 1- Negative politeness was the second most used politeness strategy among the Saudi youths (102 counts).
- 2- In the positive politeness strategy, “seeking agreement, giving (or asking for) reasons and presupposing/raising/asserting common ground” were the most used sub-strategies among the Saudi Arabian youths.
- 3- In the negative politeness strategy, “apologising” and “giving difference” were the most used sub-strategies among the Saudi youths.
- 4- Following Culpeper’s (1996) model of impoliteness, Saudi Arabian youths were seen using the bald on-record impoliteness strategy the most (110 counts).
- 5- 61 females and 41 males used “direct FTA in clear, unambiguous way without concern for the hearer’s face” while expressing their bald on-record impoliteness.
- 6- Negative impoliteness was the second most used impoliteness strategy used by the Saudi Arabian youths to express their impoliteness online (52 counts).

- 7- In the negative impoliteness strategy, “condescend, scorn or ridicule, emphasise your relative power” and “explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect” were the most used negative impoliteness sub-strategies.
- 8- Saudi youths also used some politeness strategies such as kinship non-familiar; thanking God; invocation to God; using honorific titles; courtliness; describe the other using clever and strong animals terms; comforting someone with prayers; supplicating God; appreciation; and swearing by God which are Saudi Arabian culture-specific and were not covered in Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory of politeness.
- 9- Saudi Arabian youths also used some impoliteness strategies such as invoking God’s curse; describe the other using derogatory animals terms; using honorific titles to insult; using religiously and socially derogatory terms, all of which are Saudi Arabian culture specific and were not covered under Culpeper’s (1996) framework of impoliteness.

In light of the study results, it can be argued that politeness and impoliteness do exist in the Saudi youth discourse through social media network sites. In other words, politeness strategies are not limited in their use to face-to-face conversation but they can also be found in the faceless realm or CMC as evidenced by the Saudi youths’ use of social media. Politeness is generally used in conversations to uphold solidarity or to promote the social value in the community and this encompasses the virtual community. Participants adopted politeness strategies during their conversations to mitigate the FTA of saying something. Based on the findings with regard to politeness strategies, the positive politeness strategy is the topmost strategy used by Saudi youth via the social networking sites. The majority of those adopting the strategy take the addressees’ feelings or face into consideration and in so doing, they need to save the latter’s face to maintain solidarity or good rapport. This outcome is consistent with the

one that revealed participants in face-to-face conversations tending to use the strategy to be liked, accepted and understood. This finding is also aligned with the theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) that posits politeness strategy comprise statement of friendships and compliments. At the same time, the negative politeness strategy was also adopted by Saudi youth participants when they need to ask other users for something, and when the user wants to indicate his recognition of the addressee's promotion of freedom of action. Nevertheless, the distinction between the conversation online and face-to-face is that online users have a higher tendency to mitigate the FTA imposition because of their lack of awareness of each other's face in a faceless realm.

5.5 Research Question 2: Discussion of the Results of Politeness Strategies

The data obtained from the Saudi youth (males/females) in communicating online were examined on the basis of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategy, referred to as the bald on-record strategy. The bald on-record politeness strategy is considered to be one of the strategies used by the Saudi youth in their communication on the internet and according to the obtained results as shown in section [5.2.1](#). It was noticed that 20 male participants used 9 sub-strategies (constituting 45%), while the female participants used 11 sub-strategies (constituting 55%). From the result, it is also evident that the participants used the following sub-strategies in their online communication (with their percentage frequency): "sympathetic advice or warnings (65%)"; "in case of great urgency/desperation" (20%); "speaker wants to be rude without risk of offending, so speaker does not care about maintaining face" (5%); "you're welcome" (5%); and "farewell" (5%). The above sub-strategies were utilised in stories-sharing concerning themselves and opinions-sharing. More specifically, in giving advice or warning to the hearer, the speaker uses the form of human relations related to wanting to be liked, cared about, understood, admired

and listened to. Commonly, this strategy type can be found in normal face-to-face conversations among Saudi youth (Al-Ammar, 2000). Its usage in the online community indicates that people strive to be liked and admired even in the online realm. Moreover, human nature desires the sharing and understanding of feelings and thoughts despite the fact that the interaction is not face to face.

Aside from the above, the bald on-record strategy, as mentioned in the results above in section [5.2.1](#), is deemed to be the third commonly utilised strategy used by Saudi youths who are strangers to each other (no intimate or close relationships). This may be attributed to the reason that Saudi youth do not feel the need to decrease the threat to the hearer's face, convinced that both speaker and hearer are in complete understanding not to embarrass each other intentionally. Moreover, the Saudi youth may have established ways to understand and communicate each other online that is clearly foreign to older people who face different situations and who have a higher tendency to decrease the threat to the hearer's face. In relation to this, the majority of the participants using the strategy considered the feeling/face of the addressee.

According to May, Aziz and Mohamad (2015), the bald on-record politeness strategy is the strategy wherein the speaker spares no effort to lessen the threats towards the face of the hearer. However, in the context of Saudi Arabia, Al-Qahtani (2009) noted FTAs among female speakers without redressing, in that the offers had the elements of politeness, sincerity and firmness. Such unredressed offers were deemed to be justified as the act in the interest and imposition of addressees is quite minimal (Al-Qahtani, 2009). In a related study, May et al. (2015) found that the majority of male respondents (37, constituting 74%) and female respondents (36, constituting 72%) use the strategy in their interaction within Facebook. It was noted that speakers frequently skip the part of the conversations preamble and go straight to

achieving the aim of communication (May et al., 2015). In addition, Al-Shloul (2016) made use of Facebook data obtained from Arab users, and noted their use of the bald on-record politeness strategy (specifically 182 times), supporting the present study's result. Also, Saudi culture avoids direct face-to-face complaints, finding this unacceptable, however complaints are often delivered by a third party.

Based on the obtained data, and as shown in Table 24, Saudi youth may use the positive politeness strategy in various ways in their conversations on the social website. More specifically, the total frequency of positive politeness used were 141 times (54.4%) among males, and 118 times (45.5%) among females, indicating that the former outnumbers the latter when applying the positive politeness strategy. Evidently, the participants used “seek agreement” (18.9%) in their conversations with others and this often happens in disagreements in online communication.

Moreover, the participants also used “give (or ask for) reasons” (13.1%) when they provide reasons or request them in their online communication. This is the same for the use of “presuppose/raise/assert common ground” (11.1%) when providing comments on social media, when participants are trying to steer clear of disagreeing with each other. The Saudi face-to-face and online communications lean towards the inclusion of more compliments, where exaggeration frequently prevails. In other words, the study participants used their face-to-face social communication online.

From the items, “seek agreement” was the most used sub-strategy of positive politeness, which can be attributed to the Saudi people's tendency to steer clear of being in conflict with others as they live in the same close-knit community. Hence, seeking agreement is used to end the dialogue as a part of using compliments. This is similar to the use of “give (or ask for)

reasons”, although this particular item is used to give the hearer an opportunity to obtain reasons and explanations for understanding.

Furthermore, as noted in section [5.2.2](#), the participants also used “kinship non-familial” (10.4%) and this often arises when the participants are from one country and share the same religion. In relation to politeness in religion, according to Abdalati (2010), Islam is a complete code of conduct, regulating every life aspect as established by the commandments and instructions. Politeness strategies were used in conversations and communications to mitigate the FTA of stating something. In fact, of all the politeness strategies, the positive politeness strategy is most commonly utilised among Saudi youth participants in the present study. Based on Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory, online communication users using the strategy are mostly friends or intimately related. Added to this, the positive politeness strategy strives to mitigate the threat to the hearer’s positive face and to make him/her feel good (Foley, 1997). In the context of Saudi Arabia, Al-Qahtani (2009) revealed that female speakers utilised varying strategies in both contexts (face-to-face and online), with polite offers more often used and varied.

Also, in a study by May et al. (2015), the author revealed that 21 (42%) male participants and 43 (86%) of their female counterparts use the positive politeness strategy in their interactions on Facebook. In a related study using Facebook data by Al-Shloul (2016), Arab users used the positive politeness strategy (204 times), supporting the present study’s findings. The new strategies used among Saudi youth are based on Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory, with positive politeness summarised into four sub-strategies. The first one is polite addressing terms such as kinship non-familial and using honorific titles and courtliness, while the second one is calling upon God such as thanking God, invocation to God, comforting someone by prayers,

supplicating to God and swearing by God. The third one is providing a description of the other through the use of level and strong terms, and the fourth one is appreciation.

In support of the “comforting someone with prayers” results, Tawalbeh and Al-Oqaily (2012) revealed that religious expressions were utilised more, which was also noted in the study by El-Shazly (1993) and Alaoui (2011) in Egyptian Arabic and Moroccan Arabic speakers respectively, who noted the use of religious expressions and lexical down graders to exemplify polite markers. Furthermore, in Atawneh and Sridhar’s (1993) study, Arabic speakers made use of “God be with you”, indicating that such formulae indicate respect/politeness in the conversations among participants (p. 53).

Similarly, in Samarah’s (2015) study, the religious expression “may God help you” (p. 2011) was noted to be mentioned. In this regard, the honorific name category is crucial in Arabic communications of politeness and in relation with names—with the final name considered to have a special function in the politeness expression (Samarah, 2015). The final name is generally utilised while communicating with familiar individuals (Samarah, 2015). This study found participants to use the expression of ‘thanking God’, which is commonly used in Arab culture (Samarah, 2015, p. 2012).

The data obtained by the present study show that Saudi youth used several variations of negative politeness strategy in conversing via the social website. This was summarised in section [5.2.3](#) and was shown in Table 21. As shown, 102 males used 45 items (44%) of negative politeness, while females used 57 items (56%). This strategy is generally used in the presence of a large social distance among communicators to emphasise steering clear of placing impositions on the hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The strategies consider the speaker to be imposing on the listening, with the presence of greater potential for awkwardness/embarrassment, compared

to bald on-record strategies and positive politeness strategies (Al-Shloul, 2016). The participants used the following items in the negative politeness strategy: “be conventionally indirect” (3%); “be pessimistic” (5.8%); “give difference” (20.5%); and “speech act apologising (70.5%). They were notably used by male and female Saudi youth participants, with the females (56–57%) outnumbering their male counterparts

Al-Shloul’s (2016) study supported the present one in that, when using the Facebook data of Arab users, the 209 negative politeness strategy items were examined and the results showed that the male participants used 129 items, and the female participants used 80 items.

In Saudi Arabia, Al-Qahtani (2009) found that the negative politeness strategy is often used by Saudi and British participants with higher frequency when addressing the mother. Meanwhile, Malaysian news bloggers Thayalan et al. (2012) revealed that bloggers were polite, using both positive politeness and negative politeness, with the latter used the least (7%) in Twitter updates. This is because the strategy is generally made use of when addressing hearers of higher status such as teachers, employers or lecturers (Maros & Rosli, 2017).

Data obtained in the present study indicate the rare usage of the off-record strategy among Saudi youth online. The result indicates that Saudi youths utilised the strategy only 12 times. In a related prior study, Brown and Levinson (1987) noted that a communicative act is conducted off-record when it is done in such a way that is impossible to relate only one clear communicative intention to the action. Therefore, when using FTA without being responsible for it, an individual can do it off-record and leave the interpretation up to the addressee. The items used by Saudi youth in this strategy include: overstating (1 item constituting 8%); being ironic (5 items constituting 42%); using metaphors (1 item constituting 8%); using rhetorical questions (4

items constituting 33%); and over-generalising (1 item constituting 8%), with being ironic being the most used in comments.

In relation to the above, in the Saudi culture, the indirect manner of communication is used in face-to-face conversations, and this is also noted in online communication, particularly when giving advice and making complaints. In Al-Qahtani's (2009) study, female speakers were noted to use religious formulaic expressions such as *Masha'Allah* (God protect/bless) ironically meaning to imply "really?". Irony is used to indirectly relay the message to the hearer. Saudi youths have a great tendency to be indirect when interacting with higher-ranking individuals or older individuals in the society.

In another related study, Al-Shloul (2016) used Facebook data for examination, after which the results revealed that Arab users used the positive politeness strategy in 151 items, supporting the present study's findings. Specifically, more female participants used the off-record strategy compared to their male counterparts. The off-record items used were rhetorical questions (4 items, constituting 33%). It can be stated that Saudi people use this strategy in face-to-face communication to provide hints to the hearer of what he/she did, in an indirect way.

In light of these results, one could argue that both politeness and impoliteness occur in Saudi conversations on social media networking websites. Thus, politeness strategies are not only used in face-to-face conversations. As shown by Saudi youths on social media, they are also used in the virtual community or CMC. In general, politeness is used in discourse to maintain solidarity or the social values practised in the Saudi community, which includes the online community. When communicating, people use strategies of politeness to reduce the face-threatening act of saying something. The results show that, of all the politeness strategies, the positive politeness strategy is the one most commonly used among the Saudi youths on a social

website. Most users of this strategy have the addressee's feelings or face in their mind and they need to keep the addressee's face in mind to maintain good rapport. The results parallel those where participants had a face-to-face conversation. Thus, the results also support Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, which says that politeness strategies contain compliments and statements of friendship. In this case, participants showed higher frequencies in their use of language patterns characteristic of politeness. The participants in this study often used a seeking agreement strategy to seek confirmation, to build solidarity, to show empathy and sympathy and to improve the relationships between speakers and hearers.

The negative politeness strategy was found to be widely used by Saudi youth users whenever they needed to ask other users for something or to do something. It was also used when the user wanted to show that he or she knows or recognises that the hearer does want to have his or her freedom of action to be open. However, the difference between the conversations on social websites and in face-to-face conversations was that users tended to minimise the imposition of the FTA. This happens because, in the virtual community, users cannot see each other's faces. According to the findings, the bald on-record strategy is normally used by Saudi youths on social websites. Perhaps this is because most of the users want to be friends. The most frequently used sub-strategy used by the participants was sympathetic advice or warnings.

The off-record politeness strategy is the least used strategy among Saudi users on social websites. This might be due to the existing social distance between the participants. As explained earlier, Saudis tend to be indirect when conversing with those who are of a higher rank in society or simply older. This is because the speaker or, in this case, the user, wants to remove any potential for being imposing. In this respect, the research shows that people are still apprehensive about being polite, even in the virtual community. Usually, social websites focus on developing

or building rapport among users, encouraging those users to be polite in regard to the identity of the user and the sensitivity of the topic.

5.6 New Contribution of this Study to the Theories of Politeness and Impoliteness

This research aimed to study which politeness and impoliteness strategies were used by the Saudi Arabian youths when commenting online. To this end, Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness and Culpeper's (1996) theory of impoliteness were used. After analysing the data about politeness and impoliteness, it was noted that the Saudi Arabian youths used some politeness strategies (see Table 27) which were not covered under Brown and Levinson's theory (1987) but are used in the Saudi Arabian culture. There were also some impoliteness strategies which Saudi Arabian people use but which are not covered under Culpeper's (1996) theory of impoliteness (see Table 28). These strategies are listed below as a new contribution of this study.

5.6.1 New Politeness Strategies as Contribution of this study

The following Table 27 summarises the new politeness strategies along with their examples.

Table 27: *The New Politeness Strategies*

No.	New Politeness Strategy	Counts	Example in Arabic	Translation
1	Thanking God	2	والله الحمد	Thank God
2	Invocation to God	15	ايه والله	By God
3	Using honorific titles	7	الشيخ	O'Shaikh
4	Courtliness	17	اختي الكريم	Precious sister
5	Describe the other using clever and strong animals terms	1	بالذئب	O' wolf
6	Comforting someone with prayers	9	خليها على الله	Leave it to God

No.	New Politeness Strategy	Counts	Example in Arabic	Translation
7	Supplicating to God	11	وتعدلون الله يهديهم	Allah give them hidaya (guidance) to repent
8	Kinship non-familiar	27	ياختي	My sister
9	Appreciation	2	ماشاء الله الدوله ماهي مقصره في المدارس والتعليم	God be exalted/the government has opened many schools
10	Swearing by God	1	بالله	By God

5.6.2 New Impoliteness Strategies as Contribution of this study

The following Table 28 summarises the new impoliteness strategies along with their examples.

Table 28: *The New Impoliteness Strategies*

No.	New Impoliteness Strategy	Counts	Example in Arabic	Translation
1	Invoking God's curse	4	الله يجعل كيدهم في نحرهم	May God turn their plots against themselves
2	Describe the other using derogatory animals terms	8	الهوايش	Crawling creatures
3	Using religiously and socially derogatory terms	6	هذولي حراميه	They are corrupted
4	Using honorific titles for insult	7	يا شبيهه	Old man

When the data were analysed, some politeness and impoliteness strategies were observed which were Saudi Arabian culture specific only. The participants used “kinship non-familial” (10.4%) and this often arises when the participants are from one country and share the same religion. In relation to politeness in religion, Islam has a complete code of conduct, regulating every aspect of life as established by the commandments and instructions about how to speak and what to speak. Participants also used strategies such as using honorific titles and courtliness; calling upon God; thanking God; invocation to God; comforting someone by prayers; supplicating to God and swearing by God; and describing someone through the use of clever and strong animal terms, and appreciation.

The participants also used new impoliteness strategies such as invoking God’s curse (4 counts) as an impolite way to insult others. Describing the other by using derogatory animal terms was the strategy most commonly used by the participants. It was used 8 times. Males used it 4 times and the females used it 4 times. Animal terms are used more frequently by Saudi people who want to revile each other in face-to-face conflict. These often include expressions such as “dog” as in Saudi Arabian culture people believe that dogs are only looking for who can provide them with food. The Saudis also use the word “donkey” as they associate it with stupidity.

Chapter 6: Saudi Youths' Opinions about Identity Construction and (Im) Politeness Strategies: Data Analysis, Results & Discussion [Research Question 3]

6.1 Research Question 3: Analysis of the Interview Data and the Findings

After analysing the data in order to find the linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies and politeness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths, the data were analysed at the next level to answer the third research question of the study which aimed to gain a thorough understanding of the different aspects of politeness, impoliteness, linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths in their online commenting on the social media website. The data were collected from selected participants through interviews. The interviews were in Arabic and were audio-recorded. The interviews were also aimed at finding if the Saudi youths were aware or unaware that they were constructing different identities online and while being polite or impolite. To this end, the related data were analysed at the fifth level. The interviews were conducted with five randomly chosen participants (3 males and 2 females) as a follow-up qualitative study. These participants were representatives of all the five regions and different tribes in Saudi Arabia. The small number of participants is justified since it was a follow-up study to confirm the authenticity of the findings already obtained from the Participants' Comments Data. It was also sufficient for theoretical saturation in the present context. The questions were asked in Arabic as most of the participants did not understand and speak English well. An attempt was made to clarify any questions which the participants did not understand correctly. The interview questions are attached in [Appendix B](#). All of the interview data were transcribed and translated. Sample copies of two interviews' transcription data are attached in [Appendix I](#). The following sections present the analysis of the interview data.

6.2 Qualitative Analysis of Interview Data for Understanding Saudi Youths' Opinions about Identity Construction and Politeness and Impoliteness Online

The first interview question was aimed at generating data from the participants about their politeness strategies, especially on social media. It was intended to gain understanding of expressions and strategies used by the participants for apologising on social media. It was also intended at cross-checking the strategies with the data received from the social media website created for this purpose. Participants were given seven expressions to choose from with the frequency of their use in their communication for expressing apology. To this the participants replied with different expressions and frequencies. The expression “I’m sorry” was used 6 times; “forgive me” 4 times; “My dear, please forgive” 2 times; “I apologise” 1 time; “It wasn’t my intention” 1 time; “you have rights on me” 1 time; and “If... This is the last thing that I did” 1 time. These were analysed using a content analysis approach to interpret the data in order to gain the results. The following are excerpts from the interview transcript data:

الأعتذار (3 ثانية) مثلاً اعتذار من احد ااا (2 ثانية) ااا اعزروني جعلني فدوه ااا (4 ثانية) يعني فديتك اسفه (2 ثانية) يعني مافيه اعتذار باللهجه الجنوبية يعني بشكل خاص يعني بس اكثرها كلمات متقاربه مع جميع المناطق

Apologising? (thinks) for example, apologising someone? (thinks). ‘Forgive me for making fool’. (thinks) means regret? You know, we do not have any specific words for apologising in southern dialect. They are similar to words for apologising in other regions.

This was the answer from a female participant from the south region. She opted for “forgive me” and said that there were not any specific words for apologising in the southern

dialect. The expression for apologising opted by her—“forgive me”—reflects the speaker’s guilt to the hearer.

والله غالبا تكون اعتذر و العذر والسموحه ما عيش وانا اخوك وانا اسف وحقك علي يعني مثل الكلمات هذي

O God, often I say- ‘I apologise’, ‘Excuse and forgive’, ‘Excuse my brother’, ‘I am sorry’ and ‘you have rights on me’ like these words.

This was the answer from a male participant from the centre region. He opted for different expressions for apologising such as “I apologise”, “excuse and forgive”, “excuse me my brother”, “I am sorry” and “you have rights on me”. Some of the expressions were similar to the expressions of the previous participant who opted for “forgive me”. The participant also used the word “brother” to make the apology more likely to be accepted.

The second interview question was intended to gain increased understanding of expressions used by the participants in different regions of Saudi Arabia for expressing the speech act of requesting and asking. To this, the participants replied differently. The expression “if possible, my dearest” was chosen 2 times; “is it possible to” 2 times; “excuse me, if possible, dear sister or noble brother or master” 1 time; “is there any chance/way to help me in this subject matter?” 1 time; “by God, my dear, by God” 1 time; “God never insult you brother” 1 time; “no insulting” 1 time; “if you do not consider it as command and if it is possible” 2 times; “my life, (baadhieey) please do this to me” 3 times; “God give you good health, if possible” 1 time and “I hope God makes you happy, I have a request” 1 time. Some of the answers by the participants to the question are listed below:

في الطلب او السؤال , يابعد حيي تكفى نجرا لنا هالشغله , يابعد حيي , والا يابعدى ابيك تخلص لي هالمعامله هذا , او يابعدى انا بعدى ماني حولك , والا يابن الحلال , ياشيخ تكفى ابيك تنجزني او اسالك هالكلمات هذا .

In requesting and asking, 'my life, (baadhieey) please do this to me', 'my life, you are my life' would you finish this to me', 'you are my life' I'm not near to you, you are legal son' ('Yaaabanalhalal'), 'yourShayak' please do this to me'. [he used words 'baadhieey' meaning 'my life', takfa meaning 'please'. This word is used to ask something by subservience and YaaabanAlhala means 'you are legal son']

This is the answer from a male participant from the north region. He opted for expressions such as “my life, (baadhieey) please do this to me” and “my life, you are my life” for expressing requests on social media and to be more polite with others in online communication. These expressions are more common in the north region.

ابوه دائما ابدئها الله يعطيك العافية ممكن اطلب كذا (2 ثانية) ايش كمان الله يسعدك , عندي طلب

Yes I always start by 'God give you a good health, if possible'... (think) what also, 'I hope God make you happy, I have a request.

This was the answer from a female participant from the west region. She chose the expression “God give you a good health, if possible” to express requests on social media. She agreed that it was used in her own requests on social media. She used “may God give you good health” to make the request polite with the name of God.

The third interview question was aimed at generating data from the participants with regard to two issues: 1) linguistic strategies used by the participants to create their different

socio-cultural identities, and 2) politeness strategies. It is observed that females in Saudi Arabia do not use their real names on social media when creating their profiles as this is not permitted in Saudi society. Thus, females create and use social media profiles with nicknames. Also, creating profiles with nicknames gives them freedom to express their thoughts and feelings more freely (as their real identity is not known to anyone) which they otherwise cannot do due to socio-cultural norms. Such use of a nickname rather than real name also allows participants to be more impolite which they may not do otherwise due to socio-cultural restrictions. Thus, the aim was to gain more information from the participants about this issue as this would help in understanding why females use nicknames and whether they more polite or impolite with the use of a nickname while communicating on social media. Thus, their answers would be helpful in understanding their linguistic strategies used for creating their gender identity as well as for understanding politeness and impoliteness strategies used by them. When asked about who uses real names and who uses nicknames more when creating social media profiles online in Saudi Arabian society, the participants replied in the following ways:

“Males use real names more” (5 counts); “females use anonymous or nicknames more” (4 counts); “males use nicknames” (1 count).

After this initial information on the use of nicknames by male and female gender Saudi youths, they were further probed to know if using nicknames helped them to be more polite /impolite. To this, the following responses were received:

“People using nicknames are impolite” (4 counts); “people with real names or family names more are polite”; (2 counts); “because of nickname they will have space and freedom to speak and express what they think” (2 counts); and “females use nicknames due to privacy issue” (2 counts). When they were further asked if they trusted profiles with real names or profiles with

nicknames, the participants replied that “real name profiles are genuine as nicknames profiles create an ambiguous atmosphere and one can’t communicate freely with such peoples” (1 counts); “people trust you when you use a real name rather than nickname” (1 count);, “with real names people want to make friendship with others from different countries” (1); “with real names, people want to get fame” (1 count); “people with real names try to be more ideal” (1 count); “people use real names as nickname profiles are not followed by others” (1 count); “because no one can punish them” (1 count); ‘youths with nicknames are impolite as they do not follow religion” (1 count); “people with nicknames hide behind their nicknames to be impolite” (1 count); “females use nicknames due to fear of getting exposed to social abuse” (1 count); “not possible for girls to use real names because of customs, traditions and culture” (1 count); and “females use nicknames as they are shy and dislike showing what they write” (1 count). Some of the excerpts from these answers are given below:

الرجال اكثر

The males more

المرأة بالعادة تحب تكون مجهوله الهوية على اساس العادات الاجتماعيه عندنا او تتكلم بحريه وتعبر

The female normally like to be anonymous based on the culture of community and has space to speak and express what she thinks.

بالعادة اقل تهذيب لان هويته غير معروفه وكذا يستطيع يتكلم بكل بذاءه ولا احد يحاسبه

Normally, people using nicknames are less polite because they are anonymous identities and they can speak more impolite words also no one can punish them.

The male participant here from the east region expressed that males use their real name more than females. He also said that females like to be anonymous due to culture and using nicknames gives them space to speak and express what they think. Also the people use a nickname in order to be impolite.

اتوقع اكثر شي النساء يعني الرجال ممكن عنده حسابين ,حساب بأسمه الحقيقي وحساب بأسم مستعار, والمرأة اكثر شي تستخدم اسم مستعار , يعني ممكن لأنها ما تحب يكون الكل عارف هي مين بالضبط وبنيت مين , تعرفين عندنا هنا العادات والتقاليد يعني اشياء كثيرة حولينا نحاول انا مو نخفي شخصيتنا عشان سبب معين لا ممكن اني اظهر اجمل ماعندي وافضل ماعندي في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تحت اسم مستعار , بس هو عشان ممكن ما ودي احد يعرف شخصيتي ان اكون او بنت مين اكون , عندنا هنا المرأة الوضع يختلف , وممكن اني احط رمز لأسمي بس يكون قريب من أسمي بس اوضح من اكون انا بالضبط لا اكثر شي النساء

I expect the females to use nicknames. Maybe males have two accounts. The first one uses real name and second uses nickname. But, females use nickname more because she doesn't like everyone to know who she is and as she is a girl, you know we have our customs, traditions and many more things. Therefore, I can express most with the nickname on social media. But maybe, I don't want anyone to know my identity as a girl and here we have different situation.

والله حبييتي المرأة عندنا صعبه انها تظهر شخصيتها الأساسية اذا كانت ما هو في الكل ممكن تكون شخصية معروفه او دكتوراه تظهر شخصيتها او عندها مشاريع اكثرهم زي كذا تظهر شخصيتها بس الي تكون عندها حساب تواصل او بتكون ماعندها هدف معين او مشروع.

By God, you see my dearest, being a female it is highly difficult to show her real identity online here. It may be possible to show real identity if only a female is famous doctor or social

personality or has some special project. Without these, a female cannot use her real identity on social media.

طبعاً الذي يستخدم اسمه الحقيقي مستحيل أكثرهم أكثرهم او نادراً ما احدهم يتعدى او يتكلم بالالفاظ نابية, والله شوفي حبيبتي فيه كذا وكذا ممكن عندك احد عنده اسمه الحقيقي ما عنده مشكله وهذا نادراً نادراً ممكن يصير بس اغلب أغلب الذين يستخدمون اسماء مستعاره من المراهقين من فيه بيانات معينه ما ادري ايش مشكلتهم واغلبهم بصراحه يتجرؤون ويقولون كلمات نابية ويهزؤون ويتلفظون بالالفاظ للأسف خارجه عن الأدب وعن الاحترام وعن الذوق العام.

Of course, people using real name are more polite and it is almost impossible for them to be impolite except very rarely some of them may use foul words. But by God, you see my dear, it's very rare to find someone with real name and using foul words but most of them are using nickname from teenager to people with specific nature. I don't know what their problem is but most of them speak foul words, ridicule others and speak impolite words without any respect or any care.

In the response above by a female participant from the south region, it was revealed that females use nicknames more than males. She also believed that most of the people using nicknames use impolite words.

The fourth interview question was aimed at gaining more information from the participants on how they constructed their different identities by using language. That is, how a female uses her language to show that she is a female and not a male and vice versa. It was also aimed at gaining understanding from the participants as to whether such an identity construction process was a conscious or unconscious act. The data from this question were important for answering the research questions of the study as well as in understanding how participants constructed their different identities on a social media website. The responses received to this

question were: “Sometimes you can identify the regional background of person due to region-specific words” (4 counts); “people show different identities on social media through language consciously” (4 counts); “sometimes you can identify gender of a person from his/her style of writing” (3 counts); “tribal background of a person can be identified from his/her language on social media as tribes have specific words/phrases” (2 counts); “people show different identities on social media through language unconsciously” (2 counts); “no, one can’t identify the background of a person from his/her language on social media as some people are expert in using language and hiding real identity” (1 count); “gender background of a person is difficult to identify from his/her language on social media” (1 count); and “one cannot identify educational background of a person from his language use on social media” (1 count). Below are some excerpts from their answers to the question:

احيانا ابوه اقدر اقول الشخص هذا متعلم او غير متعلم و مهذب او غير مهذب بس من اي منطقة ممكن تفرق باللهجه

Sometime yes I can say this person is educated or uneducated, polite or impolite but from region maybe there is difference dialect.

على حسب العمر بس في الاغلب الشخص يحط النك نيم على الشي الي يحبه يعني مثلا الرياضيين لهم في الرياضه يعني دائما يحطوا للشي الي يميلون له

Based on age, often person use nickname something like nickname about sport consciously.

This response by a female participant from the west region reveals that one can identify some users through their dialects. She also believed that the online users are often unconscious while commenting online on social media.

نعم ممكن لما اجبك واحد يقول لك ايش بك تعرف انه من جده ولما يجبك واحد يقول وين هو به تعرف انه القصيم
يجبك واحد يقول بعد حيي تدري انه من حائل فهي كل منطقه لها كلمات خاصه فيها او لهجه خاصه فيها بالنسبه كيف تعرف
انه بنت او ولد او رجل او المرأة عن طريق مثلاً بعض الكلمات ممكن تقولك يعني الكلمات التي ترمز لها انها انثى لما تتكلم
معك ممكن لا ترسل لي او لا تكلمني انا حرمة

*Yes possible if someone said to you (ايش بك) “what do you feel” you know this person
from Jeddah west region or (وين هو به) “ where is he” you know this person from Alqassim
middle region or someone said (بعد حيي baadhieey) “my life” this person from Hail north region.
Each region has specific words and about how you know male or female? Through some words-
maybe female said words coding to female through communication.*

ممكن تقدر تحكم انه متعلم او غير متعلم بطريقة حوار

Maybe judge if he/she educated and uneducated through style of his/her speech.

لا بالعكس غالباً يكون مدرك لان اكثر الاسماء المستعاره ما يكون او غالباً يميل للسب او الشتم او انه ينتقد بعنف
فالي يدخل بأسمه الحقيقي يكون اكثر احتراماً غالباً

*No often conscious because most of them using nicknames tend to insult and curse or
strongly criticise. But, if he/she uses real name, will be more polite.*

In this response too, by a male from the centre region, it was answered that one can identify the user through the dialect. He also believed that the users are aware of their actions on social media.

The fifth interview question was Saudi Arabian culture related. It was aimed at understanding why invoking God's name in communication is quite common and a special feature of Saudi culture. The participants answered that “invoking God's name in Saudi Arabian

culture for requesting/apologising shows a normal habit inherited from parents” (3 counts); “invoking God’s name in Saudi Arabian culture for requesting/apologising shows religious belief, customs and traditions” (2 counts); “invoking God’s name in Saudi Arabian culture for requesting/apologising shows our customs and traditions rather than any religious belief” (1 count); “invoking God’s name in Saudi Arabian culture for requesting/apologising has something to do with religious education from schools (1 count); and “invoking God’s name in Saudi Arabian culture for requesting shows the sincerity/honesty of the person’ (1 count). This can be seen from the following excerpts of responses received from the participants:

ذكر الله طيب ممكن انهم كلمات قديمه كانت تستخدم في الماضي

The name of God (Allah) is nice. Maybe it is old practise from the past.

نعم من خلال حلقات تعليم القرآن من خلال المدارس من خلال التوعيه إلي سووها المطاوعه من خلال الزمن الماضي , يعني انا اذكر كنا نطلع بحلقه والله ناسي وش كنا نقول لبعضنا وكان معنا مدرسنا وكان يقول لنا قولوا الله يجزاك بالخير فصرنا اول ناخذها بالبداية بشكل ما كنا مدركين قيمتها وكنا نتمصخر شوي بالكلمه هذا وكنا نتشمت به بمدرسنا ولكن مع الوقت اصبحت معنا ثقافه الله يجزاك بالخير لان الي يقولها هذا انسان متعلم

Yes through the classes at the mosque and through awareness that they did by (Matwaa) in the past time. I remember when I studied at the mosque, the teacher said to me say “God give you the best” at the beginning I did not know what it meant and I used it for mockery. But then I understood its significance and meaning. If anyone says this, that means he/she is educated.[he used ‘Matwaa’ meaning ‘the teacher of Quran’; the person has high education in Islamic study and he has a long beard. This word is specifically used in the north region].

In the response above, a male participant from the north region believed that in Saudi Arabian culture using the name of God has been practised for a long time through the teaching sessions at the mosques. Also anyone saying the expression “God give you the best” is considered to be educated.

المعتقد الديني وعادات وتقاليد بس قبلها وازع ديني ومتعلق بالله ومتوكلين على الله

Religious belief, customs and traditions but the important thing is religion and related to God also relying on God

In the response above, a male participant from the east region believed that such use was due to the religious belief, customs and traditions as Saudis loved using God’s name in most of their communication.

The sixth interview question was aimed at understanding the role and nature of social media in making one use polite or impolite expressions. It was also intended to see if this practice was same in all the regions of Saudi Arabia and even in the neighbouring Arab countries. The responses received included “in face-to-face communication, people are more polite” (4 counts); “people on social media are not polite” (2 counts); “I don’t know because polite is polite both on social media and face to face and impolite will be on both platforms as the tongue will be habituated” (1 count); “I don’t know” (1 count); “people on social media are free to speak anything” (1 count); “in face-to-face communication, people are more polite as the person is in front of you and being impolite may create problems and misunderstandings because of rules of society and religion” (1 count); “in face-to-face communication, people are more polite because the person you are talking to is in front of you and he/she watches you and knows who you are” (1 count); “people on social media are impolite because the screen gives them

comfort and self-confidence to give power to speech” (1 count); “people in face-to-face communication are more polite because they try to be more idealistic” (1 count); and “people on social media are impolite as people don’t know who you are, what your situation is and what your culture is. Also they feel free to talk what they want to talk” (1 count).

They were also asked to give some examples of politeness. To this end, it was found that they used polite words and expressions: “you wolf” (2 counts); “God bless you” (1 count); “God give you the best, God never insult my eyes” (1 count); “God save my dearest” (1 count); “can you give that to me if possible” (1 count); “God give me your sickness” (1 count); “God give you my age” (1 count); “may your flag be white” (1 count); “God whiten your face” (1count); “O prince” (1 count); “You are moon” (1count); “you are honey” (1count); “better my head” (1 count); “you are my life” (1 count); “God give you good thing” (1 count); and “I hope God make you happy” (1 count). When they were asked to give some region-, gender-, and tribe-specific impolite words, the following expressions were used: “effeminate” (1 count); “fucked” (1 count); “prostitute” (1 count); “impolite Rotten” (1 count); “Stinky” (1 count); “Stingy” (1 count) ; “likening to women or transgender” (1 count) ; “God make you sulky” (1 count); and “God make you mean” (1 count). Some of these responses are given below:

أكيد وجهاً لوجه اكثر تهذيب في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لا فيه ناس لا لا , وجهاً لوجه يكونون اكثر تهذيب والله ممكن الشخصية تكون قدام الواحد ويشوف مين انت واسلوبك ويكون مهذب اكثر أما من خلف البرامج مايعرف مين انت وش تكون وش وضعك وش ثقافتك ما يعرف , وبعضهم يأخذون راحتهم بالأفاظ في الكلمات في الجرائه و الأسلوب البجيج شوي

Sure, people are more polite in face to face communication than they are in online communication. By God, this may be because the person you are talking to is in front of you and he/she watches you and knows who you are that is why becomes more polite than in your absence such as on social media and where people don’t know who you are, what is your

situation and what is your culture, also some of them feel free in social media and talk what he/she wants to talk. They are free and take comfort in such ways what we call it in classical Arabic 'proud of themselves'.

|||(5 ثانية) لحظه ههههه ما تحضرني اللحين ممكن (فديتش, جعلني فدوتش, الله يطعني عتش, بعصري, جعلني فدى
رجولش هذي اكثر شي ما نقولها الا للوالدين) يعني مثل هذي الألفاظ , وجعله بالف عافيه , بالعافيه .

Just a moment. (thinks), I don't remember them now. May be, 'can you give that to me if possible', 'God give me your sickness', 'God give you my age'. These are mostly used for our parents. These words are used for intensifying your feelings for your listener and make your speech much better.

The answer above was by female from the south region. She replied that in face-to-face communication, interlocutors are more polite than in online communication because in face-to-face communication the listener is in front of you. She also replied that some people find space on social media and freedom to say whatever they want to say without any fear.

نعم قد يكون و المحترم محترم ولكن بعض الناس تستغرب منه في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي غير محترم ولما
تقابلها وجهاً لوجه يكون محترم ممكن الشاشة تعطيه اريحه او تعطيه ثقته بنفسه اكثر انه يكون قوي ويتكلم زي الكلام هذا

Yes because the person will be polite always if he is. But you will be surprised to see some people on social media who are impolite. But if you meet them face to face, they will be polite. Maybe the screen gives them comfort or gives them more self-confidence to give power to speech.

: يعني ممكن اقول زلابه تعتبر غبي او اقول هذا جاك مدرعم يعني تعتبر غير مهذب اما الكلمات المهذبه ممكن يعطيك العافيه يالأمير مثلا او يالذيب او وجهك ابيض او رايتك بيضاء هذا كلها كلمات مهذبه

The word (zlabah, means ‘bad man’ or ‘very weak who does not trust himself’) or I say ‘mdaram’, meaning ‘walking without thinking’. These words are impolite. Polite words such as ‘O prince’, ‘you wolf’, ‘whiten your face’ and ‘your flag white’.

The answer above, by a male participant from the centre region, shows that communication on social media and face to face are not the same. The participant also gave different examples of (im)politeness from his region.

The seventh interview question was aimed at understanding politeness strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youngsters while talking or discussing Trump who is always projected in the news for his anti-Muslim rhetoric. The participants responded in different ways. Some believed that “people used to insult him, his wife and his daughter using impolite words” (1 count); “people used to insult him with impolite words such as ‘homosexual’” (1 count), “people used to insult him with impolite words such as ‘son of a bitch’” (1 count); “people used to insult him with impolite words such as ‘effeminate’” (1 count); “people curse him using words such as ‘God will return his plan in his own throat’” (1 count); “people curse him using words such as ‘may God protect us from his evils’” (1 count); “people used to insult him with impolite words such as ‘dealer for prostitution’, ‘son of dog’, ‘Trump is a person of mockery in Saudi community’” (1 count); “people use words such as ‘crazy’” (1 count); “people use words such as ‘ox’, people use words such as ‘dementia’” (1 count); “people used to insult him with impolite words such as ‘fucking’” (1 count); “people use words such as ‘person without understanding’, ‘people praise him (laughs)’” (1 count); “people say that he doesn’t care about anyone” (1

count); “people curse him using words such as ‘may God return his bad intentions to him’” (1 count); “people think that Trump’s behaviour does not reflect that of any American president” (1 count); and “people think he is not a good man and not worthy to be president” (1 count). The following excerpts from their interviews show this:

اكثر كلمه سمعتها عنه مهزاء

I heard the word irony more about him.

لأنوا بيسوي تصرفات ما بتكون تصرفات رئيس رئيس امريكا بالذات , يعني مثلا مسوين له تمثال مهزئيه فيها فا دائما الشعوب ماخذين فكره عنه انوا ماهو انسان كويس وماهو جدير بالرئاسه , تصرفاته كذا مهزاء

Because his behaviour does not reflect that of any American president. People think he is not a good man and not worthy to be president.

The above answer was by a female from the west region. She said his behaviour does not reflect that he is a president.

والله فيه ناس تقول عنه هذا شخص زلابه ما عنده سالفه وفيه ناس تقول عنه عنصري وفيه ناس تمدحه انه انسان كويس راح يحسن العلاقات او كذا

O’ God some people said this person is ‘zlabah’. He does not have knowledge and some of them said he is racist. Also, some people praise him as good person may make a good relation.

In the response above, by a female from the centre region, the word “zlabah” was used which is centre region dialect.

6.3 Results of Research Question 3

Interviews were conducted to gain a thorough understanding of how the Saudi youths constructed their different identities as well as which strategies for politeness and impoliteness they used online. An attempt was also made to see how these strategies were similar or different inter-regionally and cross-culturally. It was also attempted to see if the participants were aware or unaware of their actions while using different identity construction and politeness and impoliteness strategies. From the analysis of the interview data, the following findings were obtained:

- 1- Saudi youths used expressions such as “I’m sorry” and “forgive me” for apologising online.
- 2- They preferred expressions such as: “if possible, my dearest”; “is it possible to”; “if not command [to] and if possible”; and “my life, (baadhieey) please do this to me” to express the speech act of requesting online.
- 3- Males used real names more than females and females preferred to be anonymous or use nicknames more due to cultural and social constraints in Saudi society.
- 4- It was reported that “people using nicknames were more impolite”. However, it was also reported that “people with real names or family names were more polite” (2 counts). Using nicknames also provided space and freedom to Saudi Arabian youths to speak and express whatever they wanted to express without much fear.
- 5- Female participants avoided using real names due to social and cultural norms as well as due to privacy issues.
- 6- The participants agreed that it was possible to identify the regional, gender and tribal background of an individual through the language used by that individual.

- 7- Most of the participants agreed that expressions in which God's name is evoked during communication is a distinct feature of Saudi Arabian culture which is done to show sincerity in communication as well as it is something which has come down to them from their ancestors and has now become an integral part of their daily life.
- 8- The Saudi youths also believed that in face-to-face communication, people are more polite but people on social media are not polite.
- 9- Saudi youths agreed that there were some region-specific polite and impolite expressions although most of the polite and impolite expressions were the same interregionally.
- 10- Saudi youths and people used different impolite expressions initially during Trump's election campaign as he was seen as anti-Islam due to his anti-Islam rhetoric.

6.4 Discussion of the Results of Interview Data

This study used semi-structured interviews that were conducted with 5 participants (3 males and 2 females). These participants were representatives of all the five regions and different tribes in Saudi Arabia. The participants' answers with regard to politeness strategies in terms of apologising were that they mostly used "I'm sorry". These words come under negative politeness which means they are linked with the data found on the social website (see negative politeness). In regard to this, Brown and Levinson (1978) indicated that apology may display the reluctance of the apologisee to breach the hearer's negative face and as such, the impingement is partially redressed. Similarly, Lazare (2004) stated that "I'm sorry" is a formula that does not necessarily indicate an apology or a regretful expression (p. 25). Also, in Aijmer (1996) and Knowles (1987), an apology was described as a polite gesture that does not always represent the true feeling of the speaker. The description provided by Lazare (2004) considered the face of the addressee via relating the apology with the expression of regret/remorse to the other party.

Moreover, in a related study, Bataineh and Bataineh (2008) mentioned that apologising indicates the acknowledgement of the apologisee of his responsibility and he seeks forgiveness.

Based on a second order politeness perspective, an apology can be categorised as a negative politeness device. For instance, Brown and Levinson (1987) explained that in politeness strategies, an apology relays negative politeness to restore face following an FTA (refer to section [2.8](#)) or following an offence that impacts the face of the addressee in a negative manner through a damage caused to it (Brown & Levinson, 1978). In a study of the same, Hariri (2017) reported that “I’m sorry” formed the linguistic form of the openings and closings of the Saudi context, while the words “forgive me” formed the second most common expression in the present study based on apology terms. In the context of Saudi people, asking forgiveness is a part of prayer and to apologise is a part of religious expression, whether or not using the name of God, Allah. According to Hariri (2017), Saudi students used “forgive me” in their emails (p. 89), whereas in Herring’s (2000) study, he reached the conclusion that females showed gratefulness, appreciation and apology more frequently compared to their male counterparts. Apologies are deemed to be a level within the corrective process, assisting in correcting a mistake/offence that involves a challenge, offering, acceptance and gratefulness (Goffman, 1967).

Data obtained from this study showed that the phrase, “if possible, my dearest”, was used by participants to make requests on social media. They used endearments as honorary titles such as “my dearest” for politeness. Moreover, Saudi youth also used the name of God (Allah) when requesting in order to show utmost politeness.

In the same line of study, Al-Ammar (2000) examined the realisations of request behaviour among Saudi female learners at Riyadh College of Arts and found that the subjects differed their request behaviour on the basis of social circumstances. Meanwhile, in Tawalbeh

and Al-Oqaily's (2012) research, the authors conducted a comparison between Saudi and American students and found the former participants to differ in their use of strategies based on the social variables including power and distance. Added to this, the main strategy utilised by the Saudi students during their interaction with close friends is directness, which indicates closeness as opposed to impoliteness. Furthermore, requesting was also related to tribal words such as "my life" (baadhieey)—phrases often used by the Alshammari tribe in Saudi Arabia for requesting (see [Appendix I](#)).

According to the findings obtained in the present study, the male interviewees utilised their real names in social media as opposed to their female counterparts. Saudi males specifically used their real name or tribal name to display their pride in it. In Osman's (2012) study, males were revealed to feel more comfortable compared to females in using their actual names and posting their pictures with their profile names. In the context of Jordan, Jusoh and Al-Fawareh (2017) reported that male Jordanian Facebook users were more daring compared to female users in exchanging personal information online and using their real names and their pictures. Meanwhile, their female counterparts were more conservative when using online social sites.

In the present study, Saudi female social media users opted to remain anonymous or use nicknames, as part of the Saudi culture. Similarly, in Al-Saggaf's (2011) study, the findings indicated that Saudi females guarded their privacy when communicating online and in Aljasir, Woodcock and Harrison (2013), Saudi female Facebook users were found to hide their profile online for varying reasons: hiding from their family and hiding from their employers. In relation to this, the female Saudis' reputation is held in high regard in the country, with a tarnished reputation bringing forth serious consequences for the women and their immediate families (Almakrami, 2015).

In addition to the above studies, Al-Saggaf (2016) and Stanger et al. (2017) examined the participation of Saudi youth online and found that the majority of the participants were not comfortable disclosing their personal information to the public. The authors indicated that female Saudi youth preferred to use nicknames and pseudonyms online to safeguard their privacy. Privacy was also found to be highly gendered among Qatari and Saudi females when using social media owing to the gender's socially constructed role in the society (Abokhodair et al., 2017). This finding was also supported by Strong and Hareb (2012), when they revealed that female Emiratis have privacy issues on Twitter.

As for the use of nicknames, Saudi youths were found to be impolite when using them and communicating on social media and this may be attributed to the fact that it is not a face-to-face interaction and the participants are hiding behind their keyboards. According to Culpeper et al. (2017) digital communication aspects differ from face-to-face interaction and based on the survey reported by VitalSmarts, more than 88% of the people were not polite when using social media, 75% experienced online conflicts and arguments as witnesses and five had limited in-person interaction with others owing to the words exchanged online (Bennet, 2013).

In this line of argument, users have become used to using brevity when communicating via writing and directness and this could have a counterproductive impact on the social media communication. In the case of the Saudi youth, social media plays a key role in channeling expressions freely without being hindered by the socio-cultural norms (Alenezi & Kebble, 2017). The results indicated that Saudi participants used their real names with female names sounding more polite because females tend to assume polite identities.

One of the aims of this study is to identify different identities via language use on social media. The results gathered from the interviews showed that the regional background of the

participants could be discerned by regional use of words and phrases. According to Locher et al. (2015), there is a noticeable usage of phrases among Saudis hailing from different regions of the country, with each region having distinct phrases particular to it (see [Appendix A](#)). Moreover, the writing style is one of the major findings highlighted in this study. Arabic language is used by Saudi youth to display their identities in many ways. They employ various linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies to develop their distinct identities (Alenezi & Kebble, 2017). The results of the interview analysis were supported by the data from the website.

Another objective of this study is to identify the distinct communication feature of Saudi culture in invoking God's name and the feature's different functions. Based on the results of the interviews, Saudi youth often invoke God's name in their online interactions due to habit inherited from parents and being brought up as Muslims in Muslim communities. Saudi Arabia is an Islamic country earning the name of being the top conservative culture in the world, having a unique combination of Islamic and Arab culture and traditions (Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993; Burkhart & Goodman, 1998). In fact, using religious expressions while interacting is discernible among Saudis and they use it to affirm their religious identity, coming from a deeply religious society and country.

In fact, any conversations with Saudis would include expressions of "God willing", "God bless you", and "peace be with you" as a token of Saudi's religious and cultural identity. In Almakrami's (2015) study, Islam was highlighted to play a major role in Saudi people's behaviour, norms, attitudes and practices (Al-Saggaf, 2012; Al Munajjed, 1997). Based on the findings of the present study, the participants used God's name based on belief, customs and traditions. In other words, Saudi youth reflect their religious identity in online communication, similar to face-to-face communication when it comes to using God's name. Moreover, the Saudi

culture is naturally religious, with both religion and culture forming the people's attitudes and practices and creating their daily reality (Al-Saggaf, 2011).

Another further major finding highlighted in this study is that Saudi youth are more polite in their face-to-face communications compared to their online ones, with the latter providing a space in which to be impolite. This is aligned with Locher et al.'s (2015) finding that CMC and face-to-face communication may not have true separation as such separation between interactants brings norms to the keyboard and online interactions cannot be separated. Although there is some truth to this statement, there are aspects to online communication that are distinct from face-to-face communication (Culpeper et al., 2017). Specifically, in face-to-face communication, the appropriateness notion is more evident (Locher & Watts, 2008).

The development of the internet has shifted considerable social interactions online and, via this phenomenon, people have made online communications their daily habit in an unconscious manner (Katerenchuk & Rosenberg, 2016). The participants of the interviews in the present study used some words of politeness and impoliteness on the basis of their gender and region and the results were supported by the data provided on the social website.

In the last section of the interview, the question was geared towards understanding politeness strategies used by Saudi youth while discussing Trump who frequently shows up in the news for his anti-Muslim rhetoric. The participants had negative answers towards Trump, reflecting the unlikely possibility of Saudi youth to give good face to Trump, the reason being that he is not a good president and he is against Muslims. The interview data supported the data obtained from the social website developed for the purpose of this study. On the whole, the participants made use of impolite words towards Trump on the basis of their different genders and regions.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, the researcher provides a summarised version of the thesis chapters, the main theoretical research contributions that add to the literature of construction of online identity and (im)politeness strategies among Saudi youth in online communication. The chapter also provides the practical implications of the results obtained, lists the limitations and enumerates recommendations for future avenues of research. The present study aimed to find out how Saudi Arabian youths constructed their regional, tribal, religious, and gender identities. It sought to investigate the linguistic strategies used to construct these strategies. That is, how Saudi Arabian youths used tribe-, region-, gender-, and religion-specific vocabulary and phrases to construct their various identities. It also sought to know which nonlinguistic strategies such as use of region-, tribe-, gender-, and religion-specific images such as images of castles, tribal dances, tribal dress, and animals were used to construct their different identities through nonlinguistic means.

The study also aimed to investigate different strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths to express politeness and impoliteness online. To this end, Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) theory of politeness was used as the theoretical framework to see if the Saudi Arabian youths followed the same politeness strategies. Blum and Kulka's (1989) CCSARP Coding manual was also used to this end. To study the impoliteness strategies, Culpeper's (1996) framework was used as a theoretical base. The study also investigated whether the Saudi Arabian youths used any new, different, Saudi culture and context specific politeness and impoliteness strategies.

The study attempted to seek answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: What strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their different socio-cultural identities in online communication on a social website?

RQ2: Which strategies are used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be polite/impolite in their online communication?

RQ3: In what sense are these online identity construction and politeness strategies similar and, at the same time, different, inter-regionally as well as cross-culturally?

These research questions were answered using explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The method consisted of two main sequential phases: 1) a quantitative study, and 2) a follow-up qualitative study. The outcomes of these two phases were linked in order to write the interviews questions. The primary data collection instruments included a Facebook-like social media website and the posts on it by the Saudi Arabian youths and audio-recorded semi-structured interviews carried out through Skype. The participants in the study were 158 Saudi Arabian young adults (male and female) and their most common age range was between 18 and 30.

7.2 Linguistic Strategies Used by the Saudi Youths for Identity Construction

Concerning the first research question, it was found that Saudi Arabian youths used linguistic strategies such as using region-specific words and phrases such as **صج** / really (used by participants from the east region), **بحين** / now (used by the participants from the west region), **ذا** / this (used by the participants from the centre region), **كهيل** / old fool (used by the participants from the south region and **الغزري** / Alanazi (tribe name used by the participants from the north region). They also used their tribe name as a last name such as: ABC Alanazi, XYZ Althagafi, BCD Alqahtani, MNP Alotaibi, and PQR Albalawi as a linguistic strategy to construct and reveal their tribal identity online. Different words and expressions such as **الله** /the God, **ماشاء الله** / God be

exalted, والله / By God, الله يستر / God save us, الاسلام / Islam, اخي / brother were also used to construct religious identity. The Saudi Arabian youths also constructed their gender identities through different linguistic strategies such as using real names (in the case of males) and using nicknames (in the case of females) due to Saudi Arabian cultural norms. In addition to the use of real names and nicknames as a gender identity construction strategy, other gender-specific words were also used by males (اسف / sorry) and females (by adding suffix to show feminine gender-اسفه / sorry). It was also noted that Arab females, particularly Saudi Arabian females, used nicknames as a linguistic marker to show their female gender as they are not allowed to use their real names on social media due to social and cultural norms.

While focusing on nonlinguistic strategies, the participants constructed their regional identity by posting region-specific images of old/new architecture, images of region-specific forts/castles, and images of region-specific food dishes. They posted images related to Holy Kaaba, Holy Madinah, religious words, images of children praying, and images about the Holy Quran to construct their religious, Muslim identity. Gender identity was constructed by posting images related to nature and natural beauties like rivers, mountains, gardens, greenery, places, images of veiled girls/free girls, images of flowers, images about various foods and drinks, images about the child and parents. The participants constructed their tribal identity by posting tribe-specific images such as image of tribe name, images of cultural/tribal celebration, image of tribe head, image of tribal hero, image of tribal poet and image of tribal village to construct their tribal identities.

7.3 Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies used by the Participants

In answering the second research question, it was found that the Saudi Arabian youths used positive politeness strategies the most. They were seen using different positive politeness

strategies such as seeking agreement, giving (or asking for) reasons and presupposing/raising /asserting common ground. Negative politeness was the second most used politeness strategy used by the Saudi Arabian youths. They used apologising and giving difference as sub-strategies of negative politeness. Following Culpeper's (1996) model of impoliteness, Saudi Arabian youths were seen using the bald on-record impoliteness strategy the most. Saudi Arabian females used "direct FTA in clear, unambiguous way without concern for the hearer's face" more than males while expressing their bald on-record impoliteness. This was followed by negative impoliteness wherein they used sub-strategies such as "condescend, scorn or ridicule, emphasise your relative power" and "explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect" more.

The answer to the second research question also showed that Saudi Arabian youths used some new Saudi Arabian culture specific politeness and impoliteness strategies which are not covered either in Brown and Levinson or in Culpeper. These new strategies of politeness used by the Saudi Arabian youths included; kinship non-familiar; thanking God; invocation to God; using honorific titles; courtliness; describe the other using clever and strong animals terms; comforting someone with prayers; supplicating to God; appreciation; and swearing by God. The new strategies of impoliteness used by the Saudi Arabian youths included: invoking God's curse; describe the other using derogatory animals terms; using honorific titles to insult; and using religiously and socially derogatory terms. These findings imply and reflect various nuances of Saudi Arabian youths and the Saudi society and culture in general and were reported as new contribution of this study.

Findings of research question three showed that Saudi Arabian youth often invoke God's name in their online interactions. It was also reported that Saudi Arabian youth are more polite in their face-to-face communications than they are in their online communications. Furthermore,

the participants evinced negative reactions towards Donald Trump, reflecting the unlikely possibility that Saudi youth would give good face to Trump, the reason being that he is not a good president and he is against Muslims. It was also noted that the male interviewees utilised their real names in social media whereas their female counterparts did not. Saudi Arabian males specifically used their real names or tribal names to display their personal and tribal pride. In contrast, the study showed that Saudi Arabian female social media users opted to remain anonymous or else employed nicknames—both being consistent with the norms and expectations of Saudi Arabian culture. This study found that Saudi Arabians who used nicknames were impolite in their social media communications. This finding may be attributed to the fact that the participants were hiding behind their keyboards and not interacting with their interlocutors face to face. Therefore, looking at these answers of these three questions, it can be said that Saudi Arabian youths use various identity construction strategies as well as politeness and impoliteness strategies. Thus, the aims of the study were achieved.

7.4 Limitations of the Study

This study's limitations are a consequence of the fact that all of its data were gathered from only one social media networking site. Moreover, that social media website was not the most popular one available. This was because the University of Tasmania did not allow the study's researcher to create a Facebook page, citing ethical concerns. That the data from this study was drawn from only one social media networking site, and that this website was not the most popular of all those currently available, meant that ease of access and communication between participants was limited due to Saudi Arabian youth being unfamiliar with the website. As such, the number of participants was only 158. The study's researcher foresaw the problem of Saudi Arabian youth being unfamiliar with the social media website being used for this study

and took steps to rectify the situation. To this end, the study's author attempted to use statistical tools such as NVivo, but the data were all in Arabic. Thus, the word had a different spelling that could not be coached from the NVivo tool.

Another limitation came from lack of scholarly literature/references on regional words and phrases from different Saudi Arabian regions. To this end, a panel of members from different regions was formed to verify these regional words. Scholarly resources would have helped in comparative analysis of these findings with such references. The small number of interview participants was another limitation of the study. As the interviews were only for the purpose of verifying the results obtained from the participants in the form of Comments Data and to shed more light on them, only five interviewees were selected. They were drawn from five different regions and belonged to different tribes and genders. More interviewees may have yielded further results or insights, but five was considered sufficient considering the verification purpose of the interview data.

7.5 Strengths of the Study

Although the study has certain limitations, it also has various strengths. It is the first ever study on politeness with online data from Saudi Arabian context. It is ground breaking research as it tests the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) and the impoliteness theory of Culpeper (1996) on online data in a Saudi Arabian context. It expands on how these theories fail to incorporate various aspects of politeness and impoliteness which are observed in the Saudi Arabian society and culture. Saudi Arabian youths use different politeness and impoliteness strategies to express their politeness and impoliteness. These strategies are Saudi Arabian culture specific and are observed in Saudi Arabian culture but they are not covered in any of the existing theories of politeness or impoliteness. This study is thus ground breaking as it adds different sub-

strategies to politeness and impoliteness theories and these can be used by future researchers who are interested in studying politeness and impoliteness in Arabian societies and cultures. This study will be a guide to future research in this domain. Scholars such as Graham (2007) have stated that there have not been many studies on impoliteness particularly in the context of Computer-Mediated Communication. Thus, this study finds another significant place in this context of CMC from a Saudi Arabian perspective.

7.6 Practical Implications of the Findings

The study has various implications and can be useful for many applications. These findings of the study would certainly be helpful to researchers and scholars interested in cross-cultural aspects of communication. The findings would help them understand how Saudi Arabian youths construct their various identities as well as what kind of politeness and impoliteness strategies these youths use to express politeness and impoliteness. This is because Saudi Arabian society is quite a closed society and not much research exists on these aspects of Saudi Arabian individuals. The study and its findings will be beneficial for researchers in the field as it will guide how to analyse online data for identity construction strategies as well as for deciphering politeness and impoliteness strategies from the online data.

The researcher collected some examples from Twitter (see Figures 33, 34 and 35) to show how to identify the background, geographical, tribal, and gender information of the user from the language used. One Twitter user used the word (كهل) meaning “old man”. From this use of the word by the user, it is clear that he/she is from the south region as it is a south region-specific word.

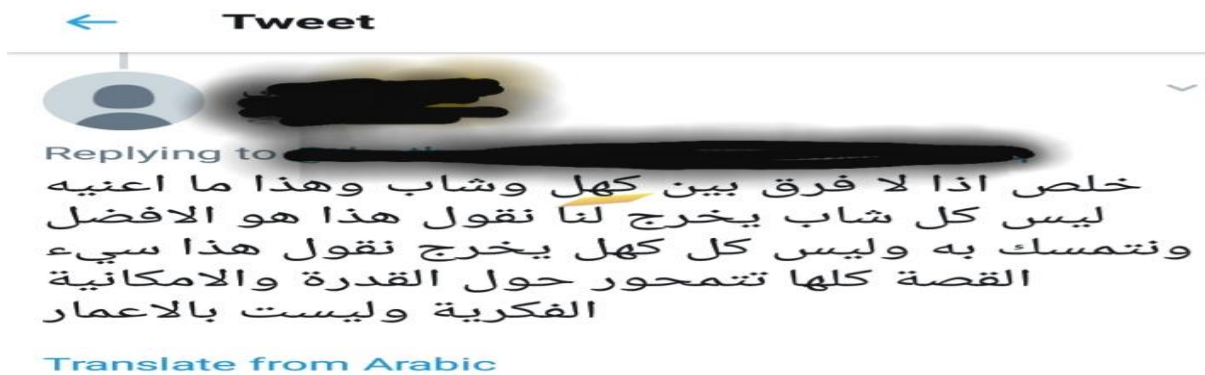


Figure 33: Practical sample from Twitter on region/gender specific words used for identity construction: Example A

Another user used the word (هلون) meaning “like that”. This word reveals that he/she is from the north region.



Figure 34: Practical sample from Twitter on region/gender specific words used for identity construction: Example B

Another user used the word (اسفه) meaning “I’m sorry”. The word reflected that the user is female as it is used only by females to show their gender identity.



Figure 35: Practical sample from Twitter on region/gender specific words used for identity construction: Example C

This study might also aid Arabic–English translators by providing information on the Arabic language in general and Saudi usage in particular. Additionally, this study’s enumeration of tribe-specific forms of communication might aid others in discerning to which tribe or region their interlocutor belongs.

The findings of the study will be helpful for developing digital apps on different regional dialects in Saudi Arabia or different Saudi Arabian region-specific words. The findings may be useful for developing different digital apps for teaching appropriate Saudi Arabian language to those who are interested in learning it. People migrate to Saudi Arabia for work, business, religious pilgrimage and other reasons and live in different regions and cities. The findings of this study help them to speak locally appropriate language and be polite and avoid any chances of cross-cultural miscommunications.

The findings can also be beneficial to those who interact and chat with Saudi youths. These people can see what Saudi youths prefer and what they frown at and dislike. They can study which politeness strategies are preferred by Saudi youths and which impoliteness strategies

they use to express their politeness and anger. Understanding these, foreigners can adapt a subtle technique to effectively communicate with Saudi youths and establish successful communication with them. Thus, this study, by enumerating appropriate and inappropriate forms of communications according to Saudi Arabian tribes and regions, might also aid the promotion of productive communication by reducing the probability of misunderstandings and offence.

7.7 Implications for Linguistic Theory

One of the strengths of the study lies in its contribution to linguistic theories of politeness and impoliteness. This study focused on online communications between Saudi Arabian youths from different regions in Saudi Arabia. It did not focus on only one region in terms of dialect, as many previous studies have done. The study also adopted a relatively new approach by combining Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory with Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness theory. As such, the present study is also a contribution to the existing body of work on (im)politeness theory. In fact, this study discovered new strategies, specific to a Saudi Arabian context, that are not included in either Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory or Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness theory (see section [5.6](#)).

Brown and Levinson's discussion of the rules governing strategy choice provided the basis for the exploration of the different strategies employed in face-to-face and online communication. The results of this study showed that Saudi Arabian youths employed new sub-strategies in their online communications, thus justifying an extension of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of positive politeness strategies. These new strategies are: thanking God; invocation to God; using honorific titles; courtliness; describe the other using clever strong animal terms; comforting someone with prayers; supplication to God; kinship non-familiar; and appreciation and swearing by God. Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategy was also extended in

light of the present study's findings regarding Saudi Arabian youth's utilisation of the bald off-record strategy. The new bald off-record strategies were: invoking God's curse; describe the other using derogatory animal terms; using religiously and socially derogatory terms; and using honorific titles to insult (see section [5.6.2](#)).

7.8 Recommendations Arising from the study

- Future studies by Saudi Arabian researchers should include more participants from different Saudi Arabian tribes and regions and utilise more social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to obtain data and thereby secure more robust and reliable findings.
- The new politeness and impoliteness strategies discovered by this study in the Saudi Arabian context may be used by researchers in the field of politeness and impoliteness to investigated (im)politeness theories in face-to-face and online communication in the context of countries outside of Saudi Arabia.
- The region-specific and tribe-specific words and phrases discovered in the present study may be used as a starting point for future research into Saudi Arabian regional dialects.

7.9 Research Summary

This research study aimed to study identity construction strategies used by the Saudi Arabian youths in their online interactions. It also aimed to study politeness and impoliteness strategies used by the Saudi youths to express their politeness and impoliteness online. To achieve this and to seek answers to the research questions of the study, the data were collected and analysed using mixed method research design. The obtained results helped in achieving the aims as well as in answering the research questions. To sum up, it can be said that this study will

definitely fill the gap in literature on the topic and will be a starting and guiding point for many new studies on the topic, not only from a Saudi Arabian context but from the region at large.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Details of Topics Posted on the Website

Duration	Topic	Questions
First week	Generation Gap in Saudi Arabia Society and Saudi Youth's Opinion	الفجوة بين الأجيال تتزايد في المجتمع السعودي. الشباب ليسوا مثل كبار السن في التعامل مع المسائل. ماهو تعليقك
Second week		
Third week		ما مدى أهمية تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في المملكة العربية السعودية؟ هل من المهم أن تتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟ لماذا؟
Fourth week	Old Man and Computer	
Fifth week		ماهو تعليقك على الصورة؟
Sixth week		
Seventh week	Best Internet Company	عندي استفسار لو سمحتوا ايش افضل شركة اتصالات بخصوص خدمة الانترنت
Eighth week		
Ninth week	Perceptions of Saudi Arabian Youths about Trump	العلاقات السعودية الأمريكية بعد فوز ترامب هل تتطور أو تتجه للمجهول
Tenth week		
Eleventh week	Fine	اخذت مخالفه من رجل مرور مع (العلم)العل انه يوجد اشخاص بنفس الزمان والمكان ولم يقم بمخالفتهم ما (ردة) ردت فعلك؟؟؟
Twelfth week	Apologise	انت تسير في الطريق الخطأ وقمت بصدم شخص غريب وكسرت هاتفه. ماذا تقول للاعتذار منه؟

Appendix B: Interview Questions

The interviews were conducted **through Skype**. Each interview lasted for 30–40 minutes. The following questions were asked in the interview:

- 1- Which expression do you use more for apologising in your communication on Social media?
 - 2- Which expression do you use more for requesting/ asking in your communication on Social media?
 - 3- Who uses real name / nickname on Social Media? Male/ Female? Why? And do people with real names / nicknames on Social Media are more polite/impolite? Why do you think so?
 - 4- Is it possible to identify gender, region, tribe, educational background of a person from his/her language used on social media? And do people show such various identities consciously or unconsciously?
 - 5- What does invoking name of God for requesting, asking and apologizing reflect/show in Saudi Arabian society?
 - 6- Do you think that people on social media are more polite/impolite than they are in real life communication? Why do you think so? Can you tell me some polite/impolite words/expressions which are specific only to your gender, region, and tribe?
 - 7- In your experiences, what kind of language do people use when talking about the new US president, Donald Trump?
-

Appendix C: Announcement for Recruiting Participants

“Dear young adults (male + female) from different regions and tribes in Saudi Arabia, you are kindly invited to my website ‘Languages & Tribes in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’ where we share our linguistic and cultural heritages and prides to know each other better. The website (URL) is prepared for use once this research project is initiated. The website is yet to be created which will have information required for participation. To join me, just sign up to the website and start posting, sharing and commenting. Your participation will be enriching and will be appreciated. You can contact me by filling in the electronic form given on contact us page should you have any concerns or need any clarifications”.

Appendix D: Sample Captures of the Comments by the Participants to Different Topics

Mohammed Q Alenezi

3 months ago -

الفجوة بين الأجيال تتزايد في المجتمع السعودي. الشباب ليسوا مثل كبار السن في التعامل مع المسائل. ماهو تحليلك

- Comment
- View all comments
- Like

8 People liked this

الفجوة هي شي طبيعي، بين الاجيال وقد ساعد التقدم والتكنولوجيا باتساع الفجوة بين الاجيال

3 months ago

Unlike3

سبب من اسباب هذه الفجوة اللحين البعد عن مجالس كبار السن

3 months ago

Unlike2

السبب يعود ع التحول السريع في الاقتصاد السعودي من فقر الى غنى والله الحمد مما ساعد إيجابياً ع التطور

السريع في التعليم

3 months ago

Unlike2

السبب اللحين هو التقدم والتطور التكنولوجي كذلك نظرة الشباب لمستقبل افضل

3 months ago

Unlike1



3 months ago

Unlike1

اعتقد ان التقنية الحديثة والتطور السريع اسهم في عملية ازدياد الفجوة بين كبار السن وجيل الشباب، فكبار السن قد جربوا ظروف الحياة المختلفة وربما الصعبة وشظف العيش مما خلق لديهم طرق تفكير مختلفة للتعامل مع المسائل، أما جيل الشباب فالرفاهية لعبت دور كبير في طرق تفكيرهم وتناولهم للأحداث

3 months ago

Unlike2

جيل من الاجيال له مميزاته وعيوبه في الوقت الراهن فجيل الاباء يتمتع بخبرات كافيته للممارسة حياته بشكل افضل اما جيل الابناء اللحين ظهر في زمن الرفاهي والترف فيعتمد على الاباء في كل شي

3 months ago

Unlike1

جميعاً متفهمون ان لكل جيل حياة معيشيه مختلفه وهذا يعتمد على حياة العصر الذي يصادف اياً من الاجيال القديمه او الحاليه وهو امر طبيعي ومتوقع عالياً

3 months ago

Like

كبار السن قد جربوا ظروف وحياه معيشيه صعبه ووهذه الحياه قد علمتهم عدم الضجر وان لكل مسأله حل أما جيل الشباب اللحين يتصجر سريعاً وأحياناً يترك المسائل بدون حل

3 months ago

Like

التقنيه الحديثه و السريعه لها سبب كبير في هذي الفجوه و لكل جيل مواهب و منافع و ايضاً عيوب و لاكن على حسب اما تكون المميزات اكثر ولا العيوب اكثر و سبب هذي الفجوه انخيار التقنيه و التواصلت الحديثه والتعليم الجيد و لاكن في جيل زمان لم يكن هناك تعلم لهذيه الدرجه مان التعلم طفيف لهذا التعلم بين الحيلين بينهما فرق كبير

3 months ago

Like

لا يوجد فرق بين قبل والالحين كبار السن وصغار واحد

2 months ago

Like

وش الفجوه وخرايبط كبار السن هم البركه واما الشباب الله يخلف

2 months ago

Like

ايش الكلام دا مافي فرق كلنا نحين زي زمان ولا فيه اي اختلاف

2 months ago

Like

كبار السن هم الخير والبركه واما الشباب غير مهتمين ولا يتدرون يتعاملون مع المشاكل

2 months ago

Like

المشكله انهم ما يجلسون مع كبار السن وهذا يجعل هناك مشاكل معهم

2 months ago

Like

لا يوجد اي اختلاف فقط هناك رافقيه عند الشباب وفي الوقت دا مما جعلهم غير يتهوون في القرارات

2 months ago

Like

الفرق بين الكبار والشباب وان الكبار ليس لديهم ما يمنحهم من مجالست الاشخاص اما الشباب في الوقت دا الواحد جالس مع جواله كيف يقدر يتعلم من الكبار

2 months ago

Like

صبح المشكله المهمه في مجتمعنا الشباب وكيف تتعامل معهم هذه حقيقه

2 months ago

Like

اخى المشكله ماهي هذا نحين المشكله اننا عايشين في عصر كل شي فيه كثير ومتوفر ولازم نمشي معاه

2 months ago

Like

وش الفجوه دا ما قد سمعت في حياتي فجوه هههههههه

2 months ago

Like

Mohammed Q Alenezi

3 months ago -

ما مدى أهمية تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في المملكة العربية السعودية؟ هل من المهم أن تتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟ لماذا؟

- Comment
- View all comments
- Like

4 People liked this

تعم مهم جداً تعلم اللغة الانجليزية بظل التطورات الحاليه واستخدام الاجهزه الحديثه وللاطلاع على الثقافات

الاخرى

3 months ago

Like

اللغة الانجليزية فله

3 months ago

Like

بس صعبه لي

3 months ago

Like

تعلم اللغة الانجليزية مهم في حياتنا وتعبر اللغة العالميه ولكن ضعف العمله التعليميه جعلت اللغة الانجليزية صعب تعلمها لدينا

3 months ago

Like

انا اخالفكم الراى اللغة ليست مهمه

3 months ago

Like

بالعكس مهمه جدا وخاصه في زمننا الحالي

3 months ago

Like

تعلم اللغة الانجليزية باتت شئ ضروري في وقتنا الراهن ولربما اصبح من اساسيات الحياه بحكم ان العالم اصبح عباره عن مدينه صغيره في عصر التكنولوجيا والعولمه ولا ننسا ان من تعلم لغة قوم امن مكرم

3 months ago

Like

مدى تعليم اللغة الانجليزية بالسعوديه جيد ولاكن لا يعرف الكثير من الانشطه العلميه و هكذا و تعبر اللغة الانجليزية اهم لغة بالعالم لانها مستخدمه في كل شئ و من المهم ان الشخص يتعلم هذي اللغة لانه قد تشكل نصف الحياه و مهمه جدا بشكل كبير و شكرا

3 months ago

Like

دراسة اللغة الانجليزية مهمه جدا لانها لغة العصر في الزمان الحالي ، واللغة تفتح لك مجالات متعدده في الاستكشاف والبحث وتطوير النفس . شكرا

3 months ago

Like

اللغة دحين مهمه وكذلك لا نخفل بان اللغة العربيه ايضا مهمه

3 months ago

} months ago

Like

دراسة اللغة الانجليزية مهمه جدا لانها لغة العصر في الزمان الحالي ، واللغة تفتح لك مجالات متعدده

في الاستكشاف والبحث وتطوير النفس . شكرا

} months ago

Like

اللغة دحين مهمه وكذلك لا نخفل بان اللغة العربيه ايضا مهم

} months ago

Like

لتعلم لكي نتقدم من بين المجتمعات

} months ago

Like

اللغة الانجليزية اسهل لغة من حيث سرعة تعلم

} months ago

Like

لنا احب لغتي بس دا اجباري اتعلم الانجليزى

3 months ago

Like

نعم أنها لغة مهمة في هذا العصر ويجب على الشاب السعودي تعلمها بالتقان

3 months ago

Like

نعم مهم جدا فاللغة الانجليزية اصبحت همزة وصل بين بقاع العالم ومختلف الثقافات والدول لانفس ان تعلم اللغة الانجليزية في المملكة حين مهم فيه

3 months ago

Like1

فالنا كم مبتعث عندما ذهبت الى دولة الابعث اضطرره لدراسة اللغة الانجليزية لمدة عام ونصف العام

3 months ago

Like1

الانجليزية*

3 months ago

Like1

لانسف طحاب الدول الاخرى الذين كانوا معنا في مرحلة اللعج يفوقونا بمراحل

3 months ago

Like1

اصبحت اللغة الانجليزية في هذا العصر هي لغة العلم، لذلك اصحى تعلمها من الامور بالغة الأهمية لمن أراد مواكبة العلم والتطور. وحيث أننا في المملكة العربية السعودية ليس بمعزل عن العالم ولحاجتنا للمواكبة أصبح لنا طينا

3 months ago

Like2

جدا مهم .. اولاً الانجليزية هي اللغة الاولى عالمياً بالتحدث ثانيا مشاكل المبتعثين بالخارج مثيرة وحائق كبير وذلك بسبب اللغة

2 months ago

Like

وايضاً يجب التنوع بالمنهج عندما بالسعودية ك مثال المقالات لاتعرفهم سوا بالخارج

2 months ago

Like

**لانعرفها

2 months ago

Like

تعليم الانجليزى مهم بس التأسيس زهت ولا يصلح

2 months ago

Like

صحيح كلامك ما يصلح المشكلة التأسيس زهت على قولتك وبعد المدرسين اما مصرى او اردنى ويعلمك خطأ

2 months ago

Like

ايوه الكلام دا صحيح الانجليزى مهم في حيتنا وفي كل وقت

2 months ago

Like

الانجليزى مهم جدا وتعرف بعض الناس يتكلم حشان يفتر بنفسه

2 months ago

Like

اللغة الانجليزية ضرورية بس صبح مثل ما قالوا بعض المعلقين المناهج ضعيله

2 months ago

Like

ماشاء الله الدوله ماهي مقصره في المدارس والتعليم بس مين بيعي يتعلم هذا هو السبب

2 months ago

[Like](#)

في ظل الظروف التي نعيشها نولتنا والله الحمد نقرر نقول ان الانجليزي ليس عقبه في التعليم صج ان بعض الاشخاص لا يحبون تعليم اللغة الانجليزية

2 months ago

[Like](#)

بالله لا تنكروني بالانجليزي تصدقون اني اكره ذا الملة ياخي معقده حالك في العربي ويس لا وبعد امحق مدرسات عندنا كلهم نسيات ههيه

2 months ago

[Like](#)

مهم جداً تعلم اللغة الانجليزية فالعالم الان قرية صغيرة واللغة الانجليزية هي المتسيد والمفتخرة والأسهل بين اللغات

1 month ago

[Like](#)

Mohammed Q Alenezi

2 months ago -

ما هو تعليقك



•Comment

•View all comments

•Like

1 Person liked this

■ مشاء الله ايش التطور هذا

2 months ago

Like

■ طر فيك ياشيخ نحين وقت شيشه

2 months ago

Like

■ حسب ما ارى انه لا يمكن الجزم بان هناك عمر معين او وضع معين لمواكبت التطور السريع الذى يشهده العالم فى وقتنا الحالى

2 months ago

Like

■ سلامتات ليش طر طر فيكى انتى

2 months ago

Like

■ نعم الان نقرر نقول التكنولوجيا دخلت كل بيت ويستخدمها الكبار والصغار

2 months ago

Like

■ من الطبيعى ان نندهش من هذا المتغير لان كبار السن بالعادة لايتقنون تطور التكنولوجيا ولكن لابد من تعليمهم وهذه خطوه جيده لكي نكون مجتمع متطور ومتقن لتكنولوجيا فى العصر الحالى و تطور التكنولوجيا وصل إلى القرى النائية فلا هناك فرق بين المنيه او القرى اول العصر

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كما فرضت التكنولوجيا معطياتها على صغار السن وبرعوا فيها، فرضتها أيضاً على كبار السن ليتعاملوا معها ويفكروا شيراتها ويلحقوا بالركب رغم أنف العمر. فهي أسهمت في تطور الحياة وسرعة إنجاز الأعمال، وسرعان ما أصبحنا نعتمد عليها في كل جوانب حياتنا بعد أن وفرت الجهد والوقت والعمل.

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فكروا الصورة هذا صورة عدم الإهتمام من الأبناء جعلته يبحث عن التواصل مع خاثل الكمبيوتر وهذا رأيي وليس بالضروري أن هناك ضده تحياتي

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ايه والله صلاته ياخني تافهين والواحد منهم رلانه ما يدافع عن نفسه

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هههه التطور ما هو بدى الطريقة التي جعلنا أعرب البشر شيخة وكمبيوتر ما تمشي مع بعض وبعد كبير بالنس

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لا يوجد ترابط لا من قريب أو بعيد بين الشيخة والكمبيوتر مما يجعل هذا الشخص ذا يربط بينهم في موقف واحد

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ان العلم من المهد إلا اللحد وهذا الشيخ الكبير من خاثل الصورة واضح انه يتخصص ويتعرف على الكمبيوتر ولربما يبتن استخدامة هذا من جهة ومن جهة اخرى يستطيع القول ان التكنولوجيا باتت في متناول الجميع واصبح الامي هو من لا يتقن استعمال التكنولوجيا

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بالعمر هذا الواحد يبحث عن العبادة والكهل هذا جالس يشيش قلعه نقله

شدهوه عاد يعني اللي يشيش يكون جاهل بالتكنولوجيا...!! الصورة توضح مدى الفجوة بين جيل الاجداد

وجيل الشباب

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ه تعينى لك يا حج كل دي في وقت واحد شيشه وكسبوتر

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هذه الماضى وسرعة المستقبل

1 month ago

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Appendix E: Detailed Invitation Posted to the Participants for Joining the Research on the Website

You are invited to participate in this research. The research primarily focuses on the phenomenon of politeness strategies employed by Saudi Arabian young adults in online/virtual communication and their construction and showing of various sociocultural, political, regional, tribal identities through these strategies in online/virtual communication. The Study also aims to examine the linguistic strategies employed to construct an individual's identity in terms of politeness, and to determine the socio-linguistic factors that underlie these from the viewpoint of sociolinguistics, and their implications. This study is being conducted for the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy in Education by Mr. Alenezi under the supervision of Dr Paul Kebble, Dr Andrew Fluck, Dr Andy Bown and Dr Yang Yang of the University of Tasmania, Australia from the Faculty of Education. Mr. Alenezi will be directly involved in the field study in person for data collection. For more details, you can also read the Arabic version of this consent form.

What is the purpose of the study?

The aims of this research are to investigate:

- 1- The linguistic strategies used by Saudi Arabian young adults to construct their different social identities in online communication.
- 2- The strategies used by Saudi Arabian young adults to be (im) polite in their online communication.
- 3- Inter-regional and cross-cultural similarities and differences in these strategies used in online identity construction and politeness.

Why have I been invited to participate?

As one of the Saudi young adult, you are invited to be a participant in this study. Your participation will be purely voluntary and you have every right to decide not to participate, without consequences, at any time. If you decide to withdraw, there will be no impact on your personal and professional dealings with the researchers.

What if I change my mind during or after the study?

You have every right not to participate in this research and, at any point of time during data fieldwork, you can withdraw without explanation and without consequences. If you change your mind afterwards and do not want to include your data you can contact the research team by December 30, 2016 and your data will also be withdrawn. In the case this data is used for some research related publications, your confidentiality will be duly maintained.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

The data collected from website and interviews will be stored in the collaborative file storage solution hosted on the Microsoft Share Point Suite facility by the University of Tasmania. The student investigator will use OneDrive, an online document storage system for PhD students, to store the data. After the data collection process is over, the student investigator will download the data, in My Site. The recorded interview data will be copied and stored in My Site. After a period of five years from the publication of the thesis, the data will be deleted, paper transcripts shredded and raw audio recordings will be deleted as well. All information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

How will the results of the study be published?

The purpose of this study is for the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy in Education of Mohammed Q Alenezi. Hence, the data collected will be used for the purpose aforementioned. The data may be used for further research publications. The identity of all participants will be kept confidential in all publications from this research.

Appendix: F Consent form

1. I agree to take part in the research study named above.
2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
3. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
4. I understand that the study involves posting comments in website page for about two months and interview which will be audio recorded for around 30,40 minutes.
5. I am aware that I have every right not to answer some questions in interview or write the comment at the study page in website.
6. I understand that copies of screenshots of website comments, interviews and audio files will be stored on the Microsoft Share Point Suite facility by the University of Tasmania in the Faculty of Education which will be accessible only to the researchers. Names and other identifying information will be removed from these documents. Computer files will be password protected and stored on a secure server in the Faculty of Education, Launceston campus. After five years after publication of the report of the project, all transcripts and field notes will be shredded, computer files deleted and audio tapes destroyed.
7. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
8. I understand that the researcher(s) will maintain confidentiality and that any information I supply to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research.
9. I understand that the results of the study will be published so that I cannot be identified as a participant.
10. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw by December 30, 2016 without any effect.

If I wish, I may request that any data I have supplied be withdrawn from the research until December 30, 2016. After that, I understand that I will not be able to withdraw my data.

Appendix G: Tables of Results

Table 1: *Linguistic Strategies used to Construct Regional Identities (Topic-Wise Classification)*

Topic No.	Region-specific words and phrases with their frequencies		Total
1	East		
Generation gap	West	دا / this (1), دحين / now (2)	
	Centre	ذا/this (3)	8
	South		
	North	هذي /this (2)	
2 Trump	East	صج / really (5), امحق / worst (2)	
	West	البزوره, دا / this (1), كثير / more (3), دحين / now (6), هذا / this (7), عانه / look (1), الديقيس, / under stairs(1), كثيره/ more(1), بهرجة, Show(1), /يعمي, O my uncle (2)	63
	Centre	دا / this(12), تدر عم / Walk without thinking(2), معتس / I agree with you(2)	
	South	كهل / old fool (3), الهوايش / crawling creatures (4), القحم, / old man(2)	
	North	هلون / like (1), حيل / more/ (1), اللحين / now (2), بحر, /look(2)	
3	East	صج / really (2),	
Importance of English In KSA	West	دا / this (1), هذا /this (1), دحين / now (1), ايوه / yes (1)	
	Centre	ذا / this (2)	10
	South	الجنوبي / southern (1)	
	North	Owaid (1)	
4	East	صج / really (2), امحق / worst (1)	
Internet company	West	دحين / now (4), كثير / more (1), هذا / this (1), يا بوي / o my father (1)	
	Centre	تدر عمين / walk without thinking (1), ذا / this (2), معتس / you are right (1), الدر عمه / walk without thinking (1)	17
	South	نشتي / what you want (1), قده / ability (1)	
	North	-	
5	East	حملوته(1)	
Policeman-fine	West	دحين / now (3), دا / this (1), كثير / more (1), هذا/ this (1), تنكبك / crying (1)	10
	Centre	ذا / this (1)	
	South	-	
	North	وشتعمل / what are doing(1)	
6	East	ريال / man (3), جذي / like that (1), صج / really (1)	
apologising to corridor fellow	West	كثير / more (2), دحين / now (1), البزوره / children (1), خوي / friend (1)	
	Centre	تدر عم / walking without thinking (4), ذا / this (2), أقديت / you are right (1), زلابه / bad man (1)	31
	South	كهل / Old man (2), أين / where (1), ارحب / welcome (1), أفغر / dull person (1)	
	North	انهج / go (2), بحر / look (2), هلون / like that (1), تسبدي / My liver (1), بعدحيي / my life (1).	
7	East	شدعوه / What's the matter (1), صج / really (1), امحق / worst (1)	
Old and-laptop	West	ياحج / O Haj (4), هذا / this (4), دحين / Now (2), هيا / try to solve this (1), دا / this (1), دى / this (1)	
	Centre	بذي / like this (1), ذا / this (3), زلابه, / Bad man(1)	24
	South	الكهل / old man (1)	
	North	انهج / I go (1), بحر / look (1),	

Table 2: *Linguistic Strategies used to Construct Tribal Identities (Topic-Wise Classification)*

Topic No.	Tribe name and tribe-specific words, phrases with their frequencies		Total
1	Alanazi	Tribe name in profile (5)	07
Generation gap	Alshammari	Tribe name in profile (1)	
	Aldossari	Tribe name in profile (1)	
2 Trump	Alshammari	Tribe name in profile (1)	10
	Alqahtani	Tribe name in profile (2)	
	Alanazi	Tribe name in profile (2)	
	Alhazmai	Tribe name in profile (1)	
	Alrwiliy	Tribe name in profile (1)	
	Alotaibi	Tribe name in profile (1)	
	Aldossari	Tribe name in profile (1)	
	Alshahrani	Tribe name in profile (1)	
3	Alshammari	Tribe name in profile (1)	08
Importance of English in KSA	Alanazi	Tribe name in profile (4)	
	Alotaibi	Tribe name in profile (1)	
	Albalawi	Tribe name in profile (1)	
	Alzahrani	Tribe name in profile (1)	
4	Alasmariy	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	05
Internet company	Alqahtani	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Aldossari	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alrwailly	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alzahrani	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
5	Bedouin	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	09
Policeman fine	Alahmari	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alharbi	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alshammari	Tribe-related name in profile (2)	
	Alanazi	Tribe-related name in profile (3)	
	Algamdia	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alharbi	Tribe-related name in profile (2)	
6 Apologising to corridor fellow	Alawni	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	22
	Alanazi	Tribe-related name in profile (8)	
	Small family	Tribe-related name in profile (2)	
	Alshammari	Use of tribe-related word Owaid(1), tribe-related name in profile (3)	
	Alharthy	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	10
	Alqahtani	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Bahrani	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alahmari	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Althagafi	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
7	Alshammari	Tribe-related name in profile (2)	
Old and laptop	Alanazi	Tribe-related name in profile (2)	
	Alahmari	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Aldossari	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alharbi	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alzahrani	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Alshamsi	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	
	Algahtani	Tribe-related name in profile (1)	

Table 3: Linguistic Strategies used to Construct Religious Identity (Topic-Wise Classification)

Topic No.	Religious words, phrases, expressions with their frequencies	Total counts
1 Generation gap	الحمد / praise be to Allah (1), الخير والبركه / goodness & blessings (1), الله يخلف / God replace (1), الله / the God (1)	04
2 Trump	ان شاء الله / God willing , الله يخلف عليه / God replace him (1), الحمد لله / الحمد لله (2), ماشاء الله / God be Exalted (2), الله يحميننا / Muslims (6), Thanks be to God (1), الله يحمينا / God protect us (1), الله يكفيننا / God protect us (1), يا شيخ / O shaikh (1), الله يجعل / May God turn (1), عز الله / By God (2), الله يستر / God Save (4), الله عز / By God, the Greatest (1), الله يأخذه / May God take (1), الله يحميها الله / God protect (1), الاسلام / Islam (4), العرب / Arabs (2), اخي / brother (5), اختي / sister (4), ربنا / My Lord (1), الله يفكنا / God protects us (1), اسلاميه / Islamic (1), ربك / the God (1), الله / the God (10)	49
3 Importance of English in KSA	الله يحمينا / God protect us (1), الله يستر / God Save (4), الله عز / By God, the Greatest (1), الله يأخذه / May God take (1), الله يحميها الله / God protect (1), الاسلام / Islam (4), العرب / Arabs (2), اخي / brother (5), اختي / sister (4), ربنا / My Lord (1), الله يفكنا / God protects us (1), اسلاميه / Islamic (1), ربك / the God (1), الله / the God (10)	05
4 Internet company	الله يحمينا / God protect us (1), الله يستر / God Save (4), الله عز / By God, the Greatest (1), الله يأخذه / May God take (1), الله يحميها الله / God protect (1), الاسلام / Islam (4), العرب / Arabs (2), اخي / brother (5), اختي / sister (4), ربنا / My Lord (1), الله يفكنا / God protects us (1), اسلاميه / Islamic (1), ربك / the God (1), الله / the God (10)	08
5 Policeman fine	الله يحمينا / God protect us (1), الله يستر / God Save (4), الله عز / By God, the Greatest (1), الله يأخذه / May God take (1), الله يحميها الله / God protect (1), الاسلام / Islam (4), العرب / Arabs (2), اخي / brother (5), اختي / sister (4), ربنا / My Lord (1), الله يفكنا / God protects us (1), اسلاميه / Islamic (1), ربك / the God (1), الله / the God (10)	34
6 Apologising to corridor fellow	الله يحمينا / God protect us (1), الله يستر / God Save (4), الله عز / By God, the Greatest (1), الله يأخذه / May God take (1), الله يحميها الله / God protect (1), الاسلام / Islam (4), العرب / Arabs (2), اخي / brother (5), اختي / sister (4), ربنا / My Lord (1), الله يفكنا / God protects us (1), اسلاميه / Islamic (1), ربك / the God (1), الله / the God (10)	05
7 Old man and laptop	الله يحمينا / God protect us (1), الله يستر / God Save (4), الله عز / By God, the Greatest (1), الله يأخذه / May God take (1), الله يحميها الله / God protect (1), الاسلام / Islam (4), العرب / Arabs (2), اخي / brother (5), اختي / sister (4), ربنا / My Lord (1), الله يفكنا / God protects us (1), اسلاميه / Islamic (1), ربك / the God (1), الله / the God (10)	10

Table 4: *Linguistic Strategies used to Construct Gender Identity (Topic-Wise Classification)*

Topic No.	Gender	Gender specific words, phrases, expressions with their frequencies	Total counts
1 Generation gap	Female	Feminine names/nicknames (7)	18
	Male	Masculine names/nicknames (11)	
2 Trump	Female	Feminine names/nicknames (29)	51
	Male	Masculine names/nicknames (22)	
3 Importance of English in KSA	Female	Feminine names/nicknames (09)	25
	Male	Masculine names/nicknames (16)	
4 Internet company	Female	Feminine names/nicknames (17), تصدقي / you believe (1), انتبهني / should be careful (1), العزيزه / my dear (2), حبيبتي / my love (1), اشتركي / contract (1)	34
	Male	Masculine names/nicknames (11)	
5 Policeman fine	Female	Feminine names/nicknames (20)	45
	Male	وهو / Dear (2), Apply (1), الذيب / wolf (1), / He (1) Masculine names/nicknames (20)	
6 Apologising to corridor fellow	Female	اسفه / Sorry (16), متاسفه / Sorry (3), اعذريني / forgive me (2) Feminine names/nicknames (40)	128
	Male	اسف / Sorry (32), اعذرنني / forgive me (1) Masculine names/nicknames (34)	
7 Old man and laptop	Female	Feminine names/nicknames (21) فيكي انتي / you are (1),	46
	Male	Masculine names/nicknames (23) منور / illuminating (1)	

Table 5: *Politeness Strategies*

Topic	Politeness strategies	Count
1 Generation gap	Bald on-Record Strategy	2
	Positive Politeness	14
	Negative Politeness	2
	Off-record Strategy	-

2 Trump	Bald on-Record Strategy	-
	Positive Politeness	31
	Negative Politeness	2
	Off-record Strategy	-

3 Importance of English in KSA	Bald on-Record Strategy	1
	Positive Politeness	43
	Negative Politeness	12
	Off-record Strategy	1
4 Internet company	Bald on-Record Strategy	3
	Positive Politeness	61
	Negative Politeness	1
	Off-record Strategy	-

5 Policeman fine	Bald on-Record Strategy	13
	Positive Politeness	52
	Negative Politeness	11
	Off-record Strategy	7

6 Apologising to corridor fellow	Bald on-Record Strategy	-
	Positive Politeness	27
	Negative Politeness	72
	Off-record Strategy	-

7 Old man and laptop	Bald on-Record Strategy	1
	Positive Politeness	31
	Negative Politeness	2
	Off-record Strategy	3

Table 6: *Impoliteness Strategies*

Topic	Impoliteness strategies	Count
1 Generation gap	Bald on-record impoliteness	2
	Positive Impoliteness	-
	Negative Impoliteness	1
	Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness	3
	Withhold Politeness Strategy	-
2 Trump	Bald on-record impoliteness	43
	Positive Impoliteness	2
	Negative Impoliteness	35
	Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness	-
	Withhold Politeness Strategy	-
3 Importance of English in KSA	Bald on-record impoliteness	7
	Positive Impoliteness	1
	Negative Impoliteness	1
	Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness	3
	Withhold Politeness Strategy	-
4 Internet company	Bald on-record impoliteness	27
	Positive Impoliteness	1
	Negative Impoliteness	11
	Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness	2
	Withhold Politeness Strategy	-
5 Policeman fine	Bald on-record impoliteness	8
	Positive Impoliteness	3
	Negative Impoliteness	11
	Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness	2
	Withhold Politeness Strategy	-
6 Apologising to corridor fellow	Bald on-record impoliteness	6
	Positive Impoliteness	-
	Negative Impoliteness	1
	Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness	-
	Withhold Politeness Strategy	-
7 Old man and laptop	Bald on-record impoliteness	17
	Positive Impoliteness	9
	Negative Impoliteness	18
	Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness	9
	Withhold Politeness Strategy	-

Appendix H: Committee

Name: *Younes*

Region: East

Age: *39*

You are invited to share your opinion about your region in which you are living. The research primarily focuses on the linguistic strategies employed to construct an individual's identity in terms of politeness, and to determine the socio-linguistic factors that underlie these from the viewpoint of sociolinguistics, and their implications. The Study also aims to examine the phenomenon of politeness strategies employed by Saudi Arabian young adults in online/virtual communication and their construction and showing of various sociocultural, political, regional, tribal identities through these strategies in online/virtual communication.

Factors	Could you chose () if it is correct and (X) if it is not correct: the below are the words and tribes name belonging to your region	Percentage
Words	<i>(X) شذوه, (X) جذي, (X) حمولته, (X) زبال, (X) امحق, (X) صج</i>	<i>96%</i>
Tribes	<i>Alshamsi (X)</i>	<i>10%</i>

لا يوجد قبيلة الشامي الاغواي محدة وقبيلة في المنطقة الشرقية وتواجدوا اراكت في دارة الامارات العربية المتحدة

Signature:

2018/7/9

43.

Name: Ahmed

Region: West

Age: 35

You are invited to share your opinion about your region in which you are living. The research primarily focuses on the linguistic strategies employed to construct an individual's identity in terms of politeness, and to determine the socio-linguistic factors that underlie these from the viewpoint of sociolinguistics, and their implications. The Study also aims to examine the phenomenon of politeness strategies employed by Saudi Arabian young adults in online/virtual communication and their construction and showing of various sociocultural, political, regional, tribal identities through these strategies in online/virtual communication.

Factors	Could you chose (✓) if it is correct and (X) if it is not correct: the below are the words and tribes name belonging to your region (west)	Percentage
Words	دا / this (✓), دحين / now (✓), كثير / more (✓), هذا / this (✓), يا بوي / o my father (✓), كذا / like that (✓), تنكبك / crying (✓), البزور / children (✓), خوي / friend (✓), يا حج / O Haj (✓), هيا / try to solve this (✓), دي / this (✓), يعنى / O my uncle (✓), عاينه / look (✓), الدقيس / under stairs (✓), اكثر / more (✓), ابهرجه / Show (✓), ايوة / yes (✓)	98%
Tribes	Alzahrani (✓), Alotaibi (✓)	89%

Signature:

8/7/2018

Name: *Ibrahim*

Region: South

Age: *37*

You are invited to share your opinion about your region in which you are living. The research primarily focuses on the linguistic strategies employed to construct an individual's identity in terms of politeness, and to determine the socio-linguistic factors that underlie these from the viewpoint of sociolinguistics, and their implications. The Study also aims to examine the phenomenon of politeness strategies employed by Saudi Arabian young adults in online/virtual communication and their construction and showing of various sociocultural, political, regional, tribal identities through these strategies in online/virtual communication.

Factors	Could you chose () if it is correct and (X) if it is not correct: the below are the words and tribes name belonging to your region (south)	Percentage
Words	كهل / old fool (✓), الهوايش / crawling creatures (✓), الجنوبي / southern (✓), تشتي / what you want (✓), قده / ability (✓), أين / where (✓), ارحب / welcome (✓), الفقر / dull person (✓), القديم / old man (✓)	98%
Tribes	Alahmari, (✓) Alqahtani (✓), Alasmariy (✓), Alsharani (✓), Algamdia (✓), Alzahrani (✓), Alharthy (✓)	100%

Signature:



Name: Ibrahim

Region: Middle

Age: 27

You are invited to share your opinion about your region in which you are living. The research primarily focuses on the linguistic strategies employed to construct an individual's identity in terms of politeness, and to determine the socio-linguistic factors that underlie these from the viewpoint of sociolinguistics, and their implications. The Study also aims to examine the phenomenon of politeness strategies employed by Saudi Arabian young adults in online/virtual communication and their construction and showing of various sociocultural, political, regional, tribal identities through these strategies in online/virtual communication.

Factors	Could you chose () if it is correct and (X) if it is not correct: the below are the words and tribes name belonging to your region (middle)	Percentage
Words	فَا / this (✓), نكر عمين / walk without thinking (✓), معتن / you are right (✓), زلابه / bad man (✓), بندي / like this (✓), نكر عمن / Walk without thinking (✓), الدرعه / walk without thinking (✓), القبت / you are right (✓)	97%
Tribes	Aldossari (✓), Alharbia (✓), Alawni (✓)	94%

Signature:

6/2/2018

Name: Hezma

Region: North

Age: 41

You are invited to share your opinion about your region in which you are living. The research primarily focuses on the linguistic strategies employed to construct an individual's identity in terms of politeness, and to determine the socio-linguistic factors that underlie these from the viewpoint of sociolinguistics, and their implications. The Study also aims to examine the phenomenon of politeness strategies employed by Saudi Arabian young adults in online/virtual communication and their construction and showing of various sociocultural, political, regional, tribal identities through these strategies in online/virtual communication.

Factors	Could you chose (✓) if it is correct and (X) if it is not correct: the below are the words and tribes name belonging to your region (south)	Percentage
Words	Owaid (✓), أهيج / I go (✓), بحر / look (✓), هون / like that (✓), تسدي / lever (✓), بعدي / my life (✓), هني / this (✓), حبل / more (✓), الحين / now (✓), وئس تعمل / what are doing (✓), تسدي / lever (✓)	98%
Tribes	Alanazi (✓), Alshammari (✓), Albalawi (✓), Alrwailly (✓), Alzahrani (✓), <u>Alhazma</u> (✓)	98%

21/2/2018

Signature:

Appendix I: Some Transcripts of Interview Data

General Description									
I:	Interviewer	Gander:	Male	Date:	14/5/2017	Start Time:	01:45 AM	Place	Australia
P	Participant	Age:	27	Region:	East	End Time:	01:57:24 AM	Method:	Skype

المقابل : السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

المستجوب : و عليكم السلام ورحمة الله

المقابل : من أي منطقة؟

المستجوب: من المنطقة الشرقية حبيبي

المقابل: كم عمرك؟

المستجوب: 27 سنة

المقابل: ماهي الكلمات التي تستخدمها في الاعتذار في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟

المستجوب: في الاعتذار بالعادة نستخدم كلمات أعذرنى يا حبيبي لا أستطيع الرد عليك مشغول وايد من هالقبيل يعني

المقابل: ماهي الكلمات التي تستخدمها في الطلب أو السؤال في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟

المستجوب: في الطلب نطلب بالعادة بالوسائل في واتس اب أو تويتر بأسلوب مهذب لو سمحت يا حبيبي وبالعادة كلمة يا حبيبي نستخدمها أكثر

المقابل: من هو الذي يستخدم الاسم الحقيقي في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الرجال أم النساء؟

المستجوب: الرجال أكثر

المقابل:السبب؟

المستجوب: المرأة بالعادة تحب تكون مجهولة الهوية على أساس العادات الاجتماعية عندنا أو نتكلم بحرية وتعبّر

المقابل: الذين يستخدمون الاسماء المستعارة أقل أو أكثر تهذيب من الذين يستخدمون الاسماء الحقيقية؟

المستجوب: بالعادة أقل تهذيب لأن هويته غير معروفة وكذا يستطيع يتكلم بكل بداءة ولا أحد يحاسبه

المقابل:هل تستطيع تحديد جنس, المنطقة, القبيلة, متعلم أو غير متعلم من اللغة التي يستخدمها في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟

المستجوب: صحيح بعض الأحيان تستطيع تحديد بعض **مصطلحات** المنطقة الي هو منها لأن بعض **المصطلحات** تتميز بها بعض المناطق **عن** مناطق أخرى أما الجنس ذكر أو أنثى أتوقع صعب تحدد من واقع الكلام

المقابل: يعني ما تقدر تحدد الجنس؟

المستجوب: صعب بس ممكن تحدد المستوى التعليمي المنطقة لان بعض المناطق تختلف في بعض اللهجات

المقابل: القبيلة؟

المستجوب: تستطيع من اللهجة والكلمات تميز بعض القبائل

المقابل:في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي هل يظهر الناس مدركين أو غير مدركين هوياتهم ؟

المستجوب: غير مدرك عن ايضاح هويته

المقابل:لماذا يستخدم اسم الله في الطلب أو السؤال والاعتذار في المجتمع السعودي؟

المستجوب: المعتقد الديني وعادات وتقاليد بس قبلها وازع ديني ومتعلق بالله ومتوكلين على الله

المقابل: هل تعتقد أن الناس في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي أكثر و أقل تهذب من التواصل وجهاً لوجه؟

المستجوب: وجهاً لوجه الواحد يكون مؤدب أكثر الخدمة الإلكترونية جعلت الواحد يتكلم براحته

المقابل: السبب وجهاً لوجه مؤدب؟

المستجوب: لأن الشخص أمامه لأن لغة الجسد تخفف شدة الغضب أحياناً وأحياناً أكثر المشاكل الفهم **الخاطي** لها لأن أسلوب الحوار

يختلف والشخص أمامك يشوفك وتشوفه

المقابل: ممكن تعطيني كلمات مهذبة أو غير مهذبة كمثال بين للشباب أو المنطقة أو القبيلة ؟

المستجوب: المهذبة كثيرة مثلاً بارك الله فيك , جزيت خيراً , لا هنت يا عيوني. تسلم لي يا حبيبي أما غير المهذبة تتداول أحياناً بين

الشباب (10 ثانية) يعني بعض المصطلحات نتكلم بصراحة (ههههه) تشبيه بالنساء وبالجنس الثالث وفيه كلمات ياخنيث ياخرونق يا

قحبه يا منيوك من **هالمصطلحات**

المقابل: في تعبيرك ماهي اللغة التي يستخدمها الناس تجاه الرئيس الأمريكي ترامب؟

المستجوب: للأمانة أيام ترشيحه كان الشعب غضبان كثير على ترامب لأنه كان يتحدث كثير عن الاسلام والمسلمين وكانوا يتهمون

كثير عليه **بمصطلحات بذينة** وأهله وبنته وكان تهجم كثير ردت فعل غاضبه على أساس **التصريحات** التي صدرت عنه يوم ترشيحه

المقابل: ايش الكلمات؟

المستجوب: يعني وصفه بالشذوذ الجنسي ياخنيث يا جرار ابن كلب شرموط ابن القحبة

المقابل: الان تغيرت النظرة تجاهه؟

المستجوب: خفت قليلاً وبعد التصريحات الاخير وزيارته السعودية

المقابل: الله يعطيك العافية

المستجوب: الله يعافيك يا حبيبي

General Description									
I:	Interviewer	Gander:	Male	Date:	14/5/2017	Start Time:	01:45 AM	Place	Australia
P	Participant	Age:	27	Region:	East	End Time:	01:57:24 AM	Method:	Skype

I: Peace be upon you.

P 9: *Peace be upon you too.*

I: Form which region?

P 9: East

I: How old are you?

P 9: 27 years

I: Which expression do you use more for apologising in your communication on Social media?

P 9: Normally for apologising, we use words such as- 'forgive me my dearest, I couldn't answer your call. I was so busy'. [He used word 'waayed' meaning 'so or more'. This word is specifically used in the east region].

I: Which expression do you use more for requesting/ asking for in your communication on Social media?

P 9: For requesting, normally on whatsapp or Twitter by polite way- 'If possible, my dearest.....' The word 'my dearest' is used more.

I: Who uses *real name* / *nickname* on Social Media? *Male/ Female*?

P 9: The males more.

I: Why?

P 9: The female normally like to be anonymous based on the culture of community and has space to speak and express what she thinks.

I: Do you think people who use nicknames are more polite/impolite than those who use real name?

P 9: Normally, people using nicknames are less polite because they are anonymous identities and they can speak more impolite words also no one can punish them.

I: Is it possible to identify gender, region, tribe, educational background of a person from his/her language used on social media?

P 9: Right. Sometimes you can identify some of words belonging to the region and some words used in specific region but the gender is more difficult.

I: You mean difficult to identify the gender?

P 9: Yes, difficult. But to identify if educated or uneducated and from which region etc. is easy as each region has specific dialect.

I: Tribe?

P 9: You can identify through dialect and specific words because each tribe has specific words.

I: Do people show such various identities *consciously or unconsciously*?

P 9: I think unconsciously.

I: What does *invoking name of God* for requesting, asking and apologizing reflect/show in Saudi Arabian society?

P 9: Religious belief, customs and traditions but the important thing is religion and related to God also relying on God.

I: Do you think that people on social media are more polite/impolite than they are in real life communication?

P 9: In face to face communication, people are more polite. But, the social media made the people free to speak anything.

I: The reason face to face is polite?

P 9: Because the person is front of you and being impolite may create problems and misunderstandings because of rules of society and religion.

I: Can you give me polite/impolite words regarding to your gender, region and tribe?

P 9: The polite words many- such as 'God bless you', 'God give you the best', 'God never insult my eyes' and 'God save my dearest' while impolite words among the youths (10 seconds)- I mean some bad words I can speak free (laugh) such as- likening to women or transgender, 'effeminate', 'fucked', 'prostitute' and 'fucked'.

I: From your experiences, what kind of language do people use while talking about the new US president, Donald Trump?

P 9: Honestly, during election days people were angrier from Trump because he spoke more about the Islam and Muslims and they used to insult him by using impolite words about him, his wife and his daughter. [He used word 'Ahlal' meaning 'his wife'. This word is common in Saudi culture].

I 9: What are the words?

P 9: They described him as 'homosexual', 'effeminate', 'dealer for prostitution', 'son of dog', 'fucking' and 'son of a bitch'.

I: Is there change now about him?

المقابل: من يستخدم أكثر الاسم المستعار الرجال ام النساء؟ ولماذا؟
المستجوب: اتوقع أكثر شيء النساء يعني الرجال ممكن عنده حسابين ,حساب باسمه الحقيقي وحساب باسم مستعار , والمرأة أكثر شيء تستخدم اسم مستعار , يعني ممكن لأنها ما تحب يكون الكل عارف هي مين بالضبط وبنيت مين , تعرفين عندنا هنا العادات والتقاليد يعني أشياء كثيرة حولنا نحاول انا مو نخفي **شخصيتنا** عشان سبب معين لا ممكن اني اظهر اجمل ماعندي وافضل ماعندي في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تحت اسم مستعار , بس هو علشان ممكن ما ودي احد يعرف شخصيتي ان اكون او بنت مين اكون , عندنا هنا **المرأة** الوضع يختلف , وممكن اني احط رمز لأسمي بس يكون قريب من أسمي بس اوضح من اكون انا بالضبط لا أكثر شيء النساء.

المقابل: السبب بوجهة رأيك النساء يحطون اسماء مستعاره أكثر من الرجال؟
المستجوب: والله حبيبتني **المرأة** عندنا صعبه انها تظهر شخصيتها الأساسية اذا كانت ماهو في الكل ممكن تكون شخصية معروفة او دكتوراه تظهر شخصيتها او عندها مشاريع أكثر هم زي كذا تظهر شخصيتها بس الي تكون عندها حساب تواصل او بتكون ماعندها هدف معين او مشروع.

المقابل: يعني الي داخله للتسلية

المستجوب: ايه تحطه مستعار

المقابل: السبب؟

المستجوب: النظرة الاجتماعية او لو (2 ثانية) **تعرضت لسوء** او تعرفين وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي فيها خليط الكويس السلبي والأيجابي و ممكن تتعرض لسليبيات ماتكون او ما تبغى تكون معروفة شخصيتها هي مين بالضبط .

المقابل: **برأيك** الذين يستخدمون اسمائهم المستعاره أكثر **تهذبا** او أقل **تهذبا** من الذين يستخدمون اسمائهم الحقيقية ؟ لماذا؟
المستجوب: طبعا الذي يستخدم اسمه الحقيقي مستحيل أكثرهم أكثرهم او نادرا ما احدهم يتعدى او يتكلم **بالألفاظ النابية** , والله شوفي حبيبتني فيه كذا وكذا ممكن عندك احد عنده اسمه الحقيقي ماعنده مشكله وهذا نادراً نادراً ممكن يصير بس اغلب الذين يستخدمون اسماء مستعاره من المراهقين من فيه **بينات** معينه ما ادري ايش مشكلتهم واغلبهم بصراحه **يتجروون** ويقولون كلمات نابية ويهزؤون ويتلفظون **بالألفاظ** للأسف خارجه عن الأدب وعن الاحترام وعن الذوق العام.

المقابل: ماهو السبب برئيك؟

المستجوب: والله شوفي في الأول والأخير يرجع للبيئة الي عايش فيها هذا الإنسان على كيف ثقافته في حياته كيف تربيته ١١١١ في الأول والأخير برضوا الدين يعني مافيه رادع ديني يعني اكون احد يعرفني او ما يعرفني او يعرف شخصيتي او ما يعرفها او يكون على التربيته الي مرتبي عليها ثقافتني العامه والتربيته على ادبي واسلوبي بالحياة حتى لو كان تحت اسم مستعار لكن للأسف البعض **يتجرا** البعض حتى يطلعون او يجيب حساب مستعار عشان **يهزأ** او عشان يتكلم الفاظ نابية او ايش السبب ؟ السبب اتوقع الثقافة و البنية التي عاش فيها والي تربى فيها هذا أكثر شيء.

المقابل: يعني **برأيك** انها حرية بالتواصل الاجتماعي ؟

المستجوب: بس **الحين** الحمد الله صار **الحين** ممكن اي احد يتلفظ عليك او يقول لك كلام ممكن تشكي عليه ويطلعونه ويطلعون حسابه ومين هو ورقمه وكل شيء. بس ماهو كل واحد يبي يروح يشكي بس أكثر العالم مستحيل يسوون هذا الشيء بس نادراً إلا اذا كان التعدي جاري معهم.

المقابل: **برأيك** استخدامهم للألفاظ الغير مهذبه يرجع لحريرتهم بالتواصل الاجتماعي او ما احد يقدر يحدد شخصيتهم ؟
المستجوب: بعضهم لهم اهداف يستقصدون ناس معينين يعني اعرف هذه الشخصيه فيه بيني وبينها شي في الحياة الاجتماعية او صار لي موقف معها في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي يتقصده انه يدخل على حسابه باسم مستعار عشان **يهزأ** او يتكلم عليه وبعضهم لا سبحان الله بعضهم ما ادري هذا الشيء في دمه او اسلوبه او ممكن **يهزأ** هذا ويسب هذا ويدخل على هذا ويتريق بشكل هذا ويتريق بأسلوب هذا ويطلع الفاظ جارحه يعني ما ادري سبحان الله فيه كذا وفيه ناس لهم أهداف في شخصيات معينه وفيه ناس لا على اي شيء .

المستجوب: **برأيك** لو حصل موقف يقدر يقول **الألفاظ** اذا كان يستخدم اسمه الحقيقي ؟

المقابل: لا اتوقع يحترم نفسه ويلزم حدوده أكثر بما ان معروفة شخصيته وهو مين اكيد بيبكون أكثر حرص حتى لو كان نقاش او شيء ممكن انه يضبط نفسه شوي .

المقابل: هل تستطيعين تحديد هوية الشخص من خلال اللغة التي **يستخدمها** من اي جنس و منطقة واي قبيلة وهل متعلم ام لا ؟
المستجوب: ما اتوقع لان بعضهم ماشاء الله عندهم طرق اساليب عندهم اشياء ما تتوقعينها **تتفاجنين** وبعضهم للأسف واصلين مراحل علمية كبيره و **تتفاجنين** في حساباته اسلوبه او كلامه ماهو قد مستوى تعليمه .

المقابل : اثناء الحديث مع الشخص ما تستطيعين تحديد جنسه ؟

المستجوب: بعضهم يتخفون يكون ولد ويتخفى بأنه بنت ويظهر انه بنت و البعض بنات يتخفون بأنهم اولاد فيه فيه بس نادرين اتوقع انهم نادرين.

المقابل: اذا حصل موقف معك هل تستطيعين تحديد الشخص رجل او امرأة؟

المستجوب: من ناحية الأسلوب او الكتابه ممكن يغلط كذا او كذا مع النقاش يوضح حاجه في الأسلوب ممكن بس في اغلب الأوقات ما اتوقع ممكن الواحد يندفع فيهم .

المستجوب: ومن ناحية القبيله او المنطقة ؟

P 1: You are *welcome dear*.

I: Which expression do you use more for apologising in your communication on Social media?

P 1: Do you mean general words? Which one? (*Thinks*).

I: The *south region* words.

P 1: Yes. Words like- '*May God preserve your life*', and '*welcome*' (*Erhaby* meaning '*welcome*' is used only in south region).

I: These are words for '*welcoming*' someone. I was asking you about apologising.

P 1: How?

I: *Apologising, apologising*.

P 1: *Apologising?* (*thinks*) for example, *apologising someone?* (*thinks*). '*Forgive me for making fool*'. (*thinks*) means *regret*? You know, we do not have any specific words for apologising in southern dialect. They are similar to words for apologising in other regions.

I: Are there any other words used *only in southern region*?

P 1: How?

I: I mean *special words* for apologising which are used in *southern region* only.

P 1: For apologising?

I: yes

P 1: My dear, please forgive me. I'm sorry, but we don't have any specific words for apologising in southern region dialect.

I: Which expression do you use more for requesting/ asking in your communication on Social media?

P 1: For asking or question?

I: Yes

P 1: When I ask someone for example service or anything else?

I: Yes

P 1: Common words, like- '*Is it possible to?*' '*Excuse me, If possible, dear sister or Nobel brother or master*', '*is it possible*', or '*is there any chance/way to help me in this subject matter?*' '*I will be highly thankful*'.

I: Yes

P 1: You see, we are living in age of social media. And in social networking sites, we speak using common language spoken by most of us in the kingdom. We use the southern region dialect with our family or friends in normal life. I mean you need words and terminology used in southern region? *By God, my dear, By God, you see*, we don't have. I mean specific words. Just common words.

I: Let us move to another question.

P 1: Go ahead.

I: Who uses *real name / nickname* on Social Media? *Male/ Female*? Why? And do people with real names / nicknames on Social Media are more *polite/impolite*? Why do you think so?

P 1: I expect the females to use nicknames. Maybe males have two accounts. The first one uses real name and second uses nickname. But, females use nickname more because she doesn't like everyone to know who she is and as she is a girl, you know we have our customs, traditions and many more things. Therefore, I can express most with the nickname on social media. But maybe, I don't want anyone to know my identity as a girl and here we have different situation.

Sometimes, maybe I use some codes related to my name and other background but, using real name-**no way**.

I: What is the reason from your point of view that the *females use nicknames* more than males?

P 1: *By God*, you see *my sister*, being a female it is highly difficult to show her real identity online here. It may be possible to show real identity if only a female is famous doctor or social personality or has some special project. Without these, a female cannot use her real identity on social media.

I: So you mean you use *nickname for entertainment* purpose then?

P 1: Yes, use nickname.

I: What is the reason?

P 1: Social perceptions or you may be exposed to abuse or you may become vulnerable to abuse as you know the social media has both positive and negative implications. And if she becomes vulnerable to negative things on social media, so she does not want anyone to know her exact identity.

I: Do you think people who use nicknames are more polite/impolite than those who use real name? Why?

P 1: Of course, people using real name are more polite and it is almost impossible for them to be impolite except very rarely some of them may use foul words. *But by God, you see my dear*, it's very rare to find someone with real name and using foul words but most of them are using nickname from teenager to people with specific nature. I don't know what their problem is but most of them speak foul words, ridicule others and speak impolite words without any respect or any care.

I: What is the reason for this from your point of view?

P 1: *By God*, you see, first and foremost, it implies the environment that they are living in and what kind of atmosphere in which a person is growing up. And also depends upon his /her following or not following his/her religion. If a person follows his/her religion, it can work as a deterrent to stop such kind of behaviours but these people don't care about their religion. A religion sets forward certain guidelines about behaving in appropriate ways but these people use nicknames to ridicule others, speak foul words. I don't know why? The reason for this, my interpretation is that *the culture and environment in which these people are growing up*.

I: You mean there is a lot of freedom on social media for expressing yourself?

P 1: Just be polite and soft. And thanks to God, now it has become possible to check such people. If anyone uses foul words, we can check his/her account, where he/she is from with a complaint to police. However, not many people opt for this and that is why, this problem is so common online.

I: Do you think using impolite words is due to *more freedom one gets on social media* or due to the fact that *no one can identify their identities*?

P 1: Some of them have specific goals and they target specific people. For example, when you know this person and you have a problem with him/her, you go to his/her account on social media by using nickname to ridicule or insult him/her. *Glory be to God*, also some of them I don't know what their problem is. May be this problem is in their blood and life to ridicule, insult, swear, mock and use foul words for others and this lives and departs with them only. It waits in their styles. And *Glory be to God*, I don't know why these people are like that. May be they have some goals like that or may be they don't have anything else in their life except this.

I: Do you think it is possible that someone uses *foul words with real name*?

P 1: No I don't think so. A person respects himself/herself as he/she appears online with real identity and that is why he/she will be very careful and control himself/herself.

I: Is it possible to identify gender, region, tribe, educational background of a person from his/her language used on social media? And do people show such various identities consciously or unconsciously?

P 1: I don't think so. Because, *Glory be to God*, most of them have such a subtle ways and many things to hide their identities that you just can't expect it. Also, some of them have high education and you get surprised when you see his/her account in social media and his/her style of speech which does not suit with his/her education.

I: During the communication, can you identify the *person's gender*?

P 1: You know some of them hide their real gender. For example, he is a *man but uses female name* and appears as a female online and also *females use male names* though it comparatively rare.

I: If this happens with someone, can one identify if the user is male or female?

P 1: Through his/her style of writing we can identify it as he/she would make mistake during discussion and we can identify real gender of the user that is why most of the time I don't think maybe one will get fooled by such people.

I: Can we identify *tribe or region*?

P 1: Tribe, I don't think so. But, region, maybe. Really most of them, you can easily identify through their writing style of words and style of his/her structure of writing, for example use of *كش or شس* [Arabic letters similar to /s/, /ts/, and /k/] Also, through the use of some specific idioms, yes, you can identify the region.

I: Do people show such various identities *consciously or unconsciously*?

P 1: Yes, some of them use consciously. For example, people like a *poet* who feel and some of them use to attract more followers.

I: What does *invoking name of God* for requesting, asking and apologizing reflect/show in Saudi Arabian society?

P 1: Yes, really we are used to this. This is our custom. We observe and learn this from our parents and grandparents and elders and continue to use it. Like the expressions- *God protect you from evil eyes, God give me your illness*- all such expressions are with the name of God. Why? I don't know exactly. May be we continue to use it as the legacy of our customs and traditions.

I: It is not the result of religion?

P 1: It is not used only by pious or religious people only. Any ordinary, common people uses name of God in almost everything in their life. And, surely, we have one God and the same God and first and foremost the same religion but is not necessary that such expressions are used only by religious or pious people. But such expressions like- *God give me your illness, God make it in my heart*- are always in most of our daily interaction and speech. Also such use makes speech more polite and religious so we use it as we follow the same religion and same style of speech.

I: Do you think that people on social media are more polite/impolite than they are in real life communication? Why do you think so? Can you tell me some polite/impolite words/expressions which are specific only to your gender, region, and tribe?

P 1: Sure, people are more polite in face to face communication than they are in online communication.

I: What is the reason?

P 1: *By God*, this may be because the person you are talking to is in front of you and he/she watches you and knows who you are that is why becomes more polite than in your absence such as on social media and where people don't know who you are, what is your situation and what is your culture, also some of them feel free in social media and talk what he/she wants to talk. They are free and take comfort in such ways what we call it in classical Arabic '*proud of themselves*'.

I: Can you give me some *polite/impolite* words used by *females* in your *region* and your *tribe*?

P 1: Just a moment. (thinks), I don't remember them now. May be, '*can you give that to me if possible*', '*God give me your sickness*', '*God give you my age*'. These are mostly used for our parents. These words are used for intensifying your feelings for your listener and make your speech much better.

I: From your experiences, what kind of language do people use while talking about the new US president, Donald Trump?

P 1: Do you mean what society talks about Donald Trump?

I: Yes

P 1: *By God*, you see, people use so many bad words while talking about him and even curse him. I don't have now those foul words. But maybe '*God will return his plan in his own throat*'. This is in south region. '*May God protect us from his evils*' and '*may God return his bad intensions to him*', like that.

I: God give you good health.

P 1: God give you too good health. You honoured me. It was, *Glory be to God*, nice interview. I am honoured with this opportunity my dear.

Appendix J: Glossary of Polite Expressions and Regional/Tribal Words Useful for visitors to KSA

One of the objectives of the research was to prepare a glossary of polite / impolite expressions, words which are specific in each region and tribes which form part of their identity. This glossary can be very useful for foreign firms, new immigrants or Muslims from the Western Society, foreign students who want to learn how to communicate with Saudi male-female students, new Muslims visiting Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj/Umrah, translators/interpreters, people connected with media, immigrants, salespeople from overseas firms or visitors to understand how to communicate regionally, culturally and locally appropriately.

Glossary of Polite expressions

1	Polite expressions to be used with young boys	يا الغالي / My dearest, O brother, يا حبيبي / O sister, Y'a alhabyab (O' nice man), يا الطيب / Y'a altayab (O' nice man), يا وحش / Y'a wahash (O' monster) or Any expression used with the name of God,
2	Polite expressions to be used with young girls	يا الغالية / My dearest, brother, sister, Taslamian / تسلمين (May you be safe)
3	Polite expressions to be used with Old People	Any expression used with the name of God, May God give you a good health/ الله يعطيك العافية, May God have Marcy upon you and your parents, You are blessing/ الله يرحمك ويرحم والدك
4	Polite expressions to be used with Sheikhs	Y'a twayal alamar/ يا طويل العمر (May God give you long life), Y'a fathylat alsheikh/ يا فضيلة الشيخ (O' virtue Sheikh)
5	Polite expressions to be used with youths and Old People (Male/Female)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wa'shlounak (How are you) وشلونك - Kayafak (How are you) كيفك - A' lawamak (How are you) علومك - Hala balhabyab (How are you) هلا بالحبيب - Marhaba (How are you) مرحبا - Wa'shlounak ya alkaal (How are you uncle) وشلونك يا الخال - Wa'shlounak ya aam (How are you uncle) وشلونك يا العم - A' kbarak ya altayab (How are you) أخبرك بالطيب - K'yaaf qayal (How are you) كيف قایل - K'yaaf Allah baak (How are you) كيف الله بك - Shahalak (How are you) شحالك - K'yaafak annt (How are you) كيف انت

Glossary of Impolite expressions

No	Impolite Expression	Who it is okay to be used	Who it should not be used AT ALL
1	زمال/Zmaal/ jackass, اثول/ Athwal/ stupid, يا جنط/ O' wheel, سطل /Bucket	With close friends	Should not be used in formal conversation and with the people you are meeting first time
2	العن امك/Insult your mother, العن ابوك/ Insult your father, كلب/ Dog, ابن الكلب/ Son's of dog	Sometime not be used even with close friends	Not to be used

Guide to Translators/Interpreters on how to translate region specific words more appropriately

Word	Meaning in East	Meaning in West	Meaning in Middle	Meaning in South	Meaning in North
Really	صحيح (Soug)	صحيح (Sahayah)	صحيح (Sahayah)	صحيح (Sahayah)	صحيح (Sahayah)
Man	رجال (Rayal)	رجل (Rajal)	رجل (Rajal)	رجل (Rajal)	رجال (Rajaal)
Like that	جذبي (chathea)	كدا (Kada)	كذا (Katha)	كذا (Katha)	هلون (Halwan)
What's the matter	شدة عوه (Shadawah)	ايش / Ayash	ليه (Layah)	ايش / Ayash	ايش (Layaish)
Now	اللاحين (Alahayn)	دحين (Dahyana)	اللاحين (Alahayn)	ذالاحين (Thalahayn)	اللاحين (Alahayn)
More	كثير (Kathier)	كثير (Kateear)	كثير (Kathier)	كثير (Kathier)	حيل / Hayal
This	هذا (Hatha)	هذا (Hada)	ذا (Thea)	هذا (Hatha)	هذا (Hatha)
Children	اولاد (Awlad)	اليزوره (Bazwrah)	اولاد (Awlad)	اولاد (Awlad)	وعدان (Wagdan)
This	ذي (Theaa)	دي (Daya)	ذا (Thea)	ذي (Theaa)	ذي (Theaa)
Bad man			زلايه (Zlabah)	أفغر (Afgar)	
You are right	معاك / Maake	معاك / Maake	معتس / Meatss	معاك / Maake	معاك / Maake
Walk without thinking	ملقوف / Malqwaf	لقافه / Laqafah	تدرعم / Tdrame	ملقوف / Malqwaf	تلقف / Talaqf
Old fool	شايب / Shayab	شيبه / Shayabah	شايب / Shayab	كهل / Kahal	شايب / Shayab
Ability				قده / qdah	
Welcome	ياها / Yaa hala	ياها / Yaa hala	ياها / Yaa hala	ارحب / Arhab	ياها / Yaa hala
Old man	شايب / Shayab	شيبه / Shayabah	شايب / Shayab	القحم / Alqham	شايب / Shayab
I go	اروح / Arwah	اروح / Arwah	اروح / Arwah	اروح / Arwah	انهج / Anhag
Look	انظر / Anthear	طالع / Talee	ناظر / Nather	انظر / Anthear	بحر / Bahar