

UN/RATIFIED IMPOLITENESS. WAYS OF BEING IMPOLITE IN THE PORTUGUESE PARLIAMENT

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Abstract:

This paper examines the manifestations of impoliteness in debates within the Portuguese Parliament, with particular attention to both verbal and non-verbal impolite acts. We conceptualise this integration of verbal (linguistic) and non-verbal (im)politeness within the broader multimodal discursive context as discursive (im)politeness. The analysis adopts an interactional perspective, conceptualising impoliteness as a phenomenon that may be either ratified or unratified by addressees during verbal interaction. At the macro level, impoliteness is treated as a parameter of genre, anticipated and regulated both by the parliamentary rules of procedure and by the informal conventions of parliamentary tradition. At the micro level, within each interaction, impoliteness emerges as both a potential strategic choice of the speaker and an interpretative judgment by the addressees, who may or may not ratify the impolite act. The analysis shows that verbal impoliteness is the most frequent; however, nonverbal impoliteness appears to challenge the traditional boundaries of Portuguese parliamentary tolerance more markedly than verbal impoliteness. In the parliamentary debates analysed, impoliteness is primarily instrumental, functioning as an argumentative strategy that the adversary may also strategically ignore. Therefore, specific acts of impoliteness must be analysed in relation to how ongoing interactions are managed, as well as to the Parliament's capacity to establish itself as a forum for debate. For the purposes of this study, we examine political debates transcribed in the official records of the Portuguese Parliament (Diário da Assembleia da República), covering the country's current democratic period.

Keywords: *Dissent; Politeness; Discursive genre; Portuguese parliamentary debates; Ratified and unratified impoliteness.*