

Analysis of Mock Impoliteness and Its Pragmatic Functions: Taking Crosstalks in CCTV's Spring Festival Gala from 1983 to 2023 as an Example

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Abstract. Politeness is the basic social etiquette people follow in their daily interactions. The current scholars pay less attention to the study of mock impoliteness. Mock impolite discourse acts account for a large part of crosstalk which is a folk rap art. This paper takes all the crosstalks in CCTV's Spring Festival Gala (from 1983 to 2023) as the corpus and analyzes the implementation strategies of mock impoliteness, which are joking, teasing, and humor. And summarizes their corresponding three pragmatic functions: solidarity reinforcement, cloaked coercion, and exploitative entertainment. This paper aims to expand readers' understanding of mock impoliteness in interpersonal communication.

Keywords: Mock impoliteness; Crosstalks; Strategies; Pragmatic functions.

1. Introduction

Politeness is a common social phenomenon, a code of conduct with moral or ethical significance that people follow in their daily lives, including the efforts people make to maintain harmonious relationships in communication. Compared with politeness, impoliteness research has been neglected in the first and middle periods. The scholarly attention to impoliteness actually began around 2000, and Culpeper (1996) laid the foundation for the study of impoliteness by proposing a series of impoliteness theory based on previous theories. After him, other scholars made some new inquiry into impoliteness. Compared with the research related to politeness, impoliteness research is still in its infancy. Mock impoliteness has gradually come into the limelight along with the rise of impoliteness research.

At present, empirical studies on mock impoliteness focus on mock impoliteness in films and television works (e.g., Yang, 2018); mock impoliteness in online communication (e.g., Wei, 2020) and mock impoliteness in television programs (e.g., Wu, 2021). Crosstalk is a kind of folk rap music art. It is distinguished by its form of speaking, learning, teasing, and singing. Crosstalk originated in northern China, became popular in Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei, and spread throughout the country and at home and abroad, beginning in the Ming and Qing dynasties and flourishing in contemporary times. It is mainly performed orally. The main props are folding fans, handkerchiefs, and waking wood. Performance forms include monologue, lip-synching, group comedy, etc. Crosstalk contains a large number of mock impolite behaviors. Therefore, in order to investigate the mock impoliteness in crosstalk, this paper takes all the crosstalks in CCTV's Spring Festival Gala (from 1983 to 2023) as the research corpus to investigate the implementation strategies and the pragmatic functions of mock impoliteness.

2. Literature review

2.1 The politeness theory and mock impoliteness

The study of politeness originated in the West when British linguist Geoffrey Leech (1983) described the important role of politeness in linguistic communication in *The Principles of Pragmatics*. He first introduced the politeness theory (Leech, 1983). The use of politeness contributes to the proper

functioning of society, the construction of the self-social identity of its members, and reflects the moral, cultural, and communicative competence of language users.

As today's society becomes more inclusive and liberal, people are no longer always formal and respectful when communicating. Instead, people often joke or flirt with each other to bring them closer together or to achieve certain goals. Such joking or flirting may appear to be impolite, but it is actually polite. This behavior is called mock impoliteness. Compared to the research on politeness and impoliteness, the research on mock impoliteness is much less and in its infancy. Combining the definitions of Culpeper (2011) and Haugh and Bousfield (2012), this paper defines mock impoliteness as behavior that is evaluated as non-incivility by (at least) two interlocutors. The function of mock impoliteness has been discussed in detail by Culpeper (2011). Briefly, Culpeper suggests three pragmatic functions of mock impoliteness: solidarity reinforcement, cloaked coercion, and exploitative entertainment.

In general, as the social environment changes and the way of interpersonal communication becomes more free and casual from serious and formal, the phenomenon of mock impoliteness becomes more and more common and has attracted extensive attention from the academic community. However, the research on mock impoliteness in Chinese discourse is relatively little, let alone the mock impoliteness in crosstalks. At the same time, there is even less research on mock impoliteness in Chinese discourse, let alone the mock impoliteness in crosstalks. Therefore, this paper takes the Spring Festival comic shows from 1983 to 2023 as examples to explore and analyze the realization strategies and discursive functions of mock impoliteness.

2.2 Empirical research on mock impoliteness

Currently, empirical studies on mock impoliteness have focused on mock impoliteness in films and television works (e.g., Yang, 2018); mock impoliteness in online communication (e.g., Wei, 2020) and mock impoliteness in television programs (e.g., Wu, 2021).

For example, Yang (2018) used the 1987 CCTV version of *Dream of the Red Chamber* as a corpus, Haugh and Bousfield's theory of mock impoliteness as a theoretical foundation to explore the pragmatic functions of mock impoliteness in combination with the specific corpus and different response models. The three pragmatic functions of mock impoliteness discourse acts are exemplified: solidarity reinforcement, cloaked coercion, and exploitative entertainment. In addition, Wei (2020) analyzed mock impoliteness in online contexts using the discourse of users in the same communicative circle in Weibo as a corpus, and developed three aspects of mock impoliteness in terms of initiation and response strategies, triggering factors and pragmatic functions, and found that in Weibo discourse: mock impoliteness is realized through initiation and response strategies; mock impoliteness can be triggered at the linguistic and paralinguistic levels; mock impoliteness achieves three discursive functions. In general, mock impoliteness has long been confined to the study of politeness or impoliteness, and the ambiguity of the attribution of mock impoliteness makes the research value of mock impoliteness not get enough attention. The research on mock impoliteness in China has started late and mostly draws on foreign research theories. Most of the corpus involved in the study of mock impoliteness in China includes mock impoliteness in film and television works, mock impoliteness in online communication, and mock impoliteness in TV programs, and few of them take crosstalk as the corpus for research. The dialogue between Dougen (the leading role in crosstalk who narrates the main storyline by constantly telling joking to make people laugh) and Penggen (the role who helps the leading role make the audience laugh with words or expressions in crosstalk) in crosstalk is mostly typical of mock impoliteness. This paper uses all the crosstalks from 1983 to 2023 in the Spring Festival Gala as the corpus and adopts a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis methods in order to expand the scope of the study of mock impoliteness and to expand readers' understanding of mock impoliteness in interpersonal communication.

3. Corpus for the study

Crosstalk is a kind of folk rap music art. It takes the form of speaking, learning, teasing and singing to highlight its characteristics. It originated in northern China, became popular in Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei, and spread throughout the country and in China and abroad, starting from the Ming and Qing dynasties and flourishing in contemporary times. It is mainly performed orally. The main props are folding fans, handkerchiefs, and waking wood. Performance forms include monologue, lip-synching, group comedy, etc. Crosstalk is a form of opera that uses joking, comical questions and answers, and rap to make the audience laugh. As a linguistic art, crosstalk contains a lot of mock impoliteness. The Spring Festival Gala, known as the Spring Festival Gala on China Media Group, has been with every Chinese since its official inception in 1983. Crosstalks that appeared on the stage of the Spring Festival Gala are the best of the best. Crosstalks of the Spring Festival Gala (from 1983 to 2023) include the crosstalks of Hou Yaowen and Shi Fufuan, Niu Qun and Feng Gong, Jiang Kun and Tang Jiezhong, Yue Yunpeng and Sun Yue, etc.

Because of its own characteristics, crosstalk contains a large number of mock impolite language phenomena, which are of great research value. Therefore, this paper takes all the crosstalks of the Spring Festival Gala (from 1983 to 2023) as the research corpus and explores the strategies of mock impoliteness and their pragmatic functions aiming to expand readers' understanding of mock impoliteness in interpersonal communication.

4. Mock impoliteness implementation strategies in crosstalk

Haugh and Bousfield (2012) points out that, joking, teasing, and humor are implementation strategies of mock impoliteness. Haugh's (2010) points out that jocular mockery is a type of teasing. Jocular mockery and jocular abuse are two typical ways of achieving mock impoliteness. In the following, I will use all the crosstalks of the Spring Festival Gala (from 1983 to 2023) as the research corpus, analyze the dialogue of Dougen and Penggen, and explore the implementation strategies in them.

The following table shows the statistics of the frequency and proportion of implementation strategies of mock impoliteness in all crosstalks of the Spring Festival Gala (from 1983 to 2023):

Table 1. Frequency and percentage of implementation strategies in crosstalks

Implementation Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Joking	138	47.10%
Teasing	113	38.57%
Humor	42	14.33%
Total	293	100%

4.1 Joking

Joking is a way to defuse embarrassment or amuse with light-hearted and humorous words that are acceptable to both sides of the conversation. Among mock impoliteness, the degree of joking is less superficially impolite compared to teasing. For example:

Example 1: [Background: Crosstalk The Idea Company at 1994 Spring Festival Gala, with Niu Qun as the Dougen and Feng Gong as the Penggen].

女士：请问冯先生，就是在去年的世界级比赛中大部分金牌都让我们女同胞拿了，使你们男同胞抬不起头来，你现在能不能出个点子让你们男同胞抬起头来呢？[Lady: May I ask Mr. Feng, it is that most of the gold medals in last year's world-class competition were won by our female compatriots, making male compatriots unable to lift their heads, can you now come up with an idea to make male compatriots lift their heads?]...

冯巩：.....我的点子是：取消女子比赛。[Feng Gong: ... My idea is: to cancel the women's competition.]

牛群：什么点子你这是。[Niu Qun: What? Listen the words that you have said.]

冯巩：我还真有好点子。马家军为什么所向披靡屡破世界纪录？[Feng Gong: I really have a good idea. Why is MaJiajun invincible to break world records?]

牛群：为什么？[Niu Qun: Why?]

冯巩：就是我一点子。吃什么补什么，我让马家军吃乌龟，那个速度，刺溜刺溜。[Feng Gong: It's my idea. There's the equivalence between what you eat and benefit from. I let MaJiajun eat tortoise, so his speed...]...

牛群：按照你的逻辑，吃什么补什么。也就是说你要是呆头呆脑，就让你吃猴头萝卜，你就比猴都精。[Niu Qun: According to your logic, there's an equivalence between what you eat and benefit from. In other words, if you are dull, let you eat monkey radish, you will be smarter than the monkeys.]

冯巩：啊对，你要是头发都掉光了，就吃鲜冬瓜，第二天马上就长出一层白毛来。[Feng Gong: Ah yes, if your hair is falling out, eat fresh wax gourd, the next day you will have a layer of white hair immediately.]

The lady asks Feng Gong for advice on the fact that men have won fewer gold medals than their female counterparts in world-class competitions, and therefore men cannot lift their heads up. Feng Gong immediately gives his idea: "to cancel the women's competition". This idea is not the result of serious consideration and deliberation, and it does not fundamentally make the male compatriots raise their heads. This idea is an exaggerated extreme to please the audience and is a joke in nature. After hearing this, Niu Qun expresses doubts about Feng Gong's idea, and Feng Gong immediately proves himself through Ma Jiajun's deed of breaking the world record. It was Feng Gong's idea of "There's the equivalence between what you eat and what benefit from." that suggested Ma Jiajun eat turtles, so that Ma Jiajun could have rapid speed later. There is no detailed scientific basis for the statement "There's an equivalence between what you eat and benefit from." eating turtles to run faster is a program effect that entertains the audience, and cannot be practiced as real, so we can say it is a joke. Niu Qun then reasons that Feng Gong would be smarter than a monkey if he eats the monkey radish according to Feng Gong's logic. Feng Gong then rebuttals by saying that if Niu Qun loses his hair, he would eat fresh wax gourd and the next day a layer of white hair would grow on his head. By watching the whole crosstalk we can learn that the two performers are not sincere to give each other advice, the surface presents a mutual dislike for impolite behavior, in fact, because the two performers are partners and friends, and is performing crosstalk in front of the audience, in order to entertain the audience, they show the mock impolite behavior through the strategy of joking.

4.2 Teasing

Teasing is divided into jocular mockery and jocular abuse. Jocular mockery and jocular abuse are considered to be two typical ways of achieving mock impoliteness.

4.2.1 Joking mockery

Example 2: [Background: Crosstalk Singing Imitations at 1990 Spring Festival Gala, with Jiang Kun as the Dougen and Tang Jiezhong as the Penggen] (Jiang Kun is imitating "self-absorbed" singing for the audience) (这句开头用不用空格？)

唐杰忠：我说你身上有虱子啊。[Tang Jiezhong: You must have lice on you.]

姜昆：你们家才闹臭虫呢！[Jiang Kun: Not me but your family is disturbed by bedbugs!]

唐杰忠：那你抖什么玩意儿？[Tang Jiezhong: Then why are you shaking?]

姜昆：这是感情内在的一种表现。[Jiang Kun: This is a manifestation of the inner feelings.]

唐杰忠：他这内在全跑外头来。[Tang Jiezhong: His inner all outside.]

姜昆：你甭管，自我陶醉嘛！（众笑）[Jiang Kun: It's none of your business, I am imitating the singing style of self-absorption! (Laughter)]

As Jiang Kun sings exaggeratedly imitating "self-absorbed", Tang Jiezhong says he looks like he has lice on his body to mock Jiang Kun's comical appearance, and here he is jokingly teasing to

commit mock impoliteness. Jiang Kun retorts that this is a manifestation of inner emotions. Tang Jiezhong again flirts with Jiang Kun's inner all run to the outside, implementing mock impoliteness for the second time through joking mockery. Although on the surface the two seem to have conflicts, in fact such a dialogue precisely reflects the intimate relationship between the two performers, which is conducive to enhancing the relationship. And it at the same time makes the audience laugh, which has the effect of delighting the audience.

4.2.2 Joking abuse

Example 3: [Background: Crosstalk Change, Change, Change at 2023 Spring Festival Gala, with Yue Yunpeng as the Dougen and Sun Yue as the Penggen]

岳云鹏：您如果想变年轻的话，您这样——[Yue Yunpeng: If you want to become younger, you do this...]

孙越：我哪样？[Sun Yue: Do what?]

岳云鹏：您出门右拐，在院儿里站十分钟，你回来你就冻得跟孙子似的。[Yue Yunpeng: Go out and turn right, stand in the courtyard for ten minutes, then come back and you will be freezing like a grandson.]

Sun Yue says he wants to become younger, but this is obviously not realistic. Yue Yunpeng does not directly accuse him of being delusional but provides him with a “clever” suggestion which is to stand outside for ten minutes and he will freeze like a grandson. “Sunzi” is a rude word in Chinese, but here the audience will not feel rude, but will find the speaker's cleverness in using the exact words. The use of “grandson” in the Chinese context reflects a difference in the ranking of relatives. To say that a person is “just like a grandson” is a verbal attack on the recipient from the perspective of a senior. Because of the cold weather outside, even standing outside for a short time is unbearable. “Freezing like a grandson” is a joking abuse, a mock impoliteness issued by Yue Yunpeng's sarcasm of Sun Yue's unrealistic ideas, cleverly worded to show that if Sun Yue wants to become younger, he needs to endure the embarrassment of becoming a “grandson”.

4.3 Humor

Humor is to expose the false and unreasonable aspects of life through insinuation, irony, puns, and other rhetorical techniques with a good-natured smile. For example:

Example 3: [Background: Crosstalk Watching TV at 1985 Spring Festival Gala, with Jiang Kun as the Dougen and Li Jinbao as the Penggen].

姜昆：比赛结束后我们女排队员整整齐齐站到了领奖台上。[Jiang Kun: After the game our women's volleyball team stood neatly on the podium.]

李金宝：获得了冠军。[Li Jinbao: Won the championship.]

姜昆：老太太更兴奋了。（学奶奶说话）哟外国发这奖品还真不错。[Jiang Kun: Grandma was even more excited. (Imitating grandmother) Wow, prizes awarded abroad are really good actually.]

李金宝：给个什么呢？[Li Jinbao: Give a what?]

姜昆：发了个涮羊肉的铜火锅哦。（众笑，鼓掌）[Jiang Kun: A copper hot pot with shabu-shabu lamb. (Laughter, applause)]

Due to the creative purpose and nature of crosstalk itself to entertain the public, most often by telling a story and imitating the characters in the story to convey a certain truth. Therefore, in crosstalk, there are no formal and serious words of edification, but mostly humorous and clever dialogues that make the audience laugh. Jiang Kun imitates his own Lao lady watching a sports game. The Lao lady refers to the gold medal of the women's volleyball team as a copper hot pot for shabu-shabu, showing in a good-natured smile that older people tend to adopt the equivalent description of something new: television and something they have never seen before, reflecting the humor of the Lao lady and making the audience laugh.

5. Pragmatic functions analysis of mock impoliteness

When people perform mock impoliteness, it is often accompanied by some kind of purpose, which may be for solidarity reinforcement, cloaked coercion, or exploitative entertainment. The analysis of the corpus of all crosstalks of the Spring Festival Gala (from 1983 to 2023) reveals that mock impoliteness appears to be implemented with three main functions: solidarity reinforcement, cloaked coercion, and exploitative entertainment. The following table shows the statistics of the frequency and proportion of the pragmatic functions of mock impoliteness in the corpus:

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of pragmatic functions in crosstalks

Pragmatic Functions	Frequency	Percentage
Exploitative Entertainment	140	62.22%
Solidarity Reinforcement	66	29.33%
Cloaked Coercion	19	8.44%
Total	225	100%

5.1 Exploitative entertainment

Exploitative entertainment is the most frequent pragmatic function in the corpus of this study, with a total of 140 words, accounting for 62.22%. In the corpus, exploitative entertainment mostly refers to the function of entertaining the audience and making them laugh. Since the purpose and nature of crosstalk is to entertain the public, all crosstalks in this corpus have the function of exploitative entertainment. The most representative ones are selected below for illustration. For example,

Example 4: [Background: Crosstalk Tomorrow Will be Better at 1996 Spring Festival Gala, with Niu Qun as the Dougen and Feng Gong as the Penggen.]

牛群：以前呀，我就怕跟我爱人上街。 [Niu Qun: In the past, I was afraid to go out on the street with my wife.].....

牛群：哎呀，二十多岁的人呀，长的就像四十都岁的。 [Niu Qun: Oh my god, a lady in her twenties looks like she's forty years Lao.]

冯巩：哎呦。 [Feng Gong: Oh.].....

牛群：这不最近光整容就整了六回。 [Niu Qun: She already has taken cosmetic surgeries for six times recently.]

冯巩：哎呦，嗨！ [Feng Gong: Oh my goodness!]

牛群：她要冷不丁一回家，她要不自我介绍我根本不认识她。 [Niu Qun: If she goes home without information, she will have to introduce herself because I cannot recognize her completely.].....

牛群：咱整容花多少钱，咱不害怕。 [Niu Qun: We are not afraid of spending money on cosmetic surgeries.]

冯巩：嗯。 [Feng Gong: Uh huh.]

牛群：咱也不心疼。 [Niu Qun: And there won't be heartaches of spending money.]

冯巩：嗯。 [Feng Gong: Uh huh.]

牛群：你说那么多漂亮的，你不照着整。 [Niu Qun: There are so many beautiful people, you don't follow their templates.]

冯巩：嗯。 [Feng Gong: Uh huh.]

牛群：怎么越整越像冯巩呀？ [Niu Qun: Why do you look more and more like Feng Gong?]

Here Niu Qun and Feng Gong take today's cosmetic medicine trend as the background, Niu Qun issues a mock rude behavior to his wife and his partner Feng Gong. Niu Qun says his wife was Lao and looked like she was in her forties while she was in her twenties. Considering that the two parties are husband and wife, and the fact that Niu Qun is willing to spend a lot of money on his wife's cosmetic surgeries, we can know his discourse is mock impoliteness. Niu Qun hopes for his wife to be better, to be youthful and beautiful, so it is just a flirtatious remark here. This dialogue reflects the real-life trivial couple dialogue which is easy to resonate with the audience, to get a laugh, to play the role of entertainment for the public. In addition, Niu Qun also issues a mock impoliteness to his

partner Feng Gong. Niu Qun says that his wife does not follow other beautiful templates but follows the template of Feng Gong, and she looks like Feng Gong now. The implication is that Feng Gong looks ugly. The audience loves to see the performers on stage flirting with each other. Here the mock impoliteness serves to entertain the public. Therefore, the two mock impolite acts here both have the function of exploitative entertainment

5.2 Solidarity reinforcement

This function appears 66 times, which means that it appears in crosstalk easily and a little frequently. Since Dougen and Penggen are basically equal in a crosstalk, they work together as partners, have a certain tacit understanding, and mostly are friends. Therefore, the function of solidarity reinforcement is more likely to appear in their mock impolite discourse. For example:

Example 5: [Background: Crosstalk Talking about Tigers in the Year of the Tiger at 1986 Spring Festival Gala, with Liu Wei as the Dougen and Feng Gong as the Penggen.]

刘伟：你们家就更离不来虎啦！ [Liu Wei: Your family has a lot to do with the tiger!]

冯巩：我们家？ [Feng Gong: My family?]

刘伟：说您妹妹的这个身材—— [Liu Wei: Your sister's figure is like ...]

冯巩：我妹妹是？ [Feng Gong: Like what?]

刘伟：虎背熊腰。 [Liu Wei: She has the tiger's back and the bear's waist.]

冯巩：该减肥了这是！ [Feng Gong: It's time to lose weight!]

刘伟：说您爱人眼睛—— [Liu Wei: Say your wife's eyes are...]

冯巩：我爱人是？ [Feng Gong: My wife has?]

刘伟：虎视眈眈。 [Liu Wei: Tiger eyes.]

冯巩：“母老虎”是吧！ [Feng Gong: “Female tiger”!]

刘伟：你跟你爱人后面——狐假虎威。 [Liu Wei: You walk behind your wife: a fox masquerading as a tiger.]

冯巩：不是？ [Feng Gong: What?]

刘伟：你爱人不在家呀，你“山中无老虎猴子称霸王”。 [Liu Wei: Your wife isn't at home, you are like “When the tiger's away, the monkeys will play.”]

Liu Wei and Feng Gong perform the crosstalk to the audience about the upcoming Year of the Tiger. Liu Wei firstly greets Feng Gong's family, saying that Feng Gong's family has a lot to do with tigers. Liu Wei then describes Feng Gong's parents, siblings, and wife with idioms with tigers in them. There are many impolite words: “has the tiger's back and the bear's waist”, “a fox masquerading as a tiger”, and “When the tiger's away, the monkeys will play.” are not words used to praise people, not to mention that these impolite words are used to Feng Gong's relatives. Generally, a man who is not very familiar with the other saying these words to another person's family is likely to cause contradictions. However, in this example, no conflict or contradiction erupted, and the audience will only feel that the two performers have a harmonious relationship. The reason is that only people who are close to each other will talk about each other's family and other private topics, and the possibility of conflict and contradiction because of flirtatious words is also low. Since Liu Wei and Feng Gong have a close relationship and are performing on stage, surface entertainment is much more than the actual meaning of the words themselves. Therefore, we can see that the function of solidarity reinforcement is reflected here.

5.3 Cloaked coercion

Cloaked coercion is related to power relations, where the expression of mock impoliteness by the high-power person to the low-power person contributes to the implicit implementation of power. This pragmatic function appears least frequently in the corpus of this study. The reason for this, I speculate, is that the status of the Dougen and the Penggen in crosstalk is basically equal, and except for some

role-playing that leads to power differentials, there are fewer cases where one party is the high power and the other is the low power. For example:

Example 6: [Background: Crosstalk The Wrong Step at 1983 Spring Festival Gala, with Jiang Kun as the Dougen and Li Wenhua as the Penggen.]

姜昆：他下班回家了，你说孩子见爸爸回来多喜欢呐。[Jiang Kun: He came home from work, and his children were happy to see their father back.]...

姜昆：你看他这镜头——（模仿同事“老樊”）“去去去去去，叫唤什么呀叭叭叭叭干嘛呢这是！”[Jiang Kun: Look at this shot of him: (imitating his colleague “Lao Fan”) “Goooooooooo, what are you shouting for blabla blabla!]

李文华：孩子这是喜欢你。[Li Wenhua: This shows that your children like you.]

姜昆：你喜欢什么你们都哪来的呀你们？[Jiang Kun: Like what? Where did you come from ah?]

李文华：怎么这么说话呢！[Li Wenhua: Do not talk like that!]

姜昆：不是你看你们这脏样怎么都参加第二次世界大战去了？[Jiang Kun: See your dirty faces like just participating in the WWII!]

李文华：这孩子赶上了吗？[Li Wenhua: They were not born at that time!]

姜昆：一个个都跟俘虏似的我跟你讲。[Jiang Kun: Every one of you are like captives.]

Jiang Kun and Li Wenhua perform a crosstalk on the background of the current national policy “Family Planning” at that time. Jiang Kun imitates his colleague “Lao Fan（老范）” who works across Jiang Kun’s desk because he often gets annoyed, everyone calls him “Lao Fan（老烦）”. (“老” in Chinese means often; “烦” in Chinese is a mood of being annoyed.) Lao Fan lived happily in the first few years, but since having five children, his quality of life has dropped significantly. Then all day long, he would wear a sad face and are easy to get annoyed. His children welcome him home, and he would feel annoyed, but the children are innocent. As a father, he knows this, so he does not directly criticize the children dirty but said the children are like participating the WWII, which is a subtle expression of his dissatisfaction. In addition, the phrase “Every one of you are like captives.” is also a mock impolite phrase. These expressions seem to be impolite on the surface, but they are actually said in a flirtatious way by Lao Fan from his father’s point of view to the children’s failure to satisfy himself, instead of teaching them with serious words, so as to relieve the pressure he exerts on them. Therefore, the mock impoliteness here has the pragmatic function of cloaked coercion.

6. Conclusion

Mock impoliteness in interpersonal activities is somewhat confusing because it is superficial impoliteness that is actually polite. Mock impoliteness often occurs among acquaintances and can have certain positive effects, and plays a pivotal role in the process of interaction. This paper analyzes the pragmatic functions of mock impoliteness using all crosstalks of the Spring Festival Gala (from 1983 to 2023) as the corpus. It is found that the implementation strategies of mock impoliteness include joking, teasing, and humor, and the pragmatic functions of mock impoliteness include solidarity reinforcement, cloaked coercion, and exploitative entertainment. This paper has studied all crosstalks of the Spring Festival Gala, and the corpus is sufficient. However, there are still some shortcomings in this study. This study only focuses on mock impoliteness in the Chinese context. Future research can explore the similarities and differences of mock impoliteness in cross-cultural contexts. Finally, the study of mock impoliteness has mostly focused on scripted conversations, and future research can further refine the study of mock impoliteness by collecting real corpus to focus on mock impoliteness in everyday conversations or online chatting interactions.

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