Politeness Annotation Scheme

We will use an integer scale of -2 to +2 to rate politeness (-2: very impolite, -1: impolite, 0: neutral, +1: polite, +2: very polite). To help the raters in determining politeness and impoliteness, we describe few example strategies below. However, these strategies are only to determine polarity (polite vs. impolite).

We don't provide any specific scheme to distinguish between the degrees of each pole (polite vs. very polite). You are encouraged to use your own understanding in measuring the degrees and rate according to that. Example hints may be,
1) what is the context? Is the reviewer pointing out to an error with a polite tone (very polite) or it's just general conversation (polite)? Degrees are most likely dependent on the context!
2) How many strategies the speaker using in a long text? (more, the better)
3) explicit use of negative words? (very impolite)
4) Is it a direct accusation (very impolite) or just an absence of possible politeness (impolite)

When a sentence doesn't fall under any category, it should be judged as neutral.

However, these strategies are just for an initial guidance. Raters are encouraged to go into detail of the conversational contexts and rate by their own discretion and put any additional remarks if needed.

Politeness:

In sociolinguistics and conversation analysis (CA), *politeness strategies* are speech acts that express concern for others and minimize threats to self-esteem ("face") in particular social contexts.

To determine politeness, we take help from the 3 politeness strategies mentioned by Brown and Levinson in their politeness theory [1]. These strategies arguably are most relevant to online conversation which do not require any further contextual details.

Positive Politeness: Positive politeness strategies seek to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face (**Positive face** is the desire to be liked, appreciated, approved, etc.) or trying to enhance it. The strategies include establishing common ground, highlighting friendliness, showing gratitude and deference, and using jokes, nicknames, honorifics, tag questions, special discourse markers(*please*), and in-group jargon and slang.

       Some example can be -

- Attend to H's interests, needs, wants

- o *You look sad. Can I do anything?*
- Use solidarity in-group identity markers and greetings
  - o ***Hey, mate***, *can you lend me a dollar?*
- Be optimistic
  - o *I'll just come along, if you don't mind.*
- Include both speaker (S) and hearer (H) in activity
  - o *If we help each other, I guess, we'll both sink or swim in this course.*
- Offer or promise
  - o *If you wash the dishes, I'll vacuum the floor.*
- Exaggerate interest in H and his interests
  - o *That's a nice haircut you got; where did you get it?*
- Avoid Disagreement
  - o *Yes, it's rather long; not short certainly.*
- Joke
  - o *Wow, that's a whopper!*
- Gratitude
  - o *I really appreciate it*
- Deference
  - o *Nice work!*
- Positive lexicons and Emoticons
  - o ***Wow****! That's **terrific***! 😊

Negative Politeness (signpost--- it's not impoliteness, but just another form of politeness 😊):
Negative politeness strategies are oriented towards the hearer's negative face (**Negative face** is
the desire to not to be imposed upon, intruded, or otherwise put upon) and emphasize avoidance
of imposition on the hearer. These strategies include questioning, hedging, and presenting
disagreements as opinions, or juxtaposing criticism with compliments (all to minimize fear and
direct imposition).

Some examples can be-

- Be indirect
  - o *Would you know where Oxford Street is?*
  - o *"By the way, where did you find..."*
- Use hedges or questions or modality
  - o *Perhaps, he might have taken it, maybe.*
  - o *Could you please pass the rice?*
  - o "Can you recheck these lines?"
    "There's a possibility …"
    "It certainly is a good approach"
  - o "It would be better"
  - o "I wonder if you..."
  - o "I suggest we write it …"
- Be pessimistic
  - o *You couldn't find your way to lending me a thousand dollars, could you?*

- o *So, I suppose some help is out of the question, then?*
- Minimize the imposition
  - o *It's not too much out of your way, just a couple of blocks.*
- Use obviating structures, like nominalizations, passives, or statements of general rules
  - o *I hope offense will not be taken.*
  - o *Visitors sign the ledger.*
  - o *Spitting will not be tolerated.*
- Apologetic / Confession
  - o *I'm sorry; it's a lot to ask, but can you lend me a thousand dollars?*
  - o *Sorry to bother you!*
  - o *"My fault", "that's a mistake I made"*
- Use plural pronouns
  - o *We regret to inform you.*
- Impersonalization
  - o *"This can be done in a more concise way"*
- Advice in 1st person:
  - o *"I would write this within another function"*

The off-record (indirect strategy): Offering advice or request through indirect implication of a sentence. "It's really cold here" could imply a request to the hearer to go shut the window down.

However positive and negative politeness strategy should also be maintained when using an indirect sentence. "This code is buggy" may sound impolite, and can be paraphrased to "this code looks buggy" which is politer in tone.

Impoliteness:

We will use Culpeper's work (1996) [2], where the author presents impoliteness strategies which are opposite to Brown-Levinson's politeness strategies. Thus, Impoliteness can be defined as "Instead of enhancing or supporting face, impoliteness super-strategies are a means of attacking face."

Positive impoliteness (not polite, a form of impoliteness 😊)**:**

- *Ignore, snub the other* - fail to acknowledge the other's presence. Exclude the other from an activity.
  - o *When a person's questions/issues are not addressed or ignored in a conversation (contextual impoliteness)*

- *Disassociate from the other* - for example, deny association or common ground with the other
  - *"I don't go by your rules"*
  - *"this is not the convention here"*

- *Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic*
  - *"I don't care what you did there"*

- *Seek disagreement* –
  - "I don't agree with this style of coding"

- *Use taboo words* - swear, or use abusive or profane language/ emoticons
  - "What a load of **rubbish"**
  - "**:@"**

- *Call the other names* - use derogatory nominations.
  - *"You should've done this way before, **moron**!"*

Negative Impoliteness:

- Direct Accusation
  - "You made these changes which are against the convention"

- Direct Question
  - "Why did you do this?"

- Direct Order
  - Fix the code here.

- Tone of Ordering with 2nd person start
  - "You should remember that..."
  - "You need to do this

- Factuality
  - "the fact is that, people don't use that library anymore"

- Put the other's indebtedness on record
  - "you were given an extra week to finish this"

- Invade the other's space
  - *Asking inappropriate questions*

- Condescend, scorn or ridicule –
  - "only a novice would write that type of code"

Sarcasm or Mock politeness:

If the rater feels a tone of sarcasm, he may rate it as impolite

Withhold politeness: The absence of politeness work where it would be expected. For example,

failing to thank somebody for a present may be taken as deliberate impoliteness.
Or, the sentence that could have been structured using some form of politeness strategies
can also be rated as impolite.

Neutral:

In absence of any politeness or impoliteness, e.g. irrelevant conversations, error details,
task and library description etc.

Mixed ??:

If a text contains sign of both politeness and impoliteness, then-

a) Rate whichever pole is prominent
b) If no side is prominent, it can be assumed that politeness and impoliteness negate each other,
   and you would rate it as neutral. (an optional remark would help in such cases though)

Thank you for reading. Some examples and notations used in this article are made with
help from few other sources as well [3][4].

Reference:

[1] Brown, Penelope, and Stephen C. Levinson. *Politeness: Some universals in language usage.* Vol. 4. Cambridge university press, 1987.

[2] Culpeper, Jonathan. "Towards an anatomy of impoliteness." *Journal of pragmatics* 25.3 (1996): 349-367.

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politeness_theory#Politeness_strategies

[4] Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil, Cristian, et al. "A computational approach to politeness with application to social factors." *arXiv preprint arXiv:1306.6078* (2013).