

PASSAGE 1

The commonest kind of indirect speech of all is politeness. Politeness in linguistics does not refer to social etiquette, like eating your peas without using your knife, but to the countless adjustments that speakers make to avoid the equally countless ways that their listeners might be put off. People are very, very touchy, and speakers go to great lengths not to step on their toes. In their magisterial work *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Use*, the anthropologists Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson show how people all over the world use politeness to lubricate their social interactions.

Politeness Theory begins with Erving Goffman's observation that when people interact they constantly worry about maintaining a nebulous yet vital commodity called 'face' (from the idiom 'to save face'). Goffman defined face as a positive social value that a person claims for himself. Brown and Levinson divide it into positive face, the desire to be approved (specifically, that other people want for you what you want for yourself), and negative face, the desire to be unimpeded or autonomous. The terminology, though clumsy, points to a fundamental duality in social life, which has been discovered in many guises and goes by many names: solidarity and status, connection and autonomy, communion and agency, intimacy and power, communal sharing and authority ranking.

According to Brown and Levinson, conversational partners work together, each trying to maintain his own face and the face of his counterpart. The challenge is that most kinds of speech pose at least some threat to the face of the hearer. The mere act of initiating a conversation imposes a demand on the hearer's time and attention. Issuing an imperative challenges her status and autonomy, as if the speaker feels entitled to boss her around. Making a request puts her in the position where she might have to refuse, earning her a reputation as stingy or selfish. Telling something to someone implies that she was ignorant of the fact in the first place. And then there are criticisms, boasts, interruptions, outbursts, the telling of bad news, and the broaching of divisive topics, all of which can injure the hearer's face directly. It's no surprise that the first thing out of our mouths when we address a stranger is a request for forgiveness: Excuse me. But despite the many ways in which a speaker can touch a nerve, he can't be constantly walking on eggshells. People have to get on with the business of life, and in doing so they have to convey requests and news and complaints. The solution is to make amends with politeness: the speaker sugarcoats his utterances with niceties that reaffirm his concern for the hearer or that acknowledge her autonomy. Brown and Levinson call the stratagems positive and negative politeness, but better terms are sympathy and deference.

The essence of politeness-as-sympathy is to simulate a degree of closeness by pretending to want what the hearer wants for herself. Two witty lexicographers commented on this stratagem when defining the word politeness in their dictionaries. Samuel Johnson explained it as 'fictitious benevolence'; Ambrose Bierce called it 'the most acceptable hypocrisy'. Two familiar examples of politeness are the impotent bidding of good fortune (Be well, Have a nice day) and the feigned inquiry into the person's well-being (How are you?, How's it going?). There are also lame compliments (You look marvelous), presumptions about the hearer's needs (You must be hungry), sound but useless advice (Take care), and the broaching of topics where agreement is inevitable, prompting Charles Dudley Warner's complaint that everyone talks about the weather but no one does anything about it.

What is the author's opinion of Brown and Levinson's views on politeness?

- 1) He admires their ideas and mostly agrees with them.
- 1) He agrees with some of their ideas, but has significant issues with others.
- 2) He initially approves of their ideas, but later on gently mocks them.
- 3) Though he claims to agree with their ideas, he actually satirizes them.

Would sharing a piece of gossip about a co-worker affect the face of the person you share it with?

- 1) No, it would only affect the face of the person you are gossiping about, not the person you are talking to.
- 2) Yes, as it would suggest that you consider yourself superior to the person you are gossiping about.
- 3) Yes, as it would imply that you think you have superior knowledge than the person you are talking to.
- 4) No, as sharing something with another person is a form of politeness and creates a bond between the two of you.

Which of the following is true as per the passage?

- 1) What we consider politeness is in fact a kind of hypocrisy.
- 2) Almost anything one can say to someone else would result in threatening their face.
- 3) Brown and Levinson disagree with Erving Goffman's definition of the concept of face.
- 4) All of the above.

If you were to interview the author, what follow-up question would you ask him?

- 1) How can politeness be taught to people?
- 2) How is politeness theory relevant in day-to-day life?
- 3) How can people avoid threatening each others' face?
- 4) What are some of the examples of politeness-as-deference?

PASSAGE 2

Security theatre is the practice of investing in countermeasures intended to provide the feeling of improved security while doing little or nothing to actually achieve it. Some experts have described the airport security repercussions due to the September 11, 2001 attacks as security theatre.

Security theatre has real monetary costs but by definition provides no security benefits, or the benefits are so minimal as to not be worth the cost. Security theatre typically involves restricting or modifying aspects of people's behavior or surroundings in very visible and highly specific ways, that could involve potential restrictions of personal liberty and privacy, ranging from negligible (confiscating water bottles where bottled water can later be purchased) to significant (prolonged screening of individuals to the point of harassment).

While it may seem that security theatre must always cause loss, it may sometimes be beneficial, at least in a localized situation. This is because perception of security is sometimes more important than security itself. If the potential victims of an attack feel more protected and safer as a result of the measures, then they may carry on activities they would have otherwise avoided. In addition, if the security measures in place appear effective, potential attackers may be dissuaded from proceeding or may direct their attention to a target perceived as less secure. Unsophisticated adversaries in particular may be frightened by superficial impressions of security (such as seeing multiple people in uniform or observing cameras) and not even attempt to find weaknesses or determine effect.

However, critics such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) have argued that the benefits of security theatre are temporary and illusory since after such security measures inevitably fail, not only is the feeling of insecurity increased, but there is also loss of belief in the competence of those responsible for security. Security theatre encourages people to make uninformed, counterproductive political decisions. The feeling of (and wished for) safety can actually increase the real risk. The disruption, cost and fear caused by security theatre acts as positive feedback for those who wish to exploit it: even if they fail to take lives, they can cause large economic costs.

A group of Cornell University researchers have found that strict airport security in the United States after the 9/11 attacks has the unintended consequence of increasing road fatalities, as would-be air travellers decide to drive and are exposed to the far greater risk of dying in a car accident. In 2005, the researchers looked at the immediate aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, and found that the change in passenger travel modes led to 242 added driving deaths per month. In all, they estimated that about 1,200 driving deaths could be attributed to the short-term effects of the attacks. Extrapolating this rate of fatalities, New York Times contributor Nate Silver remarked that this is equivalent to 'four fully loaded Boeing 737s crashing each year'.

The Cornell study also noted that strict airport security hurts the airline industry; it was estimated that the 6% reduction in the number of passengers in the fourth quarter of 2002 cost the industry \$1.1 billion in lost business.

The direct costs of security theatre may be lower than that of more elaborate security measures. However, it may divert portions of the budget for effective security measures without resulting in an adequate, measurable gain in security. Such ripple effects are often connected to fear; visible measures such as armed guards and highly intrusive security measures may lead people to believe that there must be a real risk associated with their activity.

Because security theatre measures are often so specific (such as concentrating on potential explosives in shoes), it allows potential attackers to divert to other methods of attack. This not only applies to the extremely specific measures, but can also involve possible tactics such as switching from using highly scrutinized airline passengers as attackers to getting attackers employed as airline or airport staff. Another alternate tactic would be simply avoiding attacking aircraft in favour of attacking other areas where sufficient damage would be done, such as cinemas.

Choose a suitable title for this passage.

- 1) The Need for Security Theatre
- 2) The Problem with Security Theatre
- 3) Security Theatre: The Pros and Cons
- 4) Security Theatre: More Trouble than it is worth?

Which of the following is not one of the possible negative effects of security theatre, as per this passage?

- 1) It results in economic losses due to lost business.
- 2) The false sense of security it provides may actually result in greater risk.
- 3) People tend to take unnecessary risks to avoid the inconveniences caused by it.
- 4) It results in more money being spent on useless security measures than would have been on effective measures.

What is the point being made in the last paragraph?

- 1) Security theatre results in a focus on much too specific threat, while ignoring more general issues.
- 2) Potential attackers, who are aware of the focus of security theatre measures, can change their tactics to avoid them.
- 3) Security theatre measures are likely to backfire and cause more harm than they supposedly aim to prevent.
- 4) Security theatre may result in venues that are not secure becoming the focus of future attacks.

What does Nate Silver's remark imply?

- 1) Driving is more dangerous than flying.
- 2) People should be made more aware of the dangers of driving.
- 3) People should be encouraged to fly rather than drive, despite the inconveniences caused by security theatre.
- 4) The security theatre post-9/11 may have resulted in more deaths than it prevented.

Which of the following cannot be inferred from this passage?

- 1) Security theatre became a major problem only after the 9/11 attacks.
- 2) The disadvantages of security theatre far outweigh its advantages.
- 3) Security theatre may make people more afraid than the real risk warrants.
- 4) Potential attackers would likely be pleased by security theatre, not put off by it.

PASSAGE 3

The Arabian Peninsula is where true desert still spreads out inviolate. It has a rich past, and was not always so punished by merciless hot winds. Beyond the stony desert there are low hills, where sedimentary rocks attest to a time when a fertile sea covered this barren land.

I was being taken to a small wadi - a valley cut by waters that flowed more prolifically only a few thousand years ago. As I picked my way along a natural path I started to notice the rocks to either side, which formed steep cliffs thirty meters or so in height. They were a curious jumble. In places, rocks of all shapes and sizes were stuck into the greyish clay of the cliffs like plums in a pudding. There seemed to be various kinds of rock types as well: white pebbles of limestone, big sandstone blocks, even pieces of granite and other rocks that had cooled from hot magma. Yet so loosely were they held by the clay that some of them could be plucked out of the cliffs. I took a small piece of some kind of fine-grained igneous rock in my hand and inspected it at close quarters. On it there was something of a polish, but disfigured by a whole series of scratches. But this was obviously a tough rock, so whatever had done the scratching and polishing must have exercised some considerable pressure.

Further along the wadi, the whole valley opened up into a kind of natural amphitheater, surrounded by steep cliffs evidently composed of the curious, medley rock. But the floor of the amphitheater was another kind of substance altogether, a hard, solid rock, in complete contrast to the clay-and-boulders, which could now be seen to lie as a great blanket immediately on top of this floor. What was extraordinary was that this hard rock, too, had been polished and gouged, but on a colossal scale. The whole valley floor had been scraped: great grooves scored the surface in a set of lines that ran virtually parallel from one side of the wadi to the other. Some of the grooves deepened in places, as if the fingernails of some Titan clawing the ground in rage had scraped them.

The truth is more astounding still. What I was looking at was the evidence of an ice age. Here, where now there beats a sun that melts ice as fast as a hot frying pan melts butter, there had once been rivers of ice: glaciers. Coarse boulders which had been included in these glaciers and carried along like blunt weapons had been responsible for scraping the hard floor of the wadi; finer rock material had produced the polish. Many tonnes of ice had provided the necessary pressure to produce what could now be recognized as a glacial pavement.

And then, when the ice sheet, which had once covered the Arabian Peninsula, finally melted away, all the material it had formerly carried was dropped. Boulders and stones which may have originated many kilometers away and been carried on the back of the ice were dumped together with the finest of rock that had been ground into flour and mud. The whole together accounted for that odd, plum pudding of a rock formation, which lay atop the glacial pavement. If you want to see identical rocks today you must go to Norway or Canada, where permanent ice still lingers. The only possible conclusion was that a great ice age must have scoured the ancient Arabian Peninsula.

What is the implication of the author's observation regarding the rocks in the Arabian Peninsula?

- 1) The Arabian Peninsula was covered in glaciers not too long ago.
- 2) Within a few thousand years, a glacier-filled valley can turn into a hot desert.
- 3) In the past, the entire Earth was so cold that even the Arabian Desert was frozen.
- 4) None of the above.

What is the predominant style of this passage?

- 1) Narrative
- 2) Descriptive
- 3) Argumentative
- 4) Analytical

What can be inferred about glaciers from this passage?

- 1) They are found mainly during ice ages.
- 2) They can move large boulders around.
- 3) They tend to flatten the landscape around them.
- 4) They wash away the rocks around when they melt.

Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's conclusion in this passage?

- 1) Flash floods have been known to leave gouge marks and a polished effect in the bedrock.
- 2) Scientists who study ancient climate have shown that the Arabian Peninsula was colder in the past.
- 3) New research has indicated that parts of the Arabian Peninsula were much wetter in the past than they are now.
- 4) There are many places on the Earth that have the same kind of rocks that the author found in the Arabian Peninsula.

PASSAGE 4

In olden days, before the Earth was well explored, map makers used to decorate unknown regions of their maps with various imaginative creations, such as menacing dragons that could swallow a ship whole, and delightful but equally dangerous Sirens who could lure sailors to wreck on rocky shores by the temptation of their sweet songs.

Well, things haven't changed that much. Today those who hope to raise a mission to Mars find their charts filled with dragons too. Reports of horrible beasts with names such as Radiation, Dust Storms and Back Contamination intrude into the discussion of mission plans, and do their worst to terrorize would-be crews (unsuccessfully), would-be mission planners (somewhat successfully), and would-be mission sponsors (very successfully). A Siren is there too, named Diana, the Moon Goddess, and her songs can be heard calling the Martian mariners to divert their ships once more to a barren destination. If we're going to get to Mars, we're going to have to clear the maps. The dragons and other monsters of the mind must be killed, and the Siren exposed for the fraud she is.

According to Diana's followers, it is a point of 'religious' belief that we cannot venture human expeditions to Mars until after the goddess has been appeased by the construction of a substantial array of temples - that is, bases - on the lunar surface. This belief, however, has no basis in reason.

Yes, it is quite true that due to its low gravity and negligible atmosphere, it would be much easier to send a rocket from the surface of the Moon to Mars than to launch it from the surface of the Earth. But this neglects some basic facts about solar system transportation. Put briefly, from a propulsion point of view, it is much easier to go from low Earth orbit (LEO) directly to Mars than it is to go from LEO to the surface of the Moon. So, it would make absolutely no sense to send a rocket to the Moon on the way to a voyage to Mars.

Well then, say Diana's followers, you still need to use the Moon as a test bed and training site to prepare for a Mars mission. But lunar conditions are so dissimilar from those on Mars that Antarctica would do just as well for crew training, and at far lower expense. Mars has an atmosphere and a twenty-four-hour day, with daytime temperatures varying between -50°C and $+10^{\circ}\text{C}$. The Moon has no atmosphere, a 672-hour day, and typical daytime temperatures of about $+100^{\circ}\text{C}$. While the Earth's gravity is 2.6 times that of Mars, Mars' gravity is 2.4 times that of the Moon. In addition, the types of geologic investigations needed on Mars, given its complex hydrologic and volcanic history, will much more closely resemble those that can be done on Earth than those that can be done on the Moon. We won't learn how to live on Mars by practising on the Moon.

The Moon does have some uses, most notably as a platform for astronomy using a coordinated array of optical telescopes to obtain super-high-resolution views of the universe at large. However, what needs to be clearly understood is that a lunar base is neither necessary nor desirable as an asset to support piloted missions to Mars. With respect to the path to Mars, it is a fatal Siren, a diversion into a dead end. As Napoleon Bonaparte once said explaining his winning strategy for war with Austria: 'If you want to take Vienna, take Vienna!' Well, if you want to go to Mars, go to Mars!

Why does the author refer to the Moon as 'Diana'?

- 1) To connect to the fact that 'Diana' is the ancient Roman name for the Moon goddess
- 2) To suggest that the Moon is like a goddess to those who want to build 'temples' - i.e. bases - on it
- 3) To personify the Moon as a 'Siren' who tempts explorers away from the real destination, Mars
- 4) To show that the Moon is a unnecessary diversion from the important business of sending people to Mars

What is the author's main purpose in writing this passage?

- 1) To demonstrate that there is no reason for people to go to the Moon
- 2) To show that a manned trip to Mars is a feasible goal in the near future
- 3) To explain that the fears keeping people from planning a mission to Mars are illusory
- 4) To urge people not to be distracted by the Moon when planning to go to Mars

What does the Napoleon Bonaparte quote in the last paragraph imply in the context of this passage?

- 1) Don't take 'no' for an answer.
- 2) If you want to do something, do it directly.
- 3) Keep trying until you succeed in your ambitions.
- 4) Don't be deterred by a difficult task.

