

A Pragmatic Analysis of Women and Angry Speech: Case Study of The Saudi Arabian Takki Series

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal the forms of illocutionary acts and impoliteness strategies in anger utterances directed at women in the Saudi Arabian series Takki. In Arab culture, angry utterances are not merely emotional expressions but serve as tools for enforcing social norms and patriarchal control. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method with a pragmatic approach. The data, consisting of dialogue excerpts, were analyzed using Searle's speech act theory and Culpeper's theory of impoliteness. The results show that anger utterances in Takki are dominated by directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative acts, accompanied by impoliteness strategies, including insults, prohibitions, threats, and verbal abuse. These utterances reflect unequal power relations between men and women and reinforce patriarchal structures in Saudi society. This study confirms that language functions as a significant tool of social control in cultures where family honor is paramount. By uncovering the pragmatic mechanisms that sustain gendered communication hierarchies, this research contributes to the broader understanding of how linguistic behavior reinforces social ideologies within both pragmatic and sociocultural theoretical frameworks.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bentuk-bentuk tindak tutur ilokusi dan strategi ketidaksantunan dalam ujaran kemarahan yang ditujukan kepada perempuan dalam serial Arab Saudi *Takki*. Dalam budaya Arab, ujaran kemarahan tidak semata-mata merupakan ekspresi emosional, tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai alat untuk menegakkan norma sosial dan kontrol patriarkal. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan pragmatik. Data penelitian berupa kutipan dialog dianalisis menggunakan teori tindak tutur Searle dan teori ketidaksantunan Culpeper. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ujaran kemarahan dalam *Takki* didominasi oleh tindak tutur direktif, ekspresif, komisif, dan deklaratif, yang disertai strategi ketidaksantunan berupa penghinaan, larangan, ancaman, dan kekerasan verbal. Ujaran-ujaran tersebut mencerminkan ketimpangan relasi kuasa antara laki-laki dan perempuan serta memperkuat struktur patriarkal dalam masyarakat Saudi. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa bahasa berfungsi sebagai alat penting dalam kontrol sosial pada budaya yang menjunjung tinggi kehormatan keluarga. Dengan mengungkap mekanisme pragmatik yang mempertahankan hierarki komunikasi berbasis gender, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pemahaman yang lebih luas tentang bagaimana perilaku linguistik memperkuat ideologi sosial dalam kerangka teoretis pragmatik dan sosiokultural.

المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن أشكال الأفعال الكلامية الإنجازية واستراتيجيات عدم اللباقة في عبارات الغضب الموجّهة نحو النساء في المسلسل في الثقافة العربية، لا تُعدّ عبارات الغضب مجرد تعبيرات عاطفية، السعودي تكي بل تُستخدم. كوسائل لفرض المعايير الاجتماعية وتعزيز السيطرة الأبوية. تعتمد هذه الدراسة المنهج الوصفي النوعي بالمقاربة التداولية، حيث جرى تحليل البيانات ونظرية عدم المتمثلة في مقاطع من الحوارات باستخدام نظرية أفعال الكلام لسيرل

وتُظهر النتائج أن عبارات الغضب في مسلسل تكي يغلب عليها اللباقة لكوليبير الطابع التوجيهي والتعبري والالتزامي والإعلاني، مصحوبة باستراتيجيات عدم اللباقة مثل الإهانة، والنبي، والتهديد، والإساءة اللفظية. وتعكس هذه العبارات علاقات القوة غير المتكافئة بين الرجال والنساء، كما تعيد إنتاج البنية الأبوية في المجتمع السعودي. وتؤكد الدراسة أن اللغة تُعدّ أداة جوهرية للضبط الاجتماعي في الثقافات التي تُعلي من شأن شرف العائلة. ومن خلال الكشف عن الآليات التداولية التي تُبقي على التسلسل الهرمي في التواصل بين الجنسين، تسهم هذه الدراسة في توسيع الفهم حول كيفية إسهام السلوك اللغوي في تعزيز الأيديولوجيات الاجتماعية ضمن الإطارين التداولي والاجتماعي الثقافي.

Keywords: gender ideology; impoliteness; patriarchal control; pragmatics; social domination

Introduction

Anger is a basic human emotion frequently expressed through verbal means. Expressions of anger can appear in various forms, in addition to facial expressions, tone of voice, verbal speech, and color.¹ In linguistic studies, anger is a crucial part to be analyzed because it contains social, cultural, power, and interpersonal dynamics.

In the context of Saudi Arabia, the expression of anger cannot be separated from the social structure influenced by patriarchal norms and religious conservatism.² In a study, Saudi Arabia is known as one of the countries with a high level of masculinity. They have a social system that strongly

¹ Indar Rupidara and Irwan Suswandi, "Penggunaan Ujaran dalam Mengekspresikan Kemarahan pada Film Penyalin Cahaya karya Wregas Bhanuteja," *Kode: Jurnal Bahasa* 12, no. 3 (2023): 17–31, <https://doi.org/10.24114/kjb.v12i3.47549>.

² Zarifa Sadiqzade, "The Linguistic Expression of Emotion: A Cross-Cultural Analysis," *EuroGlobal Journal of Linguistics and Language Education* 2, no. 3 (2025): 42–54, <https://doi.org/10.69760/egille.2500195>.

suppresses the role of men as protectors and controllers of women's behavior.³

In modern Saudi society, the concept of honor (*'ird*) continues to hold a central role as a moral and cultural principle that shapes social relations and regulates gendered behavior. Traditionally, this notion has been closely tied to women's modesty, family reputation, and communal respectability, defining the acceptable limits of female conduct and self-expression. However, contemporary research indicates a gradual shift in this framework, as Saudi women increasingly negotiate between traditional expectations and modern expressions of autonomy.⁴

Within this shifting social landscape, women's expressions of anger, such as those portrayed in the series *Takki*, emerge not merely as emotional reactions but as pragmatic acts of resistance to patriarchal conventions rooted in the ideology of *'ird*. Such defiant expressions expose the tension between moral codes that have historically linked women's worth to family honor and their struggle for individual agency.

Consequently, women's perceived deviations from cultural norms often provoke strong reactions from male figures, including fathers, brothers, and husbands, whose anger operates as both a personal emotion and a mechanism for maintaining social control and reinforcing patriarchal authority. This implies that women's behavior is considered a direct representation of family honor.⁵

³ Einar Thorsen and Chindu Sreedharan, "#EndMaleGuardianship: Women's Rights, Social Media and the Arab Public Sphere," *New Media & Society* 21, no. 5 (2019): 1121–40, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818821376>.

⁴ Abdulaziz Al-Qahtani, "Navigating Modernity and Tradition: A CDA of Saudi News Articles on Women's Rights," *SAGE Open* 15, no. 3 (2025): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251365752>.

⁵ Ellen Feghali, "Arab Cultural Communication Patterns," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 21, no. 3 (1997): 345–78, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767\(97\)00005-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(97)00005-9).

As a result, violations of cultural norms by women, whether intentional or unintentional, are often responded to with anger vented by male family members, such as fathers, brothers, or husbands. This anger is not only an emotion, but also a form of affirmation of social control and the reproduction of patriarchal structures in society.

It should be noted that gender norms are a series of unwritten rules that originate from social constructions regarding actions that are considered appropriate or inappropriate based on gender.⁶ This situation makes speech, especially speech that contains anger, not only an outpouring of emotion, but also a means of enforcing social norms and strengthening power relations. Therefore, the theory of speech acts and the theory of impoliteness become relevant to uncover how such speech is produced and functions in the social practices of Saudi Arabian society.

Cross-cultural research shows that although anger is universally recognized, the way it is expressed is strongly influenced by the prevailing culture and social norms in a society.⁷ This is in line with the statement of Leshin, et al., who affirms that language and culture are two inseparable aspects, both of which influence each other in the construction of meaning, including in terms of expressing emotions such as anger.⁸

Arabic, as a Semitic language known for its richness in linguistic and cultural structures, has distinctive

⁶ Prafitri Haziza and Siti Rohmah Soekarba, "Gender Norm in Saudi Arabia Within Takki The Series Directed By Mohammad Makki," *IJAS: Indonesian Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2023): 123–43, <https://doi.org/10.24235/ijas.v5i2.13239>.

⁷ Sadiqzade, "The Linguistic Expression of Emotion: A Cross-Cultural Analysis."

⁸ Joseph Leshin et al., "Language Access Differentially Alters Functional Connectivity during Emotion Perception across Cultures," *Frontiers in Psychology* 14 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1084059>.

characteristics in conveying emotions, including anger. Feghali notes that Arab society tends to use assertive, hyperbolic, and metaphorical expressions in daily communication, especially in expressing feelings of anger.⁹

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of speech in social and cultural contexts.¹⁰ This approach is relevant to understanding how speech, furious speech, plays a role not only as an expression of emotions, but also as a tool for the formation of social relations and control of power.

Understanding someone's speech and expressions can be achieved not only through direct interaction but also indirectly through the medium of film. Media such as films and television series are effective representation spaces to reflect these socio-cultural dynamics.¹¹ Until now, women often continue to appear as objects in literary works and films, reflecting patriarchal ideologies and the persistence of the male gaze.¹²

The *Takki* (2012) series by Mohammad Makki is an example of a representation of Saudi Arabia's social reality, particularly in relation to issues of gender, morality, and social change. *Takki* presents a portrait of Jeddah's young people that are marked by the conflict between conservatism and

⁹ Feghali, "Arab Cultural Communication Patterns."

¹⁰ Akhmad Saifudin, "Teori Tindak Tutur dalam Studi Linguistik Pragmatik," *LITE: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Budaya* 15, no. 1 (2019): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.33633/lite.v15i1.2382>.

¹¹ Rupidara and Suswandi, "Penggunaan Ujaran dalam Mengekspresikan Kemarahan pada Film Penyalin Cahaya karya Wregas Bhanuteja."

¹² Ida Ayu Alit Srilaksmi and Calvin Damasemil, "The Construction Reality of Women Image as Patriarchal Objects in Indonesian Horror Film," *Jurnal Audience* 7, no. 1 (2025): 51–62, <https://doi.org/10.33633/ja.v7i1.9905>; Pingfan Zhang, "Objectification, Bodily Revenge, and National Identity: Refashioning 'Comfort Women' in Chinese Cinema," *Asian Studies Review* 48, no. 4 (2024): 727–44, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2023.2289638>.

modernity,¹³ including how women are subjected to angry speech for violating norms, such as talking to foreign men, traveling without permission, or appearing on social media.

Every human community has a language that it uses as a means of communication and identity.¹⁴ In *Takki*, the language tends to be Arabic with the Hijazi dialect, commonly spoken by the people of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia.

Angry speech directed at women in *the Takki* series not only contains swear words or insults but also contains elements of command, prohibition, and affirmation of gender identity. Anger speech often uses different linguistic structures depending on the gender of the interlocutor. In Arabic, the difference in word form between men and women is obvious, for example, the use of "مجنون" (crazy for men) and "مجنونة" (crazy for women), "كذاب" (male liar) and "كذابة" (female liar).

Based on the above description, this study focuses on two main problems, namely: (1) what the forms of illocutionary acts are in angry speech directed at women in *the Takki* series; and (2) how these speeches reflect the social structure, power relations, and patriarchal norms in Saudi Arabian society.

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a pragmatic approach. Qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomena of what the research subject experiences, e.g., behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc., holistically, and by way of description in the form of words and language, in a specific natural context, and by utilizing various natural methods.¹⁵ The data consists of

¹³ Haziza and Soekarba, "Gender Norm in Saudi Arabia Within Takki The Series Directed By Mohammad Makki."

¹⁴ Roby Fathan Alifiansyah, Bambang Irawan, and Nur Hasan, "Hubungan Kata dan Makna dalam Bahasa Indonesia dan Bahasa Arab: Kajian Semantik," *Alsina : Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2023): 73–92, <https://doi.org/10.21580/alsina.5.1.16868>.

¹⁵ Hossein Nassaji, "Good Qualitative Research," *Language Teaching Research* 24, no. 4 (2020): 427–31, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820941288>.

dialogue excerpts taken from 34 episodes of the Saudi Arabian series *Takki* available on Netflix. The episodes were chosen deliberately based on the presence of scenes depicting anger directed at female characters in significant social or cultural contexts. An episode was included in the data set if it contained at least one instance of verbal anger expressed toward a woman. Identification of angry speech is determined through linguistic and paralinguistic cues, such as the use of harsh or insulting language, a raised voice tone, and expressions of verbal aggression or insults. All selected dialogues were obtained through a translation process using the official international streaming platform Netflix, which provides accurate subtitles and contextual meaning in English and Arabic. This ensures linguistic reliability and contextual equivalence of the data.

This purposeful sampling method ensures that the selected data accurately represents the various forms of anger relevant to the research objectives. A qualitative descriptive approach was then applied to analyze these angry utterances in depth. The analysis was carried out through the identification of the type of speech act based on the classification of Searle¹⁶ and the analysis of the elements of impoliteness using the impoliteness theory from Culpeper.¹⁷

The analysis process is carried out through stages: (1) Dialogue Transcripts. To ensure validity and reliability, the researcher recorded Arabic conversations containing anger speech acts and then utilized a voice translation feature through a translation application. After obtaining the Arabic transcripts, the researcher translated them into English and

¹⁶ John R. Searle, "A Classification of Illocutionary Acts," *Language in Society* 5, no. 1 (1976): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500006837>.

¹⁷ Jonathan Culpeper, "Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness," *Journal of Pragmatics* 25, no. 3 (1996): 349–67, [https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166\(95\)00014-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(95)00014-3).

Indonesian using the same application. The translated texts were then cross-checked and compared with the subtitles provided on Netflix to ensure consistency and accuracy. The transcriptions and translations were reviewed and cross-checked by two independent coders. Any discrepancies were discussed and resolved through consensus to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the analysis. (2) Identification of angry speech. In this study, *angry speech* was operationally defined as utterances that express negative emotions such as anger, insult, or humiliation toward female characters. These utterances were identified through a combination of lexical items (e.g., insulting or blaming words), paralinguistic cues (e.g., raised tone or harsh delivery), and contextual factors (e.g., situations involving violations of Saudi social norms). To ensure methodological credibility, the data were cross-checked by two independent coders, and validation was conducted through discussion and consensus to maintain reliability and analytical consistency. (3) Categorization of the types of illocutionary speech acts based on the classification of Searle,¹⁸ namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. (4) Strengthening interpretation using the theory of impoliteness from Culpeper to examine the element of impoliteness in the speech.¹⁹ The interpretation stage was strengthened by applying Culpeper's theory of impoliteness to examine the elements of rudeness and verbal aggression in angry speech.²⁰

Many studies related to speech in Arabic media have been conducted, for example, by Pebriyanti et al., who studied speech acts in Arabic animated films entitled "Muhammad bin

¹⁸ Searle, "A Classification of Illocutionary Acts."

¹⁹ Culpeper, "Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness."

²⁰ Culpeper.

Ka'ab Al-Quradhy".²¹ Meanwhile, Yoyo examines hate speech in the Contemporary Arab Socio-Political Contestation Room.²² However, specific studies that combine the analysis of illocutionary speech and impoliteness theory in the context of angry speech against women in the popular media of Saudi Arabia, especially using *the ʿAmmīyah* dialect, are still minimal. This gap is what this study tries to fill.

In an Arabic animated film titled Muhammad Bin Ka'ab Al-Quradhy found that illocutionary speech was spoken 74 times.²³ In another study, Anis found that on social media, expressions of anger and hatred (hate speech) in Arabic often use derogatory terms, such as animal names, psychiatric disorders, or innuendos of intelligence.²⁴ A similar thing is found in the *Takki* series, where women are often subjected to utterances such as “كَلْبَة” (prostitute), “مَجْنُونَة” (madwoman), and “هَيْلَة” (stupid).

However, research that specifically examines the act of illocutionary speech in angry speech against women in the popular media of Saudi Arabia, especially by combining Searle's speech theory and Culpeper's theory of impoliteness, remains relatively underexplored in the context of Saudi popular media. Therefore, this research offers empirical and

²¹ Elisa Trisyani Pebriyanti, Tubagus Chaeru Nugraha, and Muhammad Zulfi Abdul Malik, “Analisis Tindak Tutur Ilokusi pada Film Animasi Muhammad bin Ka’ab Al-Quradhy: Kajian Pragmatik,” *Journal of Linguistic Phenomena* 3, no. 2 (2025): 44–48, <https://doi.org/10.24198/jlp.v3i2.59638>.

²² Yoyo Yoyo, “Ujaran Kebencian (Khitāb Al-Karāhiyah) dalam Ruang Kontestasi Sosial Politik Arab Kontemporer,” *Adabiyāt: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra* 3, no. 1 (2019): 120–39, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajbs.2019.03106>.

²³ Pebriyanti, Nugraha, and Malik, “Analisis Tindak Tutur Ilokusi pada Film Animasi Muhammad bin Ka’ab Al-Quradhy: Kajian Pragmatik.”

²⁴ Muhammad Yunus Anis, “Bentuk dan Latar Belakang Munculnya Hate Speech dalam Bahasa Arab: Analisis Morfologi dan Pragmatik,” *Aksara* 32, no. 1 (2020): 119–34, <https://doi.org/10.29255/aksara.v32i1.447.119-134>.

theoretical contributions that can enrich the pragmatic study of the Arabic language and the study of gender relations in Saudi Arabian society.

This research is based on the theory of Illocutionary Speech Acts developed by Searle,²⁵ which was previously an extension of Austin's theory. According to Austin, the act of Illocutionary Speech is an action that is carried out when speech is produced by a speaker to communicate their intention to the listener.²⁶

An act of illocution is called the act of speaking in its narrow sense. For example, when a father says to his daughter, "Don't lie to me!" it is an act of illocution in the form of an order or request to be made. In addition, the theory of impoliteness is used to see how angry speech plays a role as a strategy of impoliteness that reflects power relations and patriarchal norms.²⁷

The main focus is the analysis of illocutionary speech acts, which are actions that the speaker performs through their speech with a specific purpose, such as declaring, commanding, prohibiting, or expressing emotions.²⁸ The five types of illocutionary speech that Searle put forward include assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. In addition, this study uses the impoliteness theory from Culpeper to examine the dimension of impoliteness in angry

²⁵ Searle, "A Classification of Illocutionary Acts."

²⁶ J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962); Indrek Reiland, "'Austin vs. Searle on Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts'," *Inquiry*, 2024, 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2024.2380322>.

²⁷ Culpeper, "Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness."

²⁸ Syarif Husein, Kholisin Kholisin, and Sarali Gintsburg, "Illocutionary Speech Acts of Assertive, Directive, Expressive, Commissive, and Declarative in the Tweets of Jibran Kholil Jibran Account," *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 7, no. 2 (2023): 541–62, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v7i2.8257>.

speech.²⁹ This theory highlights how the speaker can use speech that damages the opponent's self-image (face), either directly (bald on record impoliteness) or through covert strategies such as sarcasm or sarcasm.³⁰

Using these two theories, this study seeks to uncover how language, furious speech, is used not only as an emotional expression but also as a tool for affirmation of power, social control, and the reproduction of patriarchal structures in Saudi Arabian society, as represented in the *Takki* series.

Results

This study found that anger speech in the *Takki* series was dominated by directive and expressive speech with strong immodest characteristics. Orders and prohibitions also color the angry speech in the dialogue between the figures. Some words, such as "حيوان" (animals), "مجنونة" (crazy), and "هيلة" (stupid), appear in explicitly spoken inter-gender conflicts. The speech was included in the Bald on Record Impoliteness category and was expressive with high emotional intensity, reflecting emotional tension and social control over women.

The findings in this study are dominated by angry speech acts in the imperative form. For example, commands in Arabic are known as الأمر "amr". Meanwhile, prohibitions, which are included in the imperative form, are also known as النهي "nahy". "Amr" is used as a command by someone of high rank to those below them. Meanwhile, the sentence "nahy" is a demand for not carrying out an action conveyed by someone to someone in a lower position.³¹ In these cases, commands and prohibitions are used by speakers to demonstrate their superior position compared to their interlocutors.

²⁹ Culpeper, "Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness."

³⁰ Jonathan Culpeper, *Impoliteness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511975752>.

³¹ Alifiansyah, Irawan, and Hasan, "Hubungan Kata dan Makna dalam Bahasa Indonesia dan Bahasa Arab: Kajian Semantik."

Expressive Speech Acts

Expressive speech acts focus on conveying the speaker's internal emotional or psychological state, such as anger, regret, or gratitude. The pragmatic function of expressive is to communicate feelings rather than to elicit actions. However, when realized through impoliteness, expressive acts can manifest as verbal aggression or emotional outbursts that threaten the hearer's positive face.³² "The expressive speech acts identified in the Takki Series are summarized in Table 1."

Table 1
Expressive Speech

Scene	Sentence	Translate
4:07- 4:10	والله لو أعرف ماجد من وصلك كذا اليوم، كدرك مجنونة	Lama: I swear Majid knew who dropped you off, he would kill you.
9:07- 9:11	عاجبك؟ عاجبك فضيحتنا كدهز ليه يا بيان؟ انا ايش سويت فيك عشان تسوي معايا كده؟ ليه؟ انا ما ربتك على كده!	Bayan's Dad: Do you like this? Satisfied with this scandal? Why Bayan? Why should Dad get this? Why? Dad didn't raise you like that! why? Dad didn't raise you like that!
04:05- 04:09	ليش داق الباب؟ من فين الجوال داه؟ حيوانة!	Lama's Dad: Why did you lock the door? Where did you get that phone? You're to blame for the stupid girl!
09:45	يا هبله!	Lama: Stupid Idiot!
15:10- 15:11	يا كلبة!	Lama's Dad: Bitch!

In Table 1, entry 1, the speech exemplifies an ex-pressive act of anger, utilizing a bald-on-record impolite-ness strategy.³³ Bayan's cousin articulates her anger directly, without any form

³² Saifudin, "Teori Tindak Tutur dalam Studi Linguistik Pragmatik."

³³ Culpeper, "Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness."

of mitigation, employing threats and insults that specifically target the woman's gender identity. The term "مجنونة" ("madwoman") not only expresses anger but also signifies social control over women's behavior that is viewed as transgressing moral norms.³⁴

In Table 1, entry 2, the speech operates as an expressive act, wherein Bayan's father utilizes rhetorical questions to convey his anger and disappointment. The statement "أنا ما ربّيك" ("I didn't raise you like that!") functions as a manifestation of patriarchal control, suggesting that Bayan's actions have brought shame upon the family, thereby exposing the unequal power dynamics inherent in the Saudi family structure.³⁵ This is accompanied by positive impoliteness, as the rhetorical questions attack the hearer's positive face by implying moral failure without mitigation.³⁶

In Table 1, entry 3, the speech merges expressive and directive components, employing repetition and verbal insults such as "حيوانة" ("animal/stupid") to assert dominance and convey anger. In this scenario, Lama's father seeks to regulate every facet of his daughter's behavior, including her access to her mobile phone, after learning that she has been clandestinely communicating through it. This speech illustrates patriarchal social control and male verbal dominance over women.

Table 1, entry 4, showcases expressive insults like "هيلة" ("stupid") that undermine the interlocutor's dignity. This speech conveys anger while highlighting the use of language as a mechanism of verbal dominance in social interactions, particularly towards other women.

³⁴ Culpeper, *Impoliteness*.

³⁵ Anis, "Bentuk dan Latar Belakang Munculnya Hate Speech dalam Bahasa Arab: Analisis Morfologi dan Pragmatik."

³⁶ Culpeper, "Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness."

In Table 1, entry 5, the term “كلبة” (translated as prostitute) is included, representing a severe sexual insult that reinforces gender inferiority and patriarchal control. The term “كلبة” serves as a sexual insult that undermines one’s self-image and affirms the subordinate status of women.

Directive Speech Acts

Directive speech acts are pragmatic acts in which the speaker aims to make the hearer perform a certain action, such as giving orders, requests, or suggestions.³⁷ Their primary pragmatic function lies in influencing the interlocutor’s behavior rather than expressing emotion, making them central to interactions where obligation, persuasion, or behavioral control is at stake. In many discourse contexts, directives also reveal the speaker’s assumptions about rights, responsibilities, and social hierarchy, since the ability to command or instruct often presupposes an accepted position of authority. When accompanied by impoliteness strategies, directives may appear as bald on-record commands or rhetorical imperatives that assert authority or social dominance, especially when they are delivered without mitigation or contextual softening.

In the conversational data of the Takki Series, directive speech acts function not only as linguistic tools to shape the hearer’s behavior but also as reflections of underlying power dynamics among the characters. Many directives are produced in moments of tension, where commands, prohibitions, and summons are delivered alongside overt or covert impoliteness strategies. This interplay between the speaker’s intent to control and the expression of dominance highlights how language is strategically employed to assert authority within familial and romantic relationships. A summary of these directive realizations is presented in Table 2.

³⁷ Saifudin, “Teori Tindak Tutar dalam Studi Linguistik Pragmatik.”

Table 2
Directed Speech

Scene	Sentence	Translate
01:26- 01:29	يا بيان ما تطلع السيارة مع واحد ما تعرفي ايشبك انتي مجنونه؟	Majid: Bayan, don't get in the car with someone you don't know! Are you stupid?!
12:18- 12:20	تعال، تعالي، تعالي! خلصي كلامك معايا	Majid: Come here! We're not done talking yet!
15:39- 15:42	اسمعي، اسمعي، أصحاني مسجونين عشانة! انت إيش بيحي؟ انت بياحة	Majid: Listen! My friend is locked up because of him! You're defending him?!
04:00- 04:05	لا تكذبي! أنا أعرف اللي صار في الكوفي!	Lama's Dad: don't lie! I know what's going on there!
04:10- 04:15	اسمعي يا لمي، أنا ما أبغاك تتعاملي معاها!	Lama's Dad: I don't want you to talk to her anymore!
04:20- 04: 21	فاهمة ولا لا؟! فاهمة ولا لا؟! فاهمة	Lama's Dad: Do you understand?! Understand it or not?!
11:50- 11: 52	لمي! انتي بدخن يا كلبة؟! افتحي الباب!	Lama's Dad: You smoke?! Open the door!
09:20- 09:21	خطبت؟! جوبني!	Motaz: You're engaged?! Answer me!

In Table 2, entry 1, this speech is a directive and expressive speech act accompanied by positive impoliteness.³⁸ The instruction “ما تطلع السيارة مع واحد ما تعرفي” (don't get in the car with someone you don't know) is a form of outright prohibition, while the expression “مجنونه” (stupid/crazy) is a derogatory insult to Bayan. This utterance illustrates the strong male control over women, as seen in Bayan's position as Majid's fiancée. She is expected to maintain strict boundaries

³⁸ Culpeper, “Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness.”

and limit her interactions with other men, including avoiding accepting rides from them casually.

In Table 2, entry 2, this speech is a directive speech that is uttered in a firm and authoritative tone. The repetition of the word “تعالِي” (here) shows insistence and verbal dominance. The bald on record impoliteness strategy emerged through the delivery of unmitigated orders, which reflected Majid's power relationship over Bayan.

In Table 2, entry 3, this speech is a directive and expressive speech act accompanied by bald-on-record impoliteness. The repetition of “اسمعي” (listen) is a form of strict command without mitigation, while the sarcastic expression “إنت بياحة” (you defend him?!) shows Majid's anger and disappointment towards Lama. In this context, Lama defends her fiancé, Ahmad, who is being pursued by the authorities for alcohol smuggling. Majid, as a member of her family, strongly opposes Lama's defense, believing that accepting Ahmad into their family would damage their reputation. This situation illustrates the significant role men play as decision-makers.³⁹ This reflects broader patriarchal family norms in which male kin are positioned as heads of household and primary decision-makers in matters of marriage, honor, and family reputation.⁴⁰ The sarcasm here aligns with mock politeness strategies in impoliteness theory.⁴¹

³⁹ Muhammad Hussain et al., “Gender Stereotyping in Family,” *Sage Open* 5, no. 3 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015595258>.

⁴⁰ Mona Khoury-Kassabri and Asher Ben-Arieh, “School Climate and Children's Views of Their Rights: A Multi-Cultural Perspective among Jewish and Arab Adolescents,” *Children and Youth Services Review* 31, no. 1 (2009): 97–103, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2008.06.002>; Ishak Berrebbah, “Troubled Constructions of Patriarchal and Masculine Identities in Laila Halaby's *West of the Jordan* (2003): A Gendered Perspective,” *Contemporary Levant* 7, no. 2 (2022): 153–66, <https://doi.org/10.1080/20581831.2022.2052409>; Hussain et al., “Gender Stereotyping in Family.”

⁴¹ Culpeper, “Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness.”

In Table 2, entry 4, this speech is a directive speech accompanied by a bald-on-record impoliteness strategy.⁴² The prohibition of “لا تكذبي” (do not lie) is conveyed directly without mitigation, showing the Lama’s father’s distrust and suspicion of the Lama. In this case, Lama’s father monitors his daughter while she is outside the house and finds her socializing with men in a café. Such behavior is considered taboo in Saudi society, where it is socially unacceptable for women to freely associate with men who are not part of their family.

In Table 2, entry 5, this speech is a directive speech with a bald-on-record impoliteness strategy.⁴³ The command “أنا ما أبغاك تتعامل معها” (I don’t want you to talk to her) was delivered unequivocally without mitigation, indicating a strong social prohibition and control over women’s interactions.⁴⁴ In this context, Lama’s father forbids her from associating with her cousin Bayan, as Bayan works in the media industry and often interacts with men. At that time, Saudi society tended to perceive women working outside the home as improper or socially unacceptable.

In Table 2, entry 6, this speech is a directive speech with the strategy of bald-on-record impoliteness shown by question repetition “فاهمة ولا لا؟” (Do you understand it or not?), which exhibits psychological bullying and verbal dominance. This speech does not provide room for dialogue, but rather affirms the dominance and social control of women. The repetition can also imply off-record impoliteness by creating an implicit threat of further confrontation if not complied with.⁴⁵

In Table 2, entry 7, this speech is a combination of expressive and directive speech with the strategy of bald-on-

⁴² Culpeper.

⁴³ Culpeper.

⁴⁴ Marwan Dwairy et al., “Parenting Styles in Arab Societies,” *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 37, no. 3 (2006): 230–47, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022106286922>.

⁴⁵ Culpeper, “Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness.”

record impoliteness.⁴⁶ The insult “يا كلبة” (whore/female dog) indicates anger and verbal abuse of women, while the command “افتحي الباب” (open the door) affirms social dominance and control. In this context, Lama is caught smoking by her father. Cigarettes are considered unconventional and socially inappropriate for women to consume. This incident further enrages her father, leading him to verbally and physically abuse her. This speech reflects verbal violence and gender inequality in Saudi Arabian families.

In Table 2, entry 8, this speech is a directive speech with the strategy of bald on record impoliteness.⁴⁷ “خطبت؟” Questions! (Are you engaged?!) It is spoken in an interrogative tone and emotional urgency, followed by the command “جوبي!” (Answer me!) That shows verbal dominance. In this context, Maha’s ex-boyfriend threatens her after learning that she intends to get engaged to another man following their breakup. His anger leads him to issue threats and pressure Maha by asking a series of accusatory questions that corner and intimidate her. This speech reflects the jealousy as well as the social control of men towards women in the interpersonal relations typical of Saudi Arabia's patriarchal culture.

Commissive Speech Acts

Commissive speech is an act of Speech that expresses the speaker's commitment to do something, such as promises or threats. Commissive Speech is a statement that shows the commitment or promise of the speaker, including threats.⁴⁸ In the data, explicit threats were found to be made to women, showing high emotional intensity as well as unequal power relations.⁴⁹ An overview of the commissive speech acts found in the Takki Series is provided in Table 3.

⁴⁶ Culpeper.

⁴⁷ Culpeper.

⁴⁸ Searle, “A Classification of Illocutionary Acts.”

⁴⁹ Saifudin, “Teori Tindak Tutur dalam Studi Linguistik Pragmatik.”

Table 3
Commissive Speech

Scene	Sentence	Translate
15:19- 15:20	ايش تبغى اتسوى؟ اقتلك!	Lama's Dad: I'm going to kill you!
05:11- 05:14	والله لا تحلفي من دحين إلين يوم القيامة وهو ما صدقك	Majid: I won't believe you until the end of time!

In Table 3, entry 1, the commissive act “اقتلك” (“I will kill you”) indicates a threat that demonstrates extreme male control and the normalization of verbal aggression toward women in family contexts. In this scene, Lama’s father abuses her after seeing a video in which she appears at an alcohol party due to a friend’s deception. Although the scandal was unintentional, Lama still suffers punishment for allegedly tarnishing the family’s honor. The speech spoken by the old father is a commissive act of speech that contains a literal threat, categorized as Bald on Record Impoliteness. The threat is not only an overflow of emotions, but also a concrete representation of patriarchal social control and reproduction, in which men have the legitimacy to regulate and punish women for violations of social norms.

In Table 3, entry 2, the speech “والله لا تحلفي من دحين إلين يوم القيامة وهو ما صدقك” (“I will not believe you until the end of time”) functions as a commissive act accompanied by *bald on record* impoliteness. In this context, Majid rejects all of Maha’s explanations about her past secret relationship with another man, believing that her previous emotional involvement makes her unworthy of marriage. Although Maha insists that nothing inappropriate happened, Majid refuses to trust her. This utterance illustrates not only absolute distrust but also the moral judgment imposed on women’s behavior, reflecting

patriarchal authority and the rigid control of female honor in Saudi society.⁵⁰

Declarative Speech Acts

Declarative speech is an act of speech that expresses a statement that causes a change in status or situation. Declarative Speech is speech that changes social status or relationships between individuals.⁵¹ In the *Takki* series, this act of speech appears in the form of statements of rejection or insult that emphasize the inferiority of women.⁵² Table 4 presents the declarative speech acts that appear in the *Takki* Series.

Table 4
Declarative Speech

Scene	Sentence	Translate
15:53- 15:58	لى، إنتي هيلة؟ إنتي، هيلة؟! إنتي اسمعي، هذا لوتجلي، ما يسير زوجك!	Majid: Lama, are you stupid?! He won't be your husband!

In Table 4, entry 1, this speech is a combination of expressive, directive, and declarative speech accompanied by bald-on-record impoliteness.⁵³ The insult “إنتي هيلة؟؟” (Are you stupid?) shows anger and verbal abuse, the repetition implies a directive to listen or comply, while the statement “ما يسير زوجك” (he won't be your husband) is a declarative act of speech that unilaterally changes the status of the relationship. As explained in the previous table, Majid, as a family member, feels burdened by Lama's defense of Ahmad, which he believes would damage the family's reputation if Ahmad were to be accepted as part of their family. This illustrates the significant

⁵⁰ Searle, “A Classification of Illocutionary Acts”; Culpeper, “Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness.”

⁵¹ Searle, “A Classification of Illocutionary Acts.”

⁵² Saifudin, “Teori Tindak Tutar dalam Studi Linguistik Pragmatik.”

⁵³ Culpeper, “Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness.”

role of men as the primary decision-makers in matters concerning women within the family structure.⁵⁴

Assertive Speech Acts

Assertive speech is the act of expressing the truth, such as declaring, claiming, or complaining.⁵⁵ An overview of the expressive speech acts found in the Takki Series is provided in Table 5.

Table 5
Assertive Speech

Scene	Sentence	Translate
17:23- 17: 26	ليش؟ أنتي تغيّران من ماجد؟ السبب إنك ما تزوجتي؟	Lama: why? Are you jealous that the majid left and didn't want to marry you?
13:02- 13: 04	يعني أنت أصلاً ما يهكم، أنت ما يهكم أحد، ما يهكم إلا نفسك وتصويرك وشغلك وبرنامجك ورس	Malik: You only care about yourself, your work, and your events!
04:08- 04:09	أصلاً ما جاب لنا الكلام إلا زفت دي بنت خالتك.	Lama's Dad: I swear. It's only your cousin who gives us a bad reputation.

In Table 5, entry 1, the speech represents an assertive and expressive act containing *positive impoliteness*.⁵⁶ The rhetorical question “أنتي تغيّران؟” (“Are you envious?”) implies accusation and emotional degradation toward the interlocutor. This utterance conveys sarcasm and superiority, reflecting social competition among women in Saudi society, where marriage often defines female honor.

In Table 5, entry 2, the statement “ما يهكم إلا نفسك وتصويرك” (“You only care about yourself, your work, and

⁵⁴ Thorsen and Sreedharan, “#EndMaleGuardianship: Women’s Rights, Social Media and the Arab Public Sphere.”

⁵⁵ Saifudin, “Teori Tindak Tutur dalam Studi Linguistik Pragmatik.”

⁵⁶ Culpeper, “Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness.”

your events”) also demonstrates positive impoliteness, expressing disappointment and judgment that attack the interlocutor’s self-image. In this context, Bayan rejects Malik’s marriage proposal because she is not yet ready for marriage and wishes to focus on her growing career. However, Malik struggles to accept her rejection and sarcastically implies that Bayan only cares about her professional life without considering his feelings. Both this and the previous speech exemplify how indirect insults and sarcastic tones are used to express frustration and criticism in interpersonal interactions.

In Table 5, entry 3, the speech is an assertive act of blame, where the father expresses his judgment on maintaining the family’s honor by attributing disgrace to his cousin. The phrase “زفت دي بنت خالتك” (Only your cousin gives us a bad reputation) shows an element of positive impoliteness in the form of insults that damage the self-image of the interlocutor.⁵⁷ This speech reflects patriarchal social control, in which women are positioned as a source of family disgrace, aligning with Saudi Arabia’s social structure.⁵⁸ It does not constitute a commissive act, as there is no explicit commitment to future action.⁵⁹

Discussion

Power and Patriarchy

The results of this study show that angry speech in the *Takki* series is deeply intertwined with the social and cultural construction of Saudi Arabia’s patriarchal society. The utterances directed toward female characters are not merely emotional expressions but also serve as instruments for enforcing social norms, controlling behavior, and affirming power hierarchies between men and women. This finding aligns with Fairclough’s and van Dijk’s perspectives in Critical

⁵⁷ Culpeper.

⁵⁸ Dwairy et al., “Parenting Styles in Arab Societies.”

⁵⁹ Searle, “A Classification of Illocutionary Acts.”

Discourse Analysis (CDA),⁶⁰ which emphasize that language is not a neutral tool of communication but a means of exercising and reproducing social power. Thus, the linguistic patterns found in *Takki* illustrate how discourse can legitimize gender-based authority and sustain social inequality.

At the same time, the comparison with the Indonesian-Egyptian film *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (*Verses of Love*, 2007) suggests that such patriarchal linguistic practices are not unique to Saudi Arabia but recur across Muslim-majority contexts, indicating a broader regional pattern rather than an isolated cultural phenomenon. The persistence of misinterpretations regarding women's roles in Islam often fosters environments where male authority is normalized and female agency is suppressed. This misunderstanding not only perpetuates unequal gender relations but also finds resonance in artistic expressions such as films and novels, which serve as cultural commentaries on the misuse of religious discourse to justify gender inequality.

Impoliteness and Gender Identity

The most dominant illocutionary types identified in the data are directive and expressive speech acts, generally accompanied by the bald-on-record impoliteness strategy.⁶¹ This finding indicates that anger is conveyed directly and explicitly, functioning as a form of verbal dominance over women. Utterances such as *مجنونة* (madwoman), *حيوانة* (beast), and *كلبة* (bitch/prostitute) are not simply personal insults but also linguistic manifestations of patriarchal mechanisms that position women as bearers of family honor—whose behavior is closely monitored and judged.

⁶⁰ Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (London: Longman, 1995); Teun A. van Dijk, *Discourse and Power: Contributions to Critical Discourse Studies* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2008).

⁶¹ Culpeper, "Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness."

Additionally, commissive speech acts (e.g., threats) and declarative acts that alter women's social positions (e.g., prohibitions of marriage, verbal intimidation) further illustrate men's verbal and structural dominance. These findings are consistent with observations that Arabic in patriarchal contexts is often assertive, hyperbolic, and emotionally charged, especially regarding issues of honor and gender.⁶²

However, while *Takki* clearly reinforces patriarchal hierarchies through aggressive male language, it simultaneously gives visibility to women's emotional reactions (tears, pleas, and occasional verbal pushback), hinting—albeit weakly—at the possibility of resistance within the same system.

Language, Power, and Social Representation

Integrating insights from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), especially Fairclough's and van Dijk's frameworks allows this study to move beyond mere description of speech acts toward an understanding of their ideological implications.⁶³ On one hand, the angry speech in *Takki* functions as a discursive practice that reflects and perpetuates patriarchal control; on the other, the very act of dramatizing such verbal violence may create critical awareness among viewers, potentially functioning as an indirect challenge to normalized male authority.

The implication of these findings is twofold: first, popular media like *Takki* continue to reproduce gendered power imbalances through everyday linguistic practices; second, by

⁶² Feghali, "Arab Cultural Communication Patterns"; Leshin et al., "Language Access Differentially Alters Functional Connectivity during Emotion Perception across Cultures."

⁶³ Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (Harlow: Longman, 1989); Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*; van Dijk, *Discourse and Power: Contributions to Critical Discourse Studies*.

making these practices visible and emotionally affecting, the series opens a space, however limited, for public reflection on gender relations in contemporary Saudi society. Thus, while *Takki* predominantly mirrors and reinforces existing inequalities, it also, paradoxically, contributes to the gradual cultural conversation about women's agency and the limits of patriarchal discourse.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that angry speech directed at female characters in the Saudi series *Takki* is far more than an expression of individual emotion. Through the integration of Searle's speech act theory, Culpeper's impoliteness framework, and Critical Discourse Analysis, the analysis reveals that directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative acts, delivered predominantly through bald-on-record and positive impoliteness, function systematically as linguistic tools for enforcing patriarchal control, regulating female behavior, and safeguarding family honor in contemporary Saudi society. Gendered insults and threats emerge not as isolated outbursts but as discursive practices that reproduce and naturalize male authority and female subordination.

In conclusion, *Takki* serves as a powerful cultural text that both mirrors and reinforces persistent gender inequalities through everyday language use. While the series vividly exposes verbal aggression against women, its limited portrayal of effective female counter-discourse ultimately legitimizes the patriarchal status quo more than it challenges it.

For future improvement, media producers and scriptwriters are encouraged to incorporate more balanced and mitigated linguistic interactions that reflect evolving gender realities in Saudi society. Further research should extend the analysis to newer Saudi productions (post-2021), compare different Arab national contexts and dialects, and

examine audience reception to determine whether such representations provoke critical reflection or merely normalize existing power imbalances. These directions will deepen our understanding of how language in popular media continues to shape, and potentially reshape, gender ideologies across the Arab world.

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