

Persuasion in Cyber Blackmail's Emails: A pragma-dialectical Study

Noor Saad Sabri Al Asfer¹
University of Karbala/ Iraq
noor.s@s.uokerbala.edu.iq

Haider Kadhim Bairmani²
University of Karbala/ Iraq
noor.s@s.uokerbala.edu.iq

Abstract

This study is concerned with analyzing Cyber Blackmail's Emails using the Pragma-dialectical approach. It is not specified, as believed, what strategies are used in constructing cyber blackmail. Thus, the present study attempts to fill in this gap as it aims at identifying blackmailers' dialectical strategies and finding out how these strategies are realized pragmatically. In compatible with the aims, it is hypothesized that cyber blackmailers employ some persuasive strategies, and these strategies are realized pragmatically in the speech act's classification. An eclectic model has been developed to investigate the Speech Act theory and the use of some persuasive strategies. Additionally, a new persuasive strategy has been invented to be added to the model and examined through the data, i.e., Appeal to Promise. A mixed-method has been used to conduct the study. Finally, the study concluded that blackmailers utilize persuasive strategies to convince and gain victims' compliance. These strategies are realized using various forms of speech acts with mainly two functions; threatening and requesting. Some persuasive strategies are realized in more than one utterance, in which the payment requested occurs in combination with other strategies. This point additionally has led to the conclusion that blackmailing is a conditional demand rather than a conditional threat.

Keywords

cyber blackmail; persuasive strategies; speech act theory; pragma-dialectical approach; emails

To cite this article: Asfer N, S, S, A., Bairmani.H.K. (2021). Persuasion in Cyber Blackmail's Emails: A pragma-dialectical Study. Review of International Geographical Education (RIGEO), 11(5), 2120-2140. Doi: 10.48047/rigeo.11.05.118

Submitted: 02-11-2020 • **Revised:** 15-02-2021 • **Accepted:** 25-03-2021

Introduction

Technology has advanced and spread widely, resulting in making communication, though easier, less secured; it provides criminals with a perfect environment for fishing their victims. That issue has led to the emergence of new crimes committed using High-Tech. One of such crimes is Cyber Blackmail. A little background is available about cyber blackmail as a crime in the space of the internet, especially for the linguistic strategies used by blackmailers to convince their victims to comply with their demands. Thus, the current study attempts to remedy the lack of attention to cyber blackmail by trying to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the persuasive strategies used by blackmailers in persuading their victims to meet their demands?
- 2- How are these persuasive strategies realized pragmatically and through which speech acts' classifications?
- 3- Which of the persuasive strategies are the most dominant?

The following aims are hoped to accomplish:

- 1- Finding out the persuasive strategies employed by blackmailers.
- 2- Identifying the pragmatic realization of each persuasive strategy.
- 3- Specifying the most common persuasive strategy employed in cyber blackmail.

Following the study's questions and aims, it is hypothesized that:

1. Blackmailers tend to use various persuasive strategies to influence their victims' behaviour to comply with the demand.
2. The persuasive strategies are realized using different classifications of SA.
3. The most dominant one is Appeal to Force.

Cyber Blackmail

Many definitions are mentioned by different scholars who all stress the idea that blackmail is based on making a demand under threat. Ellsberg (1959) states that blackmail is "the art of influencing the behaviour of others by threat," in which this influence is directed harmonically with the blackmailer's desires. This type of behaviour is specified as the "rational decision" in which being rational means briefly acting in accordance with the blackmailer's expectation to avoid the consequence of not doing so, i.e., to be a rational victim. Since this expectation will influence the victim's behaviour, the blackmailer has to convince his victim; that is, if he resists the demand, then he is to be punished, on the one hand. On the other hand, if the victim complies with the demand, his act is to be accepted, and no consequence could follow. According to Fletcher (1993, p. 1618), "blackmail turns out not to be a paradox but rather a paradigm for thinking anew about the nature of crime and punishment." For the Content Team (2019, para. 1), blackmailing is defined as "the act of threatening" to punish if the victim does not satisfy the required demand. This threat involves revealing embarrassing or sensitive information concerning an individual's own life to force him to do something. The demand could involve payment or a specific action to be done by the victim for not revealing humiliating or damaging information. Hence, the threat may include revealing private or personal information, which causes humiliation or emotional distress, reporting a person's participation in a crime, whether sincerely or falsely, and revealing sensitive information that would result in financial damage. Blackmail, as stated by Content Team (2019, para. 5), is considered a crime by both state and federal laws. On the one hand, if the threat is accompanied by a demand for money, then it is considered robbery. On the other hand, if the demand includes performing an act under force, then it is considered an offense. (Fu, Ling, Yu, & Luo, 2010) mentions that threatening to reveal embarrassing information is legal, but it becomes illegal when the threat is combined with demands such as payment in which the blackmailer threatens to reveal illegally obtained information about the victim to coerce him to consent to the demand.

Pragma-dialectical Approach

Pragma-dialectics is a theory developed by Frans H. van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst. Like any other approach to a well-established field of study with a long tradition, it deals with

argumentative discourses in an interdisciplinary manner with the aim of improving them. On the one hand, argumentation aids pragmatics with the procedural dialectical conceptualization of reasoning and its normative orientation. On the other hand, pragma-dialectical aids argumentation by treating it from SA perspectives. The pragma-dialectical approach includes the utilization of persuasive strategies employed to further the argumentative ends. Thus, the main aim of evoking argumentation is "convincing the listener or reader of the acceptability of the standpoint". (Van Eemeren et al., 2004, p.2). Argumentation is not detected through a single utterance only. It might be included within two or even three utterances as well. In this regard, Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992, p.34) say that "We believe that argumentation can be treated as an illocutionary act complex. This act complex is composed of elementary illocutions". Thus, concluding the realization of rhetorical devices includes investigating more than a single pragmatic strategy.

Blackmail and Speech Act

Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2006) state that a SA is "the action or intent that a speaker accomplishes when using language in context, the meaning of which is inferred by hearers." (Kiefer, 2010) refers to SA as an action performed by means of utterances. As a matter of fact, since language, whether verbal or non-verbal, is the major means of communicating, it thus affects others' thinking and eventually behaving, which is conditioned by communicating for "speaking a language is performing speech acts" (Searle, 1969; Tiersma & Solan, 2005) describe SA saying that "utterances not only convey meaning but can also function as acts that have an impact on the surrounding world beyond mere communication of information." Fuzer (2007) mentions that some SAs are considered illegal since their illocutionary forces result in committing crimes. The illocutionary acts, according to Searle (1979), are classified into five categories as follow:

Representatives

These are SAs that commit S to the truth of an expressed proposition, i.e., stating, hypothesizing, describing, claiming, believing, assuming. They can be performed either by using performative verbs or by using other linguistic devices such as the 'if-clause' construction, which introduces a hypothetical meaning, indicating that an alternative is possible (Crompton, 1997). According to Quirk, 'if-clause', which reflects the S's belief, consists of the conditional clause and the matrix clause in which "the truth of proposition in the matrix clause is a consequence of the fulfillment of the condition in the conditional clause". Thus, it lies within Searle's classification of representative SA (hypothesize). Other indications include using modal auxiliary verbs such as using 'can' that indicate the S's claim of ability (Quirk).

Directives

They are SAs that cause the listener to take a specific action, i.e., the S's utterance is spelled for the sake of accomplishing a certain act, e.g., commanding, requesting, ordering, asking, suggesting, inviting, advising, offering, and recommending. Some modal auxiliary verbs can indicate the use of directive SAs. These have the meaning of obligation as well as necessity such as: 'must', 'have to', 'should', and 'need to'. In addition, using imperative is a clear indication of the employment of directive SA of various subcategories. The verb construction 'do +negation' can be used to accomplish prohibiting SA since it serves as an imperative marker (Quirk). Other subcategories are accomplished through using the imperative in which the meaning is derived from the "situational context" (ibid. p. 831-2).

Commissives

They are SAs that commit S to future actions, e.g., promising, planning, offering, and threatening. Since commissive SA has an indication of the S's future commitment to an act, it is indicated by using some constructions such as the semi-auxiliary verb 'be + going to' that indicates "future fulfillment of present intention" (Quirk). In addition, using the modal auxiliary verb 'will', which has the meaning of "habitual prediction", especially when it occurs within a conditional sentence (ibid. p.228). Additionally, the present simple tense is used with future indication to refer to a 'plan' (ibid. p.214-5).

Declaratives

They are SAs that alter the reality correspondingly with the proposition of a specific declaration, e.g., christening, baptizing, abdicating, declaring, appointing, and pronouncing someone guilty or, for

instance, pronouncing a couple as husband and wife.

Expressives

These are SAs that are uttered for expressing the S's emotions and attitudes towards the proposition, e.g., apologizing, thanking, praising, congratulating, blaming, pardoning, explaining, condoling, deploring, agreeing, pain, greetings, pleasure, joy, and sorrow, etc. The researcher has provided the following example, in which S is expressing his emotion towards the main proposition where he feels thankful for the H.

Illegal Direct and Indirect Speech Act

Illegal SAs are usually performatives (e.g., requesting, threatening, ordering, commanding, etc.). According to Austin (1965) and Searle (1969), utterances can be either constative or, in the case of blackmailing, performative, i.e., an act performed by an utterance. This may include threatening, lying, and soliciting in which these are considered illegal in specific circumstances. The performative SAs can be uttered by using explicit SA verbs like ask, order, and promise or without even announcing so explicitly. In this case, it is an implicit or indirect speech act (ISA). Alternatively, threatening SAs are usually performed indirectly without using the explicit performative verb (threaten). Thus, threatening SA is best described as non-performative SA (Verschuere, 1999). Illegal ISA, as ordinary ones, can be accomplished by using other forms of SAs, such as using the form of asking SA, as an interrogative sentence, to accomplish an indirect threat in which the S implies a threat by saying something without using indicative words. One of the purposes of doing so is to reduce the possibility of being caught (Tiersma & Solan, 2005). The researcher has provided the following example:

Do you want this to happen?

Kiefer (2010) states that DSAs occur when there is a direct relation between the form and the function of an utterance; otherwise, it is ISA. There are three basic types of sentences that coincided with certain SA as direct relation between the form and the structure (statement/ declarative, question/ interrogative, order/ imperative).

Speech Act: Form and Function

Speech Act may be uttered with an indication of the intended act as in using DSA where the S's intention is conveyed by the literal meaning. According to Austin (1965), p. 131, there are some linguistic cues that indicate the type of SA, such as using the performative verb 'apologize' to indicates apologizing SA. However, SAs are usually conveyed using other forms of SAs. In this case, the illocutionary force is not conveyed by the literal meaning but is derived from the surrounding context, i.e., ISA is used in this case. (Searle, 1979) states that an ISA is one that is "performed by means of another". (Léon, 2021) mentions that the function of an utterance may be either indicated by "utterance-tokens", such as "sentence-modalities, performative formulae, individual indicator words in special positions (please, you know, etc.), forms of address, intonation, etc." as in example (2), or embedded within various forms of other SAs as in example (3):

What time is it? (ibid, p. 279)

This is an example of asking SA is indicated by using the question word 'what' in which the intended meaning is stated explicitly.

You may close the window. (ibid)

In this example, the form indicates giving permission but the meaning implied is commanding SA.

Blackmail and Persuasive Strategies

The act of blackmailing is accomplished by using persuasion. Blackmail, on the one hand, is defined by Klosowski (2017, para 1) as "an age-old of convincing someone to do something they don't want to do based on the information you have on them". Persuasion, on the other hand, is defined as a

purposeful method of communication for influencing by modifying other's attitudes, beliefs, or values (Simons, 1976). It is used as a skill for making others perform certain actions (Arnold, 1970) since changing the beliefs of someone is considered as the only way of making him/her do something (Castelfranchi, 1996, p. 233-47). Though persuasion is mainly used for positive purposes, still, it is used for achieving negative ones as well. This is dependent, mainly on the user's intention. Researchers have proven that persuasive techniques are utilized by cyber criminals, such as scammers, fraudulent, dishonest salespeople, etc. (Atkins & Huang, 2013; Cialdini, 1984; Cukier et al., 2007; Dyrud, 2005; Lea et al., 2009; Manson, 2011; Naksawat et al., 2016; Rusch, 1999). There are various persuasive strategies on which cyber criminals rely in addressing their victims by making use of human emotions as indicated by Nancy (2007 cited in Chen, 2010, p. 295) that "emotions drive our decision making", and "every decision we make is in pursuit of an emotional goal". The researcher is interested in the following:

Appeal to Force

Appeal to force, also called Argument to the Cudgel, Appeal to the Stick, is a powerful tool utilized to persuade others to adopt the desired belief or action in which the addresser threatens to receive harm otherwise (Wrисley, 2019, p.98). It is defined by Damer (2009, p.106) as the fallacy of "attempting to persuade by threatening undesirable consequences instead of giving evidence for one's view". Van de Vate (1975, p.43) says that the main purpose of using such a technique is to gain the respondent's assent to a conclusion. In this regard, Jason (1987, p. 491) states that it is about obtaining agreement upon an introduced conclusion by means of the threat of force instead of reason. The logical form would be: If you do not accept X as true, I will hurt you. It is based on scare tactics, i.e., to make the listener feel threatened without announcing the threat explicitly (ibid, p. 496)

Appeals to Strong Emotions (Guilt)

This strategy is used for stimulating the desired acts. Cukier et al. (2007) have conducted a study for investigating the use of the psychological process of persuasion, finding out that emotions like greed and guilt are employed in persuading addressees. The feel of guilt is aroused when people violate their standards or beliefs or breaks a rule in which they will feel remorseful, bad, blameworthy, and want to redeem themselves as a consequence (Wierzbicka, 1986). It should be noticeable that guilt is an extremely powerful emotion utilized for changing someone's behaviors (Marketing week, 2009).

Authority

It is a psychological technique that refers to the credibility and legitimacy of the criminal as he conducts a threat in which compliance is easier to gain when the blackmailer appears in a position of authority; this includes Institutional markers like affiliations and professional titles (Atkins & Huang, 2013, p. 28(Cialdini). According to Manson (2011, p. 8), authority is an attempt to gain the victim's trust and ultimately, his compliance over the criminal's proposition. For example, when the blackmailer announces that he is a professional criminal to show his ability in carrying out the proposed threat.

Scarcity

This technique includes presenting an offer within a limited time after which the proposed offer is expired. This strategy leads the victim to make a quick decision without enough time for thinking about other possible intelligent decisions (Lea et al., 2009, p. 6); the decision is created by fears of losing a possible opportunity (Cialdini) and the blackmailer characterizes the blackmail with urgency and restricting his victims with artificial deadlines (Drake, 2004, p. 2; Manson, 2011, p. 9; Ross, 2009, p. 30).

Personalizing the threat

When a criminal uses the little personal information of his victim, he has gathered to create effects (Manson, 2011, p. 8). A victim's password, for example, is usually included in a spam email message to make it more persuasive and show that password is known to the attacker. Check Point researchers Gil Mansharov and Alexey Bukhteyev explain in their report. "To shock the victim, a spam message starts from the string with the password".

Politeness

When the criminal tends to be polite and utilizes politeness components in writing emails in order to characterize himself as a real human being (Ross, 2009, p. 30), e.g., the use of thank you, I am sorry, please, etc. (ibid. p.34). Cyber criminals may use friendly salutations such as hello and dear friend, or polite closings such as thanks, goodbye, good luck, etc. in their emails (Naksawat et al., 2016, p.13) in which the absence of salutation and closing is an indication of impoliteness (Baron, 2009). Politeness markers are called lexical downgraders, in which their function is to downgrade the illocutionary force of SA. In this regard, Le Pair (1996) state that the marker Please, as one of the lexical downgraders, is "an optional element add to a request to bid for co-operative behavior". Thus, adding the adverb Please is considered a polite marker for minimizing the imposition conveyed by request. Additionally, there are some linguistic devices that can be used to reduce the impact of performing FTA, such as when revealing rejection towards the addressee. These include the following: Unfortunately, I regret, We regret, Although, and the like (Abu Safiyeh, 2021).

Methodology

The data of the present study consists of twenty-five emails. The emails are of criminal nature. Gathering criminal data is not an easy task. This is due to the fact that these data are prevented from being published for several reasons, including being confidential and linked to the reputation of individuals and their security, as victims refuse to publish emails received from blackmailers for fear of defamation and in order to preserve their reputation and social status, besides, publishing them stimulates the commission of more crimes, as it is a source on which blackmailers rely to craft their blackmail messages. The researcher has collected about fifty emails but has selected twenty-five emails from 2014 to 2020 from some authentic websites to be under analysis. The number of emails selected, as the researcher believes, is representative since some websites supply blackmailers with standard samples to be used in conducting their blackmail, e.g., <https://smartlazyhustler.com/blackmail-someone-to-give-you-money/>. The researcher is going to transfer emails from images into text using the Google Docs program, arrange and number the selected emails chronologically starting from the recent cases and ending with the oldest one, number the utterances of those extracted samples containing more than one utterance to be analyzed with reference to their numbers. Finally, the researcher will interpret the result at which the analysis arrived in relation to the study's problem so as to answer the proposed questions and to examine the validity of the hypotheses. The researcher will use a mixed-method in investigating the aims of the study. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) states that a mixed-methods approach includes several procedures starting with "the collection, analysis, and "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative data." It is used to provide a better understanding of the research problem, in which the interpretation is based on both; qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis (ibid. 2008). The qualitative approach pays attention to the multiple meaning conveyed by the S with regard to time, place, and other contextual factors (Heigham & Croker, 2009). The quantitative approach supports the analysis with tables of percentages and frequencies to show and compare the result of the analysis. The researcher bases her analysis on the developed eclectic model, which is limited pragmatically to the SAT, including Searle (1979), Kiefer (2010), and Léon (2021) classifications, the use of some persuasive strategy that Cyber Blackmailers use for persuading their victims, including Scarcity, Authority, Personalizing presented by Manson (2011), Cukier et al.'s (2007) Appeal to Emotion (Guilt), Jason's (1987) Appeal to force, and Ross's (2009) Politeness. The researcher invented a new persuasive strategy to balance and unify the pragmatic analysis of blackmail, i.e., Appeal to Promise, and has defined it as a rhetorical strategy where the argument is made to gain the addressee's compliance by introducing a promise.

Data Analysis

This section includes applying the eclectic model on the present data in which the researcher will show an example for using each persuasive strategy and their pragmatic realization through SA. The rest of the analyses are to be reviewed as results within tables of frequencies and percentages.

(Email No. 1: Extract 1)

"(1) Hi!"

"(2) Unfortunately, I have some bad news for you."

The blackmailer starts to introduce himself and to reveal the hacking of the victim's account. He begins by using the informal salutation as a persuasive strategy (Politeness), with greeting the victim. The informal salutation "Hi" is used to establish friendliness. The use of the Politeness strategy, in (1), is realized pragmatically by employing expressive DSA (greet). Then, he uses the adverb "unfortunately" as a persuasive strategy (Politeness), which precedes conveying bad events. In (2), it is realized pragmatically through employing expressive DSA (apologize), where the blackmailer expresses his sorrow for victimizing the addressee while conveying the "bad news".

(Email No. 1: Extract 2)

"Being a regular visitor of adult websites, I can confirm that it is you who is responsible for this."

The blackmailer uses an appeal to guilt as PS, where he blames the victim for fallen prey. He mentions that the reason for being victimized is the wrongful act committed by the victim, i. e., visiting adult websites regularly. Being guilty creates self-reproach because of misdeeds or because of the fear of being discovered by others, which one associates with the fear of criticism as a result of the pursuit of perfection in general. Thus, the blackmailer takes advantage of the victim's emotions to prepare him for paying for his mistake and prevent him from rejecting the proposed demand. The use of the persuasive strategy is represented pragmatically by employing the form of representative SA (claim) to accomplish expressive ISA (blame), as he claims ability, using "can" to prove that it is the victim's mistake that has got him in this situation.

(Email No. 2: Extract 3)

"I am a computer scientist (internet security specialist) with affiliation with the Anonymous group."

Here, the blackmailer introduces himself to his victim by declaring that he is a computer scientist. In this extract, it is obvious that the blackmailer is misusing his profession as an internet security specialist as he employs his knowledge in conducting the blackmail. He aims at creating a sense of legitimacy and, hence, install fear by showing off his skills in conducting blackmail. He uses a persuasive strategy (authority) manifested pragmatically in employing the form of declarative SA (declare) that functions as commissive ISA (threaten), where he implies his threat within his credibility's declaration.

(Email No. 3: Extract 4)

"I give you 48 hours to pay."

The blackmailer sets a deadline to make the payment for ending the threat. He uses a persuasive strategy (scarcity) to persuade the victim to be in a rush in making his mind. He takes advantage of affecting the victim psychologically by stealing comfort and stability needed in decision-making. Going under the pressure of running out of time forces one to abandon making a rational decision and accepting the proposed demand. Thus, he accomplishes his aim by depriving the victim of an important factor, i.e., psychological calm. The use of this strategy is realized pragmatically by employing the form of declarative SA (declare) to accomplish directive ISA (request), where he aims at persuading the victim and directing him to pay within the assigned time.

(Email No. 4: Extract 5)

"(1) if you decide not to pay, (2) we will start the attack at the indicated date ...;(3) you will only end up wasting more money trying to find a solution. (4) We will completely destroy your reputation amongst google and your customers."

The blackmailer threatens the victim of the consequences of ignoring his demand, trying to persuade him to comply under the threat of force. He implies his demand within a hypothesis to leave a chance for the occurrence of the alternative decision, i.e., to meet the demand. He uses a persuasive strategy (appeal to force), aiming at enforcing the victim to pay in exchange for keeping business safe. In (1), the use of this strategy is realized by using representative SA (hypothesize) as a form, indicated by the employment of "if-conditional", and directive ISA (request) as a function, where the blackmailer is making a hypothetical meaning. Utterances (2,

3, and 4) include using the form of commissive SA (plan) that functions as commissive ISA (threaten), where blackmailer threatens to start the attack if the victim does not pay, where blackmailer intends to threaten the victim of the damaging consequences to push him to meet his demand.

(Email No. 6: Extract 6)

“(1) Second solution would be to give me \$1689... (2) as a result, i will promptly discard your video recording.”

Here, the blackmailer introduces his promise in combination with his demand. He sets the amount for exchanging deleting the compromised data. Here, making a promise is a way of achieving the goal by convincing the victim that paying the demand will save him from being humiliated. He uses a persuasive strategy (appeal to promise) in an attempt to persuade the victim to consent to the blackmailer's demand in order to get out of this situation. The use of the persuasive strategy is realized pragmatically through using, in (1), the form of representative SA (state) to accomplish directive ISA (request), as he tries to direct the victim to make the payment. In (2). The persuasive strategy is realized by the use of Com DSA (promise) indicated by the use of “will”, where he promises to discard the victim's video recording as a result of paying.

(Email No. 19: Extract 7)

“I know,-----, is your password.”

The blackmailer starts his email by notifying his victim that he has obtained his password in which he intends to arouse fear and anxiety within his victim. Knowing someone's password without his awareness is accomplished by means of criminal acts. Thus, the blackmailer tries to control the psychological side of the victim from the very beginning, merely by revealing that the email's password is now in possession of a criminal. Blackmailer uses a persuasive strategy (personalizing) by making use of the personal information to convey a threat. The persuasive strategy is realized pragmatically by accomplishing commissive ISA (threaten) through using the form of representative SA (state) indicated by the expression “I know”.

Results and Discussions

The results of conducting a pragma-dialectical study of cyber blackmail have revealed that cyber blackmailers use dialectical strategies realized by pragmatic ones, namely SAs. Some of the previous studies have shed light on the persuasive strategies used by scammers for convincing their victims to comply with their demands, Whitty (2013) conducted a study, entitled The Scammers Persuasive Techniques Model, to investigate the persuasive techniques used by criminals in online dating romance scams. The study revealed that similar errors are made by victims of scammers in comparison with victims of other cyber crimes such as mass marketing frauds. The study also referred to the heavy impact of using the Near-win phenomenon in re-victimizing an individual. The study, finally, shed light on the role of using information and communication technologies in developing and building a trusty relationship with their victims. Naksawat et al. (2016) investigated in their study, entitled Persuasive Strategies: Use of Negative Force in Scam E-mails, the use of persuasive strategies for deceiving the victim. The study concluded that scammers tend to use two major types of deceptive techniques; these are Framing-rhetoric Trigger and Human Weakness-exploiting Triggers, as incitement of recipients' emotions. Other studies included investigating blackmail in terms of SAs following Searle's classification to determine under which of these classifications does the act of blackmail falls. Arends (2017) has conducted two studies of blackmail. The first one deals with the theoretical part, and the second includes applying the theoretical material to the collected data. In the first study, entitled The Felicity Condition of Blackmail, (Arends, 2017a) focuses on the theory of SA in conducting his theoretical analysis of blackmail to determine the felicity conditions of blackmail, arriving at the conclusion that the three fundamental SAs of blackmail are threatening, promising, and requesting. In the second study, entitled Blackmail: How does it work, Arends (2017b) investigated the applicability of his previous theoretical model to his recent data as he has chosen a scene of a movie to be the data of analysis. The researcher proved the applicability of the previous theoretical model to the present data in which he concludes that the act of blackmail is best represented as a sum of different types of Searle's SAs classification; directives, commissive, and assertive as a higher-order SAs with a lower-order SAs:

promise, threat, and request. The present study is an attempt to combine both the pragmatic components and the persuasive techniques in analyzing the present data to figure out how do blackmailers achieve their goals and how the employed persuasive strategies are represented pragmatically. Following are discussion data analysis in detail:

Persuasive Strategies' Results

The results of detecting blackmailers' utilization of PSs have shown that these strategies are employed (287) times distributed differently among the seven strategies. Appeal to Force has the biggest share, i.e., (75) times as (26.13%), where blackmailers try to oblige victims to meet their demand using the threat of force. Authority occupies the second place, in which it is used (57) times as (19.86%), where blackmailers strengthen their threat by announcing themselves as professional cyber criminals. Personalizing occupies the third place. Results have shown that it is used (49) times as (17.07%), in which blackmailers use the victims' personal information to enrich their threat aiming at intimidating victims and eventually persuading them to save their reputations by complying with the demand. Scarcity occupies the fourth place. It is used (39) times as (13.59%), in which blackmailers urge their victims to make the payment by setting a deadline. Politeness occupies the fifth place. Results have shown that it is used (34) times with the percentage of (11.85%), where blackmailers employ polite markers within their emails. Appeal to promise occupies the sixth place. Results have shown that it is used (24) times as (8.36%), where blackmailers try to persuade victims to consent to their demand by promising to end the threat once the money is paid. The last place is occupied by Appeal to guilt with the frequency of (9) and the percentage of (3.14%), where blackmailers make use of their victims' psychological side by arousing the feeling of guilt, aiming at making victims feel that paying is a must. Table (1) and illustrate the occurrence of blackmailers' utilization of PSs in emails:

Table (1)

Persuasive Strategies in Emails

No.	Persuasive Strategies	Fr.	Pr.
1	Appeal to force	75	26.13 %
2	Appeal to promise	24	8.36 %
3	Appeal to guilt	9	3.13 %
4	Authority	57	19.86 %
5	Scarcity	39	13.59 %
6	Personalizing	49	17.07 %
7	Politeness	34	11.85 %
Total		287	100

Persuasive Strategies' Pragmatic Realization

The main aim of writing blackmail is to gain compliance over a demand, where blackmailers use various strategies to accomplish this aim. These PSs, as abstract tools, are realized by various pragmatic strategies. To convey a threat as an example, blackmailers use the Appeal to Force strategy. This strategy is realized by using multiple types of SA and is represented not only in one utterance but mostly in two utterances. This is due to the fact that blackmailers take advantage of the compromised data in making their demands. Thus, they usually combine the demand with the threat of revealing these embarrassing data in an attempt to convince victims to pay. They may also combine the demand with a promise to erase the data; Appeal to promise is used in this case. Therefore, introducing the demand in blackmail has its strongest effect when it is combined with other strategies.

Appeal to Force's Pragmatic Realization

Appeal to force is realized either by combining two or rarely three utterances with SA for each utterance, or by individual utterances with a solely pragmatic strategy. The results, as illustrated in table (2), have shown that Appeal to Force is highly realized through two utterances that include using the form of representative SA (hypothesize) to introduce directive ISA (request) in the first utterance and through using the form of commissive SA (plan) that functions as commissive ISA (threaten) in the second utterance. This pragmatic realization occurs (22) times as (29.33%). This result indicates that blackmailers start by introducing their request for payment within a hypothesis

using indirectness. Then, they move to threaten victims that undesirable consequences will follow if the demand is not met. Blackmailers' aim is to persuade victims to comply by leaving a chance to think about the alternative hypothesis that will lead victims to safety, i.e., consent to blackmailers' demands. In the second place, using one utterance with commissive SA (plan) as a form and commissive ISA (threaten) as a function occurs (7) times as (9.33%) in realizing this PS. The rest of the results varies, in which most of them include accomplishing either commissive ISA (threaten) or directive ISA (request). Thus, the focus lies either on conveying an implied threat to prevent victims from ignoring the demand or on conveying a request, implying that responding positively to the request will save victims from being exposed.

Table (2)

Appeal to Force's Pragmatic Realization

No.	DSA	ISA Form	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1		Rep. (Hypothesize)	Dir. (request)	22	29.33
		Com. (Plan)	Com. (Threaten)		%
2		Rep. (Hypothesize)	Dir. (recommend)	5	6.67 %
3	Dir. (order)			3	4 %
	Dir. (order)				
		Com. (Plan)	Com. (Threaten)		
4		Rep. (Claim)	Com. (Threaten)	1	1.33%
		Rep. (assume)	Dir. (request)		
5	Dir. (request)			1	1.33%
		Com. (Plan)	Com. (Threaten)		
6		Rep. (inform)	Dir. (request)	1	1.33%
7	Dir. (order)			3	4 %
	Dir. (prohibit)				
8	Com. (plan)	Com. (plan)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.33%
9		Com. (plan)	Com. (threaten)	4	5.33%
		Rep. (state)	Com. (threaten)		
		Com. (plan)	Com. (threaten)		
10	Rep. (Hypothesize)			1	1.33%
11		Rep. (claim)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.33%
		Rep. (claim)	Dir. (request)		
		Rep. (claim)	Dir. (offer)		
12		Rep. (inform)	Dir. (suggest)	1	1.33%
		Rep. (inform)	Dir. (request)		
13		Rep. (Hypothesize)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.33%
14	Dir. (request)			1	1.33%
	Dir. (order)				
15		Dir. (order)	Exp. (blame)	1	1.33%
		Dir. (advise)	Com. (threaten)		
		Rep. (inform)	Com. (threaten)		
16		Rep. (Hypothesize)	Dir. (recommend)	1	1.33%
		Rep. (think)	Dir. (request)		
17		Rep. (inform)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.33%
		Com. (plan)	Dir. (request)		
		Com. (plan)	Com. (threaten)		
18	Rep. (Hypothesize)			2	2.67%
		Dir. (order)	Dir. (prohibit)		
		Com. (plan)	Com. (threaten)		
19		Rep. (describe)	Exp. (criticize)	1	1.33%
		Rep. (Hypothesize)	Com. (threaten)		
20		Dec. (declare)	Dir. (request)	1	1.33%
		Rep. (describe)	Com. (threaten)		
21		Dir. (offer)	Dir. (recommend)	1	1.33%
		Rep. (state)	Dir. (request)		

22	Dir. (advise)	Rep. (Hypothesize)	Dir. (recommend)	1	1.33%
23		Com. (plan)	Com. (threaten)	7	9.33%
24		Dir. (suggest)	Dir. (request)	2	2.67%
25		Rep. (claim)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.33%
26		Rep. (state)	Com. (recommend)	2	2.67%
27		Rep. (believe)	Dir. (request)	4	5.33%
28		Dir. (prohibit)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.33%
29		Rep. (think)	Com. (recommend)	1	1.33%
30		Dec. (declare)	Dir. (request)	1	1.33%
31		Dir. (order)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.33%
Total				75	100%

Table (3) illustrates the pragmatic realization of Appeal to Force through SAs' classifications in isolation, in which results have shown that commissive ISA (threaten), and directive ISA (request) have the highest occurrences in representing this persuasive strategy pragmatically. This strategy is based on the use of threatening ISA, on the one hand, with the frequency of (59) and the percentage of (100%) and requesting ISA, on the other hand, with the frequencies of (37), and percentages of (74%), where blackmailers employ an indirect threat to convince their victims by arguing that they should obey his demand and make the payment; otherwise they would regret it. The threat usually includes the execution of the punishment, i.e., revealing the compromised data that would cost the victim his social standing or the loss of a business. Thus, it appears to victims that accepting blackmailers' demands is the right thing to do. Commissive ISA and directive ISA, in general, have the highest occurrences with the frequencies of (59), (50), and the percentages of (66.3%), (45%) respectively among SA as a whole. In addition, blackmailers tend to imply their threat using indirectness, in which ISA has a higher occurrence than DSA. Another indication is that threatening DSA has no occurrence in realizing this strategy since blackmailers try to be persuasive rather than forceful. Thus they must avoid directness in introducing the threats.

Table (3)

Appeal to Force's Realization Through Speech Acts in Isolation

No	DSA	Fr.	Pr.	ISA Form	Fr.	Pr.	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Representative Hypothesize	3	100%	Assume	1	1.75%			
				Believe	4	7.02%			
				Claim	5	8.77%			
				Describe	2	3.5%			
				Hypothesize	31	54.38%			
				Inform	5	8.77%			
				State	7	12.28%			
				Think	2	3.5%			
	Total	3	13.63%	Total	57	51.35%	Total	0	0%
2	Directive Advise	1	5.55 %	Advise	1	14.28%	Offer	1	2%
	Order	12	66.67 %	Offer	1	14.28%	Recommend	11	22%
	Request	2	11.11%	Order	2	28.6 %	Request	37	74%
	Prohibit	3	16.67%	Suggest	2	28.6 %	Suggest	1	2%
				Prohibit	1	14.28%			
	Total	18	81.81%	Total	7	6.3%	Total	50	45%
3	Commissive Plan	1	100 %	Plan	45	100 %	Threaten	59	100 %

Total	1	4.54%	Total	45	40.54%	Total	59	53.15%
4 Declarative			Declare	2	100%			
Total	0	0%	Total	2	1.8%	Total	0	0%
5 Expressive						Blame	1	50%
						Criticize	1	50%
Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	2	1.8%
Total	22	100%	Total	111	100%	Total	111	100%

Appeal to Promise's Pragmatic Realization

Results have shown, as illustrated in table (4), that Appeal to promise is realized highly through using two utterances, which indicated that more than SAs are utilized. It is realized, with the frequency and percentages of (7), (29.16%), through using the form of representative SA (state) that functions as directive ISA (request) in the first utterance and commissive DSA (promise) in the second utterance, where the demand and the promise are combined. The rest of the realizations have shown similar results but with slight differences, where the form of SA used varies from one utterance to another. illustrates the results of realizing Appeal to Promise pragmatically:

Table (4)

Appeal to Promise's Pragmatic Realization

No.	DSA	ISA Form	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Dir. (order) Com. (promise)			2	8.33%
2	Com. (promise)	Rep. (state)	Dir. (request)	7	29.16%
3	Com. (promise)	Rep. (hypothesize)	Dir. (request)	2	8.33%
4		Rep. (state) Com. (plan)	Dir. (request) Com. (promise)	4	16.66%
5	Rep. (state) Com. (promise)			1	4.17%
6		Rep. (state) Rep. (claim)	Dir. (request) Com. (promise)	1	4.17%
7	Com. (promise)			4	16.66%
8		Com. (promise)	Dir. (request)	1	4.17%
9	Com. (guarantee)			2	8.33%
Total				24	100%

Table (5) shows the pragmatic realization of Appeal to Promise through SAs' classifications, where commissive DSA (promise) and directive ISA (request) have the highest occurrences with the frequencies of (17), (15) and the percentages of (89.5%), (100%) among commissive DSA, and directive ISA, in which commissive DSA and directive ISA has the frequency of (19), (15) and the percentages of (86.4%), (78.94%) among DSA and ISA respectively as a whole. These results indicate that blackmailers introduce their request implicitly while promising to end up the threat and leave the victims alone. Moreover, they usually assign the making of payment as a condition for deleting the data, aiming at convincing the victims and gaining their compliance.

Table (5)

Appeal to Promise's Realization Through Speech Acts in Isolation

No.	DSA	Fr.	Pr.	ISA Form	Fr.	Pr.	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Representative State	1	100 %	Hypothesize State	2	14.28 %			
					12	85.7 %			
	Total	1	4.54 %	Total	14	73.7 %	Total	0	0%
2	Directive Order	2	100 %				Request	15	100 %
	Total	2	9.1 %	Total	0	0%	Total	15	78.94%
3	Commissive Guarantee	2	10.52 %	Plan	4	80%	Promise	4	100 %
	Promising	17	89.5 %	Promise	1	20%			
	Total	19	86.4%	Total	5	26.3 %	Total	4	21.05 %
4	Declarative	0	0%		0	0%		0	0%
	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
5	Expressive	0	0%		0	0%		0	0%
	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
Total		22	100%	Total	19	100%	Total	19	100%

Appeal to Guilt's Pragmatic Realization

Blackmailers persuade victims to meet their demands by utilizing emotions. Results have shown that most of the uses have different pragmatic realizations, proving that blackmailers utilize this strategy by using numerous pragmatic strategies. expressive ISA (blame) and Negative Imp. (personalize) are utilized in most cases, which indicates that blackmailers usually persuade victims to comply by blaming them and addressing them personally that being victimized is their fault. Blackmailers usually attempt to stress the idea that the wrongful acts committed by victims are what got them fallen prey. They aim at affecting their decision and eventually push them to comply. Table (6) illustrates the pragmatic realization of Appeal to Guilt:

Table (6)

Appeal to Guilt's Pragmatic Realization

No.	DSA	ISA Form	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Rep. (hypothesize)			1	11.11 %
		Dir. (order)	Exp. (blame)		
		Dir. (ask)	Exp. (blame)		
2		Rep. (state)	Exp. (blame)	2	22.22 %
3		Dir. (suggest)	Exp. (blame)	1	11.11 %
4		Dir. (order)	Exp. (blame)	2	22.22 %
5		Dir. (ask)	Com. (threaten)	1	11.11 %
6		Rep. (hypothesize)	Exp. (blame)	1	11.11 %
		Rep. (Claim)	Exp. (blame)	1	11.11 %
Total				9	100 %

Table (7) shows the pragmatic realization of Appeal to Guilt through SA's classifications, in which expressive ISA (blame) has the highest occurrence with the frequency of (9), and the percentages of (100%), among expressive ISA and expressive ISA has the frequency of (9) and the percentage of (90%) among ISA as a whole. This indicates that blackmailers usually blame victims and

announce them guilty:

Table (7)

Appeal to Guilt's Realization Through Speech Acts in Isolation

No.	DSA	Fr.	Pr.	ISA Form	Fr.	Pr.	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Representative Hypothesize	1	100 %	Hypothesize	1	25 %	Total	0	0%
				Claim	1	25 %			
				State	2	50 %			
				Total	4	40 %			
2	Directive	0	0%	Asking	2	33.3 %	Total	0	0%
				Order	3	50 %			
				Suggest	1	16.66%			
				Total	6	60 %			
3	Commissive	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Threaten	1	100 %
							Total	1	100 %
4	Declarative	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
5	Expressive	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
Total	Total	1	100%	Total	10	100%	Blame	9	100 %
							Total	9	90%
Total	Total	1	100%	Total	10	100%	Total	10	100%

Authority's Pragmatic Realization

Results have shown that Authority is best realized by using the form of representative SA (inform) that functions as commissive ISA (threaten), where blackmailers inform victims about their credibility, aiming at instilling fear and thus prevent resistance to their demand. This pragmatic realization occurs (43) times as (75.43%). In the second place, blackmailers declare their legitimacy using the form of declarative SA (declare) that functions as commissive ISA (threaten). Here, blackmailers again convey threat implicitly by declaring themselves as cyber criminals rather than informing victims about their credibility as self-representation. This pragmatic realization occurs (10) times as (17.55%). Table (8) illustrates the pragmatic realization of Authority:

Table (8)

Authority's Pragmatic Realization

No.	DSA	ISA Form	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1		Rep. (inform)	Com. (threaten)	43	75.43%
2		Dec. (declare)	Com. (threaten)	10	17.55 %
3		Com. (plan)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.75 %
5		Rep. (claim)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.75 %
6		Dir. (ask)	Com. (threaten)	1	1.75 %
8	Dir. (order)			1	1.75 %
Total				57	100%

Table (9) shows the pragmatic realization of using Authority through SAs' classifications, where the results have shown that commissive ISA (threaten) has the highest occurrence with the frequency of (56), and the percentage of (100%), among commissive ISA in which it, commissive ISA, has the highest occurrence with the frequency of (56) and the percentage of (100%) among ISA as a whole. The results of using Authority indicate that blackmailers mean to threaten victims implicitly by showing off their credibility and power in conducting the blackmails and executing the threat. For this purpose, they use the form of representative SA (inform) in representing their threat

indirectly, with the frequency of (43) and the percentage of (95.55 %), among SAs' forms, in which informing SA is used to convey the intended meaning, i.e., the consequence of falling a prey under the mercy of blackmailers.

Table (9)

Authority's Realization Through Speech Acts in Isolation

No.	DSA	Fr.	Pr.	ISA Form	Fr.	Pr.	Function	Fr.	Pr.			
1	Representative			Affirm	1	2.22 %						
				Claim	1	2.22 %						
				Inform	43	95.55 %						
				Total	45	80.35%						
2	Directive			Total	45	80.35%	Total	0	0%			
				Order	1	100 %	Ask	1	100 %	Total	0	0%
				Total	1	100 %	Total	1	1.78 %			
3	Commissive			Plan	1	100 %	Threaten	56	100 %			
				Total	0	0%	Total	1	1.78 %	Total	56	100 %
				Total	0	0%	Total	9	16.07 %	Total	0	0%
4	Declarative			Declare	9	100 %						
				Total	0	0%				Total	9	16.07 %
				Total	0	0%				Total	0	0%
5	Expressive			Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%			
				Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%			
Total		1	100%	Total	56	0%	Total	56	100%			

Scarcity's Pragmatic Realization

As results have shown, Scarcity is realized mainly by using declarative SA (declare) that functions as directive ISA (request). Blackmailers declare a deadline intending to urge victims to make the payment. This realization occurs (13) times with a percentage of (33.33%). In the second place, blackmailers use the form of commissive SA (plan) that functions as directive ISA (request). Here, they aim at introducing the demand by indicating that a plan to conduct the threat is settled and time is running out. This realization occurs (6) times with the percentages of (15.38%). The rest of Scarcity's occurrences varies in their pragmatic realization, in which the function they accomplish is either Threatening or Requesting ISA. Table (10) illustrate the results of the pragmatic realization of each occurrence:

Table (10)

Scarcity's Pragmatic Realization in Isolation

No.	DSA	ISA Form	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Dir. (order)			1	2.56 %
2	Com. (Plan)	Com. (Plan)	Com. (threaten)	1	2.56 %
		Com. (Plan)	Com. (threaten)		
3		Dec. (Declare)	Dir. (Request)	1	2.56 %
		Com. (Plan)	Com. (threaten)		
4	Dir. (offer) Dir. (advise)			1	2.56 %
5	Rep. (hypothesize)			1	2.56 %
		Com. (Plan)	Com. (threaten)		
6		Rep. (inform)	Com. (threaten)	2	5.13 %
7		Dec. (declare)	Dir. (request)	13	33.33 %

8		Com. (plan)	Dir. (request)	6	15.38 %
9		Rep. (state)	Dir. (request)	3	7.7 %
10	Dir. (request)			1	2.56 %
11	Dir. (order)			1	2.56 %
12		Dir. (suggest)	Dir. (request)	2	5.13 %
13		Rep. (state)	Com. (threaten)	1	2.56 %
14		Dir. (prohibit)	Dir. (request)	2	5.13 %
15		Rep. (inform)	Dir. (request)	2	5.13 %
16		Dir. (order)	Dir. (request)	1	2.56 %
Total				39	100%

Table (11) shows the pragmatic realization of using Scarcity through SAs' classifications, where the results have shown that directive ISA (request) has the highest occurrence with the frequency of (30) and percentage of (100%) among directive ISA, which by its turn has the frequency of (30) with the percentage of (81.1%) among ISA as a whole. These results indicate that blackmailers use indirectness in requesting payment. They employ declarative SA (declare) as a form in representing their implied meaning, in which it has the frequency of (14) and the percentage of (37.84 %) among SAs' forms as a whole. Thus, they announce the time limit for making the payment in order to push their victims to make the payment in a rush to deprive them of the opportunity of thinking in another alternative such as asking for help and eventually accomplish their aim in gaining victims' compliance.

Table (11)
Scarcity's Realization Through Speech Acts in Isolation

No	DSA	Fr.	Pr.	ISA Form	Fr.	Pr.	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Representative								
	Hypothesize	1	100 %	Inform	4	50 %			
				State	4	50 %			
	Total	1	14.28%	Total	8	21.62%	Total	0	0%
2	Directive								
	Advise	1	20%	Order	1	20%	Request	30	100 %
	Offer	1	20%	Prohibit	2	40%			
	Order	2	40%	Suggest	2	40%			
	Request	1	20%						
	Total	5	71.43 %	Total	5	13.5 %	Total	30	81.1 %
3	Commissive								
	Plan	1	100 %	Plan	10	100 %	Threaten	7	100 %
	Total	1	14.28%	Total	10	27 %	Total	7	18.9 %
4	Declarative								
		0%	0	Declare	14	100 %		0	0%
	Total	0	0%	Total	14	37.84 %	Total	0	0%
5	Expressive								
		0	0%		0	0%		0	0%
	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
Total		7	100%	Total	37	100%	Total	37	100%

Personalizing's Pragmatic Realization

The results have shown that blackmailers, in the first place, use the form of representative SA (state) that functions as commissive ISA (threaten) in realizing Personalizing pragmatically. This realization occurs (21) times with the percentage of (42.86%), where blackmailers intend to convey a threat by revealing their awareness of victims' personal information. In the second place, blackmailers



use the form of representative SA (inform) that functions as commissive ISA (threaten) with the frequency of (16) and percentages of (32.65%), where they implied a threat during conveying victims' personal information. The rest of the occurrences varies in their realization, in which most of them have the function of Threatening ISA. Table (12) illustrates the results of the pragmatic realization of Personalizing:

Table (12)
Personalizing's Pragmatic Realization

No.	DSA	ISA Form	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1		Rep. (inform)	Com. (threaten)	16	32.65 %
2		Rep. (state)	Dir. (request)	1	2.04 %
3		Rep. (state)	Com. (threaten)	21	42.86 %
4		Dir. (ask)	Com. (threaten)	1	2.04 %
5		Dec. (declare)	Com. (threaten)	8	16.32 %
6		Exp. (describe)	Exp. (criticize)	1	2.04 %
7		Com. (plan)	Com. (threaten)	1	2.04 %
Total				49	100 %

Table (13) shows the pragmatic realization of using Personalizing through SAs' classifications. commissive ISA (threaten) has the highest occurrence with the frequency of (47), and the percentage of (100%) among commissive ISA sub-classifications. commissive ISA, by its turn, has the highest occurrence with the frequency of (47), and the percentage of (95.9%) among ISA as a whole, in which blackmailers threaten victims implicitly by relying on ISA. They usually imply their threat either by stating or informing victims that they have obtained some of their private information that is sufficient in conducting blackmail and causing reputational damage. Representative SA (state) and (inform) as a form have the frequencies of (22), (16) and the percentages of (56.4 %), (41%) respectively among other SAs' forms.

Table (13)
Personalizing's Realization Through Speech Acts in Isolation

No	DSA	Fr.	Pr.	ISA Form	Fr.	Pr.	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Representative			Inform	16	41 %			
				Describe	1	2.56 %			
				State	22	56.4 %			
	Total	0	0%	Total	39	79.6 %	Total	0	0%
2	Directive			Ask	1	100 %	Request	1	100 %
	Total	0	0%	Total	1	2.04 %	Total	1	2.04 %
3	Commissive			Plan	1	100 %	Threaten	47	100 %
	Total	0	0%	Total	1	2.04 %	Total	47	95.9 %
4	Declarative			Declare	8	100 %			
	Total	0	0%	Total	8	16.32 %	Total	0	0%
5	Expressive						Criticize	1	100 %
	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	1	2.04 %
Total		0	100 %	Total	49	100 %	Total	49	100

Politeness's Pragmatic Realization

Results have shown that Politeness as a persuasive strategy is best realized through using expressive DSA (greet). This realization is found (22) times with the percentage of (64.7%). In the second place, directive DSA (request) occurs (8) times with the percentage of (23.53%), where blackmailers use



polite markers such as the adverb “please” in introducing their demand since they aim to convince victims to comply. Table (14) illustrates the results of the pragmatic realization of Politeness:

Table (14)
Politeness's Pragmatic Realization

No.	DSA	ISA Form	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Exp. (greet)			22	64.7 %
2	Dir. (request)			8	23.53%
3	Exp. (apologize)			3	8.82 %
4	Exp. (thank)			1	2.94 %
Total				34	100 %

Table (15) illustrates the pragmatic realization of using Politeness through SAs' classifications. The results have shown that expressive ISA (greet) has the highest occurrence with the frequency of (22), and the percentage of (84.6%), among expressive ISA. Besides, expressive ISA has the frequency of (26) and the percentages of (76.47%) among ISA. This indicate that the blackmailers express interest towards their victims by greeting them in order to be persuasive through gaining their victims' respect.

Table (15)
Politeness's Realization Through Speech Acts in Isolation

No	DSA	Fr.	Pr.	ISA Form	Fr.	Pr.	Function	Fr.	Pr.
1	Representative	0	0%		0	0%		0	0%
	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
2	Directive								
	Request	8	100 %		0	0%		0	0%
	Total	8	23.53 %	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
3	Commissive	0	0%		0	0%		0	0%
	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
4	Declarative	0	0%		0	0%		0	0%
	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
5	Expressive								
	Apologize	3	11.53 %						
	Greet	22	84.6 %						
	Thank	1	3.84 %						
	Total	26	76.47 %	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%
Total		34	100%	Total	0	0%	Total	0	0%

Conclusion and Recommendations

Blackmailing is considered a matter of doing business. Thus, it requires blackmailers to be persuasive to convince their victims, just as accomplishing a business deal requires agents to be persuasive to convince their clients since both are after gaining profits. Therefore, blackmailers aid their blackmail by utilizing various persuasive strategies. Some persuasive strategies are realized by combining the demand, as an example, with other blackmailing strategies, such as threatening to reveal the compromised data or promising to end the threat. Appeal to Force, having the highest occurrence among other persuasive strategies, is an example of using combined pragmatic strategies, in which it is employed to convince victims of the necessity of making the

payment and eventually to gain compliance by threatening to execute the punishment. Thus, these persuasive strategies are realized not only in one utterance but in two utterances as well, in which each utterance is classified according to Searle's SA. In addition, cyber blackmailers usually combine the demand with a threat, but they sometimes combine it with a promise in which they promise their victims to end the blackmail in exchange for the requested payment. Thus, they use the Appeal to Promise strategy where it has different indication than promising by itself; in promising SA, Ss commit themselves to future act whereas, in Appeal to Promise, Ss commit themselves to future act as a reward for H's obedience in which obedience is considered as a condition for Ss' commitment for keeping the promise. Finally, blackmail, as has been concluded by (Arends, 2017b, p.54), is considered a conditional threat. The presents study concluded that although blackmail is a conditional act, it is better to be assigned as a conditional demand since it is the demand, instead of the threat, that occurs with other acts such as threatening and promising, where blackmailers' main purpose is gaining profits rather than merely intimidating victims using threats. Such crimes are dangerous in all cases, and it is recommended that more people need to know about them. People need to be educated and introduced to the linguistic strategies, namely the pragmatic ones, used in cyber blackmail to immunize themselves from falling into the trap of blackmail and thus to refuse to submit to the blackmailers' demands, as these strategies were used to convince the victims to agree and not to force them to do so. Users of computers and the internet should be careful browsing untrusted sites and use antivirus programs to protect their accounts from harmful viruses that are spread by cyber blackmailers on these sites in particular. Linguistic studies should intensify dealing with criminal cases that are carried out using language. Additionally, students need to be educated and trained to use the High-tech Tools more safely in order to prevent being victimized by cyber blackmails.

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