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## **“Together we are strong”! Identity, Face Attacks and Solidarity in Online News Commentaries on Al-Jazeera**

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### **Abstract**

The present study addresses the use of identity markers, face attacks and acts of solidarity in news commentaries posted by Arabs on Al-Jazeera website before the Tunisian Revolution. The data used are responses written to an article posted on the website describing the aftermath of the tragic suicide of the Tunisian Bouazizi. In this paper, I shall examine the language used in these commentaries within the framework of contemporary socio-linguistic theories of linguistic im/politeness, pragmatics and identity theory. The study aims to explore how the commenters display their discursive face and how this might link with the enactment of im/politeness in this online context. Through the analytic assessments of various discursive elements e.g. the use of specific speech acts (e.g. insults, accusations, prayers... etc.) and the commenters' lexical choices, the data will provide empirical examples of the interrelation between the collective identity of the interactants, face management and politeness.

**Keywords:** *Facework, Identity markers, Face attacks, solidarity, politicized collective identity*