# Linguistic Impoliteness And Rudeness II (LIAR II)
## Paper Abstracts

### "Less feminine means less polite?" The use of male-preferred form *sugee* in complimenting by young Japanese females

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The paper explores the relationship between rudeness/impoliteness and gender through the speech act of complimenting in Japanese. Complimenting is a speech act that is gendered and also greatly related to politeness issues (Holmes 1995). As Holmes puts it, complimenting is a linguistic device that expresses politeness, especially attending positive face wants.

In Japanese complimenting, a number of compliments are found to be marked with positively evaluated term, *sugoi*, meaning "amazing, something beyond ordinary". Furthermore, there is a variant that derives from this standard form *sugoi*, namely *sugee*. Drawing on a corpus consisting of approximately 40 hours of recorded conversations that I collected from the Japanese university students in 2008, I show that out of 154 compliment events, 44 compliments were marked with these terms, which accounts for 28.6% of the entire corpus.

The discussion will focus on the frequent use of *sugee* by females. This form *sugee* is considered to be less feminine, less formal and rough, and is usually associated with masculine speech. However, 6 tokens of *sugee* out of a total of 11 were uttered by female students. Considering that this form is originally a male-preferred form, the fact that half of the tokens were uttered by women is striking.

My analysis of the use of *sugee* investigates 1) why young females choose such linguistic marker that indicates masculinity, 2) whether this is a linguistic and social change that the young generations recently started to lead and 3) young Japanese females' attitudes towards the use of this particular form, given that there is an indirect association that the masculine speech is rough and hence rude. This paper is a contribution to the research of politeness and gender adding a new case study of Japanese young adolescents.

### The acquisition of discourse markers in L2 environments: avoiding impoliteness

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Recent studies have concentrated on the importance of pragmatic differences across languages. Throughout the last decade significant progress has been made in analysing the role of pragmatic markers in conversation. However, the acquisition of pragmatic resources in relation to foreign language performance has to-date received little attention. In clasroom contexts, this is often due to the fact that, when compared with grammar and pronunciation aspects, teachers consider that pragmatic issues are less important and can be learned intuitively (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998). However, as pointed out by Barron (2003), the command of pragmatic strategies in an L2 is a clear indication of fluency. In that sense, the analysis of discourse markers (DMs) in spoken interaction can be indicative of a learner's communicative competence.

This paper investigates the use of discourse marker *oye* by English-speaking advanced learners of Spanish. Among the functions that this particular DM has in Spanish, our study has focussed on turn-initial uses, which are employed to call the listener's attention. Our data has been gathered through a questionnaire which follows the method employed by Blum-

Kulka et al. (1989), Schneider (2005) and Barron (2003). The questionnaire combines three types of methodology: first of all, informants are asked to recreate situations where *oye* could be used; this is followed by some multiple choice questions; and finally, informants are given the opportunity to reflect on the use or avoidance of *oye*. This study is intended as a preliminary exploration of how English speaking learners tend to avoid the use of this discourse marker, which, in Spanish is frequently employed in conversation (as corpus consultation also reported here shows), and does not necessarily imply impoliteness. It is suggested that native language influence is at play is this process of avoidance.

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**Impoliteness in radio call-in programmes**

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The main aim of this study is to examine some linguistic strategies that are used by Ghanaians when they want to be impolite. The paper attempts to apply Culpeper's (1996) theory of impoliteness to adversarial and confrontational discourse on radio call-in programmes. The paper argues that much of the discourse of radio call-in programmes about the activities of politicians in Ghana is made up of explicit impolite utterances. In our opinion, the fact that the host of the program does not see the face of the caller gives the caller the impetus to be blatantly impolite. Using Culpeper's (1996) definition of impoliteness, the paper analyses the main communication strategies or the head acts that are used by these callers when they want to be impolite. The paper argues that callers intentionally use these strategies which have the intention of damaging politicians' negative and positive face wants. The paper also discusses how radio presenters mitigate or aggravate these impolite utterances that attempt to insult political figures in the public domain. The data used for this study is collected from call-in programmes on local radio stations.

**Scaling Intentionality: Revisiting Goffman's (1967) assessment of (potential) face threat**

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Many of the existing im/politeness models are inspired by Goffman (1967) (see, e.g., Brown & Levinson 1987; Culpeper 1996, 2005; Culpeper et al 2003; Bousfield 2008). Yet, they focus on what Goffman (1967: 14) termed *intentional* FTAs whilst largely ignoring his *incidental* and *accidental* categories:

- *intentional* FTAs are verbal acts that are knowingly (and often 'maliciously') undertaken in order to cause (maximum) face damage;
- *incidental* FTAs are unplanned 'by-products' of a given interaction;
- *accidental* FTAs are 'unintended and unwitting' acts performed 'innocently', but which nevertheless cause offence to the hearer.

In this paper, I suggest an approach that would allow us to capture all of Goffman's FTA-types. My approach incorporates an *intentionality scale* (cf. Mills 2003), which complements whilst allowing for movement between Goffman's (1967) *intentional* and *incidental* FTA-types via the addition of an *indeterminate-to-intent* zone.

My new *indeterminate* zone is particularly useful when investigating (professional) interaction involving verbal duelling (i.e. the kinds of interaction that occur in the courtroom, board meeting, business negotiation, mediation session, etc.). For example, lawyers often have multiple goals (Penman 1990): their primary goal might be to have a coherent story that accounts for and/or discounts (non-)relevant evidence; their subsidiary goal might be a perceived need to discredit (previous testimony given by) a non-friendly witness. As part of my presentation, I will show how lawyers utilise such multiple goals in ways that deliberately problematise any perceived 'intent to harm': that is to say, determining whether any resulting FTA is intentional or an unplanned 'by product' of a given interaction becomes difficult. Indeed, I will suggest that they seem to be strategically manipulating multiple goals in ways that allow for a level of 'plausible deniability' (see Leech 1983).

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# Linguistic Impoliteness And Rudeness II (LIAR II)
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### Academic politeness in a multilingual/cultural classroom

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This paper explores the concept of politeness in the context of an undergraduate English classroom in an English medium university in Lebanon. It is often the case that some students are viewed as verbally and non-verbally 'impolite' among one another and towards their teachers with most of them not understanding the reason for being reprimanded. Theories and strategies of politeness and impoliteness are drawn upon to investigate underlying multilingual and cultural factors that might contribute to an understanding of these differences according to classroom dynamics and operationally defined infrastructures of contribution, relevance, authority, mind, turn-taking, quantity and demeanor. Teacher observations, surveys and focus group interviews of the students during the class are carried out. Preliminary findings from comparisons using quantitative and qualitative analyses between student gender, first (Arabic), second (French and/or English) and third languages (other) as well as those who are predominately from a Middle Eastern or Western culture indicated that the students are significantly influenced by their lingual and cultural backgrounds. The paper identifies the different strategies of politeness used as a consequence and argues that the possible causes for the 'misunderstandings' and the perceived 'impoliteness' between students and their teachers is more of a lingual/cultural one rather than that of 'impoliteness' and should be taken into consideration when teachers and students interact. The researchers make implications for raising student and teacher awareness which is best done through discourse and management in the context of the English classroom.

### Street impoliteness and rudeness: A Lebanese case study

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The use of compliments in every day small talk is typical in the Arab World in general and in Lebanon in particular (El-Sayed, 1989; Farghal & Al-Khatib, 2001; Farghal & Haggan, 2006; Nelson, Al-Batal, & Echols, E among others). However, in the past few years, politeness and compliments have become rather scarce in the Lebanese capital, Beirut. Street talk nowadays includes a lot of cursing and swearwords; for instance, a typical traffic scene on the streets of Beirut usually contains whistles and gestures, car horns, cars breaking traffic rules, and people shouting and cursing. The purpose of this study is to explore street impoliteness and rudeness in Beirut and to examine possible reasons behind the drastic change in Lebanese street talk in the past few years. Data collection will include participant observation as well as unstructured interviews with Lebanese citizens in Beirut over a period of two months. It is expected that recent radical changes in Lebanese politics that have resulted in two main political "camps" ongoing Lebanese national and ethnic identity crisis issues (Joseph, 2004; Kraidy, 1998; Suleiman, 1996, Al-Batal, 2002), as well as current Lebanese economical problems have all contributed to the increase in impoliteness and rudeness in Lebanese street talk.

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## (Im)politeness in the Darwin Year. Evolutionary notes on an interactional practice: Defining socio-proxemic space

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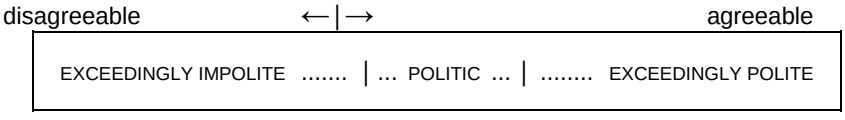
I and I, in creation where one's nature neither honors nor forgives
I and I, one says to the other: No man sees my face and lives

Bob Dylan, *Infidels* (1983)

The fact that they are morphological antonyms may encourage the notion that politeness and impoliteness are two sides of the same coin: that the one behavioural mode is the opposite variety of the other. This view, however, is mistaken, as I shall endeavour to explain with particular reference to what might be considered the evolutionary antecedents of (linguistic) (im)politeness.

Even if the opposition is not either/or, and face-work (Goffman 1967) or politic behaviour (Watts 2003) makes up the coin's edge, the point stands that face-work is closer by far to politeness than to its prefixed counterpart. Face-work, in the sense of socially default noncommittal goodwill behaviour, can be taken as a watered-down variety of politeness, as a suborder within the larger order of considerate, complaisant, or even altruistic behaviour evincing, and drawing on, other-concern. Since politeness and impoliteness are subject to grading, it involves an interpersonal meaning continuum ranging from "pointed offensiveness" (Goffman 1981: 17) via (politic) face-work to excessive politeness; all the same, politic behaviour is on the (potentially) "agreeable" side of the spectrum:



On the assumption, then, that there is a dichotomy – i.e. face-work/politeness versus impoliteness – I will try to make out a case for the view that, in spite of what their lexical forms suggest, politeness and impoliteness are really poles apart, not just relationally speaking (as is trivially obvious) but also conceptually and evolutionary. To that end, examples of "linguistic rapport management" from the early Middle Ages up to and including the present will be reviewed in order to argue that, leastwise in Western society, (im)polite (language) behaviour developed from "performative" into "codal." That is to say, there is a diachronic trend from the behavioural, usually ritual(ized), enactment of interpersonal relationships to the linguistic encoding of social meaning. Central to the ritual enactment of speaker-hearer relations – which cannot only stake strong claims to chronological primacy but may also have set the stage for the emergence of semantico-pragmatic strategies (Bax 2004) – is the enhancement of self-face (cf. Chen 2001; Chaemsaithong 2009). Ritual self-display, as a means of marking out social distance or defining "socio-proxemic space," is typically aimed at precluding or distorting the "interactional balance" (cf. Brown and Levinson 1987) – hence, its conceptual nearness to impoliteness – and has close homologues in symbolic aggression display as is widespread in the animal kingdom.

Linguistically encoded politeness, on the other hand, which is, historically speaking, by and large a modern phenomenon, is, on average, geared to the protection or enhancement of other-face (Brown and Levinson 1987). Such considerate, empathic, and/or co-operative approaches are very rare in the animal realm. Apart from transient maternal care (which is instinctive in many species), "altruism" is solely found in primates and prosimians. This suggests that, in comparison with impoliteness, the evolutionary roots of politeness are quite short, and so that the evolutionary origins of politeness and impoliteness are strikingly dissimilar. It would seem, in effect, that – unlike impoliteness, with its clear homologues in animal behaviour – politeness builds on a uniquely human adaptation involving the emergence of the social instinct that occurred in *Homo erectus*, roughly 1.5 million years BP (Hrdy 1999, 2009).

From a Darwinian viewpoint, (linguistic) face-work/politeness and impoliteness designate behavioural modes that, despite the lexical coupling, are evolutionary divergent. When considered from a historico-pragmatic angle, two interrelated developments are involved, as the conveyance of interpersonal meaning *ipso facto* the definition of socio-proxemic space evolved from performative into codal as well as from (disobligingly) *ego*-centred into (obligingly) *alter*-oriented (Bax 2009a). If I am not mistaken, this dual pragmatic innovation was for the most part a post-medieval development; important factors behind the changeover were the urbanization process (including increased dealings with strangers), the spread of humanism (with its emphasis on empathy and charity), and the overall cultural-cognitive trend, from the early modern period onwards, towards rationality (Bax 2009b; Donald 1991).

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**The iron fist in a velvet glove: How politeness can contribute to impoliteness**

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Work on 'politeness' (Brown and Levinson 1978/1987; Leech 1983) and more recent work on 'impoliteness' (e.g. Culpeper 1996, 2005, 2007; Culpeper et al. 2003; Bousfield 2008; Bousfield and Locher 2008) have provided a wealth of insight into the kinds of strategies used to either protect and save the 'face' of interactants, or disregard and attack it, respectively. Even though at a theoretical level, the use of concepts like 'relational work' (e.g. Locher and Watts 2005) and 'rapport management' (Spencer-Oatey 2000, 2005) clearly shows that both politeness and impoliteness should be encapsulated into a single theoretical framework to account for interpersonal relationships, most empirical research has concentrated on one or the other of these. Thus, the focus tends to be on what is 'polite' or 'impolite', independently of one another, although in both natural and institutional interaction these strategies may be mixed in the same encounter. Indeed, there are some speech contexts in which speakers use politeness strategies to build up the conversation to a point where they can make an impolite remark. Interestingly, one such context is the 'exploitative' TV programme whose attraction for the audience lies in its "sanctioned aggressive facework" (Watts 2003: 260), where the host/ess is 'licensed' to disregard the face needs of contestants who cannot retaliate. *The Weakest Link*, which has proved to be one of the most popular TV programmes and has been extensively analysed (Culpeper 2005) depicts such an environment where the hostess blatantly attacks the contestants' face, but only after collecting adequate material through a systematic use of positively polite strategies. This paper investigates the management of impoliteness through politeness and intends to show that these two can be components of the same interaction.

**The occurrence of '*face threat-face repair*' sequences in prime time TV talk shows**

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## Paper Abstracts

During daytime TV talk shows, program hosts, to increase the rating of their program or channel, encourage conflict among the guests stemming from personal identities, social obligations, and the requirements of societal, interpersonal, and interactional/activity roles. This paper investigates the ways in which participants of a TV talk show attend to one another's 'face' on broadcast television programs. The second question that is posed in the study is that how the societal and interpersonal roles of the guests and the host influence their interactional/activity roles and one another's face during the program.

The interactional strategies of the participants and the concept of 'face' are examined and discussed in the light of Brown and Levinson's (1987) *politeness theory*. The data consist of the transcripts of two broadcast TV talk shows (60 minutes each). The talk show format is: one host and 2 or 3 guests (usually celebrities). In these talk shows, the language choice of the participants is usually informal, the topics of conversations vary from health, sports, holidays, religion to personal subjects (preferably less sensitive topics).

The data analysis is based on a coding manual that incorporates pragmatic functions and conversation analytic features. In the analysis, instances of the participants' societal and personal relationship roles, *face threat-face repair* sequences and interactional strategies (turn taking mechanisms, topic management, etc.) are selected, presented and compared. Descriptive statistics are utilized to quantify the occurrences of *face threat-face repair* sequences in the talk shows.

The results of data analysis suggest that *face threat-face repair* sequences occur regardless of the societal roles and personal relationship roles of the participants in the following way: (i) speaker repairs addressee's face – cost to speaker; and (ii) speaker repairs addressee's face – cost to addressee. The findings of the study also indicate that in some cases attempts for a face repair initiated by the speaker (producer of the message) can be perceived as another face-threat on the part of the addressee (receiver of the message) depending on the degree of familiarity or personal relationship between the speaker and the addressee.

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**(Im)polite communication and the issue of language reception in Algerian geographical speech communities**

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Social communication in dialectical speech communities is not based on shared rules as dialects are geographically distributed whereby communication message is not always received in the same manner in different geographical speech communities. The differences in the linguistic forms used can evoke impolite communication that is thought of to be polite when addressed to the hearer but in reality it is impolite and makes a distort in communication because the item that the sender uses is thought of as impolite in the dialect of the hearer.

As Algeria is one of the most concerned with different speech communities having different varieties, it is usually noticed that when interlocutors in a speech situation do not know each other linguistic usage, they evoke a leaving-of-the-floor as the linguistic item they use sounds to the hearer as impolite. In Algeria, there are two speech communities, Annaba and Batna, similar in most of the linguistic usages but different in few usages being though sufficient for evoking an impolite communication. If we examine this real speech situation, we can see the point:

| | |
|---|---|
| A: Do you want to eat it? | أ : تاكل |
| B: Thank you, I don't want. | ب : صح . ما بغيتش |

The reported communication in English is the one that the speaker A intended to say, but he was misunderstood as impolite because the use of the expression "ما بغيتش" is considered in speaker's A speech community as insult. Speaker A is from the city of Annaba, which is a speech community far from the one of speaker B with about 270 km. Speaker A thought to be insulted by speaker A and refuses any talk with him while speaker A has just answered in a very polite way as he used to do in his speech community (i.e. Batna).

The problem of the impolite expression "ما بغيتش" is not I the production but in the reception because any speaker uses a variety that he knows without readjusting his speech to the other participant's variety. It is thus the reception of the "impolite item" that makes the hearer feel the item as a whole impolite.

The present paper deals with linguistic impoliteness as being a matter of reception in dialectical speech communities. It uses a variety of illustrations to show how and when linguistic usages sound very polite in a speech community and do not do so in another.

**Verbal aggression and impoliteness in Spanish talk shows**

*María Bernal, Stockholm University, Sweden*

Leech (1983: 103) states that 'conflictive illocutions tend, thankfully, to be rather marginal to human linguistic behaviour in normal circumstances'. However, the presence of conflict situations in everyday interactions is undeniable. In the last years there seems to be in Spain an increasing success in those television programmes in which impoliteness and verbal aggression are very recurrent. We refer to the so-called "exploitative chat shows" (Culpeper 2005), in which the participants (most of the time celebrities) embark on heated confrontational interactions characterised by a high degree of impoliteness and humiliations for the sake of entertainment. Talk shows constitute a particular interaction genre characterized as *semi-institutional* due to both institutional and conversational features (Ilie 2001; Hernández Flores 2008). Previous research on Spanish TV-debates and entertainment programmes focuses on facework and (im)politeness (Hernández Flores 2006; Lorenzo-Dus 2007; Blas Arroyo forth).

The aim of this paper is to examine rude and impolite language in different talk shows broadcast in Spain. On the one hand, the types of impoliteness present in these exploitative chat shows are analysed. On the other hand the linguistic strategies used by the interactants to put those types of impoliteness into practice are described. Both the linguistic and extra-linguistic elements are taken into consideration. As a result of this study, the way the participants in these TV-programmes construct and renegotiate their face-needs are described.

In the analysis two types of impoliteness are identified: impoliteness due to threats to the *face* of participants and impoliteness caused by a fault in the normal rules of politeness expected from the situation (cf. Bernal 2007). As we shall demonstrate, there are some instances in which the participants go beyond the accepted social conventions, leading even into a breakdown in the debate. These interactions are characterised by a clearly high aggressive load, which is received as such by the interactants. To support our findings a questionnaire was distributed among speakers of peninsular Spanish. The respondants notice impoliteness devices and break of politeness rules.

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## What do students write about their teachers when they think they remain anonymous? An analysis of impoliteness forms used in a discussion on the web portal

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The paper presents an analysis of a discussion carried out on an informal students' web portal in the University of Silesia, Katowice. During the discussion, the students exchange comments on the lecturers. Originally this was supposed to be the place where older-years students give advice to their younger friends – whose classes they should choose, which lectures are best, or what the requirements of particular professors are.

Although some of the students' comments are full of respect and praise for the teachers, there are numerous comments which constitute face-attack, especially the attack on the teachers' positive face. There are objections to their professionalism. The teachers are criticized for not smiling at students, or for excessive smiling. Students discuss their teachers' clothes, their marital status, or even their having or not having children. The majority of comments made in the discussion forum – both according to Brown and Levinson's criteria and Leech's maxims of politeness – are impolite.

In the analysed comments the following politeness strategies are rejected:

1. Positive politeness
    - The students neither seek agreement nor avoid disagreement.
    - They do not try to understand their teachers' behaviour and their generally understood needs and plans.
    - They often treat the teachers as their opponents whose image may be manipulated.
2. Negative politeness
    - The students do not treat their teachers with respect.
    - They do not avoid face-threatening acts, just the opposite they often try to discredit the teachers.
3. Off-record politeness
    - In their comments the students are, in general, direct and explicit in judging the teachers.

If politeness is understood as "minimizing the expression of impolite beliefs", the greater part of the discussion in the students' forum is to a great extent impolite. All the maxims of the Polite Principle are flouted there.

The analysed impoliteness acquires an additional dimension due to the public character of the discussion. This is not a private conversation in the corner of a lecture room, but a debate in which everyone can participate.

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**The importance of being (im)polite – A diachronic investigation of face issues in British news reports**

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In modern newspapers, remarkable instances of openly impolite attacks on the Referents (i.e. the people involved in news stories) can be observed. Here, face values (cf. Brown/Levinson 1987) obviously have to compete with news values (cf. Galtung/Ruge 1973). For example, it is typically the reference to something negative (and thus something face-threatening) that makes an event newsworthy, and news values can be increased by applying (potentially face-threatening) processing principles such as the principle of intensive presentation ("Be drastic") or emotional content ("Mention emotional aspects of events explicitly") (Ungerer 1997). By contrast, the relationship between Author/Editor and Reader seems to be essentially polite, and this does not appear surprising, since the readers with their purchasing power exert an enormous influence on what is published.

Clearly, matters of politeness in the press have not remained stable over time. Diachronic research on the Rostock Newspaper Corpus (RNC), a collection of British news reports from 1700-2000, shows that major changes have occurred which can generally be related to the changing journalistic culture, and more specifically to the growing importance of personalization. From fact-oriented accounts in the 18$^{th}$ century, which had often retained the pragmatic features of letters, we have moved to packages of news reports with a clear homocentric focus in the 21$^{st}$ century. The qualitative investigation of pragmatic features such as terms of reference and terms of address (Bös 2007), directive speech acts (Bös forthc. a), and quotations (Bös forthc. b) indicates that the risk of face loss has increased for the Referents. Furthermore, the data imply a shift from an avoidance-based to an approach-based relationship between Author/Editor and Reader.

Selected examples from the RNC will be used to illustrate major diachronic changes and to discuss the challenges of applying the face-concept to mass media communication, involving, for instance, issues of multiple authorship and multiple addressing.

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## "My Lord, if you over rule me, I cannot help it": Conflict in the arraignment phase of 17th century trials

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In this paper I shall be looking at the confrontational dynamics characterising the arraignment phase of XVII century trial proceedings where defendants are asked to plead guilty or not guilty in front of the Court. In the course of the analysis, I shall be examining how Dawn Archer's categories of "requests", "requires" and "counsels" act as face threatening devices in the hands of judges and defendants in order to challenge the authority/legality of the former and the good faith/integrity of the latter (Archer 2005, 2006). In several cases, in fact, defendants adopt a "willing to plead if the Court shows its legitimacy/legality" paradigm. This line of argument threatens the judges' and prosecutors' positive and negative face in two ways: 1) by questioning their institutional authority 2) by urging them to prove it with clear evidence. As the defendant ventures into face threatening requests and requires, the other party counter-attacks by appealing to its institutional power. By referring to traditional and more recent literature in the field of (im)politeness and courtroom discourse (e.g. Brown and Levinson 1987, Lakoff 1989, Culpeper et al. 2003, Kryk-Kastovsky 2006, Culpeper and Archer 2008), I shall inspect the ways in which defendants, prosecutors and judges proceed to an escalation of FTAs which commonly – though not always – end with the defendant's forced compliance.

The data which I have selected for analysis are taken from the trial section of *The Corpus of English Dialogues 1560-1760* compiled by Kytö and Culpeper. The trials which I am going

to investigate are dated from 1648 to 1678. They are all treason trials in which the defendants' high status helps us make sense of their non-politic verbal behavour when confronting the judges (Watts 1992). Although in some cases mitigating strategies are adopted by both sides, the legal process almost inevitably results in a dialectical breakdown where it is the judge who has the last word.

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**The role of politeness theory in young adults' safer-sex talk**

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Talking about safer-sex with a partner prior to sexual activity is recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as a prevention strategy against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS. Many young adults do not talk about safer-sex prior to their first sexual interaction given the face-threatening implications of such talk. The purpose of this study was two-fold: to analyze self-reports of safer-sex talk for the presence of politeness messages and to examine the association between the politeness messages and health outcomes.

A total of 405 young adults from a large Midwestern State University in the United States completed an online survey about safer-sex practices. In this particular paper the responses of 123 young adults were analyzed. Participants were asked to re-create a talk about safer-sex they had with their most recent partner in the form of a dialogue (he said – she said). The responses were coded using the types of politeness messages and specific positive and negative politeness strategies offered by Brown and Levinson (1987).

There were two main findings in the study. First, young adults seem to use not only bald-on-record messages, negative politeness messages and positive politeness messages but also a combination of these. Among the negative politeness strategies, respondents used hedging, asking questions, were conventionally indirect, impersonalized themselves from the hearer by avoiding the use of pronouns and gave overwhelming reasons for doing the face threatening act (FTA). Among the positive politeness strategies respondents conveyed that the hearer and they were cooperators, they used in-group identity markers, sought agreement, gave gifts to the hearer and used humor. The second main finding was that all these aforementioned message types with their specific strategies was associated with a number of health outcomes such as reported male and female condom use, discussions of STIs and number of previous partners, sharing of testing results, getting tested for STIs and HIV and abstaining from sexual interaction. This study advances the literature on politeness theory by indicating specific politeness strategies that young adults may use when broaching safer-sex talk with their partners that has health policy implications.

**Repetition, silence and (im)politeness in Chinese TV talk shows**

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Mediated interaction is a type of performance. In TV talk shows, it is the lively performative effect that all talk-related behaviors center on. Repetition, generally conceived as an excess, and silence, as absence of speech, are seemingly in conflict with the consistency, fluency and harmony that Chinese TV programmes pursue as a rule. However, they have been found largely kept as part of the shows.

The study focuses on the two types of phenomena in talks - repetition and silence, which are not explored intensively yet. In this article, the data is from *Lu Yu You Yue*, a popular Chinese TV talk show programme which has a casual atmosphere compared with many other interview talk shows in mainland China. By constructing case analysis on the conversational functions, the article studies repetition and silence as means of communication in media, explores the information they convey and the performative role they play, both in impolite and polite forms of talk found in the data. The article concludes the communicative strategies that are applied when the host and the guest deal with the impoliteness during the interaction in Chinese TV talk shows.

The article contributes to the study of (im)politeness as it employs Chinese TV talk shows, which are usually strictly impoliteness-repellent and highly controlled. Moreover, the study investigates repetition and silence in Chinese TV talk shows as two special and significant channels for communication in the interactions impressed with (im)politeness.

**Politeness on the social network site *Orkut*: Perspectives from lesser-studied cultural group, Bengalis**

# Linguistic Impoliteness And Rudeness II (LIAR II)
## Paper Abstracts

*Anupam Das, Indiana University, U.S.A.*

Inappropriate use of politeness strategies in different socio-pragmatic contexts can lead to misunderstanding (Blum-Kulka, House-Edmondson, & Kasper, 1989). Therefore, it is important to seek to understand what factors condition variations in how politeness is observed. This study investigates how a small group of Bengalis in a university town in the U.S. observes politeness in text-based dyadic interactions on the social network site *Orkut*. The study addresses two research questions: (1) What types of politeness behaviors do the members of the group observe? (2) Do technological and/or situational factors influence the politeness behaviors, and if so, how?

To address these questions, the study analyzed 37 dyadic interactions involving 19 *Orkut* users that took place on *Orkut* over four months, for a total of 2,580 messages and 4,687 utterances. To analyze the data, I applied the Grand Strategy of Politeness (GSP) (Leech, 2007) and computer-mediated discourse analysis (CMDA) (Herring, 2004). GSP was applied because it has been claimed to explain both western and eastern politeness practices. CMDA was used to investigate how the technological medium (e.g., synchronicity) and situational factors (e.g., purpose) influence users' politeness practices online.

Consistent with the GSP, the results show that most dyads engage in politeness acts that: (1) Place a high value on *Addressee*'s feelings (e.g., 'congratulations'), (2) Place a high value on *Addressee*'s qualities (e.g., 'Nice photo'), (3) Place a high value on *Speaker*'s obligation to *Addressee* (e.g., 'Thanks'), and (4) Place a low value on *Addressee*'s obligation to *Speaker* (e.g., 'you're welcome'). It was further observed that intensification through emoticons (provided by the technical medium) and playful use of typography (consistent with the social purpose of the interaction) enhance the politeness effect. The conclusion discusses the contributions of these findings to pragmatic theories of politeness, as well as to the computer-mediated discourse and cross-cultural politeness literatures.

**Impolite orders in ancient Greek: The οὐκ ἐρεῖς ; type.**

*Camille Denizot, Université de Rouen, France*

In ancient Greek, an impolite order can be expressed with a second person future in interrogative negative form : these are utterances such as

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| οὐκ | ἐρεῖς | ; |
| *Neg.* | *2nd p. Fut.* | *Interrogative marker* |

« Won't you talk ? »

Such an expression is of great interest as far as (im)politeness theories are concerned, since it is an indirect act and a conventional one (especially in the classical drama). Now the meaning can be impolite, but there isn't any context where such an utterance can be used with a polite meaning.

Our first aim is to understand the use of this impolite expression in discourse: one utterance in five is used after the failure of a first (polite or neutral) order, and more generally after a provoking remark ; this expression is sometimes the last one before a threat. Relationships

between participants should also be explored (degree of power, or of intimacy, for instance). For this aspect of our study, recent works about impoliteness are used.

Our second aim is to understand why this interrogative negative expression is impolite with the future, whereas the same form is polite with the potential (a verbal form which expresses the possibility in ancient Greek). Our point is that the locutionary form gives an orientation for the interpretation of the utterance: an indirect and conventional expression can't be polite if the locutionary meaning is opposed to it.

Our data is taken from Aristophanes' plays, where this expression is widely used (about 130 occurrences): the comedy is indeed an important corpus for verbal interaction, and especially impoliteness, in an ancient language.

**Dealing with discursive challenges: Re-envisioning the role of discourse, the researcher, and interactional practice in politeness research**

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Over the last two decades, criticisms of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory have been numerous. More recently, a group of researchers have called for a paradigm change in politeness studies by abandoning this "traditional" view in favor of a "post modern" or discursive one that gives greater attention to the role of interactional data and participants' own perceptions of politeness phenomena (Watts, 2003; Locher, 2006). However, some scholars have expressed concern over whether such work
can truly remain free of the researcher's own theoretical pre-occupations or categories that may taint the analysis of the data at hand (Terkourafi, 2005; Haugh, 2007). A similar debate concerning the threat of researcher bias in the analysis of interactional data has been ongoing between the sub-fields of conversation analysis (CA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Put simply, CA theorists claim that
researchers abandon their own pre-suppositions when following traditional CA methodology, while CDA theorists retort that such a "neutral" perspective is impossible and the researcher must acknowledge the assumptions s/he unavoidably brings to the analysis (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2000).

This paper brings the latter debate to bear on its more recent counterpart in (im)politeness in order to stimulate cross-disciplinary dialogue on methodological perspectives in the field. Following a review of the main arguments central to each exchange, the interactional (Arundale, 2006; Haugh, 2007) and framebased (Terkourafi, 2005) approaches will also be discussed in order to assess how some researchers have sought to move beyond such theoretical concerns. In the end, it will be argued that (im)politeness scholars must strive to be more explicit about what position they take within this debate in their own work and how they apply this to the analysis of the data. In doing so, research in this area would benefit from exhibiting greater methodological accountability and precision in relation to the researcher's own subjectivity during the analytical process.

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**The element of sarcasm in "On Golden Pond": a relevance-theoretic approach to impoliteness via indirect character development**

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In movies characters define themselves not only through actions but through their 'words' as well and those words reveal the characters' feelings and opinions about things. This paper is an attempt to look at the character development of Norman Thayer Jr. (Henry Fonda), the protagonist, in *On Golden Pond*, a 1981 Oscar winning movie. It will be argued that 'Norman' is, in a sense, 'verbally' created on the basis of his sarcastic style that serves as an indirect and effective instrument of covert hostility. The element of sarcasm as an indispensible personality trait in the movie makes Norman unique and distinguishable from the rest of the characters as a representative of impoliteness. The claim being made will be supported by the examples from the script of the movie to show the extent and the impact of Norman's sarcastic verbal power. A number of fragments will also be used to point to the role of body language functioning as additional contextual information guiding utterance interpretation. 'Sarcasm' (Ivanko, Paxman, and Olineck 2004), 'irony' (Wilson 2006) and '(im)politeness' (Christie 2007) will be treated within the framework of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995) according to which "style is relationship". It will be argued that the above-mentioned aspects of verbal communication heavily depend on implicitness and the sarcastic speaker can only achieve her goal by hitting the hearer via his own inferential abilities as soon as the intended implicatures are captured by him.

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**Rudeness and insults in Cyprus verbal dueling: The necessary means for the construction of powerful and witty masculine identities**

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This study constitutes part of a sociolinguistic-ethnographic investigation of Cyprus rhyming improvisations called *chattista*. In this type of ritual verbal dueling, amateur or professional performers (mostly men) engage in antagonistic competition with the aim to top their opponents and gain the approval, support and admiration of an actively involved audience (Doukanari 2008). By applying discourse analysis on a large tape-recorded/videotaped collection of live *chattista* performances, the study demonstrates how Greek-Cypriot men use skillful arguments, full of rude and vulgar insults, to project their masculine superiority, while simultaneously belittling their opponent's. The results indicate that rudeness and insults are necessary means to project a male existence which is the most physically powerful and the most knowledgeable/witty. These findings complement previous studies on verbal dueling (e.g. Labov 1972). The study identifies certain predominant devices that Greek-Cypriot men employ to convince the others that they are the best in terms of power and wits; e.g. figures of speech, antagonistic evaluation, adversative imperatives (Tannen and Kakava 1992), negation and figurative terms of address. In order to win the battle in a war-of-words, the performers interweave these rich discourse devices right on the spot, and in complex and innovative ways.

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**Cross-cultural and situational variation in requesting behaviour**

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The way in which speakers choose to formulate a request and, most specifically, the degree of directness/indirectness they employ in a specific situation have been found to be affected by a number of social and situational/contextual variables. The most widely discussed and tested variables are the social variables of social distance (D), social power (P) and imposition (R) of the requested act, proposed by Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) model of politeness. Brown and Levinson's main argument (1978, 1987) is that D, P and R are the most important factors influencing the speakers' linguistic choices and that there is a positive correlation between these social variables and the degree of indirectness employed.

The present study investigates the relationship between situational and cultural factors and Greek ESL learners' requesting behaviour. Using data collected from a Discourse Completion test and interviews, it examines whether the requestive strategies of English native speakers and of Greek learners follow a similar trend across different social situations. It additionally tests whether the same social situations are perceived and rated similarly by the native speakers and the learners. A further aim of this study is to trace the possible links between these emic perceptions of social situations and the observed strategic usage of

request patterns. In order to do this, the contextual parameters of power, distance and imposition have been correlated with the three types of request strategies: most direct, conventional indirect and non-conventional indirect.

Results from the study have shown that there are high levels of cross-cultural agreement between the Greek and the English speakers for trends of situational variation, namely, relatively higher levels of directness are licensed in some situations than in others across both cultures. However, the two groups were also found to disagree on the specific directness levels appropriate for given situations, reflecting overall cross-cultural differences in directness levels. In addition, cross-cultural disagreement was perceived in the subjects' assessment of the social variables tested in a number of situations. Even though significant differences in the speakers' perception of social reality can explain the differences in their linguistic choices to some extent, following the results of the correlation analysis, it is argued that power, familiarity and imposition were not particularly influential on the speakers' requestive production. A number of other contextual/situational parameters are suggested as being more influential on the learners' strategy selection.

**Immature boys and vulgar girls? Verbal abuse and the formation of social age and gender among 8th graders**

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Verbal abuse is a common feature of conversational interactions between students in school, especially during junior high school. The concept 'verbal abuse' is typically used within a social science framework, overlapping with the linguistic term 'impoliteness'. During junior high school, verbal abuse between students is especially common. The few studies of verbal abuse in school that consider age have focused on chronological age, rather than the social age produced through such practices. In this paper, verbal abuse is examined as a kind of identity work, focusing on the formation of social age and gender from a social constructionist perspective (Walkerdine 1990, Connell 1995). Similarly to the concept of 'doing gender', age can be viewed as 'done' in social interaction through speech and actions, rather than as an inherent trait or developmental phases.

The study draws on observations and interviews with 14-15-year-old Swedish girls and boys in order to understand their meaning-making of verbal abuse in school in relation to constructions of age and gender. Observations in the classroom and during recess were combined with in-depth interviews with students, and their form teachers, in two grade-8 classes in two schools in the Stockholm area. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed together with the observation notes using discourse analysis in the vein of discursive psychology.

The students produced and negotiated social age together with gender through verbal abuse and the discourses surrounding it, which concerned immaturity, development, sexuality, teenagehood and what it means to be an 8th grader. Verbal abuse has particular implications with regard to power and social identity. Besides creating hierarchies of masculinities and femininities among students, and positioning teenagers as different from adults, verbal abuse is also an element in the definition and negotiation of one's own and other students' maturity and level of development.

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**Impoliteness as a means of contesting power in racist discourse**

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The study aims to analyze conversation exchanges in Amiri Baraka's two plays, *Dutchman* and *The Slave*. These plays epitomize the conflict between black and white cultures in America and, thus, present a situation of complex power dynamics. In *Dutchman* and *The Slave* characters behave, discursively and otherwise, in ways which sustain the *status quo*, i.e. power asymmetries or negotiate power relationships. The study focuses on these discursive practices and more specifically, looks into the way dialogues are structured, so as to shed light on the extent to which racist ideology and asymmetric power relations are produced, reproduced and negotiated in discourse. To achieve these aims, the study brings together the methodology of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 1989) and Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (1987) as analytic tools. In Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness, face-redressive strategies are functions of the 'social distance' between speaker and hearer, the relative 'power' of speaker over hearer and the size of imposition of the face-threatening act. It is exactly this characteristic of bringing together the notion of 'face' and such sociological variables as power and social distance, that gives this model of politeness more explanatory strength. This is consistent with the framework of critical discourse analysis where discourse is considered a place where relations of power are contested. The analysis of data taken from the two plays, therefore, focuses on the range of face-threatening acts performed, the forms of redressive action taken to counter those threats and the underlying power structures which motivate the use of such forms. On the basis of the data analysed, it is argued that focus on those discursive practices which exploit politeness illuminates ways in which the asymmetrical power structures underlying inter-racial relations are discursively determined, negotiated and eventually changed in discourse.

**Teaching impoliteness to EFL students: A necessity or an alternative?**

*Farzin Fahimnia and Zahra Mozafari Rad, Azad University of Bandar Abbas, Iran*

Impoliteness is a part of native speakers' communicative competence. All native speakers of a language know impolite utterances. They also know how to be rude, though they may never have to. They have the ability to recognize and interpret face threatening acts, as well. However, looking through most of the ESL course books and classes in Iran, one finds out that impoliteness has been neglected in foreign language teaching context. Students do not know what to say or how to behave when facing aggressive or face threatening acts. It seems that EFL learners even have difficulty in perceiving and interpreting these acts. It is partly because in English course books there is no part allocated to impoliteness as a communicative function. As a result, teachers neglect this aspect of language. Even non-native EFL teachers seem to have problems with it. Research on impoliteness appears to be largely ignored in EFL context. However, Mugford's article (2008) in ELT Journal could be considered as the most relevant literature of the study. This study examines impoliteness in the most popular English course books in Iran. Then, it finds out teachers' and students' opinions about presenting impoliteness in their classes and course books through asking them questions. Finally, based on EFL experts', teachers', and students' suggestions, it provides the readers

with some suggestions on how to teach impoliteness in a foreign language class. The aim of this study is bringing this neglected part of language to teachers' and material writers' attention.

**Is web polite or impolite? A case study on English, German, Persian, and Arabic**

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The communication discourse plays significant role in adopting our linguistic strategies. While one discourse such as scholarly publication requires a formal, polite atmosphere, another one may offer a relaxed or sometimes impolite situation. In this paper, first an overview of literature on (im)politeness is provided with sufficient examples of (im)politeness markers in English, German, Persian and Arabic. The polite expressions include cases such as English *please* and its equivalents in other three languages. On the other hand, derogatory expressions in four languages represent impolite markers. Next, a web corpus is collected representing discussion groups or weblogs in languages under analysis, and this corpus is compared with a non-web corpus to evaluate the frequency of (im)politeness markers. The study shows linguistic (im)politeness markers within one language and/or across languages. The motivating hypothesis was that web culture tends to be more informal, and accordingly impolite. As the results support the hypothesis, the paper ends with discussion on the impact of socio-linguistic and technological factors on web impoliteness. It is discussed that the principle of economy, i.e. expressing as much information as possible with fewest words is a key concept to evaluate the politeness in the internet. It is argued that, as deleting politeness markers lead to saving digital space and/or user time, web culture follows a quite different paradigm as far as politeness is concerned. In other words, the shorter linguistic message, the more polite it is. As expected, four languages of the study prove to be quite different in expressing politeness on the web.

**"I meant it as a compliment, you fool!" A contrastive analysis of mock impoliteness in Spanish and Portuguese "insulting" compliments**

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Impoliteness is not always intended to cause offence – the cases of mock impoliteness show how impoliteness can on some occasions serve to reinforce rapport and social solidarity resulting in enhancing the participants' positive face instead of attacking it; they are also cases when the speaker does not intentionally seek to attack face (Culpeper 1996, 1998; Bousfield 2008).

Our research purpose is to ascertain how mock impoliteness is used to create rapport (specifically in "insulting" compliments) in Spanish and in Portuguese, more particularly if it is perceived as face attack or plain solidarity banter which reinforces intimacy between participants. We thus examine a corpus of about 25 incidents of mock impoliteness collected from naturally occurring conversation in Spanish and in Portuguese and the responses elicited.

Our aim is to establish whether Spanish speakers use more mock impoliteness to reinforce social bonds and create rapport than the Portuguese and whether the latter are more prone to perceive mock impoliteness as face attack than the Spanish. From the analysis we have

conducted so far, the Spanish tend to interpret mock impoliteness as banter more times than the Portuguese; mock impoliteness or banter runs more risk of causing offence or being interpreted as offensive in Portuguese, even amongst close friends. Our findings so far point to the radical difference in how impoliteness is employed in these two languages, despite their geographical proximity.

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**Could politeness be rude?**

*Iva Fidancheva, Jena University, Germany*

It would not be an exaggeration to state that politeness is one of the most important achievements of human communication "which helps us to achieve effective social living" (Watts, 1992:2). Although regarded as "Täuschung zweiter Ordnung"[1] and despite its ambiguity[2], politeness seems to have inevitable effect on the human wellbeing in general, because understood as "Imagework"[3] politeness looks for preserving the human identity and self-control.

Yet nevertheless, there are plenty of situations of linguistic and corporal representation of politeness: 1. indirectness in the family domain; 2. artificially polite attitude of a salesman in a shop that distracts customers from buying; 3. careless greeting; 4. lethargic questions about a person's health; 5. good manners (at a table, in an office etc.) that unfortunately cause the opposite effect. In other words, these are the situations in which politeness in fact is an insult, situations in which one performs (non)verbal actions that threaten both one person's as well as his/hers partner's face, and the identity of them respectively. And needless to say, insulting the partner is rude.

So how does the other side of the coin look like, and how harmless can it be for the human communication at all? The aim of this paper is to examine exactly these situations and by justifying the initial hypothesis that politeness can be insulting, to make contribution to the theory of politeness.

**Power and politeness**

*Catriona Fraser, The University of Melbourne, Australia*

This paper reports on part of a research project in progress that is looking at the rapport management strategies of Victorian Police Officers (VPOs). The data consist of pre-arranged

[1] For Kant politeness is one double delusion, delusion of second rank: it makes the illusion to be pure illusion, while in fact in reality it is something real and as such affects something real (Kant 1798, 45)
[2] Ambiguity of politeness: too much politeness is considered as dishonest and flattering and too little - as anti-social and disrespectful. (Ehrhardt 2002: 31)
[3] Goffman 1971, 17.

interactions between individual VPOs and non-native speakers of English (NNESs), and also interviews with these VPOs and NNESs.

The research is not concerned with law-keeping aspects of police work (i.e. suspect and victim interactions with VPOs) but rather trust building interactions which are pivotal to the community policing model used in Victoria (Australia). In particular the research is focused on answering the following questions:

1. How do individual VPOs manage rapport in intercultural interactions?
2. What rapport management strategies are evident in VPO/NNES interactions?
3. What are the NNES reactions to the rapport management strategies used by VPOs?

Importantly, the research considers successful communication as well as miscommunication with the aim of uncovering conversational strategies that encourage (or threaten) rapport between VPOs and members of various cultural groups around the state of Victoria.

The research draws on the strengths of two different theoretical models for the study of interaction; Interactional Sociolinguistics (IS) and Rapport Management theory (RM). RM is Spencer-Oatey's (2000) framework which builds on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory.

Politeness plays an important role in successful rapport building work but the level of politeness required is mediated by the power differentiated roles in the data presented. Qualitative analysis reveals that interactants with greater perceived power tend to use less politeness strategies. Politeness and impoliteness, however, are contextually bound and the freedom to be impolite (and get away with it) is the privilege of the interactant with the greatest perceived power. The lack of rapport building strategies, however, does have implications for the effectiveness of community policing models which rely on positive relationships between police forces and the communities they police.

**A case study of refusal utterances in English given by a Japanese speaker including possibilities to offend the interlocutor**

*Yumiko Furumura, Kyushu University, Japan*

This study aims to clarify the differences between English speaking people and Japanese speakers of English (JE) in understanding what rules of 'Politeness Principle' are appropriate in refusal discourse, so that Japanese learners of English could acquire the effective systems in politeness for intercultural communication.

13 JE were asked to participate in oral role-playing tasks in English. They refused a British lady in several situations not to offend her. All conversations informants produced were recorded on a tape recorder and transcribed. Native speakers of English (NSE) evaluated these refusal utterances JE gave after listening to the recorded conversations and reading the transcriptions.

In this study the result of one case among them is reported. The Japanese subject passed the top grade of 'Eiken', a test in practical English proficiency. While a JE refused a request from her British classmate not to offend her, about 93% of respondents of NSE evaluated that her

refusal would cause a distant relationship in the future with the interlocutor in this study because many of them felt her utterances were **rude and insulting.**

Actually JE built up her image of how native speakers would refuse in some situations based on her experiences of studying abroad for a year. In this study she refused directly with some softener. Against her expectation, however, her strategies were not effective. This result implicates that even proficient learners of English would have difficulties to acquire polite attitudes appropriate for different cultures without studying them. So more exact data about politeness in intercultural situations should be found, and education about it should be focused on for awareness of intercultural communicative competence in Japan.

**Congratulating or questioning? A case study of Peruvian Spanish speakers' responses to good news**

*Carmen García Fernandez, Arizona State University, U.S.A.*

Using as a basis data collected in open role-play interactions and using Spencer-Oatey's (2005) rapport-management model, this paper expands research on the preferred communicative patterns of Peruvian male and female Spanish speakers by examining their participation when responding to good news, in a situation exhibiting no power differential or social distance between interlocutors.

Results show that instead of the anticipated well-wishing and congratulating behavior, participants exhibited what apparently is permitted behavior in this social and cultural context: relentless questioning the wisdom of the 'good news' and giving unsolicited personal advice. What in other cultural contexts might be interpreted as lack of respect for the interlocutor's identity face, specifically her need for autonomy-control, is interpreted here as a signal of participants' interdependent self-construals (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). While observing relational goals, participants threatened both the interlocutor's identity face (challenging the validity of the good news) and her respectability face (her social behavior), but asserted their own respectability face by claiming authority-control. The only difference between females and males is that the latter presented an offer to the participant enticing her to reconsider the wisdom of her decision.

From these results it can be assumed that Peruvian subjects' basic assumptions and values seem to be that when in an interaction where there is no social distance or power differential, upon receiving good news, interlocutors see fit to challenge the interlocutor's wisdom. Only after the interlocutor responds to this questioning, acceptance and congratulations are offered.

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**Im/politeness in EFL: A study of agreement and disagreement sequences**

# Linguistic Impoliteness And Rudeness II (LIAR II)
## Paper Abstracts

*María García-Pastor, University of Valencia, Spain*

This paper constitutes research in progress on the shape of im/politeness in agreement and disagreement sequences ensuing in interactions conducted in English as a foreign language (EFL). Linguistic politeness research has typically been dominated by investigations dealing with communicative exchanges where English is speakers' first language (L1). Studies of im/politeness in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) have thus been comparatively scarce. This study attempts to modestly contribute to this neglected area of research in the im/politeness literature by looking at the form im/politeness adopts in EFL learners' production of agreement and disagreement in their interchanges, and their interactions with English native speakers. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and frameworks of face aggravating language and rudeness like Lachenicht's (1980) and Kienpointner's (1997) respectively, and impoliteness models such as Culpeper's (1996, 2005), Culpeper et al.'s (2003), and Bousfield's (2007, 2008), have been taken here as a starting point to explore the features of im/politeness in learners' agreement and disagreement sequences. Overall and along the lines of previous work by the author (cf. García Pastor, 2006), agreement and disagreement in this paper have been understood in terms of discursive units that can convey 1) face attention in the case of agreement, and 2) intended face damage either by the absence of face attention when such attention is required in a specific context or deliberate face aggravation (Bousfield, 2007, 2008), and unintended face damage or rudeness (Culpeper, 2008) in the case of disagreement. In general, learners' and native speakers' interventions were observed to be more similar in the shape face attention adopted in the issuing of agreement than the form face damage took in the production of disagreement. Nevertheless, differences as regards the shape of face attention in both learners' and native speakers' agreements were observed at the level of strategy usage, among other things. Face aggravation in learners' issuing of disagreement appeared to amount to rudeness or unintended face damage, whilst native speakers' disagreements were seen to more often consist of both intended absence of face attention and deliberate face aggravation. Differences in strategy usage were also observed in learners' and native speakers' production of disagreement. All in all, this research aims to modestly contribute to gain a more comprehensive picture of im/politeness phenomena in general, and in ESL/EFL discourse in particular. Second and foreign language research concerned with the teaching and learning of the pragmatic aspects of the target language might also benefit from the findings of this study in that a better understanding of how im/politeness works in the second or foreign language might yield more effective instructional treatments and designs of pragmatic awareness raising activities (cf, e.g., Bou-Franch and Garcés Conejos, 2003; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004; Person et al., 1995).

### Impoliteness in conflictual service encounters

*Bettina Kraft, University of Reading, U.K. and Ronald Geluykens, University of Oldenburg, Germany*

This paper focuses on impoliteness in conflictual service encounters. The observations are based on a comparision of naturally occurring discourse and roleplays. Episodes of conflict episodes from a docusoap are compared to roleplays based on the same scenarios. The aim of this approach is twofold: firstly, to investigate the sequential organisation of conflict solving strategies; secondly, to compare data from different sources, which in this instance leads to divergent results.

Apparently, with regard to service encounter frames, interactants have preconceived notions about which politeness strategies should be employed. The roles of 'customer' and 'service provider' trigger expectations about stereotypical behaviours associated with those roles. As can be observed in the roleplay data, interlocutors expect a high degree of 'other' consideration, as well as empathy and an attitude conducive to solving the conflict in a mutually acceptable manner. The analysis of the naturally occurring conflict episodes shows, however, that these attitudes are usually overridden by the influence of emotional involvement. Negative emotions, such as anger and frustration, lead to a focus on 'self', resulting in the frequent use of confrontational strategies. Face considerations in these conflictual service encounters seem to focus on strategies designed to be competitive and show little regard or concern for the other's interests, a finding which contradicts traditional insights in politeness theory.

This paper therefore contributes to the field of politeness research by observing a paradoxical relationship between, on the one hand, speaker expectations of normative behaviour, corresponding to traditional theories of politeness, and, on the other hand, actual speaker behaviour, which runs counter to such expectations, using (im)politeness as a tool, and showing heightened awareness of impoliteness considerations predominantly for self and not for other.

**Responding to face-threatening acts: A contrastive analysis of threat responses**

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While there is a long-standing tradition in contrastive and cross-cultural pragmatics dealing with the analysis of speech acts and face-threatening acts, the evaluation of potential RESPONSES to such acts remains underinvestigated.

Building on previous work by Limberg and Geluykens (2007), we extend the scope of our original study on verbal responses to face-threatening acts in English (L1) by including another language into our analytical scope, viz. German. Our corpus consists of data collected on the basis of standardized production questionnaires in several academic settings in Great Britain and Germany. Participants had to respond to six different situations in which they were faced with highly face-threatening acts (Brown and Levinson 1987). Two socio-cultural variables (i.e. gender and social power) have been systematically built into each scenario of the questionnaire, allowing us to control contextual aspects which might influence speakers' responses.

The results of this empirical study are used for a contrastive analysis of threat-responses across different cultures. Our aim is to compare how German and English native speakers respond (similarly or differently) towards face-threats in informal situations. In particular, participants' responses are examined along the following three dimensions: i) the general tendency of response category (i.e. tending towards compliance or rejection of the act); ii) the level of directness of the responses; and finally iii) the use of supportive moves with which the 'head acts' are furnished (cf. Blum-Kulka et al. 1987).

The results of these questionnaires reveal how speakers from different cultural backgrounds respond to highly face-threatening acts, showing among others their disposition towards accepting or challenging the respective face-threat. The implications drawn from this study allow us to consider how certain face-threats are perceived differently across cultures, in

particular as far as speaker's judgements about appropriateness and (im)politeness are concerned (cf. Brown and Levinson 1987; Watts 2003).

### 'Don't be stupid about intelligent design'. Confrontational impoliteness in medical journal editorials

*Davide S. Giannoni, University of Bergamo, Italy*

Academics tend to clothe their claims in a rhetoric of indirectness and understatement that avoids open disagreement for the sake of the audience's face (Myers 1989; Hyland 1998; Gosden 2001). This certainly holds true for the *primary genres* (Swales 1990; 2004) of research writing, where new knowledge claims are framed as collaborative, consensus-based constructs. At the same time, however, some authors (Salager-Meyer 1999, 2001; Salager-Meyer & Alcaraz Ariza 2004; Giannoni 2008, 2009) have drawn attention to the fact that academics appear to deviate from this model in book reviews and other evaluative genres where controversiality is not only tolerated but even desirable. Among these, *journal editorials* are particularly salient
when they comment on current affairs that directly affect their readership, thus revealing aspects of the editor's viewpoint and identity that would otherwise be concealed.

Against this background, the present study analyses the critical speech acts contained in the editorials of a leading international serial – the "Journal of Clinical Investigation" (estd. 1924) – whose editors are particularly outspoken in championing medical science and its standards against competing value claims. In particular, it
explores the wording of sarcastic utterances (cf. Jorgensen 1996; Keinpointner 1997; Shaw 2004) that stigmatise conflicts between the medical community and other social actors. The findings suggest that academic editors deliberately use *impoliteness*, that is "communicative strategies designed to attack face, and thereby cause social conflict and disharmony" (Culpeper et al. 2003: 1546) when the disagreements involved are most severe and "threaten the personal or professional identity, worth, beliefs, or values of the interlocutors" (Rees-Miller 2000: 1098).

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**Impoliteness and conventional metaphor**

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Studies of cognitive metaphor concentrate almost exclusively on the ideational meanings of conventional metaphors, ignoring interpersonal functions such as the expression of emotion/affect (*see* Halliday 1985, Martin 1992). In some cases, such as swearing (e.g. *piss off*) the metaphorical transfer from the Source to Target, the Ground, is entirely affective. This paper explores the conventional metaphor resources available in English for the breaching of the Approbation maxim (Leech 1983) or more generally for negative evaluation/appraisal (Hunston and Thompson 2000).

These lexical resources are mined from the on-line database of conventional English metaphors, *Metalude*. Various methodological problems are outlined. In straightforward cases there are negative labels on both the Source and Target sides of the equation, e.g. EVIL/WORTHLESSNESS IS WASTE, BAD IS SMELLY. However, some metaphor theme titles hide the evaluative lexis they contain, for example HUMAN IS BIRD (*goose, gannet, swan around*), LANGUAGE QUALITY IS TASTE (*insipid*, *tasteless, saccharine*). In others the apparent transfer of negative affect from Source to Target, e.g. in EMOTION/IDEA IS DISEASE, belies the metaphorical meaning's lack of negativity: *bug, contagious*. Some themes form part of larger schemata, and their negativity depends upon their relation to these: the apparently neutral INACTIVITY IS IMMOBILITY is negative as part of the larger schema DEVELOPING/SUCCEEDING IS MOVING FORWARD.

There follows discussion of several metaphor themes and the lexis which instantiates them, and their relationships to the Politeness Principle, notably the maxims of Approbation and Agreement. Some of these like BAD IS SMELLY, LANGUAGE QUALITY IS TASTE, and EVIL/WORTHLESSNESS IS WASTE bear out the contention that metaphor themes for conceptualising or expressing disapprobation have a bodily basis (Lakoff 1987, Eckman 2000), while others e.g. HUMAN IS ANIMAL, suggest that there are historical ideological influences which provide the values on which the metaphorical evaluation is based (Goatly 2007).

Continuing the ideological theme, the paper shows how negative evaluation or contestation of others' metaphorical lexis often depends on ideology, for example feminist contestations of the lexis in ARGUING IS FIGHTING (Govier 1999). Sometimes surreptitious associations between themes which share a Source reinforce ideologies: if GOOD IS HIGH and MORE IS HIGH, then MORE = GOOD?

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**Let's talk rude!: Disembodied voices, impoliteness and sex-related dysphemistic expressions**

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Given that one learns how to perform masculinity or femininity from early childhood, face-to-face interpersonal interaction in our daily life is then interpreted by embodied characteristics which are culture and gender sensitive. In the literature, gender is considered to be not only a feature of the flesh but a figment of the mind. This combination of mind and body becomes particularly relevant in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) due to the fact that entering into dialogue with other people in the cyberspace is characterised by a process of disembodiment or dislocation of the self. In other words, cyber-communication in interpersonal relationships constitutes an example of the disembodied practice of social talk in the early twenty-first century in so far as the body, the most natural location of the self, becomes irrelevant. If we leave the body aside, it is then the mind and how we encode our reality that matters. There are two questions that arise here: how does this process of disembodiment influence the way gender is reproduced and performed in the blogosphere and which linguistic strategies may bloggers may use in order to construct themselves in cyber-interpersonal communication?

In particular, this paper focuses on impoliteness, the use of sex-related dysphemistic expressions designed to attack face and thereby cause social conflict. Using a blog corpus which consists of 599 entries drawn from 34 British personal weblogs and thirty-one Spanish

personal weblogs created by teenage females, the analysis aims to delve into the different gendered discourses these female adolescents live out when narrating their former romantic relationships as an attempt to throw further light on how gender is reproduced and performed in the blogosphere. Thus, it is predicted that the discursive construction of these British and Spanish female adolescents' self-concept in their personal weblogs contains a repertoire of relatively discrete forms of self, each of which correlates with a particular self-attribution process. Besides the textual, cultural, generic or discoursal perspectives on sexual language, the study suggests a further avenue of exploration: the connection of sexual language with the expression of impoliteness.

**The politeness/impoliteness strategies in the language of Polish and American animated series**

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The central concern of this paper is the linguistic realisation of impoliteness in Polish. Since it is discussed in relation to the politeness/impoliteness strategies in English, the language of two controversial animated series is compared: *Włatcy móch* (misspelt *Lords of the flies*), for the Polish part of the sample, and *South Park* for the (American) English part. The Polish series revolves around the everyday lives and adventures of four preadolescent boys. The controversy that arose around the series stems mainly from the fact that the boys communicate mainly by means of taboo language. The creator of the series, Bartek Kędzierski, defends his production as "telling it like it is"; according to him, the series reflects fairly and accurately the childhood spent mainly on the playground, without much adult supervision. It is interesting to see what politeness/impoliteness strategies can be found in the stream of abuse that constitutes the dialogues between the characters of the series.

Within the politeness tradition so far it has been sufficiently argued that the politeness frameworks (Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987) fail to account for the situations where conflict talk is the norm (Culpeper 1996, 2003). Even a brief viewing of the above mentioned series reveals that conflict talk seems to be the norm for the communication between the characters. Whether it is banter (Leech 1983:144) or genuinely hostile talk is one of the issues raised in this paper. Another issue of interest is whether cultural differences observable in politeness strategies, such as the preference for directness over indirectness in Polish (Wierzbicka 1991: 64-65) translate into impoliteness strategies.

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**The grammatical expression of politeness in Tapirapé**

*Walkiria N. Praça and Helena Da S.G. Vincente, Catholic University of Brasilia, Brazil*

Tapirapé is an indigenous language spoken by approximately 700 people who live in two indigenous reserves in Mato Grosso state, Brazil. This language, like many other South American indigenous languages, displays a linguistic phenomenon known in the literature as "person hierarchy" (Zwicky, 1977; Montserrat & Soares, 1983), whose breaking, we argue, can be interpreted as the speaker's attempt to save the hearer's negative face. Tapirapé verbs, even if transitive, have only one argument position, to be filled by the item playing the role of the subject – actually represented by an affix attached to the verb – regardless of the number of participants involved in the discourse. The filling of this slot is done preferably by the highest person in the hierarchy, which, in the case of Tapirapé, is $1^{st} > 2^{nd} > 3^{rd}$. Even if a $2^{nd}$ or a $3^{rd}$ person is the Agent and a $1^{st}$ person is the Patient, it is the $1^{st}$ person that will be marked in the verb. However, Praça (2007) notes that this rigid hierarchy can be broken for the sake of face work. Our data show that asymmetrical interactions, for example, can – and generally will – be relieved by means of the promotion of the $2^{nd}$ person affix to the slot otherwise occupied by that of the $1^{st}$ person, so, instead of saying "*I* will help (you)", Tapirapé people would rather say something like "*You* will be helped (by me), a fact that suggests that negative politeness strategies are strongly observed in the language.

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**Im/politeness in the pursuit of intimacy? An analysis of British pick-up artist (PUA) interactions**

***Oliver Hambling-Jones and Andrew Merrison, York St John University, U.K.***

A prototypical "PUA" or "pick-up artist" is a male who seeks to be successful at 'seducing' women; this is a categorisation that he claims for himself.

The individual PUA may operate as a member of the wider "pick-up" community, a highly organised Community of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) emanating from the USA. A common community belief is that the means of seduction are not rooted in physical attractiveness, social status or wealth, but 'in the interaction'.

The 'art' in PUA may be seen in the relative success and speed with which the protagonist may gain intimacy with their fellow interlocutor. The current line of enquiry is, therefore:

> *What observable, conversational 'moves' are employed that may contribute to developing intimacy and accelerating that process and, specifically, how do these relate to issues of im/politeness?*

The research reported here is based on a corpus of interactions between British, male PUA–

female groupings in the UK. It offers a discursive treatment of im/politeness strategies such as "negs" ('face assault', Culpeper, 2005); 'face flattering acts' (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2006) and other evaluations/displays of social value (Goffman, 1967) to focus on how interlocutors move from a state of unaquaintedness to displays of solidarity and affect (Svennevig, 1999) by:

- deploying particular conversational sequences and (re)negotiating rights and obligations (Spencer-Oatey, 2000) to (co-)construct the state of the relationship

- employing strategies of 'other' involvement and joint ownership of the interaction (Goffman, 1967)

- establishing in-equity as part-process of testing the boundaries of the relationship (Clark, 1996; Davies et al., 2007)

This paper, reporting on work in progress, offers a perspective on issues such as these. Observable qualitative issues of topic and the development of intimacy begin to explicate the nature of the pick-up community and PUA 'practice'.

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**Insincere apologies for trivial offences**

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The apology is of central interest in the field of politeness, involving participants in resolving interactional problems: "it is perhaps the example *par excellence* of politeness at work" (Grainger and Harris 2007:1). This paper seeks to extend our understanding of apologies by examining apology strategies in naturally-occurring email discussions.

Goffman in his seminal work on apologies in spoken language highlighted two significant factors: evidence of regret on the part of the offender, and acknowledgement or acceptance

on the part of the offended (1971:90). Later, Owen (1983:119,121) replaced Goffman's expectation of the offender's sincerity with the offender's intention to abstain from re-offending. But recent politeness research sees apologies in terms of "the right amount of effort and work" (Mills, 2003:112), which aligns with the concept of facework that is "merely appropriate" (Locher and Watts 2005:9).

While our email discussion data did contain retrospective apologies for both minor and major offences accompanied by a variety of sincerity markers, a striking feature was the frequent occurrence of apologies sent *in the same message* as the trivial offences they were intended to mitigate (long messages, poor spelling, etc.). There is little evidence of regret on the part of the apologiser, who could have simply refrained from sending the offending message or else edited it to remove the offence. There is no evidence of intention to reform (indeed the offender is likely to re-offend). Unlike Goffman's spoken apologies, and some of the retrospective apologies in our own data, such apologies are never acknowledged or accepted, and the apologisers often distance themselves from responsibility for the offence by the use of impersonal forms. Nevertheless, these apologies do seem to be an appropriate mitigation of minor inconveniences and as such they contribute to the smooth running of the discussion.

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**Rules of impoliteness and refusals: Types of face threat and achieved goals**

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Persons who would like to refuse an offer, request or invitation often face a dilemma between wanting to achieve their goal and taking into account the face needs of their interlocutors. They also have to take into consideration that more than one face threat is present after the refusal (a threat to their own face included) and the consequences that (might) follow if the refusal message is not effective. That is, 'refusers' have to consider not only whether or not the message is suitable for the specific context, but they also need to find the appropriate strategies that would be able to communicate the message competently by satisfying the face needs of both of the interlocutors.

Keeping this complicated task in mind, a corpus consisting of more than two thousand naturally occurring refusals was collected by the researcher and her students between 2005 and 2008 with the aim of investigating three issues: firs, to identify the strategies that native speakers of Turkish use to refuse interlocutors with varying characteristics (e.g., age, gender); second, to uncover whether or not, as claimed by Johnston (2007), by refusing an offer/request the 'refusers' in Turkish culture concentrate more on eliminating the threat to their autonomy (i.e., their negative face) or are they more concerned about the positive face

of the requester (Besson et al 1998)?; finally, to evaluate the effectiveness of the different refusal strategies employed by the speakers.

The results of the study hint to how native speakers of Turkish classify refusals on the (im)politeness scale and how they try to balance instrumental, identity and relational goals while they employ this speech act so that the least damaged is caused to the both parties' face needs.

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**Taboo or not taboo?: bathroom graffiti and the GP consultation**

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Many of the items used to refer to genitalia are considered taboo and, in many contexts, also as impolite language. However, understanding of what constitutes an impolite utterance is in flux, both in lay circles and among (im)politeness theorists (Bousfield and Culpeper 2008; Bousfield and Locher 2008; Mills 2003) .

Drawing on recently collected data, in this talk I discuss instances of references to genitalia in graffiti on toilet doors and during general practice consultations. Both the toilet cubicle and the general practice consulting room are restricted areas in which context-specific behavioural norms apply. My aim will be to show how the contrasting situational norms of the two contexts may affect local notions of taboo language and to consider whether this can shed light on the wider debate about how interpretations of (im)politeness come about.

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**The role of politeness in business research: Issues and implications for researchers**

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Language is central to business researchers interested in exploring talk and interaction in organisations and markets (e.g. Boje 2001, Coupland 2001, Gabriel 2004, Stern et. al. 1998). Business research methods texts, however, rarely comment on politeness in research interactions other than to urge ‘polite persistence’ on the researcher’s behalf (Bryman and Bell 2007). Indeed, as business researchers, we rarely question it ourselves, assuming

politeness on our part and that of the individual being interviewed as an implicit social dimension of the research interaction.

Politeness theory suggests that individuals adopt politeness strategies in social interactions to achieve personal and social aims. It is a means of showing not only courtesy and deference, but also social position through language (Trask 2007, 223).
Therefore, the use of such linguistic strategies by respondents in research interviews should prompt us to question our taken-for-granted assumptions. We should consider why, where and how politeness strategies are used and what they mean for business research interview interactions and for the interpretation of the data.

This paper explores politeness as a speech act that has methodological implications for business researchers. I illustrate the use of politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson 1987) with extracts from interview transcripts and explore this use in relation to a number of issues; purpose, context and pattern of use.

Subsequently, I propose that the use of politeness strategies within research interviews has implications that need to be further considered as they impact upon the role of the researcher, the researcher/respondent relationship and reflexivity as well as the interpretation and validity of the data collected.

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## Narratives of '*impoliteness*' experiences as a way to access the hearer's criteria for *politeness*

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Since Eelen's (2001) criticism that politeness studies have concentrated too exclusively on 'politeness', greater emphasis is now on understanding *impoliteness*. Researching *impoliteness* is not an end in itself but serves as a way to elucidate *politeness.* Goffman (1963:7) claimed that it is 'negatively eventful' behaviour "which gives rise to specific negative sanctions if not performed, but which, if it is performed, passes unperceived as an

event". Then it is this 'negatively marked' behaviour (Watts 2003) which reveals the hearer's implicit criteria for appropriate utterances in particular situations.

How can we best research this? Inspired by Spencer-Oatey's (2002) research asking 14 Chinese students in UK to keep a record of 'rapport sensitive' incidents, initially I devised a questionnaire to gather personal accounts of 'negatively eventful' incidents experienced by language users in the past, along with their subjective feelings about them. But later, as my epistemological stance moved on, my research gradually shifted toward using a *narrative* approach. Similar 'interpretive turns' (Rabinow and Sullivan 1979) have occurred in some branches of psychology and sociology. As politeness studies move toward a post-modern interpretive era, a *narrative* approach might provide a promising new methodology.

This study is based on a Japanese woman's narrative about two British students' 'negatively marked' behaviours toward her as their teacher. As the narrative was recorded some months after the incidents, it contains her changing emotions – from initial anger, to apathy, then to a self-reflective analysis of the situation and finally to a fresh realisation of her own 'implicit criteria of appropriateness', which she was, unreasonably, expecting them to share. It was a kind of embodied aesthetic sense, which has become *doxa* (Bourdieu 1977), the taken-for-granted preconscious reality, but was actually heavily culture laden.

**Explicit evaluative comments on Turkish impoliteness: Building a model of impoliteness2 on impoliteness1**

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Many past politeness theories have been devised "at the expense of ignoring the lay person's conception of politeness as revealed through their uses of the terms polite and impolite" (Culpeper, 2008, p.19). With the intention of using (im)politeness1 (lay) conceptualisations to inform the (scientific) theorizing of (im)politeness2, this study investigates the conceptualisation of 'impoliteness' (Tr. *Kaba*) for Turkish native speakers (hereafter, TNS). The data for the study comes from a number of sources: a compiled corpus of impoliteness narratives from "sharing" websites (i.e. confession websites, blogs, forums, etc.) amounting to 235 tokens, in-depth interviews with TNS on their laymen conceptualisation of impolite acts, and a further 1306 metapragmatic evaluations of impoliteness produced by TNS collected via an open-ended questionnaire through which they reported events they had experienced in the past they would label using one of the impoliteness "explicit metapragmatic comment" lexemes (Locher and Watts, 2008, p.84) in the Turkish language (i.e. *kaba, terbiyesiz, nezaketsiz, saygısız, görgüsüz, küstah, patavatsız, küstah).* The research design and data analysis was mostly qualitative-emergent although Spencer-Oatey's (2000, 2005) Rapport Mangement model was later used to interpret the major findings. The analysis was carried out by calculating the primary strongest bases of evaluation for each (im)politeness episode reported by TNS. The data revealed that Turkish impoliteness evaluations were based on eight components/bases of impoliteness: (1) FACE-ATTACK: (a) Quality face and (b) Social identity face attack Impoliteness, (2) RIGHTS OFFENSE: (a) Equity rights (b) (Dis)association rights threatening impoliteness (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, 2002, 2005), (3) EXPRESSIVE IMPOLITENESS (i.e. evaluations solely regarding inappropriateness in language choices made, use of bad language, and violations of turn-taking, etc.), (4) INATTENTIVENESS (a) Inattentiveness to other's emotion(s), (b) Inattentiveness to other's need and/or attentiveness to self-Need(s), and (c) Inattentiveness to other/Attentiveness to self-goal(s), (5) DISREGARD for CUSTOM (i.e. social conventions

and traditions), (6) AGGRESSIVE and OFFENSIVE SELF-PRESENTATION (Schütz, 1998) (i.e. trying to project a –too– good/favourable image or trying to look good by making others look bad/less favourable), (7) SELF-EMOTION MISMANAGEMENT (i.e. not being able to hold back feelings like anger, impatience, and contempt in communication and not being able to overlook other people's wrong doings), (8) PHYSICAL IMPOLITENESS (i.e. practicing physical violence (e.g. from light beating to full battery) and/or mental bullying (i.e. threats to inflict physical pain). However, many (im)polite acts, in fact, could be regarded as borderline cases of one or more of these elements (i.e. bases for (im)politeness evaluations). Especially for some (im)politeness narratives, they may be functioning as an inseparable mixture. Based on the data, a framework to capture the *interrelatedness* of the bases of evaluations of impoliteness is suggested. Evaluations made for each self-reported episode of (im)politeness, at the surface level or the deep level, was expectedly under the influence of episode internal and external details such as age, gender, status, power and distance differentials, but for Turkish –more importantly– the less discussed aspects of politeness such as 'historicity' (Ruhi, 2008), 'motivation' and/or 'intention' (Bousfield, 2008) (i.e. what the interlocutors think is embedded in the act as a transactional or interactional goal for the self and other), the influences of 'public versus private domain', the notion of perceived 'sincerity' (Xie, He, and Lin, 2005) and 'reciprocity' were found to be at the heart of the impoliteness1 evaluation.

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## Face attack in the hospital situation

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In the paper I try to show how the patient's face is managed in the hospital situation. Two types of interaction are investigated: patient-doctor and patient-lower hospital staff member. I concentrate on exploring "the hostile side of social interaction", as patients are often not treated respectfully by members of the medical staff. Thus, the main topic of the paper is ***face-attack***, defined by Tracy (2008: 173), as "communicative acts that are (or are seen as) intentionally rude, disrespectful, and insulting". Face-attack can consist of a single act or an exchange which seem to be inappropriate to a particular context (ibid.; Kienpointner, 1997). It can take different forms, from the complete ignoring of the patient to openly impolite remarks.

A theoretical framework employed in the paper is the ***Cultural Face model*** (Jakubowska, 2008), in which face has two interrelated dimensions, social and interpersonal. The social dimension of face, which involves socially relevant attributes of the individual's self-image, includes three types of face: ***moral face*** (face tied to moral conduct), ***prestige face*** (face as a position in a social setting) and ***relational face*** (face tied to interpersonal skills and facework competence, and emerging from the relationship between interactants) (cf. Spencer-Oatey, 2005; Arundale, 2006). The interpersonal dimension of face consists of two complementary elements: ***solidarity face***, resulting from the desire for proximity and inclusion, and ***autonomy face***, resulting from the desire for distance, independence and individuation (cf. Brown and Levinson, 1987; Arundale, 2006).

The data used in the analysis come from the participant observation carried out in one of the Silesian Medical University hospitals in Katowice.

On the basis of the analysis of the data, the following conclusions can be reached:

- The patient's prestige face and autonomy face are most frequently threatened in the hospital situation.

- The patient's face is more often threatened by members of lower hospital staff (Autonomy face and Prestige face) than by doctors (Prestige face and Relational face).

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# Linguistic Impoliteness And Rudeness II (LIAR II)
## Paper Abstracts

### Undermining by bureaucracy: adversarial 'negotiations' between council and community

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The background to this paper is a community initiative which for ethical reasons will remain anonymous, and a local council response which will likewise remain anonymous. Between these two groups of people, the negotiations over an asset transfer took three years, and engendered enormous levels of acrimony on both sides. Given that the community forms part of the constituency of the council, and that the council's function is to serve its citizens, it is perhaps surprising to see the way in which a potentially beneficial project has been set up as an adversarial battle.

The data to be analysed for this paper is the final paper drafted for submission to the council executive, recommending the refusal of the project on a number of grounds. The thesis of this study is that the recommendation for refusal, which purports to be supported by reasoned argument is in fact supported by a serial undermining of the credibility of the community group concerned. In other words, the face of the community group is indirectly threatened in their representation by a third party in (ultimately public) written documents.

### When journalists break the rules: Insulting public figures during broadcast interviews

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The traditional political interview is characterized as argumentative discourse. Its confrontational mode, however, is legitimized by the institutional norms of the genre. The boundaries of 'reasonable hostility' (Tracy, 2008) are insured by several discursive practices. These boundaries are appreciated by the public in general, opposed to journalists' manifestation of over-aggressiveness (Clayman and Heritage, 2002). Research up to date was concerned with the ways in which interviewer and interviewee maneuvered their steps within the rules of institutional discourse. Whereas most attention has been given to cases in which the interviewees tried to *stretch* the rules, only few studies have dealt with the actual *breaking* of the rules by journalists. Most of these studies have analyzed the famous Rather-Bush interchange (Clayman and Heritage, 2002).

In the proposed study we analyze cases in which interviewers on Israeli TV and radio shows have violated the normative modes of interacting with public figures and, in doing so, threatened the *face* of their interviewees as well as their own professional *face*. The paper will focus on cases which have developed into 'talk scandals' (Ekstrom and Johansson, 2008), including the effort made by journalists' to restore their image. We will compare our findings with other scholars' findings regarding journalists' deviation from the rules in two more cultural contexts (U.S. and England).

Initial findings indicate that the *face threatening acts* can be identified at the linguistic level (for example, treating interviewees or their actions in an offensive manner), at the paralinguistic level (for example, using a Supercilious tone or gesture towards the interviewee), or at the interactional level (for example, preventing the interviewee's right to deliver his/her message). Responses to these *impolite practices* may lead to public debate focusing on the appropriate relationship between journalist and politician; a debate in which

the former is held accountable. The conclusion will focus on the potential effect of corrective actions on the journalistic profession, and speculate on the question of what this type of scandals can teach us on the changing relationship between journalists and politicians.

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**Issues of cross-cultural interruption in a multicultural group**

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The research to be presented has been motivated by a general concern for the study of the principles underlying interaction in cross-cultural context and more specifically in a context where participants share a common language of communication; a lingua franca.

The research has been carried out in a ten-member micro-community that shared a common language of communication, English, demonstrating though differences in the members' communicative competence. The composition of the micro-community made it Greek dominated, as five out of the ten participants were Greeks, while the rest were of different nationalities – Korean, German, French, Indian-English, English.

The data comprised of recordings of every day interactions of the aforementioned community that was analyzed using Conversation Analysis. The focus was on whether the Greek participants interrupted their interlocutors in non- legitimate places during the conversation or whether they legitimately took the turn offered.

The main argument of the paper would be that despite the "interruptional" sociolinguistic transfer the Greek speakers exhibited, they did not actually interrupt but were actively involved in the interaction. This seems to be in line with Sifianou's (2000) claim that the Greek politeness system is more oriented towards positive politeness strategies while the British (and arguably other Western) politeness systems are more oriented towards negative politeness strategies.

I interpret these findings as an indicator supporting Sifianou's argument and claim that what is a polite, personal way of interaction for a Greek might be considered as rude behaviour for someone from a different cultural background.

**A typology of impoliteness behaviour for the English and Spanish cultures**

*Silvia Kaul de Marlangeon, National University of Rio Cuarto, Argentina and Laura Alba-Juez, National Distance Education University, Spain*

The present study takes as its point of departure Kaul de Marlangeon's (2008a) typology of verbal impoliteness in the Spanish-speaking cultures, and, using a corpus of English, attempts to test its validity and/or application to the English-speaking cultures. Kaul de Marlangeon's ([1992] 1995, 2003, 2005 a y b & 2008b) and Alba-Juez's (2000, 2006, 2007 & 2008) studies on the nature of impoliteness are also taken into consideration as previous background studies, as well as Culpeper's (1996, 2005) and Kienpointner's (1997) typologies of the phenomenon, together with Bravo's (1999, 2004 y 2005), Janney & Arndt (1993) and Wierzbicka's (2003) ideas and methodological observations.

In Kaul de Marlangeon's typology, the different types of impolite acts in the Spanish-speaking culture share in common either the intention to be impolite or the absence thereof. This common intention or lack of it is thought to be reflected and regulated by the culture in question, and the types or classes of this theoretical construct constitute a group of choices made by the speakers in order to manifest their rude or impolite behaviour. The main aim of such a typology was to find a taxonomy that would focus on the differences regarding impolite attitudes and behaviour within and along an impoliteness continuum.

On the basis of the above-mentioned background work, we intend to propose a typology of impoliteness for the English-speaking culture that allows for its comparison and contrast with its Spanish-speaking counterpart. The results obtained so far make us feel inclined to argue in favor of the existence of more similarities than differences between the two cultures under scrutiny.

**Self-enhancement vs. self-effacement and impoliteness vs. politeness**

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According to Ting-Toomey (1999), self-enhancement, as a communication style, values the importance of boasting about one's accomplishments and abilities; whereas, self-effacement style, emphasizes the importance of humbling one's effort or performance. Spencer-Oatey (2008) maintains these two norms may link with participants' beliefs and values because people may develop strong views as to which principle is impolite or polite on which communicative occasions; whether participants should or should not boast or be self-effacing in given contexts. Hence, she calls these two principles value-laden norms because the evaluative element makes the norms sensitive to rapport management.

In intercultural communication among university students and faculty, conflicts and misunderstandings can result in serious problems due to different beliefs and values on these principles held by individuals from different sociocultural backgrounds. One communication style viewed as polite by some individuals may be seen as impolite or even rude by others. Interlocutors may make evaluative judgments and develop negative attitudes toward those holding opposite views. This can have serious interactional consequences, a compelling issue that begs more research.

This qualitative study has thus been projected to explore how and to what extent people's beliefs and values influence their choice of self-enhancement or self-effacement as communication style in different contexts, and how their beliefs and values shape their views on politeness and impoliteness. Research participants are university students and faculty from diverse sociocultural backgrounds. Drawing from Gee's (2005) theory and methodology of

discourse analysis, this study analyzes both participants' linguistic behaviors and their styles of relational work. Data collection has started (from January through April 2009) through interview with students and faculty; and observation in intercultural settings with student peers and student-faculty communication. This study purports to gain a better understanding of intercultural communication among student peers and students with faculty, and raise questions for further research.

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**Verbal aggression: Towards a typology of contextual parameters**

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In our increasingly pluralistic and multi-cultural societies the phenomenon of verbal aggression is increasingly felt to be a problem (Butler, 1997). Over the last thirty years or so there has been an intense debate in the social sciences about forms, intentions and effects of this phenomenon and about strategies for controlling and avoiding it. The focus of this debate differs from country to country (e.g. Leets & Giles, 1999).

So far, linguistic contributions to the analysis of verbal aggression have mainly dealt with face-threatening acts and their possible mitigation through politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Culpeper, 1996) and with the conventionalization of aggression and violence in lexis (insults, swear words) and grammar (Lagorgette & Larrivée, 2004, Allen & Burridge, 2006). What we want to show in this paper is that verbal abuse is also based on a variety of contextual factors interacting with the verbal means employed. Following the lead of the typologies of illocutionary acts developed by Austin and Searle (1976) we will develop a typology of aggressive verbal acts on the basis of a systematic study of these contextual parameters. The contextual factors which we have found to be relevant so far include *inter alia* the following:

(i) the target (Is the act targeted or not, is it targeted against individuals or groups, is the hearer also the target? etc)
(ii) the audience (Is there an audience or not?)
(iii) the background assumptions (value judgements, prejudice, stereotypes, etc.)
(iv) the manner (repetition, loudness; direct or indirect performance of aggressive acts)
(v) use of conventional or non-conventional means of aggression
(vi) truth or falsity of a statement (nothing hurts like the truth vs. defamation, libel, slander)
(vii) direct performance vs. omission of an act (insults vs. acts of disrespect, aggressive silence, etc.)
(viii) the nature of the relationship between aggressor and target (symmetric or asymmetric)

A thorough study of these contextual factors and their interaction will ultimately enable us to develop a typology of rude or aggressive verbal acts that is independent of the terminological differentiations available in individual languages.

**Self-promotion and other-depreciation in scientific discourse: Cross-cultural corpus research**

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The aim of the paper is twofold. Methodologically, it identifies the opportunities of corpus analysis in pragmatic research on scientific discourse, in particular in terms of the strategies of (im)politeness employed. While there are available several valuable contributions to the field (e.g. Myers 1989, Tannen 2002), only few provide conclusions based on the results of corpus analysis (e.g. Hunston 2005). It appears that applicability of corpus research on (im)politeness in scientific discourse may be hindered by methodological challenges, of which identifying the basic unit of analysis and establishing the appropriate *tertium comparationis* in the corpora seem to be particularly salient. Recognizing these potential obstacles, I propose a pragma-rhetorical model, postulating strict rigours in corpus design and the necessity of including units at different levels of syntactic organization as the relevant discourse realizations of the strategies in question.

In the second part of the paper I present the results of a cross-cultural pragmatic analysis of self-promotion and other-depreciation in scientific discourse, exploiting the utility of the model proposed. Specifically, the research involved three parallel corpora of scientific articles in the field of linguistics: English as L1 texts, English as L2 texts written by Polish authors, and Polish as L1 texts, published in the period 1980-2000. Cultural specificity of the relevant scientific communities and historical variation are deemed to be the major factors influencing the repertoire of the strategies of self-promotion and other-depreciation, patterns of their distribution and frequency of occurrence in the particular groups of texts. I will claim that the results obtained in the quantitative research are consistent with the corresponding profile of scientific community, and that their variation may be associated with the changing context of scientific knowledge production and dissemination, from the primarily national scientific community in 1980 to the pan-national context of operation, enabled by the digital media, from the year 2000 on. A corollary of the process is the visible focus on promoting oneself in the international context to gain the privileged position in this highly competitive environment, often made at the expense of criticizing other authors.

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**Violent facework in sixteenth-century Dutch farce-writing**

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The *rederijkers*, poets and playwrights who dominated cultural life in the sixteenth-century Low Countries, handed down to us an affluent reservoir of resourcefully invented and ingeniously designed strong language. As playwrights, they appear to have taken much pleasure in conceiving occasions for their characters to engage in long-lasting and sometimes elaborate exchanges of insults and threats. Verbal dueling of devilish *sinneken*-couples spice up the dramatized debates between allegorical characters in the *spelen van sinne* (morality plays), while in farces even the slightest upset can arouse the characters to vocalize fanciful and highly stylized blasphemy, name-calling, and intimidation.

In my paper, I will demonstrate the *rederijkers*' design and furnishing of violent farce dialogue, and I will show how the verbal interaction of the characters often literally involves brutal facework, expressing the participants' intention to maltreat each other's noses, eyes, and mouths. I will argue that in the *rederijkers*' penchant for strong language we can distinguish the aesthetics of what Mikhail Bakhtin, in his renowned Rabelais-study, called 'grotesque realism'. I intend to discuss how the grotesque vocabulary and imagery expressed and developed in *rederijkers*' farce writing and in other texts (and pictorial art) may have been a cultural countermovement that co-evolved with an increasing oversensitiveness in society to (potential) offense – much like it is the case in the present-day Netherlands, for that matter.

**Impoliteness strategies in negotiating power in broadcast political interview**

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This paper reports on a section of my research project into the workings of power within broadcast media discourse in British and Russian cultures. The following research question will be addressed in the paper: to what extent are impoliteness and rudeness a feature of power relations between interviewers and interviewees in British and Russian political interviews. In addressing that question I analyse excerpts from the BBC discussion and news programmes *HARDtalk, Straight Talk, Newsnight, Question Time* and Russian TV programmes of a like genre and format. Methodologically, my research is based on DA, CDA and CA with the general principal of priotarising micro-analysis to explain macro-issues.

My research is informed by scholarship on power, media discourse, impoliteness and rudeness studies. In analysing impoliteness I draw on Culpeper's definition of it and his taxonomy of impoliteness strategies (Culpeper 1996, 2005, 2008); theories that address power as dynamic, relational, contextually-expressed, complex and contestable; and studies of power that propose that it is related to conflict, confrontation, disagreement, asymmetry, control, manipulation, dominance, rudeness, and impoliteness (Hutchby 1996; Locher 2004; Limberg 2008; Thornborrow 2004; Wartenberg 1990; Watts 1991, 2003).

On the basis of the scholarship, my claim is that power, being a multi-dimensional phenomenon, should be analysed alongside several dimensions simultaneously and can be explained better by characterising it through its "contextual variants" such as conflict, confrontation, asymmetry, impoliteness, etc. I argue that relations between power and its contextual variants are similar to that between an abstract unit like a phoneme and its realization through allophones. I support this by showing how interviewers and interviewees use culture-specific impoliteness strategies in their power game in broadcast political interview.

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## Pragmatic transfer in L2 comprehension, production and learning: the role of the teacher

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The paper will briefly address the question of pragmatic transfer in the context of foreign language learning and teaching and suggest possible solutions concerning its didacticisation. By pragmatic transfer we shall assume any carryover of pragmatic knowledge from one culture to another in situations of intercultural communication (cf. Zegarac & Pennington 2000: 165). From the pedagogical point of view, however, it can be defined as "the influence exerted by learners' pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than L2 on their comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information" (Kasper 1992: 207).

Language teaching methodologies are increasingly acknowledging the fact that language learners, regardless of their language proficiency, need to develop the right level of sophistication not only in their linguistic competences, but also in the socio-pragmatic and intercultural competences, in order to successfully accomplish L2 communicative goals and intentions.

The teacher's role in the process is critical and needs to be clearly defined. By promoting his/her students' L2 cultural fluency, s/he does not impose any specific cultural norms and values, nor does s/he enforce any particular standard of behaviour (cf. Thomas 1983: 96). "Rather, it is the teacher's job to equip the student to express her/himself in exactly the way s/he chooses to do so – rudely, tactfully, or in an elaborately polite manner. What we want to prevent is her/his being unintentionally rude or subservient" (Thomas 1983: 96). In other

words, the teacher facilitates the process, helping the student to become a more autonomous and reflective learner and, subsequently, a successful communicator in intercultural settings.

We shall conclude by illustrating the above standpoint with appropriate examples from the foreign language classroom.

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**Why Russians often sound impolite**

*Tatiana Larina, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia*

As numerous cross-cultural studies have shown, politeness despite its universal character (Brown & Levinson 1987) is a culture-specific phenomenon (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989; Holmes 1990, Wierzbicka 1985, 1991, 1997, 2003; Watts et al 1992; Sifianou 1992, Janney and Arndt 1993, Fukushima 2000, Pizziconi 2003, Hickey and Stewart 2005, Leech 2005, Terkourafi 2005 and many others). Politeness and impoliteness are terms referring to ways in which individuals use language socially (Watts 2003: 48). People from different cultures do not always share ideas as to what is polite and what is not. The same verbal or non-verbal act being polite in one culture may be perceived as inappropriate or even rude in another culture. Even lexemes polite and politeness vary in meaning and connotations associated with them (Watts 2003: 14). This paper deals with differences in Russian and English notions of politeness, in politeness strategies and communicative styles (Larina 2008). It aims at explaining through culture, social organization and cultural values why Russians are often perceived by westerners, especially by the British, as impolite since they are not vigilant in guarding one's personal space, do not often say *please* and *thank you*, may ask private questions, interrupt and interfere into conversation, feel free to give advice, often sound too direct, over-assertive, argumentative, and even aggressive. The paper argues that the idea of *absolute politeness scale* and *relative politeness scale* (Leech 2005) is relevant to intercultural comparative analyses of politeness (when different cultural contexts are compared). "When horizontal distance is reduced absolute politeness is also reduced" but it does not always mean that "we move to impoliteness". The comparative analysis was conducted on the basis of ethnographic observations and questionnaires.

**Acoustic patterns of 'aggressive' speech among adolescent Glaswegian males**

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Glasgow has long been identified as a place where violence and physical aggression are destructive aspects city life (Macaulay 1977: 94), and recent years have witnessed an emergence of linguistic practices associated with violent adolescents, including nasalization and tense vowel production.

Most research on working-class adolescent language in Glasgow, however, has focused on the ongoing processes of linguistic change (e.g. Lawson & Stuart-Smith 1999). While these studies provide a detailed description of the linguistic landscape of Glasgow, there has been no analytical focus on how localised social meanings of language are constructed within particular communities (a notable exception is Stuart-Smith 2007). Moreover, despite the stereotypical associations between Glaswegian and violence, there have been no quantitative studies which have mapped the acoustic patterns of 'violent' or 'aggressive' speech.

This paper presents an analysis of data collected in three batches (Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3) from 15 working-class adolescent males during an ethnographic study of a high school in Glasgow, Scotland. These 15 speakers constitute a number of different Communities of Practice (three in Year 2 and four in Year 3). In order to investigate the linguistic patterning of 'violent' and 'aggressive' speech, 5500 instances of the variable CAT from Year 2 and Year 3 were analysed acoustically. Tokens in 'violent' discourse were then quantitatively compared with tokens in 'non-violent' discourse. Multiple linear regression analysis reported a significant effect of 'violent' speech for the Year 3 data, but not for the Year 2 data.

While the ethnographic data shows that specific orientations towards violent social practices are an implicit part of how the participants construct their social identities, the quantitative results suggest that 'violence' interacts in complex ways with vocalic variation among adolescent Glaswegian males, calling into question the stereotypical associations between working-class adolescent language and violence in Glasgow.

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**Cross-cultural impoliteness and inter-lingual word taboos in the language classroom**

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Inter-lingual word taboos represent a curious lexical intersection: phoneme combinations

which may be extremely offensive and/or impolite in one language, are nothing of the sort in a second language. *Une phoque* is a *seal* in French, something quite different *en Anglais.*

What comes to mind for an English speaker hearing *une phoque* for the first time, is similar to what might come to mind for Arabic speakers upon hearing the English words *unique*, or *zip*.

Although perfectly inoffensive in Language A, the terms are vulgar and offensive in Language B. This study will examine particular examples of interlingual word taboos from English to Arabic and vice versa in the context of English language teaching. Variables from Brown and Levinson's (1987) original theory of politeness such as *face, social distance, degree of imposition,* and *power* will be applied in discussing perceived offensive/impolite language situations which arise in English language teaching contexts. Gestures and other

paralinguistic behavior can be cross-culturally offensive as well, and this will also be

addressed with insights being drawn from previous research in related areas (e.g. Holster, 2005). The main implications of this study are related to foreign language pedagogy. Language learning involves acquiring forms which may be perceived as offensive (whether in the first or second language), and the acquisition of these forms (for students' receptive skills repertoires, at least, if not necessarily for their productive skills) should be seen as a vital part of the language learning and cultural adaptation process.

**The influence of the solidarity and power strategy upon the politeness forms in Arab culture (based on Egyptian dramatic literature)**

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In Arab culture since tribal times, which were marked by collectivism, the norms of behaviour have been determined by the solidarity strategy on the one hand, and by the power strategy on the other hand. The former gave rise to the tribal ethos which encompasses, in particular, such characteristics as loyalty towards tribe and fellow tribesmen, dignity, hospitality, nobleness (indispensable to survive in the desert), courage and elocution. Spontaneous behaviours allowing for the expression of emotions were regarded as the norm. The power strategy has resulted in obedience towards the tribal chieftains, the elderly and the authorities. The evolving cultural norms have come to be a frame of reference for polite and impolite behaviours. Due to the vitality of traditions their importance has survived up to the present time. The solidarity strategy manifests itself in particular in the sense of community, which is expressed, for example, by the phrase *ma fi fark* (there is no difference between us, everything we have is common) and which is evidenced by the rule of the most far-reaching hospitality. The distance between people is minimized. The power strategy is expressed through the sense of dependence on stronger individuals and the related expressions and behavioural scripts. The distance between people is increasing. The solidarity and power strategy as well as the forms of positive and negative politeness in the contemporary Arab world are competing. This rivalry manifests itself in particular in the forms of address, for example, with regard to parents official and unofficial forms are used alternately (when addressing mother – *mama* – mum and Madam - *hadritik*). I intend to prove that politeness in the Arab world requires the use of both positive and negative forms and I am going to present a selection of the expressions illustrating them. My analysis will be based on dramas written by the well-known Egyptian playwrights, including Mahmoud Taymour, Numaan Ashour and Sad ad-Deen Wahba, as well as on the lexical forms used in the Egyptian television

series. I will employ the methods used in the field of pragmatics, intercultural communication and linguistics.

**'You are an Indian, you must be puritanical!' Diversity in the notions of politeness among Indian students**

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The study discusses the limitations of Brown and Levinson's model in the intercultural context by highlighting the diversity in notions of constituents of polite behavior, by age, gender, and cultural background in the Indian context. The diversity in India mirrors intercultural situations in the international scenario. The participants include 150 students each from the Undergraduate, Masters, and Doctoral programs of study in an internationally reputed institute in Eastern India. The background of the participants reflects more than 10 cultures, more than 25 disciplines of study, and an age range of about 25 years. The notions of politeness are assessed through responses to a survey that was designed and pilot-tested for validity in the above mentioned context. Results reinforce the role of an ever-changing context in the interpretation of behavior as rude or polite. The variations in the notions of politeness, rudeness, negative politeness, and *buttering* are discussed in light of the different backgrounds of the participants. The study concludes with recommendations for application of the results of the study especially to service based organizations.

**Advise-acts by Turkish EFL Students**

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This is research in progress in the field of interlanguage pragmatics and it aims to investigate non-native speakers' production of advice-acts. It studies the production of advice at two proficiency levels: 1st and 4th grade EFL students at a Turkish University. It will look at what strategies are employed by students to realize advice acts. The data will be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively in terms of politeness markers and indirectness. A taxonomy that divides advice acts into direct, conventionally indirect and indirect (Hinkel, 1997) will be used as a starting point to analyze the acts and to compare the two groups in the production of the acts. More specifically an answer to the following question will be sought: Does the level of proficiency influence Turkish EFL students' production of advice in both quantitative and qualitative terms?

The second aim is to compare advice-acts collected via a discourse completion task (DCT) and e-mails from 1st and 4th year students. DCT data from 100 1st year students and 100 4th year students have been collected. 14 e-mail postings from 1st year students and 28 from 4th year students giving advice have been received. Thus, the second question we would like to find an answer to is the following: Is there a difference in the production of advice between DCT and e-mail data?

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**'You're fired': Impoliteness in BBC TV show *The Apprentice***

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This paper investigates the use of impoliteness in the BBC Television show *The Apprentice*. Given the recent developments within our understandings of what constitutes 'impolite' behaviour, a critical analysis of the main approaches to, and definitions of, 'impoliteness' is undertaken. The analysis then focuses on the boardroom element from series one of the show, where there seems to be evidence to warrant the inclusion of a new defensive strategy 'express benefit of trigger' of impolite behaviour in the models postulated by Culpeper *et al*. (2003) and Bousfield (2007). In addition to this, the data also appears to suggest a refinement of current models of impoliteness is necessary to include the notion of 'impoliteness about', where comments about, but not directly addressed to, other hearers maintain a Face-Threatening element. Given that impoliteness / rudeness / linguistic aggression is often a precursor to other forms of conflict for, as models such as Culpeper *et al.* (2003) and Bousfield (2007; 2008) suggest, 'impoliteness' can trigger further 'impoliteness', this finding may help understandings of the onset of 'impolite' discourse.

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**Untamed vs. tamed speech: Aggravation vs. polite mitigation in language**

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The paper focusses on untamed, aggravated language (Lachenicht 1980), the verbal behaviour of an individual who does not bother to abide by the social super-norm of polite mitigation. Such an individual uses a type of speech that is emotionally conditioned or is the expression of a free, energetic personality who chooses to be direct and maximally perspicuous in his/her intentions and wants.

As a linguistic phenomenon, aggravation is relevant especially in pragmatics and in particular in an area globally definable as modification of speech acts, i.e. the ways in which the intensity of the illocutionary force of an act is strengthened or weakened (Bazzanella et al. 1991; Dressler-Merlini Barbaresi 1994). Aggravation upgrades intensity through various mechanisms, which this paper investigates.

From a theoretical perspective, various points are raised, especially concerned with: a) the locus of aggravation vis à vis other phenomena with which it is normally conflated in the literature, namely impoliteness (Culpeper et.al. 2003: Bousfield-Culpeper 2008) conflict talk (Grimshaw 1990), face-threatening speech acts (cf. Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1997), dispreferred actions; b) its significance and stance in relation to polite mitigation (Caffi 2001), whether two independent phenomena or two poles of the same continuum; c) the illocutionary vs. perlocutionary character of the two discursive modalities, speaker-centred aggravation and addressee-oriented mitigation. Various arguments are brought up to demonstrate that aggravation and mitigation are independent phenomena, to be dealt with separately.

An extensive portion of the text is devoted to the analysis of aggravators, the linguistic expressions that achieve aggravation-driven intensification. It is shown how the various linguistic levels, morphological, lexical and syntactic, autonomously and synergically contribute to the aggravated effect. It is also shown how the intensity of the illocutionary forces of different classes of speech acts are variably affected by the presence of aggravators.

### *Do us a favour, Doc?*: Comparing e-mail requests from students in higher education in Britain and Australia

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In our experience, a not inconsiderable portion of our e-mail traffic involves students (and not always students who we are directly responsible for) asking us to do things for them: provide them with job references, excuse them for their absence in class, have tutorial meetings, borrow resources, send them handouts, grant them extensions, clarify assignment criteria, offer supportive reassurance, read drafts of their dissertations, provide signatures on official documents, send offprints of our published papers, … the list goes on and on (and you know how).

Following on from an earlier detailed analysis of e-mail requests sent within a British university (Merrison & Davies in prep.), the intention of the current paper is to expand our focus beyond a British English context and to investigate whether and to what extent the findings from that data are replicated in other varieties of English. Consequently, this paper offers a cross-cultural comparative analysis of a corpus of student e-mails sent to academic members of staff at universities in Northern England and Queensland, Australia, with a view to answering recent calls for more attention to be paid to differences in pragmatics across *varieties* of English.

Rather than consider requests as context-free head (main) acts, we recognise – and indeed value – the fundamental importance of the situated nature of their production. Specifically, analysis has led us to focus on linguistic material which supports and/or modifies these head acts. This appears to manifest itself in two distinct ways: support may occur both externally to the request as well as internally.

Internal modification often takes the form of conventionalised lexis – for example that which functions as minimisers (*just*, *quick*, *a little*), conditionality (*wondering*, *if*), issues of deontic/epistemic modality (*possible*, *perhaps*, *may*) as well as lexis relating to ingratiation and gratitude (*please*, *thanks*). The nature of *external* support for the requests in our data includes the use of accounts, preparators and the provision of additional information. Perhaps more interestingly, though, what we very often find is manipulation of (and/or appeal to) common ground.

We have previously used the concepts of equity and equilibrium to explicate this usage in the British corpus: such support appears to be employed to decrease the social distance between student and staff member within these institutional relationships and thereby minimise the potential adverse affects of making a (face-threatening) request. Strategies focusing on various types of self-disclosure allow the UK-based student opportunities to construct their identity as an *equal* rather than being constrained by their (more unmarked) institutional role

of *student*. The purpose of the current paper is to explore whether (and to what extent) the same accounts hold for our Australian corpus.

The overall claims of this paper, then, are that the situated nature of student e-mail requests can have a great bearing on the discursive construction of student identities within academic institutions, that this has a bearing on how things get done, and that how things get done in different varieties of English is worth investigating!

**How to communicate one's discontent in Japanese: Avoiding rudeness in a culture of *sasshi***

*Kazuko Miyake, Toyo University, Japan*

The purpose of this study is to investigate how speakers of Japanese manage to communicate their discontent to their offenders while they wish to maintain a good relationship. A questionnaire survey was conducted to investigate what emotional reactions are found in young Japanese when faced with a friend's apology, and how these are conveyed in their responses. The participants were presented with the following scenario in 4 different circumstances, each varying in style of the message and personal distance: they are waiting for a friend at a meeting point and receive an apologetic text message from him/her informing that s/he is going to be 30 minutes late. The participants were asked to evaluate the apologizers and compose responding messages for each scenario. A cross-cultural comparison is then made using the data from a survey conducted with the same method on British participants.

The results in young Japanese show that the Japanese recipients of apologies give the apologizers harsher evaluations than their British counterparts. However, when it comes to responding to the apologizers, their linguistic strategies do not reflect their harsh evaluations. Instead, the messages often include words of consideration for the apologizers such as "Take your time.", "Don't rush!", and "I'll wait for you around here". This kind of strategy types are rarely found in the British data. On the other hand, direct accusations found in British data such as "Forget it., what am i supposed to do now" and "OK i'm leaving, bye, see you soon" do not appear at all in the Japanese data. However, the Japanese respondents of the survey expressed their wishes to subtly communicate their frustration to the apologizers. In the data we find the respondents' careful avoidance of any direct accusations but also implicit expressions of their discontent through subtle manipulation of the linguistic components. The frustrated recipients tend to make shorter messages, use less number of pictorial signs, and write in polite(formal) form in response to the casual apologetic messages. There is no rudeness in terms of the choice of words. The message forms are rather 'polite' and more orthographically 'correct'. Yet the combinations of the above 3 components can subtly create the impression of distance and coldness to the apologizer. The writer's intention is hidden in the subtle manipulations and it requires *sassh*i (guesswork for implications) to decode the meaning. The results from this research suggest that while Japanese speech-level shift, in particular, is a widely used linguistic device for creating subtle rudeness, in some other cultures more explicit expressions are called for in order to communicate the writer's discontent.

This study attempts to describe one of the ways in which the Japanese manage their interpersonal relationship within their socio-cultural context, rather than describing in the framework proposed by Brown & Levinson (1978/1987). Though insightful and useful, the

approaches and methodologies introduced in the studies of cross-cultural pragmatics such as Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) are not employed for the present analysis either. The aim of the study is rather to bring out the features of pragmatic practices in Japanese and explain the Japanese politeness phenomena from a Japanese-specific cultural perspective. In doing so, it is hoped to contribute to our understanding of politeness and rudeness phenomena in the world.

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**Emphasizing speaker's benefit in requests: Impoliteness or positive politeness?**

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According to Brown and Levinson (1987:65-66), requests belong to those FTA that "primarily threaten the addressee's (H's) negative-face want". Leech (1983:106) qualifies requests – as well as most of the rest of directives (Searle, 1975) – as inherently discourteous illocutions, because, in principle, they suppose a certain degree of cost to H to do the requested act (A). On the other hand, the more beneficial A is for the speaker (S) and the less beneficial it is for S, the less polite the request is considered. Because of this gradual inherent discourtesy in requests, both Brown and Levinson and Leech, as well as Lakoff (1973), observe a number of politeness strategies commonly used by S in order to mitigate the intrinsic impoliteness of requests – usually, by minimizing both the addressee's potential effort and the speaker's potential benefit. Nevertheless, there are some requests in which S does not really minimize his imposition on H's wants, but, rather, does the opposite in a more or less direct way; yet it is debatable whether such requests should be considered impolite.

This paper will study a specific kind of requests, one common feature of which is the fact that the necessity and/or the potential benefit of the speaker are made explicit (and usually stressed on) either inside the request itself or outside – as an external element that supports the core request (Kasper 1990:200). My aim is to analyze the function(s) of this pragmatic phenomenon in terms of (im)politeness (and, if politeness, as a positive-politeness strategy) in the light of a survey carried out among Spanish people aged 18-75, based both on their use of and reactions to the type of request to be discussed.

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## Face-to-face with foreign-language impoliteness: Developing pragmatic competence in a second language

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Recognising, understanding, reacting to (or even ignoring) impoliteness in a foreign-language context can be a daunting task. Sociocultural misunderstandings can mean that second-language (L2) users misconstrue speaker intention and wrongly judge a given interaction to be rude or face-threatening because of different norms (Culpeper 2008). I argue that pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic resources are not sufficient to help students to develop interactional competence (Kasper & Rose 2002) when confronted with L2 impoliteness. Using learners' first-order perceptions of impoliteness (Locher & Bousfield 2008), I asked Mexican learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to evaluate, by filling in discourse completion tasks, potential instances of impoliteness. To give learners pragmatic resources for dealing with impoliteness, I presented Beebe & Waring's (2005) framework of 'aggressing' (e.g. threatening or challenging), 'persisting' (e.g. arguing or justifying) and 'acquiescing' (e.g. apologising or opting out) strategies. I asked learners to apply the framework to the previously identified incidents of impoliteness. However, L2 impoliteness goes beyond just employing pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic strategies. Language users needed help on the largely forgotten interpersonal dimension since they often try to respond in very personal, individualistic and even creative ways to target-language impoliteness.

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## Social constraints on Persian politeness ritual: *Taarof*

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In literature a number of researchers have investigated overly-polite behaviours which might lead to face loss or impoliteness in interaction (Culpeper 2005). To date there has been limited sociolinguistic research on how (im)politeness is constructed in face-to-face interaction in the performance of Persian politeness ritual *taarof*. The act of *taarof* in Iranian culture is considered as the backbone of politeness rituals. As a normative pattern, *taarof* refers to repetitive offerings, overdoing in hospitality or rejecting the offer of helping yourself as a guest in conversation. Koutlaki (2001) considers how *taarof* functions as a face saving positive politeness strategy disregarding how it could be considered as face attacking

strategy. Taleghani-Nikazm (1998) investigated how in formal relationships in Iran, immediate acceptances of offers were typically perceived as 'impolite' and 'rude'. This work addresses how *taarof* could be indexed as an inappropriate behaviour and evaluated negatively if used as an overly-polite behaviour in informal relationships in Iran.

This study analyses ten hours of recorded spontaneous data from twenty family dinner time conversations. The analysis reveals that excessive use of *taarof* may attack face of the interlocutors. Face attacking is indexed by pronoun switches between Persian second person address forms *to* the intimate 'you' and *šoma* the deferential 'you', historically plural but now also used as singular. Moreover, Persian is a pro-drop language, so sometimes these pronoun switches are realised through verbal agreement, not pronouns.

As a result the analysis in this work describes how *taarof* may be projected as over-polite and inappropriate behaviour in some communities of practice. The main argument of this work will address how cultural norms are constrained by social and individual norms.

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**Sharing responsibilities and negotiating necessities in English and Polish cultures**

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The relationship between language use and culture has been approached in two main ways in politeness research. Studies conducted in cross-cultural pragmatics focus on the question of universality vs. culture-specificity. Most research relies on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, whose speech act-based framework provides a simplified view on politeness but has the advantage of providing a unit of analysis that can be easily compared across cultures. Proponents of post-modern politeness theories, on the other hand, emphasise the emergent and negotiable nature of politeness. While politeness is described as unpredictable, culture is mainly dealt with by emphasising its heterogeneity, making it exceedingly difficult to apply post-modern concepts to the cross-cultural study of politeness.

In the present paper, we use CA with the aim to explore potentially culture-specific patterns of communication. More specifically, we look at how English and Polish couples share responsibilities in their conversations dealing with daily chores. The *sharing* of responsibilities necessarily evolves over several conversational turns and seems to constitute a universal activity that that can be accomplished in different, culture-specific ways.

In our data, which consist of video-recorded conversations of British and Polish couples, we have identified three main ways of dealing with household tasks in the data: By announcing or offering to do something, by requesting to do something and, most interestingly, by jointly agreeing on what and how to do it. In this paper we focus on these mutual decisions, while

devoting particular attention to cases in which there is a disagreement as to the necessity for a particular task to be performed.
Accordingly, our data illustrate how face is threatened, maintained and enhanced in intimate relationships when negotiating the necessity to perform certain household tasks – and how this is done in the examined cultures.

### *Sit down and shut up*. Threats to face in the secondary school classroom

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This presentation considers the hypothesis that in secondary school classrooms there is ambiguous and inconsistent recognition of pupils' face needs (Culpeper 1996; Mills 2003; Watts 2003), and that as a result of this, it is possible that teachers use unintentionally face threatening utterances when addressing aspects of pupils' social behaviour.

This hypothesis is explored through investigation of teachers' use of utterances that are aligned to pupils' face, during twelve hours of lesson observations in a Leeds secondary school. I suggest that use of mitigation is an indicator of the interpretations teachers make of pupils' face needs, and examine the types of mitigation strategy teachers use. Discussion then turns to the problems encountered when using mitigation strategies in the institutional setting of the classroom, particularly in relation to the extreme power asymmetry (Harris 2003; Bousfield 2008). This leads to consideration of instances of face threat, and to how these can be defined within models of (im)politeness.

Current government guidelines in relation to behaviour policies recommend systems of rewards and sanctions; there is limited research evidence to support these schemes, and much that refutes them. It is my belief that such schemes are intrinsically face-threatening, in that they not only restrict pupils' movements, but, through teachers' implicit use of criticism, they also have an adverse effect on pupils' need for approval.
The discussion ends by focusing on the ways in which school behaviour schemes are implemented linguistically in terms of rewards and sanctions, and with the observation from my findings that rewards are more likely to be attracted by task-oriented work than by behaviour-oriented work; conversely, pupils receive sanctions for their behaviour, but less for their subject-based class work.

### (Im)politeness and (in)sincerity

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This study explores the relationship between sincerity and politeness, a topic that has been greatly overlooked in the literature on politeness. Theories of politeness often presuppose that to be polite means to be *sincerely* polite, but this is not necessarily the case. Xie, He & Lin (2005: 438), for example, draw attention to the lack of research on this topic, noting that 'there is no necessary link between politeness and sincerity: politeness does not necessarily entail sincerity'. Hypothetically all the possible combinations could appear in a single language, from sincere and insincere politeness to sincere and insincere impoliteness.

My primary focus is on how politeness simultaneously entails both sincerity and insincerity. This can be observed from two different angles:

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1. Assuming, in Goffman's (1959) terms, that politeness always implies a performance, it unavoidable comprises an element of insincerity. However, since *all* social interaction involves a performance, a polite act can still *effectively project* sincerity. That is, speakers can appear sincere when they effectively project symmetry between what they say and their corresponding beliefs and feelings.

2. For evaluating sincerity in others, there are two distinct perspectives that help explain how common acts of courtesy can be interpreted differently. The first perspective is the more traditional view of sincerity, where an individual judges a speaker to be sincere when it appears that s/he is expressing his/her true beliefs or feelings. The second view is oriented more toward interactional aspects of communication, where an interlocutor evaluates a speaker as sincere if s/he appears to be concerned with making the interaction run smoothly and the listener feel comfortable.

As part of a larger project on the relationship between sincerity and politeness, this interdisciplinary study considers research in philosophy, pragmatics, psychology, and sociology. Also, a preliminary data corpus from 125 English-speaking participants is discussed.

**Rapport management in service encounters in Seville: The case of bars at breakfast time**

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In this paper we examine rapport management strategies used in bars frequented by regular customers in Seville, Spain, at breakfast time. The study, which draws on literature on rapport management (cf. Spencer-Oatey, 2000, 2008) and small talk (see for example, compilation of papers in Coupland, 2000 and Placencia and García, 2008), is based on recordings of naturally occurring interactions in two bars in Seville, as well as on informal interviews with bar customers and waiters.

We find that in bars with regular customers, as opposed to those which rely on passing trade (Placencia and Mancera, 2008), waiters and customers normally engage in a wide range of conversational activities that go beyond the actual transaction that they are performing – ranging from simple how-are-you enquiries to exchanges about participants' health, football, politics, and so forth, in addition to generalised joking and teasing behaviour (*cachondeo*). As such, bars at breakfast time appear to constitute an ideal site for *la tertulia* that seems to form part of what our interviewees describe as a *cultura de hablar* (speaking culture), particularly prevalent in Spain, and which surfaces in other studies that deal with service and other encounters (see Thuren, 1988; Placencia and Hernández López, 2004, for example).

We examine the different conversational activities identified as part of a continuum of small talk – from phatic exchanges to 'sociable' talk (cf. Holmes, 2000), unrelated to the task in hand, to talk related to it, but not essential for the transaction (cf. Parsons, 2007). We suggest that through these activities participants construct the breakfast transaction as a sociable event which at the same time contributes to guaranteeing their continued custom and ensuring good service.

**Degrees of politeness in English and Romanian print medical advertising**

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Politeness in medical advertising ranges from the highest levels of tentativeness and lowest degree of imposition, specific to off-the-record strategies of non-soliciting representative speech acts (SAs), to the opposite extreme of going baldly on the record, specific to face-threatening eliciting SAs.

**Theoretical Framework**. Starting from the premise that politeness strategies establish the type of relation between the advertiser and receiver/viewer determining on the basis of the greater or lesser degree of imposition, this paper will empirically analyse the degree of politeness in medical print promotional material (leaflets and posters) as a function of Speech Acts (Leech, Principles of Pragmatics - 1983) and target readers.

**Hypothesis.** The target reader variable of specialists/surgeons (E-surg) versus patients ($R_{OTC}$) produces different politeness strategies with biased employment of response seeking and therefore more positive politeness strategies in medical print promotional material targeting patients.

**Corpus.** The analysis will be based on the relationship between the types of SAs and the resulting politeness strategies in a corpus of 45 medical leaflets in **English** directed to specialist doctors ($A_{E\text{-}surg,}$ i.e. surgeons) and 45 advertisements in **Romanian** (leaflets and posters) directed to end-users/patients ($B_{R\text{-}OTC}$ i.e. OTC consumers).

**Analysis**. We investigate the choice of SAs at advertisement headline level and demonstrate that the target reader variable Specialists [-Power] induces awareness of a distant professional environment and consequently employment of non-impositive SAs specific for [+Distance] negative politeness and deference. Alternatively, the target reader variable End-user [+Power] evinces a significantly higher degree of [-Distance] positive politeness inherent in employment of directive and response-seeking SAs.

## Anthropological taboo, strong language, and grammatical mismatches

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In many languages of the world, taboo items can be used to express negation or negative polarity, as for instance in Dutch (1). Interestingly, taboo items display various levels of syntactic activity, for instance, they behave syntactically distinct from other negative items or negative polarity items. In the Dutch sentences in (2) taken from Postma (2000), the NPIs require a distinct indefinite pronoun whether they are taboo as in (2cd) or ordinary as in (2ab), (*ene* or *enige* 'any' respectively. In English, a taboo item *squat* 'anything', which has a similar function as Dutch *ene zak* (litt 'any scrotum' = anything), has a distribution distinct from the non taboo item *anything* as demonstrated in (3), taken from McCloskey (1993).

(1) Niemand begreep er e:ne {zak/bal/fluit/kloot/.../moer/sodemieter/flikker/donder/duvel...} van
nobody understood a scrotum/ball/flute/hole/testicle/.../mother/faggot/faggot/thunder/devil/.. of it

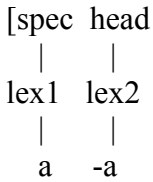
(2) a. Niemand deed {enige/*ene} stap — non taboo
nobody did any/any step

b. Niemand verleende {enige/*ene} steun — non taboo

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | nobody gave any/any support | |
| | c. | Niemand hoorde {*enige/ene} fluit<br>nobody heard any/any flute | taboo |
| | d. | Niemand zag {*enige/ene} flicker<br>nobody saw any/any faggot | taboo |
| (3) | a. | They don't know {anything/squat} | (object) |
| | b. | He never gets insured by {anything/*squat} | (by-phrase) |
| | c. | He won't live in {anything/*squat} | (locative) |
| | d. | anything's/*squat's surface | (possessive) |
| | e. | Jack didn't prove of anything/*squat that there was recursion | (prepositional) |

(4) He did not understand fuck all of it

The question then is how this syntactic activity comes about: purely collocational, semantically, or morphosyntactically. We show that the syntactic activity comes about by the interaction with the internal structure of taboo items. We will argue that taboo items encode their taboo nature not just lexically but also by a feature mismatch. The features used in Dutch are can be number, gender, etc. While the Dutch words in (1) *bal zak* etc are non-neuters internally and carry in these cases an overt non-neuter inflection on the determiner *ene*, they saturate externally a neuter pronoun position ‘iets’. Because of its reduced grammatical features, English uses categorial features to realize a feature clash, as in (4), where *fuck all* is internally verbal because of the over object *all*, while it saturates at the sentential level a nominal phrase ‘nothing’. We will show these features mismatches are systematical in a variety of languages, e.g. the famous *cet idiot de Jean* construction, discussed in Milner 1978, Ruwet 1982, Kayne 1994. In all these cases there is a feature mismatch as well. The question is therefore why. Is it an arbitrary sign of taboo or does the construction encode its taboo nature? In order to answer this question we present two anthropological theories of taboo: the first describes taboo as arising from a combination of two conflicting features (both **a** and ¬**a**), Frazer 1890, Freud 1912, the other as an impossibility of classification (neither **a** nor ¬**a**), Leach (1994). We argue that it is the first theory that gives the desirable parallel. Finally we go into the formal representation of taboo. The question is whether the taboo-property is a syntactic feature itself, like [±human], [±animate], or an operator, to be compared with WH, Focus, High-degree etc. I will propose that that cases of 'taboo' systematically project on a mismatches in a spec-head configuration, formally (5).

(5)



The lexemes lex1 and lex2 are in a specifier head configuration where they should agree but where they display a mismatch of features (gender mismatches, categorial mismatches, etc.). Under the assumption that spec-head agreement is syntactically absolute, however, we postulate a hidden operator, T, which flips features, formally, T(a)=-a. The apparent mismatch is then resolved by the presence of the covert T-operator. This yields the formal configuration in ().

(6) [spec head

```
T(lex1) lex2
   |      |
T(a)     -a
   |      |
  -a     -a
```

We propose to identify T as the taboo-operator. The presence of the T operator makes that the "strong language" as in (1) displays its strength not only lexically, the construction is strong by its very morphosyntactic configuration.

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**Human rights discourse and politeness: The Saudi Arabian context**

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This paper argues for the relevance of politeness to a specific area of discourse, namely human rights discourse. The human rights movement faces the task of socialising norms and values (Risse & Sikkink, 1999) which are supposedly universal, but which may be met with resistance or incomprehension in many socio-cultural contexts (Monshipouri & Motameni, 2000; Yusif, 2004). The process of socialising norms or values, in particular involves two functions which are potentially face threatening: 1- the introduction of new, socially acceptable identities and the rejection of old ones, (Risse & Sikkink, 1999). 2- bringing of 'bad' news by drawing attention to human rights violations. These two functions were found to create face sensitivies, and therefore are face threatening (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Spencer-Oatey, 2007; Matsumoto, 1988). The present paper analyses the process of socialising new norms and values in the context of Arabic human rights discourse in Saudi Arabia.

According to the European Values Study (2003), Saudi society is a conservative, traditional, collectivist Muslim society, Therefore an introduction of universal values and norms, not

conforming to the traditional social and religious values, are likely expected to represent a threat to the social identity and values of the Saudi society. The paper formulates the threat in terms of the notion of 'Rapport' (Spencer-Oatey, 2005), in which impoliteness is not only a matter of negative or positive face threatening but rather a result of Rapport threatening at any of its bases: face (identity), sociality rights (values), and interactional goals (2005) (2007). The analysis focuses on the discourse domain, adopted from Spencer-Oatey's Rapport Management model. The data examined is derived from literature produced for the public by the Saudi governmental human rights organization. The paper argues that Arabic human rights discourse in Saudi Arabia is oriented towards Rapport Management rather than threatening, and that this is achieved by orientating the choice of topics, organization and sequencing of information towards maintaining identity and asserting the social and religious values of the society while introducing the equivalent of these values in universal human rights.

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**"[T]his most unnecessary, unjust, and disgraceful war": Face-threatening attacks on the Madison Administration during the War of 1812 in federalist newspapers**

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Today Thomas Jefferson and James Madison are revered as Founding Fathers of the American Republic. However, in their time both Republican Presidents had to face harsh criticism from the Federalist Party.

The paper examines verbal attacks on the Madison Administration during the War of 1812. The material comes from editorials of the *Connecticut Mirror* and the *Boston Gazette*, both major Federalist newspapers, from the war years. The War of 1812 was intensely unpopular in Federalist circles, and the paper examines the ways in which a controversial war was attacked at that time, about two centuries ago. The use of negative adjectives to characterize the war, blamed by Federalists on Madison, was one type of criticism, but the paper also discusses other types. These include attacks on the motives or the character of James Madison and of other Republicans and the use of derogatory epithets. The intention of the authors of the editorials to attack face is clear, but the study brings to light attacks that range from mild to harsh, including what may be interpreted as instances of aggravated impoliteness (Rudanko 2006). Criticism is a complex concept (see Bousfield 2008, 127), and the paper sheds light on its nature as a type of face threatening behavior. President Madison tolerated the attacks without attempting to prosecute the critics for slander or sedition. An examination of the types of criticism also helps us to understand the surprisingly high degree of freedom of speech at that formative time in American history.

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**Face and the cognitive 'negativity bias': A view from Turkish and British English**

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Face is a significant body part in the discernment and conceptualization of emotions, aspects of interpersonal behavior, and personality (e.g., Ekman 2003; Ervin-Tripp et al. 1995). Studies also show that prominent emotions related to face as 'public image' are embarrassment, shame, guilt and pride (e.g., Ho et al. 2004). Research in cognitive linguistics has focused on the occurrence of the lexical item 'face' in (fairly) conventionalized figurative language and has described the underlying conceptual metaphors in a variety of languages to unravel its cultural meaning both with respect to 'face as public image' and 'face as embodying emotions' (e.g., Yu 2001). Cognitive linguistics, however, has not systematically focused on the discursive use of figurative language comprising the word 'face' in discerning how the imaginative structures conceptualize its cultural meaning in relation to self's image and emotions. The few studies that report on figurative language reveal that there is a significant cognitive negativity bias in the occurrence of the type of face idioms, such that idioms implying a negative impact on self's image predominate in discourse (see, e.g., Haugh and Hinze 2003). In Jing-Schmidt's words, the negativity bias appears be a reflection of the innate "vigilance towards threats" (2007: 435). The present paper tests the validity of this observation and investigates its significance in regard to 'face' as a culturally embodied concept in written corpora-based data in Turkish and British English (BNC and METU Turkish Corpus). The paper analyzes the occurrences of face idioms on the three ontological levels posited in Levinson (2006) for studying the relation between communication, language and cognition. The analysis reveals that the negativity bias is borne out in both corpora but

that there are significant differences with respect to the socially significant emotions embodied in face idioms and the interpersonal meaning of 'face' in the two languages.

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**Face attack in political discourse in Georgian (using the example of the act of accusations)**

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This paper is the first attempt to explore the face-threatening act of accusations in political discourse in Georgian by concentrating on the typology of face-attack discussed by Harris (2001) and Tracy (2008).

The paper is based on the data made up from transcriptions of twelve, fifty minute talk shows broadcast on two of the Georgian television channels. The data show that in Georgian, face-attack is materialized through a number of features among which are: modes of address, (vous/ tu forms, inclusive "we"); turn-taking overlap, interruptions, facial expression, prosodic means (specific intonation patterns, meaningful variations of pitch and range of the participants' voices, and so on). The above-mentioned means of expression of face-attack are often accompanied by direct or hidden ironic remarks, aggressive sarcasm and even insults.

The statistic analysis of the data reveals productive and non-productive linguistic means of expression of the act of accusations in Georgian.

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# Linguistic Impoliteness And Rudeness II (LIAR II)
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### A coding scheme for a fine-grained analysis of (im)polite disagreements in interaction: Bringing together features of conversation analysis and speech act research

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Traditionally, Conversation Analysis (CA) and Speech Act Research (SAR) have represented two research paradigms that have gone their own separate ways. This is understandable, since they belong to different disciplines (Sociology and Ethnomethodology vs. Pragmatics) and they have focused on different features of language (conversational structure and sequence vs. sentence structure and illocutionary force). However, there have been recent moves toward an integration of both perspectives for a more comprehensive account of language in use, especially among those working in the fields of social and interlanguage pragmatics (Kasper 2004, 2006) and (im)politeness (Locher 2004, Bousfield 2008). Nevertheless, these attempts are either suggestions for future research ventures (Kasper 2004), or ad hoc implementations taking features of both paradigms in a rather unsystematic way. The aim of this paper is to propose a standardized coding scheme reminiscent of that developed within the Cross Cultural Speech Act Research Project (CCSARP) that could be used as a tool to investigate cross-cultural, sociopragmatic and interlanguage variation in the deployment of disagreements in interaction by integrating CA and SAR features in one single analytic tool. In itself, this coding system does not directly inform about the politeness or impoliteness of disagreeing moves – this being dependent on the context of interaction –, but it can be useful to carry out a comprehensive classification of the linguistic and discursive realizations of those disagreements for contrastive purposes. The proposed coding system should be able to determine the level of (in)directness of disagreeing utterances by taking into account sequence-organizational and turn-constructional features (Kasper 2006: 331). Primary (own data) and secondary (previous research) sources were used as data to support the categorizations, which were drawn from three languages: American English, Spanish, and Japanese. Further research should be carried out to verify whether this scheme is applicable to other languages.

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**Negotiating professional identities through face-work in conflict situations. Two case studies of co-leadership**

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Co-leadership has been described as "two leaders in vertically contiguous positions who share responsibilities of leadership" (Heenan & Bennis 1999). Research on co-leadership has

pointed out various benefits of accomplishing leadership collaboratively, such as improving leadership effectiveness. And while it has been shown that co-leadership may involve the sharing of maintenance and task related activities, other less harmonious aspects of co-leadership have often been overlooked.

Drawing on more than 20 hours of authentic discourse data collected in two workplaces in Hong Kong, we explore one aspects of this "other side" of co-leadership: we look at how leaders and their co-leaders negotiate their roles and responsibilities in less harmonious situations. Using the framework of rapport management (Spencer-Oatey 2000) and considering recent developments in the notion of face (e.g. Spencer-Oatey 2007), we explore some of the linguistic strategies employed by leaders and their co-leaders in situations where their respective interests are in conflict. Our particular focus is on how these professionals negotiate their quality and identity face needs while at the same time constructing their various professional identities.

Findings from two case studies indicate that the leaders and co-leaders employ a range of different rapport management strategies when dealing with potential conflict. Our particular focus is on two aspects of co-leadership, namely negotiating responsibilities of chairing meetings, and discussing and sometimes challenging each others' roles and professional duties. In these situations interlocutors do face-work and construct their professional (leader-) identities in ways that reflect their self-perception, their role in the organisation, as well as normative ways of doing things in their workplace. Our analysis illustrates some of the complex ways in which face-work and the construction of professional identities are simultaneously accomplished in a workplace context.

**Rudeness as avenue for managing diversity and conflict: The case of AYENSIN – Akan Inter-Communal Insults**

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In the literature, insults are generally seen as acts of rudeness or impoliteness, which threaten a person's self esteem and his/her face. Studies into the pragmatics of invectives or insults in various communities have established that in their illocution and perlocution, invectives do not always function as face-threatening acts (FTAs). Radcliff-Brown (1940), Brempong and Warren (1978), Agovi (1981, 1995), Yankah (2002) and Sekyi-Baidoo (2008) have established that contrary to functioning as FTAs or acts of rudeness, invectives sometimes have regulatory and cohesive functions in many social interactions, at interpersonal, institutionalized and inter-communal levels.

The present is an analytical survey of AYENSIN - an established culture of insults between Akan communities. It traces the history and practice of this interactive culture among various communities, looking at the patterns of insults and general rudeness accepted and even encouraged between different 'ayensin' traditions, and the specific mores and values which guide the trading of acceptable insults. The paper establishes that such traditions of communal rudeness were instituted as fissures for diffusing the pressure of conflict associated with past losses or conflicts. Ayensin, thus, becomes the outlet for venting this conflict so that communities would continue to live in mutual peace and understanding.

The paper attempts to establish the paradox in the tradition where insults both function as instruments of attachment and separation, and of social conjunction and disjunction,

emphasizing that the separation and disjunction aspects of the insults are inputs for the attachment and conjunction functions. Finally, it presents examples of 'ayensin' exchanges, drawing attention to the established permissible images, and the strategies of insult, such as the use of humour through anachronism and heightened exaggeration.

**Belligerent broadcasting and business trouble-shooting on television**

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This paper draws upon collaborative work on the concept of "belligerent broadcasting", and looks at how this research might be used to inform our understanding of popular 'trouble-shooting' business television programmes such as *Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares* and *Mary, Queen of Shops*. Belligerent broadcasting is a broadcast style that offers as spectacle expressions of anger or impatience, or the exercise of intimidation, against an on-screen interlocutor. Focussing on the performances of Gordon Ramsay on *Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares*, the paper will analyse the management of on-screen confrontation between interlocutors occupying contrasting positions of power, credibility and expertise. The paper will also look at the amelioration of face-threatening activity in the framing of belligerent talk, suggesting that the representation of conflict talk as a productive force is justified by the programme's narrative arc. Finally, the paper will assess the relevance of arguments that this broadcasting style might be seen as part of a "new incivility" in the dominant representation of business culture.

**Trash talk nation: The rise of impoliteness and rudeness in contemporary media**

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Years ago, media critic Neil Postman alerted us to the dangers of two kinds of toxic language in our communication environment: crazy talk and stupid talk (1976). Were Postman with us today, he might well point out a third type of toxic language that pollutes our current communication environment: trash talk. Trash talk encompasses a wide range of impolite and rude discourse, including language considered inappropriate, coarse, vulgar, profane, obscene, or taboo. Trash talkers communicate in styles that seem aggressive, argumentative, insulting, offensive, or abusive, using language peppered with invective, expletives, and curses.

Nowadays, trash talk is more commonplace than ever, occurring routinely across the media landscape. According to one description on the Internet, "Our politicians, athletes and talk radio jerk-offs have raised the art of trashspeak to the point where trash thy neighbor is now the eleventh commandment" (History Buff, 2007). In such a toxic climate filled with trash talk, it becomes increasingly difficult to foster and maintain cultural traditions of people treating each other with courtesy, decency, respect, and civility.

In this paper, I review several examples of the rise of trash talk in contemporary media. Then I consider the negative impact of such impolite and rude discourse on our mental and physical well-being, arguing that trash talk is bad for our minds and bodies alike. Next, I offer suggestions about how to resist trash talk in media and in everyday life as well, by challenging the acceptability of toxic language and uncivil discourse. We can begin to stem the noxious tide of trash talk by spreading the message that language matters, that civility

counts, and that impoliteness and rudeness pollute our communication environment and jeopardize the health of our culture.

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**Facework in e-mail communication in the context of international classroom**

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The International Classroom is rapidly becoming the norm rather than the exception in most academic settings in North America. At our Canadian university, many classes have a very mixed student body, often with the majority of students being international students or recent immigrants to the country for whom English is not the first or even the second language (c.f. V. Cecchetto and M. Stroinska (eds) (2006) *The International Classroom: Challenging the notion*). In the past few years, electronically mediated forms of communication have replaced more traditional face-to-face exchanges between instructors and students. Because of this shift, any principles of facework need to be adapted to the new means of communication (c.f. Goffman, E. 1967. *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*).

E-mails from students who are non-native speakers very often violate the norms of what is considered polite or even appropriate in academic settings, from the form of address to the form of the closing greeting. The choice of register, grammatical correctness and lexical selections all contribute to the general impression of an inappropriate manner of communication and, more often than not, leave the addressee with the impression of rudeness from the writer. Students may have to pay a price for their lack of communication skills as professors may be less accommodating to someone who, in their opinion, was impolite. This is usually not the case in face-to-face encounters where the student's accent may immediately reveal that they are not a native-speaker. Foreign accent, in this case then, is a face-saving factor as it allows the hearer to adapt to the situation and modify their expectations. In countries like Canada, foreign sounding names cannot be considered an indication of being a non-native-speaker. Even grammatical errors do not necessarily point to a non-native speaker, since the grammatical correctness of many students who are native-speakers of English is constantly being questioned.

This paper looks at a body of e-mail exchanges between professors and students in order to identify and classify the types of violations of the standard, and generally accepted, Canadian norms of politeness (based on Leech, G. 1983. *Principles of Pragmatics*). We then attempt to connect different types of violation of the principles of politeness with their common interpretations to see which result from the fact that e-mail lacks the information available in face-to-face communication. We conclude with some guidelines for facework in a non-face-to-face communication.

# Linguistic Impoliteness And Rudeness II (LIAR II)
## Paper Abstracts

### "That is so rude! I'm your senior!" The role of power and status in Japanese compliments

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In the literature of both politeness and impoliteness, a recurring issue is the discussion on the role of contextuality and the possible inherent (im)politeness of speech acts (Culpeper 1995, Leech 1983, Mills 2008). This paper discusses the potential (im)polite load of compliments in Japanese as being context-dependant.

Based on a corpus of more than 40 hours of recorded conversations from the Japanese collected through sociolinguistic interviews and naturally occurring conversations, we argue that in assessing (im)politeness of any given complimenting behaviour, power relation between the speaker and the hearer has to be taken into account as one of the main forces governing nature of the interaction. Japanese society is highly hierarchical (Nakane 1970) and therefore the interactions between the interlocutors are often defined and articulated by their relative social status. One of the most significant social relations in Japanese society seems to be that of *senpai-kouhai* (senior-junior). We support this claim by providing examples of both overt comments regarding social status and interactions conditioned by social inequality. We argue that the same complimenting event in Japanese can be reanalysed in unconventional ways depending on the power difference between the interactants. As long as the relative social status permits it, compliments can be understood as polite, mocking, or potentially face-threatening acts. Our data, collected in Japan from 2007 to 2008, contain interactions between students and co-workers, environments where the *kouhai-senpai* relations are particularly salient.

The paper contributes to much debated discussion on (im)politeness as seen in direct relation to the context. Analysing compliments as context-dependent, we draw attention to how, in the case of Japanese society, social factors, such as power relations/distance in interaction can be a salient variable that allows us to understand the illocutionary force of a particular speech act.

### Discursive form and functions of flaming in Nigerian online discussion forums

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One of the less desirable liberating effects of CMC is flaming – the deliberate aggressive interpersonal behaviour online, which results in the use of overly provocative, rude and insulting language (Abrams, 2003). Flaming is considered an impolite linguistic behaviour online. The present study investigates the discursive forms and functions of flaming in two most popular Nigerian discussion forums: *Nairaland* and *Nigerian Village Square.* The data was taken from a 750,000 word corpus of Nigerian online discussion forum compiled by this researcher between 206 and 2008. My preliminary findings show that the kind of topic being discussed determines participants' flaming behaviour. Flaming occurred more in the context of political, religious, ethnic and cultural topics and participants frequently switched to the Nigerian Pidgin or any of the indigenous languages when expressing flaming behaviour. A major argument I am putting up in this paper is that Nigeria's complex ethnic, cultural and religious nature have been politicised and any discussion on these is capable of provoking flaming behaviour, especially when some participants perceive being marginalised on account any of these factors. Comparatively, topics on some neutral issues like technology,

romance, health, business and sports generated less flaming. In addition, I will also discuss the specific kinds of linguistic behaviour that generate impoliteness and how participants react to such uninhibited linguistic behaviour.

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**Mock politeness**

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The aim of this paper is to analyse in greater depth the realisations and functions of one of the impoliteness strategies identified in Culpeper (1996), that of mock politeness. Which is defined there as occasions in which "the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realisations" (1996: 356). Mock politeness is considered to be particularly interesting as it involves a reversal of face evaluation both in the contrast between form and function, or implicatum and dictum, but also in the garden-path nature of the realisation: from respect for face to attack on face. While garden-pathing has been more extensively analysed in relation to humour studies (see for example Dynel 2009) it has been less frequently studied in politeness analyses, and yet is central to mock politeness. In the corpora analysed here, mock politeness seems to be realised in two main ways. In the first, the impoliteness is created through a textually explicit clash of evaluations consisting in the juxtaposition of easily identified politeness forms with overt intensification of the face threatening act. This first type of mock politeness is seen to fulfil a wide range of functions. In the second, the politeness is intensified beyond credible interpretation, given knowledge of the context of production, and this is the most likely of the two modes to be comparable to sarcasm. The data used in this study predominately comes from UK radio and television discussion programmes, and both audio and text files were analysed.

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**Chinese-influenced impolite lexicon in Singlish as reflection of Singaporean cultural norms**

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Probably everyone has used impolite words some time or other. Some words sound flippant but otherwise harmless whilst others are downright rude. Some words seem tactfully hilarious whilst others come across as plain coarse. People may feel uncomfortable discussing certain words due to the candid meaning that they express. One thing seems certain: impolite words exist for a reason, and people use them for a reason. This paper (1) argues that certain cultural norms are identifiable in the meanings of the impolite lexicon; (2) demonstrates that language

users, on purpose, put certain cultural norms at stake (i.e. the so-called "violation" of cultural norms) in order to augment certain messages that they are trying to communicate across; (3) semantic analyses of the meanings of the impolite lexicon provide a fascinating glimpse into the culture.

This paper focuses on Chinese-influenced words in the impolite lexicon of Singapore English (Singlish) since nowhere is there a more colourful and uninhabited display of Singaporean culture than these words "which reflect the core values" of the culture (Wierzbicka 1991: 333). Through impolite words such as *ah beng* 'an unsophisticated Chinese boy' and *chuay si* 'looking for death', it is possible for aspects of the Singapore culture to be "revealingly studied, compared, and explained to outsiders". To do so, this paper adopts the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) model (e.g. Goddard & Wierzbicka 2002; and Wierzbicka 1996). By using a set of 60 or so semantically unanalysable "primes", this model allows us to decompose the complex meanings of impolite words, thus making it possible to "study, compare, and explain" these words.

Initial results indicate that the cultural norms reflected by most of these words have to do with the categorisation of people based on their appearance and behaviour; continuity of the ancestral line; quality of life and issues affecting one's livelihood or survival; or, one's placement in social hierarchy.

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**Face-attack as entertainment – Impoliteness as humour in *As Good As It Gets*[1]**

*Rachel Toddington, University of Central Lancashire, U.K.*

This paper focuses on how theories of humour can intersect and inform current models dealing with linguistic impoliteness. By analysing various scenes within the film *As Good As It Gets*, I aim to demonstrate how seemingly disparate areas such as impoliteness and humour may in fact be seen as an interface with complimentary elements which go some way to explaining aspects of human behaviour, such as our ability to get enjoyment from viewing other people's discomfort.

In my analyses, I show how concepts such as Levinson's (1979[1992]) Activity Types and Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle can impact on the structure, delivery and receipt of a Face Threatening Act (FTA) which (in this film at least) adds to the incongruity of the scenes and I maintain elicits the humour. I also argue that Bousfield's (2008) concept of

"instrumental impoliteness" can be used to facilitate a positive as well as a negative interpersonal intent (see Holmes 2000:159) due to the dramatic irony which allows us (as the viewer) to consider alternative interpretations on the intentions of the characters.

**The strategic use of impoliteness to convey caring relations: A Philippine cultural perspective**

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It has been claimed that in some discourse contexts, huge power differential and training philosophy account for the pervasiveness of impoliteness (Culpeper 1996: 359). In this ethnographic-based study of two nursing classrooms in the Philippines, I suggest that impoliteness was used intentionally and strategically by the clinical nursing instructors not only to emphasise relative power and stress a job-specific training philosophy but also to build caring relations. The two instructors were preparing the nursing students to be mentally and emotionally fit to handle ill patients who maybe at times abusive. Thus, their use of impoliteness strategies such as inappropriate and insulting identity markers, code-switching, condescension and ridicule (see Culpeper 1996) were being deployed as "practice for the real world" and therefore necessary.

When I embarked on this study, I had initially intended to focus on linguistic politeness as an interactional resource. However, on the basis of data consisting of observation/field notes and audio recordings, it became evident that the deliberate use of impoliteness by the instructors can also serve as an interactional resource intended to convey caring and concern for the addressees. In an extreme form this type of impoliteness may be seen in the remark by a parent to a child "I spank you because I love you." Based on the data collected, I illustrate how face attacks by the instructors are exercised as an extension of parental authority and viewed (as well as accepted) by the students as being in their best interest.

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**The interplay of self-politeness and other-impoliteness – a data-based study**

*Anna Wiechecka, University of Edinburgh, U.K.*

The purpose of this paper is to show the correlation between self-politeness and other-impoliteness and discuss their co-occurrences in linguistic data. Both terms derive from Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. A model of self-politeness was introduced by Chen (2001), who emphasizes that in interaction self-face is as vulnerable as the face of other and therefore deserves equal interest and recognition. While this model is promising and enlightening, self-politeness seems to be lacking detailed investigation, including data-based research. On the other hand, a linguistic impoliteness model has been described by Culpeper (1996), who stresses that rudeness in language is far more than just 'lack of politeness' or its by-product. The crucial aims of other-impoliteness are: the promotion of disharmony and disequilibrium in conversation, and attacking the hearer's face. Culpeper's model resides on a set of impoliteness strategies, which are mirror reflections of those by Brown and Levinson (1987).

This paper focuses on one specific area of natural data in which these two phenomena, self-politeness and impoliteness to other, are successfully combined in a single utterance or exchange. The source of the data is negative feedback and responses to this feedback, given after online transactions via eBay, one of the leading Internet shops. I would like to highlight various impoliteness strategies and tactics, which at the same time display numerous features of self-politeness, and propose a classification of the examples. As a conclusion, I would like to discuss two problems: firstly, how the (im)politeness of an utterance ties up with its directness or indirectness, and secondly, the importance and specificity of context in the interpretation of an utterance as (im)polite. I discuss examples such as the following:

A. Buyer: [the sellers] [d]o not correspond to email through ebay. No insruction unotainable web sight[4]

   Seller (16-Nov-08 03:34): Instructions were on product & emailed & I answered you[r] badly worded emails! SAD!

B. Buyer: asked for black got pink, out of shape, do not match display photo

   Seller (24-Jun-08 19:38): If there's an error, logical step is to contact seller when we can sort it out.

C. Buyer: BEWARE!! SENT WRONG DRESS, IGNORED 99% EMAILS, LIED, RUDE STILL OWES ME MONEY!!

   Seller (17-Nov-08 11:19): get the refund as paypal, but you didn't post back dress, want to keep it arenu

**Politeness or impoliteness - the pragmatic study of the address term "ayi (aunt)" in Shanghai Dialect**

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Theories of politeness formulated by Western theoreticians like Lakoff (1973), Brown and Lecinson (1978) and Leech (1983) are, implicitly or explicitly, claimed to be universal across languages and cultures. While language is closely related to culture, these theories are sometimes difficult to explain the phenomena in eastern countries, for example, in China. Thus, eastern scholars like Gu (1990), formulated his politeness theory—distilled from millennia's Chinese cultural tradition—Maxim of Self-denigration. According to Gu, the addressers always elevate their addressees and denigrated themselves.

Kinship terms are commonly used to address people even strangers in China. It is a good way to show your respect and your politeness. "ayi(aunt)" is a very common address term in Shanghai dialect, where it can both be a person deixis and social deixis. According to Gu, "ayi(aunt)",which is commonly used to address females whose age is above 20, is a polite way to show your respect to the addressees, who is elder than you. While statistics of the questionnaire data indicate that politeness in Chinese always seems on the move. Some women, esp. whose age range from 20 to 35, are unwilling to be addressed by "ayi (aunt)''. In their opinion, "jiejie (sister)" would be more polite than "ayi(aunt)" because they may feel

[4] The spelling and grammar in the examples are original and unchanged.

younger with the former address term. Another group of women, whose age is above 50, are also reluctant to be addressed by “ayi(aunt)”. They believe “ayi (aunt)” is a professional term like doctor and professor because now it is used to address women who do cleaning job in other’s home, hospital or office (like office boy). This group of women is disgusted with this address term because of the low social status of physical labour the women are engaged in.

Language is closely connected with culture, which is subject to change. Changes in politeness triggered by socio-economic transformations may sometimes be amazingly enormous as shown by Bencze (2005). With a lack of appropriate address terms, the same address term may have totally different implied meanings so it would be polite and sometimes it would be impolite. So elevating their addressees is not always a polite way in Chinese culture.