DE GRUYTER
MOUTON

Linguistic Politeness Research Group (Eds.)

DISCURSIVE APPROACHES TO POLITENESS

MOUTON SERIES IN PRAGMATICS

DE
G

Discursive Approaches to Politeness

Mouton Series in Pragmatics 8

Editor
Istvan Kecskes

De Gruyter Mouton

Discursive Approaches to Politeness

edited by

Linguistic Politeness Research Group

De Gruyter Mouton

ISBN 978-3-11-023866-2
e-ISBN 978-3-11-023867-9
ISSN 1864-6409

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Discursive approaches to politeness / ed. by Linguistic Politeness Research Group.
p. cm. – (Mouton series in pragmatics; 8)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-3-11-023866-2 (alk. paper)
1. Politeness (Linguistics) 2. Grammar, Comparative and general–Honorific. I. Linguistic Politeness Research Group.
P299.H66D57 2011
401'.452–dc22

2011000751

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de.

Typesetting: Apex CoVantage, LLC
Printing: Hubert & Co. GmbH & Co. KG, Göttingen
♾ Printed on acid-free paper

Printed in Germany

www.degruyter.com

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following people for their contribution to this volume: Dániel Kádár for agreeing to write the postscript; and all of the people who reviewed the chapters and made constructive comments on them, particularly Michael Haugh and Francesca Bargiela. Thanks are due to Bethan Davies and Andrew Merrison for their meticulous work in ensuring that we all conformed to the style guide. Writing and organising the book has been an interesting experiment in working collectively. It has been made feasible because we wrote the chapters and posted them on an internet group site, correcting and revising the chapters on the site. So, our thanks go to technology made available by Yahoo. And finally, we'd like to thank our patient editor Istvan Kecskes at Mouton.

Contents

Contributors

Jodie Clark is lecturer in English language at Sheffield Hallam University, UK. Her research draws upon sociolinguistics and pragmatics (specifically, relevance theory and politeness) to explore new ways of critically investigating social problems such as gender inequality, homophobia and racism. She is currently working on *Language, Sex and Social Structure: Analysing Discourses of Sexuality* (Palgrave).

Jonathan Culpeper is Professor of English Language and Linguistics at the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University, UK. His work spans pragmatics, stylistics and the history of English. He has recently completed *Early Modern English Dialogues: Spoken Interaction as Writing* (with Merja Kytö, Cambridge University Press, 2010), *Historical (Im)politeness* (with Dániel Z. Kádár, Peter Lang, 2010), and *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence* (Cambridge University Press, in press). He is the co-editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Pragmatics*.

Bethan L. Davies is lecturer in Linguistics at the University of Leeds, UK. She has a wide range of research interests, but the common themes to her work are the potential mismatch between speaker intention and addressee understanding (and how this is negotiated), representations of particular social actors and associated hegemonic discourses and the language ideologies which underlie metalinguistic debates. She is currently involved in collaborative research on e-mail requests / complaints to university faculty and on British Sign Language interpreted (triadic) interactions (with Andrew Merrison and others). She also has a particular interest in *The Highway Code* and the way in which it represents different road users (e.g. see contribution to John Conley, Chris Heffer, and Frances Rock (eds.) *Legal-Lay Communication: Textual travel in the legal process*. Oxford University Press.). In addition, she is Co-investigator on the large AHRC project *Whose Voices?* which is engaged in a multimodal analysis of the language ideological debates on the BBC Voices website (www.bbc.co.uk/voices/).

Karen Grainger is a senior lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University, UK, where she teaches sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. She obtained her PhD in 1993 ('The Discourse of Elderly Care') from the University of Wales and has published in the area of interaction in health care settings. As well as being an active member of the Linguistic Politeness Research Group, she is co-editor of the *Journal of Politeness Research*. She is also a member of the Language and Interaction Research Group at Sheffield Hallam University. She is currently engaged in research projects on intercultural pragmatics, computer-mediated interaction and educational sociolinguistics.

Sandra Harris is Professor Emeritus at Nottingham Trent University, UK. She has a long-standing interest in institutional discourse, particularly the courtroom, and is the author of two books on business discourse, both with Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini. She has contributed a large number of articles and chapters to a wide range of international journals and edited collections. Her current research interest is in linguistic im/politeness, especially in institutional and political contexts, and she is one of the original editors of the *Journal of Politeness Research*.

Dániel Z. Kádár is Research Fellow at Research Institute for Linguistics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He has conducted research on linguistic politeness (with special interest in Sino-Japanese issues), historical pragmatics and sociolinguistics, and intercultural rhetoric. His recent publications include *Politeness in East Asia* (with Sara Mills, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), *Politeness in China and Japan* (with Michael Haugh, John Benjamins, forthcoming), *Historical (Im)politeness* (with Jonathan Culpeper, Peter Lang, 2010), and *Politeness in Historical and Contemporary Chinese* (with Yuling Pan, Continuum, forthcoming).

Andrew John Merrison is a senior lecturer in Linguistics at York St John University, UK. His research concerns the socio-pragmatics of inter-action and how, in various ways, language is used for *getting stuff done*. Genuinely preferring collaborative research projects, he is currently working on: e-mail requests and complaints to university faculty; British Sign Language interpreted (triadic) interactions; face and identity issues online; and the nature (and dangers) of (mis)interpreting intention in Facebook status comments. He co-authored *Introducing Language in Use: a Coursebook* (Routledge, 2005, currently being revised for a 2nd edition), co-edited *Language in Use: a Reader* (Routledge, 2010) and with Bethan Davies and Michael Haugh, is co-editing a collection of papers on *Situated Politeness* (Continuum, in press). Invariably verbose, but always quite cheerful, his favourite words are *minimum* and *outwith*.

Sara Mills is a Research Professor of Linguistics at Sheffield Hallam University, UK. Her research focuses on gender and language, gender and politeness and gender and postcolonial theory. Her recent publications include: *Language and Sexism* (CUP); *Gender and Politeness* (CUP); *Politeness in East Asia* (with Dániel Z. Kádár). She is currently working on *Gender Feminism and Language* (with Louise Mullany, Routledge); *Gender Matters* (Equinox). She is also working on a book on discursive approaches to politeness and on a book on indirectness and directness with Karen Grainger.

Louise Mullany is Associate Professor of Sociolinguistics in the School of English Studies, University of Nottingham, UK. Her research focuses on sociolinguistic and pragmatic approaches to discourse in institutional and professional contexts. Recent publications include *Gendered Discourse in the Professional Workplace* (Palgrave, 2007) and the co-authored *Introducing English Language* (Routledge, 2010).

Introduction: The Linguistic Politeness Research Group

1. History of the LPRG

The Linguistic Politeness Research Group (LPRG) was set up by a number of scholars in the UK in 1999 to collaborate on projects concerning the analysis of politeness. To mark the fact that the Linguistic Politeness Research Group has been researching, discussing and organising research seminars and conferences on the subject of linguistic politeness for ten years, we decided to publish a collection of cutting edge essays which reflect the range of research interests and theoretical frameworks we have developed during this period. The members of this core research group are (in alphabetical order): Francesca Bargiela, Derek Bousfield, Christine Christie, Jodie Clark, Jonathan Culpeper, Bethan Davies, Karen Grainger, Sandra Harris, Andrew Merrison, Sara Mills and Louise Mullany. This group is known as the Management Group of the Linguistic Politeness Research Group to distinguish it from the wider LPRG, which is an international e-mail discussion group. It is some of the members of the smaller Management Group who have published this collection of essays.

The wider LPRG group has a mailing list and discussion forum, which keeps its members up to date with current publications, conferences and other events. This group has over 150 members located in numerous countries around the world. There is now also an LPRG in Malaysia, which is officially affiliated with the main LPRG group.

The aims of the Linguistic Politeness Research group as a whole are to facilitate research on politeness and impoliteness by hosting conferences, research seminars and colloquia. We also aim to develop new forms of analysis of politeness and impoliteness and we have organised seminars specifically focused on post-Brown and Levinson analysis of politeness. The LPRG hosts seminars each semester in the UK, generally in Sheffield, but also in York, and Loughborough, to discuss a particular piece of research on politeness and impoliteness. More details about the group can be found on the group's website: http://research.shu.ac.uk/politeness

1.1. Defining politeness and impoliteness

All members of the LPRG management group have tried to work out a position from which to analyse politeness in the wake of Brown and Levinson's important research on politeness (1978/87). We have all tried in our various ways to develop a framework of analysis which concentrates less on the notion that politeness is contained in words or phrases, and more on politeness as a question of judgements made by participants and negotiated within talk. Politeness for the group is not located at the level of the utterance, as it seems to be for Brown and Levinson. Furthermore, we are interested in natural language examples; our work is based on data which has been recorded, rather than being based on discourse completion tests or invented examples. We focus on politeness in all aspects of linguistic behaviour (not just words and structures, but also oral/aural and visual aspects), in politeness at the level of discourse, and in analysing impoliteness as well as politeness.

For us, the definition of politeness is not a simple one but we nevertheless hold that it is possible to isolate those utterances which are considered to be polite or impolite by participants. Whilst we value the development of terms such as relational work and rapport management (Locher and Watts 2005; Spencer-Oatey 2000, 2005), we still hold that politeness is a term which we will continue to use, despite its problems. We all define politeness differently, because of our different perspectives. In the essays that we have written for this collection, we all define politeness and impoliteness, but here are some of those definitions:

– Sara Mills defines politeness in the following way: For me, politeness has to be defined in two separate ways. Drawing on Watts' (2003) notion of politeness1 and politeness2, we need to see that the way we as theorists of politeness define politeness does not necessarily map onto the way that interactants use the term. As a person, relating to other people, I use politeness to refer to behaviour which I see as showing concern for others and which fits in with, and shows respect for, wider social norms. I often use it to refer to behaviour which is a little exceptional, for example, if I referred to someone as 'a polite young man', I would be referencing the general social view of young men as being problematic. As a theorist, however, I feel we need to both be aware of the judgements which are made about people when we use the term politeness, and also to develop a working definition which will encompass this judgmental use of the term and also other uses of politeness. So we need to be aware of the role politeness plays in indexing social status and the way that communities of practice can include or exclude people through the use of particular styles of politeness. There is no simple definition of politeness from this theoretical perspective, but for me, politeness consists of language choices which negotiate the indexing of social status and which attempt to include or exclude members of social groups.

- Jodie Clark's definition also draws upon a politeness1/politeness2 distinction. From her perspective, politeness2 can be defined as 'the moral compulsion to respect the boundaries around different levels of social structure' (this volume: 112) and politeness1 as the discursive dispute over either how this respect should be manifested or where these boundaries should be drawn.
- Jonathan Culpeper defines politeness as: (a) an attitude consisting of particular positive evaluative beliefs about particular behaviours in particular social contexts, (b) the activation of that attitude by those particular in-context-behaviours, and (c) the actual or potential description of those in-context-behaviours and/or the person who produced them as *polite*, *courteous*, *considerate*, etc.. Politeness 'cultures' are social groups who share similar politeness attitudes, that is, they share a politeness ideology. Linguistic politeness refers to linguistic or behavioural material that is used to trigger politeness attitudes. Politeness strategies (plans of action for achieving politeness effects) and formulae (linguistic/behavioural forms for achieving politeness effects) are conventionally associated to some degree with contexts in which politeness attitudes are activated. Impoliteness, although its performance involves significant differences from politeness, can be defined along similar but contrary lines: it involves negative attitudes activated by in-context-behaviours which are associated, along with the person who gave rise to them, with impoliteness metalanguage (e.g. *impolite*, *rude*, *discourteous*, etc.) (see also Culpeper, this volume).
- Karen Grainger defines politeness, quite simply, as the interactional management of face needs. For Grainger, this encompasses first order and second order politeness, as well as impolite, rude, politic and appropriate behaviour.
- Louise Mullany views im/politeness as an ongoing, evaluative process with which interactants actively engage rather than something which statically pre-exists any interaction. She maintains the importance of 'face' as a valuable analytical concept and incorporates notions of 'personal' face and 'social identity' face into her analytical framework (Spencer-Oatey 2005). She sees im/politeness evaluations and judgements emerging across discourse(s). This can include judgements shifting between

different speech events as our perceptions of interactants are part of an on-going process that both develops and maintains itself over time and in different contexts. She believes that the intersection between politeness1 and politeness2 deserves more exploration from a theoretical and analytical perspective and she sees value in incorporating lay attitudes to im/politeness, where accessible, to enhance the analyst's perceptions of both linguistic and non-verbal im/polite behaviour.[1]

- Not surprisingly, given their many collaborative projects, Bethan Davies and Andrew Merrison have very similar views about politeness issues. They find the general distinction between politeness1 and politeness2 a useful one: as Sara Mills states above, linguistic theorists need to be aware that their conception of politeness may not be coterminous with that expressed by general users of the language. Equally, we also need to recognise that our judgements about politeness (as researchers) are just as ideological as those made by non-linguists: we cannot hide behind the justification of 'theory' Thus politeness1 and politeness2 are both equally subject to discursive struggle. From their perspective, politeness2 is concerned with theories of social purposes – how we get things done through talk. This is not intended to reduce politeness to some instrumental notion, but rather to recognise that the maintenance of social relations is part of every utterance; talk cannot help but indicate the relationship between self and other. And while each of these utterances is a moment in time, they build up a discursive history – and thus a politeness history – with each of our addressees, and also with society in general. The evaluations which form politeness1 are thus individuals' judgements about the match between their assessment of the social purposes, and that evinced by the speaker's utterance. They therefore find Grundy's (2000: 151) definition particularly useful here, even though he uses it to define politeness in general rather than the concept of politeness1: "'Politeness' is the term we use to describe the extent to which actions, including the way things are said, match addressees' perceptions of how they should be performed"
- Sandra Harris would stress the importance of both speaker intention (even if less accessible) and, more crucially, hearer evaluation when defining im/politeness as the active and ongoing process of negotiating interactive relationships, emphasising the significance of the immediate and wider contexts in which they are situated. Such encounters are less influenced by the pre-existence of politeness norms than the discursive engagement

1 Im/politeness or (im)politeness is used by many theorists to mean politeness and impoliteness.

> of different social and cultural groupings, ideological perspectives and the conventions and/or expectations of particular situations, including institutional and professional ones. In addition to finding the distinction between Politeness 1 and Politeness 2, analytically, a useful one for reasons already given by other members of the research group, she would further define the concept of im/politeness in terms of research and methodology as not only reflecting some kind of underlying social and cultural reality but also as a significant 'placeholder for a set of inquiries' (Stolzenberg 2001), a conceptual tool which can be (and already has been) fruitfully applied in different ways and for different purposes in the discursive analysis of a wide variety of interactive encounters in diverse contexts and cultures.

From these definitions, it is clear that we are not offering one simple definition of politeness and impoliteness; this very difficulty with offering a definition indicates the complexity of politeness.

In recent years we have been working to develop the notion of discursive approaches to politeness, an approach which is first introduced and discussed in Mills' essay and which then forms the focus of the volume as a whole.[2] This discursive approach to the analysis of politeness and impoliteness can be summarised as being concerned with the contextual analysis of politeness. That is, the focus is on what the language used means to the participants, including both speaker and hearer, whether the participants themselves classify the utterances as polite or impolite, how they come to make those judgements, and what information and cues inform those decisions about whether someone has been polite and impolite. Thus, it can be seen that there has been a shift from analysing politeness as a system of rational choices made by a model speaker, to an analysis of the way that choices about what counts as politeness or impoliteness are made in particular contexts. This discursive approach to politeness is much messier than the Brown and Levinson system, but the essays in this collection demonstrate, the analysis is more able to penetrate the intricacies involved in culturally-situated communicative behaviour.

2 Not all of the essays in this collection set themselves within the discursive approach to politeness and impoliteness to the same extent as others. The discursive approach is not methodologically homogeneous and therefore a wide range of approaches can come within its ambit.

1.2. Conferences organised by the LPRG

The following international conferences have all been organised under the aegis of the Linguistic Politeness Research Group:

2002: *Politeness and Power* Loughborough University, UK
2005: *Politeness, Language and Culture* University of Nottingham, UK
2006: *Linguistic Impoliteness and Rudeness I* University of Huddersfield, UK
2007: *Situated Politeness*, University of Leeds, UK
2008: *Eastern and Western Views of Politeness*, Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest, Hungary
2009: *Linguistic Impoliteness and Rudeness II*, Lancaster University, UK
2009: *Face and Politeness*, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia
2010: *Politeness and Impoliteness, On- and Offline,* University of Basel, Switzerland
2011: *Corpus-based and Corpus-driven Approaches to Politeness and Impoliteness in Intercultural communication* Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

1.3. Other publications

The *Journal of Politeness Research*: *Language, Behaviour, Culture* was established by the Linguistic Politeness Research Management Group. Its first issue appeared in 2005, published by Mouton de Gruyter. The editor-in-chief until 2010 was Christine Christie. The journal is now co-edited by Karen Grainger and Derek Bousfield. It has an editorial advisory board of 18 members located world-wide. The journal provides an outlet through which researchers on politeness phenomena from many diverse fields of interest may publish their findings and where it is possible to keep up to date with the wide range of research published in this expanding field. It is currently published twice a year.

There have been a number of special issues including volumes dedicated to politeness at work, apologies, impoliteness, health care communication and computer-mediated-communication. The journal has a regular book reviews section where the most significant publications in the field are summarised and evaluated. Resultant dialogues between author and reviewer relating to observations made in previous reviews have recently been included to enhance the range of issues discussed and to give the journal an additional dialogic element.

We have also published an electronic special issue of a journal on 'Politeness in Context', accessible at http://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/politeness/intro.htm. In addition, we have all also published widely in the field as individual researchers.

2. Structure of the book

In Chapter 1, Sara Mills in *Discursive approaches to politeness* examines the work of various theorists who have written about politeness in the wake of Brown and Levinson's (1978/87) work. Since the critique of Brown and Levinson's work by theorists such as Eelen (2001), it is no longer possible to simply 'apply' their work to data and to assume, as they did, that a speech act theory of language is adequate for the analysis of politeness and impoliteness. Instead, theorists have worked to modify Brown and Levinson's work or have turned to other models and approaches such as Relevance theory, discursive psychology and frame-based analysis to develop more productive approaches to the analysis of politeness and impoliteness. They have also drawn on notions of community of practice and habitus to describe the way that norms of politeness and impoliteness develop and are maintained. These approaches have been categorised as discursive or post-modern and here Mills aims to analyse the elements which are shared by these discursive and post-modern theorists.

In Chapter 2, Jonathan Culpeper addresses the topic of prosody and impoliteness (though much of what he says will also have relevance for the study of politeness). It is not an unusual occurrence that people take offence at *how* someone says something rather than *what* was said. Yet despite this, the vast bulk of research on politeness or impoliteness pays little attention to the role of prosody. The single exception of note is the work of Arndt and Janney (e.g. 1985, 1987), whose notion of politeness involves emotional support conveyed multimodally through verbal, vocal and kinesic cues. As far as studies focusing on impoliteness or interpersonal conflict are concerned, prosody seems to attract at best a cursory mention (though see Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann 2003). A similar lack afflicts the prosody literature: politeness, impoliteness or indeed social interaction in general are not a feature. To be fair, for several decades there has been a small but steady stream of studies on the attitudinal or emotive meanings conveyed by prosody (see Murray and Arnott 1993, for an overview), and these clearly are of some relevance to im/politeness. However, much of this work focuses on isolated utterances in lab-based studies.

Only relatively recently have studies on prosody begun to take the role of pragmatics seriously (see, for example, the special issue of the *Journal of Pragmatics* in 2006 on the prosody-pragmatics interface). This chapter stresses that prosodic features are always gradient and relative to some degree, meaning that context must always be factored in when analysing the role of prosody in communication.

Culpeper's chapter opens with an example, used to raise the issues, and impoliteness is also defined. The main argument of this chapter is that prosody plays a key role in triggering evaluations that an utterance is impolite. Moreover, this chapter shows some of the ways in which this happens. In order to demonstrate the pervasive importance of prosody and impoliteness in the understandings of the 'lay person', he examines metapragmatic comments concerning potentially impolite utterances (e.g. comments that utterances are impolite because of a 'dismissive' or 'condescending' 'tone of voice'). Following on from this, he examines how prosody works in context to trigger evaluations of impoliteness in naturally occurring data, specifically, analysing extracts from the singing talent show *Pop Idol.* Scarcely any publications on im/politeness or on prosody (or both) hitherto actually analyse language as part of extended social interaction and part of a particular context, instead preferring to make claims about decontextualised and relatively short utterances, drawing on intuitions, either those of the analyst or those elicited from informants in experimental conditions. More specifically, he reveals how locally constructed norms impact on politeness and, especially, impoliteness. An important source of evidence for his interpretation of utterances are understandings displayed by their targets.

In the third chapter (*The limits of politeness re-visited: Courtroom discourse as a case in point*), Sandra Harris's initial premise is Robin Lakoff's (1989) call, over two decades ago, for an extension of politeness theory beyond what seemed to her at that time 'the limits of politeness' to discourse types which were not focused predominantly on interpersonal and informal situations, with courtroom discourse as her primary example. Although a considerable amount of im/politeness research has in the intervening period been devoted to a range of institutional settings, relatively few writers have followed Lakoff's lead in taking a closer look at the relevance of im/politeness to the discourse which takes place in courtrooms (but see Penman 1990; Berk-Seligson 1999; Kurzon 2001). Hence, this chapter takes another look at what Lakoff has identified with regard to courtroom discourse as the 'limits of politeness' in the light of more recent research, particularly on impoliteness (See Archer 2008; Bousfield 2008; Tracy 2008), which has attempted to move on from and/or modify in various ways the seminal work of Brown and Levinson (1987) and taking in her chapter what is clearly a discursive approach to im/politeness.

The courtroom is arguably one of the most significant of institutional sites which are almost inevitably associated with conflict, disagreement and the irreconcilable goals of the primary participants. Under an adversarial legal system, conflict between opposing 'sides' is systematic and legally sanctioned. In addition, the potential consequences for the main participants are serious beyond those in many, if not most, other conflictive situations. Certain powerful interactants (lawyers, but not usually judges and never juries) are expected to be verbally aggressive and to aggravate the face of defendants and witnesses in the course of attempting to win a case. However, what actually happens in court is more complex than this, and reveals in interesting ways how certain cultural and social 'politeness norms' interact with the power oriented, hierarchical and prescriptive interactional roles of the major participants in a criminal trial and in accord with the legal and discourse conventions of the courtroom.

Using a range of contemporary data mainly from British criminal and magistrate court cases, the chapter sets out to explore the following three issues:

(1) The pervasive nature of certain features (highly mitigated utterances, use of 'please' and 'thank you', forms of address which reflect deference, etc) often associated with politeness in courtroom discourse, along with the presence of equally pervasive features associated with impoliteness (repetitive and conducive questions, accusations, insinuations, sarcasm, threats, etc), the functions that these features serve and how they are responded to and appear to be evaluated by courtroom participants;
(2) The fact that a number of these features occur in the interrogation sequences which are the most crucial and lengthy part of a criminal trial, i.e. the presentation of evidence to the judge and jury through the questioning of defendants and witnesses, and the extent to which im/politeness plays a significant role in such sequences, particularly in defining the strategic differences between direct and cross-examination;
(3) Whether current face-oriented models of both polite and impolite linguistic behaviour which are based on other types of conflictive discourse sets, such as those examined in Bousfield (2008), are most helpful in understanding and explaining what constitutes im/politeness in court, the multiple functions it serves and how various participants make use of and evaluate it. Ultimately, Harris concludes that while aspects of face

> enhancement and face threat are components of the evidential process in court, they are not in this context, even interactively, ends in themselves or the primary goal of the crucial interrogative sequences aimed at eliciting evidence and that, as a consequence, the role of im/politeness in court must also, if not ultimately, be viewed from the perspective of a wider moral and social framework, with deep roots in history.

The next chapter, *"No, like proper north": Re-drawing boundaries in an emergent community of practice*, is by Jodie Clark. In this essay she proposes two step changes to the discursive approach to politeness. First, she advocates in favour of re-thinking politeness2 as a construct, arguing that it is best understood not as a 'scientific' or top-down theoretical model divorced from discursive struggle, but rather as an underlying set of lay concerns – what Bargiela-Chiappini calls a "moral order" (2003: 1467) – in which struggles over politeness1 are situated. Second, she proposes a new way of conceptualising 'face' – as a boundary formed around different levels of social structure, whereby the individual is understood as one (and only one) of these structures. Conceiving of face as a boundary around levels of structure offers new possibilities for the critical investigation of social structure itself, offering researchers a much needed alternative to the unproductive dichotomy between purportedly individualistic and collectivist societal frameworks.

To illustrate how these ideas work in empirical practice, Clark draws upon interactional data collected during a nine-month-long ethnographic study of a women's university field hockey club. She focuses on several interactions in which participants indicate disagreement about where to draw the boundaries between the 'North' and 'South' of England, making the claim that these disagreements reveal moral and emotional attachments to particular social configurations. Drawing upon both a communities-of-practice model (Lave and Wenger 1991; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992) and a relevance theoretical methodology (Sperber and Wilson 1995) Clark analyses participants' conversational utterances to draw inferences about how the boundaries that demarcate 'individuals' and the 'community' shift as membership in that community changes.

In Chapter 5, Louise Mullany develops the discursive approach to politeness by integrating Spencer Oatey's (2005) model of rapport management with Goffman's (1959) theory of dramaturgy and Bell's (1997) audience design framework to examine multiple stretches of discourse in *Frontstage and backstage: Gordon Brown, the 'bigoted woman' and the UK 2010 General Election*. She examines a number of spoken and written data sources that were produced on the same day of the election campaign. The data revolve around an evaluation uttered by the then Prime Minister Gordon Brown in the private sphere of his car to one of his colleagues. He commented that a voter he had just had a lengthy conversation with was "a sort of bigoted woman". Brown was unaware that his lapel microphone was still recording.

A journalist working for Sky News 'overheard' this private conversation and decided to make the data public. In order to scrutinise this incident thoroughly from a discursive im/politeness perspective, the analysis begins by examining the initial interaction between Brown and the voter in question, Gillian Duffy. Brown's private interaction in the car is then analysed. Evaluations from Gillian Duffy once journalists had played her the recording of the private conversation are then examined. This is followed by an interview analysis with Brown on BBC Radio and an examination of the language he used in a press conference held by him outside Duffy's home later the same afternoon. The final data consist of evaluations and judgements from journalists made via the medium of electronic discourse in the form of blogs.

This particular mass media incident illustrates how intervention by a third party can change an interlocutor's evaluations of an interaction even after that initial interaction has been completed. While Duffy originally evaluated Brown positively when the interaction had finished, her judgements shift when she finds out he called her a "bigoted woman". Accusations of impoliteness and rudeness result and Brown is forced to apologise. A discursive approach that examines stretches of discourse across different spoken and written discourse events is emphasised, as is the useful role that electronic discourse can play in providing rapid access to participants' judgements and evaluations of im/politeness.

Goffman's backstage and frontstage concepts and elements from Bell's audience design are applied to demonstrate that there is a disjunction between who Brown thought his audience was and who the audience turned out to be following third party intervention. There is thus a mismatch in the im/politeness strategies he adopted: Brown's language style was designed for one particular 'backstage' audience, where it is common for contradictions of frontstage behaviour to take place and for interactants to be derided in some way (Goffman 1959, Coates 2000). However, Brown's audience then shifted substantially without his consent to being broadcast 'frontstage' The ethics of broadcasting this private conversation are also considered in light of the strict ethical codes of practice that operate in contemporary linguistics research.

In Chapter 6 Karen Grainger focuses on the 'First order/Second order' distinction in politeness theory, taking sample analyses from institutional and intercultural contexts. This essay is an overview of work that she has conducted over the last 20 years that has been informed and influenced by politeness theory, initially by Brown and Levinson's seminal publication of 1987, and subsequently by other scholars' developments and departures from their model. Over the course of the last decade key scholars of politeness theory have attempted to deal with the question of what exactly we mean by 'politeness' These discussions (for example Eelen 2001; Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann 2003; Mills 2003; Spencer-Oatey 2005) reflect a problem of ambiguity in the term and Watts (1992, 2003), has attempted to clarify the distinction between popular and technical definitions by using alternative terms: 'first order' and 'second order' politeness. Locher and Watts (2005) then argued that it is only participants' constructions of 'politeness' first order politeness) that should be the object of study of politeness scholars. Second order politeness, they argue, is really about relational face-work and not to do with the common meaning of politeness at all.

In this essay, Grainger uses examples of institutional and intercultural interaction to argue that, despite the developments outlined above, the notion of 'politeness' in Brown and Levinson's technical sense remains a useful contribution to the analysis of verbal strategies that mediate human interactions. She points out that there are, indeed, limitations to this early non-discursive formulation of politeness theory, but that one can nevertheless usefully address these limitations whilst maintaining a 'second order' conception of politeness. Thus, the discursive nature of her data analysis lies not in making claims about members' evaluations of politeness, but rather in examining the observable negotiation and sequencing of face-oriented strategies in social context. For example, in the health-care research undertaken by Grainger, Masterson and Jenkins (2005), they move away from a psychologised approach to data analysis and favour a more ethnomethodological line of enquiry in which concepts from Brown and Levinson (such as positive politeness, bald-on-record strategies and face redress) are appropriate to the analysis of the collaborative and dynamic management of bad news delivery in stroke care.

More recent developments in research into politeness theory have led Grainger (with colleagues) to deal in more detail with particular politeness strategies, such as 'indirectness' When examining intercultural encounters, it turns out that, in line with the current 'discursive turn' in politeness studies, indirectness cannot be found to inhere in individual speech acts. In these data it seems that politeness (and here first order and second order may be simultaneously relevant) is only apparent when taken in both sequential and situational context. Thus, it seems that what moves us forward theoretically and methodologically in these studies is not the focus on members' own evaluations, but the focus on face-work in context and sequence.

In Chapter 7, Bethan Davies focuses on political apologies and the meta-discourses (Jaworski, Coupland and Galasínski 2004; Davies 2009) that surround them. Her essay focuses on a newspaper interview with the then serving British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, which was published in a small circulation newspaper. In this article, Blair expressed "our deep sorrow" at the existence of the slave trade and Britain's role within it. This specific phrase was immediately highlighted as being problematic – it was not seen as indexing an explicit apology. Davies explores how this distinguishes political apologies from those in other contexts, and why this requirement seems to be seen as necessary.

Apologies have received a lot of attention as a speech act, but as Davies points out, the benefits of exploring political apologies is that the analyst can move beyond discussions of whether apologies can be identified on the basis of particular linguistic features (e.g. Olshtain and Cohen 1983; Olshtain 1989; Holmes 1990; Jaworski 1994) and take into account, in addition, the evaluative comments made in print media. By exploring reported judgements about Blair's sincerity (cf. Jeffries 2007), Davies outlines the importance of the speaker's previous actions and their evaluations – that is, their discursive, historical frame. To explore this issue in detail, Davies draws upon Hill's (2007, 2008) notion of personalist ideology.

Davies's essay also opens up the temporal aspects of apology. It appears that the performative force of the apology does not have to be restricted to the current time frame (see also Davies, Merrison and Goddard 2007). Blair's 'apology' may be seen to have serious flaws in this temporal context, but the mediatised evaluations (Johnson and Ensslin 2007) show that judgements about the functionality of a speech act (or of other politeness phenomena) can be unstable. Davies thus argues that the argumentativity (e.g. Eelen 2001, Mills 2003, Watts 2003) that is taken for granted in much current politeness research should not be considered purely a synchronic phenomenon. Instead, the heterogeneity inherent within the evaluation process also needs to be considered within the diachronic dimension.

In the final chapter, Andrew Merrison focuses on 'Doing Aphasia' This essay is an exploration of the relation between aphasia, issues of (non-)competence and face maintenance. The data described in this chapter comprises eight dyads of previously unacquainted aphasic and non-aphasic individuals, and eight dyads of previously unacquainted non-aphasic interactants. Although the essay is about aphasia, it is not about the linguistic abilities of aphasic individuals *per se*. Rather, the discussion is concerned with how people who do not have aphasia interact with people who do and how face is maintained in such linguistically sensitive environments. The essay has two broad aims. Firstly, following Wilkinson (1995a, 1995b), by discussing how non-aphasic dialogue partners manage their interactions with aphasic individuals, Merrison aims to show that aphasia is indeed a variable that participants orient to. More specifically, he demonstrates how one aspect of non-aphasics' behaviour is organised such that it avoids highlighting any non-competence on the part of their aphasic interlocutor and thereby orients to face. This aspect of non-aphasic behaviour concerns the initiation of sequences of talk which check that the aphasic dialogue partner has understood the preceding discourse. Secondly, in the course of his discussion he aims to show why it is vital to carry out close observations of spoken interaction and thus, following Haugh (2007), Arundale (2010) and Hambling-Jones and Merrison (in prep.), hopes to further the case for using an interactional approach to the analysis of im/politeness phenomena.

To complete the collection, Dániel Kádár sums up this collection of essays on discursive approaches to politeness in a postscript, drawing out some of the shared themes and highlighting some of the bones of contention within discursive theorising.

It is to be hoped that this collection of essays will help to establish discursive politeness theory as a way of analysing politeness and will help to firm up some of the positions which are identified as discursive or post-modern. It will also show the range of positions which are possible within post-Brown and Levinson theorising of politeness.

References

Archer, Dawn
2008 Verbal aggression and impoliteness: Related or synonymous? In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.), 181–207. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Arndt, Horst and Richard Wayne Janney
1985 Politeness revisited: cross-modal supportive strategies. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 23 (4): 281–300.

Arndt, Horst and Richard Wayne Janney
1987 *Intergrammar: Toward an Integrative Model of Verbal, Prosodic and Kinesic Choices in Speech*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Arundale, Robert B.
2010 Relating. In *Interpersonal Pragmatics*. Vol. 6. *Handbooks of Pragmatics*, Miriam Locher and Sage Lambert Graham (eds.), Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Bargiela-Chiappini, Francesca
2003 Face and politeness: New (insights) for old (concepts). *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1453–1469.
Bell, Allan
1997 Language style as audience design. In *The Sociolinguistics Reader*, Nikolas Coupland and Adam Jaworski (eds.), 240–250. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
Berk-Seligson, Susan
1999 The impact of court interpreting on the coerciveness of leading questions *International Journal of Speech, Language and the Law* 6 (1): 30–56.
Bousfield, Derek
2008 *Impoliteness in Interaction*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Brown, Penelope and Stephen C. Levinson
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Coates, Jennifer
2000 Small talk and subversion: Female speakers backstage. In *Small Talk*. Justine Coupland (ed.), 241–263. Harlow: Pearson.
Culpeper, Jonathan, Derek Bousfield and Anne Wichmann
2003 Impoliteness revisited: With special reference to dynamic and prosodic aspects. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1545–1579.
Davies, Bethan L.
2009 Metadiscourses of race in the news: The Celebrity Big Brother racism row. In *Language Ideologies and Media Discourse*, Sally Johnson and Tommaso M. Milani (eds.), 162–181. London: Continuum.
Davies, Bethan L., Andrew John Merrison and Angela Goddard
2007 Institutional apologies in UK Higher Education: Getting back into the black before going into the red. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (1): 39–63.
Eckert, Penelope and Sally McConnell-Ginet
1992 Think practically and look locally: Language and gender as community-based practice. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21: 461–490.
Eelen, Gino
2001 *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St Jerome.
Grainger, Karen, Simon Masterson and Michael Jenkins
2005 "Things aren't the same are they?": The management of bad news delivery in the discourse of stroke care. *Communication and Medicine* 2 (1): 35–44.
Goffman, Erving
1959 *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Grundy, Peter
2000 *Doing Pragmatics*. 2nd edition. London: Arnold.

Hambling-Jones, Oliver and Andrew John Merrison
in prep. Inequity in the pursuit of intimacy: An analysis of British Pick-Up Artist interactions.
Haugh, Michael
2007 The discursive challenge to politeness research: an interactional alternative. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 295–317.
Hill, Jane
2007 Crises of meaning: Personalist language ideology in US media discourse. In *Language in the Media*, Sally Johnson and Astrid Ensslin (eds.), 70–90. London: Continuum.
2008 *The Everyday Language of White Racism*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
Holmes, Janet
1990 Apologies in New Zealand English. *Language in Society* 9 (2): 155–199.
Jaworski, Adam
1994 Apologies and non-apologies: Negotiation in speech act realization. *Text* 14 (2): 185–206.
Jaworski, Adam, Nikolas Coupland and Dariusz Galasínski (eds.)
2004 *Metalanguage: Social and Ideological Perspectives*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
Johnson, Sally and Astrid Ensslin
2007 Language in the media: Theory and practice. In *Language in the Media*, Sally Johnson and Astrid Ensslin (eds.), 3–22. London: Continuum.
Kurzon, Dennis
2001 The politeness of judges: American and English judicial behaviour. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33 (1): 61–85.
Lakoff, Robin
1989 The limits of politeness: Therapeutic and courtroom discourse. *Multilingua* 8 (2–3): 101–129.
Lave, Jean and Etienne Wenger
1991 *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Locher, Miriam A. and Richard Watts
2005 Politeness theory and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 9–33.
Mills, Sara
2003 *Gender and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Murray, Iain R. and John L. Arnott
1993 Toward the simulation of emotion in synthetic speech: A review of the literature on human vocal emotion. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 93 (2): 1097–1108.

Olshtain, Elite
1989 Apologies across languages. In *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies*, Shoshana Blum-Kulka, Juliane House and Gabriele Kasper (eds.), 155–173. Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Olshtain, Elite and Andrew D. Cohen
1983 Apology: A speech act set. In *Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition,* Nessa Wolfson and Elliot Judd (eds.), 18–36. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Penman, Robyn
1990 Facework and politeness: Multiple goals in courtroom discourse. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 9 (1–2): 15–39.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen
2005 (Im)politeness, face and perceptions of rapport: Unpackaging their bases and relationships. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 95–120.

Sperber, Dan and Deirdre Wilson
1995 *Relevance.* 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell.

Stolzenberg, Nomi Maya
2001 What we talk about when we talk about culture. In WHEN: A Conversation about Culture. Robert Borofsky, Fredrik Barth, Richard A. Schweder, Lars Rodseth, Nomi Maya Stolzenberg, *American Anthropologist* 103 (2): 442–444.

Tracy, Karen
2008 'Reasonable hostility': Situation-appropriate face-attack. *Journal of Politeness Research* 4 (2): 169–192.

Watts, Richard
1992 Linguistic politeness and politic verbal behaviour: Reconsidering claims for universality. In *Politeness in Language: Studies in its History, Theory and Practice,* Richard J. Watts, Sachiko Ide and Konrad Ehlich (eds.), 43–69. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Watts, Richard
2003 *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilkinson, Ray
1995a The application of conversation analysis to the assessment of aphasic talk-in-interaction. Ph.D. diss., University of Central England, Birmingham.

Wilkinson, Ray
1995b Doing 'being ordinary': aphasia as a problem of interaction. In *UCL Department of Human Communication Science Work in Progress.* Vol. 5, M. Kersner and S. Peppe (eds.), 134–150.

Chapter 1

Discursive approaches to politeness and impoliteness

Sara Mills

1. Introduction

In this essay I explore the various approaches to politeness research which have been categorised, or, I would argue, could be categorised, as discursive or post-modern. While some of these theorists would not themselves classify their work as discursive or post-modern, I would suggest that there do seem to be shared characteristics and emphases in their work.[1] This is due partly to the fact that all of them are attempting, in some measure, to go beyond the work of Brown and Levinson (1978/87). I examine the elements which certain theorists such as Geyer (2008), Locher (2004), Christie (2007), Bousfield (2008), Culpeper (2003), Culpeper et al. (2008), Watts (2003), Terkourafi (2001; 2005a; 2005b; 2007), Paramasivam (2007a, 2007b), Haugh (2007) and Arundale (2010) share and those which divide them. In so doing, I hope to map out how discursive or post-modern approaches to the analysis of politeness and impoliteness differ from approaches such as Brown and Levinson's ([1978] 1987) and how such approaches might lead to productive theorising and analysis of politeness and impoliteness. Post-modern approaches to politeness at the moment, in Terkourafi's (2005a: 102) view, seem: "at least in the way they deal with data unable to bring about the paradigm change within politeness studies to which they aspire", but perhaps by drawing attention to some of the ways that theorists have tried to overcome some of these difficulties, it will be possible to map out what a new

1 I would like to thank Jonathan Culpeper in particular for very helpful comments he made on an earlier draft of this essay and also Bethan Davies for some very perceptive and constructive comments she made on a later draft, particularly in relation to structure.

theoretical model might consist of. It might also be argued that it is in the very nature of post-modern or discursive theory to explicitly *not* construct an overarching theory, since, many have argued within critical theory, the days of grand narratives are now at an end.[2] Perhaps, what is most indicative of the discursive or post-modern approach is the sense that theorists are still trying to assemble theoretical models by juxtaposing elements from different approaches and methodologies, and this eclecticism is perhaps more suited to the type of contextualised, qualitative analysis favoured by the discursive approach.[3] In order to examine these discursive theorists, firstly, I focus on the influence of Brown and Levinson on the shape of the concerns and issues which have arisen within the research field for discursive theorists; I then propose definitions of the discursive and post-modern approach. I go on to focus on the theoretical influences on discursive theorists of politeness and impoliteness, and finally, I describe the work of these discursive theorists. In my conclusion, I suggest directions for future research in this field.

2. The post-Brown and Levinson research field

Whilst Brown and Levinson's work has influenced research work on politeness since its publication, it has nevertheless been criticised by a wide range of theorists, mostly in a spirit of constructive criticism in order to modify or build on it (Sifianou 1992; Spencer-Oatey 2000a, 2000b). However, there have been a number of theorists who have been far more critical and who have argued for a rejection of some elements or all of Brown and Levinson's model. Critics such as Eelen (2001) have focused on a number of different problems with Brown and Levinson's work, most notably their reliance on speech act theory, the model person/individualism, their model of communication, their definition of politeness, their understanding of the role and

2 However, theories such as Relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1995) are overarching theories which claim to have general applicability. Nevertheless, the politeness theorists who use RT tend to try to ground their analysis in the particularity of contextualised data, which Sperber and Wilson do not themselves do (Culpeper, pers.comm).

3 There are of course fundamental theoretical problems with eclecticism which it is not possible to deal with in detail here, one of the most notable being the incompatibility of certain theoretical approaches. Such problems have generally not been explicitly addressed in theoretical approaches to politeness and impoliteness which draw on a range of different theorists.

function of variables and their assumptions about the universal nature of politeness. It is beyond the scope of this essay to deal with these issues at length here, but we can briefly sketch out these issues since discursive/post-modern politeness theories have been developed largely in reaction to these elements in the work of Brown and Levinson.[4] Discursive theorists of politeness have tried to develop ways of thinking around and in reaction to the problems which these issues have posed for them.[5]

2.1. Speech Act theory

Brown and Levinson relied on speech act theory to underpin their model of politeness, and this is a theoretical grounding which has been adopted by many politeness researchers. It should, however, be remembered that Brown and Levinson, in the 1987 edition of their work, also found fault with their earlier use of speech act theory, whilst, nevertheless, not suggesting what could be used in its place. Thus, much work on politeness post-Brown and Levinson has focused especially on apologies and requests, assuming that these speech acts have some simple existence in linguistic form.[6] Quantitative analysis of requests, for example, consists of counting the linguistic realisations of requests found in data. Thus for example, Holmes (1995) decides on what constitutes a compliment for the communities that she analyses and then, based on a large data set, counts the number of linguistic realisations of compliments. Her analysis is a good representation overall for most compliments, since many of them do fall into a formal and consistent pattern. However, many utterances which have the form of compliments do not function as a compliment to the hearer, and may actually not be intended by the speaker to be taken as compliments.[7] Furthermore, individuals may pay compliments without using the conventional linguistic realisations. Compliments may be paid indirectly or by implication. This type of post-Brown and Levinson work does not acknowledge that requests, compliments and apologies can

4 It should be noted that Eelen (2001) Mills (2003a), and Watts (2003) deal with these criticisms of Brown and Levinson's model at greater length.

5 I deal with these issues at greater length in my forthcoming study of discursive politeness *Discursive Approaches to Politeness.*

6 A more nuanced analysis of apologies can be found in Grainger and Harris (2007) special issue on apologies in *Journal of Politeness Research.*

7 For example, some speakers may use the form of compliments ironically or sarcastically.

be performed using a very wide range of linguistic realisations, for example 'I'm sorry' may not necessarily feature in utterances which are accepted by both speaker and hearer as constituting an apology. And furthermore, using politeness markers which are generally seen within a particular community as indexing an apology may be used when a speaker wishes to indicate a 'surface' apology or even wishes to be impolite, for example when 'I'm sorry' is used but it is clear to both the speaker and the hearer that it is not sincere.[8] In the type of analysis which relies on traditional speech act theory, the former example where speakers apologise using different linguistic realisations would not be counted in the analysis, (thus giving an incomplete view of the way interactants apologise) and in the latter example where the function of politeness markers differs from its conventional surface usage, this would in fact be counted as an apology (giving a false view of the way that interactants draw on politeness resources in order to be insincere, ironic or impolite).

2.2. The Model Person / Individualism

Brown and Levinson focus on the Model Person, since their approach requires that the participants in interaction are rational beings who use language in order to achieve their own short term and long term goals. Politeness in this model is very much a product of the rational strategic use of language by individuals to achieve their ends, and this involves calculating the best way that they can do this, by appearing to placate and please their interlocutors. This notion of the atomistic individual is central to Western models of the self developed within philosophy and economics, who operates in rational self-interest, manipulating others only to achieve goals. However, as many critics have noted, this individualistic focus means that other people and communities of practice and society as a whole are only viewed as a means for the individual to achieve their ends. Even within Western society, this is a troubling view, since this instrumental perspective on interaction only holds sway in certain limited spheres, such as certain kinds of business, consumerist and political environments.[9] However, within Asian societies and Arabic-speaking cultures, for example, where such

8 Culpeper (pers comm) argues that speech act theory would be able to account for this type of utterance as this would be categorised as an infelicitous speech act, breaking the sincerity condition.

9 This Thatcherite model of individuals in relation to society is one which needs to be resisted in politeness research as well as elsewhere.

models of society are not generally popular, a model of politeness based only on the individual and their goals would not be valid (see Ide 2005; Hamza 2007; Kádár and Mills 2011a). Eelen (2001: 11) discusses discernment which he sees as the "socially obligatory verb (grammatical) choices", but discernment is clearly more than this simple grammatical focus suggests. Ide (2005) in a perceptive analysis of the differences between broadly speaking Western and Eastern cultures, characterises this individualistic thinking stereotypically associated with the West as 'the eagle soaring in the sky' with what Suzuki (1978, cited in Ide 2005: 48) terms 'thinking in the forest' which is more indicative of Eastern modes of thinking about the individual. Within this Eastern model, individuals are more concerned with their relationship with other 'trees' which surround them and their relationship within the forest as a whole, rather than assuming that they can soar above the 'forest' and map out their own needs. Whilst these different models of the self are useful, it is important not to assume that there is no individualistic strategic use of politeness within Eastern cultures, and similarly no community oriented (discernment) use of politeness within Western cultures. However, these tendencies are important in recognising that it is no longer possible to simply assume that a model which focuses on the individual in isolation is adequate.

2.3. Model of communication

Brown and Levinson's model assumes that communication between speaker and hearer is perfect: within their model no-one misunderstands, and once, for example, an apology has been uttered, using the formula 'I'm sorry' the hearer immediately recognises that the speaker has apologised. Many theorists (Mills 2003a; Watts 2003; Bousfield 2008) have drawn attention to the fact that communication and interpretation of utterances is much messier than this model can allow for, especially when considering politeness. Here, interpersonal relations and status are potentially up for grabs as they are continually being negotiated; difficult and sensitive negotiations are also being handled. It is therefore not surprising that this model of straightforward communication is untenable.

2.4. Definition of politeness

Brown and Levinson's definition of politeness is largely focused around the notion of mitigation of face threat, and whilst politeness is clearly used to avoid threatening others' face, it is clear that politeness has many different functions. Ide (1989) focusing on discernment/wakimae has drawn attention to the role that politeness plays in acknowledging the role that each individual has been allocated. For example, if an individual uses a particular honorific, they can be seen to be recognising that the particular context and other participants require them to use a certain deferential form; in so doing they are acknowledging their own position and others' positions in relation to them within the social system. Ide (1989) also argues that in the process of using these forms of politeness, the speaker is also acknowledging the importance of the social group and is contributing to the maintenance of the social system.[10] Even within the context of the West, discernment is a key element within politeness. Thus, by using a particular phrase conventionally associated with politeness (particularly but not exclusively deference), individuals may indicate that they recognise their position within the hierarchy. Conversely, by choosing not to use phrases associated with politeness and instead using swear words and direct insults, interactants may simultaneously express their anger within a particular context, but may also be seen to be challenging the status quo and indicating their contempt for the community of practice or social system as a whole. For example, in Bousfield's (2008) analyses of a series of incidents involving traffic wardens and parking attendants, those who swore at the traffic warden were not only contesting the warden's judgements but could also be seen as contesting their own and the warden's position in the social order.

A further problem with Brown and Levinson's definition of politeness is that they did not build into their model a clear definition of impoliteness, except to suggest that impoliteness was an absence of politeness (Eelen, 2001: 98). Culpeper (2005, 2007), Bousfield (2007, 2008) Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann (2003) and Bousfield and Locher (2007) have theorised impoliteness in a way which disengages it from its association from politeness. By recognising the difference of impoliteness (i.e. that it is not simply the polar opposite of politeness) they have begun the process of analysing impoliteness in and of itself.

10 This can be seen by the reaction to those who do not use certain politeness formulae; within Japanese particularly, when honorifics are not used in contexts where they would be expected, the speakers are seen to be calling into question and setting themselves outside the social system. See the work on the use of honorifics by lesbians and young women (Abe 2005; Yoshida and Sakurai 2005)

2.5. Variables

Brown and Levinson argue that in order to work out what type and how much politeness the speaker should use, individuals calculate the social distance between the speakers (D), the power relations between them (P) and the rank of the imposition of the particular speech act (R).[11] However, whilst Brown and Levinson themselves tried to argue that these variables are arrived at through a calculation which is very local to the interaction, other theorists have used them in a more static and inflexible way, assuming that it is indeed possible to outline the calculation of distance, etc, in order to be able to predict the type and level of politeness which will be used by interactants. Once a more Foucauldian model of power is used, it is clear that institutional rank and status do not necessarily have a clear and unequivocal relation to the level or type of politeness which is used by participants (Foucault 1972, 1978; Thornborrow, 2002). Indeed, as Manke (1997) and Diamond (1996) have shown, those in positions of power often do not use the levels of politeness which are conventionally associated with those in power, choosing rather to use deferential forms or forms indicating solidarity with their subordinates (see Locher 2004).

2.6. Universality

Perhaps one of the issues within Brown and Levinson's work which has attracted most criticism has been their notion that their theoretical model of politeness is universal; whilst different languages may express politeness in different ways, in effect, politeness itself is viewed as universally based on face mitigation. Some East Asian researchers, such as Mao (1994), Ide (1989) and Matsumoto (1989), contested the applicability of the Brown and Levinsonian framework, thus bringing East Asian politeness to the fore of linguistic politeness research for the first time and foregrounding different models of conversational behaviour. Whilst stressing that all societies are polite in equal measure, these theorists emphasised that within different

11 This inclusion of the ranking of an imposition into the equation indicates the extent to which Brown and Levinson's work is based on the assumption that politeness is concerned largely with requests and apologies. There are many instances of polite behaviour where there is no imposition as such.

cultures politeness operated in different ways and was employed based on different values and premises. Thus, although it is possible to talk about politeness and impoliteness in a universalistic way, we must recognise that within different cultures, these terms have different meanings and functions (Pizziconi 2008).

3. Definitions of discourse and post-modernism

Discourse and post-modernism are both terms about which there is a great deal of theoretical debate (Mills 1997) Furthermore, to add to the complexity of describing post-modern and discursive approaches to politeness, many of the theorists I refer to in this essay do not themselves consider their work or analytical approach to be post-modern or discourse-oriented. Here, I map out a range of definitions of these terms.[12]

3.1. Discourse

There has been a discursive turn in politeness research. By this, I mean that theorists are no longer content to analyse politeness and impoliteness as if they were realised through the use of isolated phrases and sentences. It is clear that politeness and impoliteness are, amongst other things, judgements about linguistic phenomena and judgements are generally constituted over a number of turns or even over much longer stretches of interaction. Furthermore, theorists who take a discursive approach generally are concerned with issues of context. Thus, discursive theorists do not focus on politeness at the level of the phrase or sentence, and do not assume that politeness is in some sense inherent in the words used. Discursive theorists such as Foucault (1972, 1978) and Critical Discourse theorists such as Fairclough (1995) and Wodak and Chilton (2005) have demonstrated that the resources available to interactants are shaped by social forces. By seeing discourse as Foucault does as a system of "regulated practices that account for a number of statements" (Foucault 1972: 80) the discursive theorists need to move to analyse the unspoken rules whereby certain utterances are for example seen as appropriate. Macdonell

12 It is beyond the scope of this essay to give full discussions of these terms; see Lyotard 1979 and Mills 1997 for thorough engagements with discourse and post-modernism.

(1986: 3) stresses the importance of viewing discourse as associated with institutional power, for she argues "a discourse as a particular area of language use may be identified by the institutions to which it is related and by the positions from which it comes and which it marks out for the speaker. The position does not exist by itself, however. Indeed, it maybe understood as a standpoint to be taken up by the discourse through its relation to another, ultimately an opposing discourse". Within this quotation, we can see the importance being accorded to the discourse itself rather than the individual, to the point that the individual speaker is seen as only a manifestation of the discourse and indeed the individual is seen as constituted by the discourse.[13] Foucault also focuses on the importance of the role of discourse in constituting reality and social norms; for example, he states:

> we must not imagine that the world turns towards us a legible face which we would only have to decipher. The world is not the accomplice of our knowledge; there is no prediscursive providence which disposes the world in our favour (Foucault, 1981: 67).

Here Foucault stresses the role of discourse in structuring what we see as reality. Thus, it is important to analyse these discursive constraints on individuals, rather than assuming that interactants necessarily simply make fully conscious decisions about what politeness norms to adhere to. Thus, the focus on discourse has two impacts on theorising, one is a concern with the variability of the function and meaning of elements accordingly to the context, and the other is a wider political concern for the way in which discourse structures the possible range of expression available to individual interactants.

3.2. Post-modern

The term post-modern is used in a variety of ways; within the American context often equating with post-structuralism, whereas in Britain it is used to refer to works by those such as Baudrillard and Lyotard, who have moved beyond post-structuralist theory (theorists such as Foucault, Derrida and Kristeva) and have questioned the very basis on which arguments and

13 By no means all discursive theorists take up this position in relation to discourse, and not everyone focuses so much on institutional constraints on the individual.

politics can be established. Post-modernism might be seen as a type of theoretical move which questions all concepts and evaluations and is sceptical of all attempts at grand narrative or metanarrative, that is, all overarching theories which attempt to generalise or universalise. It is particularly critical of theories such as Marxism which hold to a notion of progress and the possibility of reform. Lyotard (1979: xxiv) states:

> I define post-modern as incredulity toward metanarratives. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences: but that progress in turn presupposes it. To the obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimation corresponds, most notably, the crisis of metaphysical philosophy and of the university institution which in the past relied on it. The narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements-narrative, but also denotative, prescriptive, descriptive, and so on ... Where, after the metanarratives, can legitimacy reside?

This questioning of the fundamental bases of theorising was particularly useful in the wake of structuralist and post structuralist work and enabled theorists to examine very critically the bases of their own positions. However, when used today, post-modernism is often merely a term of criticism.[14]

This can clearly be seen in Holmes' work where post-modernist approaches are those which critique quantitative analysis. She argues "from a post-modernist perspective, a norm is not simply a useful generalisation from observed speech patterns, but rather a potentially misleading abstraction from which important variability has been excised" (Holmes 2005: 110). Holmes also argues that post-modern theorists believe that it is not possible to generalise, suggesting that post-modern theorists assume that "generalisations based on extensive empirical research in a range of contexts are suspect" (Holmes 2005: 112). This is clearly not the case, but it is the case that many post-modern theorists believe that whilst there is no intrinsic problem with quantitative research, it is the isolation of particular elements having a particular function and the interpretation of those elements by the analyst

---

14 For myself, whilst categorised as a post-modernist by Holmes (2005), I would not accept this term to refer to my position. I would hold that most of the theorists described here are in fact discursive and have been categorised as post-modernist by others.

15 A great deal of discursive work on politeness and impoliteness is data driven, both quantitative and qualitative (Terkourafi 2005a; Bousfield 2008) Because

which is highly problematic.[15] In order to undertake quantitative research it is necessary to try to isolate certain elements which have a clear meaning or function across a range of different contexts and which will indicate a particular style of speech across the data. It is post-modern theorising which has suggested that this cannot be the case, since politeness formulae are viewed, judged and used differently by different groups in different contexts. Thus quantifying the number of times a particular politeness feature is used will not enable us to make claims about the function of that particular feature apart from the fact that it is used frequently or not frequently; its actual usage and interpretation by interactants are not accessible to such research, only the interpretation of the analyst.[16] For Holmes, post-modern theorising is "irritating" and "counter-productive" because of its "constant rug-pulling", that is post-modern's questioning of those elements which seem to be assumed in more traditional theorising (Holmes 2005: 120). Holmes argues that post-modernism simply substitutes "subjectivity" for the generalising and objectivity of quantitative analysis, whilst it is clear that contextual analysis and a focus on the multivalency of interpretation is what characterises post-modern research.

4. Theoretical background

Eelen (2001) was instrumental in forcing theorists to move beyond a too-easy reliance on the framework developed by Brown and Levinson (1987). His thorough critique enabled many to examine the problems in Brown and Levinson's framework and made theorists attempt to develop new models or adaptations of Brown and Levinson's framework which addressed the problems which he had identified. Eelen (2001) called for theorists to distinguish more clearly between politeness1 (the understandings of what constitutes politeness for

---

of problems with theoretical models, many theorists have in fact started their research by focusing on data (Geyer 2008)

16 Terkourafi's (2005a) research is a good example of work which is quantitative but which could also be classified as post-modern or discursive because she is attempting to move beyond Brown and Levinson's work by focusing on contextual variation. Bousfield (2008) also aims within his post Brown and Levinson discursive work on impoliteness to develop a form of analysis which is both concerned with contextualised analysis whilst basing this contextualised analysis on firm empirical evidence.

participants in interaction) and politeness2 (theorists' understanding of politeness and academic generalisations about politeness and impoliteness), since he argued that often within analysis these two views of politeness were in danger of being confused. He suggested that theorists should focus their analyses on politeness1. This move away from the generalisations of Brown and Levinson and others has informed the way that subsequent theorists have framed their research; it has also forced them to consider exactly what it is that they are examining when they are analysing politeness.[17]

The discursive post-modern theorists have drawn on a range of different theoretical traditions. Those who have wished to modify Brown and Levinson's work have largely attempted to incorporate elements from other theoretical traditions within their work, whilst those who reject Brown and Levinson have turned to these other traditions in order to try to develop a new theoretical framework. Those who have tried to retain elements of Brown and Levinson's model include Bousfield (2008) and Terkourafi (2005). Both have significantly modified Brown and Levinson's model. Both of them are concerned with developing forms of analysis which are rigorous and can make generalisations about politeness and impoliteness, whilst nevertheless being concerned with context.

4.1. Bourdieu

Many of the theorists referred to in this essay draw on the work on Pierre Bourdieu (1991), particularly his focus on 'habitus', since in developing this notion, he is describing the ways of behaving within societies which seem to be considered as the 'normal' way, such that we do not actively need to think explicitly about them when we perform them. Habitus might be thought of as the unwritten 'rules' for behaviour which develop simply through the force of repetition of doing something in particular ways (Mills 2003a; Watts 2003; Terkourafi 2005). Terkourafi (2005) points out the fact that Bourdieu's work on habitus can be used to describe the 'conductorless orchestration' that we can observe when we analyse the regularities and norms of politeness usage. Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus' can be seen as the set of dispositions to perform one's identity in particular ways which are inculcated in the individual by

17 However, Terkourafi (2005a) and Grainger (this volume) suggest that perhaps this politeness1 focus in discursive theorising needs to be questioned.

explicit and implicit socialisation (Bucholtz 1999a; 1999b). Bourdieu describes habitus as "the dispositions [which] generate practices, perceptions and attitudes which are 'regular' without being consciously co-ordinated or governed by any 'rule'" (Bourdieu 1991: 12). This set of attitudes or practices, which are seen as constituting a norm by individuals, are then negotiated with by individuals in terms of their own perception of what is acceptable for their own behaviour. Eelen (2001) argues that we have to hypothesise a common world, that is a set of beliefs which we imagine exists somewhere in the social world and accepted by everyone, with which we as individuals need to engage. Thus, one can hypothesise a sense of a shared culture – a set of practices and beliefs which one can describe as one's culture or society – but this is a hypothesisation. Habitus is thus a flexible system of behaviours which, when engaged with by an individual, perform a structuring role without being 'invented' by a single agent or institution. For some theorists, and I suspect this may be true for Eelen, the notion of habitus may be a way of moving away from materialist analysis with its stress on the importance of external factors to the individual in self-construction, towards a more individualistic framework of analysis. However, in my work (Mills 2003a) I draw on this notion of habitus together with the model of communities of practice to describe the dynamic way in which the relation between individual and the wider social group is configured.

4.2. Community of Practice

The notion of community of practice (CofP) was developed by Wenger (1998), among others, in order to capture the language practices which are developed within particular groups of people who are engaged on a task together, and in the process of their interaction about that task they constitute themselves as a group and as a group which has particular language practices and styles. The notion of community of practice has been developed largely within gender and language studies (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2006) because it enables theorists to focus on the very local ways in which gender is worked out through practices developed within groups, rather than assuming that gender is instantiated within the individual. For post-modern theorists, this enabled a more contextualised analysis of gender and language, and the same holds true for the analysis of politeness. Rather than seeing particular phrases as being the embodiment of politeness, the focus on the community of practice makes it possible to see that different communities construct different norms for what is appropriate or inappropriate; in essence, what counts as polite or impolite. Therefore, it is not possible for a theorist to describe politeness without focusing on what counts as polite within a particular CofP.[18]

4.3. Relevance theory

Watts (2003) and Christie (2007) have both drawn on Relevance Theory for their analysis of politeness. Relevance theory offers a more sophisticated model of interaction than the speech act theory base of Brown and Levinson and Grice's work on conversation maxims and implicature. Christie (2007) argues convincingly that Relevance Theory can supplant Grice as a basis for Brown and Levinson's model. Despite the fact that their work seems to entirely disregard the importance of the role of the social, Sperber and Wilson claim that "inferential communication is intrinsically social" (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, cited in Christie, 2007: 271) and therefore, for Christie, it is possible to develop a form of politeness theorising which is concerned with both the "general mechanisms that underlie communication" at a relatively abstract and universalistic level (Christie 2007: 285) as well as the particular inferential processes whereby certain meanings are assumed in a particular context. For Christie, it is the possibility of a universal account of politeness which is one of the benefits of Relevance theory. Furthermore, for her, Relevance theory also allows a focus on the process whereby utterances are understood as polite or impolite, rather than assuming that utterances are self-evidently inherently polite or impolite.

4.4. Frame-based analysis

Other theorists such as Terkourafi (2001, 2005a, 2005b, 2008) draw on frame-based approaches to the analysis of politeness and impoliteness. A frame is as Geyer (2008: 38) puts it: "a set of expectations which rests on previous experience". And Terkourafi (2005a: 253) states "frames may be thought of as psychologically real implementations of the habitus". Our experience of how interactants express themselves in the past sets up a frame for how it is possible to interact in the present. This type of frame-based analysis allows

18 Community of practice is not a theoretical position as such; however it does involve a set of theoretical assumptions and thus constitutes a particular approach to data.

for the descriptions of statistical norms within communities based on quantitative analysis of the degree to which certain forms of language are used in particular contexts. What Terkourafi aims to do is to investigate these norms. She argues that there are two types of norms, "norms about what one *should* do, and norms about what one is *likely* to do" (Terkourafi 2005a: 244) and it is the latter that she feels it is possible to generalise about. On the basis of producing statistical evidence about what norms of politeness behaviour exist in general within a society, she feels confident that it is possible to predict what individuals are likely to produce within a particular context. What Terkourafi tries to do is to establish "regularities of co-occurrence between linguistic expressions and their extra-linguistic contexts of use" (2005a: 247). This frame-based analysis retains the speech act focus of Brown and Levinson, but she modifies this so that it is the participants' "own observable responses that guide the classification of any particular utterance as realising a particular type of act" (2005a: 248). That is not to say that it is impossible for interactants to use politeness resources in novel ways, since where there are no frames available, individuals will develop forms of expression which can still be understood as polite, but Terkourafi suggests that this novel expression is potentially more likely to be misunderstood.[19]

4.5. Conversation analysis and discursive psychology

Theorists such as Geyer (2008) draw on the work of discursive psychologists, alongside Conversation Analysis (CA) and ethnomethodology. For her CA is of use because it is mainly concerned with the "organisational features of talk" (Geyer 2008: 38) and this methodological precision is useful when dealing with elements such as politeness. CA enables her to move away from the notion that individuals have fixed, stable identities towards a more CA inflected focus on interactants' discursive ascription to a membership category particular to a particular interaction. Arundale (2010) also draws on CA as a model of analysis, to try to formulate politeness as an interactional achievement rather than as a product. Arundale argues that CA is beneficial to his analysis because of its focus on the orienting of interactants towards certain goals and the careful discursive analysis which can trace the function of adjacent utterances.

---

19 In this case, Terkourafi (2005a) argues that this is a particularised implicature rather than a generalised implicature.

Geyer (2008: 65) finds CA of use because of its conceptualisation of culture; she argues:

> Instead of conceptualising culture as an entity that is located outside of the sphere of social interaction, influencing and determining interactional practices, conversation analysts conceive of culture as common-sense knowledge that is constantly deployed, renewed and co-constructed in interaction.

In this way, it is possible to find evidence of the effect of culture within the utterances of interactants, rather than trying to trace the effect of a rather abstracted culture on the interaction.

Discursive psychology is used by Geyer because it enables her to discuss the way that interactants construct their identities through interaction, and she sees her discussion of face as a way of describing "interactants' positive self-image, constructed and managed in discourse" (Geyer 2008: 54). She sees this as a discursive approach because it "requires analysts to seek sequential and/or linguistic accountability based on their knowledge of the relevant communities of practice" (Geyer 2008: 55). Discursive psychology is concerned with elements often neglected in politeness research such as individuals' investment or stake in the interaction, the way that alliances amongst interactants are formed, and the way that their identities are discursively constructed. Her bringing together of discursive psychology and conversation analysis enables her to focus on politeness as "the intersection of language, culture, action and cognition" (Geyer 2008: 57).

5. Discursive/Post-modern approaches to the analysis of politeness and impoliteness

As can be adduced from the above, not all of the theorists whom I am categorising as adopting discursive or post-modern approaches take the same theoretical viewpoint and this makes generalising about their positions very difficult. However, it is possible to state that these theorists do share certain assumptions about politeness which inform their approach, as Haugh (2007: 297) puts it: "the discursive approach abandons the pursuit of not only an *a priori* predictive theory of politeness, but also any attempts to develop a universal, cross-culturally valid theory of politeness altogether" These theorists also seem to share in the post-modern view that the age of grand theorising and perhaps by implication predictive, all-encompassing models, is over. In that sense, these discursive theorists are not necessarily attempting to construct a model of politeness to replace Brown and Levinson's, since they recognise that constructing such a model would lead to generalisations which are prone to stereotyping. These stereotypes of general politeness norms are generally based on the speech styles and ideologies of the dominant group (Mills 2003a, 2003b). Instead, discursive theorists aim to develop a more contingent type of theorising which will account for contextualised expressions of politeness and impoliteness, but these positions will not necessarily generate a simple predictive model. These theorists are also concerned not to delve too deeply into interactants' intentions and what we as analysts can infer about their intentions and feelings, but rather they are concerned with what interactants display in their speech to others, and what this can tell the other interactants about where they see themselves in the group, how they view the group and what values they assume the group members hold.

Discursive theorisations of politeness and impoliteness can be said to share certain elements in their approach to the analysis of politeness and impoliteness. Unfortunately, the elements which they share are fairly diverse and it is difficult to group these under an overarching scheme. Despite this diversity, it is possible to discuss the shared elements of discursive theorising under the following headings. Firstly, discursive theorists share a view of what constitutes politeness (particularly the fact that most of these theorists argues that politeness does not reside in utterances, and they are also interested in the relation between politeness and impoliteness). Secondly, discursive theorists try to describe the relation between individuals and society in relation to the analysis of politeness (they generally do not consider that identity is pre-formed, and they argue that politeness is constructed jointly within groups; thus the individual does not necessarily choose all of the instances of polite behaviour that they employ). Thirdly, discursive theorists tend to use a similar form of analysis (although they obviously draw on different theoretical models). They tend to question the role of the analyst, and they focus on the analysis of context. They tend to analyse longer stretches of interaction than traditional politeness theorists and they tend to focus on issues of judgement of politeness rather than assuming that politeness is an element which can simply be traced within the utterance itself. They tend to be wary of making generalisations and they also tend to see politeness as a resource which can be accessed by participants rather than something inherent in utterances. These elements which I discuss in this section are obviously tendencies in discursive theorists' work, and many of the theorists will emphasise one element rather than others. I will discuss each of these elements in turn in this section.

5.1. View of and definition of politeness

Whilst for Brown and Levinson the definition of politeness is relatively unproblematic, for discursive theorists, politeness itself has become an intensely problematic term. Terkourafi argues that discursive theorists have moved from seeing "politeness as deviation from rational efficiency to a more comprehensive notion of politeness-in-context" (2001: 6). Arundale (2010) and Terkourafi (2001) argue that politeness is not just "strategic conflict avoidance" but also "social indexing" (Terkourafi 2001: 11). This has become very important for analysts of Asian languages, such as Japanese and Chinese where the question of wakimae or discernment is held to be more important than strategic use of language to achieve one's ends, as I discussed above. Terkourafi (2001: 11) sees discernment as "acknowledging one's understanding of the situation and of the relation between conversational participants – indicating this understanding by means of an appropriate linguistic choice".

However, some theorists feel that politeness as a term is so problematic that they feel the need to use alternative terms, Locher for example uses the term 'relational work', that is "the 'work' that individuals invest in negotiating relationships with others" (Locher 2006a: 3; see Watts, 2003). Politeness, for her, is thus a form of judgement which is made within the wider term relational work; using the term relational work prevents the analyst from shoehorning utterances into categorisations of either politeness or impoliteness. However, whilst this focus on relational work does mean that it is possible to analyse interactions where individuals are engaging in work which is neither polite nor impolite, it still leaves politeness and impoliteness rather undefined.[20] Locher states:

> in the past, politeness research has too quickly been content to describe as polite relational work of the kind that is clearly not rude or impolite. In this way a dichotomy between politeness and impolite behaviour has been created that falls short of the many shades of relational work and the fluent and negotiable boundaries between the categories proposed [in Locher's work] (2006a: 263)

---

20 Locher and Watts add categorisations of 'over polite' and 'non-polite' but do not provide the means to assess how these categorisations are arrived at by theorists or by individual interactants.

She goes on to indicate the difference in definition of politeness for the speaker and for the hearer. She demonstrates that politeness is a marked form of appropriate behaviour for the speaker who may be aiming to display concern for the other at the same time as being motivated by 'egocentric desire'; the hearer will understand an utterance as polite when it is marked and appropriate (Watts, 2003). Locher and Watts have also added to the types of terms which can be used within politeness research as they have focused not only on politeness and impoliteness but also on those elements which are considered non-polite, those which are judged to be over polite and those which are judged to be politic (that is appropriate without being marked). By defining polite behaviour as that which is marked and as self-centred (i.e. that which the interactant might feel that they accrue some benefit from) Watts (2003) has forced theorists to re-evaluate Brown and Levinson's definition of politeness. Whilst this notion of the marked yet appropriate, egocentric yet empathetic nature of politeness has been questioned (Bousfield 2008), this more complex definition of politeness characterises a great deal of discursive theorising.

What has often not been considered within politeness research is the extent to which politeness norms change. Locher (2006a: 264) draws attention to this when she states: "it lies in the nature of politeness to be an elusive concept since it is inherently linked to judgements on norms and those are constantly negotiated, are renegotiated and ultimately change over time in every type of social interaction".

Terkourafi (2005a: 248) defines politeness in an altogether different way; she asserts that politeness is a question of frequency:

> assuming that [frame-based analysis] indeed uncovers regularities of co-occurrence between expressions realising particular acts and types of contexts, why should such regularities be defined as polite behaviour? The answer of the frame-based view is simple: they are polite *because* they are regular. It is the regular co-occurrence of particular types of contexts and particular linguistic expressions as unchallenged realisations of particular acts that creates the perception of politeness. Politeness resides not in linguistic expressions themselves, but in the regularity of this co-occurrence.

It is the essence of politeness that it is unchallenged, for Terkourafi, even unremarked upon. "To the extent that these expressions go unchallenged by participants they *are* polite" (2005a: 248). Furthermore, Terkourafi (2005a) argues, in stark contrast to Brown and Levinson's definitions of politeness, "politeness is a matter not of rational calculation, but of habits" (2005a: 250).

Thus, again, the norms developed within the CofP or the wider society are the focus of attention, rather than the individual's strategies.

Whilst most theorists working in this field still retain the terms politeness and impoliteness, they do so with an awareness that politeness is defined differently by certain communities, and that coming to a simple definition of politeness is very difficult. Pizziconi (2007) has also shown that politeness is associated with different values in certain cultures. She demonstrates that in British English, politeness correlates with considerateness whereas in Japanese it is more concerned with displaying one's position within the group and one's consideration for group values. It is clear that in different languages, even different groups within a society, politeness will be associated with different values and will thus be defined and function differently.[21]

5.1.1. Politeness does not reside in utterances

Locher and Watts (2007: 78) argue that "no linguistic behaviour … is inherently polite or impolite". Whilst many other discursive theorists of politeness and impoliteness would not go as far as this, even Leech (2007) has moved away from his notions of relative and absolute politeness to a more flexible pragmatic notion of what can be counted by interactants as politeness. Watts (2003) for example draws on Relevance Theory to try to develop a form of analysis which sees politeness as worked out by participants in context. Locher (2006a: 734) comments on her own work on politeness:

> I deliberately refrain from labelling strategies such as boosting or hedging as more or less polite. …I do not wish to imply that I have already witnessed manifestations of politeness by simply identifying hedged utterances (or indirectness), nor that I have witnessed impoliteness by identifying unmitigated linguistic strategies (or directness). In this way my approach to politeness differs significantly from the more classical view, initiated by Brown and Levinson 1987 and followed by many others, which equates mitigation with politeness and directness with impoliteness. Conversely, I use 'mitigation' as a purely technical term and I make no claim that any given linguistic form is inherently polite or impolite.

21 Indeed as Terkourafi (2005a) has noted, some languages do not have an equivalent to the term 'politeness' or 'impoliteness'.

She also argues that "the ultimate say in what is considered impolite, non-polite or polite remains with those interactants who are part of a group of interactants who form a discursive practice" (Locher 2006a: 263). Bousfield (2008) tries to move beyond the focus on individual utterances by focusing on activity types or discourse roles available to interlocutors, suggesting that the roles which we inhabit or are allocated and the discursive repertoires available to those roles determine in large measure the levels and types of politeness and impoliteness that are used.

Discursive theorists tend to view face differently to Brown and Levinson. Indeed, many return to Goffman's more process-oriented view of face, and criticise Brown and Levinson for the static nature of their characterisation. Bousfield (2008: 42) suggests that face is "internally expected and externally realised in interaction, requiring in actuality some fine tuning or outright re-modification/manipulation". Rather than face being assigned to interactants, face is a constantly negotiated process. Terkourafi (2007: 47) suggests that "there is no faceless communication" arguing that "all linguistic expressions do 'information work' and 'facework' at the same time all the time" Geyer suggests the term 'interactional face' to capture this notion that face is not fixed but achieved within interaction; as she remarks (2008: 51):

> the analysis based on this conceptualisation will probably not produce a clear categorical understanding of politeness in isolated sentences. Instead, what this notion of face can capture is the moment-by-moment management of multiple faces constructed and displayed in discourse.

Arundale (2010) also, in his development of Face Constituting Theory draws on Conversation Analysis to develop a notion of politeness and face as something which is an interactional achievement, rather than an abstracted entity or set of agreed norms. Face in this model particularly becomes a relational phenomenon and not a property of utterances as such.

5.1.2. Relation between politeness and impoliteness

Theorists who have followed Brown and Levinson have tended to assume that politeness should be the main focus of analysis and that impoliteness is simply the opposite of politeness. Indeed, Bousfield (2008: 43) has claimed that "impoliteness is very much the parasite of politeness", in politeness research. Eelen (2001) has shown that it is very difficult to describe impoliteness adequately, if it is only ever seen as a lack of politeness. Whilst many have stressed that impoliteness should be seen as the other side of the politeness coin, recent work by Culpeper (2007, Bousfield (2008) and Bousfield and Locher (2007) has shown that impoliteness needs to be analysed both separately in its own right and also in relation to politeness. Analysing politeness in isolation from impoliteness is not justifiable, since politeness takes its meaning from the potentiality of impoliteness. Bousfield (2008: 72) states that impoliteness should be seen as functionally different to politeness in that "rather than seeking to mitigate Face Threatening Acts, impoliteness constitutes the communication of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face threatening acts which are purposefully delivered".[22] Furthermore as Locher (2004) and Bousfield (2007, 2008) have shown, impoliteness seems to be closely linked to the exercise of power in a way in which politeness does not necessarily have to be. Indeed Bousfield (2007: 142) argues that "the communication of offence through one's impolite utterances is, context permitting, a device, par excellence for the (re) activation of one's power over one's interlocutors" Thus, discursive theorists are beginning to integrate the analysis of impoliteness into their analysis of politeness; it is important to see impoliteness as one of the choices which could be taken at any particular juncture of the conversation (Mills in prep.).

5.1.3. Process

Discursive theorists tend to focus on process rather than product; that is, these theorists are interested in the choices which could have been made and the possibilities of misunderstanding, rather than assuming that politeness is a given and a product. Christie (2007: 292) argues in her discussion of Relevance theory in relation to politeness analysis: "in requiring a focus on the process of utterance interpretation as much as on the utterances themselves, [Relevance theory] would require an approach to politeness that begins from the assumption that utterance meaning is not a given". Discursive theorists also focus on the way that politeness is not isolated from the rest of the interaction. Theorists such as Bousfield (2008) are interested in the way

22 This still does not adequately address the problem for analysts of how to ascertain whether an utterance is understood by the hearer or intended by the speaker as 'purposefully delivered' and 'intentionally gratuitous and conflictive', and how to deal with utterances where there is some misunderstanding between the speaker and hearer about whether the utterance is in fact intended as impolite.

that it is possible to trace that way that certain utterances lead in to politeness and impoliteness. He is also interested in the effect that politeness and impoliteness have on interlocutors, rather than simply analysing politeness and impoliteness in isolation from the rest of the interaction. For example Bousfield (2008: 183), basing his work on a recasting of both Brown and Levinson and Grice, argues that:

> impoliteness does not exist in a vacuum and it does not in normal circumstances just spring from 'out of the blue' The contexts in which impoliteness appears and is utilised strategically must have been previously invoked, that is, with all other things being equal, the interactant who utters impoliteness must have felt sufficiently provoked at some point prior to actually delivering the impoliteness.

Thus, for Bousfield it is important to examine not impolite acts in isolation, but the triggers which lead up to the act and the effects of the act on hearers, which can be analysed through an evaluation of uptake. Further, Bousfield stresses that these triggers may lead to an impolite event, but in other circumstances they equally might not.[23] Locher (2006a: 249) also bases her work on a process model as she states that "the interactants' assessments of linguistic behaviour with respect to norms of appropriateness in social interaction is argued to be at the heart of politeness considerations rather than knowledge of prefabricated inherent linguistic devices". Thus, for her, politeness is an ongoing evaluative process which interactants engage in, rather than something which they assess before intervening in conversation.

5.2. The Individual and society

5.2.1. Not pre-formed identities for individuals

These discursive theorists do not presuppose that individuals have pre-formed identities/roles which influence their choice of politeness and impoliteness routines. Rather identities are constructed in the process of interaction and politeness is one of the tools/means which individuals use to construct their

---

23 However, whilst focusing on process, Bousfield, like all theorists within this discursive school, tend from time to time to refer to polite and impoliteness as products, for example referring to 'impolite containing utterances' (2008: 187) which assumes that impoliteness is in some senses a material element agreed upon prior to the interaction.

identity. The individual is not seen as a fixed entity in the way it was represented in Brown and Levinson's work. Rather, in order to address criticisms from scholars of Japanese and Chinese and also those who question the individualistic bias of early politeness research, the individual is seen as the nexus of social forces and politeness is seen as a response to the need to display a concern for the group (Kádár and Mills 2011a). Within discursive theorising, the individual has become a social entity. Thus, the analysis of discernment or wakimae is not only an issue within the analysis of Japanese data, but also in Western data as well, as theorists have recognised that:

> it is fundamentally through interaction that context is built, invoked and managed, and it is through interaction that institutional imperatives originating from outside the interaction are evidenced and made real and enforceable for the participants. (Geyer 2008: 224)

5.2.2. Co-construction

Discursive theorists of politeness assume that individuals construct politeness and impoliteness together. As Pizziconi (2007: 214) states:

> language is not an intra-organic but an inter-organic achievement and hence the result of mutual validation and social practices … language does not mirror but instead shapes reality.

This significantly moves theorists away from analysing the utterances of individuals and forces us instead to focus on the way that politeness or impoliteness are jointly achieved. This is particularly evident in research on impoliteness where the understanding of hypothesised intentions is crucial in judgements, as Bousfield (2007: 132) states: "impoliteness does not exist where one but not both of the participants … intends/perceives face threat".[24] Haugh (2007: 306) argues that "(im)politeness is conceptualised in a collaborative non-summative manner through interaction by participants. In this way, we can move our understanding of politeness1 beyond the problematic encoding-decoding model of communication implicitly relied upon" in much politeness theorising.[25] For Locher and Watts (2007: 78) even the norms

24 However, it is also possible that impoliteness can be said to have occurred if someone other than the speaker understands the intention (Davies pers comm.).

which we assume govern politeness use and interpretation are "themselves constantly renegotiated" by participants.

5.2.3. Choices

Discursive theorists of politeness do not assume that politeness and impoliteness are simply a matter of the choices made by the individual speaker. Rather than Brown and Levinson's model speaker, they tend to focus on CofP or social factors which influence the production and interpretation of politeness. For example, Locher (2004) analyses the impact of differences in power relations and Mills (2003a) analyses the role of gender. By analysing the wider forces and influences of society and ideologies (Okamoto and Shibamoto Smith 2004) they are able to retain the notion of individual agency whilst setting that agency within a wider social sphere. For example, in an analysis of the use of honorifics in Japanese, Yoshida and Sakurai (2006) show how interactants make choices between a relatively plain style (i.e. honorific free) when they are talking with family members, and a more formal style where their social role as wife or husband is foregrounded. Within the same interaction, participants can switch between these relatively informal and formal styles, to indicate awareness of their social roles to their interlocutors, for example, when they have performed a domestic task, or if they are being stereotypically masculine or feminine. Thus, although many theorists of Eastern languages stress that honorifics are an essential part of expression, and that honorific use indicates an awareness of one's position within the social order, there is nevertheless a degree of choice about when and how much to use them. The social order provides a set of linguistic resources which enables the social role to be foregrounded in a conversation, but individuals have a certain amount of latitude in terms of how much this role is brought to the fore.

Discursive analysts are concerned with a more social model of politeness, both at the level of the community of practice and at the wider social level. It is the to-and-fro movement between the social, the CofP and the individual which is of interest within this type of theorising. Leech (2007: 170) claims that "all polite communication implies that the speaker is taking account of both individual and group values". Thus, these theorists try to

---

25 Whilst some theorists use 'im/politeness' or '(im)politeness' as a shorthand to refer to politeness and impoliteness, I refrain for using it because it suggests that impoliteness can be somehow subsumed within politeness (or perhaps that politeness can be subsumed within impoliteness).

integrate a concern for both the wider social norms and individual agency when analysing politeness. Many theorists have shown that politeness and impoliteness play a role in the negotiating of power and status and thus a more refined model of the role of social norms than is exemplified in Brown and Levinson's work is necessary. Arundale's (2010) work on face constituting theory, drawing on a CA approach, suggests that the social should not be seen as a level separate from the individual interaction but should be seen as resources activated by individual within the process of the interaction.

5.3. Form of analysis

Discursive theorists do not approach analysis in the same way as those critics influenced by Brown and Levinson's work. Haugh (2007: 298) argues that the discursive approach "arguably leads to the collapse of the crucial analyst-participant distinction" and thus most discursive analysis is focused on the level of first order politeness and with understanding interpretation from the point of view of the interactants. As Haugh (2007: 302) argues, this leads to a focus on qualitative rather than quantitative data and this "places a considerable burden on the validity of the analysts' interpreting of the interaction". However, if it is the interactants' judgements which is the focus of analysis, then perhaps the analyst needs to be aware of the way their own perceptions colour their interpretations of what the interactants tell them about their judgements of discourse. This is problematic on a number of levels, as Grimshaw (1990: 281, cited in Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann 2003: 1552) notes:

> in the absence of the participants deploying and debating explicit evaluations of (im)politeness in the discourse that has taken place, some data analyses that appear in post-modern studies are selected on the basis of claims *by the researcher* pointing to implicit evidence that they involve politeness (or a weaker claim of 'potential politeness'). It is clearly not adequate to pose the analyst's interpretation as the interactants'; however, focusing on potential politeness or impoliteness does at least enable the theorist to point out moments in interaction where there is a potentiality for various forms of speech and levels of politeness or impoliteness to be chosen and understood. It is clear that we cannot access what is in the heads of interactants in any simple unmediated way but 'the availability of ethnographic context and of an optimally complete behaviour record permits analysts to make inferences and attributions which are … no less plausible than those of actual participants

This type of analysis has the benefit that it indicates the range of possible linguistic choices that participants could have made which sets their actual choices in context (Mills in prep.).

5.3.1. Role of the analyst

The analyst within this type of theorising is much more tentative with respect to what can be stated with certainty about politeness and impoliteness. If the judgements of the interactants are the key element in assessments of politeness, then the role of the analyst may appear to be downgraded. This uncertainty in approaching politeness is clear in this quotation from Locher (2006a: 262) when she is analysing the various politeness strategies used in an advice-giving on-line column:

> it is not enough to identify mitigation strategies to claim that we have witnessed politeness as such. Nor does it seem justified to argue that the imperatives used for giving advice are 'impolite' or automatically 'less polite' than the mitigated variants in this context.

It is no longer possible to simply map Brown and Levinson's formal categories onto utterances, because from Locher's point of view there is nothing to indicate to the analyst that one form of mitigated utterance is actually interpreted by interactants as more polite than another. Faced with a range of possible ways of giving advice, she argues that the variety of resources used by interactants constitute the norm of non-polite advice-giving:

> different displays of relational work together form the particular norm of the appropriate and non-polite way of advice-giving established over time in this particular framework by interactants.

Locher draws attention to the fact that different interactants, for example, young and old people are likely to judge these particular forms of advice giving as either overly formal or as overly familiar. Thus, there is nothing in the utterance itself which signals polite, non-polite, politic or over polite. The context itself creates the rules of interpretation and appropriateness.

Locher (2006a: 265) also notes that:

> as researchers, all we should do is point out instances of relational work that may be open for interpretation as polite. To do this, we first have to discover

> what is likely to be the norm of appropriateness in a given context against which such judgements are made.

Thus the analyst's role is to assess what as a whole the norms of appropriateness might be within a particular community and to suggest that perhaps certain utterances might be considered to be polite, but that does not guarantee that they are viewed in that way by participants.

5.3.2. Context

Above all, these various theorists focus on contextual analysis which is concerned with the way the social plays out in individual interaction, and the way those individual interactions feed back into the construction of wider social norms. One of the elements which most characterises all discursive theorists of politeness is their concern with context. Instead of disembodied, abstracted, invented examples, it is clear that only sections of conversation in context can be used, and contextual elements are used to clarify the meaning of those features which seem to be contributing to a judgement of politeness or impoliteness. In a discussion of politeness and honorifics, Okamoto argues that

> whilst it is important to consider multiple factors for the use of honorifics, this does not mean that if one can identify all the relevant factors one can predict the use of honorifics this is because it is speakers as social agents and not contextual features that ultimately determine the use of honorifics and also because different individuals may have different attitudes towards honorific use and associated ideologies and hence may interpret and use honorifics differently (Okamoto 2004: 48).

However, this concern with the analysis of contextualised utterances does have a major impact on the type of theoretical model which can be developed. If, as Locher (2006a: 253) claims, discursive theorists are concerned with analysing what is appropriate within each interaction, "what is appropriate cannot be predicted universally and must be addressed at the local level" If each interaction interprets the rules of appropriateness in a slightly different way, then this type of localised analysis does not lead to the development of grand theory (unless of course, we assume that these are localised interpretations of politeness resources, see below). However, Terkourafi (2005a) suggests that it is possible to undertake micro- *and* macro-level analysis, thus delineating a form of analysis which might move beyond the local interpretation. Her frame-based approach argues that "above and beyond [the] micro-level analysis, there are socio-historically emergent ways of using particular linguistic tools, and that how one *uses* these tools at the micro-level cannot be studied independently of how these tools *are regularly used* in the place and time at hand". Thus, for her, there is a clear dialectical relation between context and wider social norm.

Christie argues that within Relevance Theory context is defined in a more sophisticated way. Rather than assuming that context simply means the localised factors which contribute to the interaction playing out in a particular way, she defines context in the following way: "a context is a psychological construct, consisting of any set of mutually manifest assumptions that interlocutors in the process of producing and interpreting utterances infer to be relevant to the meaning of that utterance" (Christie 2007: 285). Within this formulation of context, external factors are only considered to have played a part in the production of particular utterances if they can be seen to be mutually manifest to interactants. But in a sense, in this form of theorising external factors are no longer seen as external at all, but rather they are part of the fabric of the interaction.

5.3.3. Longer stretches of talk/discourse

Discursive theorists tend to analyse longer stretches of talk to see how politeness and impoliteness are interpreted over time, because of their belief that politeness and impoliteness are not instantiated in individual utterances but are played out over discourse level units. Geyer (2008: 6) argues that discursive theorists "[establish] interaction and rhetorical practice as the object of study" rather than "an act-by-act speaker centred approach". It is argued by many discursive theorists that politeness or impoliteness are not achieved within individual utterances but are built up over stretches of talk. As Bousfield (2008) has shown, we need to analyse not only the explicit elements within the talk which we can recognise as polite or impolite, but we also need to analyse the lead-in/onset and the effect of politeness and the response of other interlocutors, as I mentioned earlier.

5.3.4. Judgement

Much discursive work on politeness and impoliteness is focused on judgements about politeness and impoliteness. Locher and Watts (2005), focusing on the notion of relational work, argue that: "politeness itself [is] a discursive concept arising out of interactants' perceptions and judgements of their own and others' verbal behaviour" (Locher and Watts, 2005: 10). Theorists of impoliteness often focus on acts where it is clear to all participants that impoliteness is intended. However, it is also clear that a great deal of impoliteness is not intended to offend, but is rather more aimed at venting anger, expressing distress or complaining. Thus, although intention is an important element in this type of analysis of politeness and impoliteness, it is both intention and interpretation which are at issue. Geyer (2008: 1) argues that:

> at the core of discursive acts of politeness are evaluations concerning not only appropriateness but also participants' 'face' – their interactional self-image determined in relation with others in discourse, closely related to their discursive identity.

Judgement, seen in this way, is thus not just concerned with the judgement of utterances but also with affective responses to individuals. Furthermore, it is widely recognised amongst discursive theorists that stereotypes of how people *should* behave play a major role in interactants' judgement of whether an utterance is polite or impolite; as Okamoto (2004: 43) states: "the belief that women should use more honorifics or polite language than men is widely promoted as a behavioural norm in Japanese society". Thus, those who do not conform to these behavioural norms may be judged as aberrant and impolite. In this sense, politeness for discursive theorists is overwhelmingly studied as a first order phenomenon.[26]

This focus on judgement by interactants does create some difficulties as Geyer notes (2008: 45) "participants rarely evaluate prior utterances explicitly as polite or impolite" and whilst it is clear that judgement is at the heart of politeness and impoliteness behaviour, it is difficult to know how to access participants' judgements.

5.3.5. Generalisations

Whilst many of the theorists discussed in this essay are suspicious of generalisations which seem to be informed by stereotype or ideological thinking and are more interested in focusing on contextual analysis, nevertheless

26 However, Grainger (this volume) argues that there are good grounds for focusing on second order analysis within this type of theorising.

many of the theorists do still believe that it is possible to make generalisations about politeness across language groups. In the collection of essays by Kádár and Mills (2011a) and in Mills (2009a, 2009b) it is stressed that although there are difficulties with the notion of norms which hold true across an entire language group, it is nevertheless possible to make generalisations about tendencies within language groups, whilst hedging those claims by referring to other styles and norms which are perhaps not dominant in the language. For example, Bousfield (2008: 38) wishes to make generalisations about negative and positive face in the UK and US but hedges his claims by stating:

> This isn't to say that the desire to be approved of, in some direct or peripheral way is non-existent in UK culture, nor that the desire to be free from imposition is simply non-existent in US culture (far from it in some sections) rather that (traditionally at least) the desire to be free from imposition and the desire for approval are more important respectively in these two cultures (with all things being equal).

Thus, tendencies can be described and these trends can be quantified but generalising assertions tend to be hedged, and the complexity of the overall range of politeness strategies used across the language group recognised.

5.3.6. Resources

Discursive theorists tend to see politeness and impoliteness as a resource which may be drawn on and inflected in different ways by different interactants. In a way, Brown and Levinson themselves saw politeness as a set of resources, but discursive theorising differs in their definition of resource; as Geyer (2008: 3) comments about her own approach:

> while past research enlisted … linguistic resources [such as honorifics] as politeness markers of strategies, this study treats them as resources of action accomplishment and it attempts to identify the connections between their lexical and grammatical characteristics, sequential functions and pragmatic functions.

Resources, therefore, does not refer to a stable set of linguistic items which always unequivocally indicate politeness or impoliteness. Here, rather we can understand, following Terkourafi, politeness and impoliteness as constituting frequencies of associations between linguistic items and judgements of politeness in interaction.

Furthermore, Geyer sees politeness as one of the resources which interactants draw upon when constructing their sense of identity. She argues that, in the past, politeness theorists assumed that one's identity leads to one using a particular form of politeness; in stark contrast to this view, she sees identity as "interactants' discursive ascription to a membership category" (2008: 49).

6. Conclusion

As I have demonstrated, the theorists who are researching politeness in a post-Brown and Levinson research field have developed a range of different approaches which both modify and seek to replace Brown and Levinson's theoretical and analytical model. These diverse responses to Brown and Levinson's work constitute a new perspective on the forms that analysis of politeness should take. Discursive analysis of politeness may be "more ambiguous and chaotic, yet perhaps also richer in nuance" as Geyer 2008: 25) argues. The ambiguous and chaotic nature of this approach may well lead to more fruitful theorising and analysis of politeness and impoliteness and I would suggest that there are several interesting research directions which future discursive research might follow. Firstly, it is clear that a greater theoretical clarity is needed, particularly when using an eclectic approach. Sometimes, if we try to synthesise different theoretical approaches, we may find that there are elements of one approach which do not 'fit' well with those of the other approaches we have used. With this greater theoretical clarity will come greater theoretical sophistication, so that we are able to let go of the safety blanket of Brown and Levinson, in order to more clearly see what is necessary for the analysis of politeness and impoliteness. Secondly, a model, or models, will need to be developed to support the more contextualised approach to politeness and impoliteness; for example, it is clear that we need to develop a model that can analyse the process whereby judgements are made, focusing more on the possibilities available to interactants on a turn by turn basis (even possibly focusing on transitional moments within turns where judgements might or might not be made). In this way, it will be possible to see the variety of choices made by interactants (rather than assuming, as some theorists do now, that the choices that were made were the only possible choices). Thus, the discursive approach has opened up possibilities for greater theoretical and analytical sophistication and it is clear that in coming years new models will be developed to support the more contextualised analytical procedures currently being tested out on data.

References

Abe, Hideko
2004 Lesbian bar talk in Shinjuku, Tokyo. In *Japanese Language, Gender and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Shigeko Okomoto and Janet Shibamoto-Smith, (eds.), 205–221. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Arundale, Robert
2010 Constituting face in conversation: face, facework and interactional achievement. *Journal of Pragmatics* 42 (8): 2078–2105.

Bourdieu, Pierre
1991 *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bousfield, Derek
2007 Impoliteness in the struggle for power. In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.), 127–153. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Bousfield, Derek
2008 *Impoliteness in Interaction*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Bousfield, Derek and Miriam Locher (eds.)
2007 *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*. Berlin/ New York; Mouton de Gruyter.

Brown, Penelope and Stephen C. Levinson
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Original edition, Brown, P and Levinson, S., Universals in language usage: politeness phenomena In Esther Goody (ed.) *Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction*, 56–311. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Bucholtz, Mary
1999a Bad examples: transgression and progress in language and gender studies. In *Reinventing Identities: the Gendered Self in Discourse*, Mary Bucholtz, A. C. Liang and Lauren A. Sutton (eds.), 3–24. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bucholtz, Mary
1999b "Why be normal?": Language and identity practices in a community of nerd girls. *Language in Society* 28 (2): 203–225.

Christie, Christine
2007 Relevance theory and politeness. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 269–294.

Culpeper, Jonathan
1996 Towards an anatomy of impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 25 (3): 349–367.

Culpeper, Jonathan
2005 Impoliteness and entertainment in the television quiz show: 'The Weakest Link'. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 35–72.
Culpeper, Jonathan
2007 Reflections on impoliteness, relational work and power. In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.), 17–44. Berlin/ New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
Culpeper, Jonathan, Derek Bousfield and Anne Wichmann
2003 Impoliteness revisited: with special reference to dynamic and prosodic aspects. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1545–1579.
Culpeper, Jonathan. Gila Schauer, Leyla Marti and Meilian Mei
2008 The cross cultural variation of impoliteness: a study of face-attack in impoliteness events reported by students in China, Britain, Germany and Turkey. Paper presented at the 4th International Symposium on Politeness, Budapest, Hungary.
Diamond, Julie
1996 *Status and Power in Verbal Interaction: A Study of Discourse in a Close-Knit Social Network*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Eckert, Penelope and Sally McConnell-Ginet
2006 Putting Communities of Practice in their place. *Gender and Language* 1 (1): 27–38.
Eelen, Gino
2001 *Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St Jerome Press.
Fairclough, Norman
1995 *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. London: Longman.
Foucault, Michel
1972 *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A M Sheridan Smith, New York, Pantheon. Original edition, 1969.
Foucault, Michel
1978 *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Vol. I. Harmondsworth, Penguin.
Foucault, Michel
1981 The order of discourse. In *Untying the Text: A Poststructuralist Reader* Robert J.C. Young, R. (ed.), 48–78. London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul.
Geyer, Naomi
2008 *Discourse and Politeness: Ambivalent Face in Japanese*. London: Continuum.
Grainger, Karen and Sandra Harris
2007 Special issue on apologies. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (1).

Haugh, Michael
2007 The discursive challenge to politeness research. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 295–317.
Hamza, Abdurrahman
2007 Impoliteness and misunderstanding in Arabic and English. Ph.D diss., Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield.
Holmes, Janet
1995 *Women, Men and Politeness*. London: Longman.
Holmes, Janet
2005 Politeness and post-modernism – an appropriate approach to the analysis of language and gender? *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 9 (1): 108–117.
Ide, Sachiko
1989 Formal forms and discernment: two neglected aspects of linguistic politeness. *Multilingua,* 8 (2–3), 223–248.
Ide, Sachiko
2005 How and why honorifics can signify dignity and elegance: the indexicality and reflexivity of linguistic rituals. In *Broadening the Horizon of Linguistic Politeness* Robin Lakoff and Sachiko Ide (eds.), 45–65. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Kádár, Dániel Z. and Sara Mills (eds.)
2011a *East Asian Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Leech, Geoffrey
2007 Politeness: is there an East West divide? *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 167–206.
Locher, Miriam
2004 *Power and Politeness in Action: Disagreements in Oral Communication.* Berlin/ New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
Locher, Miriam
2006a Polite behaviour within relational work: the discursive approach to politeness. *Multilingua*, 25 (3): 249–267.
Locher, Miriam
2006b The discursive approach to polite behavior: a response to Glick. *Language in Society* 35: 733–735.
Locher, Miriam and Watts, Richard
2005 Politeness and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 9–35.
Locher, Miriam and Watts, Richard
2007 Relational work and impoliteness: negotiating norms of linguistic behaviour. In *Impoliteness in Language*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.), 77–99. Berlin/New York. Mouton de Gruyter.
Lyotard, Jean-François
1979 *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (trans. Bennington, G. and Massumi, B).

Manke, M.
1997 *Classroom Power Relations: Understanding Student Teacher Interaction*. New Jersey/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Macdonell, Diane
1986 *Theories of Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Mao, Luming R.
1994 Beyond politeness theory: 'face' revisited and renewed. *Journal of Pragmatics* 21 (5): 451–486.

Matsumoto, Yoshiko
1989 Politeness and conversational universals: observations from Japanese. *Multilingua*, 8 (2–3): 207–221.

Mills, Sara
1997 *Discourse*. London: Routledge.

Mills, Sara
2003a *Gender and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mills, Sara
2009a Politeness and culture. *Journal of Pragmatics* 41 (5): 1047–1060.

Mills, Sara
2009b A process model of impoliteness. Conference paper, Linguistics Impoliteness and Rudeness/ Linguistic Politeness Research Group Conference, Lancaster University.

Mills, Sara
In prep. *Discourse Approaches to Politeness*.

Okamoto, Sachiko and Janet Shibamoto-Smith (eds.)
2004 *Japanese Language, Gender and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Okamoto, Sachiko
2004 Ideology in linguistic practice and analysis: Gender and politeness in Japanese revisited. In *Japanese Language, Gender and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Sachiko Okamoto and Janet Shibamoto-Smith (eds.), 38–56. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Paramasivam, Shamala
2007a A discourse-oriented model for analysing power and politeness in negotiation interaction: a cross linguistic perspective. *Journal of Universal Language*, 8: 91–127.

Paramasivam, Shamala
2007b Managing disagreement while managing not to disagree: polite disagreement in negotiation discourse. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 36 (2): 91–116.

Pizziconi, Barbara
2007 The lexical mapping of politeness in British English and Japanese. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 207–243

Pizziconi, Barbara
2008 Cultural and linguistic issues in the construction of the discourse on Japanese politeness. Key note paper at 4th International Symposium on Politeness. Budapest, Hungary.

Sifianou, Maria
1992 *Politeness Phenomena in England and Greece.* Oxford: Clarendon.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen (ed.)
2000a *Culturally Speaking: Managing Rapport through Talk Across Cultures*. London: Continuum.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen
2000b Rapport Management: a framework for analysis In *Culturally Speaking: Managing Rapport through Talk Across Cultures*, Helen Spencer-Oatey (eds.), 11–46. London, Continuum.

Sperber, Dan and Deirdre Wilson
1995 *Relevance: Communication and Cognition.* 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell.

Terkourafi, Marina
2001 *Politeness in Cypriot Greek: A frame-based approach.* Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge.

Terkourafi, Marina
2005a An argument for a frame-based approach to politeness: evidence from the use of the imperative in Cypriot Greek. In *Broadening the Horizon of Linguistic Politeness*, Robin Lakoff and Sachiko Ide (eds.), 99–117. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Terkourafi, Marina
2005b Beyond the micro-level in politeness research. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (2): 237–263.

Terkourafi, Marina
2007 Toward a unified theory of politeness, impoliteness and rudeness. In *Impoliteness in Language*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.), 45–74. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Thornborrow, Joanna
2002 *Power Talk: Language and Interaction in Institutional Discourse*: Harlow: Longman.

Watts, Richard
2003 *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, Etienne
1998 *Communities of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wodak, Ruth and Paul Chilton (eds.)
2005 *A New Agenda in Critical Discourse Analysis*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Yoshida, Megumi and Chikako Sakurai.
2006 Japanese honorifics as a marker of sociocultural identity: A view from a non-Western perspective. In *Broadening the Horizon of Linguistic Politeness*, Robin Lakoff and Sachiko Ide (eds.), 197–217. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Chapter 2

"It's not what you said, it's how you said it!" Prosody and impoliteness

Jonathan Culpeper

1. Introduction

It is not an unusual occurrence that people take offence at *how* someone says something rather than at *what* was said. Consider this exchange between two pre-teenage sisters:

[1] A: Do you know anything about yo-yos?
B: That's mean.

On the face of it, Speaker A's utterance is an innocent enquiry about Speaker B's state of knowledge. However, the prosody triggered a different interpretation. Speaker A heavily stressed the beginning of "anything", and produced the remainder of the utterance with sharply falling intonation. This prosody is marked against the norm for yes-no questions, which usually have rising intonation (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985: 807). It signals to B that A's question is not straightforward or innocent. It triggers the recovery of implicatures that Speaker A is not asking a question but expressing both a belief that Speaker B knows nothing about yo-yos and an attitude towards that belief, namely, incredulity that this is the case – something which itself implies that Speaker B is deficient in some way. Without the prosody, there is no clear evidence of the interpersonal orientation of Speaker A, whether positive, negative or somewhere in between.

This example illustrates the fact that prosodic features play an important role in disambiguating messages, as research in communication has repeatedly demonstrated (e.g. Archer and Ackert 1977; DePaulo and Friedman 1998). Indeed, prosodic features do more than disambiguate messages: they can over-rule conventional meanings associated with linguistic forms, as is the case with ironic or sarcastic utterances. It is interesting to note the functioning of interpersonal communication in the written channel, i.e. without prosody. Kruger et al. (2005) investigated the constraints of the written channel in email communication, particularly regarding the communication of humour and sarcasm. In one study, they found that 75% of subjects who listened to statements successfully interpreted them, against 50% – that is, no better than chance – who read them on email (2005: 928). The relative paucity of communicative resources by which to secure an understanding, coupled with an egocentric tendency to "overestimate the obviousness of the fact that they are 'just kidding' when they poke fun or criticize" may lead people to "unwittingly offend" (2005: 934), thus contributing to phenomena such as 'flaming' (hostile, insulting computer mediated interaction).

Yet despite the importance of prosody in communication, the vast bulk of research on politeness or impoliteness pays woefully little attention to the role of prosody. The single exception of note is the work of Arndt and Janney (e.g. 1985, 1987), whose notion of politeness involves emotional support conveyed multimodally through verbal, vocal and kinesic cues. As far as studies focusing specifically on impoliteness or interpersonal conflict are concerned, prosody seems to attract at best a cursory mention (though see Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann 2003[1]; Culpeper 2005). If we turn to the literature produced by scholars of prosody, concerted attention is rarely given to im/politeness, largely because of the dominance, until recently, of the structuralist paradigm and the consequent focus on intonational phonology. An exception of note is research on acoustic features and politeness in Japanese (see, for example, Ofuka et al. 2000). To be fair, for several decades there has been a small but steady stream of studies on the attitudinal or emotive meanings conveyed by prosody (see, for example, the excellent summary in Murray and Arnott 1993). Work on attitudinal meanings clearly are of some relevance to im/politeness, not least because impoliteness involves an attitude (see below). However, much of this work focuses on isolated utterances in lab-based studies. Only relatively recently have studies on prosody begun to take the role of in-context language use seriously (see, for example, the special issue of the *Journal of Pragmatics* in 2006 on the prosody-pragmatics interface).

There is no agreed definition of linguistic impoliteness (Locher and Bousfield 2008: 3). Even the term that is used for the notion is controversial (why not use 'rudeness' instead of 'impoliteness'?) (see the disagreements between Culpeper 2007 and Terkourafi 2007). My own definitions have evolved over the last dozen years, the last being:

---

1 The final third of this paper on prosody was primarily authored by Anne Wichmann.

> Impoliteness comes about when: (1) the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and/or constructs behaviour as intentionally face-attacking, or a combination of (1) and (2).
>
> (Culpeper 2005: 38)

Whilst this has the merit of emphasizing that impoliteness arises in social interaction (it is not simply something the speaker does), it nevertheless tacks the notion of impoliteness on to the notion of 'face-attack' But that simply transfers the explanatory load on to another notion that is itself controversial (see, for example, Bargiela-Chiappini 2003) and may well not cover all cases of impoliteness (see Spencer-Oatey 2002). Below I give my current definition:

> Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and /or beliefs about social organisation, including, in particular, how one person's or a group's identities are mediated by others in interaction. Situated behaviours are viewed negatively – considered 'impolite' – when they conflict with how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be and/or how one thinks they ought to be. Such behaviours always have or are presumed to have emotional consequences for at least one participant, that is, they cause or are presumed to cause offence. Various factors can exacerbate how offensive an impolite behaviour is taken to be, including for example whether one understands a behaviour to be strongly intentional or not.

This chapter both argues that prosody plays a key role in triggering evaluations that an utterance is impolite, and, moreover, aims to show some of the ways in which this happens. Much of what I say will also have relevance for the study of politeness. I start by considering the scope of the term 'prosody', and by noting key issues and trends in the field of prosody. In writing this overview, I assume that the readers of this chapter will know relatively little about prosody. My next step is to review relevant work (largely undertaken by pragmatics scholars) on prosody and im/politeness. Following on from this, I examine metapragmatic comments concerning potentially impolite utterances (see, for example, the title of this study). The point here is to demonstrate that prosody plays an important role in the 'lay person's' understanding of impoliteness. Finally, I take the crucial next step of examining how prosody works in context to trigger evaluations of impoliteness in naturally occurring data. I will analyse extracts from the singing talent show *Pop Idol*.

2. About prosody

How does 'prosody' differ from 'paralanguage', and what is it? Both terms refer to vocal effects that do not constitute the verbal aspect of a message – the words and the semantics and grammar that accompany them – but which accompany it (or, less often, stand alone as the message themselves, when people make vocal noises but do not articulate words). Prosody is often taken to refer to more local dynamic vocal effects, variations in loudness, pitch, tempo and so on. This usage is also consistent with the long-standing use of the term to describe the rhythm of verse. Paralanguage, a term attributed to Trager (1958), refers to more general vocal characteristics – voice setting, voice quality, characteristics such as whining, laughing, whispering, etc., as well as vocalizations such as "uh-huh" or "mhm". However, usage of these labels has not maintained such a distinction. Paralanguage, for example, is often taken to refer to anything 'beyond language', including kinesic aspects, such as gesture, gaze direction and posture. In this paper, I will use prosody to refer to any vocal effect, leaving paralanguage as a superordinate term. Having said that, it is not a helpful starting point for an analysis to say that prosody is *any* vocal effect – what particular aspects of vocal effects will be attended to in the prosodic descriptions? Also, the local vs. general distinction touched on above is a useful one which we should not lose sight of. I will elaborate briefly on each of these in turn.

Prosody in this chapter refers in particular to:

Timing. Includes: speech rate (e.g. segments, syllables or words spoken per second), duration (e.g. of syllables, tone units, utterances), rhythm (i.e. patterning of accented syllables); pauses (frequency and length).

Loudness. Measurable in decibels.

Pitch. The frequency of the vibrating vocal folds – the 'fundamental frequency' (F0) (measurable in hertz). Includes: pitch range (i.e. the range of pitch values produced by a speaker during a tone unit, utterance, speech event, etc.), pitch contour direction (e.g. fall, rise, fall-rise, rise-fall, level), pitch contour gradient (i.e. the steepness of the contour (the rate of change in pitch per second)).

Nucleus. The most important accented syllable(s) in the tone group, usually louder, longer and of higher pitch (and the last accent if the tone group contains more than one). Includes: nucleus prominence (i.e. degree to which the nucleus is made prominent through, primarily, loudness and pitch height), nucleus placement (i.e. the positioning of the nucleus in the tone group).

> *Voice quality*. The harmonic overtones or auditory colouring that accompanies the fundamental frequency (produced by the settings of the larynx and supralarynx and overall muscular tension). It includes voice qualities such as: breathy, whispery, creaky, harsh, falsetto.

It needs to be stressed that the fact that I have presented five *separate* groups is a matter of presentational and analytical convenience. Prosody is a composite of acoustic features. Indeed, the five groups are not only interrelated but also sometimes themselves composites of some of the other groups. For example, a voice quality such as breathy involves low pitch; a tone group nucleus is primarily comprised of loudness and pitch. Also, note that the notion of nucleus assumes another concept, namely, the tone group. There is no hard and fast way of defining a tone group. It usually contains one nucleus, forms an unbroken rhythmical sequence and is bounded by pauses. Wichmann (2000: 4) states that it contains 4–6 syllables on average, and Quirk et al. (1985: 1602) state "around five to six words, or two seconds"

Descriptions of prosody can proceed along three lines: (1) auditory descriptions, i.e. using descriptive words and transcription conventions to represent what the analyst hears, (2) acoustic descriptions, i.e. using instruments to represent the physical properties of the sound, and (3) articulatory descriptions, i.e. using descriptive words to represent the physical mechanics involved in the speaker's production of the sound. This chapter will not engage in articulatory descriptions. Acoustic descriptions, deploying the software program *Praat* (version 5.0.40; Boersma and Weenink 2008) (available at: http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/), will be used for the key segments of talk under scrutiny in the final sections of this chapter. Such descriptions have the merit of being relatively objective. They are also relatively accessible to readers. For example, seeing the visual representation of pitch movement as a line going up or down in visual space is more accessible than a transcription system using alphabetic letters (e.g. the autosegmental system). It is also more delicate, as the slightest variation in pitch will affect the line. There are, however, limitations. A practical limitation is that software programs can only handle relatively clean recordings. This rules out analysing a recording made in a busy street or on a crackling telephone. The data analysed in this chapter is produced in a studio, and thus the audio quality is relatively high. Another limitation is that not all vocal aspects are equally amenable to instrumental analysis. Until relatively recently, the analysis of voice quality has been limited to auditory descriptions (e.g. breathy, creaky), because of the particular technical difficulties involved (for recent advances involving electroglottography, see http://www.ims.uni-stuttgart.de/phonetik/EGG/

frmst1.htm). Furthermore, a more fundamental limitation is that there is no necessary correlation between what an instrumental analysis represents and what someone perceives. The analyst must decide on what is relevant. Also, an instrumental analysis does not necessarily display the context against which acoustic features are perceived. Instrumental analyses are usually focussed on relatively short segments of speech. For example, somebody's pitch range may seem unusually high, yet this could turn out to be a general feature of their voice. For these reasons, I will supplement my analyses with auditory descriptions.

The example given in the first paragraph of this chapter illustrates local and (general or global) issues. Intonational contours – falls, rises and so on – are, at least in part, conventionalised local events and are contrastive (e.g. a fall contrasts with a rise), and as such are relatively easy to identify and to interpret. Indeed, this is the traditional end of prosody that some treat as part of a grammatical system, studying, for example, how certain sentence types and intonation contours correlate, and how the intonation nucleus is associated with the information focus of the sentence. This area of prosody, focussing on the more general, might be described, following Roach (1991), as 'linguistic form-based prosody'. Example works include Halliday (1967) and Ladd (1996). Other vocal phenomena are more clearly gradient. One speaks fast or slowly, for example, to some degree. The key point here is that what counts as fast or slow, high pitch or low pitch, and so on is relative. Relative to what? It could be relative to the local context, for example, the rest of the speaker's utterance or the immediately preceding speaker's utterance. It could be relative to the general context, for example, what is usual for that type of speaker (e.g. a man or woman, young or old person). It could also be relative to an aspect of the context somewhere between global and local, such as what is usual for that speech activity or event (e.g. increased loudness addressing a public meeting). Two areas of prosody focus on the more local context. One, again following Roach (1991), is 'interpersonal prosody' (an area which encompasses affective or attitudinal prosody), and involves the communication of (emotional) attitudes concerning the speaker, the speaker's message and/or the speaker's addressee (e.g. the use of high pitch to achieve the function of hedging). One classic example is O'Connor and Arnold ([1961] 1973). Designed for learning of English, the idea is to tell students what attitudes are conveyed by a particular type of intonation contour in conjunction with a particular grammatical structure. Thus, for the intonation contour of the first example of this chapter, a rapid high rise followed by a fall and a tail in the context of a yes-no question, they suggest the attitude conveyed is "impressed, challenging, antagonistic". However, the attitudinal correlations of this work seem to be based on intuition, and it also assumes a rather limited view of communication, in which prosody and grammar are simply a code for attitudinal information. In contrast, the final area of prosody studies – which we might label 'interactional prosody' – focuses on context, particularly the local context. The landmark work here is Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (1996). Interactional prosody involves either or both (a) the management of turn-taking (e.g. turn-completion associated with a drop in pitch) (e.g. Zuraidah and Knowles 2006), or (b) contextualisation cues (e.g. Brazil 1985; Gumperz 1982) (the use of prosody to project the contextual implications of an utterance).

In fact, even relatively conventionalised features, such as intonation contours, are not immune to gradience and relativity – all prosodic cues are gradient and relative (cf. Crystal and Davy 1969: 108; Arndt and Janney 1987: 227). Again, recollect the example with which this chapter opened. The fact that the utterance was taken to be 'mean' by Speaker B was probably triggered by the relationship between the yes-no question and its prosody (a fall). However, it is also the case that the fall commenced from a particularly high point and was particularly rapid. This begs the question of 'high' and 'rapid' relative to what. It is precisely the gradience and relativity of prosody that makes it crucial to account for the pragmatic inferencing that underpins its role in communication. Relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1995), for example, can account for which aspect of context is most relevant: essentially, that aspect of context which, in conjunction with the prosody, can maximise cognitive rewards (e.g. new information) for the least (processing) effort.

3. Politeness and prosody in communication

As I have remarked in the past (1996: 355), impoliteness is, at least to some extent, parasitic on politeness. It thus makes sense to consider the literature on politeness and prosody. The most influential work on politeness, Brown and Levinson (1987) (hereafter B&L), makes a few remarks in this connection. Some are scattered in their linguistic output strategies:

> Negative politeness:
>
> *Output strategy: Question, hedge*
>
> Perhaps most of the verbal hedges can be replaced by (or emphasised by) prosodic or kinesic means of indicating tentativeness or emphasis. In Tzeltal, there is a highly conventionalised use of high pitch or falsetto, which marks

> polite or formal interchanges, operating as a kind of giant hedge on everything that is said. (Elsewhere (Brown and Levinson 1974) we have argued for the universal association between high pitch and tentativeness). (B&L 1987: 172)

Positive politeness

Output strategy: Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H)

> This is often done with exaggerated intonation, stress, and other aspects of prosodics (B&L 1987: 104)

Output strategy: Presuppose/raise/assert common ground

> The personal-centre switch [the speaker adopts the position of the hearer] can be carried out in prosodics as well: both A's and B's utterances could be expressed with 'creaky voice' (very low pitch and a constricted glottis), where the prosodics of giving comfort is the same as (or a metaphor for) the prosodics of asking for sympathy (B&L 1987: 119)

Off-record

Output strategy: Be ironic

> there are clues that his intended meaning is being conveyed indirectly. Such clues may be prosodic (e.g. nasality) … and in English ironies they may be marked by exaggerated stress. (1987: 221–222).

More substantially, towards the end of the book they comment on prosody and phonology and politeness, and make the following argument and prediction:

> Now our point here is not simply that there are correlations of prosodic or phonological features with social contexts, but rather that there are rational reasons why these particular features are used in these particular circumstances. For instance creaky voice, having as a natural source low speech energy, can implicate calmness and assurance and thence comfort and commiseration, attitudes not suitably expressed in negative-politeness circumstances. On the other hand, high pitch has natural associations with the voice quality of children: for an adult thing to use such a feature to another adult may implicate self-humbling and thus deference (Brown and Levinson 1974). We predict therefore that sustained high pitch (maintained over a number of utterances) will be a feature of negative-politeness usage, and creaky voice a feature of positive-politeness usage, and that a reversal of these associations will not occur in any culture. (B&L 1987: 268)

It is not difficult to find examples of Brown and Levinson's (1987) strategies that deploy prosody in the way they suggest. But it is also fairly easy to find the same specific prosodic features doing completely different things. However, their claims are carefully worded – "can implicate", "may implicate" – to accommodate such exceptions. Regarding the claim about high pitch always being a feature of negative-politeness and creaky voice always being a feature of positive politeness, this is an empirical question which, as far as I know, has not been addressed. However, the "rational reasons" put forward are not in themselves convincing. High pitch has associations, and arguably "natural" ones, with anger (specifically, hot anger or rage) (cf. Murray and Arnott 1993: 1103–4, 1106). This is hardly the stuff of "self-humbling" and "deference". Also, glancing ahead to section 4, there is evidence that high pitch associated with children and in particular contexts is considered "whining", something which suggests not positive but negative implications. Regarding their claim of universality in the final sentence, the lack of cultural variation with respect to a number of different prosodic features is in fact supported by Frick (1985: 414–5). However, more recent research has highlighted clear cultural differences in the politeness perception of prosody. For example, in his work on 'pressed voice' (giving rise to a rasping quality due to tensed vocal folds) Sadanobu (2004) shows that it is considered part of deferential politeness in Japanese. In contrast, Shochi, Auberge and Rilliard (2007) show that the same voice quality is viewed negatively by Americans and the French.

As I indicated in section 2, prosodic features are unlike traditional linguistic features in that they are all gradient, at least to some degree. The key question, then, for understanding the role of prosody is: what is the norm (or norms) against which prosodic features are marked? Let us turn to the only work that both deals with politeness *and* provides a thorough treatment of prosody, namely, Arndt and Janney (1987). The thrust of their approach to communication is very different from Brown and Levinson (1987). According to Arndt and Janney (1987: 248, et passim), "utterances become 'meaningful' – by which we mean interpretable – only through the interaction of verbal, prosodic, and kinesic actions in context" Consistent with this position, they point out that "[i]t seems that it is not the simple occurrence per se of prosodic effects that is significant in interpersonal communication, but the distribution and intensity of these effects in relation to the acoustic bass line (cf. Crystal and Davy 1969: 108)" (1987: 227–228). In the main, they are concerned with multi-modal emotive communication. They argue that people, as opposed to social situations and their norms of appropriacy, are the locus of politeness, and that we should "focus on cross-modal emotive behaviour as a means by which politeness is negotiated" (1987: 377). It is not pertinent to this chapter to evaluate their understanding of politeness, though I briefly note that whilst "appropriacy-based approaches to politeness" are considered "too vague" as an approach to politeness (1987: 376), they deploy the notion of "frame" (Goffman 1974), which includes situational factors, to explain how the "emotive interpretations of normal behavioural patterns" (1987: 337) can be modified. In other words, if politeness is achieved through emotive behaviour and if emotive interpretations are sensitive to situational norms, then politeness is sensitive to situational norms too. Wisely, Arndt and Janney (1987) generally refer to the notion of "supportiveness", rather than politeness. The notion of supportiveness follows Brown and Levinson's (1987) notions of positive and negative face wants:

> A supportive speaker smooths over uncomfortable situations, or keeps delicate situations from becoming interpersonally threatening, by acknowledging his partner's claim to a positive public self-image. A supportive speaker tries to minimise territorial transgressions and maximise signs of interpersonal acceptance. (Arndt and Janney 1987: 379)

The important thing for Arndt and Janney is then to forge a link with emotion:

> The basic idea which was introduced by Berger and Calabrese (1975), and subsequently developed into an axiomatic system by Bradac, Bowers and Courtright (1979, 1980), is that the listeners' emotional security depends to a large extent on the assertiveness, value-ladenness and intensity of his [*sic*] partner's behaviour. high levels of emotional security produce increases in liking and intimacy and decreases in reciprocity and information seeking; low levels of emotional security produce decreases in liking and intimacy and increases in reciprocity and information seeking (cf. Berger and Calabrese 1975: 103–107). Emotional security, which in part stems from the belief that one can predict or explain one's partner's behaviour (cf. Bradac, Bowers and Courtright 1980: 213), is highest when face-needs are met, and lowest when they are threatened. (Arndt and Janney 1987: 380)

The chief merit of Arndt and Janney (1987) is a systematic and detailed discussion of how words and structures, prosody and kinesic features interact and create meaning in communication. Of particular relevance to the concerns of this chapter is their discussion of attitudinally marked prosody. They argue that it is unexpected prosodies that trigger the search for attitudinal interpretations, including "interpersonal interpretations, e.g., the customer wants to insult me (he's being arrogant, impolite, dominating, etc. on purpose, who does he think he is?)" (1987: 273). Similarly, the near final sentences of Ofuka et al.'s (2000: 215) paper on prosodic cues for politeness in Japanese are worth noting:

> People appear to be very sensitive to unnaturalness by their standards and this listener-specific sensitivity may bias politeness judgements. A single extreme value for any acoustic feature (e.g., very fast speech rate) may reduce perceived politeness, but this will differ listener by listener.

Attitudinally marked intonation contours Arndt and Janney define as those that are not clearly motivated by syntactic considerations (1987: 273–274). For example, a declarative has the expectation of a falling intonation contour, and so a rise would be attitudinally marked. They suggest the following set of possibilities:

> *(1)* *rising pitch* together with declarative, imperative or wh- interrogative utterance types would be considered attitudinally marked;
>
> *(2)* *falling pitch* together with all other interrogative utterance types would be considered attitudinally marked;
>
> *(3)* *falling-rising* pitch, as a mixed contour, would be considered attitudinally relevant, regardless of the utterance type with which it is combined;
>
> *(4)* *all remaining combinations* of pitch direction and utterance type – i.e., the so-called 'normal' ones, grammatically speaking, would be considered attitudinally relevant only in conjunction with other types of cues or cue combinations.
>
> Arndt and Janney (1987: 275)

The first three items all involve "contrastive patterning", which Arndt and Janney view as "central to emotive communication" (1987: 369). They also discuss "redundant patterning", but "redundant patterning amplifies verbal messages", whereas "contrastive patterning modulates or modifies them" (1987: 369). The use of contrast between what is said and how it is said in the case of irony or sarcasm is an illustration of the latter.

Arndt and Janney (1987) propose a neat scheme. However, what particularly concerns me is that prosodic features can be marked for various reasons, not just syntactic. One of the key aims of the up-coming analysis is to show how other aspects of context, and in particular the co-text but also the situation, contribute to establishing a speaker's prosody as marked.

4. The importance of prosody for impoliteness: Meta-impoliteness comments

Some relatively recent major works in the area of politeness have argued that traditional approaches to politeness have applied pseudo-scientific politeness theories and categories to certain social behaviours (e.g. Eelen 2001; Watts 2003). They argue that research should focus instead on the lay person's conception of politeness as revealed in participants' own discursively-constructed and dynamic interpretations of local and particular encounters, and especially in their use of and disputes about the meanings and applicability of terms such as *polite* and *politeness* for such encounters (the same argument is made of impoliteness/ rudeness in Watts 2008). Whilst there are difficulties in constructing a general approach to politeness based solely on such a focus, it is certainly the case that any approach to either politeness or impoliteness needs to take account of the lay person's conceptions, as revealed, for example, through their use of terms. Indeed, metapragmatic comments and metalinguistic labels are important sources of evidence about how people understand politeness and impoliteness. They are also an important means of validating theoretical categories and their application. In this section, I will examine 'everyday' meta-impoliteness comments in order to support the idea that prosody can play a crucial role in triggering the interpretation of impoliteness, and also to give some limited clues about the ways in which it can do that.

My meta-impoliteness comments are drawn from weblogs, where they are fairly frequent. All weblogs, as far as I can tell, are related to the North American context. A preliminary survey of the data suggests that utterances are sometimes perceived as impolite because of the particular 'tone of voice' We need to be a little cautious here, as 'tone of voice' is not always used to refer to prosodic features; it is sometimes used to refer to register issues (for example, language being too colloquial). Nevertheless, it is often used of prosodic features, and this is illustrated in [2] (Note: I have made no attempt to correct the typos and other infelicities in the weblog data):

[2] Anyone have any ideas on how to quell the nasty tone of voice? This seems to a constant struggle in our house. Instead of using a polite tone of voice to ask a question or make a request, there is that demanding, whiny voice, especially when my kids talk to each other. I can remember my parents saying to me 'It's not WHAT you said, it's HOW you said it.' Boy, do I know what they were talking about.
http://midvalleymoms.com/index.php?q=tone_of_voice

The 'tone of voice' is negatively evaluated, being described at the outset as "nasty". Because it is contrasted with "a polite tone of voice", it is by implication an impolite tone of voice. Moreover, it is impolite in a specific pragmatic context, namely, that of asking a question or making a request. In this context it becomes "demanding", probably because it conflicts with the likely normal and/or prescribed social organisation of the family in this culture, namely, that only parents have the power to demand. Note that even when the "kids talk to each other", this tone of voice is proscribed. Regarding the specifics of the voice, we learn that it is "whiny", an auditory description that suggests the voice is markedly high-pitched and enduring.

As [3] illustrates, an impolite tone of voice is not restricted to children as perceived by parents:

> [3] It'slike fingernails on a chalkboard. You know the tone of voice. The tone of voice that infers 'You're a Moron' without even saying it. It's the tone of voice that leaves children whimpering. When I hear it coming out of another parent's mouth, I cringe. I'm not judging them – I feel for them.
>
> It's almost impossible to avoid that tone of voice when we're exasperated. But that tone says so much more than the actual words we're screaming. That tone says 'Why am I wasting my breath on you.' It says 'How did I get stuck with such a moron?' It says 'I'm embarrassed to be associated with you.'
>
> http://nwitimes.com/parent/blogs/fatherknowsnothing/?p=19

Here, a parent evaluates the tone of voice of other parents negatively. Whilst no metalinguistic impoliteness label is used, there seems little doubt that the implications of the tone of voice, as indicated in quotation marks, conflict with emotionally-sensitive norms and beliefs relating to the mediation of people's identities – they are face-attacking. The writer also alludes to a negative emotional reaction on the part of the target ("whimpering") and third-party observers ("cringe"), further reinforcing the idea that an impoliteness attitude has been evoked. There is little detailed prosodic information. Being like "fingernails on a chalk-board" suggests very high-pitch.

A particularly common way of picking out prosody as the main trigger for evoking an impoliteness attitude is to say, as illustrated in [2] above, "It's not WHAT you said, it's HOW you said it", or some similar variant. Consider the examples given in [4] and [5]:

> [4] Oh and for that manager, my friend noticed that the area where she was sitting was wet- yes water under the table. She came to wipe the

floor herself but how she said 'its okay now' was so patronizing and condescending that we should have taken it as a sign. We should have not stayed to order.

http://winecountry.citysearch.com/review/35188398

[5] After explaining the part to your first customer representative regarding the time off I had to take she responded by saying 'what would you like me to do about that sir?'. This is a not what she said but how she said it moment. I didn't even get to get to the point where I explained how I had been handled over the phone via Advance Video because at this point I was being challenged by your own representative in a manner akin to vermin

http://www.usualdosage.com/?p=100

Examples [4] and [5] are exactly like the example with which I opened this chapter. There is nothing in the words or structures "its okay now" and "what would you like me to do about that sir?" that could be taken as a means of evoking an impolite attitude (in fact, the second utterance concludes with a deferential marker); neither is it the case that the particular context of those words and structures makes the evocation of such an attitude likely (it is not difficult to imagine them as polite enquiries). It clearly must be the prosody that interacts with the words and structures and their contexts that is at issue (in the case of [4] it is possible that kinesic cues were involved). No specific information is given about the prosody. One might suspect there to have been some mismatch between the expected prosody of these utterances in such contexts and what is realised. For example, the grammar of both predicts a rising intonation contour, but perhaps a fall of some kind was given (as in example [1]); or maybe the pitch range, nucleus prominence, duration of syllables or some other aspect was odd. Regarding the specifics of the impoliteness attitude evoked, both examples are similar: "patronizing and condescending" and "in a manner akin to vermin" indicate that the prosody infringes equity rights concerning fair treatment by others (see Spencer-Oatey 2008).

The final example of this section, [6] below, is similar to the two examples above.

[6] I could go on and on, but to get the full effect, you had to see not just *what* Mary said, but *how* she said it. She was dripping with contempt and sarcasm, parroting anything said by the other panelists in a teenage sing-song imitation complete with the liberal use of air quotes.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/russert-watch-the-mary-m_b_15990.html

The implication of “to get the full effect” is that only a partial effect is available without prosody: the prosody guarantees the interpretation. The writer is quite specific about the aspects of the impoliteness attitude evoked. “Contempt” is reminiscent of the patronising and condescending prosody of the previous two examples, but we also have “sarcasm” and “parroting” Researchers have stressed the importance of prosody in communicating sarcasm, and pointed to acoustic features such as a lowering of pitch (the mean fundamental frequency) (see Cheang and Pell 2008). The prosody of sarcasm and mimicry are discussed and illustrated in Culpeper (2005).

What these meta-impoliteness comments establish is that prosody plays a role in evoking impolite attitudes. The mere presence of a particular ‘tone of voice’ in a particular context can be enough to act as a cue. In the earlier examples discussed, very high-pitched voices were viewed negatively. But, of course, this is not the only kind of prosody that can evoke impoliteness. Also, a very high pitched voice is not in itself impolite – it could, for example, signal excitement. It is the use of a very high pitched voice in a particular context, such as a child requesting something from a parent, that evokes impoliteness. The examples relating to how something was said show the crucial role prosody has in evoking impoliteness despite the words not doing so. Given that examples [4] and [5] are public service encounters with a waiter or telephone customer representative and [6] is a talk show with Mary Matalin, a spokesperson for the ex-U.S. Vice-President Dick Cheney, it seems likely that the parties responsible for the behaviour are constrained from going fully on record, i.e. evoking impoliteness through both what is said and the prosody. It is much easier for them to deny relative and gradient meanings conveyed by prosody than the formal meanings of ‘what is said’, even though the prosodically evoked meanings may be considered blatant by participants. The fact that they are blatant yet not part of the formal record means that they fit the strategy for evoking impoliteness labelled ‘off record impoliteness’ in Culpeper (2005).

5. Prosody and impoliteness in interaction: An example from *Pop Idol*

5.1. *Pop Idol* and Susie’s performance

None of the publications discussed in the previous section, nor indeed most of those referred to in this chapter, actually analyze language as part of extended social interaction and part of a particular context. Instead, they prefer to make claims about decontextualized and relatively short utterances, drawing on intuitions, either those of the analyst or those elicited from informants in experimental conditions. This section aims to fill that gap. In particular, I aim to reveal how locally constructed norms impact on politeness and, especially, impoliteness. An important source of evidence for my interpretation of utterances will be understandings displayed by their targets. Unlike the ambiguous example with which this chapter opened, my focus will be on the role of prosody as one of a number of signals which combine to exacerbate further the offence of utterances (i.e. the fact that it is offensive to a degree is already clear without the prosody).

My data is taken from *Pop Idol – Raw Talent*, a selection of extracts from a British television series which debuted on ITV on October 5, 2001. It is a talent show, in which a panel of judges initially, and later also viewer voting, determines the best singer, or 'pop idol'. It has been very successful. A second series followed in 2003, and the format has been franchised around the world as the 'Idol' series (e.g. *American Idol*). It is also very similar to the series *X Factor*. It is not, however, an ordinary talent contest but an exploitative one. Exploitative chat, quiz or talent shows are structured to maximise the potential for face loss (see Culpeper 2005). Contestants expose their ability or lack of ability in public, in front of both the immediate audience comprised of the judges, television crew, etc. and the distant TV audience. In the first round of auditions, they have to sing standing in the middle of a fairly large room with no backing music or microphone, and with the four judges scrutinizing them from behind a desk – a situation likely to bring out the worst of performances from all but the steely-nerved. The evaluation of the performance, and thus performer, is not simply a numerical score or a ranking process (for example, identifying the top three) but a verbal assessment. To carry off a critical assessment without damaging face would require consummate tact in this context. But, of course, from another perspective, it is an opportunity to evoke strong impoliteness. Simon Cowell, a judge on all of these programmes, has developed a reputation for his acerbic remarks on contestants' performances. His autobiography is called *I Don't Mean to be Rude, but: The Truth about Fame, Fortune and my Life in Music* (Simon Cowell 2004), and his 'rude' remarks have been collected in *I Don't Mean to be Rude, but: Simon Cowell's Book of Nasty Comments* (Tony Cowell 2006).[2] In fact, the verbal treatment of contestants on *Pop Idol*, and in particular the remarks of the judges Simon Cowell and Pete Waterman, was the subject of critical comments made by the British

2 Tony Cowell is Simon Cowell's older brother.

Members of Parliament Austin Mitchell and Jim Sheridan. Having said all this, there are contextual mitigating factors for potential impoliteness on *Pop Idol*, namely, the fact that it is all a game and that the judges may well just be playing the role of being nasty. However, in Culpeper (2005) where I analysed a quiz show, I argued that there is evidence that contestants took offence nevertheless, and such evidence is even clearer in *Pop Idol*, whose contestants are often – as far as we can tell from the selection of cases screened – reduced to tears. Moreover, in Culpeper (2005) I accounted for the fact that they took offence despite the presence of mitigating factors by noting a long line of research in social psychology showing that people are not very good at adequately factoring in context; targets of impoliteness are liable to be overwhelmed by the salience of impolite behaviour and not pay sufficient attention to potentially mitigating contextual factors (e.g. being targets of impoliteness is an expectable part of being a contestant on this kind of show).

My data consist of an interaction involving the contestant Susie. Performances on *Pop Idol* tend to be either very bad or very good. I have been informed by people familiar with auditioning for this show that the production team screen all contestants, and only let the bad and the good through to the actual audition in front of the judges. This makes good commercial sense, as it is the extremes of singing ability that are likely to prove the most entertaining. This does not mean that all the judges will agree on the quality of the performance. Evaluating singing is not an exact science. Also, it is clear from comments made that the judges do not have a shared list of assessment criteria, instead deploying their own. All this leads to the possibility of conflicting views being expressed by the judges, and thus additional drama (of course, it is also possible that the judges are to some extent engineering conflicts for such dramatic purposes). Susie's performance triggers such a conflict, with two judges, Neil Fox and Nicki Chapman, expressing strongly positive evaluations, and another judge, Pete Waterman, expressing a strongly negative evaluation. This provides the opportunity within one piece of data to see how prosody works to express a positive evaluation and to express a negative evaluation, and moreover to see how those workings contrast (if they do). The full interaction is transcribed below (prosodic features are not marked, because relevant details will be provided in the discussion). The segments of texts in bold will be the focus of my analysis.

Transcription conventions: brackets indicate overlap, and the equals sign indicates 'latching' (change of speaker without an audible gap).

Judges N = Nicki Chapman; F = Neil Fox (alias 'Foxy'); P = Pete Waterman; S = Simon Cowell

Contestant SU = Susie

N: hi
SU: hi
S: how you doing
SU: I'm alright [yeah erm
S: [good erm your name is
SU: my name's Susie
S: and why are you here
SU: because this is my absolute craziest dream=
S: = yep=
SU: =in the history of the universe more than anything else I've ever wanted=
S: =yeah=
SU: =is this thing
S: that's it=
SU: =that's it
S: [ok]
SU: [*indistinct*]
[*gives her performance*]
F: I think you looked great when you walked in
SU: thank you
F: you have lips every man wants to kiss
SU: [*laugh*]
F: but you've got a great voice
SU: oh thank you
F: I felt a bit of a tingle there
N: **you've got your own style, you've got your own look, lovely lovely voice**
SU: oh thank you
P: I must be hearing an apparition here, cos I don't see any of this
SU: oh
P: you said in the warm up it was your craziest dream
SU: it is

P: yeah that's what I think it is too a craziest dream, I don't see it at all, **it was an uninspired vocal, bored me, just nothing about it, it was lifeless**
SU: really
P: yeah
S: ok
SU: simon
S: I have to agree
SU: with Pete
S: no with the other two
SU: [*inhalation*] cos I always agree with what you think every time I've watched the show=
S: =no I love your voice=
SU: =every time
S: the great thing about this competition is two things number one we never agree and number two we offer it to the public, so let's find out now, Foxy
F: definitely must go through
SU: thank you
S: Nicki
N: yes
S: Pete
P: no
S: we're going to see you through to the next round congratulations
N: well done

5.2. Nicki on Susie

Nicki Chapman's evaluation, the first emboldened segment in the transcription, is one of a series of compliments initiated by Neil Fox. Each compliment is followed by a receipt from Susie (e.g. "oh thank you"). All three seem to be doing 'politeness', as face is given by the compliment and by the gratitude expressed in the receipt. Figure 1 presents a visualisation of some of the prosodic features of Nicki's utterance. The figure consists of three tiers. The first at the top represents fluctuations in air pressure, providing an indication of relative loudness (intensity) and duration. The second represents changes in pitch (fundamental frequency expressed in hertz) over time, providing an indication of the intonation contour of the utterance. The bottom tier contains

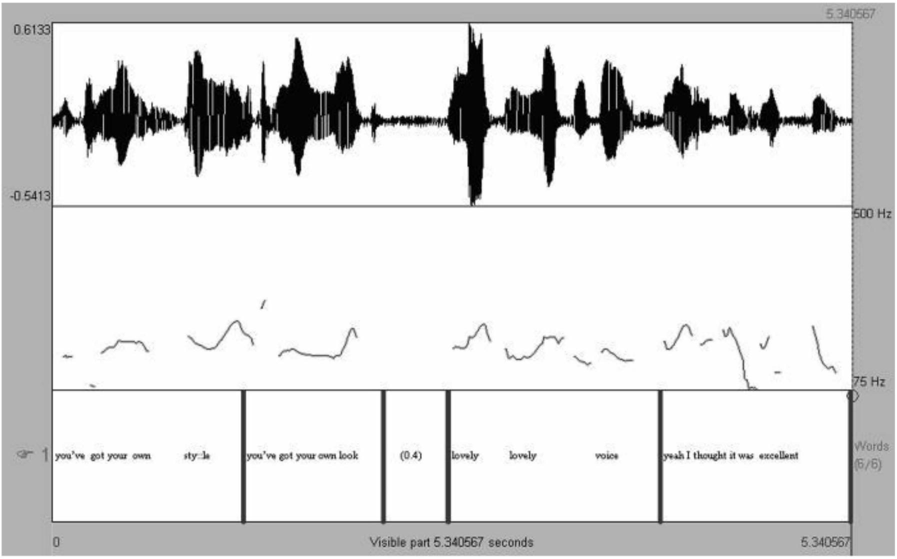

Figure 1. Nicki Chapman evaluating Susie

the words that were spoken. You will see that the suggested intonation contour looks somewhat fragmented in places. This is not, of course, intervening silence (except where silence is recorded per second in the bottom tier), but simply that the lack of voiced segments or the ambient noise prevented the computer from accurately recording the fundamental frequency. The reader needs to imagine the 'dots' joined.

Perhaps the most notable feature of Nicki's evaluation is the prosodic parallelisms. The tone units "you've got your own style" and "you've got your own look" not only repeat grammatical and lexical structures, just varying the final lexical item, but repeat prosodic characteristics, each tone unit having a heavy accent and sharp fall on the final syllable. The segment "lovely lovely voice" contains what might be described as a triple down-step pattern: it has three similar contours, but each following peak lower than the previous. There is a natural tendency for pitch to decline generally during an utterance (a phenomenon labelled 'declination'), but this has been linked to rhetorical function, the most clearly defined triple down-step pattern being linked to the 'newness' of the information of the sentence (Wichmann 2000: chapter 5). Here, the rhetorical effect is more likely to be the emphasis of the loveliness of the voice. The final word of this segment, "excellent", has particularly marked pitch movement, compared with the other words, something which reinforces the positive evaluation expressed by that word. Finally, we can note the low onsets for all tone units.

Nicki's use of prosody is not specific to conveying a positive evaluation of being polite. In fact, the triple down-step pattern is used fairly often in the performance of impolite behaviours. Instead, prosody here clearly has a rhetorical function. As Knowles (1984: 227) puts it:

> The speaker has not only to decide what to say, but how to convey it effectively to the addressee. He [*sic*] has several channels at his disposal – verbal, intonational, paralinguistic – and employs communicative strategies to combine the signals sent on each channel so that the total effect will be correctly interpreted by the hearer. Conventional linguistics concentrates on the content of the message that is conveyed: intonation is part of rhetoric, or the strategies employed to get that message across.

We should also note the prosodic features I pointed out are all marked or foregrounded, against local norms constituted by other parts of the segment I analysed and also the prior utterances.

The important point about this polite interaction is that it creates a particular local norm, a high politeness threshold, that is violated in the following interaction, as we shall see.

5.3. Pete on Susie

Pete Waterman's disagreement with the other two judges' 'polite' positive evaluations is immediately flagged: "I must be hearing an apparition here, cos I don't see any of this". Figure 2 presents a visualisation of some of the prosodic features of Pete's utterance (emboldened in the transcription).

The timing of Pete's speech is marked, compared with the local norms created by the previous speakers. He speaks 20 syllables in 7.5 seconds; in comparison, Nicki speaks 24 syllables in 5.3 seconds in the segment analysed above. One of the reasons it takes Pete longer is that he has more pauses, in fact four (of 0.8, 1.8, 0.4 and 0.4 seconds duration) compared with one (of 0.4 seconds duration). His speech in also rhythmically relatively monotonous: each tone unit ending in or consisting of a rise-fall on two syllables ("vocal", "bored me", "'bout it", "lifeless"). The segment "it was an uninspired vocal" has a very high pitched onset, but this is rapidly reset to relatively low and restricted pitch range. The pitch movement on "bored me" is very restricted, and his voice quality has some creak. Pete has a lower pitch average of 159.6Hz compared with Nicki's 173.7Hz. However, his baseline

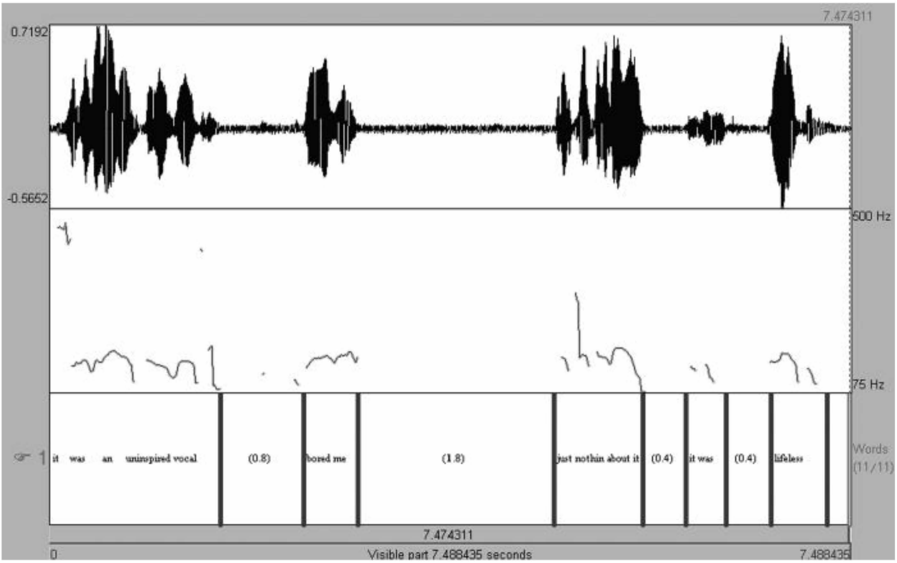

Figure 2. Pete Waterman evaluating Susie

is likely to be different, given that he is a man. Nevertheless, even by his own local norm the pitch average of 141.4Hz for the final tone unit, "lifeless", is low. Also, it is interesting to observe that Pete has a much higher standard deviation in pitch values for his segment than Nicki, 68.0 against 32.1. Although Pete may be generally low in pitch, he incorporates some sweeping falls. The nucleus on the first syllable of "nothing" is made strikingly prominent through pitch height, and is followed by a sweeping fall. It is difficult to meaningfully measure Pete's loudness across this segment, because of the many pauses. Certainly, he seems quieter then Nicki, and the top tiers of their respective Figures display differing amounts of loudness, Pete's displaying less.

The prosodic features I have mentioned with regard to Pete's segment are marked against the local norm for Nicki: they reinforce Pete's disaffiliative stance. Further, Pete's prosody is not rhetorically supportive of his meaning in the same way as Nicki's. His prosody is not only marked but also indexical of the very meaning he expresses with his words – the performance bored him (cf. "bored me"). Some of his prosodic features – notably, low pitch range, slow speech, falling contours – are consistent with research on the acoustic correlates of boredom (see, for example, Scherer 1974; though the findings of research on boredom are not all clear-cut, cf. Scherer 1986: 161). Similar features have also been correlated with disgust. The correlates of disgust are said to include: very slow speech rate, much lower pitch average, slightly wider pitch range, quieter, grumbled, chest tone, wide falling terminal contours, normal articulation (Murray and Arnott 1993: 1104–5, 1106). Arndt and Janney (1987) would label this similarity of meaning cues in multiple modalities "redundant patterning", that is, it clarifies and amplifies the meaning he is conveying.

6. Conclusion

I have emphasized the absence of study in the area of politeness or impoliteness and prosody. This chapter is a small step towards filling that gap and, more generally, raising awareness of the important role prosody plays in politeness/impoliteness. Assuming that readers are likely to be better versed in politeness or pragmatics than prosody, I have devoted some space to outlining what prosody is, what a prosodic description might consist of, the local and global issue, and the various sub-fields in prosody studies (i.e. linguistic-form, interpersonal, interactional). I stressed that prosodic features are gradient and relative to some degree, meaning that context must always be factored in when analysing the role of prosody in communication.

Politeness studies often fail to mention prosody at all. Brown and Levinson (1987) make a scattering of brief remarks, but it is clear that they are operating with a restricted model of communication. The single notable exception is Arndt and Janney (1987), which focuses on multi-modal emotive communication. They forge a link between increasing/decreasing emotional security and expressing politeness. Their detailed, systematic and replicable model treats prosody as a contextual phenomenon. However, their main focus is on modalities – looking at prosody that is attitudinally marked because one modality (e.g. prosody) contrasts with another (e.g. words and/or grammatical structures). Nowhere in their book do they tackle naturally-occurring conversation, and, in particular, how highly relevant local contexts are constructed.

My next step was to draw evidence from metapragmatic comments to support the idea that prosody plays a role – and possibly a key one – in the lay person's understandings of impoliteness. In fact, such comments revealed that particular prosodies (e.g. high pitched 'whines') in particular contexts (e.g. children making requests to parents) could evoke impoliteness. Also, it was clear that prosody was a useful way of conveying off-record impoliteness (Culpeper 2005) in public contexts where evoking impoliteness through on-record words and structures was not in the interests of the producer.

In the final section of the chapter, I examined the use of prosody in evoking impoliteness in its naturally-occurring context. More specifically, I carried out a detailed instrumental analysis of two segments from one interaction from the exploitative talent show *Pop Idol*. Prior to Pete's impolite contribution, a politeness context (repeated compliments with supporting prosody and their uptake) had been engineered in the previous discourse. Consequently, there is an expectation that the third judge, Pete, will be similarly complimentary. This locally created context is the most (psychologically) relevant 'norm' by which Pete's behaviour is marked; indeed, defeating this politeness expectation gives his impoliteness power. His prosody exacerbates the impoliteness already apparent in his verbal message by: (a) contrasting with Nicki's previous prosody (Pete has relatively slow speech, long pauses, monotonous rhythm, lower pitch range, wide sweeping falls mixed with restricted pitch movement, and more voice creak); (b) indexing the attitude of boredom and disgust, and thereby creating an amplifying parallelism with what he says in words; and (c) focussing attention on particular parts of the verbal message (e.g. prominent accent on "NOTHing about it").

You will have noted that my approach to prosody is somewhat eclectic. I do not, for example, simply espouse an interactional view. My analysis showed how prosody works, sometimes simultaneously, on several levels to contribute to the evocation of impoliteness. The one particular area which I have drawn attention to is the role of the local prosodic context in the creation of impoliteness, something that seems to have escaped other studies.

References

Archer, Dane and Robin M. Ackert
1977 Words and everything else: Verbal and nonverbal cues in social interpretation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 35: 443–449.

Arndt, Horst and Richard Wayne Janney
1985 Politeness revisited: cross-modal supportive strategies. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 23 (4): 281–300.

Arndt, Horst and Richard Wayne Janney
1987 *Intergrammar: Toward an Integrative Model of Verbal, Prosodic and Kinesic Choices in Speech.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

Bargiela-Chiappini, Francesca
2003 Face and politeness: New (insights) for old (concepts). *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1453–1469.

Boersma, Paul and David Weenink
2008 *Praat: doing phonetics by computer* (Version 5.0.40) [Computer program]. Retrieved November 10, 2008, from http://www.praat.org/
Brazil, David
1985 *The Communicative Value of Intonation in English*. Birmingham: English Language Research/Bleak House Books.
Brown, Penelope and Stephen C. Levinson
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Cheang, Henry S. and Marc D. Pell
2008 The sound of sarcasm. *Speech Communication* 50: 366–381.
Couper-Kuhlen, Elizabeth and Margret Selting (eds.)
1996. *Prosody in Conversation: Interactional Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Cowell, Simon
2004 *I Don't Mean To Be Rude, But…: The Truth about Fame, Fortune and My Life in Music*. London: Ebury Press.
Cowell, Tony
2006 *I Hate to be Rude, but Simon Cowell's Book of Nasty Comments*. London: Blake Publishing.
Crystal, David and Derek Davy
1969 *Investigating English Style*. London: Deutsch.
Culpeper, Jonathan
1996 Towards an anatomy of impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 25 (3): 349–367.
Culpeper, Jonathan
2005 Impoliteness and 'The Weakest Link'. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 35–72.
Culpeper, Jonathan
2007 Reflections on impoliteness, relational work and power. In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and in Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.). Berlin/ New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 17–44.
Culpeper, Jonathan
Forthc. *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Culpeper, Jonathan, Derek Bousfield and Anne Wichmann
2003 Impoliteness revisited: With special reference to dynamic and prosodic aspects. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1545–1579.
DePaulo, Bella M. and Howard S. Friedman
1998 Nonverbal communication. In *The Handbook of Social Psychology*. Vol. 2, Daniel T. Gilbert, Susan T. Fiske and Gardner Lindzey (eds.) 4th edition, 3–40. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Eelen, Gino
2001 *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
Frick, Robert W.
1985 Communicating emotion: The role of prosodic features. *Psychological Bulletin* 97 (4): 412–429.
Goffman, Erving
1974 *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. New York: Harper and Row.
Gumperz, John
1982 *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Halliday, Michael A.K.
1967 *Intonation and Grammar in British English*. The Hague: Mouton.
Knowles, Gerald
1984 Variable strategies in intonation. In *Intonation, accent and rhythm. Studies in Discourse Phonology*, Dafydd Gibbon and Helmut Richter (eds), 226–242. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
Kruger, Justin, Nicholas Epley, Jason Parker and Zhi-Wen Ng
2005 Egocentrism over e-mail: Can we communicate as well as we think? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 89 (6): 925–936.
Ladd, Robert
1996 *Intonational Phonology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Locher, Miriam and Derek Bousfield
2008 Introduction: Impoliteness and power in language. In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and in Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.), 1–13. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
Murray, Iain R. and John L. Arnott
1993 Toward the simulation of emotion in synthetic speech: A review of the literature on human vocal emotion. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 93 (2): 1097–1108.
O'Connor, J. D. and G. F. Arnold
1973 Reprint. *Intonation of colloquial English*. Bristol: Longman. Original edition 1961.
Ofuka, Etsuko, J. Denis McKeown, Mitch G. Waterman and Peter J. Roach
2000 Prosodic cues for rated politeness in Japanese speech. *Speech Communication* 32: 199–217.
Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik
1985 *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.
Roach, Peter
1991 *English Phonetics and Phonology: A Practical Course*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sadanobu, Toshiyuki
2004 A natural history of Japanese pressed voice. *Journal of the Phonetic Society of Japan* 8 (1): 29–44.

Scherer, Klaus R.
1974 Acoustic concomitants of emotional dimensions: Judging affect from synthesised tone sequences. In: Shirley Weitz (ed.) *Nonverbal Communication*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Scherer, Klaus R.
1986 Vocal affect expression: A review and a model for future research. *Psychological Bulletin* 99 (2): 143–165.

Shochi, Takaaki, Véronique Auberge and Albert Rilliard
2007 Cross-listening of Japanese, English and French social affect: About universals, false friends and unknown attitudes. *Proceedings of the 16th Congress of Phonetic Sciences at Saarbr cken, 6–10 August 2007*. Available at: http://www.icphs2007.de/conference/session16.html

Spencer-Oatey, Helen
2002 Managing rapport in talk: Using rapport sensitive incidents to explore the motivational concerns underlying the management of relations. *Journal of Pragmatics* 34 (5): 529–545.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen
2008 *Culturally Speaking: Managing Rapport through Talk across Cultures*. 2nd edition. London: Continuum.

Sperber, Dan and Deirdre Wilson
1995 *Relevance: Communication and Cognition.* 2nd edition. Oxford, UK/ Cambridge, USA: Blackwell.

Terkourafi, Marina
2007 Towards a unified theory of politeness, impoliteness, and rudeness. In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and in Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.), 45–74. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Trager, George L.
1958 Paralanguage: A first approximation. *Studies in Linguistics* 13: 1–12.

Watts, Richard J.
2003 *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Watts, Richard J.
2008 Rudeness, conceptual blending theory and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research* 4 (2): 289–317.

Wichmann, Anne
2000 *Intonation in Text and Discourse: Beginnings, Middles and Ends.* Harlow: (Longman) Pearson Education.

Zuraidah, Mohd D. and Gerry Knowles
2006 Prosody and turn-taking in Malay broadcast interviews. *Journal of Pragmatics* 38 (4): 490–512.

Chapter 3

The limits of politeness re-visited: Courtroom discourse as a case in point

Sandra Harris

1. Introduction

Over two decades ago, Robin Lakoff (1989) examined what seemed to her at that time "the limits of politeness", calling for the extension of politeness theory to discourse types beyond the interpersonal and informal situations which had up to then been its primary focus. She selected the courtroom as one of her two extended examples of institutional discourse, contending that as "perhaps our most public form of discourse", the very formality of what goes on linguistically in courtrooms "both creates and underscores its public nature" (1989: 111) along with its crucial social and political importance as a discourse site. Court discourse, for Lakoff, inherently necessitates a form of complex politeness strategies, i.e. a "textured web of politeness, non-politeness, and rudeness working as a whole" (1989: 120). Lakoff's article is both insightful and limited, lacking in analytical detail and containing only one rather bizarre anecdotal example of actual courtroom discourse, but posing two conclusions which point to issues that have become significant ones with regard to more recent developments in im/politeness theory and which I want to take up and explore further in this chapter: (1) that the analysis of discourse types in relationship to im/politeness must begin with an understanding of their function; and (2) that power and politeness are closely related in complex ways.

More than twenty years later, a considerable amount of im/politeness research has in the intervening period been devoted to a range of institutional settings (see Culpeper 1996, 2005; Spiers 1998; Perez de Ayala 2001; Harris 2001, 2003; Trinch; 2002; Harris, Grainger, and Mullany 2006, etc.). However, relatively few writers have followed Lakoff's lead in taking a closer look at the relevance of politeness to the discourse that takes place in courtrooms (but see Penman 1990; Berk-Seligson 1999; Kurzon 2001). Of particular interest and relevance is the even more recent work on theories of impoliteness, a number of which do focus on data from institutional discourse sites (e.g. Tracy 2008; Bousfield 2008; Bousfield and Locher 2008; Limberg 2008, etc.) and, especially, Kryk-Kastovsky (2006) and Archer (2008), whose research is concerned with impoliteness in historical (British) courtrooms. All of these writers have attempted to move on from and/or to modify significantly in various ways the seminal and hugely influential work on politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987), though most of them retain the concept of 'face' as central both to their theoretical models and their analyses.

The courtroom, whether historical or contemporary, is arguably one of the most significant of institutional sites which are inevitably associated with conflict, disagreement and the often irreconcilable goals of the primary participants. There is little doubt that under an adversarial legal system in particular, conflict between opposing 'sides' in court is systematic and legally sanctioned in that the prosecution and the defence must conduct their arguments and present their evidence in accordance with quite explicit courtroom conventions and norms, e.g., the examination of defendant/witnesses must take the form of interrogation sequences in which the lawyer is the questioner and the defendant/witness the respondent; judges are expected to address the jury; jury members must remain silent in the courtroom, etc. Participants come to court expecting conflict, disagreement and explicit accusations, though these expectations may also be differential, since many, if not most, witnesses will never have been in a court, and lawyers are, of course, courtroom professionals. Moreover, the consequences for the main participants are often serious ones, even potentially life-changing, and well beyond those in the majority of situations involving conflictive discourse, whether informal or institutional.

Recent theoretical work on impoliteness in particular has focussed on several relevant issues: (1) whether it is possible to have a context/activity type whereby verbal aggression because it is sanctioned becomes a norm for a given 'community of practice', i.e. 'systematic impoliteness' (Archer 2008: 181–182); and (2) whether what we are talking about in such contexts can usefully be labelled as 'impoliteness', especially as it is defined by recent face-based theories (Bousfield 2008, Culpeper 2008). Archer's suggestion is that we use the term 'verbal aggression' as a superstrategy which more accurately categorises a situation in which prosecutors are legally and contextually sanctioned to aggravate the face of witnesses. She proposes a reversion to Goffman's three-way division between intended, incidental and unintended face-threats, wherein 'impoliteness' becomes a sub-category of 'verbal aggression' and applicable only when the speaker intends to threaten the face of the addressee out of personal spite (not usually the case in court). Tracy (2008) also senses the inadequacy of the term 'impoliteness' as being 'too tame a descriptor for serious acts of face threat' (2008: 173) and proposes "reasonable hostility" as "a normative ideal to guide conduct in the talk-focused practice of school board meetings" (Tracy 2008: 170), where face-threatening acts are not only anticipated but play a positive and necessary role in the proceedings subject to certain conventions, i.e., they are "adorned with at least a piece or two of politeness jewelry" (2008: 187).

Tracy's observations are particularly relevant to courtroom discourse, where certain powerful interactants (lawyers, but not usually judges and never juries) are expected to be verbally aggressive and to aggravate the face of defendants and witnesses in the course of attempting to win a case. However, legal contexts are much more complex than this suggests and comprise a variety of different types of interaction, power relationships, goals, and pragmatic functions. All linguistic behaviour in court is not verbally aggressive, and what actually happens there reveals in interesting ways how cultural and social 'politeness norms' interact with the power oriented, hierarchical and prescriptive interactional roles of the major participants in a criminal trial and in accord with the legal and discourse conventions of the courtroom. There seem to be clear limits to the 'systematic impoliteness' of a courtroom, some of these imposed by the courtroom procedures themselves and others by the strategic considerations of the participants. To appear as incisive, tough, even aggressive, is nearly always regarded as an effective discourse strategy, especially for a prosecuting lawyer; to be perceived as gratuitously offensive, insulting (impolite) is almost certainly not seen as such.

In the light of the previous discussion and recent work on both politeness and impoliteness (the latter increasingly seen as a study in its own right), and using a range of contemporary data mainly from British criminal court cases, this chapter will explore the following three issues:

(1) The pervasive nature of certain linguistic features, e.g. the use of the lexemes 'please' and 'thank you', utterances which contain a high degree of mitigation, the use of address tokens and other forms which convey deference, etc. often associated with politeness, in courtroom discourse, along with the presence of equally pervasive features frequently identified as markers of impoliteness, e.g. repetitive and conducive questions, accusations, insinuations, sarcasm, threats, etc., the functions that these features serve and whether they can usefully be defined in terms of face-threatening or face-enhancing behaviour;

(2) The fact that a number of these features occur in the interrogation sequences which are the most crucial and lengthy part of a criminal trial, i.e. the presentation of evidence to the judge and jury through the questioning of defendants and witnesses, and the extent to which im/politeness plays a significant role in such sequences, particularly in defining the strategic differences between examination-in-chief and cross-examination;

(3) Whether face-oriented models of both polite and impolite linguistic behaviour which are based on other types of discourse and sets of data, such as those examined in Bousfield (2008) and Bousfield and Locher (2008), are the most helpful in understanding and explaining what constitutes im/politeness in court discourse, the multiple functions it serves and how various participants make use of and/or interpret it.

2. Pervasiveness and co-occurrence of features associated with both politeness and impoliteness in court

Though the strategic use of conducive questions, accusations, insinuations, threats, etc. in courtroom discourse have long been noted, these features were perhaps first explicitly associated with impoliteness (rudeness) in Lakoff's 1989 article on the limitations of politeness. Given the nature of the adversarial legal system and the crucial significance of the interrogation of witnesses as the primary means of presenting evidence to a jury, courtrooms are probably for most people associated with aggressive questioning and hostility. (Whether those same people would describe this verbal aggression as impoliteness is much more questionable.) That features associated with politeness are also pervasive in the courtroom has been much less frequently argued, if at all.

The following four extracts are taken from the trial of Harold Shipman, a high profile case in which a British doctor was convicted in January 2000 of murdering fifteen of his patients, with a further inquiry concluding that he may have murdered as many as 260 patients over the course of his long professional career. (See Haworth 2006, Newbury and Johnson 2006, and Coulthard and Johnson 2007 for further work on the Shipman case.) Transcripts A, B, C and D are extracts from Day 32 of the Shipman trial. Extracts B, C and D involve Shipman being questioned either by his own lawyer, Ms N Davies, QC in the case of examination-in-chief, or by the prosecuting lawyer, Mr R Henriques, QC in the case of cross-examination. Hence, for purposes of clarity, I have identified the two lawyers respectively as ND or

RH and the defendant merely as S. Extract A involves interaction between the Prosecuting Lawyer, R Henriques and the Judge, Mr Justice Forbes. (I have reproduced the official court transcripts as they appear on the internet version of the Shipman trial.)

Extract A: Day 32 of Shipman Trial

RH: R Henriques (prosecution lawyer)

JF: Mr Justice Forbes (judge)

RH: We may have some difficult news for your Lordship to accept, that we may have run out of witnesses. There is just a possibility that there is one witness we could conveniently call to avoid her coming on Monday but my Lord, if we just wait where we are, I will have an answer to that and if she is not at court then I am afraid to say we have proceeded more quickly this week than I had anticipated.

JF: Very well. We will wait for a moment.
(RH makes brief enquiries)

RH My Lord, it matters not. It was some house-keeping that can be attended to on some other future session in any event, so I am sorry we have to end now.

JF: Members of the jury, as you can readily imagine, programming the attendance of witnesses in a case like this is difficult and one does not want witnesses hanging about for a long time waiting to be called. Matters have moved slightly more quickly than was anticipated so it means you are going to have an afternoon off, not one of the ones I promised you. Do bear in mind the warning I gave you earlier at the beginning of this trial not to speak to anybody about this case or any aspect of it. Have a very pleasant weekend and I look forward to seeing you on Monday morning at 10.30. Please go with your usher.
(Members of the jury retire.)

JF: Mr Henriques, Miss Davies, it might be helpful if thought were given to the likely future progress of this trial and if we are ever in a position to keep the jury informed as to how matters are likely to proceed in the future I have no doubt they would be very grateful, as indeed would I. So if we could give some thought to it

RH: We will indeed.

JF: Thank you. 10.30 Monday.

This is an interesting situation which involves a less powerful prosecuting lawyer (RH) interacting with a more powerful judge (JF) while the jury and other members of the court look on. The situation is an awkward one in that the prosecution has misjudged the timing of witnesses and the chief prosecutor must inform the judge that while it is only lunchtime, there are no more witnesses who have been called to testify, and, as a consequence, the court will have to be adjourned with no afternoon session, obviously a waste of the court's time. RH anticipates the Judge's adverse reaction to this 'news', which clearly involves a face-threat both to the judge, who will have to let the jury go unexpectedly, and to the prosecutor himself, who is to blame and who must apprise the judge of what has happened. The language he uses is highly mitigating. First of all, he attempts to prepare for and reduce the face threat to the judge with a preface which is tentative both in terms of tense ("we may have", l. 1) and in the vague description of the substance which follows ("some difficult news for your Lordship to accept", l. 1) before stating the actual problem, ('that we may have run out of witnesses, l. 2) This is followed by RH offering a possible solution to the situation (another witness who can be called) followed by a justification which contains a further mitigating preface, i.e. "I'm afraid to say" + explanation (ll. 5, 6). After it transpires that there is in fact no further witness to call, RH issues what is both an apology and a confirmation of the 'difficult news' that the court session must come to an end. The language of this interchange is very formal, both in the syntax which RH uses ("My Lord, it matters not") and the highly deferential form of address, by title ("My Lord"). The power differential is re-enforced in that the forms of address are not reciprocal, and the judge addresses the two lawyers involved not according to their roles but merely as Mr Henriques and Miss Davies.

However, it is the response of the judge to the two lawyers which is most interesting in terms of the occurrence of features associated with politeness. As unarguably the most powerful member of the court and the immediate superior of the two lawyers, the judge has every right to be cross and to take the opportunity to engage in legally sanctioned face aggravation, given that the prosecutor, RH (and to some extent also the defence lawyer, ND) are clearly responsible for the situation whereby he, the judge, has to dismiss the jury inconveniently. What follows is a chastisement by a more powerful member of the court to less powerful ones, and it must certainly be the case from the response of RH that both he (and ND) can only interpret it as such. But the most notable and salient features of this chastisement are its high level of both implicitness and mitigation: (1) the judge waits until the jury leaves the room before saying anything to the two lawyers, so as not to cause them to lose face in front of an audience. Moreover, the account given to the jury by the judge does not apportion blame but re-enforces the explanation given by RH (ll. 5, 6), which the jury will have overheard; (2) the formality of the language of the judge is heightened by the use of formal address forms (Mr and Miss + last name) and the complexity of his syntax (ll. 24–29); (3) he does not continue his chastisement by addressing the two lawyers as 'you' but follows the direct address tokens with the use of the 'we' form which incorporates himself (l. 25, l. 28). Furthermore, he issues no overt recriminations but rather suggests "that it might be helpful if thought were given" etc, which he repeats incorporating himself in the final repetition; (4) the judge expresses what would be his own "gratitude" and that of the jury, as if what should happen in the future were not strictly speaking a clear professional obligation on the part of the two lawyers, and thanks them accordingly when they respond positively.

This is an interesting, and apparently, effective, use of certain linguistic features which are usually associated with politeness by an individual in a powerful institutional role in a face-threatening situation, which becomes instead face-saving, a long way from the shouting, use of taboo words and general humiliation of the less powerful by the powerful quoted in Bousfield (2008: Chapter 7) as revealed in several fly-on-the-wall documentaries in conjunction with an officer training army recruits and a celebrity chef with his trainee employees in a well-known restaurant. Nor do I think the highly mitigated forms used by the judge are intended to be sarcastic or merely 'mock' politeness, though there may be an element of the latter. However, RH does not seem to interpret them in such a way, though of course the judge's injunction that "thought be given" to the progress of the case in the future, despite the expression of mutuality, is meant to be taken seriously as the lawyers own responsibility, as they both undoubtedly recognise.

Even in interrogation sequences, the consistent use of 'please' and 'thank you' lexemes which are not apparently intended sarcastically or as 'mock' politeness is evident. For example,

Extract B: Cross-examination of defendant (S) by prosecutor (RH)

RH: At Donneybrook did you inform your partners that drugs had been posted through your letterbox?
S: They weren't addressed to me.
RH: <u>Please</u> answer the question. Did you inform your partners that drugs had been pushed through the letter box?
S: I am not quite sure what you are asking me.

RH: I think the question is clear. Please answer.
S: I have already said. (implied answer 'no')

In this extract, the lexeme 'please' occurs in conjunction with a repeated imperative to the defendant to answer the question, relating to how the drugs referred to in the case came to be in Dr Shipman's surgery, and it is evident that the defendant wishes to avoid producing a negative response, i.e. that he didn't inform his partners of the drugs having been posted through the letterbox. The use of 'please' by RH in this instance seems not an instance of sarcasm but rather to be meant as a signal that by pursuing the answer to this question the prosecutor does not wish to be taken as being deliberately impolite but as merely behaving in accordance with an institutional interactive norm which stipulates that it is not open to defendants/witnesses to decline to respond to a question put by a prosecuting lawyer.

Indeed, it is Shipman's own use of apologies and 'thank you' which comes closer to giving the appearance of mock politeness, as evidenced here in his interaction with the prosecuting lawyer, RH. However, since court transcripts contain no indication of prosodic features, any assumptions about intonation must be, at best, tentative ones.

RH: And do you say that each one of these patients must themselves must have received the drugs?
S: I am not – I don't understand the question. I do apologise.

And once again in the following instance, when the prosecutor is quoting from the court record of his (Shipman's) previous testimony:

RH: 'He admits that he was carrying the drug with him. There was no prescription issued in her name in relation to this diamorphine.' You see that, bottom of p.37?
S: Yes, thank you. (See Extract D, l. 17 for a further example.)

As I have suggested, the lexemes 'please' and 'thank you' consistently occur in most types of courtroom discourse in order to ensure that the face-aggravation of witnesses/defendants is not to be taken as deliberately insulting or personal to those being interrogated. Shipman's use of these same forms seems, once again in the absence of prosodic knowledge, a strategy to convey to the jury a sense of his own civility and apparent cooperation. He is perhaps not so much attempting to undermine the case of the prosecution as trying to emphasise his own position as a member of a respected profession, i.e. medical doctor.

3. Im/politeness in interrogating sequences

Since interrogating sequences are at the centre of any trial and the means by which evidence must be presented in court, it is not surprising that most research on legal discourse has focussed on them. Even Archer's (2008) recent work on historical courtrooms considers primarily extracts which involve some form of interrogation. A number of writers have analysed the prevalence, power and function of conducive questions in court (see Harris 1984; Woodbury 1984; Phillips 1987; Eades 1996, 2002, etc.), the ways that witnesses/defendants anticipate accusations (see Atkinson and Drew 1979; Drew 1992; Komter 1994, etc.) and the difficulty of resistance on the part of those questioned (Harris 1989; Stygall 1994). There is also a considerable literature on the role of narratives in courtroom discourse (see Harris 2001; Cotterill 2003; Harris 2005, etc.). However very little, if any, of this literature (other than Archer's) explicitly relates to im/politeness theory. As a consequence, it is interesting to look at two extracts from the Shipman Trial which involve the defendant being examined by his own lawyer (examination-in-chief) and the interrogation of the defendant by the prosecuting lawyer (cross-examination) from a significantly different perspective, that of im/politeness. The two extracts which follow are thus broadly representative examples of the examination-in-chief (Extract C) and the cross-examination (Extract D) of Harold Shipman:

Extract C: Day 32 of Shipman Trial (examination-in-chief)

ND: N Davies (lawyer for the defence)

S: Harold Shipman (defendant)

ND: When did you last see the deceased alive? 'About 30 minutes' What is that a reference to?
S: Before she died.
ND: Is that a reference to your visit to her home?
S: Yes. I mean, that could have been 60 minutes.
ND: '8(a)' (reference to pervious evidence) How soon after death did you see the body? About 4 hours?
S: Yes, it was after 6 o'clock when I got there.
ND: What examination of it did you make? You have there signed

'complete external.' You have told the Court by reason of the information given to you by the paramedics you did not carry out an examination?
S: No, it was just the modified look and checking who the patient was and having the asystole trace in front of me.
ND: Then we see that there you recite that in 'box 11' that the lady was found by a neighbour collapsed and I have to confess I can't actually read the first word of the second line there 'Neighbour found her?'
S: Neighbour found her collapsed and dead.
ND: And that is what you wrote and so certified on the next page, a Dr Fitton has completed form C. Can I ask this, prior to Dr Fitton's completion of form C did he raise with you any queries relating to the death of Pamela Hillier?
S: Dr Fitton isn't a doctor that I often use for a second part cremation. The undertakers who were handling the affair rang me and told me that Dr Fitton normally did the second part. I rang him, spoke to him, it seemed a long time because I took him back through the history. I explained what had happened on the day and he seemed content with that. I don't think he offered, sorry, I don't think he asked other questions.
ND: On the 9th February 1998 did you administer to Pamela Hillier morphine or diamorphine?
S: No I did not.
ND: On the 9th February 1998 did you murder Pamela Hillier?
S: No I did not.
ND: My Lord, that concludes the questioning……

Extract D: Day 32 of Shipman Trial (cross-examination of defendant)

RD: R Henriques (lawyer for the prosecution)

S: Harold Shipman (defendant)

RD: And then 'Renata Overton: This woman was a patient of the defendant. The records show that the defendant visited her on the 18th February 1994 when she was seriously ill with chest pain. After assessment the defendant administered 10 milligrams of diamorphine intravenously. He admits that he was carrying the drug with him. There was no prescription issued in her name in relation to this diamorphine.' You see that, bottom of page 3?
S: <u>Yes thank you.</u>
RD: Where did you get that diamorphine?

S: I got it out of my bag.
RD: Yes, where did you get the diamorphine that was in your bag?
S: I don't know.
RD: You had a stock, hadn't you?
S: No
RD: Well, if you hadn't got a stock how did you get it?
S: You mean how did it get into my bag?
RD: That is the meaning of my question.
S: Thank you. All I can assume is that the patient had given my drugs back and there was an ampoule of diamorphine in it and it all got thrown into the bag and that when I took the drugs out it got missed.
RD: A variation on the Arundale (reference to previous case) explanation, is that what you are saying?
S: I believe it is almost the same explanation.
RD: Well, it is a variation in the amount of drugs involved, isn't it?
S: In the mechanism of it being there it is the same.
RD: We will look at one more before our break at the conventional time. Would you look at the top of page 4. 'Mary Smith. This woman was a patient of the defendant. On 17th May 1994, 10, 100 milligram ampoules of diamorphine were dispensed in her name from the Norwest Co-op Pharmacy, Market Street, Hyde following the presentation of a prescription issued by the defendant. The only other record of her being prescribed morphine during 1994 was in the form of tablets. The diamorphine was never apparently administered. She never required a syringe driver.' Now there we have 1,000 milligrams of diamorphine. What happened to that diamorphine?
S: I have no idea.
RD: Finally, would you just please answer the question that I asked you a little while ago, that related to Marion Gilchrist, the only thing you had done wrong was not arranging for Mrs Grundy to be cremated. The question was what had you done wrong?
S: I had done nothing wrong.
RD: Why were you saying that to Mrs Gilchrist?
S: I put it to her as a black joke. At that time I obviously was under an enormous amount of pressure but I had intended it as a joke and I think she took it as a joke.
RD: But what was funny about that?
S: I am not being funny with you, sir, you can't dig up ashes.
RD: You cannot dig up ashes you said?
S: Yes.
RD: That was what was behind your thought process, wasn't it?

S: No.
RD: Has it crossed your mind that in fact you had successfully got away with the other 14 deaths we are looking at in this case?
S: I'm not aware that I have got away with anything.
RD: You had done, hadn't you, but for Mrs Grundy?
S: Since I didn't do any of this then the answer has to be no.
(End of this session)

In both of these extracts, the asymmetry in terms of the interactive roles of the participants (as questioner and respondent respectively) is a relatively clear one, though there is one point in each extract when either the lawyer (Extract C, ll. 15–18) or the defendant Extract D, l. 17) momentarily breaks the question–response sequencing to ask for a clarification. It is also clear in both extracts that it is the lawyer as questioner who has the power to initiate the topics and to control the progress of the underlying argument. In addition, both transcripts involve references to documentation which has been produced previously and submitted to the court, i.e. Shipman's notes and records kept on the various murder charges, along with his earlier testimony. This is significant, since both the defence and the prosecution lawyers incorporate this material into their questions as information specifically for confirmation (or denial) as a crucial part of the examination of the defendant and so that this previous documentation becomes re-incorporated into the trial itself and can be called to the attention of the jury as evidence.

However, as one would expect, there are some revealing and important differences between the examination-in-chief (Extract C) and the cross-examination (Extract D), particularly with regard to the relationship between politeness and power. Both lawyers attempt to maintain a high degree control over the witness, given their power as legally sanctioned interrogators, but since they clearly have conflicting goals and adversarial roles, their strategies are very different ones. This is most evident in the use of particular types of questions, and, especially in their coercive nature and intent. Though both lawyers use predominantly 'yes/no' question forms, the purpose and degree of coercion incorporated into these forms differs significantly.

Extract C relates to a situation in which Dr Shipman has visited the home of Pamela Hillier, who was sometime later (30 to 60 minutes) discovered by a neighbour "collapsed and dead", resulting in Dr Shipman being charged with her murder. ND, the defence lawyer, begins her examination of the defendant with a series of questions which are predominantly factual and relate to the previous testimony which he has given to the court. These are not questions which are face-threatening but which provide the defendant with the opportunity to elaborate on the details of his previous testimony and to clarify the circumstances of Pamela Hillier's death from his own point of view. Moreover, Dr Shipman is also given the chance to demonstrate his professional knowledge as a doctor (ll. 13–14) and to narrate at some length his version of events (ll. 24–30), including his association with another doctor (Dr Fitton), "who seemed content" with Shipman's version of what has taken place. It's also noticeable that ND poses her question in a mitigated and 'polite' form (l. 21) as "Can I ask this ..." rather than demanding an answer. The purpose of this type of questioning sequence is in fact face-enhancing, to enable Dr Shipman to present himself as a professional whose opinion and procedures are sanctioned and approved by other professionals, i.e. Dr Fitton. Having attempted thus to enhance his credibility, ND prepares for her final two questions which *are* face-threatening and relate to the charge of murder which is the basis of the trial. However, the form of these two final questions is not a coercive one (unlike the final questions of the prosecutor in Extract D). By asking overtly whether Dr Shipman has administered diamorphine (the cause of the victim's death) to Pamela Hiller followed by a question referring directly to the murder of the victim, ND provides Dr Shipman with a direct opportunity to deny both charges against him (Extract C, ll. 31–35). It's also likely that ND and Dr Shipman will have agreed on this form of questioning ahead of time and that his opportunity for both face-enhancement and an explicit denial of the charges against him will have been anticipated.

The cross examination of Dr Shipman is clearly a different matter. Though both lawyers use predominantly 'yes/no' question forms, the putting forward of a hostile proposition followed by a 'negative tag question' occurs only in the cross-examination (Extract D, see ll. 14, 26, 53 and 58) and is a highly coercive and face-aggravating form. As in Extract D, there are a series of repeated questions with regard to the location of the diamorphine (ll. 10, 12, 14 and 16) and the reference to an earlier question with regard to the "joke" which Shipman "related to Marion Gilchrist" concerning his failure to arrange for Mrs Grundy to be cremated (ll. 40–44). (The 'joke' relates to the fact that had Shipman arranged for Mrs Grundy to be cremated, her remains could not have been dug up and examined, producing clear evidence of diamorphine.) The questions of the prosecuting lawyer are a strategy aimed at leading Shipman to incriminate himself by agreeing with/confirming damaging propositions which contain evidence of his guilt. Indeed, the primary purpose of cross-examination is to convince the jury of the defendant's guilt by stating propositions which the defendant can be seen not to be able effectively to refute, undermining his credibility as a witness. However, the questioning of RH, though hostile and aggressive, is at the same time highly controlled, developed strategically, and both 'please' and 'thank you' co-occur with a high level of face aggravation, even here. Whether what happens in cross-examination, and in other types of courtroom discourse, can be most usefully described as 'impoliteness', or even face-aggravation, in the light of both the likely perception and use of that term by ordinary people (politeness1) and the more formal definitions proposed for proto-typical impoliteness in recent research, is something which will be considered presently in Sections 4 and 5.

4. Prototypical impoliteness in court discourse

Bousfield (2008: 72) in the first full-length book specifically on impoliteness has proposed a definition of what constitutes 'impoliteness' behaviour which retains a face-based theoretical approach but one which is much modified and updated (2008: 74, 95), owing more to Goffman (1967) than to the later work of Brown and Levinson (1987).

> I take impoliteness to be the broad opposite of politeness, in that, rather than seeking to mitigate face-threatening acts (FTAs), impoliteness constitutes the communication of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face-threatening acts (FTAs) which are purposefully delivered:
>
> i. Unmitigated, in contexts where mitigation is required, and/or,
>
> ii. With deliberate *aggression*, that is, with the face threat exacerabated, 'boosted', or maximised in some way to heighten the face damage inflicted.

Bousfield goes on to contend that the role of the addressee is crucial, in that "for impoliteness to be considered successful impoliteness, the intention of the speaker (or author) to 'offend' (threaten/damage face) must be understood by those in a receiver role" (2008: 72). Thus, Bousfield stresses not only that the speaker's intention must be to inflict gratuitous offense to the recipient's face but that this offensiveness be 'purposefully delivered' and clearly recognised by the hearer. For Bousfield, impoliteness cannot be unintentional or even incidental.

This definition differs significantly from Culpeper's (2005: 38) earlier version of impoliteness, which left open the issue of intention, i.e. impoliteness encompasses also the possibility that the hearer may perceive and/

or construe behaviour as intentionally face-attacking which was not so intended. Bousfield's definition poses serious problems when applied to courtroom discourse. If this definition describes prototypical impoliteness, then, as Archer also contends, such behaviour occurs only very rarely in a courtroom.

However, the following extract (E), taken from data recorded not in a criminal trial but rather in the Nottinghamshire County Magistrate Courts, is instructive and relevant to Bousfield's concept of prototypical impoliteness. This particular defendant (D) has been previously convicted of a motoring offense and given a fine by the court, which he has failed to pay; thus, he has been summoned back to court and, after his case is heard by three magistrates and a clerk of the court, he is ordered, once again, by the Chairman of the Magistrates to pay his fine of sixty pounds. The following interaction takes place immediately after the defendant (Mr H) has been ordered to pay his fine.

Extract E: Nottinghamshire County Magistrates Court

M: Chairman of the magistrates (all male)
C: Clerk of the court (a woman in her thirties)
D: Defendant (Mr H, a man in his forties)
U: Usher

(The three magistrates confer among themselves behind their elevated table.)

D: Does that [his fine] have to be paid in Derby or Nottingham
M: Just a moment (Magistrates continue to confer among themselves)
C: It has to be paid *here* – Mr H (The clerk is seated off to the side of the court.)
D: In Nottingham
C: To this court yes - the usher will give you a letter with the address
D: It can't be paid in Derby
C: I just said it has to be paid *here*
D: I heard you the first time – I was just querying if it was possible

(Magistrates now stop conferring among themselves.)

M: Yes – now Mr H had you got a question
D: I had
M: What was it
D: The very officious young lady managed to answer it quite sufficiently.

M: Hmm (2 second pause) I think you should realise that if you don't pay this fine off you'll be brought back here and uh the chances are that you'll go to prison for ninety days
D: There's fifty pounds there (Takes fifty pounds out of his pocket and throws it down)
M: Thank you
C: Um – make sure that Mr H – Usher perhaps you'll escort Mr H to the Fines Office to make sure that he pays his fifty pounds
D: I can fully assure you that my word is that if I pay the fine
M: *That's all* Mr H – thank you this afternoon (pause) and you've dropped something on the floor
D: Thank you very much (ironic tone of voice)

(Mr H leaves the courtroom with the usher)

The interaction which takes place in this extract is interesting from the perspective of im/politeness theory in a number of different ways. First of all, as is the case in all courtrooms, a magistrates' court involves a power hierarchy in terms of who is permitted to speak, when and to what purpose. The clerk of the court is less powerful than the magistrates, who are lay persons, even though she is a professional lawyer. Both the magistrate and the clerk are allowed to question the defendant, though it is the magistrate who takes the lead role and who conveys to the defendant any decisions of the court, which has been in this case the further order to pay his fine. In the interaction which follows the order being made, there is some confusion as to the purpose and intent of the defendant's question in l. 1. The defendant clearly regards his query as an 'information' question, whereas though the clerk provides the information (l. 4) she simultaneously emphasises its directive force. Thus, when the defendant asks for further confirmation of the information she has given (l. 9) the clerk responds again, and without any mitigating features, to re-enforce and reiterate the directive force of her initial response (l. 10). In his next utterance (l. 11) the defendant evaluates the response of the clerk (l. 10) as inappropriate/impolite and clarifies once more (l. 11) that his previous question was intended only as a genuine request for information.

According to Bousfield's definition, it is questionable whether the clerk's utterance (l. 10) would quality as prototypical impoliteness, since it's highly unlikely that she actually intends to be offensive to the defendant or to damage his face out of personal spite. But the defendant's response in l. 16 does markedly fall within the scope of Bousfield's definition, demonstrating that it is possible to be impolite by purposefully accusing someone else of impoliteness. In this utterance (l. 16) the defendant manages, without addressing her directly, to threaten the face of the clerk in several ways, all of which are calculated to undermine her professionalism and institutional role. First of all, he categorises her as “officious”, i.e. too forward in producing unhelpful information in an offensive/impolite manner; secondly, he refers to her as a “young lady”, foregrounding both her age and gender inappropriately in a professional context where they are not relevant. His tone of voice is an ironic one, which reverses the meaning of her answering his question “quite sufficiently” It’s also interesting that the clerk doesn’t respond directly to the defendant’s face-attack, though she is clearly more powerful than he is, and the magistrate, appearing to be somewhat nonplussed (l. 18–20), repeats the order which he has issued to the defendant earlier in the session in a more forceful manner. The clerk now does implicitly return the ‘impoliteness’ by instructing the usher to escort the defendant (l. 24–25) – who recognises her intention to insult him in his further response (l. 26) – to the Fines Office, which is not the usual procedure and thus suggests that the defendant is not trustworthy. It’s also noteworthy that the two ‘thank you’ lexemes, used by the magistrate to attempt to recover some level of civility and order in the court, (l. 23, 27) are undermined by the defendant who uses the same form with deliberately ironic intonation (l. 29).

However, it’s as well to bear in mind that this extract represents a highly unusual interactional exchange and that at least in the magistrates courts, no similar instance occurs in my data base, which includes five magistrates presiding over the cases of twenty-six defendants. What particularly marks this interaction as out of the ordinary is that it is the defendant, the least powerful participant and one who does not occupy a professional institutional role, who challenges overtly what he considers to be the ‘impoliteness’ of the clerk, who does occupy such a role. This is a very risky enterprise for a defendant at the very least, since it’s clear that the magistrates can exercise a very real power over the former which goes well beyond interactive retaliation, and there is much greater scope for individual action in magistrates’ courts, since defendants are not represented in these courts by lawyers. As it is, the magistrate not only repeats his order that the defendant must pay his fine but adds the threat of prison, qualified by the use of the mitigating phrase “the chances are ...” etc, since he has not previously given the defendant a suspended sentence. The type of prototypical impoliteness which this particular exchange represents is never likely to happen in a criminal trial, and its significance (and risk for the defendant) is also lessened by the fact that it occurs in relationship to a procedural matter (*where* the fine is to be paid) rather than one which relates to the substance of the case. (Lakoff argues that the single discursive anecdote which she quotes in her 1989 article is also markedly out of the ordinary, representing as it does the opposite situation, whereby a prosecutor deliberately and spitefully goads and insults a defendant.) Nevertheless, Extract E represents a genuine instance, if one that only very rarely occurs, which the addressee (the clerk) might credibly have reported on what took place as 'the defendant in that case was very rude/ impolite to me' Moreover, despite Eelen's (2001) characterisation of im/ politeness as being 'evaluative' as well as argumentative and discursive, it is relatively unusual in most contexts for hearers to display their assessments of im/politeness so overtly, in this case forcing the magistrate to exercise his power explicitly and bring to an end any possibility of further interactive negotiation with a threat.

5. Face-oriented models of im/politeness theory and court discourse: Some concluding thoughts

This brings me to the third issue which this paper has set out to address, i.e. how useful are face-oriented theories in enabling us to understand and analyse courtroom discourse. As I suggested earlier, especially since the publication of Brown and Levinson's seminal work in 1987, face-based theories have dominated work on politeness, and more recently, also impoliteness. Though the criticisms of Brown and Levinson have been numerous, perceptive and fruitful in encouraging further research, much of it cross-cultural, and devising more sensitive models of im/politeness, even writers such as Mills (2003) and Watts (2003), who represent a paradigm shift away from Brown and Levinson and towards discourse and hearer oriented models of im/politeness, are still reliant on face as a dominating concept, though this does not apply to Eelen himself, who makes relatively little reference to face in his ground-breaking critique of politeness theories. Recent work on impoliteness (Bousfield 2008 and Bousfield and Locher 2008), though also extensively and insightfully critical of Brown and Levinson, mainly advocates a return to Goffman's (1967) original work on face as a useful starting point for future work on impoliteness.

Though it is not possible to review here all the arguments which have been put forward for the nature and importance of face theory in relationship to im/politeness, it's interesting to note that in their introduction to a special issue on '*Face in Interaction*' in the *Journal of Pragmatics* Haugh and Bargiela-Chiappini (2010: 2073) as the editors argue that what may now actually be fuelling a number of "endless", and by implication unresolvable, "controversies [in conjunction with im/politeness theory] is the continued conflation of politeness with face" They go on to argue that "while acknowledging the important role face plays in politeness and impoliteness research, it is suggested that the time has come for face to be theorized on its own terms" I would suggest that the same applies to im/politeness theories, and while not denying the crucial importance of face as it relates to im/politeness, the over-dominance of face-based theories in im/politeness research has sometimes made it more difficult for other kinds of insights to emerge, and has resulted in a search (which may also be endless) for new face-based definitions of im/politeness and a terminology that will do justice to interaction/discourse which takes place in very different types of contexts, whether inter-cultural, institutional or interpersonal. (For example, Culpeper (2008) and Terkourafi (2008, in the same volume) both produce convincing and well-reasoned arguments for differentiating between the terms 'impoliteness' and 'rudeness' but reach opposite conclusions.)

This search for an adequate terminology has intensified with recent work on impoliteness, and is particularly relevant to what I have been arguing with regard to courtroom discourse. This is not to say that face-based theories are not significant as a way of defining and identifying im/politeness in interaction, and indeed Terkourafi (2008: 47) is probably right when she maintains that "the use of language can never be innocent with respect to face considerations" in any kind of interaction. But if we go back to Lakoff's contention that court discourse is probably our most public form of discourse (1989: 111), then what happens in court is the crucial role of discourse in eliciting, establishing, presenting, and ultimately assessing the validity of evidence, which is both the basis of the legal process and perhaps the most important element in upholding the rule of law so essential to our democratic values. The importance of "evidence underlies the whole practice of law in every field of litigation" and "is not the product of theory but rather of the need to solve practical problems in trials" (Murphy 2003: 21), the primary site where 'evidence' must be interactively elicited, established, disputed, evaluated, etc. As Murphy argues, a judicial trial cannot be a search for the ultimate truth of past events but an adversarial contest in order "to establish that a version of what occurred has an acceptable probability of being correct" (2003: 4) in the judgement of a jury. Although it necessarily involves conflicting interests, oppositional goals and verbal aggression, court discourse is surely in the end a way of resolving conflict and aggression within the wider social order, with an appeals procedure offering the ultimate closure. It provides a rule-bound and controlled set of institutional norms for the exercise of power in orderly ways within a framework of civility, which those who participate can and must recognise as such. Conventional features associated with politeness are a crucial component of this framework of order and civility, as

I've argued, and impoliteness, defined as intentional, gratuitously insulting and purposefully offensive behaviour, only very rarely occurs and indeed is probably counter-productive as a strategy in the courtroom to convince anyone of anything.

As Lakoff (1989) also reminds us, the understanding of particular types of discourse must begin with an understanding of their function. To engage in an adversarial role successfully requires strategic discourse, not in the Brown and Levinson (1987) sense of the strategic avoidance of Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) but strategies for eliciting evidence from witnesses in such a way as to persuade a jury of their guilt or innocence. Clearly, aspects of face enhancement and face threat are components of this process, but they are not in this context, even interactively, ends in themselves or the primary goal of the interrogative sequences which are probably the most crucial in the presentation of evidence in any trial. To reduce the verbal aggression of cross-examination (and, in the case of the Shipman trial, the charge of murder) to threatening the face of the defendant, or being rude/impolite to him seems both counter-intuitive and a mismatch of terminology (see also Harris, Grainger, and Mullany 2006 for a similar argument with reference to a different institutional context and Limberg, 2008, on threats in police/suspect interaction). Though the face-enhancement of a witness/defendant is frequently evident in examination-in-chief (Extract C), once again the enhancement of the defendant's face is a strategic part of the larger goal of proving the defendant's innocence, not an end in itself. Though there are undoubtedly many situations where face threats and face enhancement *are* the primary goals and/or ends in themselves, court discourse, along with most other forms of institutional discourse, is not one of them.

Bargiela-Chiappini (2003), one of the first linguists interested in im/politeness theory to suggest a retreat from Brown and Levinson's version of face and a return to Goffman, concludes her article by arguing that "the normative nature of politeness rules feeds on the moral order within which encounters take place and the ontology of which tends to be either individualistic or communitarian" and that the roots of face-based im/politeness "go deep into the history and moral constitution of a society" (2003: 1467). One might do well to take this into account, especially when attempting to understand the role and nature of institutional discourse and particularly in the courtroom. Face-based theories often seem to have an inherent tendency, probably inevitable given the nature of face itself as a defining concept, to reduce too much in different interactive contexts to the interests of the Self as an individual, despite the trenchant and widespread criticism of the work of Brown and Levinson on precisely these grounds. To examine courtroom interaction within a wider moral and social framework, with deep roots in history, may be a necessary corrective, along with a recognition of its multi-functionalism as a discourse type. Indeed, that certain salient features of courtroom discourse, such as interrogating sequences, are clearly present and recognisable in historical courtrooms over many centuries provides remarkable 'evidence' of their durability and functionality, as well as heightening our interest as to how courtrooms construct an apparent framework of civility and controlled verbal aggression which must be taken into account when deciding precisely how and where we define 'the limits of politeness'

References

Archer, Dawn
2008 Verbal aggression and impoliteness: Related or synonymous? In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds), 181–207. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Atkinson, J. Maxwell and Paul Drew
1979 *Order in Court: The Organisation of Verbal Interaction in Judicial Settings*. London: Macmillan

Bargiela-Chiappini, Francesca
2003 Face and politeness: New (insights) for (old) concepts. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1452–1469.

Berk-Seligson, Susan
1999 The impact of court interpreting on the coerciveness of leading questions. *International Journal of Speech, Language and the Law* 6: 30–56.

Bousfield, Derek
2008 *Impoliteness in Interaction*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Bousfield, Derek and Miriam Locher
2008 *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Brown, Penelope and Stephen C. Levinson
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cotterill, Janet
2003 *Language and Power in Court: A Linguistic Analysis of the O J Simpson Trial*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Coulthard, Malcolm and Alison Johnson
2007 *An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics: Language in Evidence*. London: Routledge.

Culpeper, Jonathan
1996 Towards an anatomy of impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 25 (3): 349–367.

Culpeper, Jonathan
2005 Impoliteness and 'The Weakest Link'. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 35–72.

Culpeper, Jonathan
2008 Reflections on impoliteness, relational work and power. In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds), 17–43. Berlin/ New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Drew, Paul
1992 Contested evidence in courtroom cross-examination: the case of a trial for rape. In *Talk at Work*, Paul Drew and John Heritage (eds), 470–520. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eades, Diana
1996 Verbatim courtroom transcripts and discourse analysis. In *Recent Developments in Forensic Linguistics*, Hannes Kniffka, Susan Blackwell and Malcolm Coulthard (eds.), 241–254. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Eades, Diana
2002 Evidence given in unequivocal terms: Gaining consent of aboriginal young people in court. In *Language in the Legal Process*, Janet Cotterill (ed.), 162–179. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Eelen, Gino
2001 *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St Jerome.

Goffman, Erving
1967 *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. Allen Lane: Penguin Press.

Harris, Sandra
1984 Questions as a mode of control in magistrates' courts. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 49: 5–28.

Harris, Sandra
1989 Defendant resistance to power and control in court, In *Working with Language: A Multidisciplinary Consideration of Language in Use in Work Contexts*, Hywel Coleman (ed.), 131–164. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Harris, Sandra
2001 Fragmented narratives and multiple tellers: Witness and defendant accounts in trials. *Discourse Studies*, 3 (1): 53–74.

Harris, Sandra
2003 Politeness and power: Making and responding to 'requests' in institutional settings. *Text* 23 (1): 27–52.

Harris, Sandra
2005 Telling stories and giving evidence: The hybridisation of narrative and non-narrative modes of discourse in a sexual assault trial. In *The Sociolinguistics of Narrative*, Joanna Thornborrow and Jennifer Coates (eds), 215–238. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Harris, Sandra, Karen Grainger and Louise Mullany
2006 The pragmatics of political apologies. *Discourse & Society* 17 (6): 715–737.

Haworth, Kate
2006 The dynamics of power and resistance in police interview discourse. *Discourse & Society* 17 (6): 739–760.

Haugh, Michael and Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini
2010 Face in interaction (editorial introduction). *Journal of Pragmatics*. 42 (8): 2073–2077.

Komter, Martha
1994 Accusations and defences in courtroom interaction. *Discourse & Society*: 5 (2): 165–187.

Kryk-Kastovsky, Barbara
2006 Impoliteness in Early Modern English courtroom discourse. *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 7 (2): 213–243.

Kurzon, Dennis
2001 The politeness of judges: American and English judicial behaviour. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33 (1): 61–85

Lakoff, Robin
1989 The limits of politeness: Therapeutic and courtroom discourse. *Multilingua* 8 (2–3): 101–129.

Limberg, Holger
2008 Threats in conflict talk: Impoliteness and manipulation. In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice,* Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds), 155–179. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Mills, Sara
2003 *Gender and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Murphy, Peter
2003 *Murphy on Evidence*. 8th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Newbury, Phillip and Alison Johnson
2006 Suspects' resistance to constraining and coercive questioning strategies in the police interview. *International Journal of Speech, Language and the Law* 13 (2): 213–240.

Penman, Robyn
1990 Facework and politeness: Multiple goals in courtroom discourse. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 9 (1–2): 15–39.

Perez de Ayala, Soledad
2001 FTAs and Erskine May: Conflicting needs? – Politeness in Question Time. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33 (2): 143–170.
Phillips, Susan
1987 The social organisation of questions and answers in courtroom discourse. In *Power through Discourse*, Leah Kedar (ed), 83–113. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
Spiers, Judith
1998 The use of facework and politeness theory. *Qualitative Health Research* 8 (1): 25–47.
Stygall, Gail
1994 *Trial Language: Differential Discourse Processing and Discourse Formations.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
Terkourafi, Marina
2008 Toward a unified theory of politeness, impoliteness and rudeness. In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds), 45–75. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
Tracy, Karen
2008 'Reasonable hostility': Situation-appropriate face-attack. *Journal of Politeness Research* 4 (2): 169–192.
Trinch, Sharon
2002 The advocate as gatekeeper: The limits of politeness in protective order interviews with Latina survivors of domestic abuse. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5 (4): 475–506.
Watts, Richard
2003 *Politeness.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Woodbury, Hanni
1984 The strategic use of questions in court. *Semiotica* 48: 197–228.

Chapter 4

"No, like proper north": Re-drawing boundaries in an emergent community of practice

Jodie Clark

1. Introduction

A key component in approaches to politeness research that have been called 'discursive' or 'post-modern' is the distinction – first proposed by Eelen (2001) – between first- and second-order politeness (politeness1 and politeness2). The idea is that lay notions of politeness (first-order politeness or politeness1) differ significantly from the 'scientific' study of politeness (second-order politeness or politeness2) and that the focus of politeness research should be on "the discursive struggle over politeness1" (Watts 2003: 9).

While the politeness1/politeness2 dichotomy is most frequently used to codify a shift in methodology (from 'top-down' theoretical models to 'bottom-up' empirical investigations), I would argue that we can understand this distinction as significant within lay conceptualisations of social norms. My position is perhaps best understood with reference to Bargiela-Chiappini's work, which advocates in favour of "widen[ing] and deepen[ing] Watts et al.'s [1992] definition of 'second-order politeness'" (2003: 1465). While Brown and Levinson's model of politeness2, for instance, may have very limited value as a top-down theoretical approach to politeness as a sociological concept, it has potential value, Bargiela-Chiappini suggests, for the perspective it offers on the *moral* order of society, or at least the moral order of "'Western' societies. Second-order politeness, she argues, "emerges as more than pragma-linguistic behaviour. Its roots go deep into the history and moral constitution of a society" (Bargiela-Chiappini 2003: 1467).

The moral order that Brown and Levinson's model highlights for Bargiela-Chiappini is an individualistic one, based on an interpretation of the concept of 'face' that highlights strategy, rationality and the sanctity of the individual. Their model, she argues, represents a concern in "the so-called Western societies … for individual rights, i.e. what is owed to the individual, whereas in many non-Western societies, normative or indexical politeness signals a concern for duty, what is owed to the group" (Bargiela-Chiappini 2003: 1466). Their model can be read as a set of normative principles that can be understood as "the manifestation of an individualistic ontology, as opposed to a 'communitarian ontology' that rests on a group-based society" (Bargiela-Chiappini 2003: 1466).

There are many ways, I would argue, in which discursive approaches to politeness would benefit from the exploration of politeness2, defined in Bargiela-Chiappini's terms as a "moral order". Consider Watts's claim that "what we should be doing in the study of social interaction ... is showing how our lay notions of social behaviour, as they are struggled over discursively by participants in social interaction, are constitutive of that behaviour" (2003: 11). The investigation of discursive struggles over politeness1 indeed offers a useful illustration of the instability of politeness as a concept. However, it is not necessarily the case that it is the struggles themselves that *constitute* norms of social behaviour. If we take Bargiela-Chiappini's argument seriously we might theorise that an 'individualistic ontology' – respect for the individual – is a key underlying principle in struggles over politeness in the Western world. In this scenario, discursive struggles over politeness1 would presuppose a more fundamental cultural priority – the sanctity of the individual – and thus could not be seen to be constitutive of that priority. In other words, we might understand discursive struggles over politeness1 to be sustained by more fundamental principles, such as an individualistic moral order. If we understand this moral order as a form of politeness2, then both first- and second-order politeness become lay conceptualisations. Politeness2 would be understood not as a "linguistic, scientific concept" (Eelen 2001: 30), but as an underlying set of lay concerns in which struggles over politeness1 are situated.

There are significant problems, however, that arise with the possibility of understanding politeness2 as a lay conceptualisation and opening up discursive approaches to the exploration of politeness2. Most importantly, Bargiela-Chiappini's notion of the 'moral order' is reliant upon an East-West division; these labels she herself is "dissatisfied with" because they are overly vague descriptions of "quite distinct and complex national realities" (2003: 1455). The problem in my view is not so much with the imperfections of the terms 'East' and 'West', but rather that in making such a distinction researchers run the risk of prioritising the norms rather than the exceptions, thus reifying a researcher-imposed East-West divide. In addition, because most politeness research is based on a purportedly 'Western' model, there is the danger of seeing 'non-Western' cultures or groups as 'other'

Would it be possible to theorise in terms of a lay conceptualisation of politeness2 – of some sort of moral order that underlies the struggle over politeness1 – without relying upon the presupposition of a Western/non-Western, individualistic/communitarian divide? I propose that we begin with the (necessarily vague) axiom that politeness rituals are governed both by a respect for *something* and by the implicit risk that this *something* can be damaged. If we call this something 'face', then it is important that the term is not exclusively linked to individuals.

The idea that the term 'face' is not merely an individualistic notion is not a new one, even in research on 'Western' cultures. Culpeper's analysis of the interaction between a sergeant and a private in the American army shows that the sergeant can successfully attack the private's social roles, including her role as an American or as a soldier. As Culpeper explains, "The notion of face is not confined to the immediate properties of the self, but can be invested in a wide range of phenomena such as one's family, job, nationality" (1996: 361). The problem here is that the interaction is nonetheless interpreted in individualistic terms: one individual (the sergeant) is attacking the face of another individual (the private). Neither is the problem resolved by making reference to 'non-Western' notions of face, instructive though they are. Consider Matsumoto's interpretation of face loss in Japanese society, which she contrasts with Brown and Levinson's model: "What is of paramount concern to a Japanese is not his/her own territory, but the position in relation to the others in the group and his/her acceptance by those others. Loss of face is associated with the perception by others that one has not comprehended and acknowledged the structure and hierarchy of the group" (Matsumoto 1988: 405). Such a conceptualisation maintains the link between face and the individual, although the individual member of Japanese culture here is understood to prioritise different values than the individuals Brown and Levinson describe.

How might we understand face, then, if we are not to understand it as necessarily linked to individuals? I propose that we understand face as a boundary formed around different levels of social structure, with the individual as one (and only one) of these structures. According to this perspective, the *something* that politeness2 requires us to respect is social structure itself. However, because boundaries around levels of social structure can be negotiated, resisted and re-drawn, the metaphor allows us to conceptualise different cultural configurations, which do not necessarily correspond to national boundaries or an imagined East/West divide. My claim is that it provides a productive means of exploring social practice that relies on neither an atomistic conception of the individual nor a view of social structure as necessarily stable or permanent (see Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 21–23).

To summarise, my position is that politeness2 should be understood as a moral compulsion to respect the boundaries around different levels of social structure – with the recognition that these boundaries represent a site of continual re-negotiation and struggle. Under this conception, there is scope in discursive approaches to politeness not only for the empirical investigation of discursive struggle over politeness1, but also for the empirical investigation of discursive struggle over politeness2. This chapter is one such investigation. Drawing upon the communities of practice model, it examines how the boundaries that demarcate 'individuals' and the 'community' shift as membership in that community changes.

2. Individuals and Communities of Practice: Two levels of social structure

The term 'community of practice' was first introduced in Lave and Wenger's (1991) anthropological study of 'situated learning'. In this work they advance their claim that learning is best understood not as the individual acquisition of objective knowledge, but rather as a set of processes by which learners engage – to greater or lesser degrees – in local meaning-making practices. Lave and Wenger argue that learning is a matter of *identity* and *membership* – the quality and quantity of what individuals learn is a function of their level of engagement with a community, which in turn is linked to the extent to which their sense of identity is situated within the community and its practices.

The community of practice model has offered a number of avenues for exploring the complexities of language, gender, politeness and interaction (see, for instance Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992; Bucholtz 1999; Eckert 2000; Mills 2003b; Mullany 2006; Moore 2007). However, Davies (2005) points out that there remain significant problems with the construct and how it has been used in empirical language research. The model suggests that full membership in a community of practice requires individuals to have access to community artefacts (phonological variables, clothing styles, gestures, etc.), their signification, and the competence to use them appropriately. The model also implies, Davies argues, that membership is a matter of choice. However, Davies makes the point that for membership truly to be a matter of individual choice, the signification of the artefacts would have to be transparent, and all potential members would have access to these artefacts and a safe environment in which to learn how to use them competently. While this condition seems to be in operation in the communities Lave and Wenger (1991) discuss, Davies argues, Eckert's (2000) and Bucholtz's (1999) studies of communities in American high schools depict a different state of affairs. Membership in these communities is a matter of gatekeeping and hierarchy; access to the signification of artefacts and the opportunity to engage in what Lave and Wenger (1991) call "legitimate peripheral participation" are restricted in ways that are not predicted or explained sufficiently by the communities of practice model. Davies remarks: "If we want to study the workings of communities, then it is not just the physical manifestations we need to investigate, but also a more detailed and structured account of how access and acceptance is managed" (Davies 2005: 573).

My own investigation aims to address Davies's critique by suggesting a slightly different metaphor for the community of practice. Rather than thinking of the communities as describable in terms of their artefacts, I propose that researchers conceive of social interaction in terms of different levels of social structure with different boundaries. In this view the community of practice would be understood as one level of social structure, whose identity is determined by its boundaries and the 'artefacts' that fall within those boundaries. The individual would be understood as another level of social structure, whose identity is also determined by boundaries and the 'artefacts' that fall within them. Artefacts would be understood not only as observable practices or behaviours or "physical manifestations" (Davies 2005: 573) but also as concepts, ideas, perspectives, points of view, etc. To examine "how access and acceptance are managed" (Davies 2005: 573) would be to investigate the complex and nuanced interaction of these two levels of structure, taking into account not only strategic action and constraint, but also the less rational dimensions of facework, such as emotional investment and ritual.

3. Methodology

3.1. Ethnographic fieldwork

I have been making the case that defining face as a boundary drawn around levels of social structure is beneficial to communities of practice research because it allows for a nuanced understanding of how these levels of structure interact. It offers us a new metaphor for conceiving of membership in a community. Rather than thinking of individuals as 'joining' communities of practice or of communities as mediating membership through acceptance or rejection of individuals, we might instead view membership in terms of where the boundaries around the individual and the community are drawn, and how those boundaries change. We might also consider how levels of social structure other than individual and community might interact with individual and community boundaries. For the empirical investigator the challenge is to design a research project that takes into account these various levels of social structure and has the potential to capture those moments in which the boundaries between them shift.

My approach to this challenge has been to conduct an ethnographic study of one of the women's field hockey teams at a university in the UK's Midlands primarily known for its commitment to sport, sport science and sport technology. Studying a sports team at a university offers three distinct advantages to a research exploring shifting boundaries of social structure. First, it is a community in which membership is guaranteed to change at least once a year with the intake of new students. Interactions among new members and between new and old members at the beginning of the academic year (and, simultaneously, the beginning of the hockey season) provide a productive starting point for the investigation of how new members' attitudes change as they gradually become more invested and ensconced in the team.

A second benefit of studying this community has to do with the all-encompassing nature of high-level university sport and the effect this is likely to have on newcomers. The new team members in my study are all first-year university students (freshers) who moved from their family homes to catered halls of residence on the campus. Their lives thus have many of the attributes of individuals who are confined to what Goffman (1961) calls "total institutions" Goffman explains the term as follows: "A basic social arrangement in modern society is that the individual tends to sleep, play, and work in different places, with different co-participants, under different authorities, and without an overall rational plan. The central feature of total institutions can be described as a breakdown of the barriers ordinarily separating these three spheres of life" (1961: 17). To my mind, by entering a campus-based existence and being surrounding by new people with whom they study, socialise and play hockey, the newcomers to this community of practice would experience striking changes to and consolidation of the "three spheres" of life Goffman identifies: sleep, play and work. Their sense of social structure and their place in this new environment is likely to be at issue, then, in their interactions with other community members, and analysis of these interactions is thus likely to offer inroads into an investigation of shifting boundaries.

A final advantage of investigating a community situated within a "total institution" such as a campus university, whose practices saturate members' lives on a number of different dimensions, is that some of the "interaction rituals" (Goffman 1967) will be encoded within the community's set of customs. Many university sports clubs in the U.K., like fraternities and sororities in American colleges and universities, observe some form of initiation or hazing ritual as a means of formally designating an individual's transition from newcomer to fully fledged community member (for some media coverage of such events, see de Bruxelles 2008 and Sutton 2008). The hockey team that I studied organises an annual initiation ceremony toward the beginning of each academic year, consisting of an evening of drinking games and challenges held in the student union building. The status differential of old and new members is marked by fancy dress obligations: in the year of my study, new members were required to dress as jungle animals and old members as park rangers (examples from other years include parrots/pirates and babies/grannies). Formalised rituals such as these, which mark participants' shifting levels of membership, serve as easily identifiable benchmarks against which researchers can position analyses of the more subtle ways in which these transitions occur in interaction.

To conduct the ethnographic fieldwork I observed and took part in, when possible, community practices such as matches, training sessions and social events for the duration of one academic year. I made recordings of interactions among groups of three or four participants at various times in the year at evening meals I held in my on-campus flat.

My analysis focuses on extracts from interactions recorded during two evenings. The first interaction takes place among three newcomers, whose pseudonyms are Ally, Chrissy and Sammy, at the beginning of the academic year prior to the team's initiation event. A good deal of their conversation is oriented to their pre-university lives, and in the extract I have chosen to investigate their conflicting notions of social structure seem to be very much at issue.

The second conversation takes place after initiation. In the extract I have selected, newcomer Ally is talking to two 'old-timer' team members, whose pseudonyms are Flicka and Ginge. The extract is valuable, in my mind, for two reasons. First, it allows for a discussion of how boundaries can change in relation to an individual; my claim is that there is evidence in this extract of how Ally's conceptions of her individuality are changing in relation to her sense of her position within the community of practice. Second, it offers insight into where the boundaries around the community of practice are drawn such that some newcomers are accepted within it, while others remain on the margins.

The approach I have described thus far requires a means of identifying where participants in an interaction understand the boundaries of the various levels of social structure to be drawn. The methodology I propose is to draw inferences, based on participants' utterances, about what attitudes, perspectives, priorities, etc. they communicate in their interactions. Having identified some of these perspectives, it will then be possible to identify whether these are in harmony or in conflict with other attitudes, perspectives and priorities. In my view, Sperber and Wilson's (1995) relevance theory provides a useful framework for that purpose.

3.2. A relevance theoretical methodology

Although the benefits of a relevance theoretical methodology to politeness research have been touched on by Watts (2003) and Mills (2003a), the productive possibilities of the model to the analysis of interaction have not yet, to my mind, been fully explored. In a comprehensive essay that outlines the issues of drawing upon relevance theory as a pragmatic alternative to the Gricean model on which Brown and Levinson's (1987) account is dependent, Christie (2007) draws attention to two promising directions politeness research might take. First, the adoption of a relevance theoretical framework would lead to "a focus on *the process* of meaning generation" (Christie 2007: 292; emphasis in original). As she explains:

> such a model would require an approach to politeness that begins from the assumption that utterance meaning is not a given. Although, inevitably, an analyst starts off from an interpretation, it is therefore down to him or her to make a case that would justify that interpretation by providing evidence that would show how a particular linguistic form might trigger a hearer to access a particular set of contextual assumptions, and how these assumptions in turn might generate one set of explicatures rather than another. (2007: 292)

As Christie makes clear here, the instability of utterance meaning at both explicit and implicit levels of communication would be the starting point for any analyst using a relevance theoretical methodology. The first question such an analyst might ask, then, is not what strategies a given participant is using to communicate something, but rather what it is that is being communicated, and in what context(s) such an interpretation is possible.

Consider the following exchange between two first-year members of the field hockey team, who seem to be expressing differences of opinion on where the line between the 'North' and 'South' of England is drawn.

[1]

1	Chrissy:	Midlands isn't northern ((laughs quietly))
2	Ally:	Oh it is for me, [like]
3	Chrissy:	[((laughs))]
4	Ally:	(1.1) I've been down south all my life, like

A focus on strategy here might orient to the ways in which Ally mitigates the potential face threat of disagreeing with Chrissy on line 2. It might draw attention to, for instance, linguistic features such as the hedges "oh" and "like" in line 2, conversation features such as the pause in line 4, and perhaps her attempt to frame her claim subjectively as a matter of personal preference ("it is *for me*") in line 2. A focus on the processes of utterance interpretation, on the other hand, brings to the fore a different set of questions, some of which might include: What is Ally's utterance in line 2 communicating? In what context does such an interpretation achieve relevance?

To simplify the relevance-theoretical process of meaning interpretation, I would make the case that, after enrichment and disambiguation, Ally's utterance generates the explicature: *The Midlands of England is the North of England for Ally.* This explicature only achieves relevance, I would argue, if interpreted within a context in which the 'North' and 'South' of England are deictic – relative to the geographic provenance of the speaker. Bringing this assumption (or, to use Wilson and Sperber's terminology, "implicated premise" (2002: 261)) to the fore is useful because it draws our attention not to Ally's attempt at mitigation, but rather to the contentiousness of her utterance. To interpret it requires accessing a premise that Chrissy probably does not share, especially if her conception of the North and South of England is that these terms describe objective geographic coordinates. I discuss the implications of these possibilities in more detail below.

The other possible direction in which a relevance theoretical approach to politeness might point, according to Christie, is toward "a focus on *the content* rather than the formal properties of the context and the utterance" (2007: 292; emphasis in original). I have already demonstrated some of the possibilities of prioritising the content of utterances and the contexts in which they might be interpreted. I would like to draw particular attention, however, to Christie's remarks about what relevance theory might reveal about face:

> A final question that the adoption of a relevance-theoretical framework might raise, is how a concept such as 'face' might be theorized. For example, if face is perceived as an implicated premise, it would raise questions about what the content of that premise might be, and how it might relate to other contextual assumptions in play during a particular process of utterance interpretation. (2007: 293)

I have attempted to show that in the process of "making a case" (Christie 2007: 292) for a proposed interpretation of an utterance, an analyst is in a position to identify those meanings that rely on implicated premises that are not necessarily shared by other participants (even if they are not explicitly refuted). My argument is that some of these might be premises about 'face' – that is, they might be interpreted as defining the boundaries of levels of social structure. As the Ally-Chrissy exchange cited above demonstrates, identifying these premises allows for an investigation of where boundaries might be in conflict.

4. North/South as moral boundary

I have made the claim that there is a *moral* compulsion among members of a society to respect the boundaries around different levels of social structure. Are we justified, however, in making the claim that their respect for these boundaries is governed by a moral compulsion? In addition, how do we understand where these boundaries are drawn? In the previous section I suggested that the disagreement between Ally and Chrissy shows evidence of boundaries separating *individuals*, but such an assumption runs the risk of assuming that these boundaries represent compliance to a 'Western' prioritisation of the individual self.

In this section I draw upon a much larger conversational extract, which is included in the appendix to this chapter, to focus on the moral obligations that accompany the boundaries communicated by Ally in her interaction with two other freshers, Chrissy and Sammy. These boundaries might be seen on the one hand as a means of demarcating herself as an individual who is distinct from other university students she has met. It is not merely an individual/group demarcation that is communicated here, however; Ally also communicates a set of moral obligations that accompany the boundary between the North and South of England. Consider again the utterance discussed in the previous section: "Oh it is for me, like (1.1) I've been down south all my life" (lines 35 and 37). I made the claim that interpreting this utterance in such a way that it generates the explicature *The Midlands of England is the North of England for Ally* requires accessing a context in which notions of 'North' and 'South' are deictic; that is, relative to the speaker's place of origin. Further analysis reveals that 'North' and 'South' are deictic not only in geographic, but also moral terms. To support this point, I will first explore some of the implications of the assumption that *for Ally down south is far away*.

Consider her remark on line 17, which follows a discussion of how long it would take Sammy to travel by train to her home in Devonshire:

[2]
17 Ally: I think you're the only person I've met so far who's further
18 away than me I reckon (0.3) like from down south

In the first instance, interpreting this utterance requires the enrichment of "who's further away" so that we understand Ally to be saying something like *you're the only person I've met who's* ***from*** *farther away* ***from here***. The utterance produces the most effects, I would argue, in a context that contains the premise *Ally considers herself to be from far away from here*. One of the ways in which Ally's self-correction, "like from down south", might achieve relevance is by offering a revision of that premise (Wilson and Sperber 2002: 251) so that we interpret *from farther away from here* to mean for Ally farther away not in any direction, but only toward the south. This revised interpretation can in turn be interpreted within a context which contains the premise *Down south, for Ally, is far away from here.*

How are we to understand "down south", then, and what does it mean for it to be *far away*? An analysis of Ally's comments from line 25 onward support my claim that *far away* for Ally entails not only geographic, but also moral distance. The North/South divide seems to provide her a means of aligning her moral position with her geographic position: she is as *far away from here* as she is *far away from* being "rough", "brazen", "loud" and from drinking lager by the pint. Drawing boundaries around her conception of "down south" is akin to drawing boundaries around her sense of herself as a moral individual.

Consider, for instance, the two ways in which Ally makes a case for the inappropriateness of drinking lager. On the one hand, she evaluates it in terms of its acceptability "down south":

[3]
52 Ally: Do you know what I mean, though, like, um (0.8) like down
53 south (.) you'd never (.) none of my friends, you'd never
54 catch anyone drinking a pint, (.) [do you know what I mean?]
55 Sammy: [No.]
56 Chrissy: mm
57 Sammy: Same here.
58 Ally: It's just s-, it would just be so wrong, all the boys would just
59 be like what are you [doing?]

To interpret "down south you'd never catch anyone drinking a pint" I would have to enrich "anyone" to mean *any women* and "you'd never catch" to mean that *such behaviour is judged as inappropriate*, to produce the explicature *Women down south do not drink pints of lager because it is inappropriate to do so.* Ally's self-correction in line 53 – "none of my friends" – offers a revision of that assumption to produce a new explicature: *Ally's female friends down south do not drink pints of lager because it is inappropriate to do so.* Ally further contextualises her negative evaluation of pint drinking by her use of the conditional: "You'**d** never **catch** …", "It **would be** so wrong" and "all the boys **would** just **be** like what are you doing?". I interpret these utterances as the hypothetical transference of a set of practices from one setting in which they seem to be appropriate (Ally's hall of residence) to another context in which they are not appropriate (among her home friends). I would argue that this re-contextualisation enables Ally to reinforce her argument that drinking pints is wrong, at least among her female friends down south.

What Ally's use of conditional modals underscores, however, is that there are new norms of appropriateness in the environment in which she now finds herself. Now that she is no longer "down south", what prevents her from drinking pints? Here Ally shifts from the conditional to the simple present and present perfect. She communicates, I would argue, that drinking a pint is offensive not only to "her friends" "down south", but also to her own, current sense of self. My interpretation of "I don't even drink like lager or anything" (lines 64 and 66) and "I just don't enjoy the taste" (line 75) is that *drinking lager is offensive to Ally's senses.* My interpretation of "I've always thought of it as a guys' drink" (lines 77–78) is that *drinking lager is offensive to Ally's worldview.*

Face maintenance for Ally, then, might be understood in terms of her efforts to reinforce certain boundaries in the interactions I have cited. These boundaries are drawn, on the one hand, around how she separates herself 'geographically' from the North, the Midlands and the university she is attending. They are also drawn in such a way as to distinguish herself – as an individual – from behaviours she deems morally inappropriate – being loud, being brazen, and "downing pints" (line 81).

5. Boundaries in conflict

I have made the claim for Ally, the moral compulsion to respect levels of social structure can be understood in terms of her both maintaining a North/South boundary and reinforcing her own distinctiveness as an individual. In this section I focus on the boundaries that are drawn when these notions of social structure conflict with those of other interactants. One way of investigating this conflict is by examining different responses to Ally's use of the term "Northerners" in line 25:

[4]

25	Ally:	I th- aw- I seriously reckon West Row is full of Northerners
26	Chrissy:	(0.6) mm
27	Ally:	Seriously, [though, like]
28	Chrissy:	[Northern] as in like Midlands, or Northern as in like,
29	Ally:	No, [like proper]
30	Chrissy:	[proper North]
31	Ally:	Northerners, like, well Midlands as well, [but]
32	Chrissy:	[((coughs))]
33	Ally:	(.) there's barely any: Southerners
34	Chrissy:	Midlands isn't northern ((laughs quietly))

Ally's evocation of "Northerners" might be understood as an example of what Sacks calls a "membership categorization device" (Sacks 1995: 41). Categories, Sacks argues, are "inference rich" (1995: 40), and they provide a mechanism for evaluating category-based activities and attributes, as Ally does in lines 48, 52–4, 77–8 and 80–1, describing "Northerners" as "brazen" and engaged in an activity she disapproves of, drinking lager. A closer investigation of her interaction with Chrissy, however, challenges Sacks's claim that inferential knowledge about categories is available and recognizable to all "members of a society" (Sacks 1995: 40). Instead, we might argue that Chrissy and Ally access different inferences about the viability of the term "Northerners", and that this difference represents a boundary between them as individuals.

Chrissy is prepared to access the assumption that Northerners are "rough" (line 49), but she does not seem to know what is "wrong" (line 58) about "drinking a pint" (line 54), until Ally disambiguates the term by clarifying that it is not the quantity or the container she takes issue with, but the act of drinking lager in any form. In addition, Chrissy challenges Ally's use of "Northerners" in lines 28, 30 and 34. My understanding is that Chrissy allows "Northerners" as long as it is used to refer to people from areas north of the Midlands. However, she does not herself draw upon the category "Northerners". Instead she uses "northern" and "proper North", terms which I interpret as indexing geographical coordinates rather than identity categories (compare with Ally's "proper Northerners" in lines 29 and 31). There is evidence here, I would argue, that Chrissy does not have the same moral compunction to respect for the North/South boundary that Ally has – or if she has it, she recognises those boundaries as differently drawn. If Ally's comments here are face threatening – and I think that they are – it is not only because they threaten Chrissy's sense of self (as a "Northerner", in Ally's eyes), but also because they conflict with her understanding of how the social and moral world is structured.

6. Localised individuality and the boundaries of community

I have been focussing, for the most part, on the interaction among the three freshers, Ally, Chrissy and Sammy, which as I mentioned takes place before the team's initiation event. I would now like to draw attention to some features of a conversation that takes place about a week after initiation, between two 'old-timer' team members, Flicka and Ginge, and Ally and another fresher, Nemo. I think this interaction allows for a more in-depth investigation of, as Davies puts it, "how access and acceptance are managed" (2005: 573) in a community of practice; specifically, it demonstrates a means of investigating boundaries that are drawn at the level of the community.

It would be useful for me to point out some of my own impressions about how relationships among team members have changed in the two-week period between the first conversation and the second. I will draw attention, first, to a key difference between how participants for selected for the first and the second 'data-collection dinner'. In the first, it was the 'old-timer' team members who dictated that three of the freshers should attend and report back to the rest of the team what it was like. I had made it clear that subsequent dinners, on the other hand, would be open to anyone who volunteered, in whatever groupings they chose. I was then approached by Flicka and Ginge, who had been best friends since their first year at university, who asked if they could come to dinner and bring freshers Ally and Nemo with them. This, as well as the friendly banter and shared inside jokes throughout their conversation on the evening they came round, confirmed in my mind that Ally and Nemo were being accepted by these more established community members. On the other hand, it is my impression that at this point Chrissy was not being accepted as a legitimate of the team – or at least, that she was not accepted and liked by a number of the other team members. In fact, a number of the inside jokes in the Flicka/Ginge/Nemo/Ally conversation were at Chrissy's expense, and everyone, with the only exception of Ginge, revealed that they "just don't get on with her".

With these dynamics in mind, I would put forward the following questions: Can an analysis of the boundaries of the community bring anything to bear on what I have called the complex interaction between the individual and the community? Can it help explain why Ally seems to be accepted into the community, while Chrissy seems to remain on the margins?

To explore these questions, it will be useful to return to Ally's use of the term "Northerners" I demonstrated in the previous section how "Northerners" highlighted a conflict between Ally's and Chrissy's understanding of which social divisions are salient. Ally uses the term again in her conversation with Flicka and Ginge (line 4), and again a conflict is revealed:

[5]

1	Ally:	I don't know I don't think I've met any girls in halls that I
2		could s- .h like some of them are real nice girls, I get on
3		really well (.) I go out with them and everything, but they're
4		so loud, like, some of the Northerners, like do my head in, like
5	( ):	[((laughs quietly))]
6	Flicka:	[((laughing)) Northerners, good!]
7	Ally:	((whine quality)) Wha:t? ((laughing)) like- no, like proper-
8	Flicka:	No, yeah, [((clears throat)) I know what you mean]
9	Ally:	[Like, do you know what I mean, like] not to
10		[generalise a]
11	( ):	[It's not like it-]
12	Ally:	whole part of the country

For me Flicka's utterance in line 6, "Northerners, good!" generates the implicature *Northerners is not a valid category for evaluation.* (That Ally interprets this utterance in a similar way seems clear from her retraction in lines 9, 10 and 12: "not to generalise a whole part of the country".) I would put forward the claim that one reason why Ally's use of the term "Northerners" here is rejected because it is an artefact of the individual 'self' that considers itself to be 'far away' from both the geographical location of the university she now attends and the practices of the people she has met there. This term and these attitudes about appropriate behaviour might be understood to be artefacts of a 'localised' individuality – in Ally's case, one that is localised to "down south" I would further argue that such 'localised' articulations of individual selves do not have a place in this community; they do not 'fit in' within this community's boundaries.

The following extract from the conversation among Flicka, Ginge, Ally and Nemo offers another example of an artefact of a localised individuality that seems to be resisted by community members. The four participants are looking at photos I have taken of their initiation event. I mentioned above that new members were required to come to initiation dressed as specified jungle animals. Chrissy accessorised her monkey costume with a large plush toy banana. The four members are commenting on a photo of Chrissy carrying that banana:

[6]
1 Flicka: Did she get loads of shit for wearing that banana?
2 Ginge: (0.4) Yeah.
3 Ally: Why?
4 Nemo: 'Cause it's Leicester Fyffes
5 Ginge: [Leicester]
6 Flicka: ['Cause it's Leicester]
7 Jodie: (0.6) [What?]
8 Ally: [Oh:::] I didn't [notice that]
9 Ginge: [She was wearing] a Leicester banana.
10 Jodie: (0.4) [Oh!]
11 Nemo: [Leicester's] [sponsored by Fyffes]
12 Ginge: [( ) Leicester and] um (.) so she got a bit- she
13 got [a bit of uh,] agony for-
14
15 Jodie: [Oh!]
16
17 Ginge: (aggro) for that

After enriching and disambiguating Flicka's utterance in line 1 within the context available to me, I arrive at an explicature like *Flicka is asking whether the hockey players present at initiation challenged Chrissy because of the banana that was part of her costume.* My interpretation of Nemo's utterance in line 11 generates the explicature: *The Leicester hockey team that Chrissy used to belong to is sponsored by Fyffes [a tropical fruit import company that specialise in bananas].* Interpreting the term "a Leicester banana" within this context suggests to me that the toy banana Chrissy was carrying was a promotion item produced by her former team's sponsor.

There is nothing in the transcribed interaction, however, to help me understand why carrying "a Leicester banana" would be something for Chrissy to get "a bit of agony" for. One possibility that might be put forward is that the "Leicester banana", as an artefact associated with a rival team, is a threat to the identity of the hockey club. I would suggest in addition, however, that the artefact is a threat because it is associated not just with a rival team, but a team that Chrissy used to be a member of. Consider the following exchange, which takes place a few months later, among three 'old-timer' team members:

[7]
1 Emma: I like Chrissy she was always friendly enough but
2 Sullivan: I haven't seen her in ages

3 Emma: (.) But um
4 Amanda: ((laughing)) She talks about some (.) quite weird stuff,
5 though bless her!
6 Emma: She's a bit strange
7 Sullivan: Well she came round our house [on like the first day, was it]
8 Emma: [I like her, but she's a bit strange]
9 Amanda: She's Leicester (.) ((whispers)) I reckon that's it
10 Sullivan: Is that what it is, Leicester
11 Amanda: ((laughs))
12 Sullivan: Leicester keeper

My interpretation of this extract is that despite their hedges and disclaimers the three interactants are expressing their low opinion of Chrissy. The meaning of Amanda's utterance in line 9 ("She's Leicester") remains somewhat opaque to me; I can use Sullivan's reference to Chrissy's goalkeeping experience (line 12) to generate the explicature *Chrissy used to play hockey for the Leicester club*, but I do not have access to a context which helps me understand what it is about the Leicester hockey club that would explain Chrissy's purported strangeness. However, it does enable me to access the assumption that some team members are still associating Chrissy negatively with her home town and her previous team.

I would argue, then, that there is some evidence here that artefacts that are associated with localised individualities – such as "Northerner" as a category for negative evaluation and "a Leicester banana" – are considered, on some level, to be threats to this community's boundaries. One process of boundary drawing for this community of practice, then, might involve not fully accepting members who remain attached to their localised individualities. With this in mind, we might consider Ally's distaste for pints of lager to be an artefact of a localised individuality, associated with a sense of herself as "far away" from the university and its practices. We might understand Ally's subsequent acceptance into the community as contingent upon the ritual relinquishment of this aspect of her individuality. Consider her remark in lines 90–93 of the extract in the appendix, "Thing is, like, at initiation, like, I'll be up for anything just because, oh, it's one night and I want to get smashed" – which is a response to Chrissy's claim that if Ally doesn't like lager, she will struggle with the drinking challenges at initiation. That these rituals have been effective is borne out by some comments Ally makes several months later in another conversation with Flicka, Ginge and Nemo: "I've really got the taste for Nasty now. Really, I could drink Nasty all night." Nasty is not lager, but it does have lager in it (as well as cider and blackcurrant juice), and it is indeed usually drunk by the pint.

7. Discussion

I have drawn attention to Bargiela-Chiappini's critique of Brown and Levinson's "diluted" (2003: 1454) use of the term "face" and their unreflective assumption that concern for the sanctity of individuality is a universal principle guiding human behaviour. Nevertheless, Bargiela-Chiappini suggests that Brown and Levinson's account is instructive because, like any description of politeness norms, it provides insight on "the moral constitution of a society" (2003: 1467). The model of "strategic politeness" (Bargiela-Chiappini 2003: 1466) that Brown and Levinson offer is characteristic, Bargiela-Chiappini argues, of the Western preoccupation with "duties to self", which can be contrasted with the tendency in certain non-Western societies to orient to "duties towards the group" (Bargiela-Chiappini 2003: 1466).

My approach to the analysis of my interactional data has not been, however, to examine the strategies participants – as members of a 'Western society' – use to maintain and protect their 'duties to self', but instead to explore ways in which boundaries are drawn around different levels of social structure – including, for my data set, the individual, the North, the South, and the community of hockey players. My claim has been that these levels of structure are maintained through moral attachments to sets of attitudes, perspectives and priorities which are 'bounded' by face. Ally's changing attitudes toward 'Northerners' and drinking pints of lager are examples of the process of re-negotiation of boundaries; the community's rejection of Chrissy is an instance in which the boundaries that surround the community are maintained.

This approach, I would argue, presents certain challenges to the empirical investigation of social life. In communities of practice research it requires looking beyond the observable practices – "the physical manifestations" (Davies 2005: 573) – in an investigation of local meaning making. To my mind the process of identifying practices that are locally meaningful – which is the starting point for most communities of practice research – comes with it the danger of assuming that it is in these practices that the 'meaning' resides. The practices and artefacts become, according to this view, mere resources that a strategic actor might adopt as he or she embarks, for instance, on a trajectory toward full membership. Such a perspective gives support to the assumption that community membership is primarily a matter of choice, which Davies (2005) argues is misleading.

My position instead is that meaning resides in moral commitments to the perceived boundaries around different levels of social structure. The artefacts that fall within these boundaries are not limited to observable practices, but might also include, as I have demonstrated, concepts (such as 'Northerners'), perspectives (such as a sense of moral distance from particular behaviours), associations with particular localities (such as "down south" and "Leicester") and physical objects (such as "a Leicester banana").

What such an approach also allows, I would argue, is a means of conducting cross-cultural analysis without relying upon problematic 'top-down' presuppositions about the priorities of a given culture. If we understand morality in terms of respect for levels of social structure, with the individual representing only one of these levels, we are also invited to explore interactional contexts in which the individual – as a unit of social structure – is less salient. In such contexts, the most significant level might be something else, such as a partnership, family, community, religious organisation, institution or nation (to name a few). The investigation of the moral order (politeness2) that underlies lay conceptualisations of politeness (politeness1) would thus reveal the intricate and dynamic ways in which certain perspectives, attitudes are prejudices are maintained.

8. Conclusion

The discursive approach to linguistic politeness is, in my view, opening up exciting avenues into aspects of the social that other more established epistemological frameworks cannot support. Bargiela-Chiappini's (2003) discussion of what an inquiry into politeness can reveal about the moral constitution of society is particularly promising from my perspective because it offers unique possibilities for understanding politeness2 – like politeness1 – as a site of social struggle that can be investigated empirically. If it is indeed the case, as Bargiela-Chiappini's argues, that most Western societies are governed by a preoccupation with the individual self, then work dedicated to the empirical investigation of how society is morally constituted needs to explore new frameworks for conceptualising the individual. Many current theoretical perspectives draw upon a model of the individual as either an atomistic entity who operates within some separate social structure, or else as a strategic, rational actor who accumulates structural resources for particular purposes. What I have attempted to offer in this chapter is a metaphor which allows us to conceive of the individual as one level of social structure among many. Conceiving of 'face' as a 'boundary' that is drawn and re-drawn around individuals, communities and other levels of social structure is one way of understanding, I would argue, how ideologies are situated within many social dimensions. It also offers a means of investigating the factors that influence whether and how these ideologies change.

Appendix A: Full data transcript

1	Ally:	(0.8) Where, if you went home, Sammy, where would you:
2		change (0.3) You would have to go (.) Where would you go
3		(0.4) God, it would be a long train journey [wouldn't it]
4	Sammy:	[mm] (0.5)
5		I don't know. (0.4) I haven't a clue. There might be (2.1)
6		Probably like go to Birmingham or something and go down
7	Ally:	(.) [Yeah. Where would you go]
8	Chrissy:	[Yeah Birmingham]
9	Ally:	Exeter or something
10	Sammy:	mm
11	Ally:	change at Ex-
12	Sammy:	(1.0) Totnes or Plymouth
13	Ally:	(0.5) yeah
14	Sammy:	is closest to me.
15	Chrissy:	mm
16		(2.8)
17	Ally:	I think you're the only person I've met so far who's further
18		away than me I reckon (0.3) like from down south
19	Sammy:	[Jules, yeah]
20	Chrissy:	[Here's me that lives like] twenty minutes down the road
21	Ally:	Yeah:
22	Sammy:	(0.8) I haven't met anybody from Cornwall yet (0.7)
23	Ally:	[No]
24	Chrissy:	[I have.] (0.5) There's a lad on my course from Cornwall.
25	Ally:	I th- aw- I seriously reckon West Row is full of Northerners
26	Chrissy:	(0.6) mm
27	Ally:	Seriously, [though, like]
28	Chrissy:	[Northern] as in like Midlands, or Northern as in like,
29	Ally:	No, [like proper]
30	Chrissy:	[proper North]
31	Ally:	Northerners, like, well Midlands as well, [but]
32	Chrissy:	[((coughs))]
33	Ally:	(.) there's barely any: Southerners

34 Chrissy: Midlands isn't northern ((laughs quietly))
35 Ally: Oh it is for me, [like]
36 Chrissy: [((laughs))]
37 Ally: (1.1) I've been down south all my life, like
38 Chrissy: Mm
39 (2.3)
40 Sammy: Mm. Same here. Lived in Devon all my life
41 Ally: I don't know, I do like meeting people from up north, but (.)
42 I don't know, the ones in my hall, I've found them really
43 (0.8) like you can tell (.) [like]
44 Sammy: [mm]
45 Ally: (0.6) I th-, I don't [know what it is]
46 Sammy: [Some of the girls] [I can't]
47 Ally: [Some of them] are so,
48 like (0.8) brazen, like really um (0.4)
49 Chrissy: Rough? ((laughs quietly))
50 Ally: Kind of, [yeah! I know that's like ((laughs))]
51 Chrissy: [((laughs))] ((laughing)) In a word!
52 Ally: Do you know what I mean, though, like, um (0.8) like down
53 south (.) you'd never (.) none of my friends, you'd never catch
54 anyone drinking a pint, (.) [do you know what I mean?]
55 Sammy: [No.]
56 Chrissy: mm
57 Sammy: Same here.
58 Ally: It's just s-, it would just be so wrong, all the boys would
59 just be like what are you [doing?]
60 Sammy: [The] only girl that like I kn- I
61 would go out with (.) she drinks a pint, she's from Liverpool?
62 It's just like .hhh [( )]
63 Chrissy: [If I'm having] lager I'd always have it in a
half. (1.0) Not-
64 Ally: I wouldn't even, I don't even [drink like]
65 Chrissy: [Would you not]
66 Ally: lager or anything
67 Sammy: [Oh, I hate lager]
68 Chrissy: [Would you drink it out of the] bottle, like if (0.4) a bottle
69 of Stella, or
70 Ally: (.) I just- (.) Seriously, if that was the only alcoholic drink on
71 offer, I'd probably (.) [(vouch for a) Diet]
72 Chrissy: [Oh right]

Ally: Coke, 'cause
Sammy: Yeah, same [here.]
Ally: [I just don't] enjoy the taste (.) I think [it's]
Chrissy: [mm]
Ally: really (0.7) I don't know, I- (.) I've always thought of it as
a guys' drink, [do you know]
Chrissy: [mm]
Ally: what I mean? (0.9) And the guy- the girls, some of the girls
are just li- downing pints, [oh! God!]
Chrissy: [((laughs quietly))]
Ally: I'm like wh- (0.3) It's just- (0.4) [like]
Sammy: [I can't] do it. I get a
[rash from]
Chrissy: [Wait 'til you go-] Wait 'til initiation then!
Sammy: I can't, if they give me Nasties I can't drink it. (0.3) I
actually can't drink it.
(1.0)
Ally: Thing is, like, at initiation, like, I'll be up for anything just
[because,]
Sammy: [mm]
Ally: oh, it's one night and I want to get smashed

Appendix B: Transcription conventions

[ ]	Overlapping speech
Underlining	Emphasis
CAPITALS	Loud speech
(0.4)	Length of a pause in seconds
(.)	Pause less than one-tenth of a second
((laughs))	Transcriber's descriptions or comments, contextual information
( )	Indecipherable
(word)	Transcriber's best guess at what was said
sto::p	Colons indicate elongation of a sound (number of colons corresponds to length of elongation)
hhh	Out-breaths
.hhh	In-breaths (as with colons, number of h's corresponds to length of out-breaths or in-breaths)

■

,	Weak, 'continuing' intonation
?	Rising, 'questioning' intonation
	Falling intonation

References

Bargiela-Chiappini, Francesca
2003 Face and politeness: New (insights) for old (concepts). *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1453–1469.

Brown, Penelope and Stephen C. Levinson
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bucholtz, Mary
1999 'Why be normal?': Language and identity practices in a community of nerd girls. *Language in Society* 28 (2): 203–223.

Chouliaraki, Lilie and Norman Fairclough
1999 *Discourse in Late Modernity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Christie, Christine
2007 Relevance theory and politeness. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 269–294.

Culpeper, Jonathan
1996 Towards an anatomy of impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 25 (3): 349–367.

Davies, Bethan
2005 Communities of practice: Legitimacy not choice. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 9 (4): 537–581.

de Bruxelles, Simon
2008 University hunts students involved in banned Nazi-style initiation ceremony [online] *The Times* 3 October. Last accessed 29/6/10 at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/article4870733.ece

Eckert, Penelope
2000 *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Eckert, Penelope and Sally McConnell-Ginet
1992 Think practically and look locally: Language and gender as community-based practice. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21: 461–490.

Eelen, Gino
2001 *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Goffman, Erving
1961 *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. London: Penguin.

Goffman, Erving
1967 *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-face Behaviour*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.
Lave, Jean and Etienne Wenger
1991 *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Matsumoto, Yoshiko
1988 Reexamination of the universality of face: politeness phenomena in Japanese. *Journal of Pragmatics* 12 (4): 403–426.
Mills, Sara
2003a Caught between sexism, anti-sexism and 'political correctness': Feminist women's negotiations with naming practices. *Discourse & Society* 14 (1): 87–110.
Mills, Sara
2003b *Gender and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Moore, Emma
2007 'You tell all the stories': Using narrative to explore hierarchy within a Community of Practice. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 10 (5): 611–640.
Mullany, Louise
2006 'Girls on tour': Politeness, small talk, and gender in managerial business meetings. *Journal of Politeness Research* 2 (1): 55–77.
Sacks, Harvey
1995 *Lectures on Conversation*. Vol. 1. Oxford: Blackwell.
Sperber, Dan and Deirdre Wilson
1995 *Relevance*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Sutton, Natalie
2008 Initiations: Why I took part in one [online]. *BBC News* 2 October. Last accessed 29/6/10 at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7646891.stm
Watts, Richard
2003 *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wilson, Deirdre and Dan Sperber
2002 Relevance theory, *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 14: 249–287. (Available online at www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/PUB/WPL/02papers/wilson_sperber.pdf Last accessed 29/6/10.)

Chapter 5

Frontstage and backstage: Gordon Brown, the "bigoted woman" and im/politeness in the 2010 UK General Election

Louise Mullany

1. Introduction

This chapter focuses upon a contemporary interactional event which took place within the British mass media as part of the 2010 General Election campaign coverage. On 28th April, just over one week before polling day, the then Prime Minister and leader of the Labour Party Gordon Brown visited Rochdale, a town in Northern England, as part of his aim to talk face-to-face with voters. During this visit he engaged in a lengthy conversation with Gillian Duffy, a member of the public. After finishing this interaction he went into his car with a team member and they were driven away to their next destination. Gordon Brown still had a lapel microphone on and he was unaware that it had not been switched off. The conversation he then had in the private context of the car was caught on this radio microphone. During this interaction Brown evaluated Duffy as a "bigoted woman" A producer working for Sky News, Tami Hoffman, overheard this comment and took the decision to release the recording of the private conversation into the public sphere (Hoffman 2010).

A media furore ensued. The incident was instantaneously classified as a potentially "election-defining" moment (Wintour and Watt 2010) and many journalists have placed it alongside other "election-defining" moments where politicians have been 'caught' behaving 'badly' Commentators including Sparrow (2010) and Hasan (2010) set it alongside the "election-defining" moment in 2001, when Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott was recorded by television cameras in a fracas where he punched a member of the public who had thrown an egg at him. However, there is a clear difference between the Prescott incident and the Brown incident which deserves closer inspection from the perspective of sociolinguistic im/politeness research: Brown made his comments in a private, seemingly enclosed context where he was completely unaware of potential overhearers. The Brown incident also differs from other occasions when politicians have been caught out by microphones. The most famous recent incident was an overheard conversation between George W. Bush and Tony Blair when they were US President and UK Prime Minister respectively (see Mullany and Stockwell 2010). However, Blair and Bush were physically located in a public space around a conference table at a G8 Summit, whereas Brown was in the private space of his own car and in transit at the time of recording.

This chapter takes a discursive approach to analysing linguistic im/politeness in a range of spoken and written texts surrounding the Brown-Duffy incident, including the initial interactions themselves. Following Mills (this volume), im/politeness is conceptualised as emerging across stretches of discourse, instead of being seen as simplistically contained within a single abstract utterance (as was the case with Brown and Levinson's (1987) model). Im/politeness should also be viewed as a process of judgements about linguistic choices which emerge through discourse production. A view of power as a fluid and dynamic process enacted within discourse will also be drawn upon (cf. Locher and Watts 2005). In order to expand the discursive approach, this study integrates recent research on face and rapport management (Spencer-Oatey 2008; Mullany 2010) with Goffman's (1959) work on interactional 'staging' and the interrelated sociolinguistic theory of language style as audience design (Bell 1984, 1997, 2007). Goffman's work, particularly his 1967 theorisation on face, has long been influential in linguistic politeness research. This chapter aims to demonstrate how his conceptualisation of interaction as a form of dramaturgical performance, including the metaphorical notions of interactions taking place 'frontstage' and 'backstage', can add a great deal to investigations of discursive approaches to im/politeness, particularly in terms of aiding evaluations and judgements of what is im/polite across stretches of discourse.

In addition to Goffman's dramaturgical categories, Bell's work on audience design gives the discursive approach an explicit sociolinguistic focus, overtly emphasising the importance of how our perceptions of who we think our audience is i.e., exactly who we are talking with, who we think can overhear us, and our knowledge of any potential future audiences if speech is recorded, affects the discourse we produce (cf. Mullany 2010). This fusion of different theoretical and analytical approaches will demonstrate the value of what Mills (this volume) describes as an eclectic approach favoured by discursive politeness theorists, with elements of different theoretical and analytical models being juxtaposed to attempt to move towards a more sustained paradigm change in im/politeness research (Terkourafi 2005).

The data will be introduced in Section 2 and a detailed exposition of the discursive approach will be outlined in Section 3. This will be followed by analyses of a range of spoken and written texts surrounding the Brown-Duffy incident in Section 4. The consequences of the findings and conclusions will then be discussed in the final section.

2. The data

The Brown-Duffy media event resulted in the emergence of a plethora of texts. In this chapter I analyse both spoken and written discourses surrounding this incident from the perspective of im/politeness. These texts for analysis most crucially include the initial interactions, followed by evaluations and judgements of the incident from Brown and Duffy themselves as well as from other third parties. I have broken the data down into six datasets for ease of reference. The most important starting point is to examine the actual interactions that became the focal point of the media's attention. The first two datasets are therefore as follows:

A. The initial 'public' interaction between Duffy and Brown on the street
B. The subsequent 'private' interaction between Brown and his Communications Director in Brown's car

Approximately an hour after the conversation in the car, Brown appeared on BBC Radio 2 where his 'private' conversation was played back to him in the public, broadcast arena and he apologized to Duffy. Later the same afternoon he returned to Rochdale to visit Duffy in her own home without any recording equipment or journalists present to apologize in person for calling her "bigoted". Brown then held a press conference outside Duffy's home where he delivered a speech including an evaluation of his own interactional behaviour following the delivery of his face-to-face apology. Apologies have been the focus of a great deal of im/politeness research (for example, Holmes 1995, 1998; Mills 2003; Grainger and Harris 2007; Davies this volume). Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006: 721) point out that political apologies are frequently generated by "conflict and controversy" and this is certainly the case with these data. Brown's 'apologies' to Duffy warrant scrutiny as they play a role in the evaluation and judgement process. The remaining datasets are therefore as follows:

C. Duffy's evaluations of Brown's 'overheard' conversation and their original conversation

D. Brown being interviewed on national radio (BBC Radio 2)
E. Brown's speech outside Duffy's home immediately after 'apologising'
F. Evaluations and judgements of journalists and members of the public accessed via the electronic media discourse of discussion boards and blogs

3. Discursive approaches to im/politeness

As introduced in Section 1, the foundational principle of a discursive approach to im/politeness is a concentration on how im/politeness emerges over stretches of discourse. In specific relation to impoliteness, Mills (this volume) also draws attention to Bousfield's (2008) view that, in addition to analysing impolite talk, a discursive approach should also thoroughly examine the lead in or onset of this talk, the effect of the impoliteness, and interactants' responses, in order to show how impoliteness is interpreted at different stages. The discursive approach taken here expands this further. It focuses on a wide range of discourses including the lead in with Dataset A, the 'impolite' talk which takes place in Dataset B, the effect of the 'impoliteness' and the interactants' responses (Datasets C–E). It then reaches further by also incorporating evaluations and judgements from non-interactants including journalists and members of the public through the medium of electronic media discourse (Dataset F).

Im/politeness is viewed as an ongoing, evaluative process with which interactants actively engage rather than something which statically pre-exists the interaction. An important part of this is the issue of investigating participants' judgements and evaluations of im/politeness, though the role of the analyst can also be present, whereby the analyst uses participants' judgements and evaluations as just another dataset, alongside the interactional data, to aid with interpretation of the overall discourse event (see Haugh 2007 for a detailed consideration of this issue). Haugh (2010) echoes Eelen (2001) by stressing the importance of acknowledging how individuals may well have very different perceptions when evaluating the same event, something that has long been overlooked in work on im/politeness theory. He makes the point that "there is often (though not always) variability across individuals in regards to their evaluations of certain instances of behaviour as (im)polite" (Haugh 2010: 11).

Haugh's (2010) discursive politeness study demonstrates the value of using computer-mediated-communication (CMC) to examine judgements and evaluations of impoliteness by the lay public and he presents evidence of variability between individuals' evaluations of the same 'im/polite' behaviour in a set of email exchanges within professional contexts. He includes electronic discussion boards where lay members evaluate the email exchanges, similar to the evaluative CMC focus taken here, which will enable the variability of opinion to be explored.

The Brown-Duffy data also offers further expansion of current thinking on im/politeness theory by focusing upon a specific example where a third party has deliberately intervened and informed an original interlocutor that a previous interactant has been 'impolite' about them *after the conversation has ended*. Focusing upon intervention by a third party, where new stretches of metatalk are reported, enables the discursive approach to also include instances where participants' evaluations of im/politeness can take place after an initial conversation has finished.

Interference from third parties in reporting back what individuals have said about others 'behind their backs', to give it its more common Politeness1 expression (Watts 2003), is an under-investigated focus for im/politeness research. It is important to investigate how metacommentary on previous conversations can come to occupy a prominent role as a topic in future conversations (see Coates 2000). This focus demonstrates how discursive interpretations of im/politeness can be seen to stretch across not just different turns in the same discourse event but also across different discourse contexts which take place at later points in time. An aim of this chapter is therefore to demonstrate how an interactant can be evaluated and judged as impolite/rude, not on the basis of a stretch of discourse in one specific context, but on the basis of a future interaction involving evaluative metatalk, which is then relayed to the initial interlocutor(s) at a later point in time.

Evaluations of im/politeness therefore do not always need to be directly related to the initial interaction itself. If we look at Culpeper's (2005) influential definition of when impoliteness occurs:

> Impoliteness comes about when: (1) the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and/or constructs behaviour as intentionally face-attacking, or a combination of (1) and (2). (Culpeper 2005: 38)

We can add that impoliteness can come about *after* an interaction has ended as the hearer may perceive and/or construct behaviour as intentionally face attacking on the basis of new linguistic evidence that becomes apparent from a third party after the initial interaction is over.

3.1. Frontstage, backstage and audience design

The work of Goffman (1959) and Bell (1984, 1997, 2007) can be integrated as useful components within a discursive im/politeness approach to political broadcast talk (and beyond) alongside the analytical tools outlined so far. Goffman (1959: 110) explicitly incorporates politeness into his definition of what it means to be 'frontstage'. He argues that frontstage is where interactants make "an effort to give the appearance that his [sic] activity in the region maintains and embodies certain standards" – he characterizes these standards as 'politeness' and 'decorum' Frontstage can thus be interpreted as referring to public contexts where interlocutors are very consciously aware of performances of particular forms of identities.

In contrast, Goffman defines 'backstage' as "a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course here the performer can relax; he [sic] can drop his front, forgo his speaking lines, and step out of character" (Goffman 1959: 114). He goes on to state that, in this backstage space, speakers will "very regularly derogate the audience in a way that is inconsistent with the face-to-face treatment that is given to the audience" (1959: 168).

It is important to point out that the backstage context also has politeness norms and conventions, though on the whole the consequences of losing face backstage are less serious than frontstage. It is frontstage where our quality face, social identity face, equity and association rights are very much on public display to a wider audience. In the case of politicians, performing frontstage during a General Election is often to a very broad audience via the mass media. Audience members have the power to either re-elect or reject them – the stakes of performing well 'frontstage' are therefore very high.

Goffman's (1959) theorisation of performance accords with more recent theoretical work on identity as a socially-constructed concept, which has been highly influential in a range of disciplines including linguistics, psychology and social theory. From a social-constructionist perspective, identity is something that we do, that we actively perform in interaction, as opposed to something that we have or possess (see Butler 1990; Hall and Bucholtz 2010).

Coates' (2000) work provides a good example of applying Goffman's frontstage and backstage notions to sociolinguistic politeness data which demonstrates intra-speaker politeness variation. She follows Goffman in arguing that it is frontstage where our "performance is much more carefully controlled and much more susceptible to the prevailing norms of politeness and decorum" (Coates 2000: 243). Coates argues that both women and men have a "need to assert their right to wholeness" as individuals by expressing "not-nice as well as nice feelings" (Coates 2000: 263). A 'backstage' context, where speakers do not perceive their identities to be on public display, is the ideal context for this necessary linguistic behaviour to take place.

Coates analyses women's 'backstage' performances where they are recorded expressing pejorative opinions of others. Her analysis includes examples of speakers dissecting interactions which have already taken place in the public 'frontstage', where they have abided by politeness norms and conventions in order to perform their professional identities, only to then state disparaging, insulting comments about these interlocutors in the privacy of the 'backstage' context. For example, speaker Ann tells a narrative of how she had a bad day at work. Coates points out that, "in her frontstage persona, she describes herself as answering the customer politely and doing what she is asked to do without question" – in her backstage performance, she tells her friend "what she really felt" (2000: 245). Ann negatively evaluates customers using pejorative pre-modifiers including "bloody snotty customers", "stupid people" and she calls one woman a "stupid cow" (2000: 245). The customers have thus been safely derided backstage. Coates (2000: 246) argues that Ann is 'behaving badly' – she is 'rude' and directly contradicts the 'super-polite' persona that she had enacted in her workplace when performing her professional role. Coates observes Ann's backstage behaviour to be functioning as a prime means of reinforcing solidarity between herself and her friendship group.

However, the difference between Coates' data and the Brown-Duffy data and the major problem that results for Gordon Brown is that his 'backstage' context becomes frontstage due to an intervening third party (Tami Hoffman), deciding to make his 'private' talk 'public', moving it from the safety of backstage to frontstage without his knowledge or consent. Hoffman was able to do this so effectively due to the permanent, audio-recorded nature of the conversation. Because such slippage between 'stages' can occur, I argue that instead of being seen as two separate categories, frontstage and backstage should instead be seen as a continuum. This slippage and the role of a third party can be explored further if we bring in Bell's concept of language style as audience design.

Goffman (1959) refers to the audience as an important part of 'performances' on a number of occasions. The foundational principle behind Bell's model is that speakers shift speech styles when there is a shift in audience: once an audience changes speakers shift to be more akin to the person with whom they are now talking as opposed to the person with whom they were talking. Of particular relevance to the current study is Bell's (1997: 246–7) concentric circles model where he characterizes individuals according to the roles that they occupy in any given speech situation. He categorizes the *speaker* as first person, the *addressee* as second person and then has three third person categories: *auditor*, *overhearer* and *eavesdropper*.

Bell argues that not all members of the audience are equally important and the list of categories in the order given above represents increasing distance from the speaker. An auditor is someone who is present, of whom all speakers and addressees are aware and whose presence is accepted as part of the group. An overhearer occupies a similar role to this in that the speaker is aware of them, but they are not ratified as a part of the group. Eavesdroppers are individuals whose presence is not even known to the speaker. Bell's theory is that speakers possess a "fine-grained" ability to design their speech for a range of different addressees but less so for more peripheral audience members (1997: 246).

Of most interest to the study of Brown-Duffy is *eavesdropper*. Although this category has the most distance from the speaker, when Brown is talking in his car (Dataset B), it is journalist Tami Hoffman as eavesdropper who has the most influence on the consequences of this interaction, transforming the private, backstage context to a frontstage context. The eavesdropper in this particular context thus enacts a very powerful role for herself. This emphasizes how the role of eavesdropper or anyone occupying a third party position cannot be under-estimated in terms of what they may do with any interaction they 'accidently' overhear (see Section 4.1). Brown's unawareness meant that his private speech was not designed for the mass audience that ended up hearing it, including Duffy herself. It was intended only for the addressees present in the car (and potentially the unidentified car driver as overhearer).

3.2. Frontstage talk, politics and media discourse

Within the political arena, 'frontstage' can be defined as any environment where the professional role of politician is being officially performed in front of an audience, which can range from an audience of just one to millions of people. With political media discourse, frontstage talk involving politicians most frequently takes place in 'controlled' contexts, such as pre-planned broadcast interviews and debates, including (televised) debates in the House of Commons. In all of these formal situations, although topics may not be known in advance, a set of expectations exists in terms of im/politeness norms and conventions (see Harris 2001). This is not to say that politicians 'control' what takes place; often an adversarial discourse style is adopted by journalists, with politicians frequently placed in conflictual discourse situations where they often have to respond to face threat and attack in the form of challenging, adversarial questions (see Mullany 2002). This is interesting from the perspective of power. Despite occupying positions of often considerable power in wider society, in broadcast contexts, power is often enacted over the politicians by interviewers or members of the public through the adversarial linguistic strategies that they adopt. Nonetheless, these controlled situations do have im/politeness norms and conventions and often benefit from a fixed and stable physical context where the discourse takes place (such as a television/radio studio).

During UK General Election campaigns there is a cultural tradition of party leaders travelling the country to speak with ‘real’ voters. There is thus a shift from frontstage political talk in what I term ‘controlled’ contexts to talk taking place in ‘uncontrolled’, frontstage contexts. It is in these fluid settings where substantial damage to the face of politicians and their power is arguably more likely, including damage to their quality face in terms of their competence and abilities, their social identity face in terms of their political and professional identities and damage to their equity and association rights.

Politicians’ frontstage performances are particularly vulnerable at this time as they are subject to unrehearsed, unscripted, spontaneous communication with often random members of the public in ever-changing physical contexts where they are surrounded by recording devices and many members of the media. Although party officials try to ensure that politicians meet with individuals who will give positive support, they are not always able to control this. It is a danger that even the most powerful political figures can lose power and status very quickly in these interactions, with power instead being enacted by lay members of the public which can then be taken over by representatives from the mass media. It is perhaps unsurprising that these uncontrolled instances become iconic election-defining moments as they are often so very different from the talk that takes place in the regular, controlled frontstage settings. We will now move on to examine the Brown-Duffy data in the uncontrolled frontstage of a street in northern England.

4. Data analysis

Spencer-Oatey’s (2005, 2008) rapport management framework provides a useful set of tools to help analyse im/politeness from a discursive politeness perspective (see also Mullany 2010).[1] Rapport management is defined

---

1 In other work (e.g., Mullany 2008, 2010) I have taken a discursive approach to im/politeness which draws upon the communities of practice (CofP) approach

as management/ mismanagement of relative harmony between individuals. Spencer-Oatey (2002: 540–541) draws upon Goffman's (1967: 5) notion of face as "positive social value" and then divides face into two components: 1) 'quality' face, the desire for positive evaluation of personal qualities, including competence and abilities and 2) 'social identity' face, the desire for other individuals to acknowledge and uphold our social identities and roles.

In addition to face, interlocutors are perceived to have 'sociality rights': personal and social *entitlements* in interaction. She divides sociality rights into 'equity' and 'association'. Equity rights are an interlocutor's entitlement to personal consideration and fair treatment from others by not being unfairly imposed upon or exploited. Equity rights are judged according to a 'cost-benefit' continuum, which needs to be balanced. Spencer-Oatey defines 'association rights' as an interactant's entitlement to association with others, as is deemed to be appropriate to their relationship. These rights include 'affective association/ disassociation', the extent to which an individual's concerns, interests and feelings are shared, along with 'interactional association/disassociation', referring to elements such as the amount of talk deemed relevant in a specific setting.

The analysis commences with extracts from Dataset A, the initial encounter between Brown and Duffy (Transcription Conventions are given in the Appendix):

Example 1

Gordon Brown has just come from visiting a Community Payback Scheme.[2] *He is standing in the street talking to Gillian Duffy. They are surrounded by reporters and camera operators from various media organisations as well as by members of Brown's election team and a member of the local Labour Party.*

1. Duffy: My father (.) even when he was in his teens went to Free
2. Trade Hall to sing the Red Flag (.)
3. Brown: yes

(Wenger 1998; Mills 2003). As the encounter between Duffy and Brown does not constitute a community of practice (their initial interaction is a one-off encounter between strangers), the CofP approach was not deemed suitable for the analysis of im/politeness in these media data.

2 The Labour Government's Community Payback Scheme is an initiative where offenders are given community tasks that will benefit the local environment which they must fulfil as part of their punishment, such as the removal of graffiti.

4. Duffy: an an NOW I'm absolutely a- ashamed of of SAYING I'm
5. Labour
6. Brown: Now you mustn't be (.) because what have we done we've
7. improved the health service we're financing more police (.)
8. neighbourhood policing we are getting better schools (.) and we
9. are coming through a very very difficult world recession
10. (.) you you know what my err views are (.) I'm for fairness
11. (.) for hardworking families I want to make sure I've told these
12. guys across there ((points across the road)) (.) "look if you
13. commit a crime you're gonna be punished and you'd better stop"
14. ["you'd better stop" the- th- th- th-]
15. Duffy: [well but I'm afraid I'm afraid I don't think I don't think]
16. it's happening in Rochdale
17. [with people getting let off with things]
18. Brown: well I [think I think a] a bit more
19. policing than that there were [but] we're going to do much
20. Party Official: [yeah]
21: Brown: better in the future

In lines 4–5, Duffy damages Brown's quality face and social identity face by issuing the performative speech act that she is "ashamed" to say she supports Brown's Labour Party. From a rapport management perspective this can be interpreted as a challenge to harmonious relations. Brown responds by issuing a rhetorical question to himself ("what have we done") as a preface to declaring reasons of what "we" (presumably the government) collectively have achieved. He uses the oratorical technique of parallel syntactic structures (lines 6–9) and then explicitly states his own views, shifting pronoun usage to "I" to stress his personal commitment to "fairness" and "hardworking families". He then shifts topic to community crime fighting, using the strategy of direct speech, reporting what he just said to those "guys" on the community payback scheme, thus drawing attention back to the scheme he has just visited. Duffy then attacks Brown's face again, disruptively interrupting twice (lines 15 and 17), disagreeing by declaring that she does not believe that this is happening in Rochdale, contradicting Brown's previous statement and damaging the political message of his pre-planned visit.

Example 2 gives the next stretch of talk:

Example 2

1. Brown: neighbourhood policing is the key to it you're a very good err
2. woman (.) ((smiles)) you've served your community all your
3. li[fe you you deserve]
4. Duffy: [I've have I've worked for] the Rochdale Council
5. [for 30 years] and and I worked with children
6. Brown: [good you deserve]
7. Duffy: and handicapped children [and NOW]
8. Brown [well I think working with children]
9. is so important isn't it so important
10. Brown: [have you been at some of the chil- children's centres?]
11. Duffy: [and now the thing what I can't]
12. understand is why am I still being taxed at 66 year old
13. because me husband's died and I had some of his pension tagged
14. on to my pension [now]
15. Brown: [well] we are raising the threshold at which
16. people start paying taxes as pensioners

Brown attempts to establish rapport with Duffy here (lines 1–3), shifting topic from neighbourhood policing to talking about Duffy herself, positively evaluating her by using compliments, attempting to enhance her personal and social identity face as someone who is 'good' and who has successfully fulfilled a professional role for the community. This can be interpreted as towards the 'benefit' end of the equity rights rapport management continuum, with Brown attempting to give Duffy personal consideration. However, Duffy disruptively interrupts again (line 4) and Brown does not get to finish part of his compliment utterance "you deserve" (line 6). Duffy does not respond to the complimentary nature of Brown's utterance. Instead she responds to his point about her serving the community and uses it a preface to shift the topic to pension tax. Brown engages in supportive simultaneous talk (Coates 1996) and appears to be attempting to keep on the topic of children: he echoes part of Duffy's utterance, issues a supportive tag question ("isn't it") and uses "so" as an intensifier and repetition for added emphasis (lines 8–9). He follows this with another question (line 10). Duffy talks simultaneously while Brown is asking this question. She ignores the tag and the children's centres question and instead issues a challenging question on the topic of her pension tax, thus damaging Brown's quality and social identity face further. Brown is then forced to respond to this topic instead of talking on his preferred topic of the government's children's centres.

Example 3 contains the stretch of talk in Dataset A that has attracted the most media attention:

Example 3

Duffy has brought up the topic of unemployment benefits and goes on to talk about immigration.

1. Brown: there is no life on the dole for people anymore if you are
2. unemployed you've got to go back to
3. Brown: [work six months six months]
4. Duffy: [it's eh y- y- yo you can't say] anything about
5. Duffy: the immigrants because you're saying that you're [you're]
6. Brown: [now]
7. Duffy: but all these Eastern Europeans what are coming in (.)
8. [where are they flocking from?]
9. Brown: [err well a million] people come from
10. Europe but a million British people have gone into Europe you
11. you do know that there's a lot of British people staying in
12. Europe as well (.) look come back to what you were what your
13. initial principles (.) helping people that's what we're in the
14. business of doing (.) a decent health service that's really
15. important and education now these are the things that we have
16. tried to do we're gonna maintain the schools so that we can
17. make sure that people have that chance to get on

Duffy interrupts Brown (line 4) and shifts topic again. She appears to be indirectly referring to political correctness when she uses metatalk to state that "you can't say anything about the immigrants", followed by her question asking where are "all these Eastern Europeans" "flocking from". Raising the topic of immigration is again challenging rapport management – she simultaneously states that she cannot talk about immigration whilst she is actually doing so. Metaphorical language choices collectively referring to groups with bird/animal terms such as "flocking" (line 8) have been frequently associated with racist discourses by linguistic analysts (van Dijk 1993; Resigl and Wodak 2001) and it is this stretch of talk to which Brown later refers when he is interviewed on BBC Radio 2 (see Example 9). The perspective that Duffy expresses here has been frequently found in linguistic studies of tabloid journalism, where there is "a common perception of external challenge or threat" to the community from 'outsiders' who are of a different ethnicities and are seen to contrast directly with the 'in-group' of British people (Conboy 2006: 94).

Brown attempts to gain the floor (lines 6 and 9) and then directly responds when he does hold the floor with "people come from Europe" and then asks if she is aware that there is the same number of British people living in Europe. He phrases this as a challenging declarative which presumes that she has this knowledge already while simultaneously telling her so, using "do": "you do know that there's a lot of British people staying in Europe as well". Duffy does not respond. He then shifts the topic using the discourse marker "look" to move the topic back to what he terms Duffy's "initial principles". He runs through these to emphasize that her views on "helping people" the "health service" and "education" are all represented by the Labour Party.

The close of the conversation is given in Example 4:

Example 4

Brown has responded to a question about how Duffy's grandchildren will be able to afford to go to University.

1. Brown: education (.) health and helping people that's what I'm about
2. that's what I'm about
3. Duffy: well [congratulations] ((shaking Brown's hand and
4. Party Official: [you've had your chance]
5. pats it)) and [I hope you I hope you keep it up]
6. Brown: [a- it's been very it's been very good to meet you]
7. Duffy yeah [nice to meet you]
8. Brown: [very good to meet you] and er you're wearing the right
9. colour today
10. Brown: [((laughs)) ((Brown puts his hand on Duffy back))]
11. Duffy: [((laughs))]
12. Brown: wh- wh- how many grandchildren do you have?
13. Duffy: two
14. Brown: two wh- what names are they?
15. Duffy they've just come back from Australia where they've been
16. stuck (.) for eig- nin- [ten days couldn't get] back
17. Brown: [but they got through now]
18. with this ash crisis
19. Brown: They got through now

20. Duffy: yeah yeah [they're home]
21. Brown: [we've been] trying to get people back quickly (.)
22. Duffy: yeah
23. Brown: but er are they're going to go to university? That's the plan?
24. Duffy: I hope so [(.)] they're only 12 and 10=
25. Brown: [yeah]
26. Brown: =oh [they're only 12 and 10] but [they're doing] well at school?
27. Duffy: [yeah (.) yeah] [but I think so]
28. Duffy: yeah yeah very good
29. Brown: a good family [good to see you]
30. Duffy: [and and the] education system in
31. Rochdale I will congratulate it
32. Brown: good and it's very nice to see you (.) take care

Brown repeats his own personal political commitments (as in Example 3, lines 13–17) as a form of pre-closing again using personal pronoun "I" (lines 1–2). Duffy then changes from face attack to issue congratulations, enhancing Brown's social identity and quality face signaling harmonious rapport management between them for the first time in the interaction (line 3). She warmly shakes and pats his hand. Brown reciprocates with phatic talk, stating how good it has been to meet her. Indeed, he states how "good" or "nice" it has been to meet her on four occasions in this closing stretch (lines 6, 8, 29 and 32). At lines 8–9, Brown shifts the talk from on-topic political talk to social talk using humour as a face-enhancing, solidarity-building mechanism (see Holmes and Stubbe 2003, Mullany 2004, 2006, 2007 for similar examples in workplace talk). He jokes about the colour of Duffy's jacket (its collar is red, the traditional colour of the Labour Party). Both Brown and Duffy laugh simultaneously in response (lines 10–11) and he puts his arm affectionately across her back.

Brown extends the social talk by asking Duffy about how many grandchildren she has (line 12). At line 14, he tries to maintain the social talk, but again, Brown asks a question that Duffy does not answer, leaving his adjacency pair sequence incomplete. Duffy instead shifts the talk back towards on-topic political talk by bringing up the volcanic ash crisis – Brown's government had recently been heavily criticized by elements of the media for its handling of this crisis when all UK airports were closed due to an eruption in Iceland. Brown closes this topic down swiftly (lines 19 and 21) and then reformulates another "grandchildren" question asking whether they are going to university (line 23). He then gives a final compliment "a good family", which is followed by a compliment from Duffy about the local education system (lines 30–31).

Brown uses phatic talk again as a pre-closing to emphasize how "nice" it has been to see her and he then closes with the phatic directive "take care". In this final stretch of discourse, with the exception of the talk on the topic of the volcanic ash, they engage in successful harmonious rapport management. Brown appears to have convinced Duffy by his arguments to the extent that she has twice congratulated him, enhancing his personal and social identity face as Prime Minister and the reputation of the Labour Party which he represents.

Indeed, according to the following quotation from *The Daily Mail* online newspaper, Duffy positively evaluated her encounter with Brown as soon as it had ended:

Example 5

> After the conversation, the 66-year-old widow tells reporters she thought the Prime Minister was "very nice" and that she will be voting Labour.
>
> (*Daily Mail* 2010)

Duffy's reported evaluation and judgement of Brown as "very nice", echoes Lakoff's (2005) work on the American political system. Lakoff argues that, in order to be elected, presidents have to ensure that they come across as 'nice' Although Lakoff's evidence is rather anecdotal, she makes the interesting claims that "niceness is the most important criterion of acceptability for public roles" and "niceness may be an important predictor of what makes many vote as they do" (Lakoff 2005: 182). If we look at Duffy's evaluation of Brown, then these features are observable in her evaluative comment – she has judged him as "very nice" and told journalists she will vote Labour.

However, Duffy's evaluation of Brown as "very nice" contrasts sharply with Brown's evaluations and judgements of her and their interaction. The next example is Dataset B:

Example 6[3]

After waving goodbye to the crowd Gordon Brown gets in his car with two of his election team members.

1. Brown: That was a disaster
2. Team member: Why what did she say?

3 As the furore specifically focuses on Brown's use of the term 'bigoted', it is worth providing a dictionary definition of the term for reference. The OED defines a

3. Brown:	Well just (.) ((sound of car door closing)) (xxx) should never
4.	have put me with that with that woman (.) whose idea was that?
5. Team member:	I don't know I didn't see her
6. Brown:	It's Sue's I think (-) it was just RIDICulous
7. Team member:	They they took pictures (.) I'm not sure that they'll go with
8.	that one
9. Brown:	They will go with it
10. Team member:	What did she say?
11. Brown:	Och everything she's just a sort of (.) bigoted woman that
12.	(.) said she used to be Labour I mean it's ridiculous
13.	((sound cuts))

Brown negatively evaluates the conversation both as a "disaster" and "ridiculous" (lines 1, 6 and 12). Despite the social and phatic talk and the solidarity-building at the end of the Brown-Duffy interaction, Brown's comments emphasize that from his perspective the series of verbal challenges from Duffy (as seen in Examples 1–3) have damaged him and his party. From a rapport management perspective, although Brown showed affective association in his conversation and showed that Duffy's concerns, interests and feelings were shared, his backstage performance shows that he thinks this encounter has been costly. From the perspective of equity rights, the cost of this conversation has outweighed the benefits.

Brown is letting off steam here, saying what he 'really feels' privately, backstage. However, it is worth noting that he is also simultaneously engaged in on-topic workplace talk with his Communication Director. Brown's challenging question (line 4) can be seen as an indirect accusation levelled at his team members. He threatens their quality and social identity face, accusing them of making the wrong professional decision (see Example 9 where Brown is questioned about blaming "Sue"). The Director protects his own personal and social identity face, making it clear that he played no part in the decision to let Duffy talk to Brown (line 5). Despite an attempt from his team member to express uncertainty that the media will even broadcast the conversation, Brown immediately rejects this with a declarative which demonstrates his certainty (line 9). The sound suddenly cuts out as they realize that the microphone is still recording. According to *Guardian* journalist Wintour (2010), at this point, Brown

---

'bigot' as: 'a person characterized by obstinate, intolerant, or strongly partisan beliefs' (OED Online, 2008).

was assured by his team that his comments would not be played due to an agreement they had with broadcasters to only use Brown's remarks with prior agreement.

Brown's behaviour is directly akin to Goffman's (1959: 168) backstage observations in a range of institutional settings where interlocutors speak to individuals "respectfully during the performance" but then such interactants may be "ridiculed, gossiped about, caricatured, cursed and criticized when the performers are backstage". Brown curses and criticizes Duffy as a "bigoted woman". As already highlighted above, such derogating is not in any sense unusual and it happens very regularly 'backstage', a necessary part of the process of us acquiring a sense of 'wholeness' as individuals (Coates 2000: 260). One key way in which interlocutors can derogate the absent audience which Goffman (1959: 171) highlights is to use different terms of reference or terms of address backstage. This is precisely what Brown has done here, using the unfavourable referent a "bigoted woman".

The next example is from Dataset C, when Duffy has now heard Brown's 'private' comments:

Example 7

Duffy has just come out of the Sky News truck where she has heard the audio recording of Brown's private conversation. She is walking away down the street and is pursued by two reporters.

1. SkyR: you've heard the Prime Minister's words in the Sky truck (.) what
2. is your instant reaction to that [and]
3. Duffy: [very upsetting] I'm very upset
4. ((Duffy turns to walk away from reporters))
5. BBCR: Did you expect that from him?
6. Duffy: No [he's he's he's an educated person] why has he come up
7. SkyR: [you're you're a lifelong you told]
8. Duffy: with it with words like that? He's going to lead this country and he's
9. calling a an ordinary woman who's just come up and asked him ques-
10. tions what most people'd ask him (.) they they're not doing anything
11. about the national debt an it's going to be tax tax tax for another 20 years
12. to get out of this national debt (.) and he's calling me a bigot
13. SkyR: You told me you were a lifelong (.) Labour supporter
14. Duffy: yes I wa- [I have]
15. SkyR: [and and you] that you have a postal vote [ready to] go in

16. Duffy: [yeah]
17. SkyR: will you be sending that?
18. Duffy: No

19. SkyR: I think some colleagues here are saying as well ((points to his
20. right)) do you think Gordon Brown should now apologize to you? (-)
21. Duffy: (-) yes I think so
22. SkyR: Would you like an ap- personal apology
23. [from the Prime Minister]
24. Duffy: [No not a personal one] I don't want see don't want to speak to
25. Duffy [him again really]
26. SkyR: [would you like him to write to you]
27. Duffy: it just give an apology I I I want to know (-) why them comments
28. I said there why I was called a bigot (-) ((purses her lips
29. and then turns away)) that's all ((she walks away))

Example 7 is a prime illustration of how the intervention of a third party can change an interlocutor's evaluation of a previous speech event. Coming back to Lakoff's (2005) observations, as Duffy now perceives Brown in a negative, 'not-nice' light, and is "very upset" by what he has said, he has lost her vote (line 18). She evaluates herself as an "ordinary woman" who cannot understand why Brown would call her "a bigot". Duffy only draws attention to talking to Brown on the topic of national debt and expresses incredulity on the basis of this that Brown has called her a bigot (line 12). She does not mention the topic of immigration at all. She constructs Brown's behaviour as completely inappropriate, using metalanguage to ask a question that expresses her disbelief "why has he come up with words like that?", which she places in direct contrast with her evaluation of him as an "educated person". Brown's behaviour has been judged explicitly as 'rude' by a number of commentators online on 28th April, as we can see in the short extracts given in Example 8 from Dataset F (though see also Section 4.1). Notably the first of these examples, Smith (2010), is from a member of Brown's own party and appeared on an official Labour Party blog:

Example 8

These comments were obviously rude and unfair. They will have offended Mrs Duffy and many others like her.

Smith (2010)

> Gordon Brown PM, was overheard getting back into his car making rude comments about a Labour voter in Rochdale, Gillian Duffy, to whom he had been talking about immigration.
>
> Wordpress.com (2010)

The action of a third party shifting a backstage interaction to frontstage, where the talk has not been designed for the audience who ends up hearing it, thus has significant consequences in terms of assessments of politeness and impoliteness/rudeness.

Coming back to Example 7, Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) demonstrate how apologies and demands for public apologies via the mass media are strategically important in contemporary political discourse in western cultures. It has now become commonplace to demand an apology if a person/group feels they have been wronged in some way in public life (see also Mullany and Stockwell 2010). In lines 19–20 it is members of the media themselves who raise the topic of Duffy requesting an apology from Brown. The journalist also highlights "some colleagues here", referring to other members of the media standing nearby, thus presenting a collective voice to encourage Duffy to ask for an apology. The Sky reporter even attempts to get Duffy to articulate what setting and medium of communication Brown should use when uttering his apology (lines 22 and 26). Duffy confirms that she wants an apology but not in person. She also wants to know exactly why she was called a bigot (lines 27–29).

Example 9 is from Dataset D, Brown's live radio interview:

Example 9

Approximately an hour after leaving Rochdale Gordon Brown is questioned about what he said in his car on BBC Radio 2. There is also a television camera focused on him while he is in the studio.

1. Interviewer:	As you went away a microphone picked you up saying that
2.	was a very bigoted woman (.) is that what you said?
3. Brown:	er I apologize if I have said anything like that eh what
4.	I think she was raising with me was an issue about
5.	immigration and saying that there were too many erm errrr
6.	people from Eastern Europe in the country and I do apologize
7.	if I have said anything that has been hurtful and I will
8.	apologize to her personally
9. Interviewer:	Someone has handed me the tape let's play it and see if we
10.	can hear it

11. ((Brown sits back abruptly in his chair and then leans forward.
12. He places his hand over his brow while the tape is played))
13. Interviewer: Th- that is what you said (.) erm is she not allowed to express
14. [her view to you or what?]
15. Brown: [of course she's allowed to ex]press her view and I was saying
16. that the prob- the problem was that erm I was dealing with a
17. question that she raised about erm immigration and I wasn't
18. given a chance to answer it because we had a whole melee
19. of press around there but of course I apologize if I said
20. anything that is (.) that is er been offensive and I would never
21. put myself in a position where I would want to (.) to say
22. anything like that about er err err a woman er a woman I I met
23. it it was a question about erm immigration that really I
24. I think was annoying
25. Interviewer: and you're blaming a member of your staff there Sue
26. [is it or (somebody)]
27. Brown: [No I'm blaming] myself and err I blame myself for what is
28. what is done but you've got to remember this was me being
29. helpful to the broadcasters with er with my microphone on eh
30. rushing into the car because I had to get to another appointment
31. and er (.) er they've chosen to play my private conversation
32. with er with the person who was in the car with me er I know
33. these thin- things can happen I I apologize profusely to the to
34. the lady concerned (.) I don't think she is er that I just think it
35. was just the view that she expressed that I was worried about
36. that I couldn't respond to

Brown apologizes five times in this interview (lines 3, 6, 8, 19 and 33). At line 7 he uses conditional "if" and states that he apologizes if he has said anything "hurtful". The tape is then played to him. On three occasions Brown directly refers to Duffy's comments on immigration as the reason for his bigot comment (lines 5–6, 16–19 and 23–24), though on two of these occasions he follows up immediately with an apology (lines 6 and 19–20) or the promise of an apology (lines 7–8). On the third occasion he describes the "question" as "annoying", but not Duffy herself. In lines 16–19, Brown states that he was not given a chance to answer her question. However, if we look back to the transcript he did take the floor and give a direct response (Example 3, lines 9–12). When he apologizes again he states that he does so "if" he has "been offensive" (line 19), still using the conditional here.

Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006: 734) point out that, in order for political apologies to be viewed as valid, they need an explicit illocutionary force-indicating device (IFID), and overt acceptance of personal responsibility for an act. Additionally, the act has to be committed by the apologizer her/himself. According to these criteria, Brown's apologies in Example 9 can be seen as valid. He uses the structure "I apologize" as an IFID on all five occasions, including use of the intensifier "profusely" in his final use of the performative speech act (line 33). He takes responsibility for an action that he himself committed – he is very quick to reject the interviewer's statement that he was blaming 'Sue' and immediately denies this and instead states he is blaming himself (line 27). It is important for Brown to do this so that his apology can be perceived as genuine. He offers a form of reparation by stating that he does not think Duffy is a bigot (he is careful not to repeat "bigot" and uses "that" instead, line 34). He states that he will also apologize in person, a signal that he perceives this to be a 'heavy offence' (Holmes 1995) and thus one that requires a personal apology.

He draws attention to the ethics of playing the tape in the public sphere when he states that it was the media who have "chosen to play my private conversation" (31–32) and he was "being helpful to the broadcasters" by keeping his microphone on. However, again he is careful not to assign blame here for this breach of confidentiality, despite the fact that a journalistic agreement regarding the reporting of remarks was broken, which came to light in the public sphere at a later date (Wintour 2010). Brown states "I know these things can happen" (line 32–33), which maintains that the force of his apology is not diminished as he does not side-step blame. Brown then changes his plans for the rest of the day and travels back to Rochdale to see Duffy face-to-face. Example 10 takes place when he comes out of Duffy's home:

Example 10

Brown speaks to reporters outside Duffy's house after talking to her privately inside.

I've just been talking to to Gillian er I'm mortified by what's happened I've given her my sincere apologies (.) I misunderstood what she said (.) and she has accepted that er there was a misunderstanding and she's accepted my apology er if you like I'm a penitent sinner (.) sometimes you say things that er you don't mean to say sometimes you say things er by mistake and sometimes when you say things (.) you want to correct it very quickly so I

> wanted to come here and say to Gillian (.) I was sorry to say that I'd made a mistake but to also say I understood the concerns that she was bringing to me and I had simply misunderstood some of the words that she yo- used (.) so erm I've er (-) made my apology er I've come here it's been a chance to talk to Gillian about her family and about er her relatives and about er (.) her own er history and what she's done but most of all it's a chance for me to apologize and say sorry er and to say sometimes you do make mistakes and er you use wrong words and once you've used that word and you've made a mistake you should withdraw it and say profound apologies and that's what I've done

We have to rely on Brown's interpretation of the event that has just taken place backstage as Duffy is not present frontstage at the press conference.[4] He uses seven IFIDs in this short speech, 'apologies/apology/apologize' on five occasions along with two instances of 'sorry', including the premodifers "sincere" and the intensifier "profound" to give an account of his apology interaction to the waiting media. Brown reports how Duffy "accepted" there was a "misunderstanding" and also "accepted" his apology. He makes evaluative reference to himself as being "mortified" and as a "penitent sinner". He uses metatalk to state that "sometimes" an unspecified, collective "you" "say things you don't mean", and "say things er by mistake". He repeats "mistake" three times in total to emphasize his evaluation of what happened in their

4 According to newspaper reports published later in the week when journalists had interviewed Duffy, she did accept Brown's apology but refused to join him outside. Collins, Chapman and Walters (2010) report that Duffy stated the following: "He wanted me to go outside with him and shake hands in front of all the cameras, but I didn't want that fuss. He stood for a minute or so and looked at me and said, 'So are you accepting my apology, Gillian?' I said yes, but I wasn't going outside." In this article she also commented that it was not the "bigoted" remark that really upset her but the fact that Brown referred to her as "that woman". She is reported to have stated the following: "I'm not 'that woman'. It's no way to talk of someone, that, is it? As if I'm to be brushed away. Why couldn't he have said 'that lady'?" This evaluation from Duffy is fascinating from a language and gender perspective. Although there is not space to develop the issue of language and gender thoroughly in this chapter, Duffy's complaint about Brown does accord with Lakoff's (1975: 55) observations that 'lady' is more polite than 'woman' as 'lady' gives status to the addressee. Arguably then Duffy's complaint demonstrates that she has judged Brown's use of 'woman' to be lacking in politeness and deference towards her (see also Holmes 2004). In the radio interview (Example 9) Brown uses both "woman" (line 22) and "lady" (line 34).

interaction. If we compare this stretch of talk with the radio interaction (Example 9) it is notable that Brown now does not explicitly mention immigration. He states more euphemistically that he understood "the concerns" but misunderstood the "words" Duffy used. He does not get any more specific than this. He is thus claiming that his "bigoted" evaluation was based upon his misinterpretation of Duffy's intentions as speaker. Brown refers to her as "Gillian" on three different occasions. This is the only term of address he uses, showing a clear shift in address terms/referents in his frontstage persona. Arguably he has adopted the FN strategy strategically here to portray an informal, non-hostile encounter. Brown has attempted to "restore equilibrium" between himself and Duffy, which Holmes (1998: 204) cites as an important characteristic of an apology.

4.1. Ethical 'backstage' issues

At a time when ethics in linguistics research have become stricter than ever (e.g., BAAL 2008), the mass media appear to have moved in the opposite direction and do not have any such ethical qualms about broadcasting talk recorded by accident without the consent of the speakers, despite earlier agreements (Wintour 2010). The development of blogs presents rapid and easy access to publically displayed justifications for decisions about broadcasting choices in terms of media 'production' and 'distribution' (cf. Fairclough 1995). This enables researchers to go further within the discursive approach to assess why certain forms of 'impolite/rude' discourse are broadcast in the first place. Shortly after Gordon Brown finished his apology outside Duffy's house, Tami Hoffman posted the following text on her electronic blog, providing her own evaluation of why she decided to broadcast Brown's private conversation:

> For a TV news producer this was a dream spot – the Prime Minister revealing a chink in his carefully choreographed election campaign. Caught on tape – and seen by me before anyone else had noticed … The confrontation betwen [sic] the PM and Gillian Duffy was going out on the BBC but they cut off the pictures before the crucial departure shot. I was intrigued by Gordon Brown's body language. Without the audio on I couldn't work out if this was a friendly chat or a hostile altercation. The body language didn't add up. And when I listened in, I was struck by what I felt was the very forced jolliness of the PM asking about her grandchildren and joking about her red jacket. It didn't ring true. So headphones still on I watched him stride off to his car, and heard a very

> forceful slam of the door followed by a pause and then "That was ridiculous". Gruff, annoyed and most definately [sic] on camera. And then: "She's just a sort of bigoted woman who said she used to vote Labour".

From an im/politeness perspective it is notable that Hoffman expresses that she was unsure if the interaction was "a friendly chat" or "a hostile altercation" by viewing the body language alone. Even with the audio on, she expresses uncertainty with Brown's sincerity, evaluating his use of humour and social talk (analysed in Example 4) as "forced jolliness" She sidesteps the ethical issue by making passing comment that Brown was "definately [sic] on camera" – there is a sleight of hand here as Brown was not on camera. The car can be seen for a few seconds at the start of Example 5, but Brown himself was not visible at any stage.

She then accrues power for herself by presenting a self-evaluation that she had found a "magic moment":

> After days and days of my nose pressed to the coalface of election producing it was a magic moment. The day then played out like a feature length episode of In The Thick of It – Gillian's shock, Gordon's confession, the media's delight.

Arguably the most telling thing here is the direct comparison she makes between this and the fictional television series *In The Thick of It* – a satirical situation comedy based upon the UK Government. On the basis of these comments we can deduce that she chose to broadcast the private conversation as it made for good entertainment.

Hoffman's evaluation directly accords with an observation made by Lakoff (2005: 176), that there has been a shift towards 'infotainment' as far as political news broadcasting is concerned, whereby political news coverage has been collapsed with the genre of entertainment and celebrity-style gossip. It also accords with Culpeper (2005) and Bousfield's (2008) recent work on the popularity of impoliteness as a form of entertainment in the mass media in western cultures.

Guardian journalist Rupert Myers reacts to the lack of questioning of the morals and ethics of broadcasting this conversation in his blog published on the same afternoon. There is clear variability of opinion on this incident. Myers also offers a different perspective by praising Brown for being truthful:

> His [Brown's] comment was made in private, picked up by 'accident' No one seems to have questioned the scruples of a news team who wire a partially sighted man, then leave the microphone on him to find out what it might

> pick up off-camera. Is Sky News taking advantage of the prime minister's disability, his preoccupation with affairs of politics and state, or is it just a bit negligent? Some people are bigots, this lady may – to some people – seem like one of them, and it's refreshing to hear such unspun language. He might have said 'we agree to disagree' or used some other flaccid political colloquialism for the truth – that to Gordon, this lady's views were bizarre – but he just said it like it was. More's the pity that he didn't say it on air.
>
> Myers (2010)

Myers expresses his wish Brown had said this comment "on air" and thus frontstage. He draws attention to the fact that "some people" will interpret Duffy's comments as bigoted, and for once it was good to hear Brown being honest and direct: "he just said it like it was". He positively evaluates Brown's use of what he terms "unspun language", very different from the carefully choreographed presentations given in controlled, frontstage media contexts.

Furthermore, the following day, journalist Milena Popena wrote a blog entry entitled "My anger at Gillian Duffy and all the people who didn't stand up to her" with the by-line: "This disenfranchised eastern European will receive no apology". In this blog entry, she evaluates her reaction as the previous day's events unfolded:

> Anger. Anger at Gillian Duffy, anger at all the people who weren't willing to stand up to her … More anger. This time at being disempowered and disenfranchised; at being a cheap target for political point scoring because Duffy and the 60 million people like her have a vote, and I and the couple of hundred thousand people like me don't, and therefore she will always get a grovelling apology from the prime minister, and we won't … political culture in the UK is such that no politician has any choice but to grovel to the bigots. Because standing up and explaining to them instead that immigrants make a massive contribution to the economy, let alone that all people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of nationality, citizenship or contribution, would be political suicide.
>
> Popena (2010)

Popena's entry also illustrates variability in the assessments and evaluations of the Brown-Duffy event and her perspective accords most closely with Myers' evaluation. From Popena's perspective, Duffy's use of language about Eastern Europeans was clearly bigoted. Instead of being able to say this in a frontstage context, Brown did not have "any choice" but to "grovel to the bigots" otherwise he would be committing "political suicide".

Popena focuses in particular upon apologies, and her comments draw attention to how ideologically driven apologies are as political speech acts. Duffy received an apology, but Popena, makes it clear that, by apologizing to Duffy, Brown legitimized Duffy's "bigoted" belief. From Popena's perspective, this should now warrant an apology to her as an "Eastern European" who, as a UK taxpayer, has been ignored at the expense of trying not to lose votes, along with a failure to be treated with any "dignity" and "respect" There is thus clear evidence here of political apologies generating yet more controversy after they have been delivered (Harris, Grainger and Mullany 2006).

5. Conclusions

It is the intention that this chapter has illustrated the benefits of taking an integrated discursive approach to im/politeness through detailed empirical analysis of a range of spoken and written texts. Incorporating Goffman's theory of performance, components of Bell's audience design model and Spencer-Oatey's rapport management framework have provided an eclectic framework to explore the Brown-Duffy incident. The analysis has shown how a member of the mass media, in the form of third party intervention, made a very strategic choice to broadcast a 'backstage' interaction, thus shifting backstage to frontstage without the interlocutors' consent. There is an observable fusion between public and private spheres that has taken place here and this is arguably something that continues to be eroded as political broadcasting shifts more towards 'infotainment' This raises a range of ethical issues in terms of recorded media data, consent and permission. Speakers cannot ensure that they have parity between their language style and their audience if they are not in full knowledge of exactly who their audience is. This interactional event emphasizes the danger of eavesdroppers and the potential damage they can do if the stakes are high and speakers have no conscious awareness that their audience has shifted.

This chapter has also emphasized the overarching importance and ideological significance of political apologies and how this speech act, performed across stretches of discourse, continues to play an important role in political discourse in the UK. The range of data that has been analysed here has enabled a number of discursive issues to be raised. We can see clear evidence of the variability of opinion that surrounds such controversial issues of im/politeness. Right-wing tabloid *The Sun* conducted a poll to assess if Brown's comments had changed the way people intended to vote. They gave two options: 50%

of people agreed with *The Sun's* interpretation that: "It's a storm in a teacup. Mr Brown was simply letting off steam in private. We should think no worse of him"; 46% went for the alternative "Mr Brown is a hypocrite – saying one thing in public and the opposite in private"; 4% were undecided.

Interestingly, *The Sun*, who had already declared its allegiance to the Conservative Party, decided not to publish these findings (Siddique 2010). Despite Brown's powerful official position as Prime Minister and the fact that 50% of people in *The Sun's* poll thought he was "simply letting off steam in private", the data analysis across the different discursive events of the 28th April has demonstrated how Brown was forced by the media to apologise publically. This clearly emphasises the significant power that can be enacted by the mass media within General Election campaigns and how a Prime Minister's status and power can be very quickly lost and his professional identity damaged in these uncontrolled, frontstage contexts.

Over 40 years of empirical research in sociolinguistics and pragmatics has shown how, when and why speakers change their speech styles, including the linguistic im/politeness strategies they use, depending upon context and the speaker's perception of audience (Bell 1997: 240). Sociolinguists have long argued that variations within individuals' linguistic behaviour are crucial in order for us to have a perceived sense of wholeness. Individuals are therefore fully entitled to be 'not nice' or derogatory backstage to achieve such wholeness. This view accords with the dominant theoretical paradigm of the socially-constructed nature of identity as a fluid, performed action which varies from context to context. When third party intervention takes place and backstage becomes frontstage, there is a resultant mismatch between audience design, language style and social identity performance. This can greatly affect judgements and evaluations of im/politeness after the initial interaction has been completed, as we have seen in the Brown-Duffy incident.

Appendix: Transcription conventions

SKYR:	Sky News Reporter
BBCR:	BBC Reporter
(.)	indicates a pause of two seconds or less
(-)	indicates a pause of over two seconds
(xxx)	indicates material that was impossible to make out
{xxx}	indicates material that has been edited out for the purposes of confidentiality
[ ]	closed brackets indicate simultaneous speech

% %	percentage signs indicate material was uttered quietly
RIDICULOUS	Capital letters indicate material was uttered loudly

References

BAAL
2008 *British Association of Applied Linguistics: Recommendations on Good Practice.* http://www.baal.org.uk/about_goodpractice_full.pdf

Bell, Allan
1984 Language style as audience design. *Language in Society* 13: 145–204.

Bell, Allan
1997 Language style as audience design. In *The Sociolinguistics Reader*, Nikolas Coupland and Adam Jaworski (eds.), 240–250. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Bell, Allan
2007 Style and the linguistic repertoire. In *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*, Carmen Llamas, Louise Mullany and Peter Stockwell (eds.), 95–100. London: Routledge.

Bousfield, Derek
2008 *Impoliteness in Interaction.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Brown, Penelope and Stephen Levinson
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Butler, Judith
1990 *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* New York: Routledge.

Coates, Jennifer
1996 *Women Talk.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Coates, Jennifer
2000 Small talk and subversion: Female speakers backstage. In *Small Talk*, Justine Coupland (ed.), 241–263. Harlow: Pearson.

Collins, Laura, Andrew Chapman and Simon Walters
2010 Gordon won't be getting my vote. *Mail Online*, 2nd May. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1270337/Gordon-wont-getting-vote-Gillian-Duffy-reveals-REALLY-upset-devastating-exchange-PM.html

Conboy, Martin
2006 *Tabloid Britain.* London: Routledge.

Culpeper, Jonathan
2005 Impoliteness and entertainment in the television quiz show: The weakest link. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 35–72.

Daily Mail Online
2010 Gordon Brown's most humiliating day. 29th April. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/election/article-1269761/Gordon-Browns-Gillian-Duffy-gaffe-PMs-humiliating-day-minute-minute.html

Eelen, Gino
2001 *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Fairclough, Norman
1995 *Media Discourse*. London: Longman.

Goffman, Erving
1959 *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Harmondsworth: Penguin

Goffman, Erving
1967 *Interaction Ritual*: *Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. New York: Anchor Books.

Grainger, Karen and Sandra Harris (eds.)
2007 Apologies special issue. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3(1).

Hall, Kira and Mary Bucholtz
2010 Locating identity in language. In *Language and Identities*, Carmen Llamas and Dominic Watt (eds.), 18–28. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Harris, Sandra
2001 Being politically impolite: Extending politeness theory to adversarial political discourse. *Discourse & Society* 12 (4): 451–472.

Harris, Sandra, Karen Grainger and Louise Mullany
2006 The Pragmatics of political apologies. *Discourse & Society* 17 (6): 715–737.

Hasan, Mehdi
2010 Brown, "Bigotgate" and the Prescott punch. *NewStatesman* Blog 28th April 2010 http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/mehdi-hasan/2010/04/prescott-campbell-brown-blair

Haugh, Michael
2007 The discursive challenge to politeness research: An interactional alternative. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 295–317.

Haugh, Michael
2010 When is an email really offensive? Argumentativity and variability in evaluations of impoliteness. *Journal of Politeness Research* 6 (1): 7–31.

Hoffman, Tami
2010 The hand of history? *Sky News Online Frontline Blog*, 28th April http://blogs.news.sky.com/frontlineblog/Post:4e41a29d-f4f2-4adf-b05a-9cea0bff8973

Holmes, Janet
1995 *Women, Men and Politeness*. Harlow: Pearson.

Holmes, Janet
1998 Apologies in New Zealand English. In *The Sociolinguistics Reader*. Vol. 2, Jenny Cheshire and Peter Trudgill (eds.), 201–239. London: Arnold.

Holmes, Janet
2004 Power, lady and linguistic politeness. In *Language and Woman's Place: Text and Commentaries*, Mary Bucholtz (ed.), 151–164. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Holmes, Janet and Maria Stubbe
2003 *Power and Politeness in the Workplace*. Harlow: Pearson.

Lakoff, Robin
1975 *Language and Woman's Place*. New York: Harper Row.

Lakoff, Robin
2005 The politics of nice. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (2): 173–191.

Locher, Miriam and Richard Watts
2005 Politeness theory and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research*. 1 (1): 19–34.

Mills, Sara
2003 *Gender and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mullany, Louise
2002 'I don't think you want me to get a word in edgeways do you John?' Re-assessing (im)politeness, language and gender in political broadcast interviews. *English Studies: Working Papers on the Web* 3: http://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/politeness/index.htm

Mullany, Louise
2004 Gender, politeness and institutional power roles: Humour as a tactic to gain compliance in workplace business meetings. *Multilingua* 23 (1–2): 13–37.

Mullany, Louise
2006 'Girls on tour': Politeness, small talk and gender identity in managerial business meetings. *Journal of Politeness Research* 2 (1): 55–77.

Mullany, Louise
2007 *Gendered Discourse in the Professional Workplace*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Mullany, Louise
2008 'Stop hassling me!' Impoliteness in the workplace. In *Impoliteness in Language*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.), 231–255. Berlin: Mouton.

Mullany, Louise
2010 Impoliteness, rapport management and workplace culture: Truckers performing masculinities on Canadian ice-roads. In *Politeness Across*

Cultures, Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini and Dániel Kádár (eds.), 61–84. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Mullany, Louise and Peter Stockwell
2010 *Introducing English Language*. London: Routledge.

Myers, Rupert
2010 Don't condemn Gordon Brown for candid comment. *Comment is Free at the Polls: Election 2010 Blog. The Guardian* 28th April. http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/apr/28/gordon-brown-honest-blow

OED Online
2008 'bigot' entry. www.oed.com

Popena, Milena
2010 My anger at Gillian Duffy and all the people who didn't stand up to her. *Comment is Free at the Polls: Election 2010 Blog. The Guardian* 29th April. http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/apr/29/gillian-duffy-eastern-european

Reisigl, Martin and Ruth Wodak
2001 *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism*. London: Routledge.

Siddique, Haroon
2010 Unpublished You/Gov/Sun poll shows support for Gordon Brown over bigot remark. Election 2010. The Guardian. 29th April. http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/apr/29/unpublished-sun-poll-brown-bigot

Smith, Alex
2010 Labour Party Member's Blog. 28th April. http://www.labourlist.org/brown-apologises-for-bigoted-woman-comment

Sparrow, Andrew
2010 Election Live: *The Guardian*. 28th April. http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/blog/2010/apr/28/general-election-2010-live-blog

Spencer-Oatey, Helen
2002 Managing rapport in talk. *Journal of Pragmatics* 34 (5): 529–545.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen
2005 (Im)politeness, face and perceptions of rapport. *Journal of Politeness Research*. 1 (1): 95–119.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen (ed.)
2008 *Culturally Speaking: Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory*. 2nd edition. London: Continuum.

Terkourafi, Marina
2005 Beyond the micro-level in politeness research. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (2): 237–259.

Van Dijk, Teun
1993 *Elite Discourse and Racism*. London: Sage.
Watts, Richard
2003 *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambrdige University Press.
Wenger, Etienne
1998 *Communities of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wintour, Patrick
2010 Revealed: What happened after Gordon brown's 'bigot' remark. *The Guardian,* 18th May. http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/may/18/bigotgate-what-happened-next
Wintour, Patrick and Nicholas Watt
2010 Gordon Brown's election car crash provides Labour with its most dangerous moment of the campaign. *Wintour and Watt Blog, The Guardian,* 29th April. http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/wintour-and-watt/2010/apr/28/gordon-brown-election-car-crash/print
WordPress.com
2010 Gordon Brown on "bigoted woman" Gillian Duffy. 28th April. http://keeptonyblairforpm.wordpress.com/2010/04/28/videgordon-brown-on-bigoted-woman-gillian-duffy-youve-blown-it-gordon/

Chapter 6

'First order' and 'second order' politeness: Institutional and intercultural contexts

Karen Grainger

1. Introduction

This essay examines the development of politeness theory over the last three decades and contributes to the on-going debate within politeness theory about what politeness and politeness theory is or should be. Using data from a number of previous research projects, I review how these developments are reflected in my own work on face-to-face interaction in a variety of contexts. Initially my work was informed by Brown and Levinson's publications on this topic (1978, 1987), and subsequently by other scholars' developments and departures from their model. Over the course of the last decade many of these scholars have attempted to deal with the question of what exactly we mean by 'politeness' These discussions (for example Eelen 2001; Mills 2003; Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann 2003; Spencer-Oatey, 2005) reflect a problem of ambiguity in the term. Watts (2003), has attempted to clarify the distinction between popular and technical definitions by taking up Eelen's (2001) distinction between politeness1 and politeness2, and dubbing them 'first order' and 'second order' politeness respectively. Subsequently, Locher and Watts (2005) have insisted that it is the first of these that should be studied by language and interaction researchers.

This post-modernist emphasis on speakers' intentions and hearers' perceptions is quite a different enterprise, then, from the Goffman-inspired attempt of Brown and Levinson to account for the link between the management of social relations and language use. It suggests that there are fundamentally different ways of going about politeness research. First order politeness is an ethnographic approach to perceptions of socially appropriate behaviour (called 'etiquette' in some non-academic circles), while second order politeness, as Locher and Watts (2005) point out, is really about relational face-work and not to do with the common meaning of politeness at all. In this conception of so-called 'discursive politeness', then, it is considered inadvisable to study second order politeness because it is analyst-driven, not data-driven.

In this essay, I will address the debate around 'first order' and 'second order' notions of politeness and will argue the case for maintaining a focus on technical, second order notions of politeness, whilst also recognising the importance of first order concepts of politeness in analysis. Using examples of institutional interaction that I have worked on over the last decade, I will argue firstly, that, despite the developments outlined above, the notion of 'politeness' in Brown and Levinson's technical sense remains a useful contribution to the analysis of verbal strategies that mediate human interactions. There are, indeed, limitations to this early non-discursive formulation of politeness theory, but I will argue (following Haugh 2007) that one can nevertheless usefully address these limitations whilst maintaining a 'second order' conception of politeness.

However, the position I ultimately argue for is more complicated than this. My recent enquiries into intercultural 'indirectness' between Zimbabwean English speakers and British English speakers have led me to question the value of analyses that exclude first order definitions of politeness. The examination of naturally-occurring intercultural encounters suggests that British speakers and Zimbabwean speakers operate with differing interpretation frameworks with regard to indirectness and politeness. Using the analytical tools of a combined Gricean and interactional approach, I show how a second order analysis can be both theoretically and empirically rigorous. However, I also argue that indirectness cannot effectively be understood as a politeness mechanism without making reference to participants' intentions and interpretations. To this end, I also examine participants' metadiscourses on their conversational behaviour and I further argue that without such 'insider' insights off-record politeness strategies could go completely unrecognised by both participants *and* analyst.

In order to help position my work within the various developments in politeness research, I will start by giving a brief overview of the major trends of the last three decades. This will, by no means be a comprehensive review as this has been done before in several places (notably, Eelen 2001; Watts 2003). However, I will suggest in my overview that developments in politeness theory can be characterised as appearing in three major 'waves' of thought.

2. Three 'waves' of politeness theory

2.1. First wave: Gricean approaches

The first wave of politeness theorising arises out of the philosophy of language and meaning that is attributable mostly to J. L. Austin (1962) and Paul H. Grice (1975). This approach to politeness is associated with scholars such as Lakoff (1973, 1989), Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Leech (1983), all of whom recognise that there is more to meaning in conversation than can be encapsulated by the four maxims of Grice's Cooperative Principle. Even though Lakoff's work pre-dates Brown and Levinson's by up to five years, as we know by now, it was Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness as the strategic management of face needs in interaction that gained most currency. This may be because it is only the Brown and Levinson model that provides detailed explanation of why particular lexical and syntactic choices are made by speakers on particular occasions. According to Coupland, Grainger and Coupland (1988: 253) "Brown and Levinson's 1978 extended chapter transformed politeness from an apparently peripheral sociolinguistic concern into a distinctive theory of social interaction"

By the same token, it is also Brown and Levinson's work that has attracted the most criticism, although many of the criticisms can be levelled at Gricean approaches generally. The problem of decontextualised and constructed examples of speech acts is fundamental and is one which applies to many pragma-linguistic accounts of language use. As discourse analysts know, much of the meaning of talk lies in its sequential and situational context. In their critique of Brown and Levinson, Coupland, Grainger and Coupland (1988: 255) point out that, "Any empirical work on politeness needs to confront the sequential realisation of politeness phenomena in discourse" Indeed, much empirical work since then (e.g. Sifianou 1992; Grainger 2004, amongst many others) has shown that this lack of attention to both local and global context (such as institutional, social and cultural values) means that Gricean models of politeness cannot be predictive in the way that they claim to be (see Eelen 2001; Watts 2005; Locher 2006). This is a central theme of the post-modern approaches to politeness theory to be discussed below.

Other criticisms which apply to Gricean pragma-linguistic approaches are that they tend to be overly focussed on speaker intention to (e.g. Eelen 2001; Mills 2003; Arundale 2008) and as such they assume a fairly static and cognitive view of human interaction that is in line with the encoding-decoding model of communication (Arundale 1999). Furthermore, it has been argued that in this approach there is too much importance placed on the analyst's interpretation of speaker meaning, since there is no reason why the analyst's interpretation is any more valid than the participants' (Eelen 2001; Mills 2003; Watts 2003, 2005; Locher 2006).

2.2. Second wave: the post-modern approach / discursive politeness

The 'discursive' approach to politeness (Locher 2006) was developed largely in response to the failings of the Gricean – specifically Brown and Levinson's treatment. Informed by post-modernism (Haugh 2007), – this approach takes the constructionist perspective that meaning is fluid, negotiable between participants and as such cannot reside in the minds of speakers in the form of 'intention' The main thrust of this approach, developed initially by Watts (2003, 2005) Locher (2004, 2006) and Locher and Watts (2005) is that the study of politeness should focus on the 'discursive dispute' (Watts 2003) of what it means to participants to be polite. This emphasis on participant interpretations and evaluations of politeness leads Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992) and subsequently Watts (2003) and Locher (2004) to make a distinction between 'first order' and 'second order' politeness and to argue that:

> We consider it important to take native speaker assessments of politeness seriously and to make them the basis of a discursive, data-driven, bottom-up approach to politeness. The discursive dispute over such terms in instances of social practice should represent the locus of attention for politeness research.
>
> (Locher and Watts 2005: 16)

In other words, Locher and Watts are arguing here that there is no place in politeness research for a second order, technical and specialised notion of 'politeness' as this privileges the analyst's perspective. Instead, they would focus on hearer perceptions of what is and is not considered 'polite' in naturally-occurring interactions.

A major advantage of the discursive 'turn' is that its emphasis is on situated, naturally occurring discourse data and, to this extent at least, a broadly discursive approach has achieved much currency in politeness research in the last decade, not least in the studies of 'impoliteness' (e.g. Culpeper, Bousfield, and Wichmann 2003; Culpeper 2005), gender and politeness (e.g. Mills 2003), politeness at work (e.g. Holmes and Schnurr 2005; Mullany 2006) and institutional politeness (e.g. Harris 2001). However, not all of these take up the extreme position argued for by Locher (2004, 2006), Watts (2003, 2005) and Locher and Watts (2005) to "abandon any attempts to develop a universal, cross-culturally valid theory of politeness altogether" (Haugh 2007: 297). Indeed, there has, more latterly, been some criticism of this position on the grounds that, like the Gricean approach, it aims to account for such psychological concepts as 'intention', 'perception' and 'evaluation' Thus, as Arundale (2006) and Haugh (2007) argue, *both* the Gricean and the post-modern approaches assume an encoding-decoding model of communication. Furthermore, in the discursive approach participant interpretations are typically accessed by asking them for post-hoc evaluations. Participants, then, become the analysts of their own interactions and this conflates the roles of participant and analyst and reduces the role of the analyst to merely representing participant understandings of the interaction (Haugh 2007: 303).

A third criticism of the discursive approach, articulated by Terkourafi (2005) is that it moves away from trying to account for linguistic choices and is in danger of reducing politeness theory to an account of what terms people use for their behaviour in various situations. Arguably, then, for those of us interested in explaining how language mediates human relations, such a preoccupation is not very interesting.

2.3. Third wave: sociological / interactional approaches

Whereas the post-modern approach to politeness theory can be characterised as a reaction to the Gricean approach, the interactional approach cannot accurately be said to contrast with either the post-modern approach or the Gricean approach since it overlaps with both. Indeed, most of the scholars I have referred to, including myself, may well consider themselves to be part of the post-modern or discursive trend, not least because they retain both an emphasis on contextualised, naturalistic discourse data and an interest in participants' constructions of meaning in interaction. This, however, is where the important differences lie. One principle which underlies both the Gricean and interactional approaches to meaning is the fundamentally Austinian notion that speech is social action (Austin 1962). It is this insight that explains how and why conversational participants make links between linguistic form and their functional meaning. As O'Driscoll (2007: 486) points out, there is much of value in Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness since it provides a "culture-neutral, empirical tool for examining interaction 'on the ground' with pan-cultural applicability.". My interpretation of scholars such as O'Driscoll, Arundale, Haugh, and Terkourafi, whom I am placing in the 'interactional' category, is that they are attempting to bring back into politeness theory the 'sociological' analysis that Goffman calls for in his article on frame analysis, in which he argues that we need to consider both philosophical/linguistic accounts of how people interact as well as "the moral norms of considerateness which bind individuals qua interactants." (Goffman [1983] 1997: 171). This involves the "mechanics of encounters" (Goffman 1997: 172), such as the turn-taking and topic control conventions that we find described in conversation analysis (Sacks et al. 1978; Schegloff et al. 2002). Arundale's (2006) exposition of Face Constituting theory, Haugh's (2007) critique of the discursive approach to politeness and Terkourafi's (2005) frame-based view also favour this sociological approach to the analysis of interactional data. Bargiela-Chiappini (2009) also argues cogently that the study of face and politeness could benefit from an ethnomethodological perspective. The advantage is that it enables the analyst to offer an empirically observable interpretation of negotiated meaning without having recourse to participants' post-hoc evaluations of the encounter. Because the analyst justifies his/her interpretation by focussing on what participants themselves make relevant in talk, the post-modern emphasis on meaning construction is retained but the analysis of politeness is not reduced to a discussion of 'folk' definitions of terms.

The interactional approach, then, seems to take the best of the post-modern approach (for the way it answers the criticisms of the Gricean approach) but retains a technical, 'second order' conception of politeness as a way of accounting for language-in-interaction. Indeed, this has been the approach to interactional data analysis that I have taken in much of my own work on talk between health professionals and elderly patients. I will now give a brief example of what a second order politeness analysis can bring to these cases.

3. Second order politeness in medical interaction

My original engagement with Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness was in connection with the analysis of naturally occurring interactions between medical professionals (usually nurses) and (usually elderly) patients. As I argued at the time (e.g. Grainger 1990, 1993), the medical context would seem to lend itself very well to the application of politeness theory, being notoriously full of potentially face-threatening asymmetrical encounters involving troubles-telling, compliance-gaining, embarrassment and bad news delivery. Indeed, some researchers from the nursing field recognised the potential for politeness theory to provide a much needed theoretical underpinning of nursing communication research. Spiers (1998), for example, states that:

> The current communication frameworks used in nursing is inadequate to explain how communication is directed by basic human and cultural needs New conceptual frameworks are required to illuminate how communication in interaction is negotiated and mutually constructed and how specific verbal strategies function in multiple ways to respond to the instrumental demands of the situation as well as the personal needs of both participants.
> (Spiers 1998: 25–6).

The emphasis here, then, is quite clearly on a technical conception of politeness as a theoretical concept which can help to explain real-life interactional behaviour. This can be illustrated in my work on the use of humour by nurses on an acute geriatric ward (Grainger 2004), where I maintain that:

> verbal humour and nurse-patient interaction both invite examination in the light of politeness theory, the former being a highly relational message form, and the latter being a setting potentially rich in face-threatening acts... by applying politeness theory to talk in this context, we can both gain a sophisticated explanation of how humour is used in nursing interactions, as well as highlighting some of the deficiencies of Brown and Levinson's model.
> (Grainger 2004: 40)

In the next section I take a small extract from this study to illustrate just what a second order – and specifically Gricean – approach to politeness can (and can't) offer the analysis of face to face institutional interaction.

3.1. Humour in nurse-patient interaction

These data were gathered using a broadly ethnographic method in which I was non-participant observer over a period of three weeks in a British National Health Service hospital. Certain nurses agreed to audio-record themselves while they went about their duties of bathing and dressing patients and the following extract is taken from one of the recorded interactions that involved prolonged sequences of humorous banter. The transcription used is a modified version of that used by Jefferson (1984). In this case, two nurses (both women) are engaged in dressing a rather frail male patient:

N = nurse; P = patient; Aux = auxiliary nurse

1.	N:	(louder, to P) you look so handsome we'll have to get you a date (1.0) won't we? have you got any money? (.) to take out? and get them a meal?
2.	P:	no
3.	N:	oh they're all fussy in here see they want to be treated like ladies
4.	P:	((3 syllables)) [ ]
5.	N:	we'll have to find you one with lots of money (laughing) who can take you out is it?
6.	P:	mm
7.	N:	what do you like blondes or brunettes? (1.0) eh?
8.	P:	blondes
9.	N:	<u>blondes</u> are you? (laughing) (referring to Aux) look Delia's nearly blonde look she's got enough grey hair (laughs) [ ]
10.	Aux:	I'm ((getting)) <u>grey</u> I am (1.0) getting old I am Cedrick (.) do you want to go back and sit on your chair now to put your pants on ?

A detailed analysis of this exchange, and others, can be found in Grainger (2004), but for the purposes of this essay I will just point out that a Gricean approach to these data takes us some way towards an account of the encounter witnessed here. In Gricean terms, the humour present here arises out of the assumption that the nurses do not mean what they say. In other words, they are flouting Grice's truth maxim for the purposes of lightening the conversation. Brown and Levinson's theory would describe many of the speech acts here as examples of positive politeness ("you look so handsome"; "we'll have to find you one with lots of money"), in that they "claim common ground" and "convey S and H are cooperators" (Brown and Levinson 1978: 102). Thus, on the surface these strategies are suggestive of a friendly relationship. Indeed, Brown and Levinson (1987: 124) discuss joking and describe it as a basic technique "for putting H 'at ease'", which may well be its intended function in this case.

However, the complexity of humour in interaction cannot be fully captured within the notion of positive politeness since verbal play can be *simultaneously* affiliative and distancing (Kotthoff 1996). In Grainger (2004) I argue that the institutional context, and power relations therein, mean that although this humour is superficially solidarity forming, it also has a distancing function. Furthermore, Brown and Levinson's explanation of joking behaviour (Brown and Levinson 1987: 124–5) does not take account of the dynamism of interaction. Such institutional talk needs to be viewed from an intergroup perspective, taking into account institutional influences and group goals and identities.

To some extent, then, this conclusion suggests that a post-modern, discursive approach to politeness is called for, in which the notion of politeness as a constructed and negotiated occurrence is applied to naturally-occurring institutional data. In as much as the Gricean approach does not take account of context specific factors, I would agree that these data do expose the weaknesses of Brown and Levinson's model. However, this still does not imply that we should abandon 'politeness' in its second order application because it provides a useful theoretical framework with which to interpret institutional interaction. The focus of interest in the interaction reproduced above is not the 'discursive dispute' over what constitutes polite behaviour, but rather, the systematic analysis of the mechanisms by which interpersonal relationships are managed. If the Gricean approach can be extended to take account of the dynamic and context-dependent nature of natural talk, then it may still have merit as a model for the analysis of second order politeness.

In the next section I will show how I have taken a combined Gricean and ethnomethodological (conversation analytic) approach to the management of bad news delivery in health care. Again, in this case, it is not members' understandings and definitions of politeness that I am concerned with, but their management of bad news delivery and reception.

3.2. Bad news delivery in stroke care

The extract reproduced below is part of a set of ethnographic data gathered in a stroke rehabilitation ward in the UK in 2002. The full data set consists of video and audio recordings of interactions between two right-hemisphere stroke patients and various health professionals. In this case, the conversation is between an elderly patient and the occupational therapist (OT) who has just been to the patient's home to assess whether it is suitable for the patient to return to in her newly disabled state. The patient has not fully realised the extent of the lifestyle changes she will have to make.

OT = occupational therapist; P = patient

1. P: I've been thinking if er (1.0) ((I'm gonna)) sleep downstairs I've still got to upstairs go upstairs for t'shower haven't I?
2. OT: (1.0) your shower is upstairs yes yeh but it's its just (.) whether (.) the carers can actually get you off the stair lift isn't it (.) because before you were standing yourself up weren't you?
3. P: yeh=
4. OT: =yeh (.) if you have a think about how (.) sort of much help we're having to give you at the moment
5. P: yeh (.) I'm hoping to improve
6. OT: well that's what we're (.) well if we plan for (.) what we've got <u>now</u> (1.0) and then (.) if things change and we'll obviously we'll carry on working <u>with</u> you
7. P: yeh
8. OT: and that and so (.) it its not a quick (.) business sort of getting things sorted out particularly (1.0) so that you know people <u>do</u> change (2.0) in that period sometimes so
   [ ]
9. P: yeh
10. OT: that you know (.) if we've got things sorted in that way then (2.0) you know we're not holding you up if you do need (.) all the things we put in we're not then holding you up at a later stage so er
   [ ]
11. P: yeh

Once again, a full analysis of this interaction can be found elsewhere (Grainger, Masterson and Jenkins 2005), but for this essay I will concentrate on a few illustrative points. A Gricean analysis can explain the language use here using a number of theoretical concepts. Notably, the OT's response at line 2 ("your shower is upstairs yes") flouts the maxim of quantity – she tells the patient something she already knows. The implicature to be made, then, is perhaps that she finds answering the question directly is difficult. Instead, she opts for a strategy of agreeing with an uncontroversial fact: that the shower is upstairs. In Brown and Levinson's terms this is a positive politeness strategy. As such, it orients to the patient's positive, affiliative face needs. She uses a number of other positive politeness strategies throughout this interaction, such as seeking agreement (turn 2: "before you were standing up weren't you?") and showing willingness to cooperate (turn 6). She also can be seen to employ negative politeness strategies such as the minimizing use of "just" at turn 2 and the conditional (if you think about ") at turn 4. In this context, it makes sense that the OT would construct the situation as both cooperative (showing a willingness to be supportive) and distancing (not wanting to intrude too far into the patient's affairs). Thus, although Brown and Levinson's theory does not allow for the combined use of these strategies, it does at least provide some tools with which to interpret the language use here.

In addition to this, if we then take an ethnomethodological approach to analysis and look at the sequencing and take up of turns, we can see how the negotiation of the interaction as 'bad news' is established collaboratively over a series of turns. For example, in this extract, (as has already been pointed out under a Gricean analysis) the OT does not initially take up the part of the patient's question that relates to how she will get upstairs for a shower. Instead, she orients only to the part about where the shower is and then follows this with a "perspective display invitation" (Maynard 1992) at turns 2 and 4 ("before you were standing up weren't you?"). Thus, the bad news that she will not, in fact, be able to go upstairs to use the bathroom, is initially 'withheld' (Maynard 2003) by the OT. The patient is nevertheless guided towards this realization by being asked to make her own assessment of her physical capabilities. The patient is then both compliant with and resistant to this perspective (turn 5, "yeh (.) I'm hoping to improve") after which the OT signals partial agreement through the use of the discourse marker "well" at turn 6 and modifies the patient perspective by saying "if things change " Thus, through a series of turns in which the participants display their perspectives, we can see how they navigate their way towards an understanding of the situation and how they manage the interactionally tricky business of delivering and receiving bad news.

As with the nursing data, the analyses that I have outlined here make use of combined Gricean and interactional methods and theories. What politeness theory explains in terms of interactional face-saving, conversation analysis expands on in structural and sequential terms, and does not have to make claims about speaker intentions or hearer evaluations in order to say something about meaning construction. In this method, we see how meaning is constructed in the observable interactional space, rather than in the minds of speakers. Therefore, while it is true that the application of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to situated naturally occurring discourse has unearthed problems with the pragma-linguistic approaches to language use, this does not make the idea of a second order concept of politeness invalid.

It might be argued, however, that the foregoing analysis is really to do with 'relational work' (Locher and Watts 2005) and not politeness at all. In my view, this is a false distinction. As I hope to show in the following section, politeness *is* relational work, and relational work involves the exploitation of politeness strategies.

4. Intercultural politeness

Lately I have been looking at intercultural communication between British English speakers and Zimbabwean English speakers living in the UK. From the outset, it is important to say that I am aware that the very idea of intercultural communication is problematic, partly because the notion of 'culture' is not homogeneous and static, and does not relate only to the values and practices associated with a nation state. As I (with colleagues) have noted elsewhere (Grainger, Mills, and Sibanda 2010), just because participants in a conversation happen to originate from and identify with, different parts of the World, does not mean that their interaction is necessarily problematic. (Indeed, it could be said that the interaction reproduced below is actually quite successful.) There is a danger that an analysis based purely on this assumption will resort to dangerous stereotypes (Ylanne-McEwen and Coupland 2000). However, a combination of repeated personal experience of interacting with southern Africans, the evidence from other scholars of southern African politeness (such as de Kadt 1992, 1995, 1998; Kasanga 2006), and my own research forays into this area (Grainger, Mills, and Sibanda 2010; Grainger in press) lead me to an informed supposition that there is a generalised phenomenon of differing politeness conventions in the use of English by British English users and southern African English users. This does not necessarily preclude the influence of individual styles of interaction.

In particular, I am concerned with the use of indirectness as a politeness strategy and the potential this provides for misunderstandings in intercultural encounters. In order to highlight this, in the following example I will make use of both first order (participant perceptions) and second order (analyst technical interpretations) of politeness. Even though the former makes reference to members' internal mental states, I will illustrate how even this can sometimes be observable in talk.

4.1. Changing arrangements: An indirect request

The sample conversation used here is taken from a set of data used for an article on the use of off-record indirectness in Zimbabwean English (Grainger in press). These data are naturally occurring, but not audio-recorded, conversations in which I was a participant. They are casual encounters with UK-resident Zimbabwean friends and acquaintances. These conversations were recorded in writing within 15 minutes of their occurrence and the participants were asked for their permission to use the data for research purposes. These sorts of data on intercultural politeness – and specifically on indirectness – are arguably difficult to come by without contriving a situation which is likely to produce certain speech acts. Therefore, this 'opportunistic' method has the advantage that the situations were natural and the language used spontaneous. Furthermore, it is in keeping with the ethnographic method of participant observation and means that I am placed in an ideal position to carry out both first order evaluations of the encounters and second order technical analysis. This method is also employed by Watts (2003), Locher (2004) and Locher and Watts (2005), although they use it to access first order politeness only. On the other hand, this method has the disadvantage that, because the data are recorded from memory, they may not be an exact reproduction of the conversation. However, it should be noted that the same could be said of transcripts of audio-recorded data (Cameron 2001). Furthermore, I am not claiming to be conducting a pure CA (conversation analysis) type analysis of the data. For my purposes, it is sufficient to have a record of the linguistic content and sequence of turns. A second possible disadvantage of this method is that my participant evaluations cannot help but be influenced by my expert analytical knowledge of language use, therefore my insider knowledge may not be 'typical' On the other hand, even if there were such a thing as a 'typical participant', without my dual role, these data would not have been possible.

In the illustrative interaction reproduced below, my Zimbabwean friend and I had, the previous day, arranged to meet up after work to go for a meal and a film. At about 3pm 'Themba' (pseudonym) phones me, and the conversation goes as follows:

1.	Themba:	Just phoning to check we are still on for tonight
2.	Karen:	yes I am if you are
3.	Themba:	Yes, yes, I'm just leaving work now. I have to get the bus from R_____ so I should be with you about 5.
4.	Karen:	OK that's fine

5.	Themba:	Will you be very hungry?
6.	Karen:	I don't know. I might be by then.
7.	Themba:	Do you want to go somewhere for some food?
8.	Karen:	I thought we were going to S____ (name of café-bar)?
9.	Themba:	Yes we are. Will that be enough for you or will you be very hungry?
10.	Karen:	Erm we could go somewhere else if you like.
11.	Themba:	It's just that in my experience S____ does very small portions.
12.	Karen:	Oh do they? I only suggested there because it doesn't look too expensive.
13.	Themba:	It's not very good value for money.
14.	Karen:	We could go somewhere else. Do you have anywhere else in mind?
15.	Themba:	No, it's just that I think I will be VERY hungry by then. We could go to S____ for a bite before the film and then go somewhere else afterwards.
16.	Karen:	No let's go somewhere else. Why don't we talk about it when you get here.
17.	Themba:	OK.

The outcome of this conversation, then, is that Themba and I alter our arrangements about where to go to eat. At the level of my participant – first order – evaluations of this interaction, it seemed to me that Themba's main communicative goal was to suggest going to an alternative eating place, but that he did this in an unnecessarily roundabout and indirect way. In the end (possibly because, on the basis of numerous previous experiences, I recognise the cues for an off record message), this goal is satisfied. But on what *scientific* or technical basis can we argue that 'indirectness' is present here? After all, indirectness, by its very nature involves not using a linguistic form of any kind. The answer can be found in a second order politeness analysis that combines a Gricean and interactional approach.

4.2. A second order analysis

To account for the indirectness in this interaction it is useful to invoke Grice's Cooperative Principle and the associated notion of conversational implicature (Grice 1975). Unlike Brown and Levinson's treatment of indirectness (see Grainger in press), Grice's theory seems eminently suited to the analysis of indirectness since it provides an explanation of how speakers arrive at an understanding despite certain meanings not being articulated. In this conversation, Themba flouts the Gricean maxims of quantity at lines 3 (" I should be with you about 5") and 7 ("do you want to go somewhere for food?") because, as far as I am concerned, the arrangements about what time to meet and what to do when we meet have already been settled. It could also be said that he flouts the maxim of relevance at line 5 ("Will you be very hungry?"). In Brown and Levinson's (1987: 211) terms these then 'trigger' an inference that in fact Themba is really asking about something other than my state of hunger. Furthermore, using Brown and Levinson's terms, we can point out that Themba and I both employ negative politeness formulations such as "Just phoning to check…" (line 1), "It's just that in my experience…" (line 11), "We could go somewhere else…" (line 10) and positive politeness such as "Will you be very hungry?" Line 5) and "…let's go somewhere else" (line 16). Although it is clear that Brown and Levinson's positive and negative politeness distinction is flawed, at least we can see that the interaction contains generally face-oriented utterances, with positive and negative strategies being spread across a number of turns.

What an interactional analysis can now add to this is to substantiate exactly how this trigger was interpreted and how the inference defined, in the actual moment of talk. Unlike Grice (1975) and Brown and Levinson (1987), the interactional sociolinguistic approach considers it important to look at the function of turns *in sequence and context*. Here, as Terkourafi (2005) points out, the notion of observable participant 'uptake' (taken from Austin 1962) becomes crucial. In this case, we can say that at line 1, Themba gives a reason for phoning and bringing up the topic of arrangements. This performs the function of getting into the conversation, or a "state of talk" as Goffman calls it (Goffman 1997: 173). We do not know (from this) whether he intended to check up that I still wanted to go out but we do know that phone conversations have to be 'got into' and we recognise the first few lines as the initial phase of a phone conversation, as do the participants.

At line 5, Themba brings up the topic of my likely state of hunger and I respond to it literally. In other words I am not orienting to it as if any other meaning could be possible. At line 9, however, which I have identified above as a 'trigger', Themba asks the same question and introduces the question of quantities of food. I take this up at line 10, as if Themba has criticised the amounts of food served at the suggested restaurant. In other words, I respond to a meaning that is not made explicit and it is this that tells us how Themba's utterance has been interpreted by his addressee. Furthermore, Themba's next turn at line 11 confirms that he is accepting my interpretation of his previous utterance and after this they proceed to re-negotiate arrangements using a variety of on-record politeness strategies.

By examining participants' orientations to each others turns we can see how meaning is negotiated politely (i.e. with attention paid to face wants). Importantly, I have been able to show how off-record indirectness is negotiated without having recourse to *either* Gricean notions of speaker intent *or* post-modern notions of hearer evaluation. The interactional approach shows how the participants' communicative goals are managed 'sociologically' – out there in the interactional space, rather than in the heads of the speakers.

However, in terms of what this analysis tells us about both intercultural communication and indirectness this analysis is incomplete. It tells us that off-record indirectness was one of the conversational management strategies that occurred, but it does not tell us why. In other words, it does not tell us whether indirectness is 'polite' in the first order sense. In this case Themba's reason for phoning only became apparent because I was already somewhat familiar with both the theory and the practice of southern African norms of politeness. Because of my friendships with Zimbabweans and because of my professional interest, I could perhaps be said to be operating with an 'interpretive repertoire' (Goffman 1997:169) that is similar enough to Themba's to enable us to communicate successfully. However, this familiarity with southern African styles of interaction will frequently not apply when migrant Zimbabweans in the UK converse with British English speakers. For satisfactory relations between people from communities with differing norms and expectations of politeness conventions we need to have an understanding of what those norms are (Gumperz 1982). I have suggested elsewhere (Grainger in press) that, while southern Africans may recognise indirectness as a *conventional* form of politeness in certain situations (see also de Kadt 1995), British participants may not interpret it as a politeness strategy at all, but rather view it as lack of competence (Goffman1997; Grainger, Mills, and Sibanda 2010). To uncover these politeness norms we really need recourse to the notion of first order politeness and, therefore, to participants own post-hoc evaluations.

4.3. A first order analysis

In the conversation discussed above, it was fortuitous that such participant evaluation came in the form of meta-pragmatic discourse at the end of the exchange. In my opinion, this type of evidence for first order politeness is more valuable than interview, or otherwise elicited, data since it is unpremeditated and includes at least two of Eelen's (2001) types of politeness1: classificatory (hearer judgements) and metapragmatic ("talk about politeness as a concept", Eelen 2001: 35). Furthermore, as it occurs as part of the foregoing conversation, it could be said to be itself part of the interactional achievement of politeness (Haugh 2007):

18.	Karen:	(laughing) I wish I'd had that conversation on tape. It was a very good example of Zimbabwean indirectness.
19.	Themba:	(laughing) you mean I should just have said "I will be very hungry. Can we go somewhere else?"
20.	Karen:	Yes, you could have said that.
21.	Themba:	But I have to be polite don't I?

In this 'epilogue' to the conversation, Themba and I actually discuss the fact that for him the conventional British formulation of "Can we go somewhere else?" is not, in fact polite behaviour. This confirms that his indirect strategy of asking about my state of hunger was for Themba, a polite move. Likewise, my own characterisation of Themba's contributions as "a good example of Zimbabwean indirectness" suggests that I was conscious of the extra effort it took to decipher his meaning and that this way of formulating a suggestion to change arrangements was, for me, 'marked' (see Kiesling and Johnson 2010).

Thus, this meta-pragmatic discourse gives us some insight into how the participants themselves are defining the relationship between linguistic behaviour and politeness. This first order interpretation of politeness enhances the second order analysis given above because it tells us not only how meaning is achieved interactionally, but why it is constructed in this way. Importantly for studies of intercultural communication, it can also point out potential areas for confusion, misunderstanding and misattribution of intention between speakers of differing socio-cultural backgrounds.

5. Conclusion

This essay has discussed the notions of first order and second order politeness by tracing the general trends and developments in politeness theory since the late 1970s and by applying concepts from the various approaches that have emerged to the analysis of institutional and intercultural discourse data. I maintain that there have been three main 'waves' of research: the Gricean approach which is mainly associated with second order politeness, the discursive approach which is associated with the first order approach, and the interactional approach which is largely a development of the discursive approach but which sees the value in a technical, second order definition of politeness. The hallmark of the interactional approach is that it treats politeness as a social, interactional achievement, rather than a product of speaker intention or hearer interpretation.

Looking at what a Gricean approach to politeness can contribute to an analysis of interaction between nurses and patients I have argued that the notion of 'politeness' in Brown and Levinson's technical sense remains a useful contribution to the analysis of verbal strategies that mediate human interactions. It is not only possible, but desirable, to analyse naturally occurring interaction for the linguistic management of face and social relations without necessarily having recourse to participants evaluations of 'polite' behaviour. Indeed, I would argue that such considerations are not particularly relevant in these data. On the other hand, socially-situated discourse data do also reveal the limitations of Brown and Levinson's (1987) model. In my examination of talk between occupational therapists and stroke patients I have shown that by examining the observable negotiation and sequencing of face-oriented strategies in social context we can move away from a psychologised, intention-based approach to data analysis and favour a more ethnomethodological line of enquiry in which concepts from Brown and Levinson (such as positive politeness, bald-on-record strategies and face redress) are appropriate to the analysis of the collaborative and dynamic management of bad news delivery in stroke care.

More recent developments in research into politeness theory have led me (with colleagues) to deal in more detail with particular politeness strategies, such as 'indirectness' When examining intercultural encounters, it turns out that, in line with the current 'discursive turn' in politeness studies, indirectness cannot be found to inhere in individual speech acts. Furthermore, whether nor not indirectness is considered to be a face-saving strategy by the participants becomes very relevant for the sake of fostering intercultural communication. In these data, then, it seems that notions of first order and second order politeness may be simultaneously relevant. The implications for politeness theory and research in general are that, if we take the valuable insights from all three 'waves' of politeness theory, the result could be a very rich analysis of interactional data.

References

Arundale, Robert B.
1999 An alternative model and ideology of communication for an alternative to politeness theory. *Pragmatics* 9 (1): 119–153.

Arundale, Robert B.
2006 Face as relational and interactional: A communication framework for research on face, facework and politeness. *Journal of Politeness Research* 2 (2): 193–216.
Arundale, Robert B.
2008 Against (Gricean) intentions at the heart of human interaction. *Intercultural Pragmatics* 5 (2): 229–258.
Austin, John L.
1962 *How To Do Things With Words*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Bargiela-Chiappini, Francesca
2009 Facing the future: Some reflections. In *Face, Communication and Social Interaction*, Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini and Michael Haugh (eds.), 306–325. London: Equinox.
Brown, Penelope and Stephen Levinson
1978 Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena. In *Questions and Politeness*, Esther Goody (ed.), 56–311. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Brown, Penelope and Stephen Levinson
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Cameron, Deborah
2001 *Working With Spoken Discourse*. London: Sage.
Coupland, Nikolas, Karen Grainger and Justine Coupland
1988 Politeness in context: Intergenerational issues. *Language in Society* 17 (2): 253–262.
Culpeper, Jonathan
2005 Impoliteness and 'The Weakest Link'. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 35–72.
Culpeper, Jonathan, Derek Bousfield and Anne Wichmann
2003 Impoliteness revisited: With special reference to dynamic and prosodic aspects. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1545–1579.
De Kadt, Elizabeth
1992 Requests as speech acts in Zulu. *South African Journal of African Languages* 12 (3): 101–106.
De Kadt, Elizabeth
1995 The cross-cultural study of directives: Zulu as a non-typical language. *South African Journal of Linguistics* Supplement 27: 45–72.
De Kadt, Elizabeth
1998 The concept of face and its applicability to the Zulu language. *Journal of Pragmatics* 29 (2): 173–191.
Eelen, Gino
2001 *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St Jerome.

Goffman, Erving
1997 Frame Analysis of Talk. In *The Goffman Reader*, Charles Lemert and Ann Branaman (eds), 167–200. Oxford: Blackwell. Originally published as Felicity's Condition *in American Journal of Sociology* 89 (1): 1–51.

Grainger, Karen
1990 Care and control: Interactional management in nursing the elderly. In *Language and Power,* In Romy Clark, Norman Fairclough, Ros Ivaniç, Nicki McLeod, Jenny Thomas and Paul Meara (eds.), 147–157. London: CILT.

Grainger, Karen
1993 The discourse of elderly care. Ph.D. diss., University of Wales.

Grainger, Karen
2004 Verbal play on the hospital ward: Solidarity or power? *Multilingua* 23 (1–2): 39–59.

Grainger, Karen
in press Indirectness in Zimbabwean English: a study of intercultural communication in the UK. In *Politeness Across Cultures*, Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini and Dániel Kádár (eds.). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Grainger, Karen, Simon Masterson and Michael Jenkins
2005 'Things aren't the same are they?': The management of bad news delivery in the discourse of stroke care. *Communication and Medicine* 2 (1): 35–44.

Grainger, Karen, Sara Mills and Mandla Sibanda
2010 'Just tell us what to do': Southern African face and its relevance to intercultural communication. *Journal of Pragmatics* 42 (8): 2158–2171.

Grice, H. Paul
1975 Logic and conversation. In *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, Peter Cole and Jerry Morgan (eds.), 41–58. New York: Academic Press.

Gumperz, John
1982 *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harris, Sandra
2001 Being politically impolite: Extending politeness theory to adversarial political discourse. *Discourse and Society* 12 (4): 451–472.

Haugh, Michael
2007 The discursive challenge to politeness research: An interactional alternative. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 295–317.

Holmes, Janet and Stephanie Schnurr
2005 Power and politeness in the workplace: Negotiating norms and identifying contestation. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 121–149.

Jefferson, Gail
1984 On 'step-wise transition' from talk about a 'trouble' to inappropriately next-positioned matters. In *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*. J. Maxwell Atkinson and John Heritage (eds.), 191–221. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kasanga, Luanga A.
2006 Requests in a South African variety of English. *World Englishes* 25 (1): 65–89.

Kiesling, Scott F. and Elka Ghosh Johnson
2010 Four forms of interactional indirection. *Journal of Pragmatics* 42 (2): 292–306.

Kotthoff, Helga
1996 Impoliteness and conversational joking: On relational politics. *Folia Linguistica* 30 (3–4): 299–327.

Lakoff, Robin
1973 The logic of politeness; or minding your p's and q's. In *Papers from the Ninth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society* Claudia Corum, T. Cedric Smith-Stark and Ann Weiser (eds.), 292–305. Chicago, IL: Chicago Linguistic Society.

Lakoff, Robin
1989 The limits of politeness:therapeutic and courtroom discourse. *Multilingua* 8: (2–3): 101–129.

Leech, Geoffrey
1983 *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman.

Locher, Miriam
2004 *Power and Politeness in Action. Disagreements in Oral Communication.* Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Locher, Miriam
2006 Polite behaviour within relational work: The discursive approach to politeness. *Multilingua* 25 (3): 249–267.

Locher, Miriam and Watts, Richard
2005 Politeness theory and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 9–33.

Maynard, Douglas
1992 On clinicians co-implicating recipients' perspective in the delivery of diagnostic news. In *Talk at Work*, Paul Drew and John Heritage (eds), 331–358. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Maynard, Douglas
2003 *Bad News, Good New:. Conversational Order in Everyday Talk and Clinical Settings*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Mills, Sara
2003 *Gender and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mullany, Louise
2006 'Girls on tour': Small talk and gender identity in managerial business meetings. *Journal of Politeness Research* 2 (1): 55–78.

O'Driscoll, Jim
2007 Brown and Levinson's face: How it can – and can't – help us to understand interaction across cultures. *Intercultural Pragmatics* 4 (4): 463–492.

Sacks, Harvey, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson
1978 A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation. In *Studies in the Organization of Conversational Interaction* Jim Schenkein (ed.), 7–55. New York: Academic Press.

Schegloff, Emanuel A., Irene Koshik, Sally Jacoby and David Olsher
2002 Conversation Analysis and Applied Linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 22: 3–31.

Sifianou, Maria
1992 *Politeness Phenomena in England and Greece*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Spiers, Judith
1998 The use of face work and politeness theory. *Qualitative Health Research* 8 (1): 25–47.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen
2005 (Im)politeness, face and perceptions of rapport: Unpackaging their bases and relationships. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 95–120.

Terkourafi, Marina
2005 Beyond the micro-level in politeness research. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (2): 237–263.

Watts, Richard
2003 *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Watts, Richard
2005 Linguistic Politeness Research: *Quo vadis?* In *Politeness in Language. Studies in its History, Theory and Practice*), Richard J. Watts, Sachiko Ide, and Konrad Ehlich (eds.), xi–xlvii. 2nd edition. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Watts, Richard, Sachiko Ide and Konrad Ehlich (eds.)
1992 *Politeness in Language: Studies in its History, Theory and Practice.* Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Ylanne-McEwen, Virpi and Coupland, Nikolas
2000 Accommodation theory: A conceptual resource for intercultural sociolinguistics. In *Culturally Speaking: Managing Rapport through Talk across Culture,* Helen Spencer-Oatey (ed.), 11–46. London: Continuum.

Chapter 7

Discursive histories, personalist ideology and judging intent: Analysing the metalinguistic discussion of Tony Blair's 'slave trade apology'

Bethan L. Davies

1. Introduction

In 2006, the then Prime Minister Tony Blair made a statement in a small circulation newspaper which expressed 'deep sorrow' about the UK's involvement in the slave trade. Some media interest followed, and a lot of attention was paid to the ways in which Blair's statement fell short of being an apology. From the perspective of politeness research, what made this particular metalinguistic discussion interesting was its greater focus on preconditions to successful apologising and not just its linguistic form (in comparison to both Harris, Grainger and Mullany 2006 and Jeffries 2007, for example). Using a corpus of such newspaper articles, this chapter examines these metalinguistic comments in order to gain insights into how political apologies function.

My aims in this chapter are threefold. Firstly, I want to offer an analysis of this political apology which emphasises the way in which politeness – like all forms of interaction – is interpreted within a diachronic frame as well as a synchronic one. This will be set in the context of a speech act based analysis, but will show how evaluators of this apology looked both back and forward in the speaker's discursive history. Secondly, I intend to show the value of metalinguistic data as a type of addressee evaluation which can give insights into the way in which particular politeness phenomena function in a society. Finally, I will introduce the notion of 'personalist ideology' as used by Hill (2007, 2008) as a way of understanding how addressees make judgements about speaker's intentions in making an utterance.

With the shift in politeness theory towards more social constructionist and performative models, there has been more emphasis on discursively negotiated constructions of politeness and a greater focus on addressee evaluations (e.g. Eelen 2001; Mills 2003; Watts 2003). A parallel shift has also occurred in some fields of sociolinguistics, and this has been accompanied by an interest in metalanguage (e.g. Jaworski, Coupland, and Galasínski 2004): how non-linguists talk about and categorise features of language use. This has included views on the status of accents and dialects (e.g. Preston 2004), whether or not particular linguistic formulations are racist (e.g. Davies 2009) and categorisations of politeness phenomena (e.g. Jeffries 2007).

While politeness theorists are quite well aware of the concept of metalanguage, it is not something that seems to have been taken up explicitly as a useful source of data. This is not to say that lay evaluations about language are not used in politeness research – they evidently are – but they are rarely recognised overtly as examples of metalanguage. The source of metalanguage used in this research is the print media, which in Eelen's (2001: 35) terms would be considered metapragmatic politeness1: general talk about politeness outside a particular interaction. Again, this type of data has been used in work on politeness (e.g. Zhang 2001; Harris, Grainger, and Mullany 2007; Kampf 2008), but its particular benefits do not seem to have been specifically recognised (though see Mullany, this volume). At a point in discourse research when we have largely rejected the absolute authority of the analyst, we are seeking analyses that have more demonstrable validity. Metalanguage can offer just that: rather than one person's intuitions (those of the analyst), we then have access to a much wider range of evaluations from within a particular culture. Of course, this is not a universal panacea to the problem of accessing data that can advance theory. However, it does have its place and I hope that this chapter will serve to raise its profile.

I also want to raise the profile of another concept: personalist ideology. Hill (2007, 2008) uses it in the analysis of metalanguage relating to alleged racist discourse. In particular, she focuses on the way in which commentators judge the intent of the speaker: did they mean to say something that was racist, or was it a flawed linguistic performance? In politeness theory, too, we are often concerned with the issue of intent. In this case, the question of intent is concerned with sincerity. But the question in another analytical context could just as easily be 'did they mean to be impolite?' This concept will be explained more fully and discussed in section 2.2.

It was partly through the application of 'personalist ideology' to the metalinguistic data that the importance of the extended diachronic discursive context became clear. Through this analysis, I will demonstrate that our assessment of individuals and their language is not based just on the immediate context. We bring to bear whatever knowledge we have of that person prior to this particular discursive moment. However, we can also look forward, and understand that the way in which a particular discursive event is evaluated in its contemporary setting is not fixed for ever more. Like any moment in history, language events can – and will be – re-interpreted against a different discursive context that has its own set of discourses and sensibilities that may well be different to our own.

In the next section, I will outline research on apology and political apology (including the notion of personalist ideology). This will be followed by a more detailed description of Blair's newspaper statement and the methodology used. The metalinguistic comments which comprise the data will then be analysed in terms of the evaluations made on both the form and function of the apology. Finally, the implications of these findings for politeness theory and the analysis of political apology will be discussed.

2. Apology as a speech act

This section will undertake two tasks. Firstly, there will be a generic discussion of the apology and debates surrounding its identification and analysis. In the second part of this section, I will move on to consider the specific situated context of the political apology, including its mediatised environment (Johnson and Ensslin 2007).

2.1. Defining apology

There has been much discussion within the politeness literature over the last 30 years with regard to what 'counts' as an apology, in particular whether or not is possible to compile a list of necessary and sufficient conditions for apologising. Much of this debate has been concerned with the role of illocutionary force indicating devices (IFIDs) – or what might roughly be called performative verbs (to use the original terminology from Speech Act Theory). If we extend the question to speech acts in general, then there has always been the problem that there is not a one-to-one relationship between function and form. As Thomas (1995: 44) argues, a particular performative verb can be present in an utterance without the speaker having that performative intention – for example, *promise* can easily be used when the intended speech act is a threat. Equally, a speech act can be performed indirectly, without any recourse to a performative verb. The question is whether apologies differ in any way from this standard pattern.

The first problem is that the speech act of apology can be associated with more than one performative verb. There is the canonical form of *apologise*, but *be sorry* can also act as an explicit apology. This causes a further issue, as *be sorry* can act simply as a 'statement of regret' rather than a full apology. However, both Suszczyńska (1999) and Holmes (1990) report that this formulation is more common than *apologise* in the English language.[1] In addition, there are also some other IFIDs which seem to indicate an apologetic intent in certain contexts, like *afraid* or *unfortunately*. In Davies, Merrison, and Goddard (2007), we could see no criterion on which we could separate *apologise/sorry* from *unfortunately/afraid* in our student e-mail data.

Even with this confusion about what 'counts' as an IFID, there is no agreement in the literature regarding whether an IFID is required for the speech act to be felicitous. Both Owen (1983) and Robinson (2004) contend that the use of an *apologise/sorry* unit is a necessary condition for a successful apology. Robinson argues from a conversation analytic perspective that accounts (or other remedial actions) cannot act as apologies because they are treated differently in next turn position to speech acts that use an *apologise/sorry* unit. In other words, addressees can differentiate between implicit and explicit speech acts and react differently. He cites Goffman (1971) in support of this view, but we find Goffman (1971: 140) rather more equivocal on the subject: "at some level of analysis, [accounts and other remedial acts] function in exactly the same way as does apology". Indeed, even Robinson softens his stance towards the end of his paper, saying that accounts and apologies are difficult to separate in function.

In contrast, Holmes (1990) and Jaworski (1994) argue for a categorisation based on the perceived function of an utterance or text, given that indirect speech acts can make acceptable apologies. Holmes justifies this approach by demonstrating the breadth of structures that can effect an apology, and thus the impossibility of defining a speech act set which would account for all apologies and exclude all non-apologies (assuming that there could be such a monolithic degree of agreement to start with). Jaworski makes a similar argument, and suggests that the analyst should take a pragmatic stance. His view is that we should employ our own judgement, as language users engaged in that culture. We do not have recourse to a structural definition that will capture the inherent variability of apology across contexts, therefore this type of 'informed guess' is the most appropriate remaining course of action.

---

1 Some caution should be exercised here, as it could be argued that the context used by Suszczyńska (bumping into someone accidentally in a shop) would not be something for which one would necessarily feel responsibility, and thus an expression of regret would suffice.

This also seems to be implicitly the approach taken by Olshtain and Cohen (Olshtain and Cohen 1983; Olshtain 1989). They identified a set of strategies that could be used on their own or in combination to produce an apology. These are divided into two general strategies which can be used in all contexts, and three situation-specific strategies which are context bound:

Two General Strategies

1. IFID or formulaic apology forms
2. Expression of S's responsibility

Three Situation-Specific Strategies

3. An explanation
4. An offer of repair
5. A promise of forbearance

(Adapted from Olshtain 1989: 157)

Although this may initially seem to be in conflict with the argument made by Holmes (1990) – it is, at first appearance, a speech act set that defines apology – it should be noted that this model does not make the claim that the presence of one or more of these strategies in an utterance or text will *guarantee* the existence of an apology speech act. The model was developed on data from the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989) which used discourse completion tests as a way of eliciting particular speech acts. Thus it is a descriptive rather than prescriptive system, designed as a categorisation tool to be applied to a set of extant apologies: not all examples of *offers of repair, explanations or promises of forbearance* will on their own necessarily constitute an apology. In short, Olshtain and Cohen's model will not help in identifying apologies, only analysing utterances that have already been categorised as such – thus, we are back to Holmes' and Jaworski's 'informed guess'

While the research reported in this chapter does not need to identify apologies for analysis – the stretch of language under consideration has already been specified – it *is* concerned with the features that speakers of a language use to categorise apology behaviour. In general contexts, we would agree with Holmes (1990) and Jaworski (1994) that apologies can be successfully achieved without using an IFID. However, relying on one's own intuition does have its limitations – we are all members of speech communities, but each of us is only one member. In drawing upon metalinguistic comment to explore apologies, we are effectively accessing a wider range of cultural judgements from language users rather than just that of the analyst.

2.2. Political apologies

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in political apologies within the politeness literature (for example, Lakoff 2001; LeCouteur 2001; Zhang 2001; Harris, Grainger, and Mullany 2006; Jeffries 2007; Kampf 2008). This may be, in part, because of the sheer number of these apologies which seem to have appeared in the last decade or so. Indeed, there is now a web-based database of public apologies available via a Canadian university, which includes 25–30 examples attributed to governments as well as many others attributed to the church and other corporate institutions.[2] However, I think it is more likely that this trend reflects the shift in im/politeness research towards a prioritisation of speakers' evaluations of language over complete reliance on the analyst's perspective (e.g. Eelen 2001; Watts 2003; Locher 2004). Political apologies don't just provide an example of the speech act itself, they also generate discussion in the media. This forum provides an extremely rich source of data for culturally-embedded speaker evaluations.

Two studies of particular relevance here are Jeffries (2007) and Harris, Grainger, and Mullany (2006). They both use evaluations in print media as the basis for their research, but in addition, their work is focused on the UK political context. Jeffries uses commentary from two related quality newspapers to focus on Blair's 'apology' for the unreliability of the intelligence that was used as a basis for the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Harris, Grainger and Mullany's scope is somewhat wider both in terms of the apologies considered and the data used. The authors used evaluations from a range of British newspapers and also from TV debates involving the general public. They analysed reactions to a number of apologies that were made by members of the government at that time, including several related to the Iraq war.

In the introductory phase of their paper, Harris, Grainger, and Mullany (2006: 720–723) provide an instructive set of characteristics which they suggest differentiate political apologies from personal ones:

2 Conflict, Culture, Memory Lab, University of Waterloo, Canada. http://ccmlab.uwaterloo.ca/pad/index.html

1. Political apologies are in the public domain and, as a consequence, are highly mediated.
2. Political apologies are often generated by (and generate further) conflict and controversy.
3. Both an explicit IFID and a form of words which indicates the acceptance of responsibility and/or blame for the 'offence' by the apologiser appear to be crucial component parts of political apologies in order for the media and viewers to perceive them as valid apologies.
4. Because they are usually in the public domain and thus highly mediated – as well as often involving substantial differences in status and power between the apologiser and the 'victim' – it is rare for the response to a political apology to contain any explicit form of absolution.

It is interesting to note that even before the data analysis, Harris, Grainger and Mullany suggest that for the specialised context of political apologies there are two required strategies: an explicit IFID and the acceptance of responsibility. This is in clear contrast to personal apologies. In the latter, the requirement for an IFID is open to debate and a statement of responsibility is strictly optional. Harris, Grainger and Mullany argue that the reason for this difference is the relative seriousness of the events that governments and politicians apologise for, in contrast to the events apologised for by individuals. As they report, it is hard to see how apologising for:

- Blair's alleged misuse of information about weapons of mass destruction
- military deaths due to an alleged failure to provide troops with adequate body armour
- wrongful imprisonment due to a miscarriage of justice

would fit into the categories of apology-inducing events ('offences of space, talk, time, possession, inconvenience and social gaffes') developed by Holmes (1995: 167). It is therefore not surprising that different expectations seem to apply to this particular type of apology. Jeffries finds a similar demand for an explicit IFID in her data, although the question of responsibility did not occur to the same extent – perhaps because in the apology at issue in her data the expectations were met in respect of that requirement. It does seem to be the case that in evaluating other's speech, people tend to comment more on perceived failures and omissions rather than felicitous choices: politeness is all about expectations, and discussion is only worthwhile if those expectations are not met (Grundy 2008).

One final feature of apology – or, perhaps more properly, *precondition* – is the issue of sincerity. While Searle does not comment explicitly on this question in relation to apologies, his general hypothesis on the issue of sincerity conditions in illocutionary acts was that it is the *assertion* of sincerity that is important:

> Wherever there is a psychological state specified in the sincerity conditions, the performance of the act counts as an *expression* of that psychological state. This law holds whether the act is sincere or insincere, that is whether the speaker actually has the specified psychological state or not.
>
> (Searle 1969: 65, original emphasis)

In this way, he avoids the thorny issue of how an internal state like sincerity can be judged. It is interesting to note that much general work on apologies does not really address this question, perhaps because it is not something that can be based purely on the analysis of form. This omission may also reflect the fact that a reasonable amount of work in this area has used methodologies like discourse completion tasks, where the role play aspect makes the notion of sincerity irrelevant. Or in naturally-occurring discourse contexts, it may be that the likely sincerity of the apology is not perceived to be the main focus. For example, in Davies, Merrison and Goddard (2007), we argue that it was more productive (for our purposes) to interrogate what the students were trying to *achieve* via their e-mail apologies to faculty rather than make judgements about whether we (as the recipients) believed they were sincere or not. This is not to say that we – or anyone else who has looked at apology – do not think that sincerity is important. However, it does seem to be that sincerity becomes more salient to speakers and addressees in some political contexts. This can be seen by the way in which sincerity is made relevant by Blair in the following example taken from his keynote speech to the Labour party conference in 2004 (quoted in Harris, Grainger, and Mullany 2006: 728–729):

> I can apologise for the information that turned out to be wrong, but I can't, sincerely at least, apologise for removing Saddam.

Harris, Grainger and Mullany suggest this is one reason for the requirement for an IFID as this choice can be seen as some guarantee of (or, at least, claim to) sincerity. Jeffries (2007) also recognises sincerity as important: its acceptance is seen as critical to an apology's success. However, Kampf (2008: 581–582) argues the opposite, that the requirement for sincerity is suspended in the political context, and rather that apologies are judged more on their effect (than their sincerity) in the political arena. This difference might be due to the fact that Kampf is focusing on apology interactions between actors in the political sphere, whereas both Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) and Jeffries (2007) are largely concerned with apologies made by politicians to the public at large. The 'apology' that I consider in this chapter comes under the latter category.

Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) and Jeffries (2007) also make the point that political apologies are typically prompted by others rather than being offered by the offender without being elicited. It may well be the case that we are more likely to accept unquestioningly the sincerity of a freely-offered apology in contrast to one that has been provided after the need for it has been pointed out by another party. If, as suggested above, sincerity is perceived to be a key precondition by the general public (in the role of 'addressee') it is perhaps unsurprising that political apologies seem more likely to be judged more explicitly on this criterion.

However, this returns us to the problem of how an internal state like sincerity is judged. There is certainly evidence of such evaluations in their data, but neither Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) nor Jeffries (2007) explore these theoretically. Jeffries (2007: 58) does introduce the concept of the 'ideology of personalism', as used by Hill (2007, 2008), as having relevance to the issue of sincerity, but she does not employ this term as part of her analysis. Hill's work is concerned with endemic racism within the US culture[3] and, in particular, how local linguistic ideologies allow apparent racist language by public figures to be dismissed because they weren't 'intended' or they were meant as jokes. It is the first of these categories that is closest to the type of judgements I am concerned with here, although the analysis of the latter category also has much potential for those engaged in im/politeness research. In this particular linguistic ideology, meaning is equated with speaker intention (which itself comes from an enduring set of internally-consistent beliefs): it is a simplistic conduit model in which addressee interpretation is downgraded. As addressees can never absolutely know what a speaker intended, they are left with two options: (1) accept the speaker's authoritative statement on their own intent, or (2) make a judgement on the speaker's likely intent based on previous evidence of their inner self. Hill (2008: 103) defines the basis of personalist ideology as follows:

3 This is not to say that such racism is not also endemic within UK culture or elsewhere. See Davies (2009) for a similar analysis in the UK context.

> The meanings of a person's words are determined by intentions that reside in a stable core of belief and thought, the heart … certain circumstances interrupt this connection between belief and meaning and can produce talk that reflects only an unstable and error-prone animating psychological locus, the head. These include careless inattention to speech, but also 'light talk' and joking.

In the context of her work on metalinguistic evaluations in print media, Hill (2007) finds that commentators handle this in one of three ways:

1. Accepting speaker's statement of intent, based on evidence of self that is consistent with this intent. For example:
   - a person of colour supports them and says that they are not racist
   - they have friends who are non-white
   - they are honourable people
   - such linguistic infelicities are perceived to be an endemic (and thus excusable) part of their culture (class, age, where they grew up)
2. Denying speaker's statement of intent, based on a different assessment of the consistent self. For example:
   - previous history of similar 'gaffes'
   - association with racist policies
3. Refusal to judge intent because of inability to access internal state:
   - cannot know what somebody thinks in their heart of hearts

(1) and (3) allow the speaker an 'out'; the utterance is treated as a 'gaffe' – a meaningless mistake. I found a similar pattern in my analysis of the media firestorm which surrounded the use of alleged racist language on a 'reality' television programme (Davies 2009).

I would argue that judgements of sincerity are judgements of intention, of a kind. In the data under consideration in this chapter, we also see appeal made to the idea of a 'consistent self through time' when commentators discuss issues of sincerity. This also highlights that evaluations of politeness (and of people in general) are undertaken within a historical frame, not just within the immediate, synchronic, context. Both of these issues will be taken up as part of the analysis in section 5.3.

Having discussed the particular features of political apology, some attention must now be given to the mediatised context into which these apologies are embedded, and the impact that this has on the speaker–addressee relationship. Firstly, it should not be assumed that political apologies occur in homogeneous contexts. A spoken apology can be made in the context of a carefully orchestrated political speech, a press conference or in less tightly planned contexts like TV or radio debates. Written apologies could include government statements or more personal statements (by a particular politician), press releases, or articles written to appear directly in a publication (like the 'apology' under investigation here). Secondly, unlike most personal apologies, the precise form of these speech acts will have been carefully planned. In some senses, this makes them *more* amenable to analysis as they should represent what their authors considered to be the best choice in that particular circumstance. Thirdly, part of the mediatisation process is the *timing* of the apology.[4] Like any statement emanating from the political arena, careful thought will have been given to other predictable news stories – either because the issuers want to ensure media interest, or because they want to avoid it. Fourthly, these are rarely apologies between individuals: it is often difficult to disentangle the relationship between the animator, author and principal (Goffman 1981) on the one hand and a specific addressee (if relevant) and a public audience (who are also not homogeneous) on the other. Finally, the main 'audience' for these apologies – the public at large – rarely get to experience them at first hand. The majority will see the apology in a more mediatised form, through media reportage. Such apologies are rarely given much discourse context: the media commentator will typically select short quotations which will then be embedded and recontextualised (Baumann and Briggs 1990; Silverstein and Urban 1996) alongside evaluation and metadiscussion. In other words, consumers of mediatised political apologies will rarely have the opportunity to evaluate the speech act entirely independently – they are already being given an analysis which is given credence through its appearance in broadcast or print media.

Therefore, it is important not just to analyse what was said in the apology, but also *where it was said*, *when it was said*, and *who the audiences are*. A brief outline of this will be given for the 'slave trade apology' in the next section and I will further explore the implications of this in section 6.

3. Tony Blair and the 'slave trade apology'

On 27th November 2010, an article authored by the then British Prime Minister Tony Blair was published in a London-based weekly newspaper. *New*

4 With the caveat that choice is not always available: some apologies are triggered immediately by particular news events.

Nation was a small circulation newspaper whose main audience was the black community.[5] The subject of the article was the slave trade and its legacy, both in the UK and abroad. It was published about four months before the bicentenary of the first legislation relating to the abolition of the slave trade in the UK. This is certainly an example of a political apology where there was a degree of choice about timing: it is interesting that its publication is quite close to this major anniversary relating to the slave trade, yet was deliberately planned not to coincide with the media interest which this event accorded. The 850-word article contained one key sentence (highlighted below) which was selected by the UK print media as representing something akin to an apology or statement of regret:

> It is hard to believe that what would now be a crime against humanity was legal at the time. **Personally I believe the bicentenary offers us a chance not just to say how profoundly shameful the slave trade was – how we condemn its existence utterly and praise those who fought for its abolition, but also to express our deep sorrow that it ever happened**, that it ever could have happened and to rejoice at the different and better times we live in today.
>
> Tony Blair, *New Nation*, 27.11.2006, p. 2 [emphasis added]

Of course, it is very difficult in this case to know exactly the extent of Blair's authorship – it is very likely that government scriptwriters would have been involved – although as head of the UK government at the time we can assume that he approved its content. However, Blair would still have been subject to some degree of censorship. It is interesting to note this metacomment from the editorial section of *New Nation* on the day of publication:

Extract 1

> we can reveal that the Prime Minister personally led from the front on the issue from the moment it was put in front of him and deliberately went out of his way to say as much as he could without contravening the legal advice he received from the Foreign Office
>
> Comment, *New Nation*, 27.11.2006, p. 3

In addition, the choice of context for this statement deserves comment. Blair has chosen not to make his statement part of an official speech – in parliament, for example – or to give a press conference. It was also published in a newspaper that has as its audience a specific sector of the public. One

5 *New Nation* went out of business in 2009.

could argue that this makes sense in terms of the 'offended party' for whom this statement is written. However, it does also mean that the public at large are not likely to see the original statement unless they actively seek to do so – their knowledge of it will be entirely mediated through broadcast and print media. This mediatisation process of comment and re-entextualisation will therefore be particularly important because of the way it is likely to reinforce both the public's interpretation of this event and its view of what constitutes an apology.

4. Data and methodology

Newspaper discourse is a useful source of unelicited metalinguistic comment as it enables researchers to explore folklinguistic views of language from material intended for a wide range of audiences within one culture. This can make a worthwhile comparison to linguists' views of the same phenomena, and can offer a fuller understanding of how things like speech acts work in particular contexts.

The research reported here is based on a small corpus of newspaper articles (op-ed, reportage, reader letters) from UK national newspapers generated by the NexisUK database; this includes all British newspapers from both the quality and popular press and also across the political spectrum. Data was collected in the period 1st November 2006 – 31st December 2006, although the majority of articles fell between 26th November – 4th December 2006. The search terms used to identify the articles were *Blair* and *slave trade*. Only articles that engaged in metalinguistic discussion were included in the study (85 articles).

These data were then analysed qualitatively. A data-driven approach was adopted to see what apology-related categories would emerge. In terms of the speech act itself, the following points of interest were identified:

- Whether the form of words used by Blair was classified as an apology or non-apology
- What supporting strategies were discussed
- Any personal factors which affected the successful performance of the apology

This method also allowed other themes to surface; these related to the potential long-term effects of Blair's statement both on further statements about the slave trade and Blair's personal historical legacy.

5. Analysing the 'slave trade apology'

This section is divided into three parts. Initially, the focus will be on how Blair's statement was categorised by media commentators – was it, or was it not, an apology? The other two parts of the section look at the evidence which commentators used to justify these categorisations and are divided into comments about the linguistic form of the speech act and comments about necessary preconditions to successful apologies.

5.1. Categorising the apology

There has been much discussion in the literature of late both about the variability in hearer judgements about im/politeness and the need to view cultural notions of politeness as not being monolithic (e.g. Mills 2003). However, it is interesting to note that in the metadiscussion of this particular piece of language, there was general agreement that its form did not fulfil the expectations of an apology speech act:

26.11.2006

"stop short of a full apology" *The Independent on Sunday*

"stop short of making an explicit apology" *The Observer*

"not an apology tout court" *The Observer*

27.11.2006

"stop short of a full apology" *The Express*; *The Mirror*

"stop short of a formal apology" *The Daily Mail*; *The Times*

"fall short of an apology" *The Times*

"So, not an apology then" *The Daily Telegraph*

"not give an unreserved apology" *The Guardian*

"this expression of sorrow does not add up to a proper apology" *The Independent*

28.11.2006

"not exactly an apology" *The Independent*

"a partial apology" *The Daily Telegraph*

"half-hearted apology" *The Express*

29.11.2006

"attempt at an apology" *The Sun*

03.12.2006

"Last week Tony Blair nearly said sorry for the slave trade" *The Independent on Sunday*

04.12.2006

"The difficulty with a true apology" *The Guardian*

The commentators did not necessarily share the same opinion on whether Blair's choice of words were appropriate or not, but their evaluations were remarkably similar – to the extent that most agreed that the text showed some features of apology. This is very much in keeping with both Harris, Grainger and Mullany's (2006) and Jeffries' (2007) work on metadiscussions of political apologies in the press, where journalists both seemed to have some prototypical concept of apology in mind and judged these speech acts on a cline. It should be noted that unlike Jeffries' work, this study draws on newspapers from across the political spectrum and across the popular/quality divide, thus indicating that this tendency can be further generalised. The question then becomes whether or not there is also agreement on what made Blair's text a 'partial' apology – this will be explored both from the perspective of the form of the apology, and the preconditions for its successful performance.

5.2. The form of the apology

The key feature that is commented on here is Blair's choice of lexis – his failure to use an explicit IFID. This requirement for an IFID is something that has also been noted by Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) and Jeffries (2007), but there is also evidence that other aspects also have an important role to play – such as regret, responsibility and reparations.

5.2.1. The importance of 'on-record' apologies

As has been discussed above, there is no general agreement in the literature on whether or not apologies require the use of an IFID such as *apologise*. In a previous publication, we argued that apologies in student e-mails did not require this explicit use of an IFID in order to be understood and accepted as an apology (Davies, Merrison, and Goddard 2007). However, this is a rather different context. Students are rarely going to be challenged on whether or not they have made a 'proper' apology. Neither are they likely to try to deny at a later date that an apology has been made. Both Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) and Jeffries (2007) agree on the importance of an explicit IFID (and preferably the word *apologise* rather than *sorry*) to a political apology, and I would argue that it is precisely because the speech act cannot be seen to be ambiguous in any way – the lack of an IFID allows a fatal degree of indirectness. The act must be seen to be 'on record' (Brown and Levinson 1987). It is 'folk knowledge' that politicians avoid committing themselves on sensitive subjects, and there can be nothing more sensitive to a politician than their own standing in the political arena – something which can be fatally damaged by the face threat of apology (Jeffries 2007). It may well also be, as Harris, Grainger and Mullany argue, that the explicit apology also indexes some claim to sincerity, which is also perceived to be important in the political arena (see section 2.2 above, and section 5.3 below for a further discussion of sincerity).

In this data, the commentators orient absolutely to this need for an IFID; all of them highlight the phrase 'deep sorrow' as performing the nearest function to an IFID. However, it was still found lacking.

Extracts 2–4

> Tony Blair is to express Britain's profound sorrow over the slave trade, but will not give an unreserved apology
>
> Wintour, *The Guardian*, 27.11.2006

> The Prime Minister expressed his 'great sorrow' about Britain's role in the slave trade but couldn't quite bring himself to make any apology for it.
>
> Conway, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 03.12.2006

> Tony Blair expressed 'deep sorrow' but failed to apologise for Britain's role in the slave trade.
>
> White, *The Sunday Times*, 24.12.2006

The use of the conventional implicature triggered by *but* in each of these extracts demonstrates absolutely that Blair's formulation is seen as contrastive to their concept of apology. Rather, it is seen as an expression of regret.

5.2.2. Apology, regret and responsibility

This distinction between apology and regret is nicely delineated by *The Guardian*'s discussion of the US's actions in relation to a potential apology for the slave trade:

Extract 5

The US has refused to apologise, leaving its leaders to make statements of regret.

Wintour, *The Guardian*, 27.11.2006

The difference between the two, of course, is that one can express regret for events for which one has no responsibility. It is often argued that *sorry* is problematic in this respect as it can be taken to be either regret or apology – something which makes it too ambiguous for the political context (Harris, Grainger, and Mullany 2006).[6]

Extracts 6–9

"Deep sorrow" is a nice expression of empathy. It's not an admission of hereditary guilt. That's as it should be.

McDonagh, *The Daily Telegraph*, 27.11.2006

By offering empathy rather than any suggestion of inherited guilt, the prime minister

Vallely, *The Independent*, 28.11.2006

with words such as 'shame' and 'sorry', Blair acknowledges the role Britain played …

Hunt, *The Observer*, 26.11.2006

No amount of apologies by Tony Blair can wipe out the pain of that trade, but an acknowledgement is in some way an atonement of what happened for the part Britain played in that disgusting trade.

Collins, *The Daily Mail*, 29.11.2006

Empathy and *acknowledgement* are here indicators of 'right feelings' and thus regret; *guilt* is equated with responsibility. Olshtain and Cohen (1983)

---

6 Although it should be noted that *sorry* can sometimes be preferred because it is considered to index a personal sincerity that *apologise* does not (Jeffries 2007).

identify responsibility as one of the general strategies in their model, although as this is a descriptive rather than a predictive model it does not state whether the taking of responsibility is an essential characteristic of apology. Both Jeffries (2007) and Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) also recognise responsibility as a key issue for political apologies – Harris, Grainger and Mullany rate it as important as the use of an IFID, whereas for Jeffries it increases the prototypicality (and thus acceptability) of the apology. The issue of responsibility – and just who can claim it – became quite a central aspect to this particular metadiscussion due to the complications involved when offering an apology for others' actions. The nature of responsibility and its role in apology will be further explored in section 5.3.

5.2.3. Offer of repair

The final functional element which is oriented to in the metadiscussion is that of *reparation*. If a full apology means taking responsibility for the offending behaviour, then a need to 'make good' that error follows. After all, there is no better way to show your sincere acceptance of the fault. Olshtain and Cohen (1983) list *offer of repair* as one of three situation-specific strategies.

Extracts 10–11

> For some protestors, this expression of sorrow does not add up to a proper apology. For other rejectionists, Blair's expressions are meaningless because they come not with a blank cheque for reparations to the descendants.
>
> Alibhai-Brown, *The Independent*, 27.11.2006

> Black rights activists denounced it as 'empty rhetoric' that failed to address the issue of reparations.
>
> Petre, *The Daily Telegraph*, 28.11.2006

This is another point where the distinction between personal and political/institutional apologies is brought into focus. For the individual, 'making good' is likely to involve one or two discrete actions – maybe paying for some damage, or immediately doing the piece of forgotten work. In the political or institutional context, the implications tend to be much broader. For example, Jeffries (2007) analyses the metadiscussion around an alleged apology relating to the misuse of information about the existence of weapons of mass destruction held in Saddam Hussein's Iraq, and the subsequent invasion by UK and US forces. Even if a full apology had been give here, what reparations could Prime Minister Blair and the UK government offer? One black activist gives her analysis of the requirement in the context of an apology about the slave trade:

Extract 12

> 'Reparation means to repair the harm. We need to have a full assessment made of the injuries done to us. We are talking about educational repairs, economic repairs, family repairs, cultural repairs, repairs of every kind that we need to sustain ourselves. It will cost.'
>
> Esther Stanford, secretary of *Rendezvous of Victory*, quoted in Petre, *The Daily Telegraph*, 28.11.2006

The taking of responsibility in the political/institutional context can also lead to a *demand* for reparations. Again, there are only limited contexts in the personal sphere where an apology explicitly taking on responsibility would equate to admitting legal liability. However, because of the responsibilities generally undertaken by governments or institutions, such challenges always must be considered in a potential apology situation. This case was no different:

Extracts 13–14

> There have been fears in Whitehall that a formal apology could open the way for legal claims and the payment of reparations to the descendants of slaves.
>
> Brogan, *The Daily Mail*, 27.11.2006

> [Blair] went out of his way to say as much as he could without contravening the legal advice he received from the Foreign Office that ruled out an outright apology on the grounds that it would open up the government to possible legal action for reparations.
>
> Comment, *New Nation*, 27.11.2006

It is interesting to note that both the producers of this speech act and its audience recognise absolutely what the use of IFIDs and the taking of responsibility mean in relation to the production and acceptance of an apology. Blair deliberately avoided a full apology, and its audience understood exactly which omissions indicated that.

5.3. Preconditions for apology

While there are key linguistic features that are necessary to the realisation of the political apology, there also appear to be non-linguistic preconditions to its successful performance. Jeffries (2007) contrasts the two positions taken by Thomas (1995) and Searle (1969). Whereas Thomas sees sincerity as a necessary precondition to apology, Searle believes that the performance of the speech act functions as an *expression* of that psychological state whether or not that expression is sincere. Jeffries argues for Thomas's position, pointing out our desire for apologisers to 'sound' sorry as a way of guaranteeing sincerity. And it seems unlikely that less will be required of a political apology than a personal apology – indeed, political apologies already seem to have more stringent requirements than personal ones, such as the need for an explicit IFID (discussed above). After all, these politicians are playing for very high stakes: it is their standing in public life which sustains their career. Goffman (1971: 118, emphasis in original) characterises remedial action (of which apology is a part) as follows:

> After an offense has occurred, the job of the offender is to show that it was not a fair expression of his attitude, or, when it obviously was, to show that he has changed his attitude to the rule that was violated. In the latter case, his job is to show that whatever happened before, he now has a right relationship – a pious attitude – to the rule in question, *and this is a matter of indicating a relationship, not compensating a loss.*

Thus, as well as the face-threatening action of admitting a fault, the apologiser is demonstrating that they recognise their behaviour as a fault and that it is not consistent with their central moral being – their standing in public life. We have argued elsewhere (Davies, Merrison, and Goddard 2007) that this is precisely why apologies can be seen as face-building as well as face-threatening. So, with all this at stake, it should not be unexpected that part of the judgement of political apologies will focus on sincerity.

Extract 15

> Blair presumably understands that it is meaningless, as well as presumptuous, to make an apology on behalf of people who died long ago without feeling sorry for anything.
>
> Chancellor, *The Guardian*, 01.12.2006

In this case, it is suggested that the perception of sincerity is undermined by the fact that the people being apologised for did not have those 'right feelings' While the extract does not concern itself with the sincerity of Blair himself as the apologiser, it does foreground the perceived need for sincerity in apologies *per se*.

The question is how do we gauge the sincerity of others? As discussed in section 2.2, Hill (2007, 2008) used the notion of an 'ideology of personalism' to explain how apparently racist language used by public figures could be dismissed as a 'gaffe' The most important aspect of this for the current study is the idea of internal consistency of self:

> an inner self continuous through time, a self whose actions can be judged in terms of the sincerity, integrity, and commitment actually involved in his or her bygone pronouncements … (Rosaldo 1982: 218 in Hill 2007: 70)

In Hill's data, commentators privileged the role of intention and made judgements about this based on the concept of a stable self, consistent through time. To put it more generically, personalist ideology means that we are likely to assume someone is being sincere or has integrity if our previous experience of that person is consistent with that analysis. Because Hill's research focus has been on the linguistic ideologies employed to *deny* potential accusations of racism, she has highlighted the role that positive evaluations of the consistent self have played in commentators denying racist intent. However, there is no reason that the reverse should not also be true: if speakers have been judged to be insincere or lacking in integrity in the past, then a negative evaluation of their consistent self could also be brought to bear on the judgement of intent. This is exactly what happens to Blair in these data. In his case, a perceived lack of honesty with regard to the reasons for invading Iraq in 2003 is used as a basis for the analysis of his motives:

Extracts 16–19

How strange that Mr Blair is always so ready to agonise over the sins of others while never showing the slightest remorse over profoundly shameful acts for which he is personally responsible.

Comment, *The Daily Mail*, 27.11.2006

Tony Blair still can't bring himself to apologise for dragging us into the human tragedy of Iraq, but he is about to express his sorrow for British involvement in the slave trade.

Parsons, *The Mirror*, 27.11.2006

The only true apology is to have one's actions in the present show that lessons have been learned from past follies. Blair's distorted view of the present makes such an apology impossible.

McNamee, *The Guardian*, 28.11.2006

> There has never been a more shameful event in 1,000 years of British history, and when Mr Blair apologises for the slave trade, how much more should he do so to the traumatised people of Iraq.
>
> Duke of Buccleuch, *The Guardian*, 28.12.2006

Thus, regardless of whether the form of the language was considered to constitute an apology, it seems likely that Blair's recent history would have compromised the speech act on the basis of a lack of sincerity. All this is a salutary reminder that the shift within im/politeness research to looking at extended texts rather than individual speech acts is a necessary one. However, it also tells us that it is not just the *immediate* discourse context that is of relevance rather it is also interpersonal histories between interactants.

There also appears to be a further precondition to the success of this particular type of apology. While we have discussed the importance of the explicit taking of responsibility above, we have not considered who has the *right* to take on that responsibility. The prototypical apology involves a speaker apologising for an event for which they are personally responsible directly to the person affected. This apology already differs markedly from this prototypical circumstance in that the person speaking is apologising *on behalf of* some others. This is not such a strange event. As Holmes (1990) points out, people regularly apologise for the behaviour of children or animals (or maybe even their partners). CEOs of businesses apologise for the actions of their employees. Heads of government apologise for the actions of public services or other members of the government. If – to a greater or lesser extent – you are responsible *for* that person, organisation or animal, then you can also assume responsibility for their actions. The question is whether Blair can claim that responsibility as current head of government for the actions more than 200 years earlier of the UK government, UK business and individuals.

Extracts 20–24

> Part of the problem is that, philosophically speaking, you can only properly apologise for something you have done.
>
> Vallely, *The Independent*, 28.11.2006

> You can't apologise for something someone else has done unless you somehow share the responsibility for it.
>
> Chancellor, *The Guardian*, 01.12.2006

> Tony Blair has now expressed regret for Britain's involvement in the slave trade. Marvellous. Although it's always better to apologise for something for which one is directly responsible.
>
> Carroll, *The Mirror*, 29.11.2006

> It is easy to make but has no meaning, coming from someone who does not represent the slavers, they having died centuries ago. One can only meaningfully apologise for an action for which one is responsible.
>
> Robertson, *The Daily Telegraph*, 28.11.2006

> It is an extremely strange notion that people who are alive today should apologise for acts of their remote ancestors for which they bear no direct responsibility.
>
> Lyndon, *The Express*, 28.11.2006

Although there is a lot of reference to the 200 year gap between the end of slavery and this apology, I do not believe it is the temporal setting itself that is the key factor. What most of these extracts really focus on is whether or not Blair can be considered to be *directly responsible*, they don't just say that it was a long time ago. The 200 year gap may be the element that is most likely to invalidate the claim to responsibility in this case, but it is the *validity* of this claim that is the crucial point. In other words, the validity of the claim to responsibility is a necessary precondition for the successful performance of the apology.

6. Discussion

From the analysis above, it seems very clear that these print media journalists do not view Tony Blair's statement in *New Nation* as an apology. As Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) and Jeffries (2007) found, there does seem to be general consensus about what constitutes an apology – at least when that apology falls within the political domain. Firstly, political apologies cannot afford to be implicit: an IFID is necessary. This is expressed here via the differentiation of this statement from 'explicit', 'full' or 'proper' apologies. The canonical choice would seem to be *apologise*, although this can be seen as too formal and insufficiently personal (Jeffries 2007). *Be sorry* would also be acceptable, but it would have to be used in conjunction with an explicit statement of responsibility to avoid the charge that the speech act was simply a 'statement of regret' rather than a full apology. I would argue that the requirement for the speech act to be 'on record' is because it cannot be seen to be defeasible, otherwise the politician could potentially deny the intent of the implicit meaning in the future.

Secondly, the precondition of an *ability* to take responsibility must be met. In situations where one is not obviously responsible for the offending action, any claim to responsibility has to be seen to be valid. It is not the case that anyone can make an apology for a particular offence: it has to be perceived to be the 'right' person. Thirdly, the perception of sincerity is seen to be extremely important in this type of politician–public apology. Blair is judged negatively on this because of his past behaviour with regard to other political events for which apologies were deemed necessary. This leads him to fall foul of the ideology of personalism: if he is considered to have behaved poorly in the past, then the assumption is that he will continue to behave badly. Or, in Goffman's terms (1971: 118), he is not considered to have shown himself to have a 'right relationship' to the public's moral expectations of his role in public life. However, an insincere apology seems to be viewed as just that: it's a bad apology, but it's still an apology of sorts. But an attempt at apology which cannot fulfil the claim to responsibility cannot be an *apology proper* – it can only be a *partial* apology: it is missing the basis on which a valid apology can be made. For this reason, I would argue that the two reasons why Blair's statement is categorised as not being a proper apology are (1) the lack of an IFID, and (2) the invalid claim to responsibility.

The original discourse context also needs to be taken into consideration. As was discussed in section 3, *New Nation* was a small circulation weekly newspaper with a specific target audience. As much as there was *linguistic* choice about the construction of Blair's statement, there was also choice about the discourse context in which it was embedded. This, too, had an effect on the impact of the statement, a fact that was not lost on those evaluating it in the print media.

Extracts 25–28, emphasis added

It will disappoint those who wanted the prime minister to make an apology in a parliamentary statement, or for the Queen to issue one.

Cracknell, *The Sunday Times*, 26.11.2006

It was not:

- a "*formal government* apology" *The Daily Star*, 28.11.2006
- an "*official* apology" *The Express*, 28.11.2006

It:

- "sidesteps a *state* apology" *The Guardian*, 02.12.2006

Because of this – no doubt – deliberate choice, the effect of Blair's statement was downgraded. He may have been Britain's first minister when the statement was made, but it is questionable whether the animator (Goffman 1981) here is Blair the prime minister or Blair the man – his identity in this context is not stable.

Given this apparent failure on two fronts – the statement in *New Nation* was unlikely to be seen as a 'proper' apology, and its placement in a small circulation newpaper meant it would not function as an official statement from the Government – what was the point of Blair's action?

Extracts 29–30

> Often you find they are part of a process. The early apologies to the Aborigines by figures in the Australian establishment began weakly but increased in strength over the years, and have been accompanied by some reparative actions.
>
> Vallely, *The Independent*, 28.11.2006

> Both moves [apologies about Irish potato famine and false imprisonment of Guildford Four] were widely seen as political manoeuvres to placate Irish republicans in the search for a peace deal in Northern Ireland.
>
> Brogan, *The Daily Mail*, 27.11.2006

This gives a new meaning to 'discursive context'. With this type of text, we are asked not just to consider the immediate linguistic context, but rather the history of a discourse. Even a blatantly inadequate 'apology' such as this can seemingly serve to initiate such a process, acting as a basis for further (linguistic) action. We see this suggested through the metaphors chosen by the commentators in the following examples which invoke a discursive journey:

Extracts 31–32

> Liverpool Labour MP Louise Ellman, who has been campaigning for an annual slavery memorial day, welcomed the statement, calling it a 'major step forward'
>
> *The Express*, 27.11.2006

> Change in the real world can be a long journey and the apologies can be the milestones.
>
> Vallely, *The Independent*, 28.11.2006

We are all aware that discourses of race have changed hugely in the last 50 years and that a diachronic pathway can be charted through all those synchronic textual moments. These metaphors ask us to look forward again, and imagine how that process might continue in the future, with Blair's statement being one moment in that process. Of course, for this to happen we will not only have a discursive reframing of the history of slavery, but also a discursive reframing of the efficacy of this statement by Blair. And perhaps a reframing of Blair himself. This potential impact not just on discourses of slavery but on Blair's historical legacy is also recognised by those evaluating the effect of this statement:

Extracts 33–35

"burnishing his legacy"

Brogan, *The Daily Mail*, 27.11.2006

Blair [is] using slavery to re-establish their ethical credentials post-Iraq. [He] probably [is], but so what?

Alibhai-Brown, *The Independent*, 27.11.2006

strategic apologies may be motivated by the speaker's attempt to change how others perceive them, or keep relationships intact.

Vallely, *The Independent*, 28.11.2006

Some evidence for this can be seen in this interesting extract from *The Daily Mail*, an article which predates the publication of the *New Nation* article by 10 days:

Extract 36

Tony Blair is planning a 'status-enhancing' apology for Britain's role in the slave trade, 200 years after it was abolished, it has emerged …

But although the 200th anniversary will be marked in March, the Prime Minister appears keen to apologise sooner rather than later perhaps because he may have been forced to leave office by March.

The details became public knowledge after Baroness Amos yesterday flaunted notes from a meeting with Mr Blair. The notes contained the phrases 'window closing, political pressure mounts, get it out of way' and 'do it before end of year'.

The notes also said the apology will be 'internationally recognised' a key factor as Mr Blair plans his exit from the world stage.

The Daily Mail 17.11.2006

But it also shows that Blair and the government were very much aware of the potential positive effects of the proposed statement. In addition, it indicates the planning involved in timing the release of a statement such as this – indeed, the first article mentioning the likelihood of Blair issuing some kind of apology was published on 12.11.2006 (*The Sunday Express*). Whether there is any credence to *The Daily Mail's* suggestion that Blair may have stepped down from the premiership by the following March (the date of the bicentenary) and thus might lose the opportunity for this potentially face-enhancing statement is unknown. It is clear that the timing was not accidental, however.

Thus, while it may be the case that Blair is currently judged negatively due to an ideology of personalism, such evaluations are not static. Political events, like language varieties, do not have an intrinsic value – the way in which they and their associated actors are assessed is due to a local market (as an extension of Blommaert's (2005) notion of orders of indexicality). What is valued in this market will be determined by both the local temporal and spatial context. Therefore, Blair's statement may have seemed rather ineffectual in the market and have had little intrinsic value at the time. However, should Blair's statement act as a springboard for a full apology in the future, then his legacy would undoubtedly be assured.

7. Conclusion

While a number of the findings in this chapter reinforce those of Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) and Jeffries (2007), the particular context of this 'apology' allows some further exploration of both the form and the function of the speech act. Further support is provided for the necessity of specific IFIDs (*apologise*, *be sorry*) in this type of politician–public apology. The importance of 'taking responsibility' and sincerity is also reaffirmed. However, I offer a more nuanced analysis with respect to the precise requirements of these features. A valid claim to responsibility is shown to be more important than perceived sincerity, even though both can be considered preconditions of a sort. An insincere apology is still apparently an apology, but an invalid claim to responsibility seems to constitute a misfire: the effect of the speech act is pushed along the cline of prototypicality, away from a 'full' apology. However, even with these perceived deficits, Blair's statement was still viewed as having performative force – it was considered a *partial* apology not a non-apology. The explicit appearance of metalinguistic terms to support this idea of illocutionary force being gradable also provides further support to Jeffries' view of speech acts being governed by notions of prototypicality rather than rules.

A more discursive analysis of the metalinguistic evaluations has also been offered. It has been suggested that (1) our assessment of a speech act is affected by a historical frame of that speaker's actions, not just the immediate discursive context, and that (2) the effect of speech acts and the evaluation of their producers can change over time. In categorising Blair's language as a partial apology rather than a non-apology, there is recognition that it still has some performative force, and that within an extended temporal frame even such a weak act can have a positive effect: potentially both as a stepping stone to a full apology from the British government at some point in the future, and as a positive face-enhancing strategy in which Blair is 'burnishing his legacy' (Brogan, *Daily Mail*, 27.11.2006). So whilst the behaviour may be evaluated negatively in this temporal context, it may be re-evaluated in the future. In addition, where Blair's likely sincerity is discussed, commentators judge his linguistic behaviour in the broader frame of his actions during his premiership. Thus, they appear to be drawing on what Hill (2007) terms a 'personalist ideology', where a person's behaviour is assumed to be consistent over time.

These findings reinforce the value of audience evaluations to our analysis of politeness. While it is true that a certain consensus was reached by these commentators, it should not be assumed that their response was monolithic. Within the extracts reproduced here, we see fine-grained judgements which show an understanding of the negotiated meaning of a speech act: the interaction between a particular producer and a particular discourse context. Each commentator offers a contribution to the puzzle of how this particular text is likely to be understood by this culture in this temporal context. This could be likened to a cluster of pins in a map, or a cluster of arrows on a target: it is only the set of responses that provided the pattern, but that is not to say that they are all the same.

Primary Sources

Alibhai-Brown, Yasmin, *The Independent*, 27.11.2006.
Brogan, Benedict, *The Daily Mail*, 27.11.2006.
Carroll, Sue, *The Mirror*, 29.11.2006.
Chancellor, Alexander, *The Guardian*, 01.12.2006.
Collins, Anne, *The Daily Mail*, 29.11.2006.
Conway, Anne-Marie, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 03.12.2006.
Cracknell, David, *The Sunday Times*, 26.11.2006.
Duke of Buccleuch, *The Guardian*, 28.12.2006.
Hunt, Tristram, *The Observer*, 26.11.2006.
Lyndon, Neil, *The Express*, 28.11.2006.
McDonagh, Melanie, *The Daily Telegraph*, 27.11.2006.
McNamee, Joe, *The Guardian*, 28.11.2006.
Parsons, Tony, *The Mirror*, 27.11.2006.
Petre, Jonathan, *The Daily Telegraph*, 28.11.2006.
Robertson, H.F., *The Daily Telegraph*, 28.11.2006.
Shipman, Tim and Gordon Rayner, *The Daily Mail*, 17.11.2006.
Vallely, Paul, *The Independent*, 28.11.2006.
White, Roland, *The Sunday Times*, 24.12.2006.
Wintour, Patrick, *The Guardian*, 27.11.2006.

References

Baumann, Richard and Charles Briggs
1990 Poetics and performance as critical perspectives on language and social life. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19: 59–88.

Blommaert, Jan
2005 *Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blum-Kulka, Shoshana, Juliane House and Gabriele Kasper
1989 *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies*. Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Brown, Penelope and Stephen C. Levinson
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Davies, Bethan L.
2009 Metadiscourses of race in the news: The Celebrity Big Brother racism row. In *Language Ideologies and Media Discourse*, Sally Johnson and Tommaso M. Milani (eds.), 162–181. London: Continuum.

Davies, Bethan L., Andrew John Merrison and Angela Goddard
2007 Institutional apologies in UK Higher Education: Getting back into the black before going into the red. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (1): 39–63.

Eelen, Gino
2001 *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Goffman, Erving
1971 Remedial interchanges. In *Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order*, 95–187. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Goffman, Erving
1981 *Forms of Talk*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Grundy, Peter
2008 *Doing Pragmatics*. 3rd edition. London: Arnold.

Harris, Sandra, Karen Grainger and Louise Mullany
2006 The pragmatics of political apologies. *Discourse and Society* 17 (6): 715–737.

Hill, Jane
2007 Crises of meaning: Personalist language ideology in US media discourse. In *Language in the Media*, Sally Johnson and Astrid Ensslin (eds.), 70–90. London: Continuum.

Hill, Jane
2008 *The Everyday Language of White Racism*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

Holmes, Janet
1990 Apologies in New Zealand English. *Language in Society* 9: 155–199.

Holmes, Janet
1995 *Women, Men and Politeness*. London: Longman.

Jaworski, Adam
1994 Apologies and non-apologies: Negotiation in speech act realization. *Text* 14 (2): 185–206.
Jaworski, Adam, Nikolas Coupland and Dariusz Galasínski (eds.)
2004 *Metalanguage: Social and Ideological Perspectives*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
Jeffries, Lesley
2007 Journalistic constructions of Blair's 'apology' for the intelligence leading to the Iraq war. In *Language in the Media*, Sally Johnson and Astrid Ensslin (eds.), 48–69. London: Continuum.
Johnson, Sally and Astrid Ensslin
2007 Language in the media: Theory and practice. In *Language in the Media*, Sally Johnson and Astrid Ensslin (eds.), 3–22. London: Continuum.
Kampf, Zohar
2008 The pragmatics of forgiveness: Judgements of apologies in the political arena. *Discourse and Society* 19 (5): 577–598.
Lakoff, Robin Tolmach
2001 Nine ways of looking at apologies. In *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen and Heidi E. Hamilton (eds.), 199–214. Oxford/Malden, MA: Blackwell.
LeCouteur, Amanda
2001 On saying 'sorry': Repertoires of apologies to Australia's stolen generations. In *How to Analyse Talk in Institutional Settings*, Alec McHoul and Mark Rapley (eds.), 146–158. London: Continuum.
Locher, Miriam
2004 *Power and Politeness in Action: Disagreements in Oral Communication*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
Mills, Sara
2003 *Gender and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Olshtain, Elite
1989 Apologies across languages. In *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies*, Shoshana Blum-Kulka, Juliane House and Gabriele Kasper (eds.), 155–173. Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
Olshtain, Elite and Andrew D. Cohen
1983 Apology: A speech act set. In *Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition*, Nessa Wolfson and Elliot Judd (eds.), 18–36. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
Owen, Marion
1983 *Apologies and Remedial Exchanges: A Study of Language Use in Social Interaction*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Preston, Dennis R.
2004 Folk metalanguage. In *Metalanguage: Social and Ideological Perspectives*, Adam Jaworski, Nikolas Coupland and Dariusz Galasínski (eds.), 75–101. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Robinson, Jeffrey
2004 The sequential organization of 'explicit apologies' in naturally occurring English. *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 37 (3): 291–330.

Searle, John R.
1969 *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Silverstein, Michael and Greg Urban
1996 The natural history of discourse. In *Natural Histories of Discourse*, Michael Silverstein and Greg Urban (eds.), 1–17. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Suszczyńska, Małgorzata
1999 Apologising in English, Polish and Hungarian: Different languages, different strategies. *Journal of Pragmatics* 31 (8): 1053–1065.

Thomas, Jenny
1995 *Meaning in Interaction*. London: Longman.

Watts, Richard J.
2003 *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zhang, Hang
2001 Culture and apology: The Hainan island incident. *World Englishes* 20 (3): 383–391.

Chapter 8

'Doing aphasia – Are you with me?': Analysing face-work around issues of (non-)competence

Andrew John Merrison

1. Introduction

The data described here comprises eight dyads of previously unacquainted aphasic and non-aphasic individuals (abbreviated as 'Aphasic Dialogues' or ADs), and eight dyads of previously unacquainted non-aphasic interactants (abbreviated as 'Control Dialogues' or CDs). Although this chapter is about aphasia,[1] it is not about specific linguistic abilities, nor is it particularly concerned with aphasic individuals *per se*. Rather, the discussion is concerned with the politic relational work (Locher 2004; Locher and Watts 2005) which is instigated by people who do not have aphasia when they are interacting with people who do.

This chapter has two main aims. Firstly, following Wilkinson (1995a, 1995b), it provides evidence that aphasia is a variable that participants may orient to in the course of their talk by demonstrating how one aspect of non-aphasics' behaviour is organised such that it avoids highlighting any non-competence on the part of their aphasic interlocutor and thereby orients to face[2] (Goffman [1955] 1967). This aspect of non-aphasic behaviour concerns the initiation of sequences of talk which check that the aphasic dialogue partner has understood the preceding discourse. Secondly, following Haugh

1 Aphasia is the impairment of language abilities following brain damage. This damage may be the result of tumour, trauma, infection or cerebro-vascular accident (the latter more commonly being referred to as 'stroke').

2 For current purposes, this chapter uses terminology from Goffman's discussion of face. (At the risk of trying to teach any polite grandma to suck Goffmanian eggs, his oft-cited definition runs thus: "The term *face* may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (1967: 5).)

(2007), Arundale (2010) and Hambling-Jones and Merrison (in prep.), in the course of discussion, I emphasise the importance of carrying out close observations of talk in interaction and thereby hope to further advocate the case for using a broadly conversation-analytic-inspired, interactional approach to the analysis of im/politeness phenomena.

2. Garfinkelian principles and Conversation Analysis

It is widely recognised that it is Garfinkelian principles which characterise Conversation Analysis (CA). But what are these principles? Garfinkel (1967: 31–34) lists various ethnomethodological 'policies' which can be summarised here (though presented in a slightly different order) as follows:

(I) the categories of analysis should be those that the participants themselves use;
(II) any occasion whatsoever of practical actions can be legitimately examined;
(III) all properties of actions are accomplished as a kind of work or doing;
(IV) any setting should be viewed as self-organising and accountable;
(V) the rationality of occasional actions and expressions is demonstrable.

This chapter is concerned with just the first three.

Followers of CA are firm believers in data-driven, or in Local's (1996) terminology, data-*respecting* theories of the organisation of language. Principle I entreats the analyst not to come to the data with predefined categories and thus CA avoids coding (and counting) data using such categories. As a consequence of buying into Principle I, they get Principle II for free: since analysis is data-respecting, CA necessarily takes into account the fact that the interactions being examined "were produced by the parties for one another and were designed, at least in part, by a reference to a set of features of the interlocutors, the setting, and so on, that are relevant for the participants" (Schegloff 1987: 209). In other words, unless the data shows a specific orientation to such variables as age, sex, social class, education, social relationship and so on, these variables are, in themselves, *assumed to be* irrelevant to the analyst's account of the data – for the participants will have already taken such variables into account in doing their own organisation of the current discourse.

However, following Wilkinson, I aim to show that aphasia is indeed a variable that participants may orient to in their interactions (hence Doing

Aphasia). More specifically, I am concerned with a patterning of data which Wilkinson (1995a, 1995b) has described as *Doing Being Ordinary*. Although this term originates in Sacks' Lecture of Spring 1970 (Sacks 1995: Volume II: 215–221), it is Wilkinson who first applied it to aphasic discourse. The precise formulation that I use is given below:

> **Doing Being Ordinary**
>
> In the Aphasic Dialogues (ADs) the non-aphasic dialogue partner will try to avoid highlighting any linguistic non-competence on the part of their aphasic partner.

What I am attempting to do here, then, is connect this erstwhile conversation analytic phenomenon to issues of face and politeness. In essence, what was previously only considered in CA has been appropriated for politeness research.

The rest of this chapter demonstrates just one aspect of the type of work that non-aphasic interactants do when talking with aphasic individuals – in other words, it is concerned with Principle III (hence *Doing* Aphasia, *Doing* Being Ordinary and, ultimately, *Doing* Face and Relational work).

3. Warning

Before continuing it must be made clear that, like Haugh (2010) and Arundale (2010), the approach I take is one of a pragmatics *informed by* conversation analysis – it differs from what might be called 'pure' CA in (at least) the following main respects:

(1) it entertains explicit hypotheses about certain patterns of data and it makes use of and counts categories of actions;
(2) the data comes from task-oriented interactions;
(3) the phenomenon under analysis is a relational one.

Because hypotheses are entertained and categories counted, some might think that what is really being done is *discourse* analysis. Well, pragmatically speaking, that's partly true – but because of the appreciation and advocation of close observation of qualitatively different contexts, I feel that the waving of a CA flag is also legitimate. Some might also think that because this chapter describes task-oriented dialogue and not free conversation it is not reasonable to call the analysis *conversation* analysis. But as Garfinkel's

Principle II states, *any* occasion of practical actions can be legitimately examined, and that therefore includes task-oriented dialogue. (It must be made clear, however, that I do not presume to claim that what I have to say about task-oriented talk *necessarily* generalises to free conversation – even though I suspect it might.) Finally, concerning caveat 3, given what I believe to be a fairly clear Goffmanian adumbration of the CA paradigm (see especially Goffman [1955] 1967: 37–38), I suggest that any attempts to (re)unite the two should not be seen as unfitting.

4. The task

All recordings are of pairs of participants engaged in a task that was designed to elicit natural, yet restricted dialogue. The task in question (developed by Brown et al. 1984) is known as the *Map Task* (see also Anderson et al. 1991).

The Map Task has been widely used to support the study of spontaneous speech and communication. It has been used to investigate the language and communication abilities of children (Anderson, Clark, and Mullin 1991, 1992, 1994; Doherty-Sneddon and Kent 1996), non-aphasic adults (Anderson and Boyle 1994; Boyle, Anderson, and Newlands 1994; Kowtko 1997; Davies 1997; Sotillo 1997), sleep-deprived soldiers (Bard et al. 1996), interpreted interactions between sign language users and monolingual English speakers (Quinn et al. 2008; Turner et al. 2009) and aphasic adults (Merrison 1992; Merrison, Anderson, and Doherty-Sneddon 1994; Beeke et al. 1994; Anderson et al. 1997; Merrison 1998, 2002); it has also been adapted for use in speech and language therapy (Merrison and Merrison 2002, 2005).

Two dialogue partners each have a schematic map drawn on an A3 sheet of paper (see Figures 1a and 1b). The task involves one participant (designated the Information Giver (IG)) describing the pre-drawn route on their map to the other participant (the Information Follower (IF)), whose map has no route. The IG's ultimate aim is to get the IF to successfully draw the route onto their map without resorting to showing the IF their own map. The participants sit at a table specially designed so that while each can see the other, the maps are only visible to their owners. The table not only acts as a screen between participants, but also as an easel on which to rest the maps. It also ensures a reasonable (and fairly constant) distance between the IG and the IF.

Although both IG and IF have copies of the basic map, differences exist between the two – specifically, the IG's map has three landmarks which are absent from the IF's map, which in turn has three landmarks that are not on

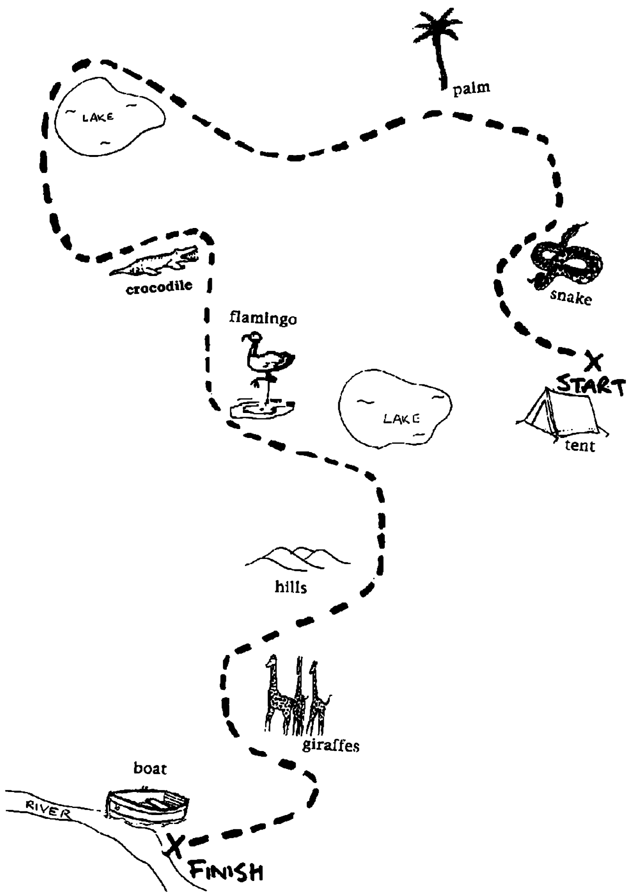

Figure 1a. IG's Map from Aphasic Dialogue between HL & DN

the IG's map. Thus, in total, there are six 'problem' points to be discovered *en route*. In the example pair of maps, the three IG-specific landmarks are *snake*, *lake* and *giraffes* (Figure 1a); the IF-specific features are *elephant*, *fire* and *rhino* (Figure 1b). The reason for the existence of these landmark mismatches is to set up a genuine information gap between the participants. The participants are made aware that there may be discrepancies. They are also told that there is no time constraint.

All recordings were made in the Department of Speech and Language Sciences at Queen Margaret College, Edinburgh. This was a familiar environment to all the aphasic participants. Simultaneous recordings were made

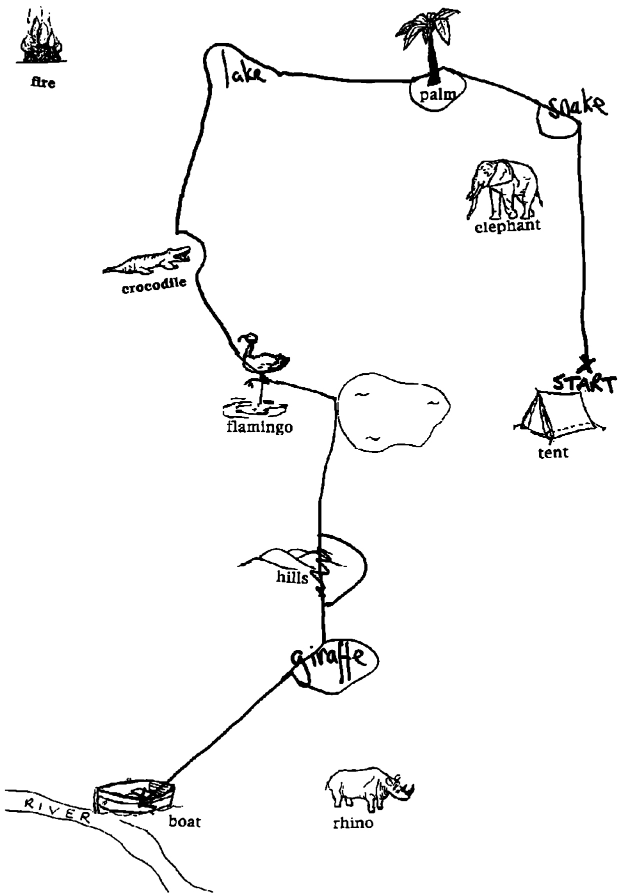

Figure 1b. IF's Map from Aphasic Dialogue between HL & DN

on video and audio tape. While the video tapes were used for all the analyses, the audio tapes were used for the process of initial transcription.

5. Participants

This chapter describes dialogues involving 4 aphasic men, 4 non-neurologically impaired age-matched male controls, and 4 non-neurologically impaired postgraduates (2 male, 2 female). All dialogue partners were unknown to each other and this was the first time any of the postgraduates had interacted with a person with aphasia.[3] Further details of participants are given in Tables 1 to 3.

Table 1. Aphasic Participants (IGs)

	HL	MD	GM	BA
Sex	Male	Male	Male	Male
Age (years)	70	30	38	51
Previous Occupation	Printer	Doctor	Gardener	Actuary
Education	School (until 14)	Degree	Degree	Degree
Handedness	Right	Right	Right	Right
Hearing Impairment	None	None	None	None
WAB[a] Score	75.4	92.2	66.8	69.6
WAB Classification	Anomic	Anomic	Conduction	Conduction
BDAE[b] Severity Rating	4	4	4	4
BDAE Class	Anomic	Anomic	Anomic	Resolved Broca's
Cause	Cerebrovascular Accident	Cerebro-vascular Accident	Unknown	Cerebro-vascular Accident
Concomitant Disabilities	None	Right Hemiplegia Right Hemianopia	Right Hemianopia	Right Hemiplegia
Months post onset	31	83	26	104

Notes:
[a] Western Aphasia Battery (Kertesz 1982).
[b] Boston Diagnostic Aphasia Examination (Goodglass and Kaplan 1983).

3 The two Speech & Language Therapy students were in the first term of their (postgraduate) degree and had not yet covered any aspects of aphasia.

Table 2. Non-neurologically Impaired Controls (IGs)

	PK	CM	TS	DL
Sex	Male	Male	Male	Male
Age (years)	69	28	37	49
Current Occupation	Retired Builder	Researcher	Managing Director	Solicitor
Education	School (until 14)	Degree	Degree	Degree
Handedness	Right	Right	Right	Right
Hearing Impairment	None	None	None	None

Table 3. Non-neurologically Impaired Information Followers (IFs)

	GW	MB	ND	DN
Sex	Female	Male	Female	Male
Age (years)	21	25	24	23
Current Occupation	Speech & Language Therapy Student	PhD Student Linguistics	Speech & Language Therapy Student	PhD Student Linguistics
Education	Under-graduate Degree in Linguistics	Under-graduate Degree in Linguistics	Under-graduate Degree in Linguistics	Under-graduate Degree in Linguistics
Handedness	Left	Left	Right	Left
Hearing Impairment	None	None	None	None

The aphasic participants (and their matched controls) always took the role of Information Giver. The postgraduates were always the Information Follower. Each of the four aphasic IGs was recorded in dialogue with one female and one male non-impaired IF. No individual ever saw the same map twice. Six months later each of the four control IGs was recorded in dialogue with the same two IFs. Aphasia was thus the main manipulated variable: 8 Aphasic Dialogues (ADs) make up the Aphasic Dialogue Corpus (ADC) and 8 Control Dialogues (CDs) make up the Control Dialogue Corpus

(CDC). The corpus therefore comprises 16 dialogues totalling 168 minutes of interaction. The mean dialogue duration for the ADC is 11.5 minutes, the mean for the CDC is 9.3 minutes.

6. Data coding

One of the methods that was employed for analysing task-oriented dialogues is known as *Game Coding* (Power 1979; Houghton and Isard 1987). It was further developed by Kowtko, Isard, and Doherty (1992) specifically for use on the 128 dialogues of the Map Task Corpus (Anderson et al. 1991). Based on goal-directed exchanges called *Conversational Games*, it essentially involves coding (or tagging) every utterance in the transcripts for collaborative interaction in terms of initiation–response–follow-up patterns (rather than linguistic content). These functional exchanges look very much like Austinian speech acts. The precise mechanics involved in Game Coding data are, for current purposes however, not actually relevant to the discussion – the code is merely a method for highlighting similar sequences of talk.

Although I recognise 26 types of game (see Merrison 1998: Chapter 4), only one is discussed here, namely what I call an *align*. This is the code put on utterances which check the other participant's understanding or accomplishment of a goal.[4] In essence, aligns are utterances which might be glossed as "*Are you with me?*". An example is given in line 7 of Extract 1 below.

In all the extract titles, the first set of initials are those of the Information Giver (aphasic or control as appropriate); the second set are those of the non-aphasic Information Follower. As is conventional in CA, transcription conventions are essentially Jeffersonian with points of interest being highlighted with an arrow.

Extract 1: GM & MB

1	MB	So I- (0.5) after the goat (0.6) I go down and then onto the
2		((deixis gesture invisible to IF)) right hand side of the ((point))
3		windmill (1.2) where it (0.7) um (0.8) ((lip smack))=
4	GM	=You walk past the door
5	MB	(0.9) Past the door. Ah:.

4 It is important not to confuse this use of the term with how it may used in CA in relation to issues of affiliation (see for example, Stivers 2008).

6	GM	You walk past the door -
→ 7		°if° you know what I mean
8	MB	Yeah.

7. Hypothesis I: *Doing Being Ordinary*

Aligns request explicit confirmation that the Hearer has understood the Speaker's preceding contribution(s), and in an AD there is always a heightened risk of the aphasic interlocutor *not* having understood. In such cases their linguistic competence would be brought to the fore which may result in extended sequences of talk (embedded games) – in short, the issue of the aphasic participant's non-competence may become interactional business in its own right and with that, a concomitant face threat to them as an individual, as well as to the conjoint interactive order. Consequently, we might expect to find fewer IF-initiated aligns in the ADC than in the CDC and it is this expectation that I call the *doing being ordinary* hypothesis. The results obtained are presented in Table 4.

8. Results

Table 4. IF align games in the two corpora

	ADC	CDC
Number of IF align games	7	2
Mean Percentage[a] of IF align games	2.14	0.53

Note:
[a] Percentages are calculated for each individual dyad by dividing the number of occurrences of IF align games by the total number of IF games initiated in that dyad. A mean of these individual dyad percentages is then taken for the corpus percentage (see, for example, Table 5).

The results indicate that not only are there *more* IF aligns in the ADC (7 versus 2), but that the relative *proportion* is also greater (in the ADC 2.14% of all the IF games were aligns versus 0.53% in the CDC).

If we agree that aligns make linguistic competence interactional business (and thereby increase the level of potential face threat), it is therefore surprising (with respect to the *doing being ordinary* claim) that there is more IF alignment in the ADC than in the CDC. That is, until we look *qualitatively* at some of those IF aligns in the ADC. From Table 5 we can see that at 2.14%, the mean percentage of IF align games in the ADC is heavily influenced by the proportion of aligns from just two dialogues, namely HL & DN and GM & ND.

Table 5. IF Align Games in the ADC

	HL & GW	HL & DN	MD & MB	MD & ND	GM & MB	GM & ND	BA & GW	BA & DN	Mean
% of IF aligns per dyad	1.75	5.00	0.00	3.70	0.00	6.67	0.00	0.00	2.14
No. of IF aligns per dyad	1	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	

In other words, it appears that just three IF align games are largely responsible for the high overall mean percentage of IF aligns in the ADC. If we look qualitatively at these three aligns, however, we will see that the risk of the potential threat of unnecessary extended turns at talk is negligible. They are shown in Extracts 2 to 4.

The first two examples (Extracts 2 and 3) cover the IF aligns in the dialogue with GM as the aphasic IG. In both instances the IF's align requests confirmation from the IG that the IF's previous explanation has been understood, but in each case we can see that the requested confirmation has already been given in the immediately preceding IG turn(s).[5]

Extract 2: GM & ND

1 GM: Yeah. It's: heading from that end to th'
2 other [end.] That's right. Do you call that right.
3 ND: [Aha]
4 ND: (1.6) ((deixis gesture)) That's - right is that way (0.5)

5 I will later refer to such alignment as 'Type-P1'

5		So [th- fOR] YOU ((iconic gesture)) it's that ((deixis gesture)) way
6	GM:	[°Yeah.°]
7	GM:	Right. [Yeah.]
→ 8	ND:	[°Yeah?°]
9	GM:	Yeah? Right.

Extract 3: GM & ND

1	ND:	((deixis gesture: self cue: left)) Left is west, and right
2		((deixis gesture: right)) (0.5) is ((deixis gesture: right, baton)) east.
3	GM:	Yeah.
→ 4	ND:	Yeah?
5	GM:	Yeah.

Because the outcomes of these aligns are already known to the IF, in these two extracts there is, in effect, no threat of unnecessary extended turns at talk. It must be noted, however, that despite the safe nature of these IF aligns ('safe' in that there is no threat of the aphasic partner displaying his non-understanding), they could still be seen as face-threatening in the Goffmanian sense (1967): if an interactant has already provided a suitable response to the prior turn, to have that response checked by their dialogue partner with an align could be potentially undermining and might reinforce an aphasic individual's already existing lack of confidence.[6]

In the third example (Extract 4, between HL (aphasic IG) & DN (non-aphasic IF)), we find that not only is the potential threat of the IF align mitigated, it is in fact *multiply* mitigated. Before explaining how this is so, let us look at the data:

Extract 4: HL & DN

1	DN:	Er then down and across to the flamingo
2	HL:	Mhm
3	DN:	Er then to the second lake
4	HL:	(1.0) Mm
5	DN:	that's in the middle °((lip smack))° down through the hills (.) to

6 This lack of confidence is, as Hughes (himself aphasic) notes, an integral part of aphasia (see Edelman and Greenwood 1992: 31f).

	6		the [giraffe °((lip sm]ack))°
	7	HL:	[Round] the hills [(.) not thr]ough hills
	8	DN:	[Rou-]
	9	DN:	Round the hills ((redraws and crosses out)) to the giraffe (0.9)
	10		An:d then down to the boat.
	11	HL:	Mhm.
	12	DN:	°And that's it.°
	13	HL:	((tiny nod)) (4.5)
→	14	DN:	((almost inaudible)) °°Okay?°° (.)
	15		[[Is that it?]] ((with big eyebrow flash))
	16	HL:	[((nods))]
	17	HL:	Yes ((gestures to camera))
	18	DN:	Okay.

By using the close observational method of an interactional approach to politeness phenomena, I will now explain how the face-threat is multiply mitigated.

Firstly, before the IG's 4.5 second silence in line 13, there is a minuscule head nod that acts as an acknowledgement. However, as DN does not notice this non-verbal response, according to the theory of preference organisation (for a summary, see Levinson 1983: 332–345), HL's apparently 'attributable' silence would indicate that he had a potential problem. We can claim (given the unseen acknowledgement) that DN orients to the silence as 'attributable' because his preceding contributions were presented in installments (Clark and Schaefer 1989: 283–289), after each of which HL had previously been showing appropriate evidence of understanding. Had HL's silence truly been a display of trouble, then the IF align would have allowed a legitimate entry for HL to indicate that problem. (As it happens, the 4.5 second silence is doing no such work – from the video (and from the non-verbal acknowledgement that we *qua analyst* can see) it is clear that HL has simply finished the task and is now waiting for the researcher to appear.)

Secondly, the IF align in line 14 is uttered so quietly that it is almost inaudible. In this way DN allows HL the non-face-threatening possibility of not responding to the align. In such a scenario DN would then be able to pursue some alternative 'Plan B' line.

Thirdly, we see that after waiting for but a micro-pause, in line 15 DN does indeed produce an alternative 'Plan B' in the form of a direct yes-no question ("*Is that it?*") which impersonally orients to transactional aspects of the task rather than more personal issues of his aphasic partner's linguistic competence in understanding.

Finally, we must consider the wider context: the talk in which this IF align occurs is part of an extended résumé sequence (what elsewhere I have called an *align retrace* game) which (as we can see in Extract 5) HL had prompted 24 turns earlier. In line 8 we see HL's prompt and in line 11 DN's uptake:

Extract 5: HL & DN – *24 turns earlier...*

	1	DN:	(1.3) °((lip smack))° I'm at the giraffe °then.°
	2	HL:	(1.3) Go round the (2.7) girafts and go towards the boats
	3	DN:	Okay.
	4	HL:	Finished. (2.5) River
	5	DN:	Okay. So that's the boat and that's the end is it
	6	HL:	Aha
	7	DN:	O↑kay↑ ((waves to camera))
→	8	HL:	(1.3) You ch- check it °No?° (0.9) °No.°
	9	DN:	(1.7) >You wan-< So I talk- talk through it to [check it.=]
	10	HL:	[Aye]
→	11	DN:	=Okay. Right. Sorry (0.5) Er (0.7) Okay starting at the tent.
	12	HL:	((virtually inaudible)) °Mhm°
	13	DN:	and then (0.8) it goes up (0.4) to the snake,
	14	HL:	Mhm

So when DN contributes the 'offending' align in line 14 of Extract 4, he does in fact know that that is indeed the end of the task; there is thus no real fear of an unnecessary sequence of talk.

So although IF align games account for 2.14% of all IF games in the ADC, we have seen that several of those games are not actually threatening and thus we need not be so surprised at what, prior to closer analysis, seemed unexpected results. I am, of course, aware that some readers might feel I am explaining away patterns of data that do not fit with my expectations. What is really required is in-depth analysis of each and every individual case – not only a consideration of data which confounds hypotheses, but also a closer examination of that which we take as *affirmation*. Although restrictions on space exclude such examination in the present chapter, it must be emphasised that the 'disproportionately influential' align games can be accounted for and that they are not as disruptive to *Doing Being Ordinary* as they might appear. Perhaps more importantly, Merrison (1998) has also shown that the remaining four IF aligns in the ADC can similarly be accounted for.[7]

Turning now to the control data, one of the two IF aligns in the CDC is also not contentious for the same reasons discussed in relation to Extracts 2 and 3. The other, however, is far from inoffensive, as we see in Extract 6:

Extract 6: PK & GW

	1	PK:	Now. (0.8) ((cough)) °(·hh)° You were turning (0.9) if you
	2		go do[wn abo]ut two inches [and start] swinging round okay?
	3	GW:	[Just-] [aha]
	4	GW:	To the right or the left.
	5	PK:	Er well (0.5) °((lip smack))° (0.4) ((cough)) you'd be going to
	6		your- your right.
	7	GW:	°I° mean it's it should be the same on ((iconic gesture)) your map
	8		(0.6) it's exactly the same. Start's in the top left hand corner,
→	9		((PK folds his arms and sits back in his chair))
	10		(0.6)
→	11	GW:	[[Okay?]]
	12	PK:	[[°Aha°]]

This dialogue started with a protracted discussion (lasting 18 turns) in which PK repeatedly asked GW whether or not the maps were mirror images and she repeatedly told him that they were not – i.e. that they were in fact "exactly the same". By line 7 in the extract it seems that not only does GW believe that she has (on several occasions) made herself perfectly clear, but also that she expects that some affirmative acknowledgement *should* be forthcoming in PK's next turn. Since it is not forthcoming (cf. the 0.6 second pause in line 10), it is *seen to be absent* and consequently she initiates her align in line 11. Prior to doing so, however, she makes no attempt to play down its face-threat and hence we see the resulting social sanctions (in terms of withdrawal from interaction) which PK imposes in line 9. What we have

7 The IF already knows the answer to two of her aligns in the dialogue between MD & ND (as in Extracts 2 and 3 they are both *Type-P1* aligns). The third align in MD & ND and the one that occurs in HL & GW are very similar to each other in that they both provide a legitimate (yet *optional*) opportunity for the IG to express dissent (cf. the first comment on Extract 4). I will later call this a 'Type-N' align (for discussion, see Merrison 1998: §6.2.2.2).

here, it might be argued, is a case not only of a non-politic *align* move but potentially even an impolite one.[8]

What we have seen is that not only are the 'disproportionately influential' ADC aligns innocuous, but also that the other ADC aligns are too. Yet, in marked contrast, we have found that one of the two CDC IF aligns is really rather hostile. Thus, although there is four times more IF alignment in the ADC than in the CDC, the argument is that, contrary to the CDC case, *all* of the aligns in the ADC support the *Doing Being Ordinary* hypothesis.

9. Simplificatory explicitness

Up until now I have been making a case for why we might expect less IF alignment in the ADC. For the rest of this chapter I suggest a reason why we might actually expect to find more.

In the Control Dialogues the potential risk of extended sequences generating misunderstandings is slight and therefore measures need not be taken to avoid them. With a linguistically impaired partner, however, extended sequences can pose both transactional and face threats to the smooth running of the interaction and – in keeping with Clark's (1996) Principle of Least Effort – wherever possible, they should probably be avoided.

In order to minimise any highlighting of aphasic non-competence (in order to mitigate potential face threat), it was hypothesised that, in the ADs, the non-impaired dialogue partner would tend to avoid the generation of unnecessary talk by simplifying the interaction (cf. Gravel and LaPointe 1983; Linebaugh, Pryor and Margulies 1983; Nicholas and Brookshire 1983). In Merrison (1998) this led to two sub-hypotheses, one of which is stated below:

> **Hypothesis II:** ***Simplificatory Explicitness***
>
> In the ADs the non-aphasic dialogue partner will try to avoid highlighting any linguistic non-competence on the part of their aphasic partner *by making the interaction explicit.*

IF aligns are an obvious way of making the discourse explicit and as such their adoption is potentially *useful* in aphasic/non-aphasic interactions. The

8 It seems that while *non*-competent speakers are treated with politic deference, competent speakers can more easily be treated as *in*competent.

fact that there is four times more IF alignment in the ADC than in the CDC is therefore in keeping with Hypothesis II.

But it now appears that I have proposed two conflicting hypotheses in that Hypothesis I leads us to expect *less* IF alignment in the ADC, while Hypothesis II points to *more*. However, this is merely a consequence of indiscriminately counting categories, and as such the contradiction is fortunately but an *apparent* one. If we adopt a CA-inspired approach and consider IF aligns *qualitatively* instead of simply *quantitatively*, the paradox disappears. Consequently I conclude with a brief discussion of the importance of close observation.

10. Close observation (rooting around in language material)

Kelly and Local (1989: 98) have stated that "simply rooting around in language material is [not] illicit: it is after all our most fundamental research tool and serendipity is at its most effective in this situation" Although they were writing about doing phonology, they could equally well have been writing about doing CA, for conversation analysts believe that theorising should be based on close observation since only then can we "find things that we could not, by imagination, assert were there" (Sacks 1984: 25). Local (1996: 178) concurs: "it is clear that only by conducting tightly organized micro-analyses of talk can we hope to come to a proper understanding of the general architecture and functioning of speech in interaction"

What I have not yet explicitly stated is that closer inspection of the data has uncovered the existence of qualitatively distinct *types* of alignment which elsewhere (Merrison 1998) I have called *Type-P aligns* and *Type-N aligns*. Although both types request explicit confirmation that the Hearer *has understood / agrees with* the Speaker's preceding contribution(s), the distinction between them lies in what the Speaker expects the Hearer's response will be:

(I) if the Speaker really expects only a positive response, I call such alignment a *Type-P(ositive) align*

(II) if the Speaker expects a positive response but is nevertheless aware of, and therefore allows for the possibility of dissent, I call such alignment a *Type-N(egative) align*

If misjudged, Type-P(ositive) aligns potentially bring linguistic (non-) competence to the fore and, since they are thereby potentially face-*threatening*, they are therefore probably best avoided in linguistically sensitive situations. In contrast, although the Speaker might *expect* a positive response to a Type-N(egative) align, the align's existence provides for a more legitimate possibility of a sequentially implicated next turn *disagreement*. Consequently, in cases where disagreement does indeed become the next action, this type of align will (at least to some degree) have been face-*saving*. Admittedly disagreement is still likely to constitute what in CA is referred to as a *dispreferred* next turn,[9] but since Hearers' preferred seconds are related to what the Speakers *expect*, if the Speaker has explicitly set up the possibility for next turn disagreement then that disagreement will at least be more warranted than totally unsolicited dissent. In other words, this type of explicit alignment reduces the weightiness of the face-threatening act associated with any next turn disagreement.

Thus the benefits of the explicitness associated with IF aligns can be harnessed without any of the threatening disadvantages if the align is:

(I) a Type-P align where the elicited confirmation has already been made explicit in preceding talk (I call this a Type-P1 align); or

(II) a Type-N align which reduces the face threat of next-turn disagreement

but *not* if it is a Type-P align where the elicited confirmation has not already been made explicit in preceding talk (a Type-P2 align).

After closer CA-like inspection, then, we have found that of the two IF aligns in the CDC, one (a Type-P1 align) poses no great threat to subsequent interaction while the other (the Type-P2 align in Extract 6) is far from inoffensive. In the ADC, on the other hand, *all* the explicit IF aligns are either Type-P1 or Type-N and are thus – in terms of being potentially interpretable as impolite or face-threatening – 'safe'

11. Conclusion

At first glance, the hypotheses about IF alignment might have seemed rather contradictory, putting forward opposing scenarios, namely *less* IF alignment

9 In contrast to preferred turns, dispreferred turns are ones which are often marked by things such as non-contiguity (delay), mitigation, elaboration (e.g. accounts, disclaimers, hedges) and implicitness. For further details, see Schegloff (2007: Chapter 5) or the collection of papers in Part II of Atkinson and Heritage (1984).

in the ADC (according to Hypothesis I) versus *more* IF alignment in the ADC (Hypothesis II). However, what qualitative inspection of the data has uncovered is that the *align* category actually constitutes three distinct sub-types (Type-P1, Type-P2 and Type-N), worthy of separate, individual attention rather than consideration as an aggregate. Had we been blinkered category counters, because we find four times as much IF alignment in the ADC as in the CDC, we might have concluded that while Hypothesis II was correct, Hypothesis I was simply wrong. Such is the consequence of not carrying out close inspection of the data, for having done so not only have three types of alignment initiator been uncovered, we have also discovered that the distribution of IF alignment across the two corpora is actually what *both* hypotheses would predict.

Thus, what has been shown is that with respect to seeking confirmation from their dialogue partner, in these task-oriented dialogues, non-aphasic individuals organise their interactions differently when conversing with aphasic compared to non-aphasic individuals. In other words, in task-oriented dialogue at least, aphasia is indeed a talk-relevant variable. Of course, this may not necessarily be generalisable to free conversation. However, the fact that alignment which potentially highlights linguistic non-competence is avoided even in task-oriented dialogue between unacquainted individuals (where the goal-oriented nature of the task might otherwise license socially insensitive behaviour) might suggest that similar patterns of data may indeed be found outwith this setting.

Perhaps more important, however, is the fact that the analysis would have been very much the poorer had it not adopted a CA-inspired close observation of qualitative differences of sequences of talk, for it was only by going beyond the basic categories that the actual distribution of the data was able to be fully explained.

In short, then, what I hope to have shown is that the application of an interactionist methodology can be extremely useful in the study of issues of politeness within (and, I am more than happy to claim, outwith) aphasic discourse. For me, the overall result seems clear: if our analyses are to employ and count utterance-level categories of action, then we need to know precisely what it is that is being counted, and for that, a data-respecting, CA-inspired, discursive approach is what is needed.

Acknowledgements

This material is based on data and discussion from Merrison (1998) which was partially funded by a Vans Dunlop Faculty of Arts Scholarship from the

University of Edinburgh. I am also very grateful to Bethan Davies, Michael Haugh, Anne Hesketh, Ruth Lesser, Sally Merrison, Jim Miller, Karen Sage and Jack Wilson for very helpful comments on earlier drafts. All the deficiencies that remain, are, of course, mine alone.

References

Anderson, Anne H., Miles Bader, Ellen Gurman Bard, Elizabeth Boyle, Gwyneth Doherty, Simon Garrod, Stephen Isard, Jacqueline Kowtko, Jan McAllister, James E. Miller, Catherine F. Sotillo, Henry S. Thompson and Regina Weinert
1991 The HCRC Map Task Corpus. *Language and Speech* 34 (4): 351–366.

Anderson, Anne H. and Elizabeth Boyle
1994 Forms of introduction in dialogues: their discourse contexts and communicative consequences. *Language and Cognitive Processes* 9 (1): 101–122.

Anderson, Anne H., Aileen Clark and James Mullin
1991 Introducing information in dialogues: forms of introduction chosen by young speakers and the responses elicited from young listeners. *Journal of Child Language* 18 (3): 663–687.

Anderson, Anne H., Aileen Clark and James Mullin
1992 *Communication Skills in Children: Learning how to make language work in dialogue*. Edinburgh: HCRC Publications, University of Edinburgh.

Anderson, Anne H., Aileen Clark and James Mullin
1994 Interactive skills in children: learning how to make language work in dialogue. *Journal of Child Language* 21 (2): 439–463.

Anderson, Anne H., Alasdair Robertson, Kerry Kilborn, Suzanne Beeke and Elizabeth Dean
1997 Dialogue despite difficulties: a study of communication between aphasic and unimpaired speakers. In *Conversation: Cognitive and communicative perspectives*, Talmy Givón (ed.), 1–39. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Arundale, Robert B.
2010 Relating. In *Interpersonal Pragmatics*. Vol. 6, *Handbooks of Pragmatics*, Miriam Locher and Sage Lambert Graham (eds.), Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Atkinson, J. Maxwell and John Heritage (eds.)
1984 *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bard, Ellen Gurman, Catherine F. Sotillo, Anne H. Anderson, Henry S. Thompson and Martin M. Taylor
1996 The DCIEM Map Task Corpus: Spontaneous dialogue under sleep deprivation and drug treatment. *Speech Communication* 20 (1): 71–84.
Beeke, Suzanne, Elizabeth Dean, Kerry Kilborn, Anne H. Anderson, Alasdair Robertson and James E. Miller
1994 The relationship between syntactic processing and communicative performance in aphasia. In *Pathologies of Speech and Language: Contributions of Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics*, T. Powell (ed.), 75–88. New Orleans: International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association.
Boyle, Elizabeth, Anne H. Anderson and Alison Newlands
1994 The effects of visibility on dialogue and performance in a cooperative problem solving task. *Language and Speech* 37 (1): 1–20.
Brown, Gillian, Anne H. Anderson, Richard Shillcock and George Yule
1984 *Teaching Talk: Strategies for production and assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Clark, Herbert H.
1996 *Using Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Clark, Herbert H. and Edward F. Schaefer
1989 Contributing to discourse. *Cognitive Science* 13 (2): 259–294.
Davies, Bethan L.
1997 An empirical examination of cooperation, effort and risk in task-oriented dialogues. Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh.
Doherty-Sneddon, Gwyneth and Gillian Kent
1996 Visual signals and the communication abilities of children. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 37 (8): 949–959.
Edelman, Gill and Robert Greenwood (eds.)
1992 *Jumbly Words, and Rights Where Wrongs Should Be: The Experience of Aphasia from the Inside*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: Far Communications.
Garfinkel, Harold
1967 *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.
Goffman, Erving
1967 On face-work. In *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*, Erving Goffman, 5–45. New York: Pantheon Books. Originally pulished in 1955 in *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes* 18 (3): 213–31.
Goodglass, Harold and Edith Kaplan
1983 *The Assessment of Aphasia and Related Disorders*, 2nd edition. Philadelphia: Lea and Febiger.

Gravel, Jane S. and Leonard L. LaPointe
1983 Length and redundancy in health care providers' speech during interactions with aphasic and non aphasic individuals. In *Clinical Aphasiology Conference Proceedings*, Robert H. Brookshire (ed.), 211–217. Minneapolis: BRK Publishers.
Hambling-Jones, Oliver and Andrew John Merrison
in prep. Inequity in the pursuit of intimacy: An analysis of British Pick-Up Artist interactions.
Haugh, Michael
2007 The discursive challenge to politeness research: an interactional alternative. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 295–317.
Haugh, Michael
2010 Jocular mockery, (dis)affiliation, and face. *Journal of Pragmatics* 42 (8): 2106–2119.
Houghton, George and Stephen Isard
1987 Why to speak, what to say and how to say it: modelling language production in discourse. In *Modelling Cognition*, Peter Morris (ed.), 249–267. Chichester: Wiley.
Kelly, John and John K. Local
1989 *Doing Phonology*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Kertesz, Andrew
1982 *The Western Aphasia Battery*. New York: Grune and Stratton.
Kowtko, Jacqueline C.
1997 *The Function of Intonation in Task-Oriented Dialogue*. Edinburgh: HCRC Publications, University of Edinburgh.
Kowtko, Jacqueline C., Stephen D. Isard and Gwyneth M. Doherty
1992 *Conversational Games within Dialogue*. Edinburgh: HCRC Publications, University of Edinburgh.
Levinson, Stephen C.
1983 *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Linebaugh, Craig W., Ann P. Pryor and Cheryl P. Margulies
1983 A comparison of picture descriptions by family members of aphasic patients to aphasic and nonaphasic listeners. In *Clinical Aphasiology Conference Proceedings*. Robert H. Brookshire (ed.), 218–226. Minneapolis: BRK Publishers.
Local, John K.
1996 Conversational phonetics: some aspects of news receipts in everyday talk. In *Prosody in Conversation*, Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen and Margret Selting (eds.), 177–230. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Locher, Miriam A.
2004 *Power and Politeness in Action: Disagreements in Oral Communication* (Language, Power and Social Process 12). Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Locher, Miriam A. and Richard Watts
2005 Politeness theory and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 9–33.

Merrison, Andrew John
1992 How aphasics get from A to B: Total Communicative Ability and the Map Task. MSc. diss., University of Edinburgh.

Merrison, Andrew John
1998 Doing aphasia: Aphasic discourse from a non-aphasic perspective. Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh.

Merrison, Andrew John
2002 Politeness in task-orientated dialogue. *Working Papers on the Web: No 3* available online at http://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/politeness/

Merrison, Andrew John, Anne H. Anderson and Gwyneth Doherty-Sneddon
1994 *An Investigation into the Communicative Abilities of Aphasic Subjects in Task Oriented Dialogue.* Edinburgh: HCRC Publications, University of Edinburgh.

Merrison, Sally and Andrew John Merrison
2003 *MerriMaps: An Assessment and Therapy Resource for Pragmatic Language Skills.* Ponteland, Northumberland: STASS Publications.

Merrison, Sally and Andrew John Merrison
2005 Repair in Speech and Language Therapy Interaction: Investigating Pragmatic Language Impairment in Children. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy* 21 (2): 191–211.

Nicholas, Linda E. and Robert H. Brookshire
1983 Syntactic simplification and context: effects on sentence comprehension by aphasic adults. In *Clinical Aphasiology Conference Proceedings.* Robert H. Brookshire (ed.), 166–172. Minneapolis: BRK Publishers.

Power, Richard
1979 The organisation of purposeful dialogues *Linguistics* 17: 107–152.

Quinn, Gary, Andrew John Merrison, Bethan L. Davies, Graham, H. Turner and Kyra Pollitt
2008 Task-oriented discourse between British Sign Language (BSL) users. Paper presented at BAAL, Swansea, September 2008.

Sacks, Harvey
1984 Notes on methodology. In *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*, J. Maxwell Atkinson and John Heritage (eds.) 21–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sacks, Harvey
1995 *Lectures on Conversation, Volumes 1 and 2. Edited by Gail Jefferson.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Schegloff, Emanuel A.
1987 Between micro and macro: contexts and other connections. In *The Micro-Macro Link*, Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen, Richard

Munch and Neil J. Smelser (eds.), 207–234. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Schegloff, Emanuel A.
2007 *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis I*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sotillo, Catherine F.
1997 Phonological Reduction and Intelligibility in Task-Oriented Dialogue. Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh.

Stivers, Tanya
2008 Stance, alignment, and affiliation during storytelling: when nodding is a token of affiliation. *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 41 (1): 31–57.

Turner, Graham H., Kyra Pollitt, Andrew John Merrison, Bethan L. Davies and Gary Quinn
2009 The pragmatics of dialogue interpreting between sign and speech. Paper presented at IPrA, Melbourne, July 2009.

Wilkinson, Ray
1995a The application of conversation analysis to the assessment of aphasic talk-in-interaction. Ph.D. diss., University of Central England, Birmingham.

Wilkinson, Ray
1995b Doing 'being ordinary': aphasia as a problem of interaction. In *UCL Department of Human Communication Science Work in Progress Vol. 5*, Myra Kersner and Sue Peppe (eds.), 134–150.

Postscript

Dániel Z. Kádár

1. Introduction: A difficult task[1]

The author of a postscript is meant to critically reflect on the findings of a volume – instead of sheepishly agreeing with everything that has been argued. Yet, (at least, I hope) anyone would agree that it is a difficult task to reflect on a collection of excellent papers, in particular if the papers were written by some of the best experts in the field. Thus, when the Management Group of the LPRG invited me to write an epilogue for this volume, even though I did not hesitate for a moment to accept the offer, I felt quite uncertain as to what I would be able to say apart from agreeing with the authors. And, when I read the manuscript it seemed that the worst-case scenario had occurred. Relying on in-depth and insightful inquiries, as well as extensive scholarly experience, the authors explore different, important, aspects of linguistic politeness research in most convincing and innovative ways.

With this 'problem' behind me, I had to revise my perception of the genre of epilogues – at least, for the time of writing the present chapter. Thus, I will make reflections on our field – discursive politeness research – in general. In other words, the present chapter tries to problematise the 'field' of discursive politeness research. The questions made here are *self-reflexive* in nature, and follow Foucaultian ([1966] 1970) logic to some extent. That is, I focus on some aspects of the discursive theorisation that seem to be problematic to me in spite of the fact that I define myself as a *devout* discursive researcher, belonging to the same stream of analytic thinking as the authors of this volume.

---

1 The present chapter is based on an invited talk I gave at the Seminar of LPRG, 08 December 2009, at Sheffield Hallam University. I would like to express my gratitude to Sara Mills and Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini for their kind support and for organising the Seminar. I would also like to say thanks to all those in the Group who shared their insightful ideas with me during the discussion following the talk.

I hope that by addressing some points of the field that I find problematic I can not only reflect on the present volume in a (somewhat) critical way, without criticising its contents, but can also suggest future directions for research. In a sense the present chapter follows several discursive undertakings that problematise the discursive field (see, most importantly, Haugh 2007a, and Terkourafi 2005). Yet, some problems discussed here are also valid to the aforementioned undertakings, that is the present work revisits the wider discursive field (see more in Conclusion).

The present chapter has the following structure: Section 2 reviews the present volume from a wider perspective. By the label "wider perspective" I mean that instead of summarising the contents of the work, I *categorise* the contributions, trying to answer the question why this volume, in spite of the theoretical and empirical diversity of the contributions, can be claimed to be a solid contribution to the field of *discursive* politeness research. Section 3 raises some critical concerns about the discursive field, following the aforementioned Foucaultian logic. Finally, Section 4 draws some conclusions and suggests future research directions.

2. The present volume: A wider perspective

2.1. What this volume is about? Discursive vs. post-modern

In Chapter 1 Mills overviews the state of the field and discusses some of the most important notions within the field of discursive research. Here I would only like to address one basic terminological issue in relation with the contents of the present volume: the label 'discursive'. I would like to briefly describe what I take 'discursive' to mean, and why it might be more useful than 'post-modern' in reference to the contents of this volume. While this is a rather basic terminological issue, it can help providing a wider 'frame' for the present volume.

In the field the word 'discursive' is often used in parallel with the term 'postmodern'/'post-modern' However, using the label 'post-modern' is not without danger: in fact, very few researchers could define what post-modern politeness research precisely means – or, more precisely, what is the difference, if any, between discursive and post-modern concepts. Mills (in the present volume) refers to the following general understanding of 'post-modernism' by many: "when used today, post-modernism is often merely a term of criticism". This reference by Mills illustrates that, for many, the term 'post-modernism' has a simple and somewhat negative meaning, as an intellectual approach that is suitable only to deconstruct ideas. In fact, equating 'post-modernism' with critical thinking makes sense, if we maintain that, by using this notion we want to emphasise that our method of politeness analysis follows the idea of critical thinking of the post-modern age (and so, post-modern thinking has nothing to do with aimless deconstruction, cf. Chapter 1, in the present volume). Yet, one may wonder whether it is useful to use 'post-modernism' as a synonym of 'critical' Critical thinking has longer traditions than post-modern thinking, as different researchers argue. For example, it is pertinent to refer to scholars such as Dewey (1933) who emphasised the necessity of reflexive thinking well before the birth of post-modernism. As Dewey (1933: 9) notes, reflective thought is "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends."[2]

As a matter of course this does not mean that the critical turn in politeness research cannot be defined as post-modern, but perhaps the label 'post-modern' should be used in a more profound sense and should be differentiated from 'discursive', in research.

As Mills argues in Chapter 1, post-modernist approaches in applied linguistics are closely interlinked with the analytic notion of 'Community of Practice' (henceforth CofP), which "for post-modern theorists, [...] enabled a more contextualised analysis of gender and language, and the same holds true for the analysis of politeness." The use of the notion of CofPs seems to be a good starting point to define post-modern linguistic studies. Indeed, since post-modern inquiries gained importance in linguistics through gender and language research (see e.g. Bucholtz 1999), CofP has been the focus of attention of many researchers. This is a most logical choice of analytic unit: as post-modernist thinking aims to deconstruct monolithic descriptions of society and social behaviour, post-modern theorists need to focus on the behaviour of smaller groups, preferably the smallest analysable social unit. Also, as Bucholtz (1999) notes, by relying on this analytic notion, post-modern researchers can connect linguistic inquiries with major social theories. Thus – even though (as far as I am aware) no claim has been made to link post-modern research with CofPs in the field of social studies – it can be argued that the optimal unit of post-modern analyses is CofP.

2 I found this citation on the following website: <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~palmquis/courses/discourse.htm>

However, if we accept the above connection between post-modern politeness research and the theory of CofP, it becomes evident that some chapters in the present volume are *not* post-modern in a strict sense. While no contributions in the present volume expresses criticism towards using the analytic notion of CofP (unlike e.g. Holmes 1995, see Mills, in the present volume), only a few of the authors (Clark) rely on CofPs in an explicit way. Furthermore, some chapters (e.g. Davies, Harris, Mullany) are involved in the analysis of institutional interactions. As Wenger (1998: 3) notes: "Communities of practice exist in any organization. Because membership is based on participation rather than on official status, these communities are not bound by organizational affiliations; they can span institutional structures and hierarchies." In other words, while there is a solid interface between institutional discourse and COfP, scholars exploring the former are approaching analysis from different perspective. Research of institutional discourse(s) presupposes interest in deriving constant sociopragmatic 'mechanisms' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 27) of interactions, from the data studied, as well as interest in "official status", and "organizational affiliations", to use Wenger's above definition. This type of analytic interest may differ from post-modernist approaches focusing on CofPs, in the sense that post-modernist thinking focuses primarily on individual de/constructive participation in discourse, of course in accordance with the accepted norms of a CofP. In order to illustrate the difference between these analytic interests, one may refer to Bucholtz's (1999) study on the CofP of 'nerd' girls in an American high school. For the (critical) discourse analyst, such a community would be of interest, because its members form a micro-level institution within the institution of school, and they have different roles, ranks, and obligations at different institutional levels. On the other hand, CofP experts like Bucholtz approach this community as a source for identity formation, that is, she has interest in the ways in which individuals associate and dissociate themselves with and from the given group.

It is also pertinent to note that post-modern thinking would presuppose that scholars predominantly focus on first-order understandings of 'politeness', or "narratives and metanarratives" (Mills, in the present volume). In this sense Eelen (2001), the first influential analyst of the research of 'first-order' politeness, rightly used the label 'post-modern' in relation with his theorisation of linguistic politeness. However, some contributors in the present volume – most importantly, Grainger – argue that 'second-order' conceptualisations of politeness cannot and should not be neglected.

2.2. Why discursive?

To continue the discussion, I would argue that in general the label 'discursive' is more appropriate to describe the contents of this volume than 'post-modern' In fact, I would argue that 'discursive' is a vague definition and its basic virtue is that it presupposes diversity: this approach includes various insightful conceptualisations of linguistic politeness that often have not much in common. Nevertheless, despite the diversity of discursive theorisations, the discursive approach is a 'field', because discursive research shares some related basic concepts (see also Christie 2010), which differentiate it from other approaches to politeness.[3] In what follows, let us summarise why the chapters of the present volume can be categorised as solid contributions to discursive research:

Firstly, as it was already noted by Mills (in the present volume), the discursive approach is a strictly interaction-based one, that is, it analyses politeness occurring in longer chunks of authentic discourse. This is in contrast with previous Brown and Levinsonian (1987, henceforth B & L) research, which was predominantly based on short examples. Within longer discourse fragments, discursive researchers aim to put focus not only on the speaker's production of certain utterances but also on the hearer's evaluation of them. As Eelen notes, "in everyday practice (im)politeness occurs not so much when the speaker produces behaviour but rather when the hearer evaluates that behaviour" (Eelen 2001: 109).

The contributions in the present volume are not only interaction-based but in fact put discourse at the centre of their analyses, studying longer chunks of interaction. Furthermore, a noteworthy characteristic of the contributions is that they make use of interactions that are both authentic and noteworthy from the perspective of the discourse analyst, including interactions that received international attention (Davies), discourse in closed communities (Clark and Merrison) and various institutions (e.g. Culpeper, Grainger, Harris, Mullany), and intercultural settings (Grainger).

---

3 It was an interesting intercultural experience for me to see at LPRG Seminar at Sheffield Hallam University that very few British discursive politeness researchers define their field as a 'school', in spite of the fact that the geographical 'centre' of the Linguistic Politeness Research Group – and the discursive field – is Britain (though various discursive experts are located outside of Britain of course). With a continental European scholarly background I am inclined to refer to discursive research as a 'school' but will refrain from using this term in this paper, in order to remain on the safe side.

Secondly, the authors make use of the key concepts of discursive research, in particular (a) the theorisation of 'politeness' (first-order vs. second-order) and (b) the discursive evaluation of utterances as polite and impolite. In most chapters – such as Culpeper's groundbreaking work on prosody and impoliteness and the insightful CofP-based inquiries by Clark – evaluation *is* actually the very basic analytic concept.

To sum up, I would argue that the present volume carries out research in a discursive vein. In what follows, I try to raise some critical questions with regard to the discursive field, as an approach based on the concept of 'evaluation' and the theorisation of politeness as first-order vs. second-order.

3. The questions

The field includes a couple of *terminological* and *theoretical* notions, which seem to be self-evident and serve as the pillars of argumentation for many discursive studies – including the contributions for the present volume. However, some of these points can turn out to be problematic, which is worrying for someone involved in discursive theorisation, precisely because these are *basic* points that should be self-evident. The obvious answer for many (like me, for instance) might be that they overcomplicate matters and it is tempting just to ignore such questions; but this would be a mistake because in the long run some of them might become subjects of academic criticism. Thus, it seems to be worthwhile to make a self-reflexive attempt to problematise our field. We can make an *a posteriori* presumption that the field will not be new forever, and even the critical discursive turn in politeness research may sooner or later become subject of (similar) criticisms. For example, the theory of B & L (1987), was alive and kicking in its own time (and continues to be, to some extent), and we have no reason to assume that the discursive theorisation, which seems so vibrant at the moment, will not induce some criticisms similar in scope with that of B & L. In other words, by problematising and redefining some very obvious notions as scholars belonging to this field we could make a kind of 'pre-emptive strike' against 'external' criticisms, i.e. arguments by scholars who are not sympathetic to discursive ideas.

On a personal note, much of the problematization I make in this chapter originates in previous historical pragmatic projects, and so many of the citations and theoretical arguments are historical in nature. However, I believe that this does not decrease their validity to synchronic research such as the explorations presented in this volume. On the contrary, as noted by O'Driscoll

(2010: 267): "historical politeness studies have a great deal in common with cross-cultural ones", and so ignoring seemingly 'exotic' historical evidence is just like ignoring cross-cultural and intercultural ones, which is a mistake as it was demonstrated by the influence of studies like Ide (1989), Gu (1990), and Nwoye (1992).

Also, the questions that I pose here are centred around a single focal point, namely, the *lack* or *lesser importance* of certain notions and practices in historical times.

In what follows I will approach these problems by making two questions, namely a terminological and a theoretical question (even though terminological questions also raise theoretical ones).

3.1. Terminological question: 'Politeness' research?

The following questions could be rightly made on the basis of the present state of the discursive field: 'What is the object of our field?'; 'Are we *politeness* researchers anymore?'

By making these questions I would like to refer to a recent discursive problematization of politeness, which itself seems to be problematic from some perspectives. Locher and Watts in their (2005) paper – which can rightly be called one of the most representative contributions to this discursive field – note that 'politeness' should describe the first-order *emic* notions of politeness. They also added that politeness, as they interpret it, arises "out of interactants' perceptions and judgements of their own and other's verbal behaviour" (2005: 10). Finally, they claim that "the polite level of interaction can be captured in "discursive struggles" (2005: 29). While some authors in the present volume (importantly, Grainger) revisit this issue, while also others choose to ignore this terminological issue as far as possible, the first-order vs. second-order dichotomy runs through the whole volume. However, if we accept the theorisation of Locher and Watts (2005) as a standard definition of this dichotomy, we need to (re-)consider a number of things.

Most importantly, this theorisation implies that second-order terminology should *not* include 'politeness', that is, researchers are expected to select from a menu of scientific terms such as 'relational work' (Watts 1989, 2003; Locher 2004), 'rapport-management' (Spencer-Oatey 2008), and 'facework' (Goffman [1967] 2005), or alternatively to themselves coin other terms that are 'appropriate' due to certain second-order considerations. (In fact, though this issue is not the topic of this chapter, it would be reasonable to adopt only one second-order term among these labels with different connotations, and use it consciously thereafter). However, this terminological proposal is not without problems: most importantly, it is rather questionable from a historical perspective. As in a recent study Kádár and Culpeper argued (2010: 23): "ideally we should avoid using 'politeness' to describe diachronic *emic* practices and notions, since it is a recently coined expression from a diachronic perspective". That is, from the perspective of the historical pragmatician, it would perhaps be possible to use 'politeness' as a second-order analytic notion but certainly not as a first-order one. Another alternative would be to simply expel the word 'politeness' from our terminological lexicon – but this would be a strange choice insofar as we define ourselves as politeness researchers.[4]

Kádár and Culpeper's claim is based on several historical studies that rely on authentic data. For example, Andreas Jucker (2010) in a recent paper on historical English notes: "What we know about politeness in Anglo-Saxon England based on kinship loyalty as well as *caritas* and *humilitas* differs considerably from the Early Modern English politeness based on face-saving strategies" (2010: 197). That is, 'politeness' (not just the label but its practice as we understand it) did not have any equivalent practice in many historical contexts – this, anyway, might also turn out to be valid to several contemporary cultures. For example, Haugh's (2007b) study has already demonstrated, in an illuminating way, that in Japanese culture 'place' (*tachiba*) is more important in discursive negotiations of politeness than *emic* equivalents of 'politeness'

The difference between modern and historical understandings of 'politeness' also manifests itself in difficulties that arise when one intends to apply modern analytic concepts to the analysis of historical data. For example, the Dutch scholar Marcel Bax (2010: 75) criticises the 'surplus' approach – that is the Wattsian notion that politeness arises from the interactants' evaluation of certain behavioural types as 'polite' because they go beyond contextual requirements – in the following way:

> I am of the belief that Watts' distinction, in itself valuable, applies uniquely to the modern world, especially latter-day Western society. Historically, the difference evaporates, as it runs dead against ostensibly extremely polite uses

4 Yet, when I refer to this alternative as a "strange choice" I do not intend to claim that it is an *impossible* choice. In a recent keynote lecture Richard Watts (2010) argued, quite convincingly to me, that politeness is only a small part of the complex cognitive process that we define as 'interaction'. Thus, if politeness is not studied as an autonomous entity, it is indeed a feasible way to treat it as a marginal notion – but this is not a possible alternative to many (including me).

> of language that, on closer examination, merely amount to presentational rituals – in other words, unmarked politic behaviour, mandatory face-work. … ritual extravagance – i.e. the wearing of a much-adorned behavioural mask – is in just about all communicative contexts just an accurate reflection of period standard norms.

To sum up, as these quotations demonstrate, some basic notions of the discursive theorisation (insofar as we regard Watts' work as one of the most important frameworks in the field) prove to be somewhat problematic, and we need to ask some self-reflexive questions:

Firstly, without the existence of 'politeness' as a first-order concept (or a first-order practice), can the interactants perceive and judge something as 'polite'? It would be an unconvincing argument to claim that 'politeness' always has some cultural equivalents even if the interactants do not define it by this name: we do not have evidence that 'politeness' or any of its equivalents existed in those historical contexts where politeness was *not* based on rationalised face-work (see more in 3.2 below). That is, we can treat 'politeness' as a sociocultural 'development', which is not universal diachronically (and perhaps not synchronically). As we understand from sociological research, in particular Michael Foucault's work ([1966] 1970), the social sciences are often eager to project culturally and temporally extant notions as 'universal' to diachronically and spatially distant societies and cultures in an *a priori* manner.

Secondly, without the universal importance of marked behaviour and the existence of 'politeness', is the 'surplus' approach universally applicable? If we accept Bax's claim that extravagance, i.e. marked behaviour, was only normative in some historical contexts, and also marked behaviour was part of ritual (self-)display rather than rational face-work, we cannot make use of the surplus concept in a really effective way. One alternative for this problem was proposed in Kádár (2010) where I argued that some surplus behaviour can be captured in every historical context, but the border between 'politic' and 'polite' behaviour is often indefinable, and consequently, adopting Leech's (1983) 'scalar' approach, we should regard 'politic' and 'polite' as extremes of a scale. Nevertheless, this is not a universalistic definition and it might not be valid to use it in relation to (synchronic) contexts where politic and polite are clearly separable.

Finally, although this aspect of the above-mentioned theorisation of Watts (2003) and Locher and Watts (2005) was not problematised by previous research, an intriguing question for the historical pragmatician is whether there should really be a discursive *struggle* so that one can capture 'politeness' This definition excludes much research work on monologic genres and devotes unreasonable importance to dialogue (vs. monologue), in spite of the fact that both monologue and dialogue belong to *discourse* (e.g. Kaplan and Grabe 2002). For example, previous socio-pragmatic work on politeness in historical letters (Kádár 2010) could in fact capture utterances that are closer to the politeness end of the politeness–deference scale, despite the fact that discursive struggles (at least in the way in which they are interpreted in Locher and Watts 2005) do not exist in monologic interactions (but cf. Culpeper and Kytö's 2010 so-called 'corpus method' that may aid one capturing struggles in monologic genres). More precisely, struggles may occur in monologic genres (one may recall Voloshinov's 1986 definition that monologues are dialogues in the larger context), but they are somewhat irrelevant to those who want to capture 'politeness' as a metapragmatic phenomenon – unless one intentionally studies works that discuss politeness.

With regard to this point, it is pertinent to note *in passim* that discursive struggles are quite marginal in the present volume, except in the case of Culpeper's illuminating contribution, and this lack makes one wonder whether these struggles have indeed to be analysed in order to be able to say something about 'politeness' in a strict sense.

To conclude this terminological problematization, the following arise:

1. Can politeness research – or whatever discursive scholars define as politeness research – make use of the word 'politeness', which is neither applicable as a first-order notion in some contexts, nor as a second-order analytic concept?
2. If we retain 'politeness' as a technical term, how should we define it?

One alternative would be to retain politeness both as a first and a second-order term, as a better-than-nothing term – a solution which is so far ignored in discursive research, including the present volume. Pan and Kádár (forthcoming) propose that 'politeness' could be used simultaneously both as "as a neutral default first-order working concept" and as a 'second-order' Wattsian analytic notion for utterances that are closer to the polite end of the politic–politeness scale. But, in this case we should definitely use the first-order 'politeness' notion in a simple folklinguistic way, in accordance with Mills (2003: 8) who notes that "what I focus on is the analysis of what people judge to be polite"; this simple definition could include politeness in cultures where 'politeness' as a term does not exist. In other words, a widely accepted 'disarmed' first-order politeness would be needed, which would be *different* from 'politeness1' as it is currently used by many in the field.

3.2. Theoretical question: Universals?

Along with the above-discussed terminological question there is a theoretical one – defined here as 'universals' – that should be addressed in this self-reflexive exploration. This point is important to be noted here because in the present work, except the contribution by Harris, all the authors seem to share these 'universals'

B & L are often accused of being 'Eurocentric' or 'ethnocentric' in their universalistic conceptualisation. This critique is rather debatable, and in fact Barbara Pizziconi (2003) successfully defended several aspects of B & L's theory. Independent of the fact of whether discursive scholars accept criticisms of B & L or not, it is intriguing to consider whether *we* will not be criticised for the same universalistic attitude sooner or later. Even if we have not made it clear, and perhaps many would refuse this idea, discursive theorisations have their own implicit universals. To provide a pivotal discursive issue as a case study, along with the previously claimed importance of markedness, discursive scholars devote universal importance to the hearer's evaluation of an utterance in the discursive (co-)construction of politeness. Since discursive research is interested in context, the hearer as an evaluator is inherently present in discourse-based analyses. More precisely, discursive scholars ask for both production and interpretation to be considered, but Eelen (2001) is quite explicit about the fact that politeness can only be realised through interpretation (even so, one may add that it is not yet settled in politeness research whether the speaker or the hearer is more important, so it would be more proper to state that 'apart from the speaker the hearer also plays an important role in the realisation of politeness'). Thus, this notion provides an interesting example to explore whether our universals (independent of whether we explicitly claim them to be universal or not) are really universal.

The problem with the notion of evaluation is that there are historical (but also contemporary institutional) contexts in which politeness primarily serves, and is manifested by, ritual display rather than (addressee-oriented) facework in a modern sense; though no historical pragmatician claimed that these two types could and did not co-exist – simply ritual behaviour was more salient. It is pertinent to note that this phenomenon is not uniquely historical. Harris (in the present volume) notes that "though there are undoubtedly many situations where face threats and face enhancement *are* the primary goals and/or ends in themselves, court discourse, along with most other forms of institutional discourse, is not one of them." In fact, there is a unique relationship between historical ritual behaviour and courtroom interactions in the sense that – as Harris also notes – courtroom interactions are ritualistic in nature. Yet, in historical data ritual display is more evident than in contemporary settings because it is not restricted to certain institutional contexts.

The problem of lack of evaluation in historical times was discussed, amongst others, by the aforementioned studies of Marcel Bax (2010) and Andreas Jucker (2010). If politeness is part of ritual display in certain cultures and settings, the claim that it is the hearer who constructs politeness and impoliteness through evaluation is rather questionable, because the hearer's active role presupposes the existence of rationality-based facework. This does not mean that the hearer's role is completely eliminated: the hearer still plays a role in interpreting and in some contexts resists/manipulates these rituals (Kádár 2010); that is why rituals change – though slowly – over time. However, it is obvious that in historical contexts the role and obligations of the discursive 'hearer' were different from that of this role in our times.

In certain historical cultural contexts[5] like imperial China (Kádár 2007) this phenomenon is particularly salient, as the following dialogic example, written in Classical Chinese, demonstrates:

> 則天問狄相曰　「若改見前解，則與卿長保富貴。若不改見前解，這殿前油鍋是卿死處。」【梁公九諫】
>
> Zetian asked Minister Di: "If you, O Revered Minister, changed your former view, you shall be granted countless treasures. If you do not change your view, then you, O Revered Minister, shall be cooked alive in oil in front of this palace." (*The Nine Admonishments of Duke Liang*; trans. by Kádár)

This interaction, cited from a Song Dynasty (960–1279) historical novel, takes place between Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (r. 690–705) and his minister Di Renjie 狄仁傑 (630–700). In this interaction the speaker, Empress Wu, is not *polite* in a sense that we would interpret this term, due to the deathly threat made here. It is important to note that this utterance is neither a 'polite threat' in a technical sense, simply because it is too direct; a 'real' polite threat should be indirect. For example, Jon Hall (2009: 177) in his recent thought-provoking monograph on historical Latin politeness cited the following example as a stereotypical form of polite threat:

5 In accordance with Eelen (2001) and Mills and Kádár (forthcoming) I think that the label 'culture' is quite problematic as an umbrella term since it is prescriptive. Nevertheless, I think it is a useful notion in particular if used in relation with socio-cultural (or 'evolutional') understanding of certain phenomena such as individuality in communication.

> Bear in mind not how long Caesar lived, but for how short a time he reigned as king. *(neque quam diu vixerit Caesar sed quam non diu regnarit fac cogites)*

This line by Cicero is meant to threaten the reader in a hidden yet clear way: this is the essence of polite threat. Interestingly, this interpretation of 'polite threat' seems to be confirmed also by an informal discussion on Linguist List by Susan Ervin-Tripp (1991) who claimed that "polite threats are useless in real life". Obviously, Ervin-Tripp's reason to make this prescriptive claim was that polite threats are too indirect for the necessities of a 'real' i.e. spoken discourse.[6] Thus, the Classical Chinese example cited above is simply 'bald on-record' in its approach, to use a Brown and Levinsonian term, that is, the empress is being straightforward and threatening.

According to the modern interpretation of 'discernment', as Ide defined this notion in her 1989 paper, in East Asian settings like this one the ruler should not use *deferential* forms in this setting. That is, what we see here is *not* an 'exotic' example of 'Oriental' discourse: while in honorific-rich languages such as Japanese and Classical Chinese the acknowledgement of status often takes place irrespective of whether facework is needed or not, as noted by Ide – and in this sense it would be possible for a higher-ranking person to use honorifics towards a lower-ranking one – it would be highly unusual and *illogical* for a higher-ranking person to use honorifics while threatening a lower-ranking one in a bald-on-record manner.

It is interesting thus to consider the role of the addressee-elevating honorific form of address (cf. Kádár 2007) *qing* 卿 ('O Revered Minister')[7] in this interaction. In fact, this term determines the ruler's position, that is it is part of ritual discourse and self-display: in historical China only rulers could use this honorific form of address, that is, by using this form the speaker defines her *own* role, as well as her superior relationship with the addressee. Consequently, *logic*, or more precisely *rationality*, does not have anything to do with the discursive use of this term, and so unlike in modern East Asian contexts it is perfectly applicable here. It is pertinent to note here that some historical Chinese textual studies (e.g. Kádár 2007) have shown that the form *qing* was quite often used in this way, i.e. independently from the context, due to its function of defining the superior–subordinate relationship between the interactants.

6 Personally, though, I regard Ervin-Tripp's statement to be somewhat prescriptive. For example, an utterance by a blackmailer such as "I would not like to take this further …" could work very well in certain contexts.

7 This term literally means 'minister' and, in a similar way with other historical Chinese official terms of address, it functions as an honorific in discourse (cf. Kádár 2007).

While I have referred to an East Asian example, it is important to note that ritual display, and lack on interpretation, seems to be the 'universal norm' in historical societies (Bax 2010). In Europe before the intellectual transitions following the Renaissance period chivalrous self-display dominated interactions, as the following extract from Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* illustrates:

> In the end, however, Sir Tristam proved the stronger, and Sir Blamoure, on receiving a tremendous buffet on the helmet, sank to the ground, defeated.
>
> 'Sir,' he said to Sir Tristram, 'I beg you to kill me, for never will I dishonour my name and my kin by uttering the shameful word, mercy!'[8]

Just as in the case of Minister Di, manifestations of 'courtesy' have not much to do with 'politeness' as we understand this notion in contemporary times. Sir Blamoure speaks to an enemy and is about to be killed by him (in the end he is spared). Logically, in such a situation politeness should be used in order to address the other's face needs, hence attaining some goal – in this case saving the speaker's life. However, Sir Blamoure, on the contrary, begs to be killed, and so expressions of deference do not have any particular goal in his speech, except that they display *his* chivalrous character, as a person who speaks as a knight even in a most perilous situation. In other words, expressions like "beg you" and "Sir" have no direct relationship with the other's evaluation.

Returning to the central question, the hearer's role seems to be limited in such interactions. This would not be the case if honorifics were used rationally in a hearer-oriented way, since in those contexts honorifics are subject to evaluation, just as Barbara Pizziconi (forthcoming) has recently demonstrated. If the hearer's role in the discursive (co-construction) of politeness is limited in certain historical contexts, the 'universality' of the analytic concept of evaluation can rightly be questioned.

4. Conclusion

In this postscript I have argued that it is necessary to pose self-reflexive questions. By problematising certain concepts of the field I did not intend to propose that we need to give answers to these problems in an instant. For example, the terminological issues discussed here might be inherently

8 Cited from Keith Baines' classic rendition of *Le Morte d'Arthur* ([1962] 2001: 182–183).

problematic; as Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini (2009) mentioned in a note that was included in the discussion material of the LPRG meeting at Sheffield Hallam University, which inspired the present work:

> Apparently, Herbert Blumer (1986) (the American sociologist and founder of social interactionism) argues that 'none of the basic concepts in the social and behavioural sciences are true concepts' but 'sensitising concepts', i.e. concepts that sensitise us to a problem.

In accordance with this remark, it might be that no perfect definition, or even theory, can ever be obtained, and this is perhaps not our goal. Instead, we need to be aware of the fact that even the discursive field has its own potentially weak points, that is the critical turn can also become subject to criticisms.

One could argue that there are current theorisations that provide alternatives to the strict-sense discursive field, that is, the problems discussed here are of limited scope. Such frameworks, notably Arundale (2008), Haugh (2007a), and Terkourafi (2005), were defined by Grainger (2010) as "interactional/sociological" approaches to politeness. Yet, I believe that some of the critical points raised here, most importantly the problematization of evaluation and the hearer's role as universally valid concepts, are also relevant to the "interactional/sociological" frameworks.

What the readers have in hand is a collection of outstanding essays. Although one should refrain from evaluative remarks in a scholarly publication, I daresay that this is the best collection of discursive essays so far available in the field, which gives the reader an excellent overview of the state of art. In the years coming, our main task should be to keep the field alive and kicking through some thorough self-reflexive self-analysis.

References

Arundale, Robert

2008 Against (Gricean) intention at the heart of human interaction. *Intercultural Pragmatics* 5 (2): 229–258.

Bargiela-Chiappini, Francesca

2009 *On Concepts and Terms: A Self-Reflexive Exercise.* Paper presented at LPRG Seminar, 8th December 2009.

Bax, Marcel

2010 Epistolary presentation rituals, face-work, politeness, and ritual display in early modern Dutch letter-writing. In *Historical (Im)politeness*, Jonathan Culpeper, Dániel Z. Kádár (eds.), 37–86. (Linguistic Insights 65) Bern/Oxford: Peter Lang.

Brown, Penelope, and Levinson, Stephen C.
1987 *Politeness: Some Universals of Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bucholtz, Mary
1999 'Why be normal?' Language and identity practices in a community of nerd girls. *Language in Society* 28: 203–223.

Chouliaraki, Lilie, and Fairclough, Norman
1999 *Discourse in Late Modernity: Rethinking Critical Discourse Analysis*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Christie, Christine
2010 *Linguistic Politeness: Theories and Applications*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Culpeper, Jonathan, and Kytö, Merja
2010 *Early Modern English Dialogues: Spoken Interactions as Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dewey, John
1933 *Experience and Education*. New York: Macmillan.

Eelen, Gino
2001 *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Ervin-Tripp, Susan
1991 <http://www.umich.edu/~archive/linguistics/linguist.list/volume.2/no.301-350>

Foucault, Michael
1970 Reprint. *The Order of Things: Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London: Routledge. Original edition, 1966.

Goffman, Erving
2005 *Interaction Ritual: Essays in Face-to-Face Behaviour*. New York: Random House. Original edition, 1967.

Grainger, Karen
2010 *First Order and Second Order Politeness: The Case of Intercultural Indirectness*. Lecture presented at the 5th International Symposium of Politeness, Basel.

Gu, Yueguo
1990 Politeness phenomena in modern Chinese. *Journal of Pragmatics* 14 (22): 237–257.

Hall, Jon
2009 *Politeness and Politics in Cicero's Letters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Haugh, Michael
2007a The discursive challenge to politeness research: An interactional alternative. *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2): 295–317.

Haugh, Michael
2007b Emic conceptualisations of (im)politeness and face in Japanese: Implications for the discursive negotiation of second language learner identities. *Journal of Pragmatics* 39 (4): 657–680.

Holmes, Janet
1995 *Women, Men and Politeness*. London: Longman.

Ide, Sachiko
1989 Formal forms and discernment: Two neglected aspects of universals of linguistic politeness. *Multilingua* 2 (3): 223–248.

Jucker, Andreas H.
2010 'In curteisie was set ful muchel hir lest' Politeness in Middle English. In *Historical (Im)politeness*, Jonathan Culpeper, Dániel Z. Kádár (eds.), 179–200. (Linguistic Insights 65) Bern/Oxford: Peter Lang.

Kádár, Dániel Z.
2007 *Terms of (Im)politeness: On the Communicational Properties of Traditional Chinese (Im)polite Terms of Address*. Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University Press.

Kádár, Dániel Z.
2010 Exploring the historical Chinese polite denigration/elevation phenomenon, In *Historical (Im)politeness*, Jonathan Culpeper, Dániel Z. Kádár (eds.), 117–145. (Linguistic Insights 65) Bern/Oxford: Peter Lang.

Kádár, Dániel Z., and Culpeper, Jonathan
2010 Historical (im)politeness: An introduction. In *Historical (Im)politeness*, Jonathan Culpeper, Dániel Z. Kádár (eds.), 9–36. (Linguistic Insights 65) Bern/Oxford: Peter Lang.

Kaplan, Robert B., and Grabe, William
2002 A modern history of written discourse analysis. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 11 (3): 191–223.

Leech, Geoffrey N.
1983 *Principles of Pragmatics*. London/New York: Longman.

Locher, Miriam A.
2004 *Power and Politeness in Action*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Locher, Miriam, and Watts, Richard J.
2005 Politeness theory and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 9–34.

Malory (Sir), Thomas
Le Morte d'Arthur; modern edition used for this work: Baines, Keith ([1962] 2001). New York: Penguin.

Mills, Sara
2003 *Gender and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mills, Sara, and Kádár, Dániel Z.
forthc. Politeness and culture. In *Politeness in East Asia*; Dániel Z. Kádár and Sara Mills (eds.) *Politeness in East Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nwoye, Onuigbo G.
1992 Linguistic politeness and socio-cultural variations of the notion of 'face'. *Journal of Pragmatics* 18 (4): 309–328.

O'Driscoll, Jim
2010 Epilogue. In *Historical (Im)politeness*, Jonathan Culpeper, Dániel Z. Kádár (eds.), 267–290. (Linguistic Insights 65) Bern/Oxford: Peter Lang.

Pan, Yuling, and Kádár, Dániel Z.
forthc. *Politeness in Historical and Contemporary Chinese*. London and New York: Continuum.

Pizziconi, Barbara
2003 Re-examining politeness, face and the Japanese language. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (10–11): 1471–1506.

Pizziconi, Barbara
forthc. Honorifics: The cultural specificity of a universal phenomenon in Japan. In *Politeness in East Asia*; Dániel Z. Kádár and Sara Mills (eds) *Politeness in East Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen (ed.)
2008 *Culturally Speaking*. 2nd edn. London and New York: Continuum.

Terkourafi, Marina
2005 Beyond the micro-level in politeness research. *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1): 237–262.

Voloshinov, V. N.
1986 *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Watts, Richard J.
1989 Relevance and relational work: Linguistic politeness as polite behaviour. *Multilingua* 8 (2–3): 131–166.

Watts, Richard J.
2003 *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Watts, Richard J.
2010 *Theorising Linguistic Politeness Phenomena?* Keynote lecture presented at the 5th International Symposium of Linguistic Politeness, Basel.

Wenger, Etienne
1998 Communities of practice: Learning as a social system', paper downloaded from the following website: <www.ewenger.com/pub/pub_systems_thinker_wrd.doc>

Index