

2nd World Conference on Educational Technology Researches – WCETR2012

Politeness and impoliteness strategies: an analysis of gender differences in Geralyn L. Horton's plays

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyse the speeches in six one-act plays by an American woman playwright, Geralyn L. Horton, to examine the gender differences in impolite acts. In the analysis of impoliteness, two classifications are taken as basis: types of strategies are classified according to the conventionalized impoliteness formulae and implicational impoliteness in Culpeper's latest book, *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence*; responses to impoliteness are classified within the framework in Bousfield's *Impoliteness in Interaction*. The findings show that men use more impoliteness than women in their speech, and the frequency rates of the types of strategies deployed by men and women show differences.

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Selection and/or peer-review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Hafize Keser Ankara University, Turkey

Key words: *Impoliteness strategies, gender differences, Geralyn L. Horton, American women dramatists*

1. Introduction

1.1. Impoliteness

The notion of politeness and impoliteness has been one of the controversial issues and has been defined in many different ways since politeness theory was first introduced by Brown and Levinson. Watts argues that “(im)politeness is a term that is struggled over at present, has been struggled over in the past and will, in all probability, continue to be struggled over in the future.” (2003: 9).

Brown and Levinson's theory, which is based on Goffman's face notion and Grice's maxims, states that any behaviour that attempts to protect the face of the addressee is polite; therefore, any behaviour that attacks the face of the addressee is impolite. Most of the later definitions of impoliteness center on the face notion. For example, Culpeper defines impoliteness as "...communicative strategies designed to attack face, and thereby cause social conflict and disharmony..." (Culpeper et al. 2003:1546). New dimensions are added to the act of impoliteness in later definitions even though the face notion remains as the lowest common denominator. Intentionality is one of these dimensions; Culpeper (2005) adds it to his definition as one of the essential conditions of impoliteness. Bousfield also mentions it in his definition; "...impoliteness constitutes the communication of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face-threatening acts which are purposefully delivered" (2008:72). The role of social norms is another dimension; Holmes et al. emphasize the importance of social norms and the perception of

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the hearer while ignoring the role of intentionality. They define verbal impoliteness as "... linguistic behavior assessed by the hearer as threatening her or his face or social identity, and infringing the norms of appropriate behavior that prevail in particular contexts and among particular interlocutors, whether intentionally or not" (2008:196). Sarah Mills discusses the same notion as community of practice, "Impoliteness can only be understood and analyzed pragmatically when considered in relation to group/community understanding of utterances, and also in terms of the long-term discourse strategies of the interlocutors" (2003:139). As it is mentioned in Holmes' definition, the perception of the hearer is another dimension in impoliteness studies. Culpeper's 2005 definition covers both intentionality and hearer's perception: "Impoliteness comes about when: (1) the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and/or constructs behavior as intentionally face attacking, or a combination of (1) and (2)" (2005:38).

1.2. Gender and Impoliteness

Lakoff, who made one of the early studies on gender differences in language, argues that women are more polite than men and "the marginality and powerlessness of women is reflected in both the ways women are expected to speak, and the ways in which women are spoken of" (1973b:45). Since then almost all the studies on gender differences have come to the same conclusion (Brown, 1980; O'Barr & Atkins, 1980; Tannen, 1990; Holmes, 1995; Cameron and Coates, 1998; Sarah Mills, 2003).

Besides the role of the secondary status of women in society, different approaches of men and women to life and communication affect their use of impoliteness in language. Tannen explains that men regard the world as a battlefield of "a hierarchical social order in which he was either one-up or one-down" (1990:24) and to them "conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand." Women, on the other hand, regard themselves as individuals "in a network of connections" (25). In their world, "conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give confirmation and support, and to reach consensus." This may be why women are abstain from impolite verbal acts.

1.3. Plays as Data

Plays are taken as the data of this research. Brown and Gilman state that they "provide the best information on colloquial speech ..." (1989:159). Culpeper claims that politeness is useful in the study of drama because "...frameworks of linguistic politeness can be used to shed light on literary critical issues." (1998:83) When literature in this field is scanned, it is noticed that there are outstanding studies in which plays are taken as data for impoliteness research. Among them we can cite *Politeness Theory and Shakespeare's Four Major Tragedies* by Brown and Gilman (1989), "The Rhetoric of Politeness and Henry XIII" by Lynne Magnusson (1992), the study of *Macbeth* in "Towards an anatomy of impoliteness" by Culpeper (1996), (Im) politeness in dramatic dialogue by Culpeper (1998), "Implication, Convention and *The Taming of the Shrew*" by Cooper (1998).

2- RESEARCH

2.1. Research Questions

- This study tries to find answers to the following research questions:
- 1- Is there any gender difference in the use of impoliteness?
 - 2- Is there any gender difference in the types of impoliteness strategies?
 - 3- Is there any gender difference in the factors that trigger impoliteness?
 - 4- Is there any gender difference in the responses to impoliteness?

2.2. Data: Geralyn Horton's Plays

Geralyn L. Horton is an Off-off Broadway playwright, an actress, a director and a reviewer. She worked with several theatres such as the Thespian Society, David Wheeler's Theatre Company of Boston and Playwrights' Platform. In an interview with Bella Online in 2000, she summarizes her career simply as follows: "Over the years I have written forty some plays, directed forty more, and performed in more than one hundred and forty—mostly unpaid and in church basements." She learned at the early stages of her career that "Girls do not grow up to be Great Playwrights" and "Most successful acting careers consist of long running hits of doubtful merit, occasional film bits,

and commercials". This led her to turn to "the Internet as a possible path through the barriers erected against unagented scripts, an also a way of talking shop with theatre artists around the world". She has achieved a great success at this; her webpage with more than fifty one-act and fourteen full-length downloadable plays is very popular. Her plays are produced not only in USA but abroad. When asked whether her plays were "more character driven or action driven", she explained that they "tend to be idea-driven". When asked about her writing style, she said it was "polysyllabic, stylized, sensual, aural rather than visual."

In this study six of Geralyn L. Horton's one-act plays are taken as data. The titles and the subjects of these plays are given below:

- 1- *Under Cover* (2002), a ten minute puppet play in which Candice, an American activist woman, covers her head to support the Muslim women who are alienated and humiliated in the society.
- 2- *The Dark Side* (2008). Joanne has just been dismissed by a computer firm and her colleagues Albert and Bytner try to console her. They are all well aware of the dirty jobs on the net, how people make money and exploit the Third World people.
- 3- *Happy Hour* (2003), a satire on the publishing world. Winnie and Jack, a married couple on the verge of divorce because of Jack's collection of hotel brochures, visit Mimi and Jay, their neighbors. Mini is an actress and Jay is a collector of manuscripts for plays.
- 4- *Party, Party, Tea and Antipathy* (2010), a Muslim family and a Christian family living in the same neighborhood and the problems they confront.
- 5- *Kiss the Twins for Me* (2011). The three siblings, Diane, Steve and Jeff, are in the apartment of their mother who unexpectedly disappeared after her husband's death. The siblings who have been so indifferent to their mother and her problems are now puzzled by the farewell letter she left before her departure.
- 6- *On Speaking Terms* (2010). Arnold and Serena, an ex-couple meet at a family party and quarrel for some time till they notice that they still love each other.

2.3. Measurement Instruments

In this paper Culpeper's classification of impoliteness in his book titled *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence* and Bousefield framework to study impoliteness at discourse level are taken as the measurement instruments to identify and classify the acts of impoliteness in Geralyn L. Horton's plays. Culpeper first divides impoliteness into two main groups. The first group contains the impolite acts that are inherent in English language, and Culpeper gives the formulae for them. His classification consists of the following items:

- 1- Insults
- 2- Pointed criticisms/complaints
- 3- Unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions
- 4- Condescensions
- 5- Message Enforcers
- 6- Dismissals
- 7- Silencers
- 8- Threats
- 9- Negative Expressives

In his second group there is implicational impoliteness which consists of the following items:

- 1- Form- driven: the surface form or semantic context of a behaviour is marked. (insinuation, casting aspersions, snide remarks)
- 2- Convention-driven: (sarcasm, teasing)
 - a- Internal: the context projected by part of a behaviour mismatches that projected by another part; or
 - b- External: the context projected by part of a behaviour mismatches the context of use.
- 3- Context-driven:
 - a- Unmarked behaviour. An unmarked (with respect to surface form or semantic context) and unconventionalised behaviour mismatches the context; or

b- Absence of behaviour: the absence of a behaviour mismatches the context.

Bousfield takes impoliteness not only at utterance level but also at discourse level; he studies the beginning, middle and ending of impoliteness in discourse. He argues that “Impoliteness does not spring from nowhere, nor does it occur in pure, strict isolation...there are always antecedent events which trigger the onset of impoliteness” (2008:146). This can be anger, a show of power, a dispute, a threat to the face, great sorrow, disappointment, bewilderment, panic, jealousy, feeling of helplessness, strong disapproval, desire to provoke, the wish to entertain, etc. In this paper what triggers impoliteness in men and women will be searched.

Bousfield is also interested in what happens after impoliteness is enacted. This study attempts to find out whether there is gender difference in the reactions of the interlocutors. In the analysis of the reaction of the addressee to impoliteness, the table of response options in the article written by Bousfield, Culpeper and Locher is taken as a base. Here is the table (2003:1563):

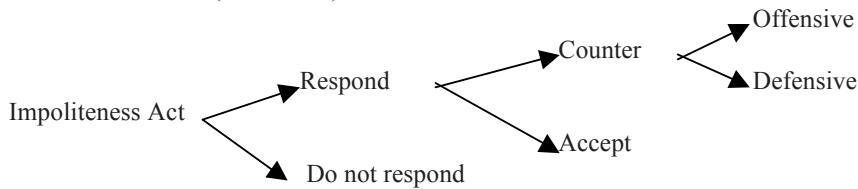


Figure1. Options of response

This table is later slightly modified by Bousfield in his article “*Beginnings, middles and ends: A biopsy of the dynamics of impolite exchanges*”. In the same article the defensive strategies are given as direct contradiction, abrogation, dismissal, ignoring the face attack, offering an explanation, pleading, opting out on record, treating the situation as a different activity type. (2006:2200)

Bousfield offers a list of ends to impoliteness acts; these are submission to opponent, dominant third party intervention, compromise, stand-off, withdrawal, and other considerations.

3- ANALYSIS OF THE PLAYS BY GERALYN L. HORTON

3.1. Under Cover

- 1- “Are you out of your mind?” (m/unpalatable question/disapproval/withdrawal-f)*
- 2- “Going out like that!” (m/unpalatable question/ disapproval /withdrawal-f)
- 3- “Can’t you just wear a hat?” (f/unpalatable question/ disapproval /withdrawal-f)
- 4- “How can you even put that thing?” (m/unpalatable question/ disapproval / withdrawal-f)
- 5- “You’re doing this out of spite, pure spite.” (m/insult/ disapproval /withdrawal-f)
- 6- “You never do anything right!” (f/insult/ disapproval /withdrawal-f)
- 7- “Always selfish. ‘Always ‘Look at me, me, me!’” (m/insult/ disapproval / withdrawal-f)
- 8- “You’ve got to be different! Got to be free, free, free!” (f/insult/ disapproval /withdrawal-f)
- 9- “Who do you think you are?” (m/unpalatable question/ disapproval /withdrawal-f) (twice)
- 10- “Think you can do whatever you want?” (m/unpalatable question/ disapproval / withdrawal-f) (twice)
- 11- “You think it is easy?” (f/unpalatable question/ disapproval /withdrawal-f)
- 12- “If you think those people will be grateful you’ve got another thing coming.” (m/presupposition/ disapproval /withdrawal-f) (twice)
- 13- “Some stranger pretending to be buddy-buddy.” (f/insult/ disapproval/ withdrawal-f) (twice)
- 14- “Parading around in their outfits like it’s Halloween.” (m/insult/ disapproval / withdrawal-f) (twice)
- 15- “Nothing but a Drama Queen.” (f/insult/ disapproval /withdrawal-f)

* In the parenthesis the first part refers to the gender of the utterer of the impoliteness, the second to the type of impoliteness, the third to the triggering factor, and the last to the type of response and the gender of the respondent.

- 16- "How droll. A communist fashion statement." (m/pointed criticism/ bewilderment/offer an explanation-f)
- 17- "That's crazy!" (f/ pointed criticism/ /bewilderment/offensive response-m)
- 18- "Crazier than wrapping up like a mummy?" (m/unpalatable question/a threat to the face/offer an explanation-f)
- 19- "dupe" (m/insult/ disapproval /attempt to compromise-f)
- 20- "Spy" (m/insult/ disapproval /attempt to compromise-f)
- 21- "Fifth columnist" (m/insult/ disapproval /attempt to compromise-f)
- 22- "Terrorist bitch." (m/insult/ disapproval /offer an explanation-f)
- 23- "Hankie head whore." (m/insult/ disapproval /plead-f)
- 24- "Where do you think you are going?"(m/unpalatable question/ disapproval /plead-f)
- 25- "You love it, don't you, mama?" (m/unpalatable question/ disapproval /plead-f)
- 26- "Go live in Afghanistan." (m/form-driven implication/ disapproval /plead-f)
- 27- "Unclean." (m/insult/ disapproval /plead-f)
- 28- "Filthy bitch." (m/insult/ disapproval /plead-f)

3.2. The Dark Side

- 1- "I'm not exactly feeling social." (f/form-driven implication/sorrow/ ignore the face attack-m)
- 2- "They are scum bastards." (m/negative expressive/anger/no respondent)
- 3- "That's supposed to cheer me up?" (f/form-driven implication/sorrow/offer an explanation-m)
- 4- "Hey! Did you follow me here?" (f/message enforcer-unpalatable question/ sorrow/ offer an explanation-m)
- 5- "Were you spying on me?" (f/unpalatable question/sorrow/direct contradiction-m)
- 6- "It's just too much of a coincidence." (f/form-driven implication/ sorrow/offer an explanation-m)
- 7- "You were one of their zombies." (m/insult/a show of power/direct contradiction-f)
- 8- "Identity theft is crazy." (m/condescension/disagreement/ignore the face attack-m)
- 9- "The scheming bastard who controls us figures by the time our whole industry is shipped to India, he'll have bailed out with a golden parachute..." (m/negative expressive/anger/no respondent)
- 10- "Necessity's a motherfucker." (m/negative expressive/disagreement/no response -f)
- 11- "Now, Bytner? Holy fucking Jesus you didn't!?" (m/negative expressive/ bewilderment/offer an explanation-m)

3.3. Happy Hour

- 1- "Before we go in, Jack: I want it understood. Not a word" (f/unmarked behavior/anger/abrogation-m)
- 2- "Change the subject." (f/unmarked behavior/anger/submission-m)
- 3- "I'm warning you. I've had all I'm going to take. One more word and I'll scream. Two more and I file for divorce." (f/ message enforcer-threat(2)/ anger/ offensive response-m)
- 4 "You've been screaming since yesterday." (m/insult/a threat to face/stand-off-f)
- 5- "Have I made myself clear?" (f/message enforcer/anger/submission-m)
- 6- "Now that you're warned: are you ready?" (f/message enforcer/anger/ submission-m)
- 7- "Oh, for God's sake: Jack filled in his Cleveland set." (f/negative expressive/ anger/no response-m)
- 8- "At a cost that boggles the mind." (f-form-driven implication/anger/accept-m)
- 9- "If buying junk's an art." (f/form-driven implication/anger/treat the situation as a different activity-m)
- 10- "Same shit, but better pay." (m/negative expressive/anger/ no respondent)
- 11- "He wrung out my balls." (m/negative expressive/anger/no respondent)
- 12- "That's really why Winnie's do pissed, of course." (m/negative expressive/ sorrow/no respondent)
- 13- "The hell it is!" (m/negative expressive/anger/offensive response-m)
- 14- "The hell you say!" (m/negative expressive/bewilderment/ignore the face attack-m)
- 15- "Jack, I think you're addicted." (m/insult/provocation/direct contradiction-m)
- 16- "You're a slave to it." (m/insult/provocation/direct contradiction-m)
- 17- "Not only are artists egomaniacs, they are also obsessive compulsives." (m/form-based implication/provocation/withdrawal-m)
- 18- "I was damn near suicide." (m/negative expressive/sorrow/no respondent)
- 19- "—no wonder your wife is bullshit." (f/negative expressive/disapproval/no response-m)

- 20- "You're cheating on her, plus you're not being true to your real self!" (m/insult/disapproval/offensive response-m)
 21- "How the hell do you get that, eh?" (m/negative expressive/a threat to face/offer an explanation-f)
 22- "Are you out of your mind?" (m/unpalatable question/bewilderment/direct contradiction+offensive response-m)
 23- "No, my friend, you are. Jack: you're compulsive. An addict." (m/insult/a threat to face/offensive respond-m)
 24- "You're crazy." (m/insult/a threat to face/direct contradiction-m)
 25- "Nostalgia is for chumps." (f/form-driven implication/disagreement/offer an explanation-m)
 26- "That's what you all think, jerks!" (m/pointed criticism/disagreement/no response-m)
 27- "What you call luck I call destiny, Slugger." (f/ mock impoliteness/wish to entertain/offensive response-m)
 28- "We were made for each other, Catlady." (m/mock impoliteness/wish to entertain/accept-f)
 29- "You understand..... Cause his f-ing agent doesn't know he's looking to do an f-ing play!" (m/negative expressive/disapproval/no respondent)
 30- "Damn little" (m/negative expressive/disappointment/ignore-f)
 31- "But it was still a better deal than for any f-ing playwright!" (m/negative expressive/disappointment/no respondent)
 32- "That doesn't mean the writers know their ass from their elbow." (f/negative expressive/disapproval/ no respondent)
 33- "- -not a single ass from an elbow! "(f/negative expressive/disapproval/ no respondent)
 34- "And when it comes to lying, Jay's got them all beat! Don't you, Slugger?" (f/mock impoliteness/wish to entertain/accept-m)

3.4. Party, Party, Tea and Antipathy

- 1- "That's filth!" (f/pointed criticism/dispute/stand-off-f)
 2- "All for the coloreds and the foreigners, you elitists. You'll rob your own son of his rightful inheritance, all for a mess of pottage!" (f/insult/dispute/third party intervention-male child)
 3- "Nicky, put down that filthy f-ing- -!" (m/negative expressive/dispute/ dominant third party intervention-f)
 4- "Lies! Toxic Know-nothingism!" (m/insult/dispute/offensive response-f)
 5- "... You're the Know-nothings!" (f/insult a threat to face/offensive response-f)
 6- "...You're buying snake oil!" (m/insult/a threat to face/third party interference-male child)
 7- "Liars make money selling it to people like your Grandma, people can't think for themselves- -" (m/form-driven implication/dispute/direct contradiction-f)
 8- "That's no excuse for worshipping a rodeo clown!" (m/form-driven implication/ dispute/dominant third party intervention-f)
 9- "Slander! Communist slander!" (f/pointed criticism/dispute/offer an explanation-f)
 10- "Children, cover your ears! Leftists lie." (f/insult/dispute/dominant third party intervention-m)
 11- "Shut the frack up, you little demon!" (m/insult/dispute/ dominant third party intervention-f)
 12- "Leave the poor boy alone you monster!" (f/insult/dispute/ dominant third party intervention-police)

3.5. Kiss the Twins for Me

- 1- "What the hell has Mom done?" (m/negative expressive/bewilderment/no respondent)
 2- "Her letter made it clear she's done some damn thing!" (m/negative expression/feeling of helplessness/no respondent)
 3- "Jesus! Really?" (m/negative expressive/bewilderment/no respondent)
 4- "I said, you showed us what a musician's life is really like, and I'm sort of glad to have been spared the humiliation, myself." (m/form-driven implication/show of power/offensive response-m)
 5- "You're welcome..." (m/external convention-driven implication/a threat to face/dominant third party intervention-f)

3.6. On Speaking Terms

- 1- "Are you on the hunt?" (m/unpalatable question/jealousy/direct contradiction-f)
 2- "My- -acquaintances- -are none of your business!.. If you must know Arnold, I didn't invite Ron because I was afraid my crazy ex would show up uninvited- -" (f/pointed criticism +insult/anger/offer an explanation-m)

- 3- "My 'what' means 'what do you expect from me?'" (f/unpalatable question/helplessness/offensive response-m)
 4- "... what is the ploy?" (m/unpalatable question/a threat to face/offer an explanation-f)
 5- "I cannot annoy you more than you annoy me!" (f/form-driven implication/anger/offensive response-m)
 6- "Then why do you say fucking 'what'?" (m/negative expressive/ a threat to face/plead-f)
 7- "In therapy I've been practicing dealing with difficult people, and I think it's- -" (f/form-driven implication/anger/direct contradiction-m)
 8- "I'm not difficult! Nobody in the whole damn world but you thinks of me as difficult!" (m/negative expressive/a threat to face/offer an explanation-f)
 9- "Shut up, ok?" (m/silencer/sorrow/direct contradiction-f)
 10- "Don't be an idiot!" (m/form-driven implication/anger/ignore the face attack-f)

4- FINDINGS

Table 1- Total number of entries and the acts of impoliteness

Title of the play	Total number of the entries		Total number of impoliteness acts	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Under Cover	85	56	8	25
The Dark Side	30	61	5	6
Happy Hour	224	345	16	20
Party, Party, Tea and Antipathy	63	38	6	6
Kiss the Twins for Me	38	84	-	5
On Speaking Terms	56	55	4	6
Total	496	639	39	68

In this analysis it is found out that women use less impolite acts in their utterances even though the difference isn't very significant. According to the results women use impoliteness acts in 7.8% of their overall speech whereas the rate is 10.6 for men.

Table 2- Types of impoliteness strategies used by men and women

Type of Strategy	Female	%	Male	%
Insults	10	23.2	21	29.5
Pointed criticisms/complaints	4	9.3	2	2.8
Unpalatable questions and presuppositions	5	11.6	16	22.5
Condescensions	-	-	1	1.4
Message enforcers	3	6.9	-	-
Dismissals	-	-	-	-
Silencers	-	-	1	1.4
Threats	2	4.6	-	-
Negative expressives	4	9.3	20	28.1
Form-driven implicational impoliteness	11	25.5	7	9.8
Convention-driven implicational impoliteness	-	-	2	2.8
Context-driven implicational impoliteness	2	4.6	-	-
Mock impoliteness	2	4.6	1	1.4

When the types of impoliteness strategies are considered, it is found out that the impoliteness strategies most frequently deployed by women are form-driven implicational impoliteness (25.5) and insults (23.2) whereas they are insults (29.5), negative expressives (28.1), and unpalatable questions (22.5) for men. Dismissal is the strategy that is not used at all. Silencers, condescensions and convention-driven impoliteness are not used by women whereas they are rarely deployed by men.

Table 3- Causes of impoliteness

Cause	Female	Male	Total
Anger	13 (33.3%)	6 (8.8%)	19 (17.7%)
Dispute, disagreement, disapproval	16 (41%)	33 (48.5%)	49 (45.7%)
A threat to the face	1 (2.5%)	10 (14.7%)	11 (10.2%)
Show of power	-	2 (2.9%)	2 (1.8%)
Bewilderment, panic	1 (2.5%)	6 (8.8%)	7 (6.5%)
Helplessness, sorrow, disappointment	6 (15.3%)	6 (8.8%)	12 (11.2%)
Jealousy	-	1 (1.4%)	1 (0.9%)
Desire to provoke	-	3 (4.4%)	3 (2.8%)
Wish to entertain	2 (5.1%)	1 (1.4%)	3 (2.8%)

The analysis shows that the main reasons of impoliteness are dispute, disagreement and disapproval. Jealousy and show of power don't appear as important triggers. A threat to face is found out to be an important factor for men whereas it has a low rank for women. Helplessness scores higher for women than for men but bewilderment scores higher for men than for women.

Table 4- Response to impoliteness

Response to impoliteness	Female	Male	Total
Direct contradiction	2 (4.3%)	6 (14.6%)	8 (8%)
Abrogation	-	1 (2.4%)	1 (1%)
Dismiss	-	-	-
Ignore	2 (4.3%)	3 (7.3,5)	5 (5%)
Offer an explanation	8 (17.3%)	6 (14.6%)	14 (14%)
Plead	7 (15.2%)	-	7 (7%)
Opt out on record	-	-	-
Treat as different activity	-	1 (2.4,5)	1 (1%)
Offensive response	1 (2.1%)	10 (24.3%)	11 (11%)
Accept	1 (2.1%)	5 (12.1%)	6 (6%)
Compromise	3 (6.5%)	-	3 (3%)
Withdrawal	16 (34.7%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (1%)
Stand-off	2 (4.3%)	-	2 (2%)
Dominant third party intervention	4 (8.6%)	4 (9.75%)	8 (8%)
No response	-	4 (9.75%)	4 (4%)
No respondent	-	-	13 (13%)
Total	46	41	

The results indicate that women are exposed to impoliteness more than men but the difference isn't significant. When the types of responses are considered, it is found out that men prefer to react with an offensive response (24.3%), direct contradiction (14.6%) or offering an explanation (14.6%) whereas women's preferences are withdrawal, offering an explanation and pleading.

5- CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

According to the results of the study impoliteness is, fortunately, a rare phenomenon in language. When all the dialogues are analyzed, it is found out that only 9.4% off all entries consists of impoliteness, 107 out of 1135. When the gender differences are researched, the results show that this rate is 7.8% for women and 10.6% for men.

When the dialogues are classified in terms of Culpeper's 2011 book, it is noticed that implicational impoliteness (21.9) is less used than conventionalized impoliteness formulae (78%). This is not consistent with Culpeper's results that say 59% of his impoliteness events are implicational (2011:155). When we look at the gender differences, we see that women deploy more implicational impoliteness (34.8) than men (14%). This result is an indicator of the secondary status of women in the society. Women are more careful than men not to utter impoliteness. When they

do it, they abstain from doing it directly. The use of negative expressives is very common with men (28.1%) but quiet rare with women (9.3%). Insults are frequently used by men (29.5), and they are not rare with women (23.2). Women prove to use more pointed criticism and complaint (9.3%) than men (2.8%). On the other hand, men make use of unpalatable questions (22.5%) more than women (11.6%). Dismissals, condensations and silencers are almost non-existent in the impoliteness events in these plays.

The results of the analysis point out that among the main triggers of impoliteness are disputes, disagreements, disapprovals, sorrow, helplessness, disappointment and anger. When the responses of the addressees are examined, it is found out that men respond to impoliteness more offensively (24.3%) than women (2.1%). Among the defensive strategies, men prefer direct contradiction (14.6) more than women (4.3). Women reflect passive roles given to them with their preference of withdrawal (34.7%), plead (15.2%) and explanation (17.3%).

To sum up, the results of this study indicate that women are more polite than men and they use less impoliteness acts in their speech. These results are consistent with existing literature. It is also found out that women are exposed to impoliteness more than men. It can be argued that the inequality existent in every walk of life can also be observed in language. However, it must be kept in mind that these are the results of the analysis of a single contemporary woman writer's plays and there may be personality, gender and stylistic factors at work. As plays give us a realistic representation of colloquial speech, more plays by male and female playwrights belonging to different eras can be studied to shed more light to the phenomenon of impoliteness in language.

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