The Analysis of Impoliteness in Family Discourse:
Verbal Interactions between Irreconcilable Iranian Couples

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Abstract: This study attempted to analyze impoliteness in family discourse in verbal interactions between irreconcilable-couples in Ahvaz, Iran. Therefore, a corpus of 300 minutes of the couples’ conversations, which was provided by Family research center, was recorded, transcribed and analyzed. The couples were asked to put their controversial problems into discussion. The theoretical framework in this study was Impoliteness Model by Culpeper (1996) based on Brown & Levinson Politeness Strategies (1987). This study was a descriptive analytic one and data analysis was based on qualitative as well as quantitative factors. The results showed women insult themselves twice more compared to their husbands and insult their spouses 5 times more, while men’s insults were directed at their wives’ family 2.3 times more compared to the other way around. But on the whole, women used impoliteness twice as much as men did. It was hypothesized that men used impoliteness more than women did. But the findings revealed that out of 175 impoliteness examples, 93 cases were utilized by women and 82 ones by men. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the findings of this study were contrary to expectations in that they depicted that although women, in order to save their face, were normally more conservative in verbal communication in different contexts in society and thus appeared politer than men, they tended to be more impolite in family discourse. It indicated that women were less concerned about their face in family conversations in comparison with other contexts.

Index Terms: descriptive-analytic, family discourse, impoliteness model, politeness

1. INTRODUCTION

Impoliteness, as a variety of face-aggravating verbal behaviors, has recently been paid extensive scholarly attention (Bousfield & Locher, 2008; Culpeper, 2005, 2011; Culpeper, Bousfield, & Wichmann, 2003; Terkourafi, 2008). Classical politeness theories (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983) was scrutinized for marginalizing non-cooperative communication, and for presuming that impoliteness can be examined utilizing concepts developed for politeness (Perelmutter, 2010, p. 1). Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviors happening in particular contexts. It is maintained by expectations, desires and/or beliefs about social organization, including how one person’s or a group’s identity is mediated
by others in interaction. Situated behaviors are negatively considered as “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 behaviors are always assumed to have emotional consequences for at least one participant, that is, they cause or are presumed to cause offence (Culpeper, 2011, p. 254).

1.1 Purpose and Significance of the Study

In the recent decades, many important studies have been conducted in the field of politeness and its strategies. Linguists attempted to categorize these strategies and to investigate them. In their opinion, social factors and cultural variables are involved in the use of polite and impolite utterances. One of the main environments under the impact of polite or impolite utterances is family. The verbal interactions between the couples and their discursive styles are challenging topics in the linguistic studies. Hence, this research attempts to analyze the impolite utterances of irreconcilable Iranian Couples through their conflicts and disputes.

1.2 Research Questions

The study mainly attempts to answer the following research questions:
1. Which one of the irreconcilable Iranian couples (men or women) uses the impoliteness strategies more in their verbal disputes?
2. What is the relationship between gender and the use of impolite discourse in the family?

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Laitinen (2010) in his thesis studied the use of impoliteness strategies in the American TV-series House M.D. The aim of this research was the study of impoliteness strategies in the series between Dr. House and his patients. Therefore, the author transcribed nine extracts that were all short conversations between House and his clinic patients. Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies formed the framework of this research. Conclusions showed that based on nine short extracts, it seemed that bald on record strategies and sarcasm were the impoliteness strategies that House utilized most regularly. Most of the patients completely ignored House’s impolite insulting remarks. However, the author claimed that due to the fact that the patients were actors in a series, it was impossible to analyze the truthfulness of their reactions.

Kunsti (2012) examined politeness and impoliteness strategies used by lawyers in the “Dover Trail”. The subject of this study was linguistic politeness and impoliteness in the speech of lawyers. Culpeper (1996) impoliteness strategies formed the framework of this research. The data for this study was a courtroom transcript of the "Dover Trial". The complete transcript consisted of 5000 pages, but every fifth page was selected as the sample for this study. The results showed that lawyers utilized both politeness and impoliteness strategies in their speech in the courtroom. The number of politeness strategies was significantly greater than that of impoliteness strategies. Thus, the results corresponded with the hypothesis he presented.

Pennanen (2013) investigated the structure of impolite events in Computer-Mediated Conversation. The general aim of this study was to map how impoliteness events were realized in CMC and especially in a discussion board that was used to comment on a piece of news. The data was compiled from the United States of America version of CNN-website. In this case, the piece of news came from the U.S. edition of CNN entitled “war over women kicks off Obama- Romney race”. The corpus of this study consisted of the first 1125 of these comments. The appearance of impoliteness super-strategies in the data were analyzed as follow:
The conclusion showed that CMC was a medium highly different and in some ways incomparable. It was a medium where people could provoke others in ways that were virtually impossible in face-to-face communication. It was a unique form of communication and gave researchers of 'language in use' many opportunities that should be paid attention in the near future (Pennanen, 2013).

Keykhayee (2013) in her article investigated the relationship of the type and number of impoliteness strategies employed by Sistani students with addressee's power and gender in the realization of request speech act. To reach this purpose, a number of requests were collected through a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). The data were gathered according to the Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness framework. The analysis of the data showed that: 1) both male and female subjects tended to be more negatively impolite in the realization of request speech acts, 2) the addressee's power influenced addressee's utilization of impoliteness strategies in terms of the choice and frequency of the strategies employed; and 3) the addressee's gender did not influence addressee's use of impoliteness strategies in terms of the choice and frequency of the strategies employed (See Keykhayee, 2013, p. 352).

Table 1.

*Impoliteness Super-Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPERSTRATEGIES</th>
<th>Following conversation</th>
<th>Triggering event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-record impoliteness</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive impoliteness</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;ignore/ snub the other&quot;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;exclude other from activity&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;dissociate from other&quot;</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic&quot;</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;use inappropriate identity markers&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;seek disagreement&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Use taboo words&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;call the other names&quot;</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEGATIVE POLITENESS</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;frighten&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Condescend, scorn, ridicule&quot;</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect&quot;</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFF-RECORD IMPOLITENESS</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sarcasm&quot;</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITHHOLD POLITENESS</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;criticize&quot;</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;enforce role shift&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;challenge&quot;</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total usage</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Culpeper (1996) utilized Brown and Levinson's (1987) model as a departure for his seminal article on impoliteness. Terming impoliteness as "the parasite of politeness", Culpeper regarded impoliteness as the use of intentionally face threatening acts (p. 335). Culpeper laid out five super strategies that speakers utilized to make impolite utterances (Furman, 2010, p. 3). Before introducing these strategies, it was necessary to present a definition of "face".

The term "face" may be described as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others presume he has taken during a specific contact (Goffman, 1967, p. 5). Brown and Levinson (1987) define face in two ways; in terms of positive and negative face. Negative face is "the want of every component adult member that his actions be unimpeded by others" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.67). Positive face is "the want of every number that his wants be desirable to at least some others" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 67). A face threatening act is a speech act (such as a warning or a threat) that can damage the hearer's positive or negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 68).

Culpeper's model of impoliteness is based on Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (1987). Culpeper (2005) defines impoliteness as those occasions 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)" (p. 38).

According to Culpeper (1996), super strategies and sub-strategies of impoliteness are categorized as follow:

1) **Bald on record impoliteness**: performing the FTA (Face Threatening Act) in a direct, clear, unambiguous, and concise way even when face considerations are relevant.

2) **Positive impoliteness**: strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants.
   - Ignore, snub the other
   - Exclude the other from an activity
   - Disassociate from the other
   - Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic
   - Use inappropriate identity markers
   - Use obscure or secretive language
   - Seek disagreement
   - Make the other feel uncomfortable
   - Use taboo words
   - Call the other names

3) **Negative impoliteness**: strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants
   - Frighten
   - Condescend, scorn or ridicule
   - Invade the other's space
   - Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect
   - Put the other's indebtedness on record
   - Use of physical barrier

4) **Sarcasm or mock politeness**: performing the FTA with politeness strategies that are obviously insincere.

5) **Withhold politeness**: Not performing politeness work where it is expected.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study followed a descriptive-analytic method and the corpus of this study was based upon the conversations of 16 irreconcilable couples aged between 18 and 50 who lived in Ahvaz, Iran.

The sampling method was as follows: announcements were issued by the researchers in crowded public places such as squares, parks, mosques... in the city of Ahvaz in order to invite irreconcilable couples. The researchers also sent invitations to marriage counseling centers to motivate the irreconcilable couples who were willing to undergo treatment into participating in the study.
The couples were interviewed to make sure that they had the essential criteria to take part in this research. As a result, 16 couples were considered appropriate and thus were selected as the participants in the study. Their interactions were videotaped during goal oriented scenarios, including: problem solving, decision making, reviewing conversations about a shared memories of a pleasant event in past interactions, and a tea-break session in the research center lab of Ahvaz.

The Material Adjustment Test (MAT) was completed by all participants before observations. The results of this test were compared with the participants' adjustment of marriage satisfaction. In marriage compatibility, the women's scores ranged from 12 to 98 and the men's scores ranged from 7 to 99.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
As we mentioned before, in this study, we attempted to analyze which one of the irreconcilable Iranian couples (men or women) used the impoliteness strategies more in their verbal disputes and to examine the relationship between gender and the use of impolite discourse in the family. Below, we present the results of this study.

4.1 Qualitative and Quantitative analysis
4.1.1 The use of Bald on record impoliteness
a. The use of Bald on record impoliteness by women
This kind of impoliteness involves insults. In the Iranian culture, there are 3 types of insults:
1- Insulting one's self (spouses)
Example (1)
Wife: I became vulnerable to be your donkey. It means that you fool me again.
Husband: the only thing I did, I came and save your life and made you happy, didn't I?
Qualitative analysis:
In these two conversations, the wives belittled themselves directly by using words like: donkey, silly, waste. They could belittle their husbands but they preferred to humiliate themselves. It means that they wanted their husbands to understand that their behavior and utterances were so horrible that the wives chose to express these insults.

2. Insulting the spouse (by women)
Example (1)
Husband: do you admit that you acted like an idiot or not?
Wife: my foolish actions are nothing in comparison with those of yours.

Example (2)
Wife: we should make several kinds of salad.
Husband: I had to make all of them, didn't I?
Wife: when do you make salad?
Husband: are you sure you always do the kitchen works?
Wife: you are so rude. When do you do something useful?

Example (3)
Husband: you said to me you wanted to go to Shiraz.
Wife: you are sneaky, I smell a rat.

Example (4)
Husband: I do as you wish.
Wife: as I wish? Ok, God damn you if it is not my wish.

Example (5)
Wife: You were a pretentious person who shows himself as a religious one to me. I thought you are a religious and rich man but I found you are a beggar and ridicule the praying.
Husband: But you found out after one year.

Qualitative analysis:
In all of these conversations, the wives belittle their husbands for some reasons like anger, sadness and dissatisfaction with marriage. It caused them to use these contemptuous words with a high frequency. These statistics prove that the wives have the verbal power in the family.

3. Insulting the spouse's family
Example (1)
Husband: my mom doesn't interfere in our problems. She raised Kimia who is a very polite girl.
Wife: yes! She is very impolite and spoiled too.

Example (2)
Husband: let me say one word! Just one word! That night your mom wanted me to finish the engagement party because your brother would get mad.
Wife: can you teach your brother manners?

Qualitative analysis:
In the example (1), the main discussed topic is about training and nurturing their child. The husband believes that his mother-in-law trained her child badly, then he pointed out his nephew who was trained by the husband's mom but the wife insulted that child by using negative adjectives to describe the child's personality. In fact she insulted her mother-in-law's upbringing. In example (2), husband complained about his wife's brother, but the wife insulted him directly.

b. The use of Bald on record impoliteness by men
1. Insulting one's self
Wife: Do you admit you were silly?
Husband: I am still silly, I am proud.

Qualitative analysis:
The husband could direct the contemptuous remarks toward his wife but he insulted himself instead. Insults to the other person in interactions are equal to insults to one's self.

2. Insulting the spouses
Example (1)
Husband: one of the problems which bother me is your laziness.
Wife: which laziness?

Example (2)
Husband: the problem is that I don’t accept your behavior because your behavior is problematic. I don't trust you yet.

**Qualitative analysis:**

In all these conversations, men used direct insults toward their spouses. Utilizing words such as "laziness" and "foolish" proves that.

3. **Insulting the wife's family**

Example (1)

Husband: my problem is your cunning father. He is pretentious and promiscuous. He is a liar.

Wife: (angrily) what do you mean by promiscuous?

Example (2)

Husband: your father is a robber because he doesn’t give back my money. He is sly because the checks he gave me all bounced. He is pretentious because he prays but he doesn’t act like a Muslim.

Wife: what are you saying?

**Qualitative analysis:**

In these conversations, husbands insulted their spouse's families directly.

**Quantitative analysis:**

Considering the use of *Bald on record impoliteness* that included direct insults, there are 36 cases. Women have used this strategy 24 times and the husbands utilized it 12 times.

### Table 2.

*The Number of Applied Insults*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of insults</th>
<th>women</th>
<th>men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insulting one's self</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulting the spouses</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulting spouse's family</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of the insults is 35. It is clear that women insult themselves twice as much as men do. Women insult their spouses five times more than men, but men insult their spouses' families three times more than women. In total, women use the insults in 24 cases and men use them in 12 ones. It indicates that the women's percentage in using *Bald on record impoliteness* is 67% and this portion for men is 33%. The chart of this analysis is drawn below:
4.1.2 Positive impoliteness

These are strategies designed to damage the addressee’s positive face wants.

1.a. Ignore, snub the other (by women)

Example (1)
Husband: you didn’t say hello to me!
Wife: why didn’t you answer me when I said hello to you?

Example (2)
Wife: nobody understands how much I suffer, not my children, not anybody else, they always ask me how I spend my life all alone. I have to do your duties as well as mine.
Husband: you don’t have any problems.

Qualitative analysis:
In this conversation, the husband is addicted and the wife is complaining about his unfulfilled duties. She criticized him using indirect statements. In this part, women use examples of Ignore, snub the other 14 times. Here only 3 of them are given due to its great volume.

1. b. Ignore, snub the other (by men)

Example (1)
Wife: your mother tells me many things in a short phone call, but I keep silent.
Husband: I’m not in mood for talking now.

Qualitative analysis:
The husband is tired of what her wife says about her mother-in-law and he prefers to ignore her saying: ‘I’m not in mood for talking now’.
Example (2)
Husband: when I need you to understand me and sympathize with me, where were you?
Wife: I always understood you, in all situations. Men use examples of Ignore, snub the other 21 times. Here only 3 of them are given owing to its massive volume. Men have utilized this impoliteness strategy 1.5 times more than women.

Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Using Ignore, Snub the Other Maxim</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>using Ignore, snub the other maxim</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative analysis:

In total, men use Ignore, snub the other in 21 cases and women use in 12 cases. It means that the men’s percentage in using the Ignore, snub the other factor is 60% and this percentage for women is 40% . The chart of this analysis is draw below:

![Chart](image)

Figure 2. Ignore, snub the other

2. a. Exclude the other from an activity (by women)

Example (1)
Wife: I always fast during Ramadan.
Husband: yeah. You do it hypocritically!
Wife: I’m not a hypocrite. You have no right to speak like this about me!
Example (2)
Husband: at the beginning of our married life, I wanted to visit my aunt more often. But you didn’t let me do it. Why?
Wife: because they came over to my house twice a week and we dropped in on her twice a week too. It was unbearable. One should pay a visit to their relatives once a month, once in two months.

Qualitative analysis:
In these two conversations, the women excluded their husbands from doing something.

2. b. Exclude the other from an activity (by men)
Example (1)
Wife: why didn’t you let me to go my uncle's house? Because your father had a problem with him, I wasn’t supposed to go there.
Husband: I had a personal problem with your uncle and for that I didn’t let you go there.
Example (2)
Wife: I can't speak like you. I can't uphold my rights.
Husband: you had no rights to uphold. If you had the right, you could defend it well.

Qualitative analysis:
In these two conversations, the men like women excluded their spouses from doing something, too.

Table 4.
The Use Of Exclude the Other from an Activity Maxim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of insult</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the use of Exclude the other from an activity maxim</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative analysis:
In total, men use exclude the other from an activity maxim in 2 cases and women use in 2 cases. This means that the men’s percentage of men and that of women in this factor are both 50%. This is depicted graphically down below:
3. a. Disassociate from the other (by women)

Example (1)
Husband: our journey to North was so nice and enjoyable.
Wife: (sobbing) no, not at all. It wasn’t nice.

Example (2)
Husband: your sister was interfering in our life.
Wife: she didn’t interfere in our life!
Husband: yes, she did.
Wife: she was just speaking about her problems and her life.

Qualitative analysis:
In these dialogs, the couples don’t have the same idea about inviting their guests to the party and thus fail to come to an agreement in this respect. The husband suggests that they invite one of the families, either invite his family or his wife’s family, not both of them. But the wife disagrees with him. In her opinion, both families should be invited to the party.

3. b. Disassociate from the other (by men)

Example (1)
Wife: if you do that again, he (their child) won’t have lunch when he comes upstairs.
Husband: he will have lunch.

Example (2)
Husband: I don’t want to discuss that topic.
Wife: on the contrary, it is better to discuss it.
Husband: it dates back to several years ago. I can’t speak about it.

Qualitative analysis:
In using this factor, women and men have scored equal numbers. Each of them made use of this factor 11 times. Only 3 examples are provided due to its great volume. The correspondent table is presented below.
Table 5.
*The Use of Disassociate From the Other Maxim*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of insult</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the use of Disassociate from the other maxim</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 22

**Quantitative analysis:**
In total, men and women made use of this factor 11 times. They have scored equal numbers. This means that the men’s percentage and that of women in this factor is 50%. This is displayed below:

![Bar chart](image)

*Figure 4. Disassociate from the other*

4. **a. Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic (by women)**
   Example (1)
   Wife: I have no feelings for you. Considering the way you’ve been treating me recently, I even hate you.
   Husband: like I have good feelings for you!
   Example (2)
   Husband: I suggested we live with each other like a brother and sister, just because of our child.
   Wife: our love died the moment you said that.

4. **b. Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic (by men)**
   Example (1)
   Husband: I think that our main problem is that we are not satisfied with each other.
   Wife: what does satisfaction mean?
   Husband: it means that we aren’t interested in one another. We are not pleased with each other.
Wife: all right, we should get divorced.
Example (2)
Wife: whenever I wanted you to take me somewhere, you didn’t do it!
Husband: there was nowhere to go, no place, no motivation, no new words!

**Qualitative analysis:**

In these dialogues, to be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic expressed by men is clear. The use of words such as: not satisfied, no place, no motivation, nothing to say, etc. vividly shows this point. Only 3 examples are provided owing to its great volume.

Table 6.

**The Use of ‘Be Disinterested, Unconcerned, Unsympathetic’ Maxim**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of insult</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the use of ‘Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic’ maxim</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quantitative analysis:**

According to the data, men used the maxim of being disinterested, unconcerned and unsympathetic 8 times and women in 12 cases. This means that the men’s percentage is 40% and that of women in this factor is 60%. This is shown below:

![Bar chart showing the use of 'Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic' maxim by men and women](image)

**Figure 5.** Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic

5. **Use inappropriate identity markers**

Not found within the corpus.

6. **Use obscure or secretive language**

Not found within the corpus.
7. a. Seek disagreement (by women)

Example (1)

Wife: my problem is distrust. I mean I think this is going to happen again. I know, it will be just as before.
Husband: did that problem recur?

**Qualitative analysis:**

In this conversation, the wife mentions that her husband will repeat what he has done before. This reveals the fact that the husband has done the same unpleasant deed in the past many times and the wife is distrustful of him and thus disagrees with him on this account.

Example (2)

Husband: I love you and my child.
Wife: it is easier said than done! You have been treating me like a slave for 4 years. Now that your bank account is blocked, you tell me such things.

**Qualitative analysis:**

In this conversation the husband tries to get emotionally closer to his wife. But his wife disagrees with him and brings new topics into the discussion. This can be inferred that she is not pleased with their relationship.

Example (3)

Wife: anytime we decided to celebrate Amir hossein's birthday it did not turn out to be what I had planned. Since the very first year, I have craved for a birthday party in which we invite Amir hossein's friends over.
Husband: Amir hossein's friends, relatives, sister,....

7. b. Seek disagreement (by men)

Example (1)

Husband: I don’t see it necessary now to take you to the best restaurant in Tehran. Even if you keep asking me to do it 100 times, I won't do it.
Wife: I don’t have a mental complex regarding this matter.

Example (2)

Wife: don’t you talk about my family! Do I ever talk about yours?!
Husband: do it, talk about them if they annoy you! One of my problems is your family, your mom.

**Qualitative analysis:**

In the above conversations the husbands have utilized this maxim through clear statements which show seeking disagreement. These statements are "one of my problems is your family, your mother" and " I don’t see it necessary". Only 3 examples are given due to its great volume.

**Quantitative analysis:**

With regard to "seek disagreement maxim", eight examples were detected in the corpus. 4 of them were used by the wives and four by the husbands. Therefore we have:

Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Use of Seek Disagreement Maxim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of insult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the use of seek disagreement maxim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statistically, women and men have equal scores in this maxim and each represents 50% of the total number of the Examples.

![Chart showing the use of seek disagreement maxim by men and women]

**Figure 6. Seek disagreement maxim**

**8. a. Make the other feel uncomfortable (by women)**

Example (1)

Wife: this is exactly what you said.

Husband: I don’t remember.

Wife: why don’t you remember? Why don’t remember what you should and why do you remember what you shouldn’t.

*Qualitative analysis:*

In this conversation the wife has pressed charges against her husband. As a result her husband bank account has been blocked. By saying " Why don’t remember what you should and why do you remember what you shouldn’t" the wife seeks to remind him of his block account and make him feel uncomfortable.

**8. b. Make the other feel uncomfortable (by men)**

Example (1)

Husband: it is going to be like this for a while, there is no other way.

Wife: you mean, there is no other way for you to work?

*Qualitative analysis:*

In this conversation the husband makes his wife feel uncomfortable by saying "there is no other way". This is due to the fact that the wife hopes the situation will change, but the husband takes away all her hope.

*Quantitative analysis:*

With regard to this maxim, the husbands and wives have used it equally and hold 50% of the total amount.
Table 8.

Use of Seek Disagreement Maxim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of insult</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the use of seek disagreement maxim</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since this maxim has been used by men and women only once, a chart analysis can't be provided. It can only be counted in classifying impoliteness types.

9. Use taboo words
Not found within the corpus.

10. Call the other names
This maxim was used only once by a husband. It is depicted bellow:
Illogical pretentious pheasant!

4.1.3 Negative impoliteness
These are strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants

1. a. Frighten (for women)
Example (1)
Wife: I have suffered a lot during all these years. You must suffer to see how it feels to undergo such a thing.
Husband: why are you unfair?
Example (2)
Husband: I will be proud of your success.
Wife: you will have no role in my life then to be proud.

Qualitative analysis: Here the wife is threatening her husband with divorce.

1. b. Frighten (for men)
Example (1)
Husband: you used only one of your breasts to breast feed the baby. This will make me get even with you one way or another.
Wife: you appear confident and everyone thinks you are right.
Example (2)
Wife: I can do it, give you a gift and say that your dad didn’t give anything.
Husband: do it and see what will happen.

Qualitative analysis: Here the husband means he will make his wife regret it.

Quantitative analysis: husbands and wives have both used this maxim twice.

2. a. Condescend, scorn or ridicule (by women)
Example (1)
Husband: we went to Afsariye, Cocacola, Sepahsalar, but you couldn’t choose any thing! Where else can we find it?
Wife: all the shops are full of clothes. We can choose the best, but not with this budget.
Example (2)
Wife: you were so stupid that you ruined our marriage because of your personal problems withmy father.
Husband: he meddles in our life.
2. b. Condescend, scorn or ridicule (by men)

Example (1)
Husband: even a Tractor can't work like this.
Wife: (silence).

Qualitative analysis: When a couple is satisfied with each other, they will ignore the annoying talks.

Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of insult</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>use of Condescend, scorn or ridicule</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative analysis:

Men and women have equal scores in using this maxim. The percentage for each of them is 50%.

Figure 7. Condescend, scorn or ridicule

3. Invade the other's space

Not found in the corpus

4. a. Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect (by women)

Example (1)
Husband: thank God I have never used narcotics in my life!
Wife: why don't you say thank God I've never drunk or smoked!
Husband: you knew I drank from the very beginning.
Wife: that was an example.

4. b. Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect (by men)

Husband: anyone who lives according to what the Quran says won't be a pretentious fanatic like your father! Won't do the unpleasant things that your father does!
Qualitative analysis: In this conversation, the husband associates his father-in-law with pretense and fanaticism.

Table 10.
The Use of Explicitly Associate the Other with A Negative Aspect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of insult</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the use of Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative analysis: Both men and women have used examples of this case only once. Therefore, no accurate statistical analysis can be provided. This maxim can only be accounted for in counting impoliteness types.

5. a. Put the other's indebtedness on record (by women)

Example (1)
Wife: you can’t do it. Everyone is addicted, but no one is like you.
Husband: you mean I am the only exception?
Example (2)
Wife: you have no relationship with your relatives! Your grandmother did know you had gotten married. Later on, when she died, no one attended her funeral.
Husband: (silent)
Example (3)
Wife: why did you insist on taking a trip together with your female employee?
Husband: I had no special intention, it just happened like that. And besides, her travelling companion was her husband on that trip. You were with me, too.
Wife: you are married, but you flirt with many women!
Husband: You must be ashamed of what you say.
Qualitative analysis:
In these conversations, women used statements such as ‘everyone is addicted, but no one is like you’, ‘you have no relationship with your relatives’ and ‘you are married, but you flirt with many women’ in order to reveal their husbands’ negative personality traits.

5. b. Put the other's indebtedness on record (by men)

Example (1)
Husband: You did confess that you were this way all due to what your father had done. Your sister is going to elope!
Wife: why should she elope?! She is getting married.
Example (2)
Husband: your father has beaten your sister to death many times.
Wife: Why are you talking nonsense?! Did it happen in front of you?
Example (3)
Husband: I’ve got to keep silent because no one knows when your sickness began.
Wife: I’ve become vulnerable.
Qualitative analysis:
In these conversations the husbands used statements such as ‘you did confess that you were this way all due to what your father did’, ‘your sister is going to elope’, ‘your father has beaten your sister to death many times’ and ‘no one knows when your sickness began’ to reveal a secret in their wives’ private lives.

Quantitative analysis:
There were 20 examples relevant to this case in this study. Half of them were used by men and the remaining half by women. Only 3 examples are provided above due to its great volume.

Table 11.
The Use of Put the Other’s Indebtedness on Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of insult</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the use of Put the other’s indebtedness on record</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9. Put the other's indebtedness on record

6. The use of physical barrier
Not found in the corpus

The following table summarizes this section.
Table 12.

*Use of Negative Impoliteness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maxim</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frighten</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condescend, scorn or ridicule</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invade the other’s space</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put the other's indebtedness on record</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of physical barrier</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.4 Sarcasm or mock politeness

This section is about performing the FTA with politeness strategies that are obviously insincere.

1. a. Sarcasm or mock politeness (by women)

Example (1)
Husband: I don’t see it necessary to take you to the best restaurant in town.
Wife: And you would take me there if I told you!

Example (2)
Husband: I can’t control myself.
Wife: yes, your heart is brimming with emotion!

*Qualitative Analysis:*
In the last example the wife means that her husband is stupid. In fact, in all these examples, the wives have made use of sarcasm (mock politeness).

1. b. Sarcasm or mock politeness (by men)

Example (1)
Wife: didn’t you have fun there?
Husband: You had fun only because we were in company with those two gatecrashers!

Example (2)
Wife: it is your duty.
Husband: How wonderful! Wisdom is a great asset!

*Qualitative analysis:*
In these examples, husbands try to upset their wives intentionally using biting statements such as ‘wisdom is a great asset’ and ‘your respectful cultured family won’t like it that way’.

Table 13.

*The Use of Sarcasm or Mock Politeness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of insult</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the use of Sarcasm or mock politeness</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quantitative analysis:
As the table above shows, the wives have utilized sarcasm twice as many times as the husbands have. The statistical analysis, provided down below, graphically depicts the exact percentage regarding this case. Only 3 examples are given above due to its great volume.

![Figure 9. Sarcasm or mock politeness](image)

4.1.5 Withhold politeness
It is about not performing politeness work where it is expected. (Culpeper 1995). Nothing is found in the corpus related to this section.

5. CONCLUSION
The total number of impoliteness types in the current corpus is 175. There is a chart down below which displays these impoliteness strategies and the way they have been utilized by men and women in this study.

Table 14. The Chart of Impoliteness Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impoliteness strategies</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bald on record impoliteness</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive impoliteness</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative impoliteness</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcasm or mock politeness</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withhold politeness</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In reply to the first question, it could be said with a high degree of certainty that there was no significant difference between using impoliteness strategies and maxims by men and using them by women. Women insulted themselves twice more compared to their husbands and insulted their spouses 5 times more, while men’s insults were directed at their wives’ families 2.3 times more compared to the other way around. But on the whole, women used impoliteness twice as much as men did. It had been hypothesized that men utilized impoliteness more than women did. But the findings revealed that out of 175 impoliteness examples, 93 cases were utilized by women and 82 ones by men.

In reply to the second question, it is worth mentioning that the findings of this study were contrary to expectations in that they depicted that although women, in order to save their face, were normally more conservative in verbal communications in different contexts in society and thus appeared politer than men, they tended to be more impolite in family discourse. It indicated that women were less concerned about their face in family conversations in comparison with other contexts. This study is the first research in impoliteness within family discourse in Iran. The chief limitation in this study was the scarcity of the studies and scientific papers on impoliteness in family discourse in Iran. As a matter of fact, this study is the very first research in this field in Iran which deals with this interdisciplinary topic and provides a detailed statistical analysis based on Culpeper's recent impoliteness model.

REFERENCES


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