

“You’re quite entitled to speak out, but the Prime Minister ought to get his facts straight, and as so often, he gets his facts wrong.”

Impoliteness in a British political debate

Sanna Lötjönen, 165091
Master’s Thesis
School of Humanities
English Language and Culture
University of Eastern Finland
May 2014

ITÄ-SUOMEN YLIOPISTO – UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

Tiedekunta – Faculty Philosophical faculty		Osasto – School School of Humanities	
Tekijät – Author Sanna Lötjönen			
Työn nimi – Title “You’re quite entitled to speak out, but the Prime Minister ought to get his facts straight, and as so often, he gets his facts wrong.” - Impoliteness in a British political debate			
Pääaine – Main subject	Työn laji – Level	Päivämäärä – Date	Sivumäärä – Number of pages
English language and culture	Pro gradu -tutkielma	6.5.2014	88
	Sivuainetutkielma		
	Kandidaatin tutkielma		
	Aineopintojen tutkielma		
Tiivistelmä – Abstract			
<p>Impoliteness studies, which derive from politeness studies, has become a popular area of sociolinguistics during the past few decades. However, it mostly focuses on the informal aspects of speech. The most obvious instances of impoliteness are prevalent in situations where the interlocutors are agitated, which is why researchers have utilised contexts such as army training camps or busy commercial kitchens, as portrayed in reality television, as a basis for a database (for instance Culpeper 1996, Culpeper <i>et al.</i> 2003, Bousfield 2008).</p> <p>This study looked into the usage of impoliteness in a more formal context: a political debate. The area of study took inspiration from Harris’ (2001) and Garcia-Pastor’s (2008) works. When implementing the study, Culpeper’s (1996) and Bousfield’s (2008) work on impoliteness and especially impoliteness strategies were the main starting point. The main objective was to find out what kind of impoliteness strategies were in use in this more formal context. The presumption was that not all of the strategies compiled by Culpeper (1996) and Bousfield (2008) would be found as they would be too crude to a formal context, but that some of the strategies that illustrate impoliteness in an informal context can be found in a formal context as well.</p> <p>The data of this study consisted of three General Election debates, held in Great Britain in the spring of 2010. The party leaders of the Labour Party, the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats met for three moderated debates, each of which lasted 90 minutes. Both written transcripts and video material of the debates were available for the study.</p> <p>The data was then studied in order to isolate first all the instances of impoliteness, which were then categorised. The instances were compared to a list of 20 possible impoliteness strategies, compiled from the works of Culpeper (1996) and Bousfield (2008). The instances of impoliteness were also divided for each of the debaters, and their debating styles were compared. The results were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.</p> <p>Of the possible 20 categories, the instances of impoliteness from this data fell into seven categories: disassociate from the other; seek disagreement or avoid agreement; condescend, scorn, ridicule, use sarcasm; associate with a negative aspect and personalise; criticise; hinder / block; and challenge. In addition, there were a few instances that did not fit into the already existing categories, which were labelled miscellaneous. The instances in the miscellaneous category seemed to all resemble each other, and could possibly indicate a new category: belittle or undermine. However, this data does not offer enough of those instances to draw definite conclusions.</p> <p>It also turned out that the three debaters favoured different impoliteness strategies. Possible reasons for the differences are power relations between the debaters, as well as personal debating styles. The results also indicated that impoliteness in a formal context can be described using the same impoliteness strategy categories that are used to depict impoliteness in an informal context.</p> <p>This study was a glimpse into the less frequently studied side of impoliteness, the formal, in this case also a political context. The impoliteness strategies seemed to serve the intent to challenge the opposing debater quite well. As this study only focused on individual strategies of impoliteness and not on, for instance, combinations of them or the use of strategies within one topic, a premise for further research can be found.</p>			
Avainsanat – Keywords			
Impoliteness, Political Speech, Debates, Sociolinguistics			

Tiedekunta – Faculty Filosofinen tiedekunta		Osasto – School Humanistinen osasto	
Tekijät – Author Sanna Lötjönen			
Työn nimi – Title “You’re quite entitled to speak out, but the Prime Minister ought to get his facts straight, and as so often, he gets his facts wrong.” - Impoliteness in a British political debate			
Pääaine – Main subject	Työn laji – Level	Päivämäärä – Date	Sivumäärä – Number of pages
Englannin kieli ja kulttuuri	Pro gradu -tutkielma	6.5.2014	88
	Sivuainetutkielma		
	Kandidaatin tutkielma		
	Aineopintojen tutkielma		
Tiivistelmä – Abstract			
<p>Epäkohteliaisuuden tutkiminen osana kohteliaisuuden tutkimusta on ollut muutaman viime vuosikymmenen aikana varsin suosittu sosiolingvistiikan osa-alue. Pääpaino on kuitenkin ollut epämuodollisen kielen tutkimuksessa. Epäkohteliaat ilmaisut ovat yleisimpiä tilanteissa, joissa puhuja on kiihtynyt, ja epäkohteliaisuutta onkin tutkittu esimerkiksi tosi-tv-sarjoissa, jotka sijoittuvat vaikkapa armeijaan tai ravintolan keittiöön (esimerkiksi Culpeper 1996, Culpeper <i>et al.</i> 2003, Bousfield 2008).</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus keskittyi epäkohteliaisuuteen muodollisemmassa kontekstissa, vaaliväittelyssä. Tutkimuksen aihe otti mallia Harrisin (2001) ja Garcia-Pastorin (2008) artikkeleista, ja perustui Culpeperin (1996) ja Bousfieldin (2008) listaamiin epäkohteliaisuusstrategioihin. Tavoitteena oli määrittellä mitkä näistä strategioista olisivat käytössä ja istuisivat myös muodolliseen ympäristöön. Oletuksena oli, että kaikkia Culpeperin ja Bousfieldin määrittelemiä strategioita ei voida käyttää tässä kielen rekisterissä, mutta että osa strategioista soveltuu sekä epämuodollisiin että muodollisiin kielenkäyttötilanteisiin.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen aineisto koostui kolmesta puoluejohtajien vaaliväittelystä, jotka pidettiin Iso-Britanniassa keväällä 2010. Väittelyihin osallistuivat Työväenpuolueen, Konservatiivien ja Liberaalidemokraattien puoluejohtajat. Jokainen väittely oli 90 minuuttia pitkä. Kaikista väittelystä oli käytettävissä sekä litteroitu dialogi että videotallenne.</p> <p>Aineistosta etsittiin ensin kaikki epäkohteliaat ilmaukset, jotka sitten luokiteltiin. Luokittelu perustui Culpeperin (1996) ja Bousfieldin (2008) tutkimusten pohjalta koottuun 20 strategian listaan. Lisäksi ilmaukset jaoteltiin jokaisen väittelijän mukaan. Tulokset arvioitiin sekä laadullisesti että määrällisesti.</p> <p>20 mahdollisen strategian joukosta aineistosta löytyi seitsemää eri kategoriaa edustavia ilmauksia. Ne olivat (itse suomennettuna): pyri erottautumaan toisista; pyri erimielisyyteen tai vältä yksimielisyyttä; alennu, halveksu, pilkkaa, käytä sarkasmia; yhdistä negatiiviseen pürteeseen ja henkilökohtaista; kritisoi; häiritse / estä; ja haasta. Lisäksi muutama ilmaus ei sopinut mihinkään alkuperäisistä kategorioista, ja ne merkittiin yhteisnimekkeellä sekalaiset. Sekalaisen kategorian ilmaisut vaikuttivat samankaltaisilta, ja antavat alustavia viitteitä siihen, että epäkohteliaisuusstrategioiden listaan voisi mahdollisesti lisätä yhden uuden kategorian; vähättele. Aineistosta ei kuitenkaan löydy tarpeeksi tämän tyyppisiä ilmauksia, jotta asia voitaisiin sanoa varmaksi. Kävi myös ilmi, että väittelijät suosivat eri strategioita. Tähän voi olla useita eri syitä, mutta vaikuttavia tekijöitä lienevät ainakin väittelijöiden väliset valtarakenteet ja jokaisen väittelijän omat väittelytaktiikat. Tutkimuksen tulokset viittaavat myös siihen, että muodollisessa tilanteessa esiintyvää epäkohteliaisuutta voidaan kuvata samojen strategioiden avulla joilla kuvataan epäkohteliaisuutta epämuodollisessa kontekstissa.</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus tarjosi silmäyksen kielitieteellisen epäkohteliaisuuden tutkimuksen vähemmän tutkittuun puoleen, epäkohteliaisuuteen muodollisessa kontekstissa, ja tässä tapauksessa myös poliittisen väittelyn kontekstissa. Vaikutti siltä, että väittelijät pysyivät hyödyntämään epäkohteliaisuusstrategioita omissa puheenvuoroissaan varsin mallikkaasti. Koska tämä tutkimus keskittyi ainoastaan yksittäisten strategioiden käyttöön, eikä käsitellyt ollenkaan esimerkiksi eri strategioiden yhdistelyä tai sitä, miten eri strategioita hyödynnetään yhden aihepiirin aikana. Täten voidaan sanoa, että jatkotutkimukselle on hyvät edellytykset.</p>			
Avainsanat – Keywords			
Epäkohteliaisuus, Poliittinen kielenkäyttö, Vaaliväittelyt, Sosiolingvistiikka			

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	1
2. What is impoliteness?.....	3
2.1 Early studies: Grice	6
2.2. Im/politeness and face	9
2.3. Culpeper’s model of impoliteness and Bousfield’s modifications of the theory	11
2.3.1. Types of face threat.....	20
2.3.2. Speaker intention	21
2.3.3. Aggression	22
2.3.4. Implicational impoliteness	24
2.4. Impoliteness in discourse	25
2.4.1. Triggering impoliteness: impoliteness in conversation beginnings, middles and ends	25
2.4.2. The use of impoliteness strategies	30
2.4.3. Turn-taking (who has the floor?)	32
2.5. The political context.....	33
3. Methodology	41
4. Results and discussion.....	45
4.1. The use of impoliteness strategies in the data	45
4.1.1. Disassociate from the other.....	49
4.1.2. Seek disagreement or avoid agreement	51
4.1.3. Condescend, scorn, ridicule, and use sarcasm.	53
4.1.4. Explicitly associate with a negative aspect and personalise	55
4.1.5. Criticise	57
4.1.6. Hinder / block	58
4.1.7. Challenge	60
4.1.8. Miscellaneous	62
4.2. The debaters’ differences and similarities, and the audience response to the debates..	65
4.3. Is impoliteness in a formal context still impoliteness?	67
5. Conclusions	70
References	73
Appendix 1	79
SUOMENKIELINEN TIIVISTELMÄ	80

1. Introduction

In this pro gradu thesis I will look at the 2010 General Election debates (leaders' debates) in the UK, in order to determine what kind of features of impoliteness can be found in the exchanges between the debaters. I am interested in the use of impoliteness in a more formal debate context and want to find out how the debaters convey their differing opinions and argue for their political views whilst adhering to the rules and conventions of a somewhat formal debate. I hope to define what kind of strategies, or are most common in a formal context. My hypothesis is that that due to the debate context certain impoliteness strategies, such as using taboo words or using obscure language will be ruled out, and other strategies, such as *ignore, snub the other; condescend, scorn or ridicule; seek disagreement; criticise or hinder/block* will highlight as more useful.

Politeness and impoliteness have been studied quite a bit in recent years (see chapter 2), but the emphasis tends to be on informal language and contexts. This seems to be the natural habitat of impoliteness, but it does not mean that instances of impoliteness cannot be found amongst the more regulated interactions. In fact, many of the interactions in formal, especially political settings are based around confrontation and the interactants defending their differing views. My study will focus on the less studied formal context that is restricted by rules of conduct and thus limits the available strategies, which hopefully brings additional depth to the existing impoliteness theories.

The reason I chose this topic stems from having an interest towards how people communicate. I find it interesting that politeness and impoliteness are central in almost any form of communication. Especially in a case of differing opinions, the use or non-use of politeness and impoliteness strategies drastically shapes the nature of the conversation. In addition, I am intrigued by how the more formal context of communication restricts what can be said and how, and how skilled speakers can work within these restraints to convey their intended message.

Possible limitations to this study arise from the extensive nature of the general topic. Im/politeness has become a very broad field over the last decade, and it has been studied in numerous contexts. I would have found it interesting to study the political debates from the joint perspective of im/politeness and power use, but that viewpoint would have been too wide for this particular study.

The structure of this thesis will be divided into four chapters, the first one being the introduction. In the second chapter I will present the rather complicated nature of impoliteness. I will first talk about its general definitions, and then I will look into the use of impoliteness, both on a general level and in a political context. The third chapter is dedicated to introducing the data and the methods of the study, and in the fourth chapter I will analyse the data and discuss my findings.

2. What is impoliteness?

“The quest for a ‘holy grail’ theory goes on.”

Bousfield (2008: 67)

“[t]here is no solid agreement in the chapters as to what ‘impoliteness’ actually is.”

Locher and Bousfield (2008: 3)

The general consensus about im/politeness theory at the moment seems to be that everyone agrees that politeness and impoliteness are incredibly difficult to define. Locher and Watts (2008: 3) do state that the “lowest common nominator, however, can be summarised like this: *Impoliteness is behaviour that is face-aggravating in a particular context.*” But what does this mean? And what do we know beyond this lowest common denominator?

When the research first began, many researchers viewed linguistic impoliteness as something that can be directly derived from politeness theory, and/or that it is the opposite of politeness. Politeness, in turn, also has numerous definitions, a rather clear one coming from Locher:

Politeness for the speaker:

A polite utterance is a speaker’s intended, marked and appropriate behaviour which displays face concern; the motivation for it lies in the possibly, but not necessarily, egocentric desire of the speaker to show positive concern for the addressees and/or to respect the addressees’ and the speaker’s own need for independence.

Politeness for the addressee:

Addressees will interpret an utterance as polite when it is perceived as appropriate and marked; the reason for this is understood as the speaker's intention to show positive concern for the addressees' face and/or the speaker's intention to protect his or her own face needs.

Locher (2004: 91)

Returning to impoliteness, Leech (2005, quoted here from Bousfield 2008: 51) describes the model of politeness as "inevitably also a theory of impoliteness, since impoliteness is a non-observance or violation of the constraints of politeness." Similarly, Mills (2005) argues that impoliteness is "a break from the hypothesized norms of a community of practice." As Bousfield (2008: 51) points out, while impoliteness cannot be considered to be the norm and the principal way of communication, it is nonetheless prevalent and central as a part of the range of human communication, and it has its own means and purposes.

One of the problems in the politeness theory framework, from the impoliteness viewpoint, is that it assumes that polite behaviour is the goal in every linguistic context, and impoliteness is deviant and something the interlocutor wants to avoid. This, quite obviously, is not always the case. In conflict situations impoliteness is quite clearly the goal, as illustrated in, for instance, Bousfield's data (2008).

Many researchers feel that it is also important to differentiate between so called 1st and 2nd degree (or order) impoliteness. This means making a distinction between what people (laymen) generally consider to be impolite (1st degree impoliteness); "judgements by participants in the interaction in question" (Locher and Watts 2008: 79) and impoliteness as "a theoretical concept which is established by the researcher" (Garcia-Pastor 2008: 104).

Bousfield (2008: 71–73) states that in the broad sense impoliteness can be seen as the opposite of politeness, in the sense that if politeness seeks to mitigate FTAs (face threatening acts), impoliteness aims at communication that is purposefully conflictive. FTAs are unmitigated (when mitigation is required) and/or deliberately aggressive or otherwise heightened.

Some researchers feel that the division between polite and impolite is not enough. For example, Lakoff (1989: 103, quoted here from Harris 2001: 453) divides linguistic behaviour into three categories; *polite*, *non-polite* and *rude*, the two latter forming a kind of impoliteness spectrum. Non-politeness is viewed as “behaviour that does not conform to politeness rules, used where the latter are not expected” and rudeness, in turn, as “behaviour that does not utilize politeness strategies where they would be expected, in such a way that the utterance can only be interpreted as intentionally and negatively confrontational” Similarly, Schneider (2012) makes a distinction between *appropriate/polite* and *inappropriate* and *impolite/rude* behaviour. Some researchers, such as Culpeper (2010), Schneider (2012) and Waters (2012) have taken a semantic interest in whether *rude* or *impolite* is the appropriate term, if they can be used interchangeably or if there is a continuum between them. In this study, I will use the term *impolite*, because that has been more extensively used when describing impoliteness strategies.

Both politeness and impoliteness have been studied extensively in the recent years. The studies have been conducted since the 1970s, though in the beginning the focus was almost solely on politeness studies. Important early studies on politeness include the works of Lakoff

(1973), Grice (1975), Leech (1983), and Brown and Levinson (1978, modified in 1987). More recently, Watts (2003) has been a central figure on honing politeness theory. For a detailed review on the history of politeness studies, see, for example, Locher (2004: Ch. 4) and Locher and Bousfield (2008: Ch. 1). In the branch of impoliteness, early studies were conducted by Lachenicht (1980), Austin (1990) and Culpeper (1996). Especially Culpeper's work has since been expanded, by Culpeper himself (2003 as Culpeper *et al.*, 2005, 2010), Bousfield (2008), and Bousfield and Locher (2008). Recently, impoliteness studies have become more specified, with interests in the political context (Harris 2001, Mills 2005, Terkourafi 2008), semantics (Culpeper 2011, Schneider 2012, Waters 2012), argumentation and disagreements (Robles 2011, Bigi and Morasso 2012, Sifianou 2012) and face (Spencer-Oatey 2007, Bayraktaroğlu and Sifianou 2012), to name but a few viewpoints.

2.1 Early studies: Grice

The cooperative principle is considered to be one of the founding elements of many of the original politeness theories, such as that of Brown and Levinson (1987) and of Leech (1983). Bousfield (2008: 21–31), however, argues that Grice's theories have been, to a certain extent, misunderstood and some of the criticism aimed at it (for example, Watts 2003) stems from these misunderstandings.

Grice is, in the im/politeness context, best known for his Cooperative Principle (CP) (1975), which is also closely linked to politeness and impoliteness theories (for instance, Brown and Levinson 1987 and Bousfield 2008). His view is that conversations between people are, at

least to a certain degree, cooperative efforts, and that each participant of the conversation recognises certain common goals. These goals lead up to the Communicative Principle (Grice, 1975: 44-47), which he divides into four categories; maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner, as follows:

The maxim of quantity:

1. Make your contribution as informative as required (for the purpose of the exchange)
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required

Maxim of quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true

1. Do not say what you believe to be false
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

Maxim of Relation: Be relevant

Maxim of Manner: Be perspicuous

1. Avoid obscurity of expression
2. Avoid ambiguity
3. be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)
4. be orderly.

Grice (1975: 49) also pointed out that in discourse people often transgress from the expectations and the implied common goal of the conversation. This transgression can manifest in several ways. The interlocutor might, for example, *violate* a maxim, which can lead to misunderstandings, or he or she could *opt out* of a maxim, indicating that they are not going to cooperate in the way the maxims require. There could also be a *clash*, if the interactant is unable to fulfil a maxim. Or, finally, they might *flout*, blatantly fail to fulfil it.

Bousfield (2008: 24–25) feels that Grice is often misinterpreted. He argues that because Grice's theory is quite loose, and especially in 1975 still developing, the terms in the paper are rather ambiguous. Especially the terms 'cooperative' and 'conversational cooperation' have gained several different interpretations. Of these maxims, Bousfield argues that ignoring or violating the maxim of Manner is rather an efficient tool for impoliteness.

Fetzer (2002: 185) argues that within communication but especially within political speech validity and credibility of the interlocutors are central concepts, which derive from Grice's quality maxim. She points out that this is not solely linked to an individual, but an audience that truly evaluates the credibility required. This is why this aspect makes it very interesting from the viewpoint of impoliteness in political speech. For example, in a debate, I would argue that the goal of the debaters is to heighten the audience's trust in themselves and weaken the credibility of the opponents, and this might be seen as a driving force behind intentional impoliteness.

2.2. Im/politeness and face

Goffman (1967: 5) defines *face* as “an image of self delineated in terms of social attributes - albeit an image others may share”. Face is also an important concept in the im/politeness theories of Brown and Levinson (1987), and Culpeper (1996, 2005), where they make a distinction between positive face and negative face. Positive face refers to the wants of an individual to be approved of or to be a part of a group, and negative face reflects the person’s wants to be respected as an individual (Cutting 2002: 45–46).

Brown and Levinson’s face theory is often criticised for being too western a view. For example, the researchers in Japanese and Chinese cultures have argued that the concept of negative face does not exist in their cultures. Bousfield responds to this criticism by saying that some of these researchers may have misinterpreted the concept(s), and that there may be different emphases in different cultures on whether the positive or negative face strategies are prominent in the culture, but that both aspects are nonetheless present (Bousfield 2008: 35–37). However, he also states that Locher (2004) has argued that Brown and Levinson’s concept of face as a “public self-image” implies that it entails actually two concepts, an external and an internal one. These two are, according to Locher, mixed in Brown and Levinson’s research.

A solution to the issues presented by the critics of Brown and Levinson’s theory lies, according to Bousfield (2008: 34–36), in O’Driscoll’s (1996, quoted here from Bousfield 2008) concept of *dualism* to face. According to O’Driscoll, in addition to positive and

negative face there are also basic positive and negative 'wants' - "the need to come together, make contact and identify with others; to have ties; to belong; to merge" and "the need to go off alone, avoid contact and be individualised; to be independent; to separate". He also argues, stemming from the views of Brown and Levinson (1987: 17–18), that utterances can range from slightly to very positively or negatively polite. Bousfield (2008: 35) finds the view useful, but comments on the problem that O'Driscoll's views leave a lot of room for interpretation. Many have considered his theory to mean that while there is a scalar range in strength of positive and negative politeness, the positive and negative face wants are not to be found in a scalar relation, but they are dichotomous, or even polar opposites. Bousfield (2008: 36) argues that this idea of dichotomy of positive/negative face should be abandoned, because he feels and demonstrates that "positive and negative face oriented utterances can co-occur within a single utterance".

Terkourafi (2008) presents a slightly different view of the face theory, stating that the face is solely external, and exists purely in interaction. Face is not 'gained' or 'lost' in a conversation, but it is something that exists within the interaction, where it is enhanced (or 'constituted') or damaged. For Terkourafi, every interaction contains the concept of face, which is built and maintained during a conversation. Bousfield (2008: 39–40) agrees on this latter point, but challenges Terkourafi's view of face existing only within a conversation. Bousfield argues that each interlocutor does bring something concerning their own face wants and needs to the conversation, namely their expectations on how their face should be constituted. He states that these expectations are brought to the conversation by an individual, based on the interlocutor's sense of self-worth and his or her understanding of the context of

the conversation. Reflecting Goffman's and de Kadt's theories, Bousfield explains that face is mutually constructed in a conversation:

“when the *reality* of the socially and internationally constituted face differs markedly from the individual's (internal and cognitive) expectation of how their face should be constituted – especially where face is constituted at a somewhat ‘lower’ level than expected – then things can really get interesting: tensions can ensue requiring, perhaps, remedial face/politeness work, an individual's reassessment of their standing in society in relation to their feeling of self-worth including a defence of their expectations in an attempt to bring actual face in line with the expected, or an attack on a threatener's face or other, similar ‘repositioning’. In short, face expectations not matching face reality may well result, amongst other things, in the communication, manipulation or management of impoliteness or aggression, linguistic or otherwise.”

(Bousfield, 2008: 40, original emphasis)

2.3. Culpeper's model of impoliteness and Bousfield's modifications of the theory

There are three early models of impoliteness, Lachenicht's (1980), Austin's (1990) and Culpeper's (1996). They have their similarities, especially the fact that they are all based on the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987, though the first version was published in 1978), but they also differ from each other. Of the three, Culpeper's paper seems to be the most quoted one, and it is also the one that has been rather frequently expanded upon and updated since 1996.

Bousfield (2008: 82) describes Austin's theory as something that focuses on the interpretation and perception of impoliteness, and the role of the speaker is undermined. Culpeper *et al.* (2003), however, point out that, in contrast, the role of the hearer and the context are under-represented in Brown and Levinson's theory. They also remark that the fact that Austin's

theory is not tested on real language but it solely relies on the researcher's examples is a hindrance to the theory.

Bousfield (2008: 83) notes that at first glance Lachenicht's and Culpeper's theories appear quite similar. He also states that Culpeper was not aware of Lachenicht's theory when he wrote his 1996 paper. Lachenicht (1980, quoted here from Bousfield 2008: 83) describes impoliteness as "aggravating language" that is used with the intent to "hurt" the addressee, whereas Culpeper (1996) defines impoliteness as the kind of linguistic behaviour that attacks the hearer and aims to cause disharmony and/or social disruption. In addition, they refer to (though in different terms) the addressee's positive and negative face wants as the target of impoliteness. The differences between the two theories, according to Bousfield, come from the "architecture" of the models. Essentially, they categorise impoliteness slightly differently and group the strategies in different ways, but still it is clear that they are along the same lines. Bousfield (2008: 89) criticises Lachenicht's theory on being inconsistent and speculative in nature, and that, similarly to Austin, no examples based on real speech are provided. However, he gives the model credit for considering the possibility that different face aggravating strategies can be mixed, a point which he also talks about extensively (more on the topic below).

Culpeper (see, for instance, 1996, 2003, 2010) first approached impoliteness studies by contrasting politeness and impoliteness. He stemmed from Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness study and categories in order to conjure his own impoliteness theory. He argued that whereas B&L aim to find communicative strategies that maintain or promote social

harmony, Culpeper concentrated on strategies that have the effect of social disruption. In his article (1996), Culpeper points out that there are factors, such as social distance and power relations between the interlocutors, which create circumstances where the motivation to maintain social harmony is reduced. The participant who has more power has also more freedom to be impolite, and thus impoliteness is more likely to occur in situations where there is an imbalance of power, a point which is evident also in Bousfield's study (2008). Interestingly, in the data I am using in this thesis the situation is quite contrastive, as the power is divided rather equally between the debaters, yet there are clear occurrences of impoliteness. One of the explanations for this could be that even though the debaters are of similar power in the debate, within politics the incumbent Prime Minister has more power, and the other two debaters are challenging that. I will discuss this point further in the analysis section.

Culpeper (1996: 352) also differentiates between impoliteness and mock impoliteness. The latter, also referred to as banter, is impoliteness on the surface level only, as it is not really intended to hurt anyone's feelings. Quoting Leech (1983), Culpeper explains that the purpose of banter is to reflect and foster social intimacy. Intimacy and the importance of politeness within communication are inversely proportional; the closer the interlocutors are, the less need there is for formal politeness. Culpeper adds to this by pointing out that this is mostly true in contexts where the impoliteness is clearly understood to be untrue. Interestingly, Culpeper also points out that impoliteness, a step further from lack of politeness, is even more likely to be interpreted as banter in non-intimate contexts: "[t]he more people like each other, the more concern they are likely to have for each other's face. Thus, insults are more likely to be interpreted as banter when directed at targets liked by the speaker" (Culpeper 1996: 353).

Culpeper (1996: 355–358) introduces impoliteness strategies, which derive from Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies. He opposes the politeness strategies and super-strategies, so that they do not enhance or support but are aimed at attacking face. The impoliteness super-strategies are:

(1) *Bald on record impoliteness*: the FTAs performed are “direct, clear, unambiguous”

For example:

S1: we'll start with you madam <to S4> I work for T F M parking
okay

S2: has made no attempt to respond

S3: excuse me excuse me you are

S4:

S1: I did the first time I met you okay where's your car

S2:

S3: a parking attendant alright act like one okay *shut up and act like a parking attendant*

S4:

(from Culpeper *et al.*: 2003: 1556)

(2) *Positive impoliteness*: strategies are used to damage the addressee's positive face wants.

(3) *Negative impoliteness*: strategies are used to damage the addressee's negative face wants.

(4) *Sarcasm or mock politeness*: the FTA is performed by the use of politeness strategies and is obviously insincere.

(5) *Withhold politeness*: the absence of politeness work in contexts where it is expected.

Culpeper also points out that the formula for assessing the weightiness of an FTA that Brown and Levinson created for politeness research is also useful when evaluating impoliteness: “the more powerful and distant the other is, the more face-damaging the act is likely to be.”

In addition to super-strategies, Culpeper (1996: 357–358) has created counterstrategies for the output strategies of Brown and Levinson (1987), which intend to satisfy “the strategic ends of a super-strategy.” Culpeper emphasises that the list he has created is not exhaustive, and the impoliteness of the strategies greatly depends on the context.

Positive impoliteness output strategies:

- *Ignore, snub the other*: fail to acknowledge the other’s presence.
 - *Exclude* the other from an activity
 - *Disassociate* from the other: for example, deny association or common ground with the other; avoid sitting together.
 - *Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic*
 - *Use inappropriate identity markers*: for example, use title and surname when a close relationship pertains, or a nickname when a distant relationship pertains.
 - *Use obscure or secretive language*: for example, mystify the other with jargon, or use a code known to others in the group, but not the target.
 - *Seek disagreement*: select a sensitive topic.
 - *Make the other feel uncomfortable*: for example, do not avoid silence, joke, or use small talk.
 - *Use taboo words*: swear, or use abusive or profane language.
 - *Call the other names*: use derogatory nominations.
- etc.

Negative impoliteness output strategies:

- *Frighten*: install a belief that action detrimental to the other will occur.
 - *Condescend, scorn or ridicule*: emphasize your relative power. Be contemptuous. Do not take the other seriously. Belittle the other (e.g. use diminutives).
 - *Invade the other's space*: literally (e.g. position yourself closer to the other than the relationship permits) or metaphorically (e.g. ask for or speak about information which is too intimate given the relationship).
 - *Explicitly associate with a negative aspect* - personalize, use pronouns 'I' and 'you'.
 - *Put the other's indebtedness on record*.
- etc.

Bousfield (2008: 125–132) states that in his data there were some utterances that do not fit within these strategies. As Culpeper (1996) has left his lists of strategies open-ended, Bousfield suggests some new or modified strategies:

- *Seek disagreement* -strategy could benefit from an addendum of *Avoid agreement*.
- *Frighten* could be combined and supported with another strategy, *Threaten*.
- *Criticise* - “dispraise *h*, some action or inaction by *h*, or some entity which *h* has invested face.”
- *Hinder/block* - “physically (block passage), communicatively (deny turn, interrupt)”
- *Enforce role shift*

- *Challenge* - “ask *h* a challenging question, question *h*’s position, stance, beliefs, assumed power, rights, obligations, ethics, etc.”

Bousfield (2008: 125–132)

In addition to these, Bousfield (2008: 137, quoting Culpeper 1996 and Jay 1992) points out that there are other actions, such as shouting, that can also convey impoliteness.

Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann (2003) report that many researchers criticise Culpeper’s (1996) article on taking too narrow an approach to the impoliteness theory and single impoliteness strategies, and aim to expand those. They respond to the (other researchers’) criticism that questions the necessity of Culpeper’s (1996) impoliteness framework, claiming that since Brown and Levinson’s politeness framework already contains the ‘bald on record’ option, which can be interpreted to include the impolite. Culpeper *et al* (2003) argue that that is not enough, first of all because Brown and Levinson’s definition of the bald on record strategy is not comprehensive, and because not all impolite instances fit under the definition of bald on record. Thus, they state: “It is clear that bald on record does not adequately describe the variety of phenomena, including impoliteness phenomena, that can be – and have been by many researchers – placed within it” (Culpeper *et al*, 2003: 1548). Often the impolite utterance is not the most direct option available, and does not fulfil the Grice’s maxim of quality. For example, saying “*You have shit for brains*” carries the same core meaning as “*You fool!*”, but the former is both less polite and less direct than the latter (Culpeper *et al*, 2003: 1549, original example). The researchers do point out (*ibid*, 1549, quoting Leech 1983) that this kind of correlation between indirectness and im/politeness does not apply to all cases of im/politeness and other factors, such as taboo words, also play an important role. However,

this example does illustrate why the category of bald on record is not sufficient and justifies the need for an impoliteness framework. Another interesting point about directness in regards to im/politeness is, once again, context. The intention of an utterance is key. For example, criticism of a paper is less likely to be interpreted as impoliteness if the critique derives from a tutor or a professor to a student. To make communication even more complicated, identifying speaker intention is notoriously difficult (Culpeper *et al*, 2003: 1549–1550).

Another criticism of Culpeper's (1996) work is voiced by Bousfield (2008 90–91). While he praises Culpeper's theory on being the most widely tested on natural speech data and considers it to be a useful tool for analysing impolite interactions, he also points out that Culpeper has left his impoliteness categories (intentionally) open-ended, which is a good thing in the sense that it makes it adaptable and thus useful over a long period of time even if the field changes, but that it is also a weakness since the number of strategies that could be added to the list is possibly infinite. Still, this model with its modifications seems to currently be the best one available. Bousfield (2008: 94–95) also proposes a slight modification to the Culpeper (1996) and Culpeper *et al*. (2003) theory by simplifying it to “two overarching ‘tactics’:

1. On-record impoliteness:

The use of strategies designed to *explicitly* (a) attack the face of an interactant, (b) construct the face of an interactant in non-harmonious or outright conflictive way, (c) deny the expected face wants, needs or rights of the interactant, or some combination thereof. The attack is made in an unambiguous way given the context in which it occurs.”

2. Off-record impoliteness:

The use of strategies where the threat or damage to an interactant's face is conveyed indirectly by way of implicatures (cf. Grice [1975] 1989) and can be cancelled (e.g., denied or an account / post modification / elaboration / offered, etc.) but where "...one attributable intention clearly outweighs any others" (Culpeper 2005: 44), given the context in which it occurs.

Sarcasm and the *Withholding of Politeness* where it is expected would also come under this heading, as follows:

(a) Sarcasm:

Sarcasm constitutes the use of individual or combined strategies which, on the surface, appear to be appropriate but which are meant to be taken as meaning the opposite in terms of face-management. The utterance that appears, on the surface, to positively constitute, maintain, or enhance the face of the intended recipient(s) actually threatens, attacks and/or damages the face of the recipient(s) (see Culpeper 2005) given the context in which it occurs.

(b) Withhold politeness:

More specifically, withhold politeness where politeness would appear to be expected or mandatory.

(Bousfield, 2008: 95)

According to Bousfield, an outsider cannot know for sure if S2's utterance was intended as an intentional aggravation or if he just grew tired of the discussion and decided to leave in spite of it having potential offensive consequences.

2.3.2. Speaker intention

The example above relies heavily on speaker intention, which is the basis for the entire field of pragmatics. It is also a central part of politeness and impoliteness theories (Bousfield 2008: 73). The problem with trying to decipher speaker intention is that it will always remain guesswork. Culpeper *et al.* (2003: 1552) state that while reconstructing actual intentions of a speaker can prove to be impossible, adequate evidence can help researchers deduce 'plausible' intentions. Similarly, Mooney (2004: 900–901) suggests that intention is, first of all *reconstructed* and not *retrieved*, and that it is often based on previous information the hearer has, from, for example, past encounters or knowledge of social roles. She (*ibid*) also points out that even this might not be enough:

Consider I intend to insult someone. If they are not insulted, my intention has not been realised. There are two possibilities here in terms of retrieval of intention. It may be possible to see in my utterance a potential insult (that the particular recipient has failed to note); but it also should be possible to see how the recipient failed to notice it. That is, analysis should be able to account for both possibilities (given that the recipient is competent in the language of interaction and so forth). What matters is not my intention to insult, but whether or how an insult is present in my utterance. In the same way, it is possible that I insult someone unwittingly; without intending to. Here too, what I intended and what the recipient perceived should both be accounted for.

(Mooney 2004: 901)

Bousfield (2008: 72–73) follows the same reasoning. He notes that for impoliteness to be successful, it must be understood by the recipient. Thus, if only one of the (usually) two participants intends or perceives a face-threat, impoliteness is not successful. In other words:

- Impoliteness is successful if the speaker intends to be impolite and the hearer correctly interprets what they hear as impolite.
- If the speaker intends face-damage but this intent is not perceived, the attempt at impoliteness fails.
- If the hearer interprets something the speaker says as intentionally face-damaging even if that was not the case, there is a case of *accidental impoliteness*, which might be caused by *rudeness* (Bousfield defines this as inadequate levels of politeness) or *insensitivity* on behalf of the speaker, or hypersensitivity by the hearer; “*a clash of expectations, a cultural misunderstanding; misidentification (by the speaker or the hearer) of the Community of Practice or Activity type in which they are engaged*”; or some combination of these, or some other reason altogether.
- If the speaker does not intend to be impolite but the hearer interprets their message as unintentionally face-damaging, there might be a case of *incidental or accidental face-damage*. The causes are similar to accidental impoliteness.

2.3.3. Aggression

Bousfield (2008: 75) describes aggression as “the one, lowest and most common denominator to such phenomena as ‘conflict’ or ‘confrontation’ which underlie impoliteness.” He also considers Hydén’s (1995, quoted here from Bousfield 2008: 76) division into two varieties,

verbal aggression and physical violence central to the definition. Bousfield wonders about the purpose of aggression, viewing the explanations of Hydén, who thinks that aggression serves as “a tactic for reaching a certain goal” (1995, quoted from Bousfield 2008: 76), and Yllö (1993, quoted from Bousfield 2008: 76), who finds it to be a means to attain or maintain power, as well as Straus and Gelles (1990, quoted from Bousfield 2008: 76), who see aggression as a conflict tactic, and considers that all these elements should be extended to be about verbal aggression as well, since “[i]t would be counterintuitive to consider that verbal aggression occurred solely for its own sake.” He also notes that in some contexts aggression can be seen as “a possible response to a frustrating incident, object, individual, or other phenomena” (2008: 78). He concludes that

“[I]n response to an offending event, feelings of frustration could be triggered in an interlocutor. In turn, this could lead to the expression of some form of instrumental verbal aggression, for example, impoliteness. Such a speech act could, itself, be seen as a triggering, offending event and could, in turn, lead to the expression of new impoliteness.”

(Bousfield 2008: 81)

This is an interesting point. Verbal aggression is often a central part of impoliteness, especially in an informal context. However, once again it is necessary to question how well this applies to the more formal contexts. The factors that trigger impoliteness in, for example, a debate may vary. I expect to find instances of equally intentional expressions of impoliteness in my data, but it will be interesting to see what kind of responses they elicit.

2.3.4. Implicational impoliteness

Culpeper (2010: Ch. 5) also argues that not every instance of impoliteness follows the conventional formulae. He offers three categories:

(1) *Form-driven*: “the surface form or semantic content of a behaviour is marked.” Methods include insinuations, innuendos, casting aspersions, digs, snide comments/remarks, and so on.

(2) *Convention driven*: Includes phenomena such as sarcasm, teasing, and certain types (harsh/bitter) of humour and jokes.

(a) *Internal*: “the context is projected by part of a behaviour mismatches that projected by another part”; or

(b) *External*: “the context projected by a behaviour mismatches the context of use.”

(3) *Context-driven*: “impoliteness interpretation is primarily driven by the strong expectations flowing from the context” (p. 180)

(a) *Unmarked behaviour*: “an unmarked (with respect to surface form or semantic content) and unconventionalised behaviour mismatches the context”; or

(b) *Absence of behaviour*: “the absence of a behaviour mismatches the context.”

While I agree that this more subtle branch of impoliteness is important to acknowledge, I also wish to highlight that the different elements of implicational impoliteness also already fit

within Culpeper's (1996) and Bousfield's (2008) impoliteness strategies, and within Bousfield's (2008: 94–95) definition of off-record impoliteness.

2.4. Impoliteness in discourse

In addition to singular utterances and single politeness or impoliteness strategies, impoliteness can also be realised in extended discourse. (Harris 2001, Bousfield 2008). In fact, Culpeper *et al* (2003: 1561) and Bousfield (2008: 146–167) point out that this, paired with mixing several impoliteness strategies, is a more common realisation of impoliteness than singular utterances using one specific strategy. The offending interlocutor might use the same strategy repeatedly in order to form a parallelism, in order to boost the challenge and thus intensify the threat. Alternatively, one particular strategy can be used in combination with other strategies. Different strategies mutually boost one another and boost impoliteness.

2.4.1. Triggering impoliteness: impoliteness in conversation beginnings, middles and ends

Bousfield (2008: 183–) argues that “[i]mpoliteness does not exist in a vacuum and it does not in normal circumstances just spring ‘out of the blue’”. Context, as discussed above, plays a central role. Impoliteness is often triggered by an “offending event”, which creates feelings of “frustration, anger, annoyance, or similar”, which result in occurrences of impoliteness. However, he also wishes to clarify that impoliteness is not the only possible response to these events. In addition to triggering events, Bousfield states that *further* triggering events can be located within a conversation. Locher (2004) describes argument sequences where

interlocutors prompt each other to keep the insults flowing. Similarly, Garcia-Pastor (2008: 110–111) describes face aggravating strategies yielding positive and negative face aggravating moves as *negativity cycles*:

Such moves did not necessarily correspond with a turn a talk. Rather, they consisted of a juxtaposition of impoliteness strategies constituting a coherent and identifiable chunk of speech by virtue of the overall aggravating function they performed as regards the opponent's positive and negative face. Negativity cycles sporadically contained direct and explicit face mitigation targeted at the moderator of the exchange, the audience or the rival, which was issued for strategic purposes linked to the speaker's (S) own image building in the case of the latter. These macro impolite units took place at any point in the unfolding event, frequently resulting in illicit talk that the moderator ended up stopping most of the time.

(Garcia-Pastor 2008: 110)

Garcia-Pastor also explains that these negativity cycles show impoliteness as highly aggressive. It will be interesting to see if any can be found in my data. Since I hypothesise impoliteness to be less overtly aggressive in a more formal, political context, but at the same time the debate forum might be an ideal place for these negativity cycles, they might be apparent but possibly in a different form.

Culpeper *et al.* (2003: 1562) point out that an important aspect that has not been studied very widely is the hearers' responses to impoliteness. These are instances of impoliteness mid-conversation, Harris (1986, quoted here from Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1562) has appointed two basic pairs of impolite exchanges, OFFENSIVE-DEFENSIVE and OFFENSIVE-OFFENSIVE. This means, theoretically, that when a person receives an FTA, they have two choices: to respond or not respond (i.e. stay silent) to the threat. Bousfield (2008: 188) considers there to be numerous explanations on the strategy of not responding. In addition to

Thomas' (1995, quoted here from Bousfield) reason of deliberately being offensive by not speaking when there is an expectation to speak, or Culpeper's (1996, quoted here from Bousfield) reason of refusing to respond when there is an expectation to be polite, Bousfield includes the reasons of "(a) the participant not hearing the content of the utterance of one's interlocutor, (b) accepting the FTA; or (c) simply not having understood the content of the utterance of one's interlocutor, amongst others" (2008: 188). This brings us back to the question of intent, and the successfulness of impoliteness. Bousfield argues that not only does staying silent have many reasons behind it, it is also quite difficult to study, and it is difficult to analyse whether the silence has any impolite strategizing behind it (ibid).

Culpeper *et al.* (2003: 1562) state that those who choose to respond have further choices, either accepting the face attack or countering it. The former means, for instance, assuming responsibility for the occurrence of the impoliteness act in the first place by apologising. Similarly, an interlocutor might accept criticism by agreeing with it (Bousfield 2008: 193). The latter, in turn, can lead to an offensive or defensive counter strategy. Offensive strategies mean countering face attacks with face attacks, and defensive strategies mean that the interlocutor aims to defend his or her own face by attempting to deflect, block or in some other way manage the face attack (Culpeper *et al.*, 2003: 1562). Bousfield (2008: 193–194) argues that interactions with offensive countering use the classic impoliteness strategies, discussed also in this thesis, as tools. They require the interlocutors to be in a similar social and/or power positions, which, according to Bousfield, does not happen very often, or at least it did not in his data. For my study, this pairing is actually rather interesting, as the debaters are largely equal in social status and power.

To summarise:

J. Culpeper et al. | Journal of Pragmatics 35 (2003) 1545–1579

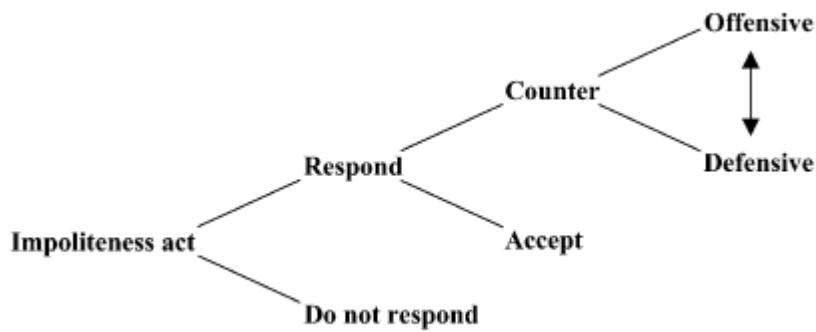


Fig. 1. A summary of response options.

Culpeper et al. (2003: 1568–1577) also wish to highlight the importance of prosody, in other words the “pitch (intonation), loudness, speed and voice quality” of speech. The transcriptions of discussions only show the words that the participants used in the conversation, and that leaves out the tone and intonation, gestures, glances and facial expressions; the importance of not only *what* was said but *how* it was said. The researchers illustrate this by explaining that the examples they have used in the paper are all very clearly impolite to them, but in conferences people who have not heard the examples usually found them less obviously so. Culpeper (2010: 157) also points out that “prosody and other intensifying techniques are used to ensure that we are guided to the ‘impolite’ interpretation”, if there is room for understanding the interlocution in another way. One impoliteness strategy which I expect to be frequent in my data can be emphasised prosodically. This is the negative impoliteness strategy of *hinder linguistically* (interruptions and denying turn).

Bousfield (2008: 206) states that discourse endings have been somewhat neglected in the impoliteness studies. However, the resolutions of disagreements are central in the actual conversations. Drawing from Vuchinich's (1990, quoted here from Bousfield 2008) work, Bousfield introduces five types of conflict termination:

- 1) *Submission to opponent*. "The first participant "gives in" and accepts the opponent's position." Bousfield marks this as the prominent resolution especially in his military training data.
- 2) *Dominant 3rd party intervention*, where "an ongoing-conflict [sic] between participants is "broken-up" [sic] by a third party". Usually the third party has some power over the interlocutors, even if they are not traditional authority figures. In my data the moderator of the debates might be found to be this powerful third party.
- 3) *Compromise*. Sometimes "the participants negotiate (a) concession(s) – a position between the opposing positions that define the dispute.
- 4) *Stand-off*. This is a situation where "the conflict continues with neither party submitting." Theoretically this could be infinite, but the situation usually resolves when the topic is changed.
- 5) *Withdrawal*. This requires one opponent withdrawing from the discussion, and possibly even physically leaving the area.

(Bousfield 2008: 206–215)

2.4.2. The use of impoliteness strategies

Bousfield (2008) expands on the analysis of impoliteness strategies Culpeper *et al.* (2003) brushed upon in their article. He looks extensively into Culpeper's (1996) positive and negative impoliteness output strategies, seeking to further define and illustrate them via his own data (which appears to be, at least partially, the same data as in Culpeper *et al.* 2003). His most interesting idea, however, is that "participants tend to combine, or 'mix' together, impolite strategies within a single utterance" (Bousfield 2008: 146). In fact, Bousfield points out that in his data "participants *rarely* used a single strategy in isolation" (*ibid.*). In addition, Bousfield (2008: 146–167) suggests that impoliteness can in fact span throughout an entire conversation. He makes a distinction between "simple" and "complex" impoliteness, 'simple' meaning single strategy impoliteness and 'complex' meaning "complex, (co-)realisation of impoliteness strategies, within a single utterance, or turn-at-talk" (p. 155). In the cases of complex impoliteness, one particular strategy may be used repeatedly to form a parallelism, or several strategies may be repeated over a conversation, or several strategies can be combined and used within one interlocution. Bousfield (2008: 161) also points out that when there are several impoliteness strategies in use within a conversation, they can also orient towards several aspects of face.

Bousfield (2008: 169–170) is interested in impoliteness patterns and structures within a conversation. He believes that context and the interlocutors' reactions to impoliteness are a central part of the analysis. Since Bousfield also argues that combinations and repetitions of impoliteness strategies within a conversation are more common than individual, isolated instances of impoliteness (see paragraph above), patterns and context really do make a

difference. Bousfield (2008: 171–173) utilises Levinson’s (1979) and Thomas’ (1995, quoted here from Bousfield 2008) work on activity types, when attempting to define the importance of context further. Thomas gives activity types six attributes, and Bousfield looks at them from the viewpoint of impoliteness research:

- *The Goals of the Participants*. “The goals of the individuals rather than the event” (Bousfield 2008: 172). At times these two can vastly differ, and if one interlocutor is acting based on the goals of the situation and the other is looking at the situation from his or her individual point of view, conflict can arise.
- *Allowable Contributions*. “Some interactions are characterised by social or legal constraints on what participants may say” (Bousfield 2008: 172, quoting Thomas 1995: 190). This means that the register and choice of words are important, and when looking at impoliteness, that might be restrained due to this. The allowable contributions are quite central for my study, as the political debate context dictates how a disagreement can be voiced.
- *The degree to which Gricean maxims are adhered to or are suspended*. Bousfield (2008: 172) points out that in some of the contexts from their data, such as the examples from the army, the Gricean maxims are frequently violated but that in everyday conversations adhering to the maxims is more of a norm.
- *The degree to which the interpersonal maxims are adhered to or are suspended*. Bousfield states that “while some activity types would presume the interpersonal maxims will be broken, for effect, some which *can* result in impoliteness, do not presume this (rather they anticipate it may be a possibility)” (2008: 173, original

emphasis). Interpersonal maxims here refer to Leech's (1983) work, especially the politeness principle.

- *Turn taking and topic control.* On the whole, this is an important area for impoliteness. It is also strongly linked to the allowable contributions attribute, as the interactants' "social and discursal roles in the situation at hand significantly affect the way in which turn taking and topic control can be exploited" (Bousfield 2008: 173). I shall elaborate on this shortly.
- *The manipulation of pragmatic parameters.* Pragmatic parameters are, for example, "the social distance; their [the interlocutors'] powers, rights, obligations, the size of the face threat, how the face threat is delivered or managed," and so on (ibid). The interlocutors' roles within the conversation dictate how much room there is to manipulate the parameters.

Other important factors that influence the context are the interlocutors' *background knowledge* which helps them to interpret the messages from the speaker, and *the dynamic potential* of the context, meaning paying attention to if and how the context changes during the conversation (Bousfield 2008: 180–181).

2.4.3. Turn-taking (who has the floor?)

A normal conversation entails certain, rules of conduct, such as people speaking one at a time and that there are changes in who speaks (Silverman 1998, quoted here from Bousfield 2008: 225, see also Sacks 1992 and Sacks *et al.* 1974). Speaking rights, participant powers and

interactant's obligations in the conversation are important. Simultaneous talk is not uncommon, but giving room to other people to speak is an expectation of orderly communication, where the participants can actually hear what the other person is saying. Thus, manipulating turn-taking and controlling the floor can be effective means of conveying impoliteness.

Mey (2001, quoted here from Bousfield 2008: 228) defines the "floor" as "the right to speak" and "turn" as "the utterance made by the speaker once one person has relinquished the floor and the speaker takes it". Bousfield (2008: 228, paraphrasing Edelsky 1981) argues that a turn can be taken without having the floor, and he adds to Edelsky's view that it is also possible to take a turn without taking the floor, by staying silent or choosing not to respond. Additionally, especially if the nature of the talk is competitive (such as in the election debates), there may be instances where one interlocutor tries to take a turn, but the floor has been denied from him or her. Bousfield (2008: 229–230) views this kind of speaking "out of turn" as a vehicle of impoliteness. In a situation where the turns and the floor are fought over, equal power relations are essential. Speaking out of turn cannot happen when one of the interlocutors is in a subordinate position. Some important aspects of the turn-taking process include interruptions and challenging of the other interlocutor (Bousfield, 2008: 233–253).

2.5. The political context

Harris (2001) points out that most of the research done on politeness and impoliteness focuses on informal contexts. This is true in, for example, the research of Culpeper (for example

1996, 2003) and Bousfield (2003, 2008), whose data come mostly from reality TV depicting the life of army recruits, chefs or traffic wardens. The emphasis is on the “linguistic behaviour of speakers as individual agents” (Harris 2001: 452). Im/politeness is much less frequently studied in more formal contexts which are outside ordinary conversations. As one explanation for this, Harris introduces the view of Lakoff (1989, quoted here from Harris 2001), who sees politeness as something that is first and foremost relevant in defining relationships. Exchanging information is secondary, if necessary at all.

Harris (2001: 453–455) proposes that an institutionalised setting such as a classroom, a court or a venue of debate forms a specific *community of practice*, which gives the use of language in each of these settings a context. Every community of practice has its own set of rules, which determine what kind of behaviour is acceptable within that community. Thus, each community of practice also defines what is considered polite or impolite within that context, even if that definition conflicts with the norms of informal conversations:

“Judging what is polite against a set of expectations within a specific community of practice thus has distinct advantages, as has been claimed, though these expectations cannot be divorced from the wider social and political world of which they are a part and which informs them. “

Harris (2001: 454)

Similarly, Locher and Watts (2005, paraphrased in Locher and Watts 2008: 78) state that

“[w]hether interactants perceive or intend a message to be polite, impolite or merely appropriate (among many other labels) depends on *judgements* that they make at the level of relational work *in situ*, i.e. during and ongoing interaction in a particular setting. These judgements are made on the basis of norms and expectations that individuals have constructed and acquired through categorising the experiences of similar past situations, or conclusions that one draws from other people’s experiences.”

For example, Harris' (2001) data comes from the Prime Minister's Question Time, which has very specific rules of conduct that differ from everyday conversation but also from ordinary debates. There are rules governing, for instance, how the MPs address each other, how arguments are presented and how turn taking works within the debate (for more detailed description, see, for instance, Chilton 2004). These regulations have a long history and have been formed over time (Harris 2001: 454–455). Bousfield (2008: 174) discusses similar concepts (though not specifically related to political speech) when he speaks of social roles, which “imply power, rights and obligations of the participants” and discourse roles that define the “relationship between the participants and the message”. In addition, Archer (2010), who has studied lawyers' speech in cross-examinations, argues that in that particular context impolite speech falls somewhere between Goffman's (1967) intentional and incidental levels, as a *strategically ambivalent* face threat.

In comparison to this, the Leaders' Debates I have used as my data show both similarities and differences. There are quite a few rules concerning the general organisation of the debates (Mair 2010), but the general nature of the debates is not as formal as in Question Time.

Harris (2001: 456-469) argues that there are three ways the speech of the Prime Minister's Question Time is significant for the politeness theory. Firstly,

“(t)hat much of the discourse of Prime Minister's Question Time is composed of intentional and explicitly face-threatening (or face-enhancing) acts and that these can be analysed in terms of both propositional (e.g. hostile/supportive propositions/presuppositions which preface or are built into questions and responses to questions) and the interactional (e.g. modes of address, turn-taking 'rules', non-verbal and paralinguistic behaviour) levels.

Harris (2001: 456)

For my research, this is a very interesting context. The debaters can and are expected to be face-threatening, but there are still certain norms they have to adhere to. To utilise Culpeper *et al.*'s example above, the expression "You have shit for brains!" would not be appropriate during Question Time, no matter how much in the wrong the debater on the opposite side is perceived to be. The interlocutors need to be able to find other ways to deliver the message in a more fitting register, which may still be openly hostile and impolite.

According to Harris (2001: 458-459), strategies that MPs use for impoliteness centre on questioning the authority of the opponent, often by using implicatures or presuppositions. For example, in "[w]ill the Prime Minister promise straightforwardness and honesty in future health announcements" (example (j), p. 459), the MP implies that past announcements are have not been straightforward and honest. Additionally, lexical choices can prove to be very significant. Since the MPs are not allowed to directly accuse each other of lying, the speakers will have to find other ways of expressing their suspicion, such as: "No one any longer believes the Prime Minister's **fiction** about the Government's figures, let alone the **fiction** about the Opposition's figures..." (Example (k), p. 459, added emphasis).

Secondly,

"(t)hat negative politeness features co-exist, often in the immediate discourse context and sometimes in the same utterance, with the performance of intentional threats to the hearer's positive face and that these can only be understood and interpreted in relationship to the institution of Parliament and the wider political context, including the televising of Parliamentary debates."

Harris (2001: 462-463)

Harris (2001: 463) makes a very important point regarding impoliteness in a more institutionalised context. Just because the language needs to be formal in a formal setting, it does not mean the interlocutors cannot or will not be intentionally impolite. The formality of the situation forces upon certain strategies that aim to avoid impoliteness, but they seem to co-exist with the acts that are clearly intended as impolite. For example:

S: Mr William Hague

L of O: Madam Speaker – we have got used to the Prime Minister dodging questions at these sessions – but we have not been used to it's becoming more pathetic as the questions go on – the fact is that he went to Amsterdam – signed away this country's legal rights by accident and came back with a letter saying "Don't worry about it" – that is not very good for a lawyer – is it – after all this – is it not obvious that assurances that he offered to businesses about European regulation before the election are like the assurances he gave to students and to people with pension funds – absolutely worthless.

Harris (2001: 463)

The Leader of Opposition follows here the restrictions issued by the general rules for the Question Time debate:

Members of the House are not referred to by name except when they are called upon by the Speaker to ask a question, and MPs normally preface their questions (and the Prime Minister his responses) with an explicit address token to the Speaker of the House. [...] This practice again would usually be regarded as marking a high degree of deference and depersonalization,

associated primarily with formal contexts and identified as a feature of negative politeness which usually both distances interactants and denotes mutual respect

Harris (2001: 464)

Harris (2001: 464) states that this formality aims to ensure a certain formality in the debates. The enforced negative politeness behaviour thus eliminates the possibility of use of some impoliteness strategies. Still, simultaneously with the obligatory negative politeness the MPs manage to intentionally threaten the positive face. For example, in the exchange above, Harris argues that the Leader of the Opposition creates these damaging propositions:

- that the Prime minister refuses to answer questions (accusation)
- that his failure to answer questions is ever more evident (contempt)
- that he has signed away the country's legal rights (criticism)
- that he is not a good lawyer (ridicule)
- that his assurances are not valid ones (challenge)

In addition, Harris highlights some of the lexical choices of the Leader of Opposition. By using words and terms such as 'dodging questions', 'pathetic', and 'absolutely worthless' the speaker can intensify the offending message without breaking the rules of the debate.

Finally,

[t]hat systematic impoliteness is not only sanctioned in Prime Minister's Question Time but it is also rewarded in accordance with the expectations of Members of the (and the overhearing audience) by and adversarial and confrontational political progress. *Hence, even the most serious face-threatening acts rarely, if ever, occasion a break-down in interpersonal relationships nor are they intended to.*

Harris (2001: 466, added emphasis)

Here we can see an essential difference in impoliteness between informal and formal contexts. Harris explains (2001: 467) that in the political debate impoliteness is more ritualistic, and thus less offensive. In question time, there seems to be a certain theatricality to them, which steps into the field of ritual insults, a sign of solidarity. The argument focuses on the issues, not the people.

Still, an interesting question is how much of this is accurate, specifically for Question Time. Harris (2001: 467) points out that in this particular context humour and wit are more effective ways for the challenger to question the Prime Minister than aggressive rudeness. But is this the case in all formal contexts? And how offensive can one be in a debate before the matter becomes personal?

Locher and Watts (2008: 85) discuss impoliteness in another formal context, a political interview. They argue that impoliteness in such a context is “intimately tied to issues of power and the exercise of power in the interview situation.” This is an important aspect of a debate, and surely prevalent in my data as well, but as it would open the research to another rather extensive direction, I will not discuss the question of power relations in my study.

Garcia-Pastor (2008) is one of the few researchers to have studied impoliteness from this specific context. She introduces several studies that do have politeness aspect as a part of their

study, but argues that “politeness studies of political discourse in general, and electoral debates in particular, are still scarce.” She, too, explains that the link between the use of power and im/politeness research is central. In her study, Garcia-Pastor focuses on “those interventions in which politicians principally address one another, since they best exemplify the combative dimension of these encounters.” This seems like a sound strategy for my thesis study as well.

Garcia-Pastor (2008) studied “sixteen debates of the 2000 U.S. elections corresponding to a total of twenty hours of ongoing talk”, and placed the impolite instances within the face aggravating impoliteness strategies. She comes to the conclusion that

[p]oliticians discredit the opponent, and coerce him/her into a specific course of action in their interchanges. This gives place to a discursive struggle which 1) evinces the interrelation between impoliteness and power in debates, and 2) underscores the relational, dynamic and contestable features of these concepts. Such struggle illustrates the attack-defence or defence-attack dynamics characteristic of these contexts, too.

Garcia-Pastor (2008: 121)

It will be interesting to see how central the relationship between power and impoliteness will be in my study. Since power relations are such an extensive concept, I have chosen not to include them in any great detail in this thesis, but should I ever continue with this research beyond this study, this is something that most likely should be looked into.

This has been an overview of impoliteness studies on a rather general level. In the following chapters I will first look at the data I am going to apply these theories to, and then see how my findings from the data will fit into the framework of impoliteness strategies.

3. Methodology

In the previous chapter I presented the aspects of impoliteness theory relevant to this study. The focus was on the work of Culpeper (1996, 2003 as Culpeper *et al.*, 2010), and Bousfield (2008), and I also briefly looked into the field of political speech from the viewpoint of impoliteness. This chapter includes an introduction of the aims and methods of the study and presents the data.

The aim of this study is to find out what kinds of impoliteness strategies are prevalent in the formal context of a political debate. I hypothesise that certain strategies, such as ‘use taboo words’ or ‘call the other one names’, are unlikely to emerge, whereas strategies such as ‘condescend, scorn or ridicule’ and ‘hinder / block’ will be used more frequently. I aim to find out which strategies are recurring, and if the three debaters use similar or different strategies when attempting to persuade the audience to vote for them in the upcoming elections. I will also attempt to determine what kind of impoliteness is possible in a formal context.

Culpeper defined the first set of impoliteness strategies in 1996. He defines five super-strategies, and additional output strategies to two of the super-strategies.

The super-strategies and output strategies are (they were introduced in greater detail in Ch 2):

1. Bald on record impoliteness
2. Positive impoliteness

This entails the following output strategies:

- 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: select a sensitive topic.
- Make the other feel uncomfortable
- Use taboo words
- Call the other names

3. Negative impoliteness

This entails the following output strategies:

- Frighten
- Condescend, scorn or ridicule
- Invade the other's space, literally or metaphorically
- Explicitly associate with a negative aspect and personalise
- Put the other's indebtedness on record

4. Sarcasm or mock impoliteness

5. Withhold politeness.

Bousfield (2008) has extended the output strategies to entail the following:

- Avoid agreement (as an addendum to *seek disagreement*)
- Threaten (to be combined with and support the strategy *frighten*)
- Criticise
- Hinder/block, physically or communicatively

- Enforce role shift
- Challenge

In my study, I expect to find mostly instances of the super-strategies of positive and negative impoliteness and, more specifically, of their output strategies. They are the most detailed and the most relevant to communication in a formal setting. I do not expect to find instances of the other three super-strategies, though I will mention any occurrences should they arise from the data.

My primary data is the transcripts of all three TV debates, provided by the BBC News (see bibliography for the link). Videos of the debates can also be found in the C-SPAN video archive (see bibliography for the links). The ability to follow the debates both from the transcripts and the videos will be useful when looking into interruptions and to the tones of voices when searching for instances of sarcasm. Since I will be using ready-made transcriptions of the debate as my preliminary data, having access to the videos also enables me to ensure that there are not significant parts missing or poorly transcribed. I will have to slightly modify the transcriptions to include all the interruptions, as the transcriptions were not originally intended as a source for a linguistic study.

The debates took place on three consecutive Thursdays; April 15, April 22 and April 29 in 2010. Each debate was 90 minutes long. The participants in each debate were Labour leader and Prime Minister at the time Gordon Brown (henceforth GB), Conservative leader David Cameron (henceforth DC) and Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg (henceforth NC). The first

debate was produced by ITV and it was hosted by Alistair Stewart, the second one was produced by Sky and hosted by Adam Boulton, and the third one was produced by the BBC and hosted by David Dimbleby. In each debate, the first half was themed (domestic affairs for the first debate, foreign affairs for the second, and economy for the third), and the second half consisted of general debate with questions from the audience.

In my research I will proceed to examine the data from the viewpoint of each of the output strategies individually, and mark all instances of said strategy. After looking for all the strategies in the data, I will compare the frequencies of the different strategies in order to find those with the highest frequency of occurrence. After isolating the instances of impoliteness, I will divide them by debater, to see if the three debaters favour similar or different impoliteness strategies. I am hoping to find statistically significant differences between the three debaters' impoliteness strategy usages. These elements will hopefully illustrate how impoliteness occurs in a formal, restricted context. I will introduce and discuss my results in the next chapter.

4. Results and discussion

In this section I will present and discuss my results. I will first look at the different strategies in general, talk about if and how the debaters differ in using them, and give some examples of the usage of the strategies in the data. Then, I will focus on each of the debaters separately, and discuss their individual debate styles. Finally, I will discuss other aspects of impoliteness, presented in Chapter 2, to explain if and how they were prevalent in the data.

4.1. The use of impoliteness strategies in the data

In my methodology section I stated that I will look for the occurrences of impoliteness strategies in the three leaders' debates held before the general election in the UK in 2010. I started by marking all the instances of impoliteness found in the data, and then compared them to the impoliteness strategies defined in Culpeper's (1996, 2003) and Bousfield's (2008) studies.

The categories I looked for are:

1. Ignore / snub the other
2. Exclude the other from an activity
3. Disassociate from the other
4. Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic
5. Use inappropriate identity markers
6. Use obscure or secretive language
7. Seek disagreement or avoid agreement
8. Make the other feel uncomfortable
9. Use taboo words

10. Call the other names
11. Frighten, threaten
12. Condescend, scorn, ridicule
13. Invade the other's space
14. Explicitly associate with a negative aspect and personalise
15. Put the other's indebtedness on record
16. Criticise
17. Hinder / block
18. Enforce role shift
19. Challenge
20. Use sarcasm

Out of these twenty options, I found instances of 7 categories:

1. Disassociate from the other
2. Seek disagreement or avoid agreement
3. Condescend, scorn, ridicule, use sarcasm¹
4. Explicitly associate with a negative aspect and personalise
5. Criticise
6. Hinder / block
7. Challenge

In addition, there were a couple of instances that did not fit into any of the categories, and were thus labelled

8. Miscellaneous

¹ The use of sarcasm is a separate category in Culpeper's and Bousfield's works, but in my data only three instances of it emerged, and since they all also could be interpreted as a part of the 'condescend, scorn, ridicule' - category, I have included sarcasm as a part of this group. Sarcasm may be more clearly a separate category in a different context, but here the coupling was natural. I will discuss and exemplify this further as I discuss this category.

Of the 20 possible categories, some were automatically ruled out due to the more formal context of the debate, in comparison to, for example, the data that Bousfield (2008) uses, which is collected from reality television. Because the register of language in political speech tends to be formal, strategies such as ‘use taboo words’ and ‘frighten / threaten’ are highly unlikely to emerge. Similarly, as the debaters are there to challenge each other, categories such as ‘exclude the other from an activity’ or ‘use obscure or secretive language’ were also improbable. However, categories such as ‘ignore or snub the other’ and ‘put the other’s indebtedness on record’, or even ‘use inappropriate identity markers’, if the debate is heated enough, are plausible options, just not manifested in this data.

The 8 strategies that were exhibited in the data were distributed as follows:

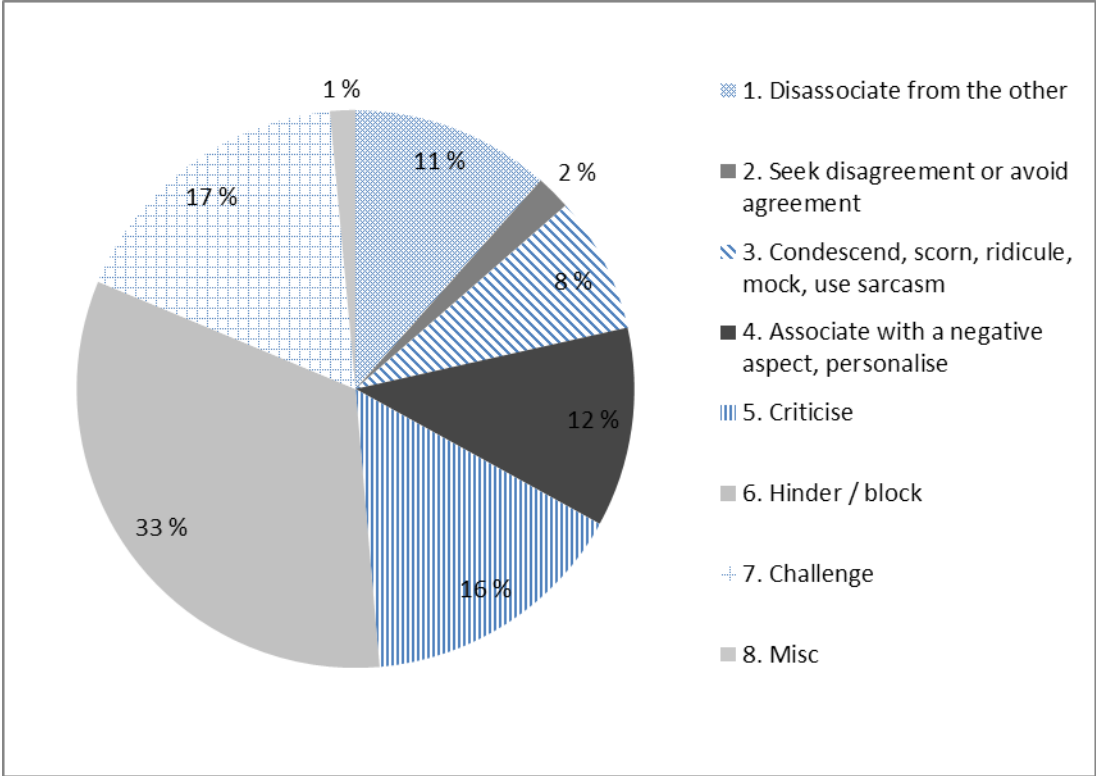


Figure 1 The distribution of the total use of impoliteness strategies normalised per 1000 words. For the detailed figures, see Appendix 1.

We can see here that most of the strategies, save the second one, ‘seek disagreement or avoid agreement’, and, as already mentioned, there were only a few instances of impoliteness that fell into the ‘miscellaneous’ -category, were quite equally frequently used. The strategy ‘hinder / block’ was clearly the most frequently used one with 33% of the instances. ‘Challenge’ and ‘criticise’ were almost equally frequently used, 17% and 16% of the time, respectively, and ‘associate with a negative aspect, personalise’, ‘disassociate from the other’ and ‘condescend, scorn, ridicule, use sarcasm’ are at a quite similar frequencies, at 12%, 11% and 8% percent, respectively.

However, when each debater’s strategy usage is studied individually, it becomes apparent that the three leaders use impoliteness strategies differently:

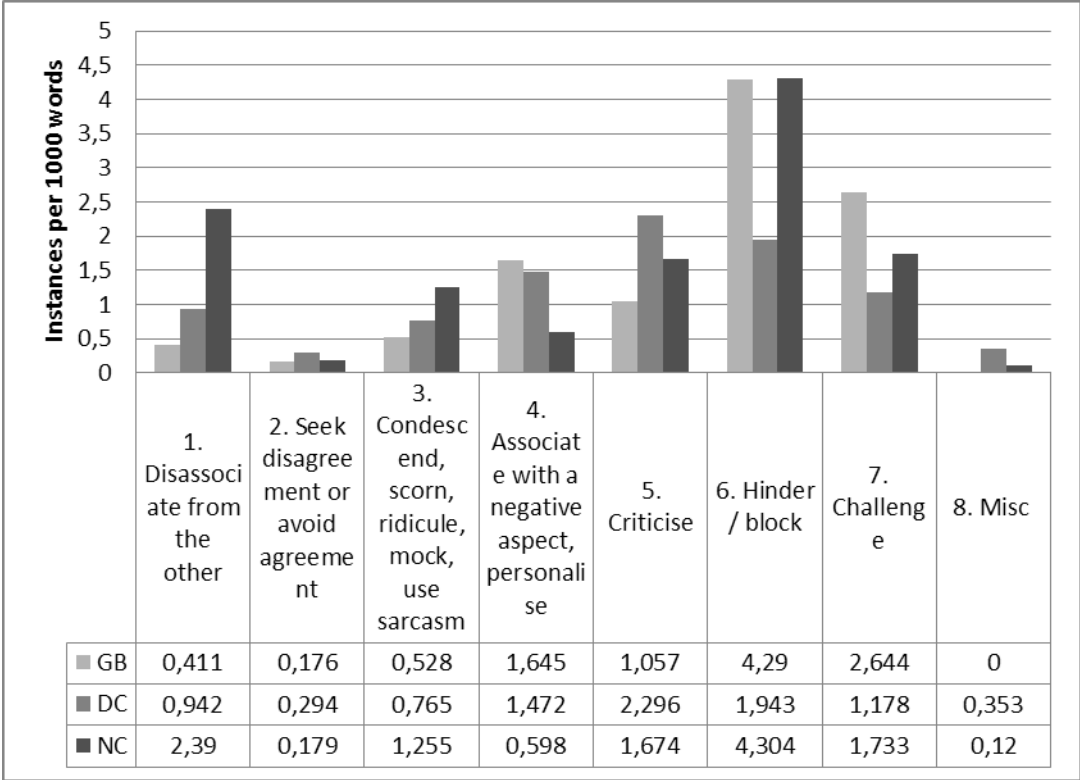


Figure 2 Number of occurrences per feature per speaker, normalised per 1000 words. For the detailed figures, see Appendix 1

The differences in the usage of strategies between the debaters are statistically very highly significant ($\chi^2 = 79.16$, $df=14$, $p<0.001$)². I will discuss each variable individually below.

4.1.1. Disassociate from the other

Culpeper's (1996: 357) examples of this category are both verbal; denying association or common ground with the other, and physical; such as avoiding sitting together. Naturally, in this data's context, the focus is on the verbal aspect. Here are some examples of the manifestation of the variable:

[1] GB: Nobody earning below £20,000 will pay the national insurance rise. The reason for the national insurance rise is to ensure our health services, our police and our education, and David can't guarantee funding for police and education that will match what we are doing. That's the reason for the national insurance rise. But nobody below £20,000 will pay it. **Six million people in this country receive tax credits, and the Conservatives and Liberals have a plan to reduce tax credits for middle-class families.** I come back to this central question about fairness in the tax system. If David wants fairness in the tax system, why does he support this inheritance tax cut for only 3,000 families, worth £200,000 each? The biggest beneficiary of the Conservative manifesto is, as always, the richest estates in the country, and not the ordinary, hard-working people of this country. If the Liberals want to cut child tax credits with the Conservatives, then I can say one thing - I will never form an alliance with a Conservative government that cuts child tax credits.

(Debate 3, p. 6)

[2] DC: Just one point on the European issue. There is a bit of a con going on here as well. The Lisbon Treaty has just about seven words on climate change. You don't need another treaty for politicians to get together in different countries, you need political will, you need action. That is what is required. **Instead, what we keep getting from the other two parties is more institutions, more regulation, more new agreements.** That's not what's required. It's action at the European level and that requires political will.

(Debate 2, p. 11)

² Unless otherwise stated, all statistical analysis refers to Chi2 Analysis, all but the first one are calculated with Yates' Correction for one-way design, where $p<0.05$ is significant, $p<0.01$ is very significant, and $p<0.001$ is very highly significant.

[3] NC: Maybe I should explain, **rather than having David Cameron and Gordon Brown, very much in the style of old politics, making misleading claims.** I think there is a problem. **It's a problem I didn't create, you didn't create, they created. It was Conservative and Labour Governments that created chaos in your immigration system so that lots of people came here illegally.** Now, they're here, OK, it's a problem. They're here, whether we like it or not. So I think we have to deal with it. I'm saying that for those who've been here for a decade, who speak English, who want to play by the rules, who want to pay taxes, who want to come out of the shadows, do community service to make up for what they've wrong, it's better to get them out of the hands of the criminals, so we can go after the criminals, and in the hands of the taxman. You can pretend as much as you like, David Cameron and Gordon Brown, that somehow you can deport people when you don't even know where they are. I'm coming up with a proposal. It might be controversial, but it's dealing with the way the world is. Get real. This is a problem you created. We now need to sort it on a one-off basis. It's a one-off problem which needs a solution.

(Debate 3, p. 15)

Considering that these debates had the aim of winning over undecided voters, it is not surprising that the strategy to differentiate from the other two parties is prevalent. However, the statistical analysis shows that there are highly significant differences between the usage of this strategy between the debaters ($\chi^2 = 27.71$, $df=2$, $p<0.01$). Out of the three debaters, NC uses the strategy most frequently, he uses this variable very highly significantly more than GB ($\chi^2 = 23.17$, $df=1$, $p<0.001$) and highly significantly more than DC ($\chi^2 = 10.29$, $df=1$, $p<0.01$). The difference in usage between GB and DC is not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 3.52$, $df=1$, $p>0.05$).

Thus, we can draw the conclusion that NC uses this strategy the most. One reason for this is probably the political party he represents. The Liberal Democrats are the third largest party in Britain, and while they have quite a lot of power, it is still clear that they are somewhat the weaker party. NC's strategy throughout the debates is to not only differentiate from "the old

parties”, as he said in example [3], but also to make it clear that they have a new, different approach and ideas.

While NC focuses on trying to convince the audience that his party is different from “the old parties”, DC and GB also spend time making sure to highlight that they are different from the biggest competitor. At times the Liberal Democrats are not mentioned at all, but all the focus is on how poorly the Labour or the Conservatives have managed the country. For example:

[4] GB: Creativity, discipline, standards in schools, but we can't evade this question: if we're going to have the best education for our children, we do need the teachers and the teaching assistants. If you cut money out of the education budget now, you'll be cutting the numbers of teachers and teaching assistants. **We say it's so important for our country that while we cut the deficit, we will maintain our investment in education per pupil. Now, the Conservatives cannot say this, and I think we need an answer this evening.** Again, it's the risk, the risk to our health service, the risk in crime if you have less police. Now it's the risk to education.

(Debate 1, p. 17)

‘Disassociate from the other’ proved to be an important impoliteness strategy in this context. It is a very clear way of conveying the differences between the debater’s party and the competition, which is naturally very important in a political debate.

4.1.2. Seek disagreement or avoid agreement

In Culpeper’s (1996: 357) view this strategy takes place when an interlocutor chooses a sensitive topic. His definition of the strategy is solely ‘seek disagreement’. Bousfield (2008: 108–109) defines the strategy further, adding the ‘avoid agreement’. In a way, the entire context of the electoral debates can be seen as an attempt to seek disagreement and avoid

agreement. The whole purpose of the debates is to help the undecided to choose for whom to vote. This attitude can even be seen in the debates; on a couple of occasions the moderator moves on to a more controversial topic if the debaters seem to agree too much. For instance:

[5] Adam Boulton: OK, thank you. **Given the degree of agreement, we're going to move on now and take some more questions.** That brings to an end the international affairs part of this debate, although we may well come back to it in subsequent questions, and in a moment we're going to move on to the open section. [...]

(Debate 2, p. 13)

While the entire debates fit into this category, actual instances of 'seek disagreement / avoid agreement' were quite few, only 0.22 instances per 1000 words. There was not enough data to evaluate the statistical significance of differences between the debaters with this variable. However, it is interesting to look into the couple of instances where this strategy does occur.

For example:

[6] DC: The point is that today, actually, the number of nurses is going up - the number of managers is going up five times faster than the number of nurses in our NHS. The government has had 13 years to fix these problems, and it hasn't done. **Gordon Brown talks about cancer, but what he's not telling you is that there are people in our country, there was a case the other day of someone who had to sell their home to get the cancer drugs.** And the Prime Minister, the government, is about to hit the NHS, Britain's biggest employer, with this National Insurance rise. It's going to take £200 million out of our National Health Service. We say stop that National Insurance rise, and instead spend the money on a cancer drugs fund, so people can get the drugs they need. Talk about guarantees, but the fact is for some people, waiting two weeks to see a consultant is too long. We need a faster, choice-driven system, but the drugs have got to be there when you need them. They're not always right now.

(Debate 1, p. 27)

This is a very typical example of how this strategy occurs in this data. The debater is not willing to accept what the other person has previously said about the topic and move on to the next one, but he is aiming at prolonging the discussion of that particular topic and pointing out elements of it that are not flattering to the opponent. The strategy appeared in contexts

where the debater was responding to something his opponent had already said, and thus it could be seen to follow Bousfield's addition, 'avoid agreement'.

4.1.3. Condescend, scorn, ridicule, and use sarcasm.

Culpeper (1996: 385) and Culpeper *et al.* (2003) remark that the use of this impoliteness strategy being contemptuous and emphasising one's relative power. Bousfield (2008: 114) also remarks that the use of this strategy "can be powerfully impolite". It is true that in this data, too, some of the remarks from this category would be easily categorised as impoliteness, also from the viewpoint of 1st degree impoliteness. The general atmosphere of the debates, however, despite being competitive, is relatively relaxed, and since the competition and criticism is aimed at ideas more than people, even the more personal attacks lose their hardest edge. Some examples include:

[7] GB: That's why there are 20,000 more people in prison as a result of the tougher sentences we've been passing. But you've got to answer this question: we will continue to match the funding of the police as of now. You are saying you're going to cut it. **Now, be honest with the public, because you can't airbrush your policies, even though you can airbrush your posters.**

(Debate 1, p. 10)

[8] DC: **Labour seem to confuse the economy with the government.** What we're saying is, save government waste to put money back in people's pockets. That's what - if you think about this, saving one out of every £100, that is something every small business, every large business, many families have had to do in this country, and government should do the same. **Gordon's argument, in a way, is "Let me go on wasting your money, so I can put up your taxes next year"**, and it's taxes on people earning £20,000, £21,000. These are not rich people. They shouldn't be paying for the mistakes of the bankers and for the dreadful record of Gordon's government.

(Debate 3, p. 5)

[9] NC: **I have to say, David Cameron has the most creative justification I've ever heard for giving tax breaks to double millionaires.** But, anyway, there you go. Look, I think Adina's point is that taxes are unfair on millions of people on ordinary incomes, not the double millionaires that David Cameron wants to help. Millions of ordinary people are simply struggling to pay the fuel bills, to pay the petrol prices, to pay the weekly shopping bills. What I'm... I'm totally with you on this, Adina. I think it's just wrong, let's say you are a teaching assistant on £10,000 a year. At the moment, you will pay, maybe you work three days a week. You will pay about £1,000 of that in tax and national insurance. Under our plan, by lifting the income tax threshold to £10,000, you won't pay any income tax on that first £10,000. I believe that if people work hard, particularly if they want to get off benefits and start working, even if it's just part-time, we should help them keep more of their money. It is as simple as that. That is the fair thing to do.

(Debate 3, p. 6)

The difference in usage between the three debaters was not statistically significant for this variable ($\chi^2=5.21$, $df=2$, $p>0.05$). In person-to-person comparisons, NC used this variable significantly more than GB ($\chi^2=4.8$, $df=1$, $p<0.05$). There was not a statistically significant difference between GB and DC ($\chi^2=0.73$, $df=1$, $p>0.05$) or DC and NC ($\chi^2=1.88$, $df=1$, $p>0.05$). The differences between the frequencies of usage of this variable may be explained by individual debating and expressive styles.

As I already mentioned, I combined the strategy 'use sarcasm' to the same group with 'condescend, scorn, ridicule'. This was for two reasons. Firstly, there were only three instances that would have been clearly categorised as sarcasm in the data, which is not sufficient basis for any kind of conclusions. Secondly, many of the instances in 'condescend, scorn, ridicule' are expressed in a sarcastic manner, thus the groups meld in together rather smoothly. For example:

[10] GB: At Reading Prison, we've been working at this young offenders' institution with companies, and where people are in this institution, they've been trained for jobs that they can get if they don't reoffend and they go out and actually do a decent job. Now, there's been a 75% success in this project, so you can bring the reoffending rate down. But I do come back to this central problem that we face - **I'm grateful, by the way, David, for you putting up these posters about me and about crime and about everything else. You know, there's no newspaper editor done**

as much for me in the last two years, because my face is smiling on these posters, and I'm very grateful to you and Lord Ashcroft for funding that.

(Debate 1, p. 9)

4.1.4. Explicitly associate with a negative aspect and personalise

Culpeper (1996: 358) elaborates this category by 'use the pronouns 'I' and 'you''. In my data, I expanded the notion a little. In this context, the party leader and his party are oftentimes treated as one; the debater represents his entire political party. Thus, the personalisation can be seen as drawing attention to the negative aspects of both the party leader and the party. For instance:

[11] GB: I accept it's been tough in these last two years with the recession, but what we've tried to do, when people are in difficulty, is provide tax credits. A half million people have got tax credits when they've been on short time and are trying to get through this recession. We've brought down the basic rate of tax from 23 pence when we came in to 20 pence. At the same time, we've raised the top rate of tax above £150,000 to 50 pence so that that's fair to ordinary, hard-working families. I believe in fairness, but one thing I don't believe in is the Conservative policy which would cut child tax credits, but at the same time give an inheritance tax cut to the 3,000 richest people in the country of £200,000. **That's not fairness, that's the same old Conservative Party, tax cuts for the very rich, and cutting child tax credits of the very poor. It's simply not fair.**

(Debate 3, p. 5)

[12] DC: People can remember the record of 13 years, they remember who it was who abolished the 10p tax that hit some of the poorest people in the country the hardest. **They remember the measly 75p increase on pensioners that Gordon Brown was responsible for.** And let me say this, the whole reason we're having this debate about how difficult it is to get taxes down, how difficult it's going to be to cut spending, is **because this Prime Minister and this Government have left our economy in such a complete mess with a budget deficit that, this year, is forecast to be bigger than that of Greece.** That's why we're having to have this debate. Let's not forget whose responsibility it is.

(Debate 3, p. 8)

[13] NC: Firstly, Mary, you need to be given the power to sack any politician who's proved to be corrupt. It's something I advocated in the past, it's something I put forward in Westminster, both David Cameron and Gordon Brown's party didn't support that. They now say, which is good, say they do welcome that. You're the boss, you're the boss. The other thing of course we need to do is clean up all the murky business of party funding. We've all had problems with party funding. Again, there was a deal, there was a deal on the table, we supported it, to clean up party funding. Yet again, the old parties said no. **Gordon Brown wanted to protect his trade union pay masters, David Cameron wanted to protect his paymaster in Belize.** I think we all agree on the rhetoric of cleaning up politics, but we actually have to act. I'd say one final thing: one of the reasons why your friends and your neighbours are perhaps right in saying they feel ignored is because **we have this very odd electoral system which allows Gordon Brown the Prime Minister to be in power when only 22% of people voted for his party last time**, many people are being ignored and we need to change that as well.

(Debate 2, p. 14)

Just like 'disassociate with the other', 'explicitly associate with a negative aspect and personalise' seem to be an integral part of a political debate. This impoliteness strategy allows the debater to draw the voters' attention to those details that would persuade the audience not to vote for the competition. The strategy is also effective. Personalising and claiming that one person is solely responsible for the problems in the society may be simplifying, but these kinds of claims are easy to remember.

There was a statistically significant ($\chi^2=8.86$, $df=2$, $p<0.05$) difference in usage with this variable. There was not a statistically significant difference between GB and DC ($\chi^2=0.17$, $df=1$, $p>0.05$), but GB used the variable highly significantly more than NC ($\chi^2=8.53$, $df=1$, $p<0.01$), and DC used the variable significantly more than NC ($\chi^2=6.43$, $df=1$, $p<0.05$). Perhaps because the Labour and Conservative parties have a long history of competing against each other, the mentality is also reflected here and GB and DC used this variable more frequently.

4.1.5. Criticise

Bousfield (2008:126) argues that the impoliteness strategy ‘criticise’ takes place when s dispraises h, “some action or inaction by h, or some entity in which h has invested face.” In this particular context, I would claim that the strategy ‘criticise’ is quite closely related to the previous discussed strategy, ‘explicitly associate with a negative aspect and personalise’, but the difference is that when the previous strategy focused on people, this one has its focal point at actions. Similarly to the previous strategy, this one also allows the debaters to highlight the shortcomings of the competition. For example:

[14] GB: Nick, I'm not really interested in point scoring, I'm interested in doing the right thing. **If we send out a message to people in other parts of the world, you get an amnesty if you come to this country, then you've got a real problem.**

(Debate 2, p. 25)

[15] DC: **A lot of people would ask, though, we've had 13 years of a government that's now only started to talk about addressing this issue.** If you look at the numbers, net migration levels before 1997 were never greater than 77,000 a year. Under your government, they've never been less than 140,000 a year. That's a very big number.

(Debate 1, p. 5)

[16] NC: Was it Adina? Sorry, in this echoey hall, I couldn't hear. Yes, Adina, I think you're absolutely right. Our tax system is grotesquely unfair. **After 13 years of Labour, who would have believed it that you would have now a tax system where a multimillionaire from the City of London, pays a lower rate of tax on their capital gains, that's income to you or me, than their cleaner does on their wages. After 13 years of Labour, we have the bottom 20% of people in this country who pay more in tax as a proportion of their income than the top 20%.** I think we need to change that. David Cameron says you can't afford tax giveaways. No, you can't. What you can do is switch the tax system, make it fair. Make sure that those huge loopholes that only people right at the top, very wealthy people who can afford a football team of lawyers and accountants to get out of paying tax, close those loopholes, give the money back to people so that they pay no income tax on the first £10,000 that you earn. That's £700 back in the pocket of the vast majority of you in this country.

(Debate 3, p. 6)

With this variable there were statistically significant differences between the debaters ($\chi^2=7.79$, $df=2$, $p<0.05$). DC used this variable highly significantly more than GB ($\chi^2=7.74$, $df=1$, $p<0.01$), and significantly more than NC ($\chi^2=1.81$, $df=1$, $p<0.05$). NC used the strategy significantly more than GB ($\chi^2=2.17$, $df=1$, $p<0.05$).

The reason that DC and NC use this impoliteness strategy more than GB might come from power relations. When the debates took place the Labour Party and Gordon Brown were in power. Thus, it is natural for the opposing party leaders to criticise all the things that they feel the sitting prime minister is responsible for. Both DC and NC were keen to point out what had been gone wrong under the Labour government, and especially DC seemed very eager to highlight the problems the Labour Party had not fixed during their 13-year-governance.

4.1.6. Hinder / block

Bousfield (2008: 127) explains that, in an informal context, hindering and blocking can be either physical, for example blocking a passage, or communicative, such as interruptions and denying turns. In my data, the strategy manifests only in the communicative form. The debaters either hold the floor or try to take over the floor. They go both against each other and sometimes against the moderator who tries to hand out turns. For instance:

[17] GB: Back to the question Robert put, that the PCT, the health authority, was finding it very difficult because of the situation at the moment. Take thousands of millions out of the economy now, take £6 billion out of the economy now, and think of the risk to jobs and businesses. I say to the Conservatives, of course we want efficiency savings and of course we want to deal with waste, but we cannot afford to see private investment so small and then public investment cut at this time and lots of jobs put at risk.

Alistair Stewart: **David Cameron.** <overlapping>

GB: **Please tell us you won't do that** <overlapping>

- DC: £6 billion is one out of every £100 the government spends. What small business in this recession, what big business hasn't had to make that sort of decision? Many people are making a much bigger decision. Turn it round the other way and think about it like this. Gordon is effectively saying, "I want to go on wasting money now so I put up your taxes later." **Why should we pay our taxes for government waste? <overlapping>**
- AS: **Gordon Brown! <overlapping>**
- GB: **We've got a responsibility for the overall growth rate of <overlapping>** the economy. We've got to get this economy moving forward. You can't do it with private investment alone. The government has got to play its role. Now, next year, we'll make these bigger savings and of course we're going to pay for health and for education, and for policing by what we do on National Insurance. But this year, don't pull the money out of the economy, don't put good people's jobs and their businesses at risk now.
- AS: **David Cameron!**
- DC: But why do you think it is, I would say, that a hundred of the leading business people in this country, people who run some of the biggest businesses like Corus, like Logica, like Mothercare, why do they say, and they couldn't be more clear, the risk to the economy isn't cutting waste, **the risk to the economy is Labour's proposal of a jobs tax. <overlapping>**
- AS: **Gordon Brown on that specific point. <overlapping>**
- DC: **Why do they say it? <overlapping>**
- GB: **The risk to the economy is this year, <overlapping>** and every country - America, the rest of Europe, including Britain - is saying, we've got to make sure we invest in the economy this year so that we can have the growth we need. Now, pull out the money, and you've proposed it at every point during this recession, pull out the money and you'll have less growth, you'll have less jobs, and you'll have less businesses. That's the fear. We've got to take an overall responsibility for the whole economy.
- NC: All I would say is this argument I think just doesn't address the fundamental issue. There are going to be big things over the next few years, and neither will come clean on this with you, that we simply can't afford to do. Trident, I don't think we can afford it. A tax on banks I think is now unavoidable. Tax credits. We need to look at public sector pensions. **These are big decisions we need to take. <overlapping>**
- AS: **David Cameron? <overlapping>**
- NC: **...I would like us for once to get the politicians together... <overlapping>**
- AS: **Yeah. I've got the agenda, Mr. Clegg. Mr Cameron's response. <overlapping>**
- (Debate 1, p. 21–22)

There seemed to be two reasons for the debaters to use the 'hinder / block' -strategy. Either they wanted to interject questions and challenges or a correction when another debater was talking, or they wanted to hold the floor. The latter type of strategy usage was often conducted against the moderator, as in the latter part of the example above.

The differences in usage with this variable were statistically very highly significant ($\chi^2=17.54$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$). Both GB and NC used this strategy very highly significantly more than DC ($\chi^2=15.09$, $df=1$, $p<0.001$ and $\chi^2=14.48$, $df=1$, $p<0.01$, respectively). There was no statistically significant difference between GB and NC ($\chi^2=0.0069$, $df=1$, $p>0.05$).

The use of the 'hinder / block' impoliteness strategy may be explained as an attempt to gain more power in the situation. The debaters are battling against the time restraints enforced by the moderator, as they wish to get their viewpoint across as efficiently as possible. Some of the usage may also depend on personal debating styles and an inclination to wordiness.

4.1.7. Challenge

Culpeper (2008: 132) defines the impoliteness strategy 'challenge' as "ask h a challenging question, question h's position, stance, beliefs, assumed power, rights, obligations, ethics, etc." He also states that challenges are always in the form of a question. I would challenge this view a little bit, in my data I found instances that were clearly a challenge, but in a form of a statement that is called to be denied or argued. Here are some examples of both kinds of challenges:

[18] GB: David's got it wrong. We're making £15 billion of efficiency savings now. He wants these savings on top of that without putting the money back into the economy. You go to America, look at France, look at Germany, look at the other countries. They're saying, as all the international institutions are saying, don't withdraw the support from the recovery until the recovery is assured. What David would do in an emergency budget in a few weeks' time is, for ideological reasons, take £6 billion out of the economy and put our recovery at risk. **The time to do the deficit reduction is when the recovery is assured, and David, you've just got it wrong economically. It's the same mistake the Conservatives made, the same old Conservative Party of the 1930s, the 1980s, and the 1990s.**

(Debate 3, p. 4)

In this case, to further illustrate the fact that this is not only a criticism but also a challenge,

DC responds immediately:

DC: **It is every business leader. Every leading business leader is saying that we've got it right, and the government going on wasting money is wrong.** Let me tell you where I think we should start: we should start with welfare. Under this government, there are now five million people on out-of-work related benefits. There are people who could work who we'd train and offer work. We should say in our country "If you don't accept work, you can't go on claiming benefits". That's something Labour have left us with, this terrible mess. And the Liberal Democrats have almost nothing to say about welfare, so as we try to get public spending under control, let's start with people who can work, who are offered work, but who don't take it.

Other examples of this strategy:

[19] DC: Let me take on, Robert, this argument directly, the idea that if you cut waste this year, you endanger the recovery. Just this week, we've seen two I think pretty hideous waste stories. The first is that civil servants have been given credit cards funded by the tax-payer to go out and spend that on food, wine and other things, and that's cost £1 billion. The second story was that managers in the National Health Service, many of whom are paid over £250,000, have had a 7% pay rise. **Are we honestly saying that if you didn't have that sort of waste, that sort of excess, that our economy would collapse? I think it's nonsense. It's like saying that giving up smoking is somehow going to be bad for your health.** Giving up waste would be good for our economy, and it would mean that we could stop this tax rise that's coming down the track, that Britain's biggest business leaders all say will cost jobs. Cut the waste, stop the tax. That's the right answer.

(Debate 1, p. 19)

[20] NC: **What are you going to do?**

GB: Net inward migration is coming down as a result of the points system that we introduced. It's come down three years ago, two years ago, and is coming down this year. We are taking the action that is necessary. From the end of this year, people will be counted in and counted out of the country...

NC: **Gordon Brown, what are you going to do?**

GB: It would be more helpful if you would support identity cards for foreign nationals instead of opposing them.

NC: **I'm just asking for a simple, honest answer to a big question, which is that because of the chaos in the system in the past, we have lots of people who are here. Now, if you just ignore it, they will carry on living in the shadow of our economy. You can either deny it, which you're doing because you have no plan to deal with it, neither do you...**

GB: We're removing them.

NC: Or you try and... No, you can't deport 900,000 people. You don't know where they live.

(Debate 2, p. 25)

Example [20] also illustrates that the challenge does not have to limit to one turn of speech, it can also spread through a longer conversation.

The differences in usage in this category were statistically highly significant ($\chi^2=10.23$, $df=2$, $p<0.01$). GB uses the variably highly significantly more than DC ($\chi^2= 9.62$, $df=1$, $p<0.01$), but there are not statistically significant differences between GB and NC ($\chi^2=3.46$, $df=1$, $p>0.05$) or between DC and GB ($\chi^2=1.65$, $df=1$, $p>0.05$). Out of the three debaters, GB thus used the impoliteness strategy the most frequently. He is also very aggressive in his challenges, and often aims them at DC. One reason for this might be the situation GB is in. During the debates, he was the sitting prime minister of Britain, but not in a terribly strong position as the Conservative Party was quite likely to win the election. Perhaps the best way for GB to try to hold on to his position is to challenge his opponents, especially DC, in questions that he knows are difficult to respond to.

4.1.8. Miscellaneous

Finally, there were a few instances of impoliteness that did not really fit into any of the categories existing for impoliteness strategies. There were not enough of them to provide statistical analysis on them, but it might be interesting to take a little look at them nonetheless. These undefined strategies were used the most, though not a lot, by DC, 0.53 times per 1000 words, slightly by NC, 0.12 times per 1000 words, and not at all by GB. It would be

interesting to see if, in a larger data set but in a similar context, it would be possible to find more instances that are comparable.

Interestingly, all of the instances in this category were quite similar. For example:

[21] GB: Nobody earning below £20,000 will pay the national insurance rise. The reason for the national insurance rise is to ensure our health services, our police and our education, and David can't guarantee funding for police and education that will match what we are doing. That's the reason for the national insurance rise. But nobody below £20,000 will pay it. Six million people in this country receive tax credits, and the Conservatives and Liberals have a plan to reduce tax credits for middle-class families. I come back to this central question about fairness in the tax system. If David wants fairness in the tax system, why does he support this inheritance tax cut for only 3,000 families, worth £200,000 each? The biggest beneficiary of the Conservative manifesto is, as always, the richest estates in the country, and not the ordinary, hard-working people of this country. If the Liberals want to cut child tax credits with the Conservatives, then I can say one thing - I will never form an alliance with a Conservative government that cuts child tax credits.

DC: **Well, what you're hearing is very desperate stuff from someone who's in a desperate state.** But you have heard from Labour Gordon Brown that if you earn £20,000 or over, you're considered rich, you're considered a target for the Labour government to go on wasting money this year and to hit you with taxes next year. Let me answer this question directly about inheritance tax. I believe in this country that if you work hard and you save money and you put aside money and you try to pay down your mortgage on a family home, you shouldn't have to sell that or give it to the tax man when you die. You should be able to pass it on to your children. It's the most natural human instinct of all. I'm afraid these other two parties simply don't understand that. Inheritance tax should only be paid by the richest, by the millionaire, it shouldn't be paid by people who've worked hard and done the right thing in their lives. It's not our top priority, our top priority is helping those on the £20,000 that are going to be hit by Gordon's other tax. But should we try to encourage people to work hard and save? I say, yes we should.

(Debate 3, p. 6)

[22] Adam Boulton: Nick Clegg, final word. Anti-American?

NC: **I'd simply say don't let people create scare stories to frighten you into thinking that we can't change Europe.** Of course we can change Europe. I, unlike David Cameron and Gordon Brown, have been in there, have sought changes. We can do it if we leave and don't complain on the side-lines.

These instances almost, but not quite, fit into several categories. They could be seen as a part of the 'criticise' or 'associate with a negative aspect, personalise' strategies, but both of those focus on the attack, and drawing attention to the political shortcomings of the opponent. The

instances in this category serve the purpose of highlighting what the speaker wishes to convey as insignificant argument that should not be taken too seriously. They are a response to the attempted use of those two strategies.

Another possible category for these instances was ‘avoid agreement or seek disagreement’. Again, partially this category is applicable. The debaters will not let the challenge or criticism pass, and wish to lessen its impact, often they will even carry the argument further. But whereas in example [6] DC attempts to carry on discussing a topic that has already been closed and the discussion has moved on, here the emphasis is on undermining the attack from the opponent, and furthering the debate on the particular topic is less central a goal.

‘Call the other names’ was another possibility for a fitting category. The debaters insinuate that the person they are aiming the impoliteness at is desperate when he says the things he has said (example [21]) or a liar (example [22]) who is trying to scare the audience with idle threats. However, the debaters do not explicitly call names, they only insinuate. Directly calling someone a liar, for example, would be too direct and too confrontational for this context, where, despite the heated conversation, the emphasis is ultimately on the ideas rather than the people.

Based on the instances found in this data set, the strategy used here could be defined as ‘belittling’ or ‘undermining’ the opponent. Though Culpeper (1996) mentions ‘belittle the other (e.g. use diminutives)’ as a definition for his ‘condescend, scorn, ridicule’ -category, that can be interpreted as referring to belittling the person, whereas in the examples found in

this data the belittling is aimed at what the opponent is saying, to who he is. The speaker tries to convince the audience that the opponent's previous utterances should not be taken seriously. They served as a response to an impoliteness strategy that was directed at the speaker by another debater. Unfortunately, there were not enough instances to draw definitive conclusion on whether this is a category that should be added to the list of impoliteness strategies compiled by Culpeper (1996) and extended by Bousfield (2008).

4.2. The debaters' differences and similarities, and the audience response to the debates.

As we can see in Figure 2 and in the analysis above, the debaters do not use the strategies in identical ways. To compare the general approach of the debaters, I will now look at the three top strategies from each debater.

GB's most used strategies are 'hinder / block', followed by 'challenge' and 'associate with a negative aspect, personalise'. The most frequently used one speaks about the need to hold the floor and to make sure that his views are heard. The two following ones seem to reflect his power position in the debate; he's holding the political power as the prime minister but knows that the competition is strong, and he tries his best to make sure that the audience is aware of their weaknesses.

DC, in turn, uses the different strategies a bit more evenly, though the evenness mostly comes from the comparison that both GB and NC use the 'hinder / block' -strategy very actively. DC most often chose to use the strategy 'criticise', followed by 'hinder / block', and thirdly

‘associate with a negative aspect, personalise’. Interestingly, these are the same strategies that GB uses, only in a different order. This might tell us that these strategies are very useful in a debate, but the choice can depend on the power relations between the debaters as well as personal preferences.

Finally, NC also uses the strategy ‘hinder / block’ most frequently, followed by ‘disassociate from the other’ and ‘challenge’. The most interesting part of his profile is the very active use of ‘disassociate from the other’ -strategy, which he uses considerably more than the other two. As already discussed above, it most likely comes from the need to stand out as a viable option next to the two conventional choices for votes.

According to Sky News (Chung 2010, Fitzgerald 2010, Richardson 2010), polls published immediately after the debates declared NC the winner of the first debate, DC and NC to tie the second debate, and DC to win the final debate. Thus, it could be argued that the strategies chosen by DC and NC have aided them in presenting their views in such a way that the audience were convinced. Naturally, it is impossible to say based solely on those figures how persuasive the actual debates have been, but since people were polled immediately after the televised debates, it is likely that they have made a difference.

All in all, all of the strategies that manifested in the data are quite natural for this context. Being able to challenge, criticise and highlight the differences of the opponents as well as insisting on discussing the controversial topics are all necessary aspects in the battle for the votes, and holding the floor and mocking the adversary are efficient tools for doing that. It

would be interesting to see if the same categories emerge in other debates, especially if the debate is held in another culture.

4.3. Is impoliteness in a formal context still impoliteness?

In chapter 2 I discussed the theories of Bousfield (2008) and Mooney (2004) on what constitutes impoliteness. According to these researchers, when determining impoliteness elements such as the type of face threat, speaker intention, aggression, and implicational impoliteness need to be taken into consideration. This sub-section will examine these elements in relation to this data.

Bousfield (2008: 72–73) argues that in order for impoliteness to be successful, it must be understood as impoliteness by all the interlocutors. This condition is fulfilled in impoliteness in a formal context. A context such as a political debate does limit what can be said, and thus limits the amount of impoliteness strategies available for the speaker, but conveying impoliteness is still possible. For instance, when DC criticises GB and the Labour government and says,

[23] **Obviously, with the terrible situation we have in our public finances, with the mess left by Gordon and Labour**, where out of every £4 the Government spends, £1 is borrowed, it's not possible to make great big tax giveaway promises.

(Debate 3, p. 5)

There is no question about that being intended and interpreted as impolite.

Another aspect of impoliteness is aggression. Bousfield (2008, discussing Hydén's 1995 theories) talks about two aspects of aggression; verbal and physical. In this data, there are

signs of verbal aggression, to a degree. The debaters do get frustrated, and lose their patience on a few occasions, though they still sustain the formal register. For example:

[24] GB: I do seem to be right. David did not mention free eye tests.

DC **Well let me do it right now. We'll keep them. Let me challenge you. Will you now withdraw the leaflets... Will you withdraw the leaflets that are going around the country saying that the Conservatives would take away things like the free bus pass? You know, you really should be ashamed of doing things like that.**

(Debate 2, p. 19)

This may feel somewhat more subdued in just a written form, but from the video footage it was quite clear that DC was upset and aggressive during this exchange. The second aspect, a threat of physical violence, however was not present. This can be seen as one central difference between informal and formal context impoliteness. In the latter, physical violence is very rare, as it would break the context of social formality.

Culpeper (2010, Ch. 5) also suggests that some instances of impoliteness do not follow the formula he presented in his earlier (1996) article, but that impoliteness can be also be regarded as form-driven, convention-driven or context-driven. As I already mentioned in chapter 2, elements of these can be found from the impoliteness strategies and Bousfield's (2008) work, but I do agree that they are an interesting viewpoint. They offer a more detailed viewpoint on many of the impoliteness strategies, and the convention-driven aspects of impoliteness are especially clearly prevalent in a formal context as well. Additionally, what should be taken into consideration is Harris' (2001) view on the institutionalised settings and a Community of Practice, which helps to define the success of impoliteness. For instance, face threats may be seen differently in formal and informal contexts, as the debaters represent

both themselves and their party in the debates, and thus both themselves as well as the party are attacked.

All in all, based on the findings in this data I would argue that some of the impoliteness strategies and conventions of impolite speech are used in a formal context, and they fit into it quite naturally. The register dominates certain things, such as what kind of strategies can be convincingly used, but there is still room for individual variation, as we can see from the differing ways the three debaters use impoliteness strategies. Conclusions will be presented in the following chapter.

5. Conclusions

This study examined the use of impoliteness strategies in a formal, political context. Impoliteness is traditionally associated with highly informal speech and situations where the interlocutors are not constrained by specific rules of conduct, but this study, drawing inspiration from the works of Harris (2001), and Garcia-Pastor (2008) aimed to discover how well will Culpeper's (1996, Culpeper *et al.* 2003) and Bousfield's (2008) model of impoliteness modify under the constraints of a more formal register of speech.

I set out to look for how individual impoliteness strategies, compiled by Culpeper (1996) in his model of impoliteness, with some additions from Bousfield (2008), manifested in the three leaders' debates held in Britain before the previous General Election in 2010. The data consisted of three 90-minute-debates, where Gordon Brown, David Cameron and Nick Clegg debated the questions posed by members of the audience. Each debate was moderated. I hypothesised that I would not find instances of some of the cruder impoliteness strategies, but that some of the strategies would prove to be well suitable for debates. Additionally, I wanted to see if the debaters choose similar strategies or if their debating techniques differ in this aspect, and if it can be convincingly justified that linguistic impoliteness has a role in a formal context.

The results revealed that from the list of 20 impoliteness strategies, the debaters used seven of them, and additionally there were a few instances of miscellaneous strategies that did not fit into any of the 20 options. The emerging strategies also fulfilled the original hypothesis of the

more informal strategies such as ‘use taboo words’ or ‘call the other one names’ being unlikely to emerge, and the strategies that did occur, such as ‘criticise’ and ‘hinder / block’ fit more comfortably into the formal context. All of the strategies that manifested in the data seemed natural tools for a political debate. There also proved to be statistically significant differences between the ways the debaters used the strategies, suggesting that both the power relations between the debaters as well as personal output styles affect what kind of strategies each debater chooses to apply. The fact that a considerable amount of impoliteness strategies were found from the data, and that they all fit logically into the nature of political debate, support the idea that this side of impoliteness is worth looking into, and that it can be convincingly analysed using the same set of parameters as with the more conventional, informal side of impoliteness. It could even be argued that it is better to use the same set of strategies for both formal and informal contexts of impoliteness, as this allows a possibility for a continuum and a chance to explore how and to what extent the informal and formal sides of impoliteness differ from each other. While this study is not extensive enough to allow absolute generalisations, it helps to validate the purpose of studying impoliteness in a formal context.

The hindrance of this study is the threat of subjectivity. The categorisations of the instances of impoliteness are based on my own evaluation, though I have attempted to study the examples and definitions of Culpeper and Bousfield in great detail in order to follow their classifications. Yet, every researcher is bound to draw slightly different conclusions when categorising the data. I hope that the examples I have provided persuade the reader that the categorisations are appropriate. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis also aims to offer a more detailed view of the data set, and to prove that not only can

instances of impoliteness be found in a more formal register of communication, but that people can use the strategies differently, due to differences in power relations and personal debating styles.

Impoliteness is a very vast field, and there are a lot of approaches available. One element that I would have liked to look into is Bousfield's (2008) idea about the more complex realisation of impoliteness: the combinations of impoliteness strategies and strategies spanning over a longer piece of dialogue. In this study, I only looked at individual strategies and studied impoliteness on a rather simple level, but in the future it would be interesting to see how the debaters combine strategies, and if specific strategies appear together frequently. Another viewpoint is how the impoliteness strategies manifest within the discussion on one topic. Additionally, it would be interesting to find out if a different database or a more varied data would present similar results. Some of the impoliteness strategies that I expected to find in the data were not used, and I would like to know if it is just the case of this data, or if those strategies just do not belong to this range of linguistic impoliteness.

References:

- Archer, Dawn. 2011. "Cross-examining lawyers, facework and the adversarial courtroom." *Journal of Pragmatics* 43.
- Austin, Paddy. 1990. "Politeness revisited – the dark side." In *New Zealand ways of speaking English*, Allen Bell and Janet Holmes (eds). Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.
- Bayraktaroğlu, Arın and Maria Sifianou. 2012. "The iron fist in a velvet glove: How politeness can contribute to impoliteness." *Journal of Politeness Research* 8.
- BBC News, 2010, full transcripts of the debates, website, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/election_2010/the_debates/default.shtm, last accessed 19.12.2013
- Bigi, Sarah and Sara Greco Morasso. 2012. "Keywords, frames and the reconstruction of material starting points in argumentation." *Journal of Pragmatics* 44
- British Election Leaders' Debate (first debate). (n.d.). British Election Leaders Debate. Retrieved January 30, 2014, from <http://www.c-span.org/video/?293014-1/british-election-leaders-debate>
- British Election Party Leaders' Debate (second debate). (n.d.). British Election Party Leaders Debate. Retrieved January 30, 2014, from <http://www.c-span.org/video/?293134-1/british-election-party-leaders-debate>
- British Election Party Leaders' Debate (final debate). (n.d.). British Election Party Leaders Debate. Retrieved January 30, 2014, from <http://www.c-span.org/video/?293242-1/british-election-party-leaders-debate>

- Brown, Penelope and Stephen C. Levinson, [1978] 1987. *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bousfield, Derek. 2008. *Impoliteness in Interaction*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Bousfield, Derek and Miriam Locher (eds.). 2008. *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Chilton, Paul. 2004. *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Chung, A. (2010, April 16). Clegg Up: Lib Dem Leader Wins TV Debate. Sky News. Retrieved April 15, 2014, from <http://news.sky.com/story/773443/clegg-up-lib-dem-leader-wins-tv-debate>
- Culpeper, Jonathan. 1996. "Towards an anatomy of impoliteness." *Journal of Pragmatics* 25
- Culpeper, Jonathan. 2005. "Impoliteness and *the Weakest Link*." *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1)
- Culpeper, Jonathan. 2010. *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)
- Cutting, Joan. 2002. *Pragmatics and Discourse, A resource book for students*. London: Routledge.

- Edelsky, Carole. 1981. "Who's got the floor?" *Language in Society* 10.
- Fetzer, Anita. 2002. "Put bluntly, you have something of a credibility problem." In *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic approaches to political discourse*, Paul. A. Chilton and Christina Schäffner (eds). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Jon Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Fitzgerald, G. (2010, April 23). TV Debate: Clegg And Cameron Neck And Neck. Sky News. Retrieved April 15, 2014, from <http://news.sky.com/story/774618/tv-debate-clegg-and-cameron-neck-and-neck>
- Garcia-Pastor, Maria Dolores. 2008. "Political campaign debates as zero-sum games: Impoliteness and power in candidates' exchanges." In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.). Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Goffman, Erving. 1967. *Interaction ritual*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing.
- Grice, H. Paul. 1975. "Logic and Conversation." In *Speech Acts* [Syntax and Semantics 3], Peter Cole and Jerry Morgan (eds.), New York: Academic Press.
- Harris, Linda, Kenneth Gergen and John Lannaman. 1986. "Aggression rituals." *Communication Monographs* 53.
- Harris, Sandra. 2001. "Being politically impolite: Extending politeness theory to adversarial political discourse." *Discourse and Society* 12 (4).
- Hydén, Margerita. 1995. "Verbal Aggression as Prehistory of Woman Battering." *Journal of Family Violence* 10 (1).

- Jay, William. 1992. *Cursing in America: a psycholinguistic study of dirty language in the courts, in the movies, in the schoolyards and on the streets*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Lachenicht, L. G. 1980. "Aggravating language: A study of abusive and insulting language." *International Journal of Human Communication* 13 (4).
- Lakoff, Robin, 1973. *The logic of politeness, or minding your p's and q's*. Papers from the Ninth Regional Meetings of the Chicago Linguistics Society. Chicago, IL: Chicago Linguistics Society.
- Lakoff, Robin. 1989. "The limits of politeness." *Multilingua* 8.
- Leech, Geoffrey N. 1983. *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Leech, Geoffrey N. 2005. "Is there an East-West divide?" *Journal of Foreign Languages* 6.
- Levinson, Stephen C. 1979. "Activity types and language." *Linguistics* 17 (5/6).
- Locher, Miriam. 2004. *Power and Politeness in Action: Disagreements in Oral Communication*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Locher, Miriam A. and Richard J. Watts. 2005. "Politeness theory and relational work." *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1).
- Locher, Miriam A. and Richard J. Watts. 2008. "Relational work and impoliteness: Negotiating norms of linguistic behaviour." In *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*, Derek Bousfield and Miriam Locher (eds.). Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Mair, E. 2010: Those Election Debate Rules..., website, http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/pm/2010/04/those_election_debate_rules.shtml, last accessed 13.4.2013
- Mey, Jacob L. 2001. *Pragmatics: An Introduction (2nd Edition)* London: Blackwell.
- Mills, Sara. 2005. "Gender and Impoliteness." *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 (1).
- Mooney, Annabelle. 2004. "Cooperation, violations and making sense." *Journal of Pragmatics* 36
- O'Driscoll, Jim. 1996. "About face: A defence and elaboration of universal dualism." *Journal of Pragmatics* 25 (1)
- Richardson, M. (2010, April 30). Polls Suggest Cameron Wins Final Debate. Sky News. Retrieved April 15, 2014, from <http://news.sky.com/story/775818/polls-suggest-cameron-wins-final-debate>
- Robles, Jessica S. 2011. "Doing disagreement in the House of Lords: 'Talking around the issue' as a context-appropriate argumentative strategy." *Discourse & Communication* 5 (2)
- Sacks, Harvey. 1992. *Lectures on conversations (Vol I. and II.)* Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Sacks, Harvey, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. 1974. "A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation" *Language* 50.
- Schneider, K.P. 2012. "Appropriate behaviour across varieties of English." *Journal of Pragmatics*

- Sifianou, Maria. 2012. "Disagreements, face and politeness." *Journal of Pragmatics* 44.
- Silverman, D. 1998. *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.
- Spencer-Oatey, Helen. 2007. "Theories of identity and the analysis of face." *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39 (4).
- Straus, M. A. and R. J. Gelles. 1990. *Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence in 8,145 Families*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- 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.). Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Thomas, Jenny. *Meaning in interaction*. London and New York: Longman.
- Vuchinich, Samuel. 1990. "The sequential organization of closing in verbal family conflict." In *Conflict talk: Sociolinguistic investigations of arguments and conversations*, Allen D. Grimshaw (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Waters, Sophia. 2012. "'It's rude to VP': The cultural semantics of rudeness." *Journal of Pragmatics*.
- Watts, Richard J. 2003. *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yllö, Kersti. 1993. "Trough A Feminist Lens: Gender, Power and Violence" in *Controversies in Family Violence*, R. Gelles and D. Loseke (eds.). Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Appendix 1

Table 1: Raw data, number of instances in individual debates, strategies 1–8.

1. Disassociate from the other
2. Seek disagreement or avoid agreement
3. Condescend, scorn, ridicule, use sarcasm
4. Associate with a negative aspect, personalise
5. Criticise
6. Hinder / block
7. Challenge
8. Miscellaneous

GB - 1	DC -1	NC -1	GB - 2	DC - 2	NC - 2	GB - 3	DC - 3	NC - 3
3	0	20	0	12	10	4	4	10
1	5	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
2	4	5	6	4	7	1	5	9
6	8	1	11	5	4	11	12	5
2	6	12	4	13	12	12	20	4
38	21	23	29	7	32	6	5	17
15	11	9	12	2	13	18	7	7
0	1	0	0	3	2	0	2	0

Table 2: Raw data, total number of instances

GB - total	DC - total	NC - total	total hits
7	16	40	63
3	5	3	11
9	13	21	43
28	25	10	63
18	39	28	85
73	33	72	178
45	20	29	94
0	6	2	8

Table 3: Total word count in all three debates:

GB	DC	NC	All
17014	16985	16730	50729

Table 4: Normalised data, per 1000 words

GB	DC	NC	all instances
0,411	0,942	2,39	1,242
0,176	0,294	0,179	0,217
0,528	0,765	1,255	0,848
1,645	1,472	0,598	1,242
1,057	2,296	1,674	1,676
4,29	1,943	4,304	3,509
2,644	1,178	1,733	1,853
0	0,353	0,12	0,158

SUOMENKIELINEN TIIVISTELMÄ

Pro gradu -tutkielmassani tarkoitukseni oli selvittää millaisia kielitieteellisen epäkohteliaisuuden strategioita on löydettävissä muodollisessa kontekstissa. Tutkimalla Iso-Britanniassa vuonna 2010 järjestettyjä puoluejohtajien välisiä vaaliväittelyjä pyrin määrittämään millaisia epäkohteliaisuusstrategioita voidaan luontevasti käyttää väittelyssä, jonka muodollinen rekisteri asettaa rajoituksia ilmaisun epäkohteliaisuudelle. Hypoteesini oli, että tietyt strategiat, kuten sopimattomien ilmaisujen käyttäminen tai toisen sulkeminen ulkopuolelle vaikeatajuisten sanojen tai aihepiirien avulla eivät palvele puhujia tässä yhteydessä, tai niiden käyttö koetaan muodolliselle kontekstille soveltumattomaksi. Sen sijaan oletin, että osa strategioista, kuten vastaväittelijän huomiotta jättäminen, pilkkaaminen ja keskeyttäminen olisivat varsin käyttökelpoisia myös tällaisessa tilanteessa.

Kohteliaisuus ja epäkohteliaisuus ovat nykyisin varsin tutkittu osa-alue sociolinguistiikassa (ks. esim. Locher ja Bousfield, 2008: 2). Tutkimusala lähti liikkeelle kohteliaisuuden tutkimuksesta 1970-luvulla, muun muassa Gricen (1975), Leechin (1983) ja Brownin ja Levinsonin (1978, tutkimusta tarkennettu 1987) toimesta. Epäkohteliaisuus nähtiin aluksi kohteliaisuuden sivutuotteena tai vaihtoehtoisesti vastakohtana. Epäkohteliaisuutta ei myöskään aluksi nähty tietoisena ja tavoitteellisena keskustelun osana, vaan se koettiin enemmänkin vahingossa tapahtuvaksi. Nykyään ollaan kuitenkin tultu siihen tulokseen, että vaikka epäkohteliaisuutta ei voida nähdä kommunikoinnin yleislähtökohtana, sillä on kuitenkin keskeinen osa ihmisten välistä vuorovaikutusta, ja sille on oma tarkoituksellinen aikansa ja paikkansa. Epäkohteliaisuus voi olla jopa koko keskustelun tavoite. (Bousfield 2008: 51). Epäkohteliaisuutta on myös tutkittu useasta eri näkökulmasta, muun muassa poliittisen kontekstin kautta (esim. Mills 2001, Harris 2005, Terourafi 2008), semantiikan

yhteydessä (mm. Culpeper 2011, Schneider 2012, Waters 2012) ja kasvojen, eli kuvan omasta itsestä sosiaalisissa tilanteissa, säilyttämisen tai menettämisen kannalta (esim. Spencer-Oatey 2007).

Tämän työn kannalta keskeisimmät tällä alalla tehdyt tutkimukset ovat Culpeperin (1996, 2005, 2010, ja Culpeper *et al.* 2003) ja Bousfieldin (2008) käsialaa. Pro gradu -tutkimukseni lähtökohtana käytin Culpeperin (1996) luomia epäkohteliaisuusstrategialistoja, joita Bousfield on sittemmin tarkentanut. Culpeper (1996) määrittelee viisi superstrategiaa epäkohteliaisuudelle (vapaasti suomennettuna):

- suora, kiertelemätön epäkohteliaisuus
- positiivisiin kasvoihin (tarpeeseen olla hyväksytty, arvostettu, ja ryhmän jäsen) kohdistuva epäkohteliaisuus
- negatiivisiin kasvoihin (tarpeeseen toimia itsenäisesti ja vapaasti) kohdistuva epäkohteliaisuus
- sarkasmi tai teennäinen kohteliaisuus, joka on selkeästi tulkittavissa epäkohteliaisuudeksi
- kohteliaisuuden välttäminen tilanteessa, jossa se olisi tarpeellista

Lisäksi Culpeper tarkentaa positiivisiin ja negatiivisiin kasvoihin kohdentuvaa epäkohteliaisuutta listaamalla niille tuotantostrategioita (vapaasti suomennettuna).

Positiivisiin kasvoihin kohdistuvia tuotantostrategioita ovat:

- jätä toinen huomiotta
- sulje toiminnan tai keskustelun ulkopuolelle

- pyri erottautumaan toisista
- ole välinpitämätön ja epäystävällinen
- puhuttele asiayhteyteen sopimattomalla tavalla
- käytä epäselvää tai salailevaa kieltä
- pyri erimielisyyteen
- tee toisen olo epämiellyttäväksi
- käytä sopimatonta kieltä
- nimittle

Negatiivisiin kasvoihin kohdistuvia strategioita puolestaan ovat:

- pelottele
- alennu, halveksu, pilkkaa
- häiritse toisen omaa tilaa (kirjaimellisesti tai kuvallisesti)
- yhdistä kielteiseen piirteeseen ja henkilökohtaista
- muistuta (kiitollisuuden)velasta

Bousfield (2008: 125–132) lisää oman tutkimuksensa pohjalta listaan seuraavat strategiat ja tarkennukset:

- vältä yksimielisyyttä – tukemaan ja laajentamaan strategiaa 'pyri erimielisyyteen'
- uhkaile – lisäyksenä strategiaan 'pelottele'
- kritisoi
- häiritse / estä
- pakota vaihtamaan sosiaalista roolia
- haasta

Tämä tutkimus rakentui näiden strategioiden ympärille. Aineistosta etsittiin erityisesti positiivisiin ja negatiivisiin kasvoihin suuntautuvia epäkohteliaisuuden ilmauksia, sillä ne ovat yksityiskohtaisimpia ja siten parhaiten kategorisoitavissa. Toki huomioon otettiin myös superstrategiat, ja näistä myös sarkasmia löytyi väittelijöiden puheesta.

Lisäksi vaaliväittelyjä tutkittaessa on syytä ottaa huomioon poliittinen konteksti. Kuten Harris (2001) toteaa, epäkohteliaisuuden tutkimuksen painotus on tavallisesti epämuodollisessa ilmaisussa, sillä siellä epäkohteliaisuus ilmenee yleisimmin ja luontevimmin. Hän kuitenkin ehdottaa, että muodollisempia konteksteja tarkastellessa keskustelu tulisi nähdä erillisenä käytäntöyhteisönä (Community of Practice) joka määrittää omat sääntönsä siitä, millainen käytös on hyväksyttävää. Esimerkiksi tässä aineistossa vaaliväittelyn tuoma muodollinen konteksti tarkoittaa sitä, että kaikki Culpeperin ja Bousfieldin määrittämistä strategioista eivät istu käytäntöyhteisön säädösten sisälle, ja vaikkapa asiayhteyteen sopimattomalla tavalla puhuttelemisen ei kävisi päinsä.

Tutkielman aineistona oli kolme televisioitua vaaliväittelyä, jotka järjestettiin Iso-Britanniassa huhtikuussa 2010. Väittelyt pidettiin viikon välein, ja niihin osallistui Britannian kolmen suurimman puolueen, Työväenpuolueen, Konservatiivien ja Liberaalidemokraattien puheenjohtajat Gordon Brown (maan senhetkinen pääministeri), David Cameron ja Nick Clegg. Parlamenttivaalit järjestettiin viikko viimeisen väittelyn jälkeen. Jokainen väittely kesti 90 minuuttia, ja jokaisessa väittelyssä oli puheenjohtaja, joka jakoi puheenvuoroja ohjasi keskustelujen aiheita kutsumalla yleisön jäseniä esittämään kysymyksiä. Väittelyistä oli tarjolla sekä litteroinnit että videomateriaalia (ks. lähteet).

Aineiston tutkimuksessa lähtökohtana oli ensin kaikkien epäkohteliaisuustapausten merkitseminen ylös, ja sen jälkeen niiden kategorisointi Culpeperin (1996) ja Bousfieldin (2008) luomien listojen pohjalta. Lisäksi tapaukset jaoteltiin väittelijäkohtaisesti. Tavoitteena oli paitsi hahmottaa millaisia epäkohteliaisuusstrategioita tästä aineistosta löytyy, myös selvittää käyttävätkö väittelijät strategioita samalla tavalla, vai suosivatko he eri strategioita. Väittelijöiden välisiä eroja tarkasteltiin myös tilastollisesti.

Epäkohteliaisuustapauksia luokitellessa kävi ilmi, että aineistosta löytyi seitsemää eri kategoriaa edustavia strategioita. Nämä strategiat olivat:

- pyri erottautumaan toisista
- pyri erimielisyyteen tai vältä yksimielisyyttä
- alennu, halveksu, pilkkaa, käytä sarkasmia
- yhdistä negatiiviseen piirteeseen ja henkilökohtaista
- kritisoi
- häiritse / estä
- haasta

Lisäksi muutama ilmaus ei sopinut mihinkään alkuperäisistä kategorioista, ja ne merkittiin yhteisnimikkeellä sekalaiset. Sarkasmin käyttäminen on Culpeperin (1996) teoriassa erillinen strategia, mutta koska se ilmentyi aineistossa vain kolme kertaa joista jokainen istui myös 'alennu, halveksu, pilkkaa' -kategoriaan, sarkasmi integroitiin samaan. Eri aineistossa sarkasmin käyttö saattaa ilmentyä toisenlaisella tavalla, mutta tähän yhteyteen yhdistäminen sopi. Sekalaisen kategorian ilmaisut puolestaan vaikuttivat samankaltaisilta, ja antavat alustavia viitteitä siihen, että epäkohteliaisuusstrategioiden listaan voisi mahdollisesti lisätä

yhden uuden kategorian; vähättele. Aineistosta ei kuitenkaan löydy tarpeeksi tämän tyyppisiä ilmaisuja, jotta asia voitaisiin sanoa varmaksi.

Kävi myös ilmi, että väittelijät suosivat eri strategioita. Gordon Brownille tyypillisimmät strategiat olivat häiritse / estä; haasta; ja yhdistä henkilökohtaiseen piirteeseen ja henkilökohtaista. Hänellä tuntui olevan suurin tarve keskeyttää vastaväittelijänsä tai esittää välihuomautuksia muiden puheenvuorojen keskellä. Kaksi muuta Gordon Brownille tyypillistä strategiaa johtuvat mahdollisesti valta-asetelmasta. Väittelyjen aikana Gordon Brown oli vallassa oleva pääministeri, jonka valta-asemaa kahden muun suurimman puolueen johtajat yrittivät horjuttaa. Brown puolestaan pyrki luomaan yleisölle kuvaa siitä, etteivät vastaväittelijöiden puolueinjat olisi äänien arvoisa. David Cameron puolestaan suosi epäkohteliaisuusstrategioita kritisoi; häiritse / estä; ja yhdistä negatiiviseen piirteeseen ja henkilökohtaista, joskin hän käytti kaikkia aineistossa ilmenneitä strategioita varsin tasaisesti. Nick Clegg poikkesi kahdesta muusta väittelijästä erityisesti siinä, että hän käytti runsaasti strategiaa 'pyri erottautumaan toisista'. Tämä johtune siitä, että Clegg pyrki esittämään puolueensa uutena ja tuoreena vaihtoehtona kahden perinteisen sijaan, jolloin selkeän eron korostaminen puoltaa yleistä väittelystrategiaa. Omia tarkoituksia palvelevien syiden lisäksi eri epäkohteliaisuusstrategioiden valintaan vaikutti todennäköisesti myös omat mieltymykset väittelytyylissä. Jollekin sopii paremmin vastaväittelijöiden keskeyttäminen ja oman kannan siten esille tuominen, kun taas toiselle on luontevampaa haastaa vastaväittelijät kritisoimalla ja kyseenalaistamalla. Jokainen vaaliväittelijä kuitenkin käytti jokaista aineistossa esiintyvää epäkohteliaisuusstrategiaa, lukuun ottamatta sitä, että Gordon Brown ei käyttänyt yhtään strategiaa joka kuuluisi ylimääräiseen sekalaista-kategoriaan.

Aineistosta löytyneet epäkohteliaisuusstrategiat vaikuttavat varsin tyypillisiltä vaaliväittelyn keinoilta. Koska vaaliväittelyn tavoitteena on vakuuttaa potentiaaliset äänestäjät paitsi siitä, että itselle ja omalle puolueelle kannattaa antaa ääni, myös siitä, että kilpailevien poliitikkojen ajatukset ja puoluelinjaukset ovat puutteellisia, vääriä tai muuten huonosti esitettyjä. Tällaiseen yhteyteen vastaväittelijän haastaminen, kritisointi ja hänen heikkouksiensa esiin tuominen istuvat mainiosti, ja tällaiset epäkohteliaisuusstrategiat ovat luontevia, jopa odotettavissa olevia. Samoin puheenvuoron itselleen omiminen ja vastustajan pilkkaaminen soveltuvat useimpiin väittelytilanteisiin. Voidaankin sanoa, että aineistosta löytyneet epäkohteliaisuusstrategiat ovat kaikki luonnollisia elementtejä tässä kontekstissa.

Muun muassa Mooney (2004) ja Bousfield (2008) ovat pohtineet sitä, millaisia elementtejä vaaditaan, jotta epäkohteliaisuus toteutuu. Näihin vaatimuksiin kuuluu muun muassa se, että epäkohteliaisuuden tulee olla sekä tarkoituksellista että epäkohteliaisuudeksi ymmärrettyä. Tämä toteutuu vaaliväittelyissä, vaikka kaikkein suurimmat ja tylyimmät epäkohteliaisuuden ilmaisut eivät yleensä ole käytössä muodollisessa – kontekstihan muuttuu epämuodolliseksi esimerkiksi kiroilun tai nimittelyn myötä – kontekstissa, mutta epäkohteliaisuudesta oli silti ilmiselvästi kysymys. Tyypillistä epäkohteliaisuustilanteissa on myös aggressio. Muodollisessa kontekstissa tämä esiintyy lähinnä suullisessa muodossa, fyysisen aggression uhkaa ei missään vaiheessa ollut väittelyssä havaittavissa, ja se vaikuttaakin jälleen enemmän epämuodollisen kontekstin ilmiöltä. Epäkohteliaisuuden toteutumisen suhteen on myös syytä ottaa huomioon Harrisin (2001) näkemys käytäntöyhteisöistä, eli yhteisö määrittää sen, millä ehdoilla epäkohteliaisuus toteutuu.

Tutkimuksessa kävi ilmi, että Culpeperin (1996) ja Bousfieldin (2008) laatimasta kahdenkymmenen mahdollisen epäkohteliaisuusstrategian joukosta aineistosta löytyi

ilmaisuja, jotka sopivat seitsemään näistä kategorioista. Lisäksi mukana oli muutama sekalaisten kategoriaan luokittuva ilmaisu. Väittelijät suosivat eri strategioita, ja heidän strategiavalintojensa välillä oli tilastollisesti merkittäviä eroja. Se, että aineistosta löytyi varsin paljon epäkohteliaita ilmauksia jotka myös sopivat luontevasti kontekstiin puhuu sen puolesta, että epäkohteliaisuutta sekä epämuodollisessa että muodollisessa kontekstissa voidaan määrittää samojen strategialuokitusten avulla. Tämä tukee ajatusta, että epäkohteliaisuutta on mielekästä tutkia erilaisissa konteksteissa. Koska tämä tutkimus keskittyi ainoastaan yksittäisten strategioiden tarkasteluun, jatkossa olisi mielenkiintoista tutkia sitä, miten eri strategioita yhdistellään keskenään tai esimerkiksi yhden aihepiirin ajan. Voisi myös olla mielenkiintoista selvittää, ovatko nämä strategiat kulttuurisidonnaisia. Jatkotutkimukselle on siis lukuisia eri mahdollisuuksia.