



**Linguistic Politeness
Across Boundaries**

The case of Greek and Turkish

Edited by
Arin Bayraktaroğlu
and Maria Sifianou

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LINGUISTIC POLITENESS ACROSS BOUNDARIES

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THE CASE OF GREEK AND TURKISH

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*To the young generation represented by
Christina, Kerem and Lucas*

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Preface

Interest in linguistic politeness has been growing since the 1970s, when Robin Lakoff's pioneering work was published. "The logic of politeness: or minding your p's and q's" (1973) was spurred by the desire to expand the scope of linguistics from the limited horizon of transformational grammar to the broader issue of language use. As part of an attempt to make sense out of what we are actually doing with language, Grice's "The logic of conversation" (1975) created an awareness of the use of language use: be clear and be polite. For the first rule, be clear, she applied what came to be known as Gricean maxims. For a formulation of the second rule, be polite, she needed to work out the principle of politeness. Robin Lakoff's work was the first attempt to integrate linguistic politeness into an encompassing theory of language use, a topic that became ever more popular as the field of pragmatics.

People use language to transmit information, but to do it effectively, language must be used in a manner that will not cause friction between the participants. It is for this reason that interest in linguistic politeness came into focus more or less as a by-product of the growing interest in pragmatics. It was against this background that Brown and Levinson, then graduate students at the University of California in Berkeley where both Robin Lakoff and Paul Grice were on the faculty, posited what has come to be seen as more or less *the* theory of linguistic politeness. Leech's work (1983) on linguistic politeness is along the lines of the principles of language use i.e. pragmatics. His principles of pragmatics consist of a cooperative principle and a politeness principle, precisely the two components described by Robin Lakoff, though Leech described them far more elaborately.

The rapid growth of attention given to linguistic politeness seems to be more the result of real world necessity than purely linguistic interest. As the world becomes smaller and smaller owing to rapid progress in transportation and communication systems, people who previously engaged in face to face interaction among acquaintances are now confronted by the need to communicate with people from different backgrounds and with unfamiliar communica-

tive styles. The topic of linguistic politeness did not stay in the ivory tower, but became an instrument to investigate ways to negotiate around the pitfalls of intra-cultural and inter-cultural communication.

A large number of empirical and theoretical articles have been published in books and journals in the last 25 years in fields ranging from linguistics and anthropology to sociology and psychology. While interest in pragmatics in general is directed towards finding the truth about language use, the interest in linguistic politeness became the focus of attention for perspectives on various aspects of our everyday life. Because of the world situation today, with rapid growth of person to person contact, either face to face or by electronic media, people are increasingly concerned with the question of how we can communicate without friction. Thus, the study of linguistic politeness, which evolved out of theoretical interests in the academic world, has been applied to the real world issue of how to achieve smooth communication.

Linguistic politeness can be described as follows:

We speak language not only to transmit information, but also to establish the appropriate interactional relationship... In speaking, we think of the content of what is to be conveyed, and at the same time of the linguistic expressions that will make the utterance appropriate to the given situational context. Appropriate speech establishes smooth communication. The language use associated with smooth communication is what is referred to as linguistic politeness. (Ide, 1988: 371)

What is appropriate in communication differs from culture to culture and subculture to subculture. Language use without regard to this difference of appropriateness can and does cause friction and conflict not intended by the speaker. This is where the research on linguistic politeness across neighbouring countries can provide an important service.

This book is unique in that it unites papers on linguistic politeness from neighbouring countries at the crossroads of the East and the West, Turkey and Greece. These countries have historically had a great deal of contact, though they share neither a linguistic, religious, nor ethnic background. The frequent direct contacts are purely a result of geography. It is often observed around this globe that neighbouring peoples with differing backgrounds do not get along and blame each other for the differences. This often leads to unfortunate and unnecessary miscommunication and friction. What is needed is research into what is going on in their communicative behaviour. An analysis of the communicative behaviour of each makes a comparison of the two systems

possible, and by bringing the mechanisms of their differences to light, makes understanding possible.

Of particular note is that the articles presented here are paired into six kinds of topics that are compared in the two countries. The empirical studies of linguistic politeness employ a variety of approaches including ethnographic observation, conversational analysis of natural conversation and television chat shows, and the discourse completion test on speech acts.

Not surprisingly, those involved with the two languages highlighted in this collection will find much of value here in the explanations for the competing differences which hinder smooth communication. But it also provides valuable insights into finding cultural ideology behind discourse in any language, and thus is useful for all interested in linguistic politeness. Language is not only a means of communication, but also the means to express the speaker's understanding of the situation and the interaction, reflected in the choices made from among those the language provides. These choices are based on cultural values and are realised through the choice of words or expressions. It is through this relationship between the options offered by the language and the expressions we choose that we project our identity. Every individual on this globe owns their own identity, which consists of personal attributes as well as the culture of the community to which they belong. The identity of each individual has to be cherished, for it is the diversity of every person's individual language and their language use as culture in action which underlies cultural value. The prosperity of all the world depends on the maintenance of all manner of variation and diversity that exists on this globe. To achieve the new goal, our role as students of language must be to give useful insights into language as a part of social life.

Sachiko Ide

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Introduction

I.

Why Greek and Turkish, and not Greek and Bulgarian or Turkish and Arabic, or any other combination? Keeping stable the historical, geographical and cultural dispositions on which this work is built, a variety of computations apart from this one could have been a possibility. In fact, it is still possible, if not easier now, to investigate others, as the present book holds the door ajar for us to see where the similarities lie and what differences exist in linguistic realisations of politeness in this area. It can act as a springboard for further research into the inter-changeable aspects of similar cultures. Questions like whether or not other possible compositions give the same results and in case they do not, why this is so, will have a better chance of being answered as the comparative material grows in quantity. As Ide (1989: 97) wrote some years ago, “the more descriptions we acquire about the phenomena of linguistic politeness, the more we realise how little we know about the range of possible expressions of politeness in different cultures and languages”. Despite the time that has elapsed and the considerable number of publications that have appeared concerning the complex issue of politeness and its realisations, our knowledge is still limited. The present study endeavours to fill a fraction of this gap by taking a first step towards the cultural crossroads of Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

The seeds of this volume were planted four years ago at an international conference, where the editors met for the first time. A spontaneous conversation ensued, as it usually does in such academic settings, and among people of the same geography, who, due to some detection techniques peculiar to them, notice one another among unfamiliar crowds and make an approach in each other’s direction, on the false assumption that they have found someone from their native land. The discovery that the other person is not from the same place but from a neighbouring country may come as a surprise or even an embarrassment to some, but ordinary Greeks and Turks, contrary to expecta-

tions, are not generally put off by this turn of events, and may engage in a most friendly conversation, regardless of what issues their respective politicians may be dealing with back home. This sudden liking between Turks and Greeks also predicated on the long symbiosis of the two people.

The relationship between the Turks and the Greeks spreads over some 600 years, when the whole Balkan region was under the Ottoman Empire. From shortly after the fall of the Byzantine Empire and the capture of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453 until the Greek war of independence in 1821, the two nations lived in the same territory, and under Ottoman sovereignty. Even after an autonomous state of Greece was founded in the 1830s, a considerable number of Greeks preferred to stay in Turkish soil rather than move west to join their compatriots. Until the exchange of populations in 1922–1923, there were spots of high Greek concentration in various parts of Anatolia, the Aegean coast, Cappadocia, and the Trebizond region on the Black Sea front, and Muslim concentrations in certain areas in Greece such as Thrace and Macedonia. The greatest mixed congregations, however, were always in Istanbul and Izmir (Alexandris 1992).

The structure of the Ottoman Empire also contained other “corporate identities” like the Jews, Armenians, Bulgarians, Serbs, Vlachs, Albanians and Arabs. However, the Orthodox Greeks were the largest group that the Turks had mixed with, the Greeks constituting about one quarter of the total population, and the Turks about half, while the rest was made up of other minorities (Lewis 1971, Alexandris 1992). Although the languages of the two largest ethnic groups in the empire were completely different typologically, the exchange of cultural influences was, of course, unavoidable. Probably for linguistic and political reasons, this exchange was always overlooked in research until 1981 when Tannen and Öztekin, in a pioneering study, brought to the readers’ attention some similarities in the use of these two languages, more specifically, in the use of formulaic expressions. It is not surprising, therefore, that the conversation, began, as described, at an international conference, and made both editors, who happened to have similar academic interests, think that there must be more to be discovered. The hunch gave rise, in time, to this book on the linguistic practices of politeness in their respective countries.

II.

Politeness is probably a universal occurrence but the theories of it have so far been constructed in the English speaking west in particular, and the native language of the theoreticians has provided the basic insights involved in theory construction. The concepts used in their development are those fitting to the cultural moulds of the environment where they originate, and describe the behaviour shaped by the norms found therein. Even when the initial inspiration comes from the east, as in the case of the concept of “face” (Brown and Levinson [1978]1987, Ervin-Tripp *et al.* 1995), the results are not any different. Consequently, the definitions of the term “politeness” reflect northern European norms, where politeness is primarily conceptualised as a means of avoiding conflict in interactions. Remarkably, what is overlooked in such conceptualisations is that politeness, besides being a means of restraining feelings, is also a means of expressing them. Our acts are not only face-threatening (Brown and Levinson ([1978]1987) but also face-boosting (Bayraktaroğlu 1991) or face-enhancing (Sifianou 1995) and although tact may encode the essence of politeness in some cultures, in some others it may be concepts like generosity or modesty which predominate (Leech 1983).

Research on politeness did not start with Brown and Levinson but admittedly proliferated, especially after the reissue of their work in 1987. Continuing and expanding interest on the topic is evident in the number of conferences and publications, the most recent of which is the special issue of *Pragmatics* (1999). Some of these publications, especially earlier ones, support and expand on the findings of the original theory while others contest aspects or the whole of it as inadequate, especially on the basis of cross-cultural data. In this respect, not only is it claimed that the theory is incapable of explaining the complications of “facework” within the very society where the theory was developed (Tracy 1990); there has also been a series of strong protests from other parts of the world (Matsumoto 1988, Ide 1989, Gu 1990, Ervin-Tripp *et al.* 1995, Hiraga and Turner 1996, de Kadt 1998). These draw attention to the fact that what is put forward as a universal theory, based on a universal notion of “face” with two aspects, falls short of explaining the realisations of polite behaviour in different cultures and different languages, because politeness in each closed group is shaped by its own social rules. The distinction between “positive politeness” and “negative politeness”, based on the assumed universal needs of every individual to build and protect a social image for him/

herself, and the strategies allocated to these types of politeness are questioned on the grounds that societies are not similar in the “face” needs of their members. It is this awareness that enabled Brown and Levinson (1987: 248) to consider cross-cultural variation and recognise that some societies may be orientated towards one or the other type of politeness (i.e. negative or positive). However, in addition to the fact that the strategies used to realise one orientation may show differences from culture to culture, there are societies which do not seem to fit happily into this taxonomy, like the Japanese (Matsumoto 1988: 408) where the concept of negative politeness is rather alien and the German (Pavlidou 1994) where neither orientation can account for the linguistic realisations of telephone call openings. More importantly, Brown and Levinson’s insistence on the proposed hierarchy of strategies carries with it the strong implication that societies with a positive politeness orientation are less polite than those with a negative politeness orientation. This reflects the common and common sense equation of politeness with formality. However, as mentioned earlier, since definitions reflect culturally specific conceptualisations of the term, one cannot as yet expect universal applicability of the theories constructed and, consequently, societies cannot be ranked as more or less polite than others.

Tannen’s (1984) distinction between “high involvement” and “high considerateness” styles points to the fallacy of limitations drawn around the strategies of politeness. Speakers who get highly involved in speech — i.e. interrupting more, speaking louder, showing more interest in the other’s affairs etc. — do not always deserve to be labelled pushy, aggressive and nosy; for they may be exhibiting interest in ways practised in their own solidarity orientated society. Nor can those who hesitate more and display consideration for others’ speaking rights always be considered respectful, as they may be demonstrating aloofness in an attachment-free society. We are shown by Schiffrin (1984) how Jewish Americans argue for the sake of sociability, and by Tannen and Kakava (1992) how the Greeks disagree in order to agree. Turkish boys’ duelling rhymes are not intended to hurt but to have fun (Dundes *et al.* 1972), and among Argentinians and the Jews, being direct overrides being considerate for others (Blum-Kulka 1992). All these examples point to the same direction: what may be frowned upon as inconsiderate or even rude in one culture may have relation-consolidating effects in other parts of the world. Specific strategies and sub-strategies do not necessarily have the same payoffs in all contexts, let alone cultures. For instance, the

“seek agreement” and “avoid disagreement” sub-strategies are not always solidarity-building and off-record realisations have not only been found to be less polite than on-record ones (Blum-Kulka 1987) but can also be rude rather than extremely polite (Sifianou 1997). As Watts *et al.* (1992: 10) say “both freedom from interruption and freedom from imposition are ... very relative concepts indeed” as are concepts like “interruption” and “imposition”.

Besides its contested overtones of one type of politeness being more desirable than the other, the backbone concept in the theory, “face”, has also been claimed to have three rather than two aspects (Lim and Bowers 1991) since human beings have three rather than two basic needs. More specifically, it has been contested that the concept of positive face has been underspecified and should be distinguished into “fellowship” and “competence” face while “autonomy face” is equivalent to Brown and Levinson’s negative face. In short, the conceptualisation of face on which Brown and Levinson’s theory is based is deemed as rather ethnocentric (Watts *et al.* 1992: 10).

To make sense of any behavioural pattern, it is necessary to take into account the values operating within the culture where this behaviour is taking place, and Hofstede’s classic analysis of work-related values (1980), distinguishing society types along four dimensions (power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity), is a good starting point. This work has been followed by a proliferation of others, especially in social psychology, most notably by Triandis (1987, 1988, 1990) whose work has mainly concentrated on the “individualism versus collectivism” dimension. Societies in this approach are labelled either as “individualistic” (where self-reliance, assertiveness and autonomy are important), or “collectivist” (where the individual is dependent on in-group nurturing). It is of course apparent that these are broad approximations and “the type of IC [Individualism/Collectivism] found in each culture varies widely depending on its ecological and historical circumstances” (Kim 1995: 5).

Hofstede’s (1998) recent work investigates the other dimension of a society where human behaviour is shaped: Masculinity and Femininity. The terms are somewhat misleading, as they do not denote psychological attributes but anthropological ones. In Hofstede’s (1991: 261–62) words:

Masculinity stands for a society in which men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. The opposite pole, Femininity, stands for a society in which both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.

Cultures which are inclined towards Femininity are those where “equality”, “solidarity”, “compromise”, and “modesty” are the outstanding values. Masculinity is where “equity”, “mutual competition”, and “strength” are the predominant validations. As Hofstede (1994: xiii) suggests, “a conceptual framework based on the two dimensions of I/C and masculinity and femininity is a lot richer and potentially more revealing than the single pair of concepts [i.e. I/C]”.

On the scale of “Individualism” (see Hoppe 1998: 33), Greece and Turkey seem to stand at almost the same level (Greece’s mean score is 35, and Turkey’s 37, while, for comparison it might be interesting to note that, Great Britain scores 89 and the United States 91). This shows that both are more “collectivist” than “individualist” cultures. On the Masculinity index, however, Turkey’s mean score is 45, and Greece’s 57, which means that both are somewhere in the middle, although in Greek culture, characteristics of Masculinity are indicated to be slightly stronger. Our findings, however, suggest otherwise; i.e. that Turkish culture is inclined towards Masculinity a fraction more than Greek culture. Whether this has validity needs further research.

Recent linguistic studies have been producing results compatible with these distinctions. In societies where collective behaviour is the norm, for instance, power is found to be tolerated more than in individualistic societies. Spencer-Oatey (1997) compares the role relationships in an academic setting along the parameters of power and distance/closeness, and states that the relationship between a student and a professor in China is not egalitarian but socially close, whereas in England it is egalitarian but distant. Wetzel (1985) shows that in Japanese, in-groupness and out-groupness are marked by the choice of nominal and verbal elements, an expected outcome in a highly collectivist society. Blum-Kulka (1983) displays the aggressive nature of political interviews on Jewish television, in a society of moderate Masculinity (Israel’s mean score on the index is 47, almost the same as that of Turkey). Tannen (1990) analyses the “gender cultures”, a feature of the Masculinity dimension, by distinguishing between the “rapport talk” of women and “report talk” of men. This reflects older distinctions between “content” and “relationship” (Watzlawick *et al.* 1967) and between “referential” and “emotive” aspects of communication (Jakobson 1960) or more recent ones between “transactional” and “interactional” functions of language (Brown and Yule 1983: 1). These broad dimensions have been found to indicate not only different functions served by a language but also different orientations in

discourse types or genres and ultimately different orientations of societies (see Pavlidou 1994).

III.

The purpose of this book is many-fold, with equally important messages on all fronts. One is that it provides a dual opportunity to test politeness in areas other than English, which has hitherto been the playground of theory-makers. The second is that it makes available to observers regional patterns of behaviour, which are located between the East and the West. The third is that it demonstrates the results of cultural interaction, even when the interaction is in the past. Besides, the volume is not meant as a battlefield for theories of politeness, nor is it compiled to favour one theory at the expense of others. As it happens, several theories have guided the present authors (“maxims of politeness” by Leech 1983, “politic versus polite behaviour” by Watts 1992, and “relevance theory” by Sperber and Wilson [1986] 1995). If Brown and Levinson’s ([1978] 1987) views underlie most papers, though not always uncritically, it is because their theory has been the most influential and comprehensive so far. It is hoped that the findings will present a clearer and more vivid picture of these moderately masculine and collectivist societies where sociability overpowers respectability at times and will thus contribute to the ongoing dialogue on politeness phenomena which originated and developed mostly in the West. In contrast to Watts’ (1999: 18) British informants who favoured mostly negative politeness and rejected positive politeness, our informants tended to draw a distinction between “politeness of manners” and “politeness of the soul”, suggesting that the former may hide real intentions and be hypocritical while the latter reflects the essence of true politeness for them.

Articles in the collection are empirically rather than theoretically orientated and examine realisations of politeness in relation to social parameters such as “gender”, “social closeness/distance”, “power/subordination”, and in genres like television-interviews and service-encounters. It also makes room for investigations of a specific speech act, that of “complimenting” in interaction, whose status as face-threatening or face-enhancing has been ambivalent. The chapters in this volume have been arranged in pairs treating related issues. The first two papers present a more general ethnographic picture of the two societies. The following two pairs deal with the variables of power/status in

classroom and other interaction, and of solidarity in advice giving and in the use of approbatory expressions. The next pair concentrates on service encounters and the differential use of language by males and females while the following pair examines the use of interruptions in television talk. Finally, the last pair considers compliments in interaction. A more detailed description of the contributions follows.

Renée Hirschon's contribution, entitled "Freedom, solidarity and obligation: The socio-cultural context of Greek politeness", constitutes an exploration in the ethnography of speaking. Written from an anthropological perspective, the chapter analyses the relationship between key cultural values, social behaviour and language use in Greek, bringing in interesting contrasts with British English and Turkish. The analysis employs the concept of "honour" in anthropology, juxtaposing it with "face" in sociolinguistics, and the gift-exchange model (Mauss) based on the pivotal notion of "obligation" with its implications for relative status. The key values identified for Greek society are those of freedom and personal autonomy as well as ones emphasising sociability and solidarity. Inbuilt contradictions and tensions result from the co-existence of these values. They are shown to affect politeness conduct, particularly in the reluctance to acknowledge obligation. An additional feature Hirschon outlines is the lack of accountability in Greek linguistic behaviour, a degree of laxity in verbal expression, which can be seen to relate to the values of freedom and which has widespread social ramifications. This sheds light on a comparative study of Greek and Turkish responses to insult. Hirschon notes that these differences also relate to different social structures, notions of "face" and honour codes, social context and history in the two societies.

In her article, "Politeness in Turkish and its linguistic manifestations: A socio-cultural perspective", Deniz Zeyrek provides an ethnographic/social background to Turkish and presents its culture as that of "relatedness", a term developed by Kağıtçıbaşı (1998) as a defining feature of "Collectivism". She evaluates the "family" as the most important support institution in Turkish society, while "neighbours", "friends" and "colleagues" provide the individual with additional networks. As is to be expected of this type of social environment, the importance in establishing new in-groups is noticeable, evidenced in the interpersonal rituals of the exchange of benefits like hospitality, gifts, polite formulae, etc. Seen under the light of Collectivism, speech characteristics such as insistence on making offers and inquisitiveness about the other's private matters, acquire a new meaning as ways of forming or

consolidating relationships, rather than of trespassing on personal preserves.

Power relations are analysed by Seran Doğançay-Aktuna and Sibel Kamlı in the “Linguistics of power and politeness in Turkish: Revelations from speech acts”. The authors compare the responses to corrections and disagreements in situations where power is unequally distributed. They find that the speaker in the superordinate position in academic settings is direct in his corrections and disagreements but in the workplace the boss uses mitigation techniques to soften the impact of these acts. In other words, contrary to English contexts where negative politeness is used to superiors rather than status equals or subordinates, in Turkish higher status speakers favour negative politeness in face damaging situations. The authors conclude that the directness on the part of the professors can be explained by the characteristics of their profession: they are expected to give correction as part of their job, whereas in other work places there is no such expectation.

Classroom interaction is also analysed by Soula Pavlidou in “Politeness in the classroom?: Evidence from a Greek high school”. Based on naturally recorded data from high school classes in Greece, Pavlidou shows that students and teachers use differential patterns of politeness in class: while students invest more on negative politeness, teachers seem to pay greater attention to the students’ positive face wants. However, on the whole, the classroom interaction under discussion is characterised by minimal politeness investments, especially on the students’ part, a fact that can be explained in terms of roles and other characteristics of classroom interaction. Moreover, although it is true that girls talk less and take less initiative than boys in class, girls in this study do not necessarily appear to be more polite than boys, as has been claimed by other researchers, but are polite (or impolite) in qualitatively different ways from their male classmates. Finally, Pavlidou argues against any decontextualized approach to politeness and warns against premature inter-cultural comparisons before the contextual aspects of politeness are sufficiently studied intra-culturally.

In her paper “Congratulations and bravo!”, Marianthi Makri-Tsilipakou investigates two related approbatory expressions, that is, *συγχαρητήρια* ‘congratulations’ and *μπράβο* ‘bravo’, the everyday use of which sometimes seem ‘problematic’. A close examination of their syntactic, semantic and pragmatic properties reveals both similarities and differences. Although they are both positive polite expressions carrying largely similar preconditions, *μπράβο* ‘bravo’ comes out as more of an exclamation, while *συγχαρητήρια*

‘congratulations’ — which additionally belongs to a rather formal register — as more of a conventional expression, presupposing a ceremonial frame. The pattern of their social distribution further clarifies their affiliative role in interpersonal communication and helps explain their “abuses” as ultimately motivated by the cultural drive for maximising praise.

In “Advice-giving in Turkish: “Superiority” or “solidarity”?”, Arın Bayraktaroğlu examines the consequences of advice-giving and finds that this speech activity in Turkish does not carry negative implications as strongly as it does in English. In an individualistic society, giving ideas to others may be heard as underlining the superiority of the speaker as if s/he knows better, but in societies where collectivism is the norm, advice-giving is a threat only in newly established relationships, where social distance is the dominant factor. Otherwise, helping to solve someone else’s problem is a solidarity consolidating exercise. In newly established Turkish encounters, advice is not normally repeated by the giver for fear of sounding too familiar, but in close relationships, as it is a form of emphasising in-groupness and solidarity, it is rejected freely by the recipient and repeated unashamedly by the giver, forming a lengthy stretch of talk in conversation where no party shows the signs of a fall-out.

Yasemin Bayyurt and Arın Bayraktaroğlu in “The use of pronouns and terms of address in Turkish service encounters” examine the consumer world in Turkey and how the sexes behave in it as regards the use of pronouns and terms of address. They find the characteristics of the “Masculinity” culture in the way females favour using the “V” pronoun even in familiar contexts, while male customers prefer making a direct contact with the sellers, utilising the “T” pronoun, regardless of the fact that it may be a first-time encounter. The authors additionally discover the signs of a materialistic attitude in the society, a feature of Masculinity, whereby customers, regardless of their gender, become more formal and indirect in economically strong environments. They tend, however to relax and address the other with familiar terms in modest circumstances. On this point, it is also noted that in affluent circumstances, the variability of pronoun use (T/V) disappears altogether and the “V” form becomes the norm. In comparison, non-egalitarian attitudes surface when fuelled by prejudices. The importance of reliance on the family and familiarity is underlined once more; the customers use kinship terms (uncle, sister, brother, etc.) in circumstances where they feel “at home”, and become voluble in shops they use frequently.

Eleni Antonopoulou in “Brief service encounters: Gender and politeness” also looks at gendered linguistic behaviour in Greek service encounters. Examining 400 exchanges in a small newsagent’s, she notices that while the exchange is perceived as mainly transactional by men and does not, therefore, necessitate civilities, it is viewed as a tripartite event by women, including also interactional, introductory and closing phases. Significantly, the paper shows that such behaviour is also sensitive to the addressee’s gender, with men as well as women adopting the pattern considered more comfortable for the addressee. Linguistic forms (like questions) which have traditionally been considered typical of female discourse appear to be used just as frequently by males and indicate co-operation rather than tentativeness. Solidarity is shown to be also conveyed through extensive use of playful language equally employed by both genders.

In “‘What you’re saying sounds very nice and I’m delighted to hear it’: Some considerations on the functions of presenter-initiated simultaneous speech in Greek panel discussions”, Angeliki Tzanne examines 5 all-male panel discussions with the aim of identifying the functions of presenter-initiated simultaneous speech observed in them. Her analysis involves the examination of instances of simultaneous speech in context and draws upon Goldberg’s (1990) classification of simultaneities into “power-related”, “rapport-related” and “neutral”. Tzanne finds that the presenters of the programmes examined produce simultaneous speech that relates, firstly, to managing the flow or the topic of the conversation with no address to the face of the current speaker (“neutral”), and, secondly, attending to the guest’s negative and positive face wants and to enhancing the positive face of the participants (“rapport-related”). She accounts for her findings on the basis of the positive politeness orientation of the Greek people, that is, of their preference for cultivating the positive aspect of face of their interlocutors. She also argues that the topic of the discussion is a decisive factor leading to the realisation of this preference in conversation.

In “Analysis of the use of politeness maxims in interruptions in Turkish political debates”, Alev Yemenici examines a double act of interruptions in political television programmes: the interviewer (IR) interrupting the interviewee, and the interviewee (IE1) interrupting another interviewee (IE2). In the first case, she discovers that the IR sometimes steals the floor from the IE for reasons which go beyond the “footing” allowed to this contextual role in the Western societies; to disagree, to assert his/her own viewpoint, to mislead

the audience, and to challenge. She also discovers that interviewees interrupt one another to disagree, to escalate the tension, and to ask ironical questions. As a result, the interview turns into a heated argument, which is to the advantage of both parties: the interviewer has to compete for ratings, not only with others of the same profession in 100 or so television channels in Turkey, but also with the colleagues in his own TV station, and the interviewee, as the representative of a political party, has to snatch voters from the other contending 26 parties for parliamentary seats. With so much emphasis on the materialistic gains for the self, both display the characteristics of the Masculinity in their society.

In “Relevance theory and compliments as phatic communication: The case of Turkish”, Şükriye Ruhi and Doğan Gürkan bring a new dimension to the cognitive approach to politeness by linking the social aspects of compliments to Relevance Theory. They find that it is a speech activity occurring mainly in close relationships to emphasise in-group solidarity, although compliments among strangers — men to women — are not an unknown occurrence, and one ending with undesirable results. Women compliment each other as much as men compliment them, but praising of men by women, or of men by other men, is not as frequent. The authors note that the women’s compliment topics are very diversified with equal weight on each topic, while men go for appearance in women and accomplishments among each other. Family is at the front of the stage once again: children constitute a favourite topic for compliments. Another recurrent aspect is the features of Collectivism and Masculinity: female speakers utilise compliments to consolidate their in-group connections, while men, at times, use this speech activity to make a pass at someone of the opposite sex.

In the paper “ ‘Oh! How appropriate!’ Compliments and politeness”, Maria Sifianou claims that compliments are multidirectional rather than unidirectional, constitute prime examples of positive politeness and are related to offers. The results do not support the high proportion of formulaic compliments attested in other studies. It is argued that the data must include interactions rather than single utterances in first turn position because the latter type of data probably conceal the fact that any utterance can count as a compliment in a specific setting. The gender pattern revealed supports earlier findings, namely, that women both pay and receive significantly more compliments than men, who rarely exchange compliments between themselves. This is interpreted as a reflection of different perceptions of the functions of compli-

ments. What is noteworthy, is that both genders appear to increase or decrease the amount of compliments paid according to the addressee's gender, a pattern also dominant in Antonopoulou's data (this volume).

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Freedom, solidarity and obligation

The socio-cultural context of Greek politeness¹

Renée Hirschon

Context

In the contemporary world of the “global village”, ways of promoting understanding across cultures are of critical importance. An increasing body of sociolinguistic studies shows the cultural specificity of many types of speech acts (see, e.g., Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993; Wierzbicka 1991). Often the source of inadvertent cross-cultural misunderstanding, politeness conduct is one such area where misinterpretation can easily occur.

A vast body of anthropological enquiry shows that different cultures have their own systems of rationality and their own internal logic. In my view, the task of anthropology is an interpretative one (cf. Geertz 1973, 1983), and in this way it makes sense, in terms of western European logic, of the logical patterns of other systems of thought and action, including verbal conduct (cf. Crick 1976; Parkin 1982). The premise of rationality informs linguistic studies (Tyler 1978), including the field of the ethnography of speaking where the specificity of cultural patterns is a fundamental precept (though claims to universality also are made, e.g. Grice 1975; Brown and Levinson [1978] 1987).

In the approach from anthropology adopted here, the presumption is that apparently unrelated phenomena can be seen to make sense if interpreted in a holistic way within the overall socio-cultural context. The aim of this kind of anthropological approach and, indeed, of much sociolinguistic enquiry, is to make sense of the conduct of any group, and to explicate patterns which are coherent within the system but which may not be apparent to outsiders. The effort is to overcome what Tannen (1984: 152) rightly calls “the trauma of cross-cultural communication”.

In the context of the present volume, the endeavour is inherently comparative, and by implication it touches on the problem of cross-cultural communication. Even if specific papers do not address both Greek and Turkish politeness phenomena, they implicitly involve comparison with English. Since all anthropological enquiry is intrinsically comparative, every observation implicitly references some other cultural or social norm. It is evident, then, that in dealing with a range of different cultures, the meeting ground between anthropology and sociolinguistics has great potential. In the present paper, I focus on some aspects of Greek politeness behaviour in the context of social norms and cultural values, and devote one section to the contrast between Greek and Turkish responses to insult.

Rationale

The assumption on which this anthropological exploration is based is the close relationship between cultural values, social conduct and language use, and it therefore falls under the rubric of the ethnography of speaking (Bauman and Sherzer 1974: 95, 97). The relationship between these conceptually discrete spheres has been investigated from various perspectives, including sociolinguistic studies.² I would go further, maintaining that linguistic expression may also *reveal* key elements in the social construction of reality in a particular community or society. It is a fundamental position, given the holistic character of the anthropological approach, that the relationships between these analytically distinct but mutually interacting spheres are of a subtle kind. With sensitivity, we may infer one from the other, interpret one with reference to the other, and uncover an underlying rationale by conjoining what otherwise are seen as separated spheres of investigative interest.

In the Greek case examined here, I attempt to interpret verbal conduct with reference to what I think of as “key values”. It is my contention that certain values have primary interpretative significance as markers of the ‘ethos’ of the culture³ and can provide a key for our understanding of many aspects of social life in Greece.⁴ These values can be seen as fundamental to cultural perceptions, affecting a variety of social actions. The particular focus here is the indigenous Greek emphasis on freedom. It is seen as an essential framework for political and social life, and as a desirable state of mind. Associated with it, I see a premium placed on personal autonomy of action and

expression. Standing in some tension with this prized state is the emphasis placed on a range of values which have the effect of promoting “sociability”, a quality which is well regarded. Among others, these values which promote sociable contact and hence solidarity, can be inferred from linguistic conduct and communicative style. In short, my methodological approach in this paper is one in which indicative verbal expressions are interpreted in an overall cultural context and in relation to prevalent values. I try to use the Greek case to illustrate how to “make sense” of cultural patterns characteristic of politeness, or its obverse — rudeness — specifically, insults.

Language is certainly a clear mirror for the reflection of key themes. Indeed, it is the medium through which central cultural preoccupations and themes are given expression. This is particularly evident in the realm of metaphor, the significance and widespread ramifications of which were demonstrated in the ground-breaking work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980). However, the expressive load of metaphor is not necessarily apparent to native speakers at the conscious level.⁵ For example, it struck me, as a non-native speaker, that a number of Greek phrases in which “open/closed” are used as metaphors had certain features in common. In my analysis (see Hirschon 1993), these metaphorical phrases represent symbolic states in which the opposition is expressed between the “open” as auspicious and the “closed” as inauspicious. These metaphorical oppositions provide the basis for analysis of the way in which gender roles, the woman’s body, and male and female characteristics are defined in Greek society. In another context, that of death, the symbolic oppositions expressed in metaphor help to elucidate some paradoxes and reversals associated with death rituals, specifically the way the house of the bereaved opens and closes at different times (Hirschon [1989] 1998: 206ff, 235–45).

Key values in Greek social life

In order to interpret aspects of politeness phenomena in Greece, I draw on two concepts salient to the analysis of social life in Greece, those of “honour” and of “obligation”, and juxtapose them to the concept of “face”, central to the sociolinguistic approach. In the latter, Goffman’s notion of “face” has been reinvented through the work of Brown and Levinson ([1978]1987) initially, and further refined in response to a growing body of empirical research. In the

present paper, “face” is taken as the background reference point. I see it as a cognate concept, the equivalent of “honour”, a key notion for the interpretation of Greek social conduct and values in the anthropological approach. Honour became an early focus of anthropological interest in the study of Mediterranean societies (Campbell 1964; Peristiany 1965). A long running debate developed over ways of viewing honour (Schneider 1971; Davis 1977: 89–101; Gilmore 1987; Stewart, C. 1994; Stewart, F. 1994). In one interpretation it is seen as referring to a person’s social reputation, prestige and esteem; in another it refers to a person’s intrinsic worth and to moral integrity. In the first case, it is an externally evaluated attribute, belonging to the social arena, and directly related to economic criteria of success, “a system of social stratification” (Davis 1977: 98); in the second, it is a moral attribute, inherent in a person’s notion of self, and rooted in a sense of equality. The actual constituents of honour are different for men and women but in both they have a sexual referent: the quality of “shame” entailing modesty and chaste behaviour is that associated with a woman’s honour, while men are expected to be brave and assertive, upholding the reputation of the family and protecting it from insult.

Politeness codes, I argue therefore, have a direct bearing on notions of honour and reputation. The notion of “face” as it developed in the sociolinguistic literature clearly is related to the social concept of honour. This is not the place for a thorough analysis of the relationship between “honour” and “face” in terms of the “face threatening activity” (FTA) model since that would constitute a complex exercise in discovering common ground and distinctions between anthropological and sociolinguistic concepts. My working assumption is that considerable overlap exists. One possible point of distinction is the different degree to which these notions are employed as analytical or as indigenous concepts. In sociolinguistics “face” is primarily analytic, while in the anthropological disputes, honour/shame may be used as both, one contentious issue in the interpretation debate. Notwithstanding such points of definition I feel that “honour” and “face” can validly be used as conceptual equivalents, having considerable overlap, without the need to define their limits. Indeed, this link is made by Brown and Levinson (1987: 13, see also note 12, p.52):

On the other hand notions of face naturally link up to some of the most fundamental cultural ideas about the nature of the social persona, honour and virtue, shame and redemption and thus to religious concepts — points well

made, for example, by Geertz's (1960) description of Javanese religion.

One reason for introducing the notion of "honour" is that, going slightly further in the analysis of politeness, this explanatory paper includes reference to an interesting contrast between Greek and Turkish responses to insults. The differential sensitivity displayed raises comparative questions about the degree to which "face" and "honour" are significant factors in social and linguistic conduct. It is clear that (a) the question of hierarchy must be considered in order to interpret these differences and (b) that a contextual explanation is essential. Here, the social context of family and the nature of corporate identity which has some variation in the two cases must be considered in order to understand the differences in responses.

Furthermore, in order to elucidate Greek politeness fully, I draw on another explanatory concept, the notion of "obligation". This is derived from Mauss's classic essay *Essai sur le don* (1925) published in English as *The Gift* (1970). His work has provided the model for analysing all kinds of social exchanges, material as well as intangible. This scheme posits a chain of exchanges initiated by any offering, whether gift or intangible for, in essence, every offering entails a return. The underlying notion is that of reciprocal obligation. Mauss identifies three essential points inherent in all social exchange: the obligation to give, the obligation to receive, and the obligation to repay (ibid. 10–11, 37ff). It is important to note the structural implications of the exchange for it is an interaction which is inherently asymmetrical and hierarchical. The recipient of the gift assumes a subordinate status in relation to the giver (ibid. 63), whose elevated position must end with the obligation to accept a return gift. The relationship of giver to recipient is that of superior to inferior: the exchange sets up a hierarchy. This can be seen to have a connection with the twinned concepts of "power" and "solidarity" in the sociolinguistic approach to communication (Brown and Gilman 1960), where the concern with power is one in which an asymmetry of status is expressed.

Originally attempting to provide a model for explaining the nature of "total prestations" in non-western societies, Mauss (1970: 2) also claims to have "uncovered one of the bases of social life". Indeed this model has been widely influential and was further refined to specify different types of reciprocity so that it can accommodate a wide range of cultural variation.⁶ It is certainly a useful analytical approach for cross-cultural comparison. In the Greek case examined here, its application rests on the obligation entailed in

the gift (i.e. in all kinds of social exchange, material and intangible, including words), and in its invidious implications for the relative status of giver and recipient.

In the internal logic of the Greek worldview, the predominant emphasis placed on freedom and autonomy results, I argue, in a pervasive concern with hierarchy. This amounts to a continual struggle to maintain one's position vis-a-vis others, a constant battle, as it were, to assert one's position. Subordination is not easily accepted and the aim is to remain on equal terms and autonomous, if not in a superior position. Freedom of the person is central to the Greek notion of self, which does not easily accept being subject to another's will. Autonomy, the exercise of free will, not conceding rank unless it is clearly marked by a defined official status — these characteristic features can be empirically demonstrated in many examples from contemporary Greek social life. These central values, I suggest, are also connected with specific features of Greek language use — what I call “verbal laxity”, or a lack of accountability (see below, section on insults).

It is highlighted, too, particularly in contrast with societies which are openly organised on hierarchical lines. In contrast with Japanese society, for example, which is explicitly ranked (Nakane 1973; Hendry 1987), the absence of honorifics in Greek is a telling linguistic index.⁷ The deeply rooted disposition towards freedom and autonomy is consciously and overtly expressed in political discussions regarding the Greeks' predilection for democracy.⁸

The argument suggested here is that Greeks do not easily accept status differences; they are reluctant to concede hierarchy, though this is not true for all social contexts (see below). However, at the same time a coexistent set of values, precepts and injunctions emphasise sociability, and a high positive value is placed on social interaction and exchange. This cultural feature is expressed in the emphasis on being socially involved, on having company (*παρέα*), on taking time for sociable activities (*να περάσεις την ώρα σου*), on the highly valued “open personality” (*ανοιχτός τύπος*) (Hirschon [1989]1998: 166–8, 170–2). Inevitably this set of values creates a structural tension since, according to Mauss's model, an asymmetry in relationships automatically results from social exchange. In these terms, the value of autonomy is inevitably compromised by the necessity for social engagement. It is therefore significant that in many aspects of Greek social life, a great reluctance to place oneself under obligation (*το να είσαι υποχρεωμένος/η*) is recognised. The Greek word for “obligation” (*υποχρέωση*) is in itself

highly suggestive, for it is the literal equivalent of “in debt” (*χρέος* ‘debt’). And it is also revealing that visiting people on their namedays, going to weddings and funerals, and in general doing what is socially expected of one are activities called “social obligations” (*κοινωνικές υποχρεώσεις*). This does not apply however to closely related people.

In a society of free and autonomous beings and from the insiders’ point of view, being in debt could be deemed to be abhorrent, and so, I would argue, is obligation. One way to understand this conundrum is provided by the model of gift-exchange and reciprocity, with its intrinsic notion of obligation. The logic of the core values of autonomy and freedom stand in clear opposition to others, as important, which emphasise sociable exchange. Mauss’ gift-exchange model with its key notion of obligation and reciprocity offers a key to the interpretation of many aspects of Greek social and verbal conduct. Given that inherent asymmetries in status are set up through exchange, we might expect to find reflections of this tension between autonomy and the obligations inherent in sociability reflected in ways of speaking, and in ways of doing things.

The interplay of language and key values

The overriding premium placed on personal autonomy and freedom is a striking feature of social life in Greece, one which is evident in a variety of contexts. But this must be understood in the context of a culture in which collective identity prevails over that of the individual, and institutions such as the family are the basic elements in social life. Indeed, it should be noted that the notion of the individual as understood in the west is not applicable to the Greek context (Hirschon [1989]1998: 141). A nuanced interpretation of concepts related to the human subject is essential, and particular care should be taken with the notion of the individual in Greece, for it can easily be confused with common-sense ideas of individuality which have developed in the west. At the social level, Greeks may be seen to act as individualists but I would argue against this. Rather, as I have suggested elsewhere (Hirschon 1998), the notion of the “person” should be contrasted with the atomistic idea of the individual. Constructions regarding the human subject are essentially culturally specific, and the understanding of what constitutes the human being is both dynamic and varies in different social groups.

The emphasis in Greece on independence from the authority of others can be inferred, for example, in the noted predominance of small businesses in the Greek economy, usually family-based, and very few large enterprises or industrial establishments (Hirschon [1989]1998: 82).⁹ In the context of work, employment and economic choices, the preference for self-employment in poor localities such as Kokkinia was revealing: it was expressed explicitly in phrases such as *δεν θέλω κανένα πάνω απ' το/στο κεφάλι μου* 'I don't want anyone over my head', usually said by the men. Women revealed this desire for autonomy by preferring lower paid jobs as cleaners in banks or offices, an impersonal setting, rather than in much better paid domestic jobs where they would be under the direct authority of another woman/housewife.¹⁰ Several women told me that working as a domestic cleaner was demeaning (*υποτιμητικό*), an affront to personal dignity (therefore honour) and not a desirable job, even though earnings were considerably higher. At this level of generalisation, therefore, values of freedom and autonomy can be seen to have a predominant cultural significance. Though the values attached to women's and men's roles are different, this common concern with independence and dignity reveals clearly the concern with freedom and autonomy that I have noted.

In short, the desire for autonomous action entails exercising power over one's own life. Allowing one to make choices without reference to another's authority, personal autonomy is an integral aspect of freedom. The logic of this position has interesting implications for social organisation. The critical dimension is that it stands opposed to the acceptance of hierarchy and of conceding authority to others in contexts where status differences are undefined. I characterise the overall character of the society as one where, in many contexts, fluidity and the negotiation of status prevails while there are a few in which hierarchy is overtly recognised.

For comparative purposes, various typologies used to order societies and cultures represent distinctions of the kind which contrast hierarchy with egalitarianism (cf. Dumont's (1980) classic study of Indian caste society). In Hofstede's (1980) analysis of different societies and their approach to work, he notes a continuum of "power distance" cultures. At one end are those which easily incorporate what he calls "power differentials"; at the other, are those which find them less acceptable. It is evident to me that Greek society falls towards the lower end of the continuum (less accepting of power differentials). Interestingly, this contrasts with the finding that Turkey is at the higher

end of the “power distance continuum” (see Zeyrek, this volume). This point of contrast, I suggest, has a bearing on the interpretation of different codes of politeness and to the indigenous responses to insults in the two societies. Hofstede’s scheme may be correlated with the opposition between hierarchical and egalitarian societies already noted. In this respect then, Turkey might represent a society where hierarchy is accepted and more widely institutionalised while Greece is one where hierarchy is contested, fluid and subject to negotiation (see Schwartz 1994: 113–14).

This is not to say that Greek society does not incorporate systems of hierarchy for it certainly does. An essential consideration in this respect is that of context. In recognising a distinction between ethos and organisation, it is no contradiction to state that hierarchy exists even where the prevailing ethos emphasises freedom and autonomy. Defined hierarchical structures are certainly identifiable in Greece e.g. in the Church, in the formal organisation of the university, in political contexts, in the legal and medical worlds. Structured hierarchy does also exist within the family, though with considerable variation by region. In its urban nuclear form the hierarchy is informally maintained and patriarchal elements are not pronounced (in contrast with stark marking of status differences among transhumant shepherd communities of Epirus (Campbell 1964) and Crete (Herzfeld 1985, note 4 below).

Overall, the common element in these social contexts in which hierarchy exists is that structured inequalities of power and authority are explicitly and formally organised. In these instances the recognised basis of the system is hierarchical and unequal with regard to power distribution, and it follows that a range of formalised actions, including linguistic expression, marks the power differentials. This struck me forcibly when, in my previous post as head of department at a Greek university, I was introduced for the first time to the Chairman of the Governing body by a colleague. In contrast with the first-name familiarity with which she usually addressed me, the colleague took on an obsequious posture, used title and V forms, made an elaborate complimentary speech, flourishingly offered a chair, prepared and served coffee, generally acting out the part of humble subordinate. It was striking on my election, too, that staff of all ranks took up title and V forms instead of the familiar first name and T. T/V distinctions in Greek are clear markers of the contexts in which hierarchy and the separate feature of social distance applies. Conforming then with Brown and Levinson’s scheme, this recognition of hierarchy in particular contexts establishes social distance in ways that are markedly

distinct from forms of everyday interaction.

Notably, in the informal public arena of everyday life, in anonymous contexts, a more egalitarian approach is predominant. Before the strong influences resulting from Greece's integration in the EU, the idea of waiting one's turn, the conventional queueing of Anglo-American society, was seldom observed. Interactions of daily life, in post offices, at bus stops, on the streets, were somewhat disorderly and fraught with tension, marked by what anthropologists have called an "agonistic" quality (see Friedl 1962: 75–6; Herzfeld 1985). This combative quality derives, in my view, from the reluctance to concede hierarchy or to accept subordination. Here, the quality of *εγωισμός* 'pride', self-regarding dignity, one which is closely linked with honour, is operative (Campbell 1964, Herzfeld op.cit.). Social differentiation based on criteria such as age, sex, rank, wealth have particular qualities which demonstrate this self-regarding concern with autonomy.¹¹ Thus, some older people perceive the seats offered to them on buses as an offensive act, and feel insulted that they might be considered weak and infirm. Significantly too, those exempt from the fray were pregnant women, priests and obvious foreigners — beings who have a marginal or liminal position in society which places them outside the pertaining context.¹² For them, seats would be given up on buses.

Reluctance to concede priority to others is also revealed in the frequency of confrontation and combative encounters in the open forum of informal public life. In these anonymous contexts of city and town space, people do not hesitate to struggle for an advantageous position, in effect to assert their will over others. "Greeks are not egalitarian," I have been told, "in reality they want to have the upper hand". Not surprisingly, friction and conflict is endemic to this 'free for all' approach. Arguments and disputes are common, seldom is a bus journey quiet or orderly. Rows break out easily and, with them, the accompanying insults, which do not usually, however, lead to physical violence (see below, insults). Characteristically, the challenge is *και ποιος είσαι εσύ* 'and who are you?' This rhetorical question challenges any possible claim for primacy that the other might have. Its inference is that "You aren't any greater than I, — what gives you the right to assert your will over mine?"

The question of context and appropriate conduct produces a more complicated picture of the variable quality of social interaction. This poses the question of politeness (and rudeness) — and even of civility — in a wider perspective than that of linguistic conduct alone. Clearly, the quality of social

life portrayed in the public arena described above is not characterised by acknowledged codes of negative politeness, whose overall function has been recognised, following Brown and Levinson ([1978]1987), as that of preserving “face”, and also as one of avoiding conflict (Watts et al. 1992: 3).

We could at this point conclude in a gross over-simplified way that a society of equals refusing to acknowledge hierarchy is a kind of anarchy — and conclude, together with Henry Kissinger, that the Greeks are an ungovernable people (interview reported in the Turkish Daily News, 1997). This picture would be reinforced in foreign reporters’ eyes by the recent violent demonstrations against the U.S. President’s visit to Athens in November 1999. But several sociolinguistic studies point out another feature: they characterise Greek society as one of solidarity with a strong emphasis on involvement. Tannen and Kakava (1992) have explored the nature of disagreement in Greek conversation and how it relates to solidarity, while other evidence supports the prevalence of disagreements as a mode of conversation (Makri-Tsilipakou 1994). It is this apparent contradiction which alerts us to the salience of the sets of underlying values I have identified, and the ways in which tensions are created between the notions of “freedom” and “autonomy”, “face” and “honour”, and the emphasis on sociability. It is possible that the evidence for “disagreement as solidarity” may be a reflection at the linguistic level of the need to maintain a sense of autonomy in an overall context which values sociable engagement.

Indeed, ample ethnographic evidence from my own experience of neighbourhood life in Kokkinia can be cited to support this view. Although there was a marked sense of competitive rivalry between families and households, in that urban setting there was also considerable social pressure promoting the values of neighbourly conduct. These encouraged a high degree of social involvement through social exchange (food, gossip, conversation, spending time), a premium on being “in the midst of the activity” (*μεσ’ την κίνηση*), the strong approval of sociability and involvement (*καταδεχτικότητα* ‘a willingness to accept’), as well as the “open” personality (*ανοιχτός τύπος*) mentioned above (Hirschon [1989]1998: 166ff).

In sociolinguistic terms this particular emphasis is evidenced in a preference for positive politeness codes (Sifianou 1992; Makri-Tsilipakou, and Tzanne this volume). But herein lies the contradiction already noted. Stated summarily and at a general level, the prevailing ethos in Greece is one which emphasises personal autonomy and freedom, but it also emphasises solidarity and involvement. The inherent contradiction between these two sets of social

values gives a particular character to politeness codes and to exchanges of all kinds. Notably, social life is characterised by a propensity for confrontation, conflict and verbal dispute. This tension between freedom and obligation is revealed in a variety of verbal expressions, some of which are illustrated below. We could be led to expect that politeness in Greece, as in many societies, is a complex mix of both negative and positive codes; in this case, negative face refers to freedom and autonomy but positive face to solidarity and social engagement.

Feeling free in everyday linguistic expression

Gifts

Conventions regarding presentation of gifts in formal circumstances particularly on the occasion of name-day celebrations provide ethnographic evidence for the emphasis on the avoidance of obligation. In the old style of name-day festivities, a clearly formalised visit took place at the house of the celebrant.¹³ Typically, the gift would be a bottle of alcohol, or confectionery, and typically the offering would be placed unobtrusively on a table and not be overtly acknowledged (cf. Zeyrek this volume). Sometimes when presented, the response was *μα δεν ήταν ανάγκη* ‘oh, but there was no need’. This formulaic disclaimer highlights a key issue in relations of exchange. I suggest that it expresses the reluctance to recognise the debt and the obligation inherent in accepting a gift. This stylistic non-recognition can be contrasted with the conventions of elaborate acknowledgement of the gift in other cultures.

Possibly too, this formulaic dismissal of a gift as if it might indicate a deficiency in the host family could reflect pride in the household’s integrity (relating also to Greek village values of the household as a self-sufficient unit, symbolically a cornucopia, see du Boulay 1974: 38–40. This is a comparable expression of the ideal state of autonomy in a collective context). Admitting need could be seen as a deficiency in a world-view where autonomy of the person and of the family is a central issue. In Olymbos, Karpathos, a Dodecanese island, during festivities which include the lavish offering of food, participants take sparingly, if at all, often refusing everything during long hours of the feast (*γλέντι*). I was told that it is not done to fill yourself at such events — it suggests that you go hungry at home. Similarly, on Kalymnos

those who attended festivities and consumed heartily were looked down upon and referred to as “starving/hungry” (*πεινασμένοι*) (Sutton n.d.). Again, the structural implications of exchange allow us to interpret this as a cultural concern with relative status differences, and the avoidance of compromising one’s autonomy through incurring obligations.¹⁴

At such ritual or formal occasions the context of gift offering is different from those spontaneous offerings which might follow compliments (documented by Sifianou this volume), where an immediate exchange takes place. Some cases presented by Sifianou, show that a spontaneous gift (which cannot be refused, see Mauss 1970: 9ff) may lead to embarrassment. The discomfort associated with such unexpected exchanges reveals the recognition of the obligation incurred and with it the implied change of status from giver to recipient. The direct (immediate) reciprocity between friends, with some degree of intimacy, indicates that finer distinctions can be drawn regarding the status implications of gift-giving. We should note, therefore, general explanatory value of this model which highlights the status implications for relative status in the ways in which acknowledgement is made and obligation is incurred through accepting of a gift, whether formally prescribed or unexpectedly offered.

Thanks

Another revealing element in Greek politeness phenomena, demonstrating the reluctance to acknowledge obligation, is the use — or underuse of — of the word *ευχαριστώ* ‘thank you’. Adept English-speakers who learn Greek soon become aware of the inappropriate nature of expressing gratitude for small routine services. In other cultures, too, the frequent use of “thank you” can be open to misunderstanding (cf. Coulmas 1981: 81, 91).¹⁵ In Greek, it may be construed to border on the sarcastic or even hostile when used in contexts which are entirely acceptable, indeed even necessary, for polite behaviour in the Anglophone world. For example, in UK English, “thanks” is used in ways which can appear superfluous and even ridiculous from the Greek point of view. Conventions regarding politeness terms, as well as apologies, are frequently the sad source of cross-cultural misinterpretation. Greeks may appear ungrateful, rude and abrupt to the English, while to Greeks the English may appear insincere, distant, and hypocritically subservient (cf. Sifianou 1992: 13, 42–3).

Since *ευχαριστώ* ‘thank you’ expresses gratitude, it is a term which marks a difference in relative status with the asymmetry involved in acknowledging a favour or service. The use of “thanks” with closely related persons or within the family context in Greece where mutual obligations are firmly grounded and non-negotiable might be perceived as a distancing device, as a means of eschewing the obligation to reciprocate in kind. For example, parents and children do not exchange thanks but are expected to behave in socially appropriate ways. We might contrast this with the well-brought up children in some middle class UK households who thank their parents for preparing and serving the meal.¹⁶

In Greek, the acknowledgement of the obligation involved in exchange is explicit, where, for example, a person may respond to being thanked with the phrase *υποχρέωσή μου* ‘the obligation is mine’, or add to the thanks, *μένω υπόχρεως* ‘I am under obligation’. This is usually in formal or consciously polite usage.

If you wish

An interesting subtlety in the Greek case, and a further instance of the salience of the notion of freedom, is revealed in another verbal convention. This is the phrase sometimes appended to a request instead of (or along with) the word *παρακαλώ* ‘please’. This might typically happen in the home or in a restaurant. The speaker will add *αν θες* ‘if you like’ to a blunt request, e.g. *φέρε νερό, αν θες* ‘bring some water, if you like’. Other formulations of a similar kind are *αν σου είναι εύκολο* ‘if it’s easy for you’ and *αν έχεις την καλοσύνη* ‘if you’d be so kind’. Such phrases recognise the addressee as a free agent and allow for options in response to the request. By making an order or a request into a voluntary possibility, these phrases allow for the exercise of choice and for the freedom not to comply. It allows free agency on the part of whoever complies and provides the service. The effect of this is to produce solidarity (as opposed to emphasising power differences) by reducing the inequality of status which is inherent both in social exchange and specifically in the request/ command for a service.

Reading the signs

It is important to note here that intrinsic to Greek are many and varied ways of

non-verbal communication through gesture and body language. In contrast with the more level delivery of English, Greek is not effectively spoken without the use of facial expression, a certain amount of gesturing, and varied intonation. Non-Greek speakers remark on this feature and Greek speakers have pointed out that being polite is not just a question of the words used. We need to recognise, therefore, that non-verbal actions play a very important part in maintaining politeness in the Greek context. A shrug, a raised eyebrow, a half smile and, just as important, the tone of voice are most important ways of promoting politeness, for example in modifying requests, and in expressing appreciation, without prejudicing “face”.

Verbal laxity, non accountability

In an earlier analysis of what I have called the “play” aspect of Greek verbal conduct (Hirschon 1992), I have examined verbal deceptions. Though the original focus of my work was interaction between adults and children, the findings are easily applied to adult conversation (cf. Mackridge 1992, also taken up by Sifianou, this volume). In attempting to interpret the playful aspect of language use and what appears to be irresponsibility or lack of accountability in Greek, I pointed out the gap which exists between word and action, between *logos* and *praxis*. This leads to a distinction in the analysis between statements of intention and those of affect, where a syntactically similar type of statement, appearing to be promises or threats, might fall into either category (Hirschon 1992: 43–5). Of course, ambiguity may be evident in various types of statement, e.g. in English “I’ll be back tomorrow” may be a promise to a child but a threat to a tenant.

The problem posed in the context of social life by this kind of laxity in verbal conduct is one of ambiguity: how does one interpret statements which appear to promise or intend something but may actually be expressions of another kind — statements of affect? It is interesting, therefore, that Sifianou’s (this volume) research findings on compliments suggest a concern with sincerity: she notes how reiteration and “objectivisation” of the compliment occur quite frequently, apparently to counteract the suspicion of insincerity. Such problems of interpretation might be expected to follow in cultures where verbal accountability is lax and it is by no means unique to Greek, as cross-cultural studies demonstrate.

Insults with impunity

A great degree of freedom of expression can certainly be evidenced in speech usage in Greece. I have suggested that Greek linguistic conduct allows the speaker to make statements without direct literal accountability and with a greater degree of freedom than is the norm in some other speech communities (Hirschon 1992: 38ff). If this contention is correct, it could be further applied to other aspects of language, specifically, its overt “face-threatening” aspects.

An opportunity for examining face-threatening incidents is provided by Millas’s (1999) work on Turkish and Greek insults. Based on investigations in a small sample of bilingual Greeks from Constantinople/Istanbul now living in Athens, the findings are highly suggestive.¹⁷ People in the sample have lived in both major cities, Istanbul and Athens, and are fully bilingual in Greek and Turkish. They have all been struck by the different reactions to insult by natives in the two countries. In brief, the investigation indicates that insults and curses have more serious consequences in the Turkish context. Following an insult, retaliation should take place, and fighting might be expected to follow. “Turks tend to take verbal insults more seriously than Athenian Greeks and would react more strongly” (Millas 1999: 1). This is especially so when aspersions are cast on family members and the honour of the family is impugned.

The preliminary conclusions of this survey are highly suggestive. One finding noted that “the rudest and most dangerous cursing was that associated sexually with the family “I fuck your mother”; but in Turkey it was much worse to utter such an insult” (Millas 1999: 4). Respondents observed with some surprise that Greeks were more tolerant of such insults, tending to take them lightly, letting them pass usually only as verbal altercations. They noted that in Turkey, the same insults could produce serious rifts including physical violence, with long-term problems of reconciliation. One respondent noted how shocked he was that “Greeks use insulting words against one another, and then, for example, they may remain on the same bus, travelling together as though nothing has happened; in Turkey they would get off and fight to settle their differences” (ibid. 5).

A further difference is that in Turkish a wider range and abundance of insulting terms directed to the family exists and this contrasts with a more limited range in Greek. The sample noted that this sensitivity to take offence was “much greater with regard to group identity” in Turkey (ibid. 4). I would

suggest that differences in family and other corporate group structures together with ways that define identity could account for this. Indeed, the more pronounced patriarchal nature of the Turkish family and the importance in rural areas of corporate kinship groups provides a probable explanation for this greater sensitivity to group insult. “Face” is thus a collective as well as a personal matter. In a society where corporate kin structures have greater importance, one might expect that politeness codes, tolerance and retaliation for insult have different ramifications (see Gilsenan’s (1996) rich account of violence and reputation in Lebanon.) In social terms, insults which are seen to threaten the honour and sexual integrity of the family provoke different demands for physical retaliation as a necessary defence of reputation and prestige in Turkey and Greece.

A further feature noted by all the respondents was that the use of insults and cursing (of a formulaic kind) takes place more frequently in the Athenian Greek context. Everyday parlance is full of phrases which to the ears of the respondents were shocking and constituted rude and insulting terms. Phrases such as *χέσε μας*, lit. “shit on us” used to mean “leave us alone”, *γαμώ το/τη ... σου* ‘I fuck your...’ and *μαλάκας* ‘jerk’, ‘wanker’ (lit. “masturbator”) are sprinkled liberally in speech (ibid. 6) without consequence, much to their astonishment. The latter term, “wanker/jerk” has shocking implications for the respondents but not so for Athenian Greeks who undoubtedly use it as a multifunctional term. The word *πούστης* ‘homosexual’, ‘gay’ is similarly used with equivocal implications. As well as being a term of approbation, it can be phrased in a way to express grudging admiration (*βρε τον πούστη*). Notably, among youngsters *μαλάκας* is not necessarily an insult or even rude (cf. Loizos and Papataxiarchis 1991: 224–6); it is also used affectionately, to indicate solidarity and in-groupness, and is thus, for Athenians a marker of positive politeness, though not for Greek speakers from Istanbul.

Similarly, the widespread and non-insulting use of the term *γαμώ* ‘I fuck it’ can be illustrated in numerous contexts. It is used frequently in popular discourse, on the radio and TV, and even appears in newspaper headlines. A notable case was the triumphal cry of the woman athlete, gold medal winner in the 1996 Olympics: *Γιά την Ελλάδα ρε γαμώ το* ‘I fuck it for Greece’, which became almost a national slogan. Though four letter words are increasingly used in the UK in popular parlance, they are still taboo words and certainly do not appear unabridged in national papers.

The preliminary conclusion of the report is that Athenian Greeks “curse

more freely, insulting individuals, families and even pious symbols”, provoking little reaction, in contrast with the sample group. In Athens generally, people are reluctant to let insults escalate into violence (Millas 1999: 7). In attempting to interpret this feature, the importance of several factors must be considered. Generational difference in language use is one variable, already alluded to regarding male sexuality, where older people (parents) would find the four letter words and insults used commonly by young and single persons more offensive. This overall tolerance of insulting words without retaliation is also associated, I suggest, with the characteristic of verbal laxity, playfulness and lack of accountability already noted. Here, the question of laxity and verbal freedom is undoubtedly applicable, as well as are different conventions regarding what constitutes areas of verbal taboo.

Millas (1999) asserts that the interpretation requires attention to power relationships, not only to differences in the literal or face-value significance of words (*ibid.* 7–8). His analysis thus raises the question of hierarchy in relation to “face-threatening” verbal conduct and varying degrees of sensitivity in the two societies. Clearly, the scope for analysis could go far beyond the present brief exploration. A speculative conclusion at this point is that reaction to and retaliation for insults reflects differences in the two countries history, in their social organisation/ institutions, in values associated with honour and conventions about how it is maintained. In all this, the analysis requires careful attention to specific social contexts (family, generation group, class, employment, army, public arena).

Conclusion: Cultural variability and questions of “face”

The present paper written from an anthropological perspective attempts to illustrate how the identification of central values, elicited from prevalent patterns of social conduct among Greeks, might help us interpret characteristic features of verbal activity, specifically, aspects of politeness conduct. It aims to present a picture of the specific character and central features of speech patterns in Greece and constitutes an exploration in the ethnography of speaking. Based on ethnographic observation and the analysis of key cultural values it aims to show how these are expressed in social and verbal conduct. The emphasis on values of freedom, personal autonomy, and sociability give a distinct quality to life. Tensions arise in a variety of contexts where exchanges

take place. Avoidance of being under obligation is a primary concern, and this is reflected in certain characteristic features of politeness codes, some of which are explicated above.

This paper focuses attention on various types of exchange, on gift giving, on modification to requests, on the acknowledgement of services and favours, and on insults — the obverse of politeness. In order to provide an interpretation for these features, and not simply to document them, I refer to what I have elsewhere called the playful aspect of Greek verbal conduct, the “detachability” of language, and the lack of accountability for a range of verbal utterances (Hirschon 1992). I have also drawn attention to the importance of non-verbal cues, in body language and intonation, in maintaining politeness. My argument is that identifying the primary value of freedom and personal autonomy helps to make sense of these cultural features and of language use.

With a focus on politeness conduct in Greece, the paper addresses issues of “face”, contextualised in the case of Greece and Turkey in the value of “honour”. Brown and Levinson’s ([1978]1987) monograph has been the pervasive central influence in writings on politeness. Over the past years, various revisions and refinements have been suggested. Taking an anthropological view, it is clear that verbal activity as an FTA shows considerable cultural variability, and the question of whether it constitutes a linguistic universal is one which should be addressed empirically. In this respect, collaboration between the fields of anthropology and sociolinguistics could be a most productive area.

One suggestion arising out of this analysis of language use in a specific cultural context, that of Greece, relates to the accountability or literal value of statements. A critical point in any empirical study is to determine the manner in which verbal utterances are interpreted within the speech community in question. In other words, a pre-condition for the understanding of FTAs is the question of the accountability of utterances, since this is not standard but itself is culturally variable. The question of how accountable is the relationship between word and action (how binding words are, i.e. the degree to which literal statements are the norm) determines the degree to which verbal activity is face-threatening. I argue from this that “face” or self-esteem is not entirely determined by literal expression of an utterance. In other words, the face-threatening aspect of verbal activity is dependent on the degree to which words are taken seriously. After all, words themselves have a “face value”. Furthermore, other important factors in the communication of the message

include intonation, gesture and body language as well as context.

The question of variable degrees of accountability and of inconsistency between word and action is an aspect of language use applicable to Greek speech acts (and also to some other language communities). It might help explain the greater tolerance for insults in some cultures, for example, and the fact that some societies do not have expressions of cursing, swearing or insult (Montague 1965). In addition, one might expect a number of features associated with non-accountability: a greater elasticity, and a greater degree of freedom which makes verbal utterances ambiguous and open to interpretation. There may be a greater emphasis on elaborate modes of expression, taking the form of rhetoric or oratory, as well as an appreciation of the voluble as an aesthetic and creative pursuit. Mackridge (1992: 113) has noted the importance of poetry in Greek literature, its prestige and success.

Certainly in educated Greek circles, language skill can be seen as a matter of pride in itself, in some way, as an art form. One's skill with language can be displayed — it is an expressive act, rather like the dance. Herzfeld (1985) has drawn attention both to the performative aspect of language in Cretan village life and more recently (1997) to the ways in which the politicisation of language reveals the strategic use of *demotic*, (the popular) as opposed to the more purified, elaborated *katharevousa* forms. I would also like to argue that the tradition of rhetoric, a classical Greek pursuit, has an unacknowledged currency throughout contemporary Greece, in rural and urban groups, both in everyday and in more formalised elitist contexts. Anyone who has been involved in Greek academic life will recognise that the skilful use of language and oratory is an appreciated quality, and that the right to speak at length and to express oneself is an important issue of respect. To be concise is not a prevailing value; a by-product of this is the extraordinary length of departmental meetings and of television panel interviews!

Summing up the further implications of this paper in an impressionistic way one could say that the acceptance of some degree of non-accountability of words in Greek gives the language a life of its own. It need not have an absolute or necessary connection with literal reality but can be playfully employed. I have suggested that this has direct implications for the face-threatening aspect of verbal activity. As we have seen, a greater tolerance for insult might be explained in this way. Other aspects of verbal conduct have been examined in terms of tensions set up by what I identify as core values in Greek society. Those which emphasise freedom and personal autonomy stand

in contrast, even in direct contradiction with those values which emphasise sociability and its various injunctions to social involvement which result in engagement with others. The tension between these produces a reluctance to enter into obligations, following Mauss's gift-exchange model, and consequently a notable tendency to contest hierarchy. Thus social life is marked by high degrees of confrontational and combative encounters but also by intense sociability with the pronounced characteristic of "solidarity in disagreement".

Linguistic studies dealing with various aspects of Turkish and Greek politeness codes included under the same covers in this book should provide a revealing testing ground for comparative analysis and conclusions. The explorations in this paper are offered as a wider contextual framework to promote this endeavour and I am grateful to the editors for inviting me to contribute to it from outside the discipline of sociolinguistics.

Notes

1. I am most grateful to Maria Sifianou and Arın Bayraktaroğlu for their comments and editorial patience. Earlier version of this paper profited from criticisms by Margaret Kenna, Peter Mackridge, Charles Stewart and David Sutton and I gratefully acknowledge their contributions. Nick Allen and Joy Hendry provided very useful comments on a later draft. Most helpful have been discussions with native Greek speakers. I thank Sophia Handaka, Dimitris Livianos, Effie Mavromichali, Iraklis Millas, and especially Nasos Vayenas whose suggestions helped clarify the argument, rectify the interpretations and improve the text.
2. In addition, the question of cognition and language is also addressed: see for example, the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis, positing a deterministic correlation of thought and language, cf. Allen (1983) "language reflects social organization" and (it) "constrains the social cognition of society." See also Brown and Gilman's (1960: 272) study of T/V usage and the possibility of correlating a young French male's political and social attitudes with the regular use of T to female students.
3. In this I follow Bateson in his 1930s pioneering work *Naven* (1958, 2nd ed.) which incorporated the concepts of "ethos", "eidos", "emotion" and "value". In a period when structural-functionalist explanations prevailed, Bateson's approach was highly innovative, and continues to offer insights.
4. The problem with such statements is the level of generalisation implied. Thorny epistemological debates abound in the social sciences on this issue. Without dismissing the post-modernist emphasis on reflexivity and its concomitants, I uphold the validity of generalisation based on empirical data and supportive evidence. With regard to Greece, notwithstanding identifiable urban/rural, regional, generational and educational differences, generalising statements referring to overall cultural features are common currency in anthropological writing and do not deny the differentiations within the society.

5. This point is a central premise in anthropology with the analytical distinction between “insiders” and “outsiders” models, or the “conscious/unconscious” models of Levi-Strauss. This is not always understood by other disciplines, which only accept explicit interpretations provided by “natives”, or by native speakers, i.e. an expression of the “conscious” model (see Mackridge’s (1992: 115–6) scepticism about anthropologists’ reliance on and use of key notions, such as *σημασία* “meaning” which are not elaborated in Greek speech).
6. Taking the notion of social exchange further, Sahllins (1974: 191–6) elaborated a typology on the principle of reciprocity. Distinguished into “generalised”, “balanced” and “negative” depending on the immediacy of the return transaction, this is a useful scheme for the interpretation of culturally-variable patterns of reciprocity.
7. I do not propose any deterministic relationship: while Greek offers T and V forms of address, English does not, yet hierarchy is more widely evident in English society based on class (see also Sifianou 1992: 63ff).
8. “Freedom or death” was the slogan of the 1821 uprising. The Greek national anthem, a poem by Solomos, is entitled “Hymn to Liberty” and was written in 1823 during the War of Independence. This paper does not deal with the possible explanations for and the historical development of the primacy of freedom among Greek values; it is far too complex a topic with many ramifications. For the present purpose, illustrations from ethnographic observation of an impressionistic kind must suffice for the argument.
9. The temporal point of reference is the character of Greece’s economy before joining the EU in 1981. Arguments regarding processes of social change cannot be examined here but, in summary form, my contention is that core values, central cultural themes and preoccupations do not change very rapidly. They are, however, pre-eminently flexible, are subject to adaptation and adjustment. Thus, they might **seem** to change, taking different epiphenomenal expressions which may appear to be “modernising” while in fact the underlying concerns remain the same, cf. Nakane’s (1970) widely accepted analysis of Japanese business organisations/corporate structures and their continuity with the *ie*, the traditional household; see also Hirschon ([1989]1998: 32–5).
10. For a full discussion of these choices in Kokkinia and the values which inspire them, see Hirschon ([1989]1998: 84–105).
11. Since wealth is one criterion conferring status, an interesting illustration comes in anecdotes such as that about the late Aristotle Onassis. When he was at the height of his powers, his legendary wealth and extravagance widely reported, people would comment “But he too will only have one and a half metres of ground” (*και αυτός μόνο ένα μισο μέτρο γη θάχει*), i.e. as a grave.
12. Possibly, too, this effect is reinforced by an association, at the symbolic level, with the world beyond social boundaries, the ritual or sacred sphere (stranger as god in disguise, pregnancy’s highly creative state as close to the divine).
13. Far reaching changes are occurring with the increasing celebration of birthdays and lavish name-day parties, the topic of my current research (Hirschon 1998).
14. Compassionate feeding of travellers and tourists is seen as a normal social duty to the needy. But in what can be seen as public food consumption it is less socially acceptable

for those who are part of the community who might be seen as incapable of catering for their own needs.

15. Minimised use of “Thanks” is noted in other cultures too with regard to expectation of family duties. With a wide range of cross-cultural variability, thanks and the expression of gratitude are linguistic features which might be profitably compared with reference to the analytical concepts of the gift-exchange model and its implications for relative status.
16. See Pitt-Rivers (1992, 215ff) for an examination of the connection between grace, the unique non-reciprocal relationship between divine and secular worlds, and gratitude.
17. This joint research project is currently underway and the results are preliminary. They are highly suggestive in relation to the topic focus of this volume, and worth introducing into the current discussion. I express my grateful acknowledgement to Iraklis Millas for allowing me to use the fieldwork material from our collaborative project which is still in progress.

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Politeness in Turkish and its linguistic manifestations

A socio-cultural perspective¹

Deniz Zeyrek

Socio-cultural phenomena, language and politeness

Socio-cultural phenomena encompass culture on the one hand, and social phenomena on the other. Culture is “a script or a schema” (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey 1988: 30) shared by the members of a society and includes the knowledge of a wide range of values, beliefs, norms and ideas shaped by tradition. Social phenomena constitute individuals’ understanding of situational factors such as gender roles, distance versus closeness, power and solidarity. Socio-cultural phenomena and language reciprocally influence each other. Socio-cultural phenomena affect language, and the way language is used can have an impact on how socio-cultural phenomena are perceived. This is because beliefs, values, ideas and perceptions are reinstated through language and can eventually become considered as appropriate behaviour. The present chapter deals with one side of this reciprocal relationship by examining the influence of socio-cultural phenomena on language. It views politeness as an important aspect of socio-culturally sanctioned behaviour and analyses its manifestations in the vocabulary, formulaic expressions and conversational styles.

In the first part, Turkish culture is analysed from an ethnographic perspective. Key aspects such as family organisation, and norms and values such as cordiality are dealt with. This part is aimed to provide a background against which culturally sanctioned appropriate and polite behaviour can be understood. The second section outlines the social factors that hinge on the cultural aspects mentioned in the previous part. It discusses conceptualisations of

power and gender and how they influence deference terms and forms of address. The third part reconsiders the use of formulaic expressions in Turkish and discusses their role in conveying some salient beliefs.

The culture of relatedness

Relatedness and group consciousness are central aspects of Turkish culture. Social networks provide support to individuals and in return thrive on their loyalty. This loyalty, however, is not always passive. The honour, or the “good name” (*namus*) of the individual, which is of primary importance in Turkish society (see also Hirschon in this volume for the same concept in Greece), derives its strength from the extent of the defence one is prepared to mount for the ethos of the network, whether of the family, the block of flats that one lives in, the neighbourhood, the school, the professional club, the home town, the political party, or the country. Individuals are expected to place group advantages before personal ones, even if this requires at times making sacrifices. Disputes are usually the outcome of conflicting loyalties and affection between individuals generally develops as a result of in-group affinity.

One may belong to many social networks, and priority in loyalties may vary from person to person, but family and the country are top of the list for almost all Turks.

The family

This sense of relatedness explains the closely-knit social and familial structures of Turkish society. In a cross-cultural study (Kağıtçıbaşı 1996) that showed the value of children for parents in the Turkish family, it was indicated that, in the modern age, culture has not given way to the separation and individuation of family members, quite contrary to the predictions of sociologists. Instead, “family interdependence” and “a family culture of relatedness” prevail in the society (1996: 45). This first takes the form of the child being dependent on the parents, and then, in old age, of parents getting emotional and financial support from the grown-up child.² The language used in various kinds of social interaction reflects this concept quite clearly. The questions, “Are you married?” and “Do you have children?” or even “Why aren’t you

married?” can readily be asked of a new acquaintance or of guests by hosts on TV shows. Due to the importance of family and children, these utterances are not considered as an intrusion on one’s private life, and thus are neither inappropriate nor impolite.

Proverbs and frozen expressions in the language further reflect the role of the family and progeny. Blessings and curses used by ordinary people are usually built on the theme of family, such as *Yedi oğlanla bir sofraya oturasın* ‘May you dine with seven sons’ and *Kımalı parmak sıkama* ‘May you not hold a finger with henna on’³ (said to a young man) demonstrate.

The value placed on the family makes individuals aware of their roles within this social group and to act accordingly. Appropriate and polite behaviour in a tight familial organisation usually takes the form of expected behaviour. Thus, children would be behaving appropriately if they were well mannered when they were young, and if they provided support for their parents in their old age. The father would be exhibiting appropriate behaviour if he maintained the livelihood of the household, and the mother would be doing so if she enhanced the well being of the family. Age is a further factor warranting certain patterns of behaviour. Older individuals are expected to be shown respect and warmth, while younger ones are to be nurtured, cared for and protected. For instance, kissing an older individual’s hand and raising it to the forehead is a polite code of behaviour manifesting deference.

Turks’ concern for their family members and the values they hold in relation to familial ties can be understood from the results of quantitative research carried out in Ankara (Tezcan 1974). This study tested the attitudes towards national and culture-specific notions of a group of university students. The respondents lived in Ankara but had diverse backgrounds; some were raised in cities, the rest in villages or small towns. In one questionnaire constructed for this study, 65% of the respondents said they helped their relatives and their families in tasks like child-care, finding a job and loans (Tezcan 1974: 243, 292). These answers also point to the fact that people residing in cities try to keep intact ties with their nuclear family members but do not sustain their relationships with members of the extended family. This was even more evident in the answers of the respondents raised in a rural setting versus those raised in an urban setting. 57.1% of the former group indicated that they would support their relatives and their families when they were in need, while 92.3% of the latter group indicated they would not (Tezcan 1974: 292).

In a closely-knit family structure, directness in speech prevails. Huls (1988) investigated the socio-linguistic consequences of intimate relationships that exist among Turkish family members and focused on the use of directives. Of the two migrant families under observation in Holland, one was a religious family with traditional division of tasks in the household, and the other a more open and non-religious one with a less traditional division of household tasks. She found that bald-on-record strategies were more frequently used in both households while negative politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987) strategies were almost absent. According to Brown and Levinson's theory, directness in speech is interpretable as minimal politeness. However, as we have mentioned above, the family is a tightly organised unit where members are expected to be aware of their duties and help one another without being asked, often without expecting a return. Consequently, the direct, bald-on-record utterances of one family member to another would not be impolite; rather, they seem to be motivated by a sense of duty and obligation engendered by the social context.

This sense of duty and obligation also determines the type of appropriate behaviour in responding to the family member who did the favour, helped etc. The literature indicates that there are diverse verbal and nonverbal means of expressing gratitude across cultures. In a classic paper (Apte 1974) it was shown, for instance, that in South Asian languages there are situational variations relating to acts of verbal gratitude. Similarly, in a Turkish household verbal gratitude does not occur and if it does, it has negative connotations. As is probably the case in most kinship-based societies, the expected reciprocity of similar actions of help renders verbalisation of gratitude rather inappropriate.⁴ What is expected of the family member who receives help or a favour from another is to behave in the same way when the occasion arises (see Sifianou 1992a: 162, 1993: 71–72 for the same points in Greek society).

Love and trust, which are assumed to hold the family members together also sanction particular codes of behaviour. Thus emotions, namely love and affection, do not always receive any explicit expression. Spouses generally do not express their love to each other by explicit linguistic means; parents often refrain from verbally conveying their warm feelings to their children. These feelings are assumed among family members so that there is no real need to verbalise them. This contrasts sharply with the Anglo-American culture which encourages people (e.g. spouses) to say directly and explicitly what they want and what they think (Wierzbicka 1991: 99). Thus, in contrast to the Anglo-

American style of expressing endearment, e.g. “I love you”, or “I’m proud of you”, Turkish speakers would prefer non-verbal ways of expressing their love and endearment in the family, e.g. hugging and kissing. The only linguistic means to import affect are some lexical items like *canım* ‘my soul’, *hayatım* ‘my life’, and the diminutive marker (see Cordiality).

Other networks

Komşuluk, i.e. the friendships formed with one’s neighbours, literally ‘neighbourliness’ can be regarded as the next important mode of socialisation for many people, especially for those living in rural areas. Just like family members, neighbours can be important when help is needed, for example for food and accommodation at difficult times, loans, assistance during child birth and death, etc. As Delaney (1991: 188) has observed, in the villages, mutual cooperation and trust hold among neighbours in such cases. The reason can be the tendency of individuals to depend on the people they consider close, sometimes even more than on institutions (cf. Sifianou 1993: 71–72 who mentions the same characteristic in her discussion of Greek society). Mutual dependency among neighbours seems to be losing its importance among people living in cities, probably because of the diverse forms of socialisation existing there, and because of better access to institutions like hospitals and banks. Nevertheless, the language still has expressions and proverbs reflecting the importance of networks. For instance, to indicate the identity of a person, one can use the expression *bizim mahalleli* lit. ‘from our neighbourhood’ (Tezcan 1974: 99), which roughly encodes the meaning ‘s/he cannot be someone totally mysterious or dangerous as s/he lives in the same neighbourhood as we do’. Boys protect the girls of their neighbourhood from the advances of boys from other *mahalles*, even when the girls are known to them only vaguely, thus demonstrating how vital it is for them to keep the “good name” of their close circle unblemished.

Hemşehrilik is another concept, probably more important than ‘neighbourliness’, which still seems to play a role in socialisation. The term means relatedness due to being from the same home town. In general, *hemşehrilik* ties help people, especially migrants/students from rural areas, to form new social networks (Baştuğ 1977, Güvenç 1977). For instance, students coming from the same town to a city for their university education get in contact and

rent an apartment together to stay in while they are there. Migrants coming from villages to major cities for better job opportunities secure dealings with various bureaucratic agencies through this kind of network. The language thus has the word *tanıdık* ‘acquaintance’, which means a person whom someone knows and trusts for finding a job, or getting a job in an agency. It is quite common to join new networks (usually of employment) by using the visiting card of a mutual *tanıdık* or someone famous, bearing on it the hand-written words, *Hamili tanıdığım* ‘He who carries this card is well-known to me’. Tezcan’s quantitative analyses provide cues as to the prevailing importance of this network. In that study, 48% of the respondents indicated that the psychological impact of having social ties with one’s *hemşehri* ‘home townner’ and working with him/her at the same place would be positive. On the other hand, a substantial number of respondents (25.5%) did not think it useful, and a slightly larger group (26.5%) was undecided (Tezcan 1974: 295).

Prolonged contact with people in the same work place, school, etc. is still a further means of establishing close ties with new people and thus forming a social group. Often, in order to indicate how such relationships have come to be included in one’s social network, specialised terms are used. For instance, one may have an *iş arkadaşı* ‘work friend’, *sınıf arkadaşı* ‘class friend’, *askerlik arkadaşı* ‘army friend’ or *oda/ev arkadaşı* ‘room/house friend’. It is important to note that these terms encode ‘friendship’, rather than the concept of ‘mate’ or ‘companion’ embedded in the equivalent English terms. If someone is another’s work/school/house friend, s/he is generally expected to be close to him/her. S/he is the one with whom intimate conversations can be held and who can be depended on and trusted.⁵ Like the relationships among the members of a family, the ties among friends are expected to be close, intimate, and warm, enhancing supportiveness and generosity. This characteristic of Turkish culture has been noticed by Hotham (1972: 126, emphasis mine):⁶ “whenever I engaged a man for the job my Turkish friends were reluctant in the extreme to discuss the question of payment. They gave the impression that the work should be done out of...*comradeship* or *friendship*”. The importance Turks place on the relationship with their neighbours, people they know from their home town, and their relatives, may be undergoing changes as mentioned above, but the traditional importance attached to the unity of the immediate family members, social networks established through friends, and in some cases home-townners seem to indicate that they value in-group membership and collectivism. Sifianou (1997b: 167) reports that the in-group is “one’s

family, relatives, friends and friends of friends” where intimacy, support and generosity hold among individuals. Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988: 40) define “collectivism” as a dimension of cultural variability where “group goals have precedence over individuals’ goals”. This is in contrast to “individualism”, where “emphasis is placed on individuals’ goals.” An important aspect of collectivist cultures is that “people belong to in-groups and collectivities which are supposed to look after them in exchange for loyalty”. Reconsidering Kağıtçıbaşı (1996) who stressed the same point in relation to the Turkish family structure, and other aspects of the society which we have mentioned above, we can conclude that the Turkish socio-cultural structure tends to have a strong collectivist nature.

Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988: 43, 46) propose that the terms “collectivist” and “individualistic” can be replaced by the labels “high-context communication” and “low-context communication”. The former terms define broad differences between cultures, while the latter focus on cultural differences in communication processes. This distinction is a useful one for the purposes of the present analysis, which aims to shed light on politeness strategies that emerge in communication as a result of specific socio-cultural characteristics. Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988: 43) quote Hall (1976) who defines a high-context communication or message as one in which “most of the information is either in the physical context or internalised in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message”. In contrast, a low-context message is one where most of the information is conveyed in the explicit code. Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988: 44) contend that all cultures Hall (1976) labels as low-context are individualistic, and those he labels as high-context are collectivist. This leads them to conclude that low- and high-context communication styles are dominant in individualistic and collectivist cultures, respectively. Although there exists no culture which is one hundred per cent at one end of the individualistic-collectivist and high-low context continuum, Turkish culture would be placed toward the higher end of both continua; thus individuals would value “we” identity, the indirect mode of verbal style, and they contextualise their utterances by alluding to shared experiences and sentiments, amongst other communication strategies (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey 1988: 59, 93).⁷ Indirectness is, of course, too wide an area to be handled in an article of this generality, but it may be useful to remember in passing that indirectness does not always mean negative politeness. Sifianou (1997b), for instance, explored indirectness in

the context of Greek society and found that while some examples of indirect speech may indeed be explained as individuals avoiding imposition on others, some other forms may derive their meaning from the close relationship that exists between the speakers, i.e. it can be a form of positive politeness.

The inside versus the outside

If we are correct about the collectivist nature of Turkish society, which necessarily involves the evaluation of self in terms of involvement in a group rather than personal independence, we are led to consider how Turks perceive the distinction between in-group and out-group members. In her ethnographical research, Delaney (1991: 208) indicates that this distinction does indeed exist and is, in fact, quite strong. Helling (1959: 194, 225) shows in his sociological research, the prevailing importance of friend vs. foe in Turkish society. Certain social values and the language itself can substantiate the claim. For instance, the house has a special symbolic role in Turkish familial structure in general; namely, it encloses family members vis-à-vis people outside (cf. Delaney 1991: 211 ff). It is like a fortress, providing a safe and protective environment for family members against outsiders. To use Goffman's term, it appears to be a "region" of a special kind; it has clear boundaries separating it from the outside (Goffman 1959: 106). As a symbolic place securing the well-being of the family, the house is obviously the inside, making everything else left out of the boundaries of the house the outside. Support for this idea can also be found in the word *evlenmek* 'get married'. The word is derived from the root noun *ev* 'house' giving 'marriage' the meaning of 'having a house'. The term thus underpins the cultural belief that one cannot belong to a family without a protective environment, i.e. a house.

Another revealing example is the word *yabancı* 'stranger', which also means 'outsider' and 'wild'. Thus, anyone outside the boundaries of a perceived region (e.g. the house, the town, the country, etc.) is simultaneously an outsider and a stranger belonging to the wild.⁸ What looks like a simple case of polysemy actually reveals how the outside is perceived, i.e. as unknown, unfamiliar, strange and wild. From this vantage point, an insider (e.g. a family member, someone from the same work place, a friend) is familiar, known and to be trusted, while an outsider is unfamiliar, unknown and not trustworthy. In other words, an insider and an outsider are sharply distinguished.

Gelin ‘bride, daughter-in-law’ seems to support the distinction. What is interesting about this word is that it is derived from the verb root *gel* ‘come’. Thus a woman who joins the family through marriage is literally ‘the one who comes (from outside)’, i.e. she is essentially perceived as an outsider. Once again, the word underpins the value attached to the in-group (the family in this case) and the fact that outsiders are perceived with respect to in-group members.

The distinction between the inside and the outside does not seem to lead to the estrangement of all out-group members, nor are all outsiders and guests viewed as potentially dangerous or destructive. Looking at history, we can see that the ancient Turkic tribes did not totally alienate outsiders, either. They readily granted refuge to strangers in an encampment, provided that they abided by their rules such as not stealing and not making sexual advances to the women of the household (Delaney 1991: 233). This notion still lives in the culture, as the expression *Tanrı misafiri* ‘The guest sent by God’ shows. It is used to refer to a person who is not known but is nevertheless treated as a guest in the house.

Cordiality

Cordiality appears to be quite pervasive and evident in Turkish culture and influences both verbal and non-verbal messages. This notion is probably not peculiar to any specific society but may be reflected in culturally and linguistically specific ways. Below, a number of these, namely the use of the diminutive, some linguistic forms used in entertaining guests, and physical expressiveness, will be dealt with as modes of cordial behaviour.

Wierzbicka (1985: 166) contends that the central place of warmth and affection in Polish culture is reflected in the highly developed systems of diminutives, which is true for Slavic and the Mediterranean cultures. Sifianou (1992b) shows that Greek too is one of these languages where diminutives are used extensively to indicate endearment and affection. As such, they are linguistic elements serving as markers of friendly, informal politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987: 109, 251) mention in passing that the particle meaning ‘a little’ in Tzeltal is sprinkled liberally throughout a positively polite conversation, especially by women. In general, they explain, the diminutive functions as an endearment for the topic of the conversation. Although Turkish does not

seem to be one of the languages having a highly developed system of diminutives, the role of — *cV̇k*,⁹ the diminutive suffix in Turkish, seems quite similar to these languages, expressing familiarity, informality and endearment. For instance, parents commonly use it to address or call their children. It is also frequent between good friends (especially females) and spouses. From the linguistic perspective, it is used with personal names, nouns and adjectives, giving the utterance a general sense of informality and affect. Offering more food to guests can also be enacted by the diminutive suffix. The hostess can mark the word *parça* ‘piece’ with the diminutive even though the piece (of food) may not be so small, e.g. *Bir parçacık daha alsana*. ‘Why don’t you take another piece-DIM’. In this way, the hostess would be successfully alleviating the possibility of imposition that may be induced by her insistence. On the whole, the utterance would seem to convey what Wierzbicka explains (1985: 167) for Polish: ‘Don’t resist! It’s a small thing I’m asking you to do — and a good thing!’ Sifianou (1992b: 164) also, points to this function of diminutives in making offers in Greek. The primary function of the diminutive suffix, then, is to signal interpersonal involvement, and to show affectionate concern for the addressee’s well-being.

Cordiality is practised while entertaining guests or helping strangers. Lewis (1971: 119), describing family life in Istanbul during the Ottoman Empire, wrote: “Whatever one’s resources ... the entertainment of a guest was a sacred duty, no matter how unexpected his arrival. Food and drink, of the best that could be provided, were at once offered, as well as a bed if the visit were protracted...”. Lawlor (1993:41) wrote:

Turks are so solicitous, one hesitates to betray any inadequacy. Even seek directions and a task force is assembled. How eager they are to help, providing advice, prices, opening hours, bus schedules. They will do anything to be of service, anything to smooth your way.¹⁰

Guests and visitors are treated cordially as Lawlor and Lewis noticed, and it would not be an overgeneralisation to say that the generosity shown in offering food to guests is one of the most prominent forms of cordiality in Turkish culture. In order to express her generosity, the hostess often does not accept the simple ‘no’ said by the guest and offers again. This is because ‘no’ or some hesitation actually means ‘ask me again’ for many Turkish speakers, as Saville-Troike (1990: 34) notes is the case in most Middle-Eastern countries.

The ritual of offering food (or any other goods/services) to guests involves a lengthy interaction most of the time, where the hostess may use one

or more of the following expressions randomly or within a sequence. In repeating her offer, it is quite likely that she would choose an expression that is stronger in its illocutionary force than the one she has used in her previous offer:

- Ne olur!* ‘What happens if...’ lit. “Come on, don’t refuse”
Allahaşkına! ‘For the sake of God!’
Küserim! ‘I won’t talk to you again!’
Ölümü gör! ‘See my dead body!’¹¹

By using these expressions in repeated offers, the hostess can step up the pressure, so to speak, on the guest (see also Wierzbicka 1985: 148–149 for offers in Polish, and Gu 1990: 253 for invitations in Chinese). This pattern of behaviour may appear a downright imposition to a cultural outsider, but this is far from the actual fact. It would be perceived as appropriate within the context of Turkish culture, where generosity is a way of showing cordiality. The guest is also believed to be behaving appropriately when s/he declines the offer several times before s/he finally accepts it. This is because of the tacit cultural value which dictates that the guest should not appear too eager to eat the food offered.¹² At the end of a visit, the hostess exhibits a similar pattern of behaviour, in that she tries to detain the guest/s, using expressions like, *oturuyoruz daha* ‘we’re having a good time’ or *daha erken* ‘it is still early’.

The cordiality shown to guests is often accompanied by a physical manifestation, viz. hugging, kissing and shaking hands. Thus, visitors are welcomed not only by verbal means, but also by such physical means. The leave-taking ritual similarly includes physical expressiveness, which seems to be a characteristic of most Mediterranean cultures including Slavic cultures (Wierzbicka 1985: 167). Neither women nor men refrain from bodily contact with other women and men unless they have a strict religious faith that prohibits the touching of the opposite sex.

Silence and talkativeness: If words are silver, silence is golden

‘Söz GümüŖse Suküt Altındır’

While talkativeness is a necessary quality, keeping silent, in particular knowing *when* to be quiet, is a required attribute. Talkativeness is most appropriate

in friendly interactions. During his travels in Turkey, Hotham (1972: 126) noticed this tendency and wrote that he and his Turkish friends would “discuss the news, drink Turkish coffee or tea, talk about every subject under the sun” thus hinting at the talkative nature of Turks rather than their taciturnity. Lawlor (1993) also seems to have noticed Turks’ interest in lively and friendly talk as he gave several examples of lengthy conversations he had with the people he met while he was travelling in the country. Lewis (1971: 114) wrote about the interaction among women during visits, where they shared and exchanged gossip, compared children, discussed matrimonial matches, etc.

Looking at the language, we find several words and expressions that reflect the value attached to talkativeness in friendly interaction. One example is the noun *sohbet* ‘friendly talk’, which connotes talking for communicative rather than referential purposes. Another noun *hoşsohbet* ‘sweet talker’ shows that a person is valued positively for his/her ability to carry out jocular and friendly conversation. The language has the set expression *Ne kokar ne bulaşır* ‘S/he neither gives out odour, nor does s/he mix’, which pejoratively refers to a person’s not wanting to socialise. Metaphorically, it encodes the meaning that a person who does not mix with others and does not talk has neither virtues nor vices.¹³

Silence, on the other hand, appears to be the appropriate mode of behaviour in the presence of a more powerful companion or in solemn contexts. In some gift-giving acts, especially those taking place in socially unequal situations, the gift can be quietly left in an appropriate place in the room of the host/ess by the giver. This pattern of behaviour seems to free the giver from the struggle of finding the right words to accompany the act. As an alternative to silence, the gift-giver may choose to utter downgrading expressions to belittle the gift (cf. Brown and Levinson 1987: 185–186), such as *Size layık değil ama ...* ‘It is not anything that equals your-PLU (high) worth but...’

In return, the addressee may remain silent, sometimes only smiling. Alternatively s/he may use verbal modes of expression showing humility, like *Zahmet etmişsin(iz), hiç gerek yoktu* ‘I see that you-PLU gave yourself trouble (in buying this), there was really no need (for you to go to the trouble).’ And finally, s/he opens the gift a little later, often after the giver has left. The receiver thus avoids the rather uncomfortable situation of appearing too eager to see what the parcel contains.¹⁴ It needs to be pointed out, however, that the traditional perspective on gift-giving/receiving acts outlined here is undergoing change and in urban contexts nowadays the gift is often opened in the

presence of the giver and gratitude expressed, rather than abiding by the traditional rules of keeping silent.

Silence is also appropriate on visits paid to the family members of a recently deceased person. Formulaic expressions like *Başın (ız) sağolsun* ‘May your-PLU head be alive’ apart, visitors often prefer to talk very little in the house of a dead person and everyone sits silently.¹⁵ The function of silence in this case seems to be to share the sadness occasioned by the death, and pay respect to the memory of the deceased.

The visitors’ behaviour at a deceased person’s home, and the more traditional examples of gift-giving/receiving situations show that silence in Turkish culture is produced consciously for communicative purposes, and as such it often wins over words. Knowing when to keep silent, therefore, should be part of the communicative competence of the individual, which requires an understanding of the socio-cultural factors shaping the event. These examples reveal that silence is not the total lack of talk; rather, it is “the appropriate amount and type of talk in the particular context”, as predicted by Sifianou (1997a: 75).

Social factors influencing language use

Power, distance and gender

Power is “the degree to which H can impose his own plans and his own self-evaluation (face) at the expense of S’s plans and self-evaluation” (Brown and Levinson 1987: 77). As such, it is associated with the use of second-person pronouns like the French *tu* and *vous*, Greek *esi* and *esis*, and Turkish *sen/siz* (cf. Brown and Gilman 1960, Friedrich 1989), gender styles (e.g. Tannen 1993) and directness in language (e.g. Lakoff 1975: 65, 1990: 32–34). In this section, emphasis will be on gender-differentiated styles, the use of the second person plural, and terms of address. Firstly, power and its relationship to distance and gender in Turkish culture will be dealt with briefly. This analysis is hoped to serve as a general background against which other issues can be understood.

In his classic study, Hofstede (1980) has identified “power distance” as one of the four major dimensions along which cultures can vary. He explained it as the extent to which the less powerful members of a society accept unequal distribution of power (in Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey 1988: 47, Spencer-

Oatey 1997: 285). Individuals from a high power distance culture consider power as a normal part of their social life, while low power distance cultures believe power should be used only when it is legitimate. In Hofstede's study, Turkey was found to be towards the higher end of the low-high power distance continuum (in Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey 1988: 58–59).

The interrelationship of the concept of power-distance with another social dimension, distance/closeness, has been studied (see Spencer-Oatey 1997 and the bibliography therein). The studies suggest a tendency for Asian cultures to associate power positively with concepts like benevolence, supportiveness, kindness and nurture. This finding contrasts sharply with the Western concept of power, which is associated negatively with authoritarianism and domination. It would be reasonable to hypothesise that Turkish culture, showing the characteristics of a collectivist and high power-distance culture, can exhibit features that are more like those of the Asian people. In the absence of socio-linguistic data and research on the topic, we can rely on observations about political leaders' patterns of behaviour, and the type of relationship that generally holds between professors and students, to help to corroborate the hypothesis.

Helling's (1959: 464) study suggests that Turks perceive authority not too negatively, but rather as a notion with some favourable undertones. Thus, leadership in Turkey can activate ideas of sympathetic behaviour, kindness, and fatherliness. The behaviour of some political leaders could testify to this. Even a cursory observation of the way they address their voters in public would show that they aptly use an informal, friendly style, including rhetorical questions, sometimes seasoned with the most conspicuous aspects of Anatolian accents (Özkardeş 1996). This approach allows them to give the message that 'We are alike,' or 'We belong to the same family', thus skilfully appealing to the in-group identity of their followers. The response they get from their followers would generally be akin to the response a father would get from his children, e.g. on television voters are frequently seen kissing the leader's hand and raising it to their forehead, which is one of the most conspicuous patterns of behaviour showing respect and warmth to an older or higher status person.

Likewise, Turkish professors generally tend to establish and preserve a close and friendly relationship with their students, providing them with encouragement and emotional support at times of distress. Most professors would like to be a 'father' or 'mother' for their students or treat them as a family member. Consequently, one can frequently hear professors address

their students with the terms *kızım* ‘my girl, my daughter,’ or *oğlum* ‘my boy, my son’ as if they are addressing their own children. Their kissing and hugging the students, e.g. on their graduation day, would not appear strange, either. Doğançay-Aktuna and Kamışlı (this volume) show that in the classroom, both professors and students tend to maximise solidarity, preferring to use positive politeness strategies regardless of their relative distance and status. This finding seems to substantiate our hypothesis, as it suggests that students generally tend to see professors as kind and sympathetic individuals worthy of showing positive politeness to. The findings also provide hints as to how professors generally view students, namely not simply as lower-status addressees but as individuals who need guidance.

Gender roles and the implications of gender-differentiated styles

Language is supposed to represent the behaviour typically associated with men and women. Thus across the majority of cultures, men’s language is “the language of the powerful”; women’s language that of those “without access to power” (Lakoff 1990: 205, 206). Men’s language reflects authority and dominance, women’s language submissiveness and secondary status. Such sharp distinctions can blur the subtlety and complexity of gender-differentiated styles and obliterate the reasons why women’s language developed the way it did. Tannen (1992, 1993), for example, emphasises cultural factors shaping men’s and women’s use of different languages. Lakoff (1990: 206) remarks that women’s language actually shows distance from power, or lack of interest in power, rather than subservience and obedience.

The roles assigned to Turkish men and women and their socialisation styles could shed some light on their use of language. Women in Turkish culture are central to the family as mentioned earlier, and as such, they are associated with motherhood and the ability to raise and maintain the status of the family (Bolak 1995: 174). Due to their perception as mothers and as key figures in the family, responsible for the establishment and preservation of the family bond, they can be considered to have developed solidarity and involvement styles so that they can keep the family as a closely-knit unit (cf. Tannen 1992: 18–20). It seems justifiable to argue then that such styles of communication, described as being typically associated with women by Tannen, developed as a result of the cultural value placed on the family and women’s role in sustaining its well-being.

Men, on the other hand, have been associated with concepts of power and authority in the household. This may be due to the Ottoman patriarchal structure of the family, i.e. the patrilineal pattern through which households are extended and where the senior males in the family hold authority. Patterns of deference based on age are observable in this form of patriarchy, as well as distinct male and female hierarchies and a separation of their spheres of activity (Kandiyoti 1995: 306, Delaney 1991: 170 ff). Recent sociological and ethnographical studies indicate, however, that the patrilineal and extended family structure is exceptionally flexible, and the place of men and women within the family varies to a great extent from place to place and time to time. It is even argued that the flexibility is so large that one cannot talk about a traditional family any more (Marcus 1992: 97–98). It is especially after the 1950s, i.e. the period when capital penetrated into rural areas, that trends of change in the patriarchal family structure have started to be felt. Since then, and in particular during the 1980s, which mark the start of a rapid economic and social transformation, authority could not be derived only from status in the family, the village or the lineage, but came also and more importantly from new resources such as capital and education (Kandiyoti 1995: 312–316).

Sociological studies show that in the eighties, women in many households in rural and urban settlements have become primary and steady breadwinners (Ertürk 1995, Bolak 1995, Berik 1995). For these women, man's image as the major provider has lost its significance; they have become quite independent of their husbands and formed social networks outside the family and kin (Bolak 1995: 192–193). Working women have ensured their status outside the home and have become upwardly mobile. Since the eighties, men (rather than women) have started to race for money, neglecting their "responsibilities" in the house.¹⁶ Women, therefore, have had to shoulder more responsibilities to enhance the status of the family, e.g. they have prepared their children for examinations at all levels by placing them in special courses and/or finding them special tutors (Özbay 1995: 106–107).

The changes outlined above can help to evaluate the conclusions of the studies on gender-differentiated conversational styles of Turkish men and women. In a study by Baysal (1997), the tape recordings of four married university graduate couples were analysed and it was found that men's speech exhibited overlappings and interruptions as expected. However, the study also revealed that men often used overlaps to give approval to what their wife was saying. Perhaps a close reading of this finding could lead to parallels between

gender-differentiated conversational style and changes in society, i.e. that men's language is not always characterised by disruptive acts aiming to take floor and dominate the conversation. The way modern Turkish men use overlappings is indicative of their acknowledgement of diminished authority within the family (cf. James and Clark 1993: 239).

Gender may influence the use of specific linguistic devices as well as conversational styles. Although Turkish is not heavily marked by gender-specific devices as such (but see Braun 1999 for an argument against this point of view), there are some items characterising men's and women's speech (see also Bayraktaroğlu 2000, Hayasi 1998).

In general, women (especially when addressing other women) prefer linguistic devices that underline solidarity. The commonly utilised words *canım* 'my soul', *hayatım* 'my life', *şekerim* 'my sweet' and the diminutives serve this purpose particularly well. Tag questions (*değil mi?*) and interjections (*ayol* 'oh dear') minimise the possibility of conflict and consolidate the relationship (cf. Lakoff 1990: 34). In comparison, the lexical items used by men hinge more on masculinity and perhaps machoism, especially if we consider their tendency to use profane expletives, swearing (Özçalışkan 1994), and the interjection *ulan/lan* 'hey you'. Since these usages are almost exclusively observed in single-sex interactions, they can be argued to support feelings of fraternity, involvement and solidarity.

An interesting aspect of Turkish women's speech has been revealed by Durmuşoğlu (1990) in a study analysing the compliments and insults used by urban middle-class working women. Durmuşoğlu's study is revealing with regard to insults used by women addressing other women. Despite the fact that insults are not as frequent as compliments in women's speech, when insults occur, they can be responded to in a light-hearted and non-serious way, suggesting that they are often not perceived to be insults *per se*, but rather markers of sincerity among intimate speakers. In this way, friends can tell one another that a new hair style does not look nice or a recently purchased hand-bag looks as if it had been bought from a street-seller. The voicing of such frank opinion seems to enhance the bond between the speakers, rather than disrupt it. This is, of course, what happens in close relationships. Among participants with a loyalty to different networks, insults usually do the opposite and may lead to disputes among those of the female gender and aggression among the males (see also Hirschon's remarks in this volume about the sensitivity of the Turks to insults). This is because, in such cases, individuals

become protective of not only their own “good name” but also that of the networks to which they belong.

Changing trends in forms of address

Like many languages such as French, German, Greek, Tamil, Quecha, etc., Turkish makes a distinction between the singular and plural forms of the second person pronoun. As is the case in those languages, the pluralised pronoun in Turkish, when used to a single addressee, indicates deference and/or distance (Brown and Gilman 1960, Brown and Levinson 1987: 198). Mutual *siz* ‘you-PLU’ appears in situations where the speakers are socially distant and mutual *sen* ‘you-SING’ appears where the speaker and the addressee are on an equal footing or when they want to establish solidarity. *Siz* is a status or power differential and encodes deference and/or distance, *sen* is used in informal settings and encodes in-group membership. Where an asymmetrical relationship is perceived, the higher status individual can use *sen*, while the lower status speaker responds using *siz*. Various terms of address exist in the language accompanying the use of the second person pronouns. *Sen* can appear with solidarity boosting address terms such as kinship terms.¹⁷ *Siz* is preferred in contexts where deferential terms of address and expressions are used (see also Bayyurt and Bayraktaroğlu in this volume).

The second person plural in Turkish is used to address a single person in a polite manner, as explained above.¹⁸ In some cases, the third person plural agreement marker can also be used in the same way, in order to increase the formality. Consequently, in a way that is very similar to Greek (Sifianou 1992a: 62), we could have the highly formal question posed by a waiter to a customer, *Beyefendi ne alırlar?* ‘What would the gentleman have?’

The mobility in modern times, coupled with mass communication facilities, has blurred the clear-cut distinctions of the past between the strictly formal and strictly informal. Neither relationships nor social roles are clearly defined nowadays. Such changes in society reflect on the linguistic performance of its members. In a study that attempted to delineate the perceptions of university students regarding the use of *sen/siz*, it was shown that students who came from rural families and had parents who were not university graduates tended to use *sen* in a variety of situations where *siz* would be expected (König 1990). This is accounted for by the migrations from rural

settlements to cities, the implication being that in-group conversational styles typical of villages are carried over to the cities (see also Kocaman 1998: 485). This migration, in time, has given way to hybrid forms which are neither formal nor informal but a mixture of the two, and as such, are very convenient to use in semi-formal contexts. Thus, kinship terms such as *ağabey* ‘big brother’, *yenge* ‘brother’s wife’, etc. are accompanied by a deferential form and used along with the intimate *sen* ‘you’. The address forms below are some examples of mixing intimacy with deference.¹⁹

<i>Ayşe Hanım Teyze</i>	‘Lady Aunt Ayşe’ — e.g. to address an older female neighbour or a distant female relative
<i>Hakim Bey Oğlum</i>	‘My son Mr. Judge’ — to address a younger judge
<i>Bey Kardeşim</i>	‘My Sir brother’ — to address a male (generally of equal status)
<i>Hanım kızım</i>	‘My Lady daughter’ — to address a younger female

Some forms of address, like the honorific *Muhterem* ‘Respectable’ and ‘*Sayın*’ ‘Honourable’ have resisted blending with items of positive politeness, probably because they are still required in highly formal situations. However, the needs of semi-formal contexts are satisfied with a new coinage, *Değerli* ‘Valuable Dear’ which claims the relationship to be neither too distant nor too close.

Examples of changing perceptions of the use of deferential forms can be traced in the language of TV broadcasts. TV is an effective means of mass communication in Turkey, and the language used by news announcers, hosts, interviewers, etc. widely influences the language of the viewers (Rona 1996). It is also possible to say that TV reflects the changing trends in the language. An observable tendency is the increasing use of *sen* in the call-in programmes and entertainment shows, as suggested by the data in Bayyurt (1997). The host converses with the callers and/or the guests in the studio in an informal style so as to create an informal situation inducing an in-group identity including her/himself, the guest and the viewers. The intimate *sen* appears frequently in these shows, accompanied by the first name. Furthermore, introductions, topic shifts and leave-takings are announced by utterances including *Değerli* ‘Valuable Dear’, which we have explained above as a relatively new form of address, combining deference with friendliness.

Deferential language in Modern Turkish does not always seem to be associated with distance, then. It seems, rather, that deference can be shown to

socially distant partners as well as to friends, if presented with the right number of solidarity markers in the latter case. It is plausible to interpret the speakers' motives in such cases as the need to show attitudinal warmth and respect at the same time.²⁰ Such a pattern of behaviour can appear anomalous to cultural outsiders but is quite meaningful for Turkish speakers who seem to value in-group identity but do not perceive social distance too negatively either.

Formulaic expressions in Turkish

Some researchers view formulaic expressions as ready-made units for use in social interactions, arguing they are often not issued to express a genuine feeling but simply utilised to follow social conventions of polite behaviour (cf. Bach and Harnish 1982). Turkish is characterised by innumerable formulaic expressions used in routinised acts such as welcoming, leave-taking, blessings, ways of expressing good wishes, and curses (see Tannen and Öztek 1981 for a detailed analysis). These phrases generally underpin a cultural norm or a religious belief; i.e. they are imbued with a sense of traditionality. In this sense, a great majority of Turkish formulaic expressions would be 'motivated' rather than 'arbitrary'. Observe, for instance, the embedded meanings in the following phrases and expressions. It will be seen that some of them encode the belief in God or fate and are used to "create a sense of control over forces that otherwise seem uncontrollable" (Tannen and Öztek 1981: 40) (e.g. a-d ; g-i; k); some show the importance attached to lineage (e.g. e-f); still others provide the speaker with a safe way of dealing with unexpected situations (e.g. m, n) and bad events (e.g. k).

Leave-taking

(a) *Allaha ısmarladık* lit. 'We trust God to take care of you; Good bye'

Good wishes, blessings

(b) *Allah bağışlasın* 'May God spare' — said to a parent to wish a good life for a son/daughter

(c) *Allah uzun ömür versin* 'May God bestow you (long, healthy) life' — said to an elderly person

(d) *Hayırlısı (olsun)* 'May the good take its course' — to express good wishes for something that is yet to happen

- (e) *Torununu okşa* ‘May you caress your grandchild’ — an answer to *Çok yaşa* ‘may you live long’ said to a sneezing person
- (f) *El öpenlerin çok olsun* ‘May you have many people who kiss your hand’ — said to a person who kisses one’s hand and raises it to his/her forehead

Miscellaneous

- (g) *Allah kerim* ‘God is munificent’ — said when the future looks dim
- (h) *Allahın emri* ‘God’s order’ — said when an event is uncontrollable
- (i) *Allah rahatlık versin* ‘May God give you comfort’ — said before going to bed
- (j) *Ağzına sağlık* ‘Health to your mouth’ — said to someone who is thought to have said nice things, e.g. to a coffee-cup fortune-teller.
- (k) *Şeytan kulağına kurşun* ‘bullet to the devil’s ear’ — at the mention of a possible bad event
- (l) *Sağol* ‘May you be alive’ — to express gratitude/thanks

Exclamations

- (m) *Allah iyiliğini versin !* ‘May God bestow good things upon you!’ — used to show surprise
- (n) *Allah aşkına !* ‘In the name of God’s love!’ — used to show disbelief (also used for begging, requesting and as a prayer)

Swear words

- (o) *Allah cezası versin* ‘May God punish you’
- (p) *Allahın belası* ‘God’s trouble, you are’

As these examples illustrate, formulaic expressions in Turkish are not only easily accessible to the speakers, but also usable in situations that are emotionally loaded, such as birth, death, old age, illness.²¹ Due to the abundance of formulae in the language, the speaker is not restricted in his or her choice of a response and can still exercise a preference mechanism.

Turkish additionally allows the use of some linguistic units, which we can call ‘non-traditional’ formulae. Most of these expressions have entered the language through contact with English and are now transmitted into every household via films and programmes on television. They do not encode any cultural norm or belief; in that sense, they seem to be empty semantically and stereotyped. The following are some examples:

<i>Görüselim/Görüşürüz</i>	‘Let’s meet again/We’ll see each other’
<i>Öptüm</i>	lit. ‘I kissed you’ — to close off informal talks
<i>Harika!</i>	‘Great!’
<i>Kendine iyi bak</i>	‘Look after yourself’
<i>Olamaz!</i>	‘This can’t be true!’
<i>Inanmıyorum!</i>	‘I don’t believe this!’
<i>Hayret bir şey!</i>	‘That is incredible!’

It seems justifiable to distinguish these kind of phrases from the traditionally shaped ones and analyse them separately. Considered from the vantage point of functionality, both the ‘traditional’ and ‘stereotyped’ expressions fulfil a pragmatic role. The former group of expressions carry conventional significance however, and this probably stops them from becoming “hackneyed expressions” (Coulmas 1981a: 4). The latter set of phrases appear to lack conventional significance, especially because they are not as semantically loaded as the former group are.²² In short then, traditional formulae in Turkish — but not what I call the “stereotyped phrases” — can convey cultural values and may appeal to the speakers’ sense of culturally sanctioned appropriateness. One can claim on these grounds that they have expressive power and can hardly be interpreted as insincere.

Belief in the evil eye and its effects on the topic choice

A group of formulaic expressions that requires attention but have not been touched upon so far are those encoding the widely-held belief in *nazar* ‘the evil eye’, or the synonymous expression *kötü/kem göz* ‘the bad eye.’ They refer to the belief that a glance can damage life or property. According to Lykiardopoulos (1981: 222–223), this may stem from “the fear of potentially harmful powers outside the sphere of human control, projected to certain members of the society.” This belief can be traced back to ancient civilisations, e.g. Babylonia, Egypt, the Graeco-Roman world, and Talmudic Judaism. It can still be found in India, China, Africa, and among the Eskimos and American Indians, as well as the societies throughout the Mediterranean area, e.g. Turkey, Greece, and Italy (Lykiardopoulos 1981: 222, Tannen and Öztekin 1981: 42).

It is generally believed that the possessor of the evil eye can be practically anybody, but an individual who is different physically or socially from mem-

bers of a closely-knit community is more likely to possess it. Thus, in the Mediterranean area, a blue-eyed person is generally believed to have the malicious glance, while in Northern Europe a dark-eyed person is likely to have it (Lykiardopoulos 1981: 223). The evil eye can influence anybody or everything that is of value and beauty, bringing misfortune to the one/thing it is directed at. A marriage that has ended in divorce, a child (sometimes an adult) who has got sick, a good relationship ruined can be said to have attracted the evil eye. Turkish thus has idiomatic expressions such as *nazara gelmek* 'to be struck by the evil eye' and *göz değmesi* 'the touch of the evil eye' to explain the reason for a misfortune.

Numerous means of protection are reported to ward off or prevent the evil eye. The protective measures can be material objects worn or carried on a person, and can involve certain kinds of behaviour, such as spitting, praying, gesturing, etc. (Lykiardopoulos 1981: 225–226). A blue bead is probably the most prominent object that is believed to provide protection from the evil eye. Babies and young children, who are presumably the most vulnerable to the effects of a malicious glance, wear a blue bead on their clothes. Lykiardopoulos (1981: 226) notes that this is common in the countries around the Mediterranean, and can be replaced by a red ribbon in some countries, e.g. Hungary. In Turkey, the baby generally carries a blue bead, or a small golden coin and a red ribbon to avert the evil eye. Alternatively, protection may be sought through utterances such as *Nazar değmesin* 'May you not be struck by the evil eye', or *Maşallah* 'With the will of God'.

Interesting as it may sound, the belief in the evil eye sometimes guides the selection of topics to be raised in interpersonal communication. So as not to attract the evil eye, or perhaps not to appear to be boasting, many Turkish speakers would refrain from bringing up the pleasant aspects of their life in conversation. As a corollary of this, the speaker freely talks about the blows of misfortune s/he has experienced, even to a stranger such as a person s/he meets on a bus or a train (see Bayraktaroğlu 1988 for a detailed analysis of this aspect). Problems in the family such as a sick child, a high school student who is having trouble at school, a husband who is irresponsible, etc. can be shared informally with strangers. A person who appears unwilling to participate in a conversation on such topics is likely to be perceived negatively. One does not need to have problems to share in order to get into conversation with a stranger. Traffic jams, high prices, long queues in health care centres, etc. are potential problematic aspects of life that can start conversations. While the

motive is primarily to have a ‘heart-to-heart’ talk and share experiences and grievances (if any), the covert sentiment is often to conceal the positive aspects of one’s life so as not to attract the evil eye.²³

Summary and conclusions

In this chapter, the socio-cultural factors influencing Turkish interactions have been analysed. In the first part, where the emphasis was on cultural factors, the value placed on familial ties and relatedness have been examined, and their impact on social organisation and conversational styles have been outlined. It has been shown that in the family and in contexts where a sense of relatedness is perceived, the participants are generally expected to be aware of their culturally and situationally determined rights and obligations and act accordingly. In such contexts, politeness can be manifested by means of socially and linguistically specific ways of supporting group membership. For instance, thanking a family member for a favour s/he has done, giving a gift to a socially distant person, and expressing condolences can be enacted in silence, while offering food to guests generally requires an extensive amount of talk, and a good deal of insistence. In the second part of the chapter, power and its perceived association with distance have been focused on, and gender roles and their effect on conversational styles have been dealt with. Considering the leadership styles and the relationship that usually holds between a professor and a student, it has been suggested that distance and power in these situations are generally not perceived as totally negative. This may ultimately manifest itself in the use of deferentials, leading, say, university students to address their professors with deferentials that carry a sense of affect. With respect to women’s use of language, it has been suggested that the traditional patriarchal family structure is disappearing especially in cities, being replaced by a more egalitarian structure in which women and men share roles. Through examining women’s language use inside and outside the family, it has been concluded that in both types of situation, the involvement and solidarity establishing styles, which are associated typically with women by Tannen (e.g. 1992), basically suit Turkish women’s conversational styles. The second part of the chapter has also dealt with the changing trends in the use of polite plurals and deferential forms. We have seen that in semi-formal contexts there is an observed tendency to use informal forms of address together with deferential

ones, expressing intimacy as well as respect. It has been shown that such a mixture is not considered inappropriate, although it may seem strange to outsiders. Lastly, the arguments raised in the chapter have been supported by formulaic expressions, which required a brief analysis of their importance.

It was indicated at the beginning of the chapter that socio-cultural knowledge is schematic in nature and allows individuals to evaluate choices, decide and act in an acceptable way. It seems that in the situations examined in this chapter, the participants are guided by schematic knowledge structures based on an in-group identity. A wide variety of politeness forms exhibiting benevolence, solidarity and sympathetic behaviour enhancing in-group identity seem to have developed. The need to encode such values can be appropriately associated with the collectivist nature of Turkish culture, and a sense of in-group protection and relatedness nurtured by the individuals upholding this culture.

Notes

1. I would like to express my deep gratitude to both Arın Bayraktaroğlu and Maria Sifianou for the highly insightful comments they made on the draft of this paper, aspects of the topic they encouraged me to discuss, and for important bibliographical references. Special thanks go to my colleagues Şükriye Ruhi and Joshua M. Bear for reading the manuscript and making helpful suggestions.
2. The present-day importance attached to children in Turkish culture has its roots back in history, as seen in texts dating from the 11th and 13th centuries, namely, *Kutadgu Bilig* and *Dede Korkut*. As shown by these texts, bearing children is believed to be necessary for the prosperity and well being of the family and is regarded as highly important due to children's role in the continuation of the family line (Karabaş 1977).
3. In Turkey, henna is the traditional decorating dye for the palm and the fingers of a bride-to-be. The expressions with henna metaphorically refer to a young girl who is going to get married.
4. See Eisenstein and Bodman (1993: 74) who report a similar norm in Argentinian culture, which also values the family and ingroup membership.
5. The word *arkadaş* 'friend' has a functional role in encoding this meaning. It is derived from the root *arka* 'back' and the reciprocal suffix *-daş*. The word thus has the meaning of 'one who stands at the back of another.' Examining other expressions and words in the language that are derived from the same root, we find that *arka* is semantically related to 'care and protection.' So a friend in Turkish is literally the one who stands at the back of another to care for the other's well being. The reciprocal suffix used in the derivation of *arkadaş* 'friend' critically implies the give-and-take nature of the relationship, i.e. friends are people who stand 'back to back'; they mutually support and care for each other. The

- word does not imply that one of the participants is passive, as Dundes, Leach and Özkök (1986: 160) seem to suggest. Equally important to note is that neither *arkadaş* nor the other phrases refer to a typically male concept of friendship (Dundes, et al 1986: 159), but encode the solidarity that is expected to hold between any member of the group, be it male or female.
6. Although Hotham noticed that “friendship is one of the strongest things in Turkey” (1972: 132), he, too, thought that it mainly holds between man and man. It seems necessary to indicate, again, that the notion encompasses friendships between both men and women (see note 5).
 7. Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988: 93) also consider Greek society to be towards the higher end of the high-low context continuum.
 8. Sifianou (p.c.) has indicated that in Greek, too, *ksenos* means both ‘stranger’ and ‘foreigner’ and that *ksenios Zeus* is derived from the same root. This was the god who protected outsiders.
 9. The V in the middle of the suffix stands for a high vowel such as u, ü, ı or i, which is motivated by the rules of vowel harmony.
 10. It needs to be pointed out, however, that some Turks would be over-willing to provide information in giving directions, even when they are not certain of its validity, so as not to appear impolite or uncooperative.
 11. I owe these examples to A. Bayraktaroğlu.
 12. Alternatively, to accept an offer is an FTA and it is best minimised by allowing oneself to be cajoled into it (Brown and Levinson 1987: 233).
 13. In Greek, too, a taciturn person is valued negatively and can be described as “a decorative piece of furniture” (Sifianou 1997a: 76).
 14. Greeks would act in a manner similar to Turkish people in receiving gifts, as mentioned by Eisenstein and Bodman (1993: 73).
 15. See Tannen and Öztekin (1981) and Bayraktaroğlu (this volume) for more of the set expressions used to express feelings in the event of death.
 16. In social/ethnographic surveys carried out in Turkey, the majority of women indicate that a good husband is one who is aware of his “responsibilities” (e.g. Bolak 1995). The concept roughly refers to women’s expectation of role sharing between spouses.
 17. This is predicted by Brown and Gilman (1960/1979: 260), who remark that relations of the same age as, the same family as, the same kind of ancestry as, and the same income as are interpreted for purposes of V. Furthermore, Friedrich (1989: 277) and Sifianou (p.c.) note that the second person singular pronouns can be used with solidarity boosting terms in Russian and Greek, respectively.
 18. The use of plural to indicate formality in Turkish enables the language user to easily encode politeness without having to resort to more complex systems, just as in Greek (Sifianou 1992a: 63). Thus, a simple construction like the imperative can be used to convey differing degrees of formality and politeness due to the availability of the singular/plural distinction.

19. I would like to thank A. Bayraktaroğlu for bringing these usages to my attention.
20. cf. Gu (1990) who mentions the importance of attitudinal warmth in Chinese.
21. On the other hand, a colleague indicated that a majority of his Turkish students found the formulaic expressions cited by Tannen and Öztekin (1981) totally unfamiliar. This can be a hint showing that the traditional formulae are not perceived as totally functional by the younger generation (I would like to thank Joshua Bear for this comment).
22. Nevertheless, if the majority of speakers find this non-traditional group of expressions appropriate, they will naturally be accepted as useful in social interactions, they will be a part of the cultural schema of the speakers and used along with the more traditional formulae.
23. This tendency can alternatively be accounted for by the Islamic mysticism that sanctions suffering and pain as religious practices, as A. Bayraktaroğlu (p.c.) pointed out.

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Linguistics of power and politeness in Turkish

Revelations from speech acts*

Seran Doğançay-Aktuna and Sibel Kamışlı

Introduction

In the field of sociolinguistics, the study of politeness has often been intertwined with studies on speech act use, especially with those that are face-threatening (FTAs) by virtue of the message conveyed. The use of politeness markers form part of a ritual for making one's utterance less face-threatening for both the speaker and the hearer, while fulfilling one's illocutionary intent. At the same time they also address the sociopsychological needs (i.e. *face needs*) of the interlocutors.

Cross-cultural studies on speech acts like apologies, requests, compliments, invitations, etc., (see Walters 1979; Olshtain and Cohen 1983, 1987; Olshtain and Weinbach 1986; Wolfson 1989; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Takahashi and Beebe 1993; among others) reveal cross-cultural variation in the use of semantic and syntactic formulas as well as politeness markers across speech communities. Such sociolinguistic relativity in turn may lead to intercultural communication problems, or "pragmatic failure" (Thomas 1983) in learning second/foreign languages. Empirically-founded studies on the execution of speech acts across languages are valuable not only in revealing the

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sociolinguistic norms of people, but also in combating stereotypes (cf. Takahashi and Beebe 1993), in providing materials for foreign/second language teaching, and in preventing breakdowns in cross-cultural encounters.

To interpret effective communication, a number of theories on politeness have been proposed aiming at explaining how people in face-to-face encounters maintain deference for the ‘face needs’¹ of one another (Goffman 1967), i.e., their need to project a positive self-image and desire to be approved of by others (see for example, Lakoff 1977; Leech 1983; Brown and Levinson 1978, 1987). As Watts et al. (1992: 1) explain,

The study of politeness focuses directly or indirectly on the presentation, maintenance and even adjustment of a concept of the “presentation of self” (cf. Goffman 1959) in the course of social interaction, on the historical growth of culturally specific patterns of behaviour, and on the distribution of status and power in social groups.

The notion of face as conceptualized by Goffman and adapted by Brown and Levinson (henceforth B & L) is of great importance in interpreting messages judged to be embarrassing for the hearer. It also relates to the dilemma on the part of the speaker as to how best to convey the desired message to the hearer while attending to the hearer’s *positive face*, that is to say, showing the hearer that he/she is liked and well thought of, through friendliness and cooperativeness so that the hearer will avoid finding himself/herself in an embarrassing situation. On the other hand, the speaker needs to exercise caution so as not to offend the hearer’s *negative face* by avoiding imposition on him/her.

In this study we will use Brown and Levinson’s (1987) framework, the most extensive and best known model of politeness, as our guideline to analyse how Turkish people satisfy the face-needs of interlocutors in face-threatening encounters. In accordance with B & L’s model, the speech acts of correction and disagreement threaten the positive face of the hearer by indicating that the speaker has a negative evaluation of some aspect of the hearer’s positive face. Examples of that could be disapproving or criticising the hearer’s earlier utterance on contradicting the hearer’s statements, such as in offering corrections or pointing out a mistake (see the appendix for details of the speech situations).

In B & L’s model speakers are seen to have several choices in face-threatening encounters, such as when correcting someone’s mistake or when disagreeing with another person:

1. They can decide to go “bald on record” by giving explicit corrections or

expressing outright disagreement with the hearer, without taking any redressive action to soften the impact of their words. In B & L's definition, the prime reason for bald-on-record usage may be stated simply: In general, whenever S' concern is maximum efficiency, rather than satisfaction of H's face needs, he/she will choose the bald-on-record strategy, as in cases of great urgency or desperation, for redress would actually decrease the communicated urgency (1987: 95–96).

2. They can choose to go “on record” and redress their correction and disagreement acts by using one or more politeness markers, which are chosen to satisfy requirements of power and social distance while keeping the illocutionary force of the utterance. Here the speaker is taking sociolinguistic measures not to threaten the face of the hearer by minimising the weight of the imposition and showing social closeness.

3. They can go “off record” by using hints, metaphors, or other devices to sound deliberately ambiguous, thus open to negotiation. Requests to talk further or to reconsider, and postponing the decision/answer to a future time are examples of off record strategies.

4. They can avoid doing the FTA by remaining silent especially when the FTA is perceived to be too dangerous to commit.

Strategies of positive and negative politeness (henceforth PP and NP respectively) are used when speakers decide to go “on record”. Strategies of PP strengthen solidarity and rapport between speaker and listener by emphasising or attending to the listener's wants and interests, and by expressing approval and sympathy with the listener, using various means (e.g. compliments, commiserations, intimate address terms). NP strategies, on the other hand, involve displaying respect while minimising impositions on the hearer. In general, via NP strategies the aim is to avoid imposing on the hearer in a manner that indicates the speaker does not wish to interfere with the hearer's freedom and personal space.

Wolfson (1989) claims that if we consider politeness as a social strategy, as it indeed is in terms of signifying relative social distance and power, then strategies of NP can be said to be used by the less powerful in interacting with higher status people. An example of this would be being offensive and apologising for it. Strategies of PP, on the other hand, will appear more frequently as a sign of social closeness and approval, as displayed by the use of compliments. NP use in speech act execution can also be considered as less threatening than PP use because the latter is based on the assumption that the

hearer agrees with the speaker's assertion of their closeness while this assumption may not necessarily be shared by the hearer. The choice of a particular politeness marker in a given event is dependent upon the perceived weight of the FTA and an evaluation of the social distance between the interlocutors and their relative power. These, B & L claim, have universal applicability. B & L's model has been criticised for its claims on universality and for the assumption that higher levels of indirectness necessarily indicate greater social distance between interlocutors.

Data from Polish (Wierzbicka 1985), Japanese (Matsumoto 1988) and Chinese (Gu 1990), for example, show that the concept of NP is irrelevant in some cultures, thus defeating claims of universality. Wolfson's (1989) *Bulge Theory*, on the other hand, which is supported by empirical studies on various speech acts as used by native speakers of American English, opposes B & L's and Leech's claim that greater social distance between interlocutors brings about greater indirectness. Wolfson shows that native speakers of American English use more direct speech patterns to intimates, strangers and status unequals, while preferring a more indirect mode of address to status-equal interlocutors who are acquaintances carrying the potential of becoming friends. Wolfson's Bulge Theory would also account for Ervin-Tripp's (1976) finding that hints, as indirect language behaviour, are used more often to familiars. Scarcella's (1979) data, on the other hand, shows hints to be used more often to both superiors and subordinates in status, than to status equal familiars. Such conflicting research findings seem to plague empirical studies on the use of politeness markers.

In any event, we acknowledge that such arguments against the universality of B & L's model need to be taken seriously in making cross-cultural comparisons (for details, see Wierzbicka 1985; Wolfson 1989; Hurley 1992). Following Sifianou (1992), we believe that "rules for appropriate, polite speech behaviour may vary from one society to another" (p.49). We still feel that this model nevertheless offers the most comprehensive and thorough treatment of the notion of politeness, besides offering a set of explicit strategies for categorising manifestations of politeness, as supported by Fasold (1990) and Cazden (1988) and as used by Takahashi and Beebe (1993) and Scarcella (1979) in sociolinguistic research. Takahashi and Beebe applied parts of this model in making cross-cultural comparisons between Americans and Japanese in their language use, while Cazden used traits of PP and NP for getting insights about classroom discourse. In a similar vein to Takahashi and

Beebe, Scarcella compared the politeness strategies employed by both L1 and L2 speakers across situations as mirrors of people's pragmatic competence, suggesting also specific areas of politeness that need to be addressed in the language classroom.

The study

In this study, we will adopt the B & L model to examine the linguistics of politeness in the use of two potential FTAs of correction and disagreement by native speakers of Turkish to interlocutors of higher and lower status than themselves. Our findings can then be used to test the validity of some of the above-mentioned claims on politeness use across cultures.

Although a sizeable body of research on speech act use (as well as on other aspects of pragmatics such as politeness) exist in many other languages, such studies on Turkish are limited to the study of the following: the use of expletives by Turkish boys (Dundes et al. 1972), reports on the swearing patterns of Turkish men and women (Duman 1988; Ağaçasaban 1989; Özçalışkan 1994), the role of disagreements in troubles-talk (Bayraktaroğlu 1992), the study of corrections (Doğançay-Aktuna and Kamışlı 1996), disagreements (Kamışlı and Doğançay-Aktuna, 1996) and studies on the use of formulaic expressions such as proverbs and sayings as mirrors to the norms and values of the Turkish society (Tannen and Öztekin 1981; Doğançay 1990). Our aim in this study is to contribute empirically to the body of information on politeness in speech act use from the Turkish perspective by focusing on the following research questions:

1. What is the preferred mode of speech behaviour of native speakers of Turkish in disagreeing with and correcting an unequal status interlocutor? In other words, what kind of consideration do they show for the face-needs of their interlocutors?
2. What type of politeness markers do Turks utilise to soften the effect of these potential FTAs?
3. What is the effect of social status and context on choice of politeness markers by Turkish speakers?

Method

Following the tradition of many speech acts studies, data was collected from eighty native speakers of Turkish (28 males and 52 females) aged between 19–22, via discourse completion tests (DCT) (Blum-Kulka 1982). Subjects were asked to respond to given situations by writing down exactly and without deliberation what they would say in that particular situation. Such an elicitation technique was preferred over natural observations as a means of being able to collect data in a controlled manner as well as for the sake of future cross-cultural comparisons. We have adapted the situations used by Takahashi and Beebe (1993) in their studies with native speakers of American English, Japanese, and Japanese ESL speakers. The situations were translated into Turkish by the researchers and by an independent Turkish-English balanced bilingual. They were further validated by two professors of Turkish and English Linguistics who did a comparative linguistic analysis of the questionnaires. The final translations were based on a combination of the above procedures. Although DCTs do not elicit spoken discourse responses which contain variables such as hesitations, pauses, fillers, etc., they are extensively used in speech act studies to collect significant amounts of data in a short period and in a controlled manner (Beebe 1989; Wolfson 1989). As our aim in this study was to reveal the norms of appropriateness for Turkish speakers in situations where social status was controlled, they served our purposes quite well.

The situations used by Takahashi and Beebe had cross-cultural validity by not being specific to the American culture and consisting of general everyday encounters as was also confirmed by other Turkish people. As part of a larger research project subjects responded in Turkish to twelve situations depicting different scenarios, presented in random order. Four of the scenarios on which we are going to focus in this paper concerned expressing disagreement and offering correction to a status unequal. (See Appendix A for details).

Along with the discourse completion tests, a one-page questionnaire was also administered to the subjects eliciting background information on their age, gender, family background and socioeconomic status, as well as the extent of their exposure to foreign languages. The subjects chosen had little or no experience of living in a foreign culture, as extended exposure to other cultures was considered to be a potential factor influencing people's language use. They represented people from urban and rural backgrounds and from

various socioeconomic groups. Thus, the subjects formed a group quite representative of young educated Turkish people who can be found anywhere in Turkey.

Data analysis

Data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively in three tiers. First, the subjects' responses in the four situations were categorised in accordance with the B & L model as direct ("bald on record") or indirect either "on record with redressive politeness markers", or "off record" where a direct answer containing disagreement or correction was avoided by being ambiguous or open to negotiation. A summary of the first categorisation, as an answer to the first study question, is given in Table 1 and discussed below.

A second analysis was done on the markers of PP and NP used by the subjects when they softened their utterances addressed to a status unequal, in order to answer the second study question mentioned earlier. Here subjects' utterances in instances when they went "on record" and employed politeness strategies were analysed. The findings are presented in Table 2.

Subjects' sociolinguistic behaviour in different contexts and status relationships was compared to find out how much these social variables influence the norms of behaviour. Findings concerning study question 3 are shown in Table 3 (see Appendix C).

Categorisation of subjects' responses in accordance with the B & L model was done independently by the two researchers, and an inter-coder reliability of 0.86 was obtained. A few cases where discrepancies occurred were discussed and resolved. Throughout the three levels of analysis statistical computations were carried out to investigate whether sociolinguistic variation across status, speech acts and contexts was significant. A test for measuring differences between two independent population proportions was used for this purpose. Results are indicated by the Z values on the tables below where a Z value of 1.645 and above indicates statistically significant difference at the .05 level.

Politeness continuum: Directness through indirectness

Before discussing our findings, it is important to note that all our Turkish data was found to correspond well with B & L's framework, thus showing the cross-linguistic applicability of the latter. Table 1 summarises the general mode of behaviour of Turkish subjects in responding to mistakes and in disagreeing with suggestions of someone of unequal status.

A comparison between bald on record and on record variation among the Turks showed that, in general, Turkish people have a significant preference for using politeness markers in their corrections and disagreements with unequal status interlocutors, with the exception of professors correcting their students (see endnote 2). In the role of the higher status interlocutor, Turkish subjects were more straightforward, with professors being the most direct (44%). In the classroom situation, professors either gave an immediate correction of the student's mistake or simply pointed out the mistake with no immediate correction, as in examples 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1. Subjects' preferred mode of behavior in the two speech act situations in relation to the status of interlocutor. (n= 80 for each situation)

	Higher to Lower				Z	Lower to Higher				Z
	Disagree.		Correct.			Disagree.		Correct.		
<i>Mode of Behaviour</i>	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	
Bald										
On Record	22	28	35	44	**2.47	15	19	9	11	1.08
On Record	41	51	30	38	1.50	52	65	50	63	0.58
Off Record	12	15	1	1	**3.00	5	6	4	5	0.19
Other ¹	---		5	6	N.A.	1	1	1	1	0.09
Accept ²	---		---		N.A.	1	1	---		N.A.
No reponse	---		---		N.A.	---		3	4	N.A.
Disqualified ³	5	6	9	11	N.A.	6	8	13	16	N.A.

Notes. All percentages are rounded off to the nearest tenth.

**p<.01, N.A.: Proportion test not applicable for the obtained values.

1. Other category contains responses which could not be categorised in the given framework.
2. "Accept" category contains the one response where the lower status person accepted the boss's plan despite disagreeing with it.
3. Disqualified are those responses in which instead of writing what they would say in those situations, subjects described what they would do.

- (1) *Söylediğin tarih yanlış. Doğrusu ...*
‘The date you gave is wrong. The correct date is ...’
- (2) *Doğru tarih şudur ...*
‘The correct date is ...’
- (3) *1948 değil, 1949.*
‘It’s not 1948, but 1949.’

In expressing direct disagreement with the suggestion of the lower status person, higher status bosses criticized the plan, sometimes following this with a rationale or a suggestion for modification or reconsideration.

- (4) *Bu öneri şu nedenlerden dolayı işe yaramaz. O yüzden kullanamayız.*
‘This suggestion is not good because of ... Thus we cannot use it.’
- (5) *Bu planda birçok eksiklikler var.*
‘There are many deficiencies in this plan.’
- (6) *Söylediğiniz planın birçok eksik yanı var, mesela ... ya da yani bu plan bu durumda yürümez.*
‘The plan you mention has deficiencies, for example, ... or ..., therefore it won’t work in this form.’

There was a difference across situations, however, in the level of directness displayed by the higher status interlocutor: in giving corrections in the classroom, professors were significantly more direct than higher status bosses disagreeing with their assistants (44% vs. 28%, $Z=2.47$, $p<.01$). Furthermore, there was no significant difference between the bald on record and on record categories in corrections by professors, though the difference was highly significant for all the other three groups.² This shows that professors did not feel a particular need for redressive action, unlike the others in the study. This finding can be explained as a result of expectations and norms of behaviour seen as appropriate in the two situations. In classroom contexts, teachers are expected to give corrections as part of their jobs, thus professors do not feel the need to be indirect, whereas in the workplace, considerations of the face-needs of the others are more expected.

In terms of B & L’s framework, this finding indicates that the weightiness of the FTA, and therefore the perception of politeness, is affected by the particular context people are in and is related to the general goals of the

interaction. The idea that the more power an interlocutor has, the lower his/her perception of the need to redress his/her utterance was thus found applicable in the correction situation, though not in the disagreement situation, as most bosses in the workplace preferred to redress their utterances.

Lower status interlocutors acted quite uniformly in the two situations. They were significantly more polite ($p < .001$), showing deference for the face of the higher status person. In both situations the majority of the lower status speakers utilised one or more politeness markers (to be detailed below) to soften the impact of their corrections and disagreement to the higher status addressee (65% in disagreement, 63% in corrections). This finding indicates that less powerful people do indeed perceive a greater need for politeness.

The off-record strategy of being ambiguous by giving responses open to negotiation was not much preferred by the Turkish subjects. Only in the role of bosses expressing disagreement with the suggestions of the lower status assistants were these used (15%). When bosses preferred to go off record, they said things like the following, which expressed neither agreement nor disagreement with the speaker's suggestion, and were therefore ambiguous:

- (7) *Bu konuda görüşlerine önem verdiğim ...'in fikrini de soralım.*
'Let's ask for X's idea on this, as I value his opinions.'
- (8) *İşlerimin yoğun olmadığı bir zamanda üzerine düşünüp, fikrimi ondan sonra belirteceğim.*
'I will think about it at a time when I am not so busy and let you know my opinion.'
- (9) *Sanırım bunun üzerinde biraz daha düşünsen iyi olur.*
'I think it would be better if you thought about it a bit more.'
- (10) *Şu anda bir karar almak doğru olmaz.*
'It wouldn't be right to take a decision now.'

In short, by suggesting reconsideration of the plan, postponing their evaluation of it, etc. higher status interlocutors avoided giving their opinions at that time. This can be seen as a polite act. Note also that in the role of the professor only one subject went off record by uttering example 11, which could be perceived as reinforcement of a correct answer or as pointing out a mistake in the date.

- (11) *Bu önemli olayların tarihlerini iyi öğrenmeni tavsiye ederim.*
 ‘I suggest that you learn well such important dates.’

This indicates that being ambiguous is not perceived as an appropriate feedback strategy by professors in the classroom whose tasks are to be as clear as possible for pedagogical purposes. Indeed, as B & L indicate, direct behaviour can be the most appropriate when the speaker does not fear retribution from the addressee, when for example, “both speaker and hearer agree that face-needs may be suspended in the interest of urgency or efficiency” (p. 69) as in a classroom situation where efficiency and pedagogical aims may override politeness norms.

The “no response” category as an option not to say anything seemed a choice open to students in the classroom, though it was not used much. This could have been a result of the situation and the number of interlocutors involved in the interaction. In a classroom situation, students have the option of remaining silent unless they are called upon by the teacher. Yet in a one-to-one, face-to-face encounter speakers do not have this option when asked a question (as exemplified by the disagreement situations above). When their opinions are openly sought, speakers can only go off record if they feel that their words will be too threatening for the hearer. Nonetheless, neither the “no response” nor the “off record” categories seem preferable to the Turks in a lower status role.

In short, if we view the “bald on record” — “on record” — “off record” categories as forming a continuum ranging from the most direct to the most indirect, we can say that in both correction and disagreement situations Turks prefer to take the middle ground irrespective of status. The only exception was the bald classroom corrections by professors that could, as aforementioned, be explained by virtue of the speaker’s pedagogical role.

Politeness strategies across status levels and speech situations

In this part of the analysis we will discuss in detail the linguistic markers of PP and NP used by the Turkish subjects when they went “on record with redressive action” in the two potentially face-threatening speech contexts. Our analysis involved categorizing the syntactic structures used to soften the impact of speakers’ words.

Table 2. Frequency of preferred politeness strategies by subjects who went on record. (S is the number of subjects who used politeness formulas; i.e. those who went “on record” with redressive action)

	Higher to Lower				Z	Lower to Higher				Z
	Disagree. S=41		Correct. S=30			Disagree. S=52		Correct. S=50		
<i>Positive Politeness¹</i>										
	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	
Str. 1	1	1	7	19	**2.74	1	1	---		0.91
Str. 2	9	12	2	6	*2.22	11	15	---		**3.32
Str. 3	7	9	6	17	0.07	8	11	28	41	***6.07
Str. 4	1	1	---		0.93	14	19	---		**3.86
Cumulative	18	24	15	42	*1.91	34	47	28	41	0.72
<i>Negative Politeness</i>										
	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	
Str. 1	10	13	3		0.35	11	15	---		**3.67
Str. 2	28	37	7	1	1.24	13	29	18	27	0.97
Str. 3	19	25	11	31	1.53	14	19	22	32	1.61
Cumulative	57	76	21	58	*1.91	38	53	40	59	0.72

All percentages are rounded off to the nearest tenth.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

1. For a description of strategies of positive and negative politeness, see Appendix B.

A comparison of the cumulative percentages of PP and NP used by the subjects shows that in the two speech act situations, while addressing status superiors as well as status subordinates, Turkish subjects used NP markers more, though this difference was found to be significant for disagreements from higher to lower status and for corrections from lower to higher status interlocutors.³ In other words, when disagreeing with the suggestion of the lower status interlocutor in the workplace, bosses opted to use NP strategies as did students in addressing the professors in the classroom, hence showing more concern for conveying respect to the hearer than displaying solidarity, while the NP-PP difference was not significant for the other two groups. This finding does not concur with Wolfson's (1989) claim that strategies of NP are preferred by the less powerful, as higher status bosses preferred NP strategies towards their assistants while the opposite was not true. In the classroom situation, however her suggestion was supported by our data. Therefore, it

appears that the speech situation and probably the sociocultural context need to be carefully considered before making such generalisations.

Professors' tendencies to use NP and PP strategies quite evenly could be related to their desire to give affective feedback to the learners that would motivate them, hence triggering better attitudes to learning. Similarly, the professor-student relationship could be perceived to be similar to that of parent-child, thus displaying more characteristics of a care-giver's affective speech, contrary to interactions in the workplace. Similar to professors, assistants in the workplace were equally concerned with showing deference to their superiors as with displaying solidarity.

In general, PP strategies were deemed significantly more appropriate in corrections by professors than they were in the disagreement situation at the workplace (for example, 42% vs. 24% respectively, $Z=1.91$, $p<0.05$), whereas NP strategies were preferred by the bosses towards their assistants. In the lower to higher status interactions there was no difference between the two speech acts. Hence, though students prefer to use NP strategies over PP strategies towards their professors, subjects do not differ in their use of PP or NP strategies from the lower status assistants addressing their bosses.

In terms of the specific PP features used, professors used devices whereby they attended in hearer's face wants by giving reassurance i.e. expressing their belief in the student's knowledge, while this strategy was not common in the other three groups (strategy 1; examples 12, 13, or reassuring about the promising nature of the plan, example 14) (see Pavlidou, this volume, for a comparison to Greek professors' redressive actions).

- (12) *O tarih değil ama bir kere daha düşünürsen eminim bulabilirsin..*
 'It's not that date but if you think again, I am sure that you can find it.'
- (13) *Hadi, tarihi biliyorsun.*
 'Come on, you know that date.'
- (14) *Bazı gerekli düzenlemeler sayesinde harika olacaktır.*
 'It'll be great with the aid of some modifications.'

It was found that including the speaker in the decision by using *let's* or *we* (strategy 2) was preferred by the interlocutors at the workplace regardless of status. For instance, in disagreeing with a status unequal they said things like:

- (15) *Yalnız bu planın şu dezavantajları var. Şöyle yapsak daha iyi olmaz mı?*
 ‘But this plan has these disadvantages. Wouldn’t it be better if we do it this way?’
- (16) *Bazı eksikliklerin farkına varmanız çok güzel, ama bence yine de bu düzenlemeyi başka açıdan ele almalıyız.*
 ‘It’s good that you found some deficiencies, but I think we need to consider this rearrangement from a different perspective.’

Such a strategy, showing inclusion and solidarity, was not used much in the classroom where direct corrections were given. This could be explained by considering the role relationships and the respective ages of the interlocutors. It might well be the case that when interactants do not differ greatly in age, as in the workplace, contrary to student-professor status, *let’s* or *we* might be more readily used to signify solidarity.

The PP strategy of using negative question forms instead of statements in offering corrections and disagreement to status unequals (strategy 3) was used by the subjects as a means of neutralizing assertions, by seeking agreement as presupposing common ground, as they soften the degree of threat implicit in the message conveyed and presuppose knowledge of the hearer’s wants and attitudes. Higher status managers and professors used the following responses, that presupposed knowledge of the hearer’s wants and attitudes in conveying their disagreements and corrections:

- (17) *Bu olay 1922 tarihinde değil, 1923 tarihinde olmuştu, değil mi ...?*
 ‘This event happened in 1923, not in 1922, didn’t it ...?’
- (18) *Söylediklerini anlıyorum, ama benim görüşümde öyle yapacağımız yerde böyle yapsak daha iyi olmaz mı?*
 ‘I understand what you are saying, but in my opinion, wouldn’t it be better if we did it this way instead?’

Assistants in the workplace also made use of the negative yes/no questioning strategy as shown below;

- (19) *Evet yalnız bazı bölümlerde şu değişiklikleri yapamaz mıyız?*
 ‘Yes, but couldn’t we make these changes in some parts?’

One significant finding of the study was that this questioning strategy was the only PP strategy used by the students to the professor in the classroom and it

was their preferred politeness marker in general (41%), as well as the strategy used by all subject groups. Students used utterances like the ones below much more often than professors and other groups in the study ($p < .001$). A possible explanation for the choice of this strategy over other PP strategies could also be that students were less sure of their knowledge on the subject matter, thus hesitant in their corrections.

- (20) *Efendim, plan iyi fakat şöyle olsaydı daha iyi olmaz mıydı?*
‘Sir, the plan is good but wouldn’t it be better if it were like this?’
- (21) *Bu söz başka bir şahsa ait değil miydi?*
‘Weren’t these words someone else’s?’
- (22) *Bu söz Durkheim’a mı yoksa Weber’e mi aitti hocam?*
‘Did these words belong to Durkheim or Weber, sir?’
- (23) *Hocam, acaba bu söylediğiniz lafı ...dememiş miydi, yoksa ben mi yanlış biliyorum?*
‘Sir, wasn’t it ... who said those, or am I mistaken?’

Students’ preference for using negative yes/no questions can be a result of their function as polite forms of corrective feedback. As Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983) explain in their *Grammar Book*, negative yes/no questions are used for seeking agreement without imposition on the hearer. Besides, they carry the function of expressing surprise for receiving information that goes counter to one’s expectations. Based on this, it can be said that by using such syntactic constructions as a response strategy, lower status interlocutors are not only avoiding imposition on the face needs of the higher status person (NP strategy) but could also be showing their surprise for not getting the correct information from the higher status person as expected. By using such a strategy they indicate their belief in the professor’s ability to give correct information in general, hence catering to the needs of the higher status person’s positive face. (cf. Pavlidou’s “non-compliant initiatives” by students in Greek high school classrooms, in this volume.)

Thus, in general students used a more redressed, more softened language than the professors, possibly as a result of the power relationship in the classroom. During lessons it is the professor’s responsibility to give corrective feedback, and as the above examples show, professors do not seem to feel the need to soften the impact of their words or show concern for the face-needs of the students, for the reasons detailed below. Students, on the other hand, are

less direct and non-imposing in their offer of corrective feedback, due to their roles as learners and not as disseminators of information in the classroom. The finding that students overwhelmingly offer a correction rather than pointing it out to the professor and expecting him/her to self correct shows that the latter is not seen as appropriate behavior. An explanation for that could be that just pointing out an error and expecting self-correction from the higher status person might be perceived as a challenge to test the knowledge of the professor, which is not deemed appropriate student behavior in Turkish classrooms. Students can thus offer correction in a non-threatening manner, but cannot ask the professor to rethink the date. Professors, on the other hand, are supposed to evaluate the student's knowledge, and thus can ask questions in a more straightforward manner. In relation to students' behaviour in the classroom, it must be mentioned that in almost all instances of address from students to the teacher, Turkish students used *hocam* 'sir/miss', as attention getters, as well as to show deference, as also shown by Pavlidou in her study of Greek classrooms (in this volume).

Another noteworthy finding was the fact that in the lower to higher situation in the workplace, assistants used token agreements (strategy 4) to their bosses (19%, $p < 0.01$) though this was not a strategy preferred by the other groups and, in fact, not used at all in the classroom. These token agreements, as exemplified below — called “disarming moves” by Edmondson (1981) — are often used to preface disagreements, as Pomerantz (1984) explains, and are quite common in many languages (see, for instance, Tannen and Kakava 1992 for their use in Greek).

- (24) *Evet planın güzel ama ...*
‘Yes, it is a good plan, but ...’
- (25) *Evet fikirini beğendim, ama ...*
‘Yes, I liked your idea, but ...’
- (26) *Evet önerin iyi ama...*
‘Yes, your suggestion is good, but ...’

One possible explanation for the lack of token agreements in the classroom could be the professors' concern for clarity in classroom interactions and their attempt to avoid ambiguity for pedagogical reasons. Similarly, due to their higher status, bosses do not feel the need to initiate their disagreements with token agreements, although assistants find this an appropriate disagreement

softener.

Particular NP strategies used by the Turks in these two situations were the following: Turks softened the threat of their words by using minimisation devices as exemplified below (strategy 1).

(27) *Bence bu konuyu biraz daha düşünmelisin. Bazı noktaları biraz daha düşünmelisin.*

‘I think you need to think a bit more about this matter. You need to think a bit more about some points.’

(28) *Plan ve düşüncelerinsekreterlik görevleri için pek uygun değil.*

‘Your plans and thoughts are not that useful for secretarial duties.’

(29) *Sanırım tarihte küçük bir hata var.*

‘I think there is a minor mistake with the date.’

In general, the most frequently used minimisation device in Turkish was the adverb *pek* or the adverb *o kadar*, followed by a descriptive adjective and a negative verb, as in *pek uygun değil* ‘not that appropriate’, *pek güzel değil* ‘not that nice’ or *o kadar iyi değil* ‘not that good’, and *o kadar uygun değil* ‘not appropriate enough’. The status difference had an influence on the use of minimisation devices. In the two situations there was no difference between the higher status interlocutors’ use of these devices, yet among the lower status interlocutors they were not used at all by students ($p < .01$), possibly as a result of students’ feeling that they needed to be more precise and clearer in the classroom.

Other strategies of NP were the use of disclaimers preceded by positive remarks or apologies (strategy 2). This was a strategy common to all groups and there were no significant differences across speech acts.

(30) *Evet olayın gelişimi anlattığınız gibi, yalnız, ... tarihinde olmuştur..*

‘Yes, the sequence of the event is as you say, except, it happened on ...’

(31) *Doğru, ancak kanımca bu plana pek uygun değil.*

‘Yes, but, in my view, this is not such an appropriate plan.’

Disclaimers preceded by apologies were generally used by the lower status interlocutors in the role of students offering corrections to the professor;

- (32) *Hocam, pardon, ama hatırladığım kadarıyla, bu söz X'e aittir.*
'Excuse me sir, but as far as I remember, these are X's words.'
- (33) *Afedersiniz hocam, bize verdiğiniz bilgiler ışığında sanırım bu söz X'in değildi.*
'Excuse me sir, but in light of the information you gave us, I think these are not X's words.'

In general the formula of positive remark/apology for interrupting + but + correction/criticism of the plan was a widely used strategy, preferred by all groups, though professors used it at a lower frequency than the other three groups.

The last NP category used frequently was the integration of parenthetical verbs or adverbs as mitigating devices for softening the tone of corrections and disagreements (strategy 3). This hedging strategy was again preferred by all groups and used often as a softener, as shown in the examples below.

- (34) *Sanırım şimdilik bu düzenle devam etmek daha uygun olur.*
'I think it would be better for us to continue with the current setup.'
- (35) *Seninle aynı fikirde olduğumu söyleyemeyeceğim.*
'I cannot say that I agree with you.'
- (36) *Ufak bir tarih sapması oldu herhalde. Asıl tarih budur ...*
'There is probably a small mistake in the date. The real date is ...'

Hedges of different types were used by the Turks quite often, for instance, *bana kalırsa/bence* 'in my view', *sanırım* 'I suppose/guess', *herhalde* 'maybe/possibly' as shown above. The two main categories of hedges were (1) quality hedges such as "I suppose/I guess", etc. rather than stronger assertions, and (2) modifiers like "sort of/kind of". Note that Brown and Levinson (1987: 116) cite hedges as parts of both PP and NP:

one positive-politeness output ... leads S to exaggerate, and this is often manifested by choosing words at the extremes of the relevant value scale. Thus words like ... marvellous, delightful, revolting, appalling, etc. may abound in positively polite talk. ... choosing [hedges] and using such extremes to characterize one's opinions is risky, in light of the desire to agree — that is, risky unless S is certain of H's opinion on the subject. For this reason, one characteristic device in positive politeness is to hedge these extremes, so as to make one's own opinion safely vague. Normally hedges are a feature of negative politeness, ... but some hedges can have this positive-politeness function as well, most notably (in English): *sort of, kind of, like, in a way.*

In the Turkish data hedges were not used to modify extremes as in a PP strategy, but rather to avoid presumptions, as in a NP strategy, and therefore were classified as NP strategies. Some examples were;

(37) *Bu plan galiba bazı yönlerden eksik gibi.*

‘This plan seems sort of lacking in some aspects.’

(38) *Evet haklısın, teori olarak çok güzel bir fikir. Ancak pratikte uygulanması biraz zor gibi.*

‘Yes you are right. In theory this is a very good idea. But in practice it is sort of difficult to implement.’

In sum, Turkish subjects used at least one of the above discussed strategies of NP and PP in their attempts to minimize the threat to the interlocutor’s face and to maximize solidarity. In general, while bosses in the workplace and students in the classrooms preferred NP strategies over PP ones to status unequals, this preference was not found in the case of professors and assistants. Our findings do not support the view that lower status interlocutors are more NP oriented (cf. Wolfson 1989), thus suggesting that there might be other situational and cultural factors that influence the use of politeness across cultures. In terms of the particular NP and PP strategies preferred by the Turkish subjects, it was found that people displayed differences across status levels and speech situations. Nonetheless, for the particular groups under investigation it was found that the NP strategies of using disclaimers preceded by positive remarks, apologies, and utilizing hedges as softening devices, were the most common across groups. The PP strategy of using negative yes/no questions to soften the corrections made was especially preferred by students in addressing their professors.

Relative impact of social status and speech situation (context) on politeness markers

In the last part of our analysis we compared the relative impact of social status and context, (the latter referring to the particular speech act), on the choice of politeness markers, to answer study question 3. Specifically we analysed the politeness markers used by higher and lower status interlocutors in correction and disagreement situations, using data from Table 2 and endnote 2 along with further statistical analysis (see Appendix C Table 3), in order to see whether

subjects differed more across status levels or speech acts.

When we look at differences across status levels we see that in their PP and NP use, i.e., the use of politeness markers, relative status made a difference in the disagreement situation (e.g., 24% vs. 47% PP use, $p < .001$ and 76% vs. 53% NP use, $p < .001$) but not in the correction situation, where PP use was about 41–41% for both status levels and NP use was 58–59%. Therefore people seem to vary their politeness use in accordance with status changes in some situations, i.e., when disagreeing with a status unequal, but not when correcting status unequals in the classroom. It might very well be the case that in some speech situations, as in classroom corrections, the demands of the situation override status variation, while in others, i.e., disagreements, status variation gains precedence over situational variables. Without researching the impact of status variation on politeness use across a broader range of speech situations, however, it is difficult to make generalisations as to whether social status or situational factors have a greater impact on the use and choice of politeness markers.

An internal analysis of the specific PP and NP strategies across status levels displays certain differences. For example, in the correction situation though PP use across status levels is the same as aforementioned, the only strategy used by the lower status students is the questioning strategy (41%), while higher status professors show more variation, as discussed before. In the NP category, the only significant difference is the greater use of mitigating devices by professors over the lower status students, though in fact only 8% of professors used this strategy. Apart from these, subjects displayed similarity in politeness use across status levels.

In the disagreement situation differences in the use of politeness strategies across levels were more pronounced. For instance, while 19% of lower status assistants used token agreements to their bosses, the figure was only 1% from bosses to assistants. So far as NP use was concerned, disclaimers and apologies preceded by disagreements/criticisms were used by bosses 37% of the time and 18% of the time by the assistants ($p < .001$). The use of other NP strategies across levels in the disagreement situation was similar, though in terms of their cumulative use bosses preferred NP strategies more than did assistants, whereas assistants used more PP than bosses ($p < .001$ for both cases).

All in all then, analysis of the use of politeness markers across status levels and social contexts shows that in some cases status differences override

contextual factors, whereas in other cases the latter have more impact on language use. This finding points to the need to further examine two important issues: (i) the particular nuances of a speech situation/speech event to find out exactly what factors trigger the use of which type of politeness markers and (ii) how a particular variable such as social status takes precedence over others, such as context, gender, age, etc. This is by no means an easy undertaking because

Politeness involves more than just pragmatic well-formedness, whatever that might be. In studying politeness, we are automatically studying social interaction and the appropriacy of certain modes of behaviour in accordance with socio-cultural conventions (Watts et al. 1992: 6).

These issues necessitate a more encompassing approach to the linguistic study of politeness in order to reveal the socio-pragmatic conventions underlying it.

Conclusions and implications

In this study we have shown the norms of behaviour of native speakers of Turkish in expressing disagreement with and correcting status unequals. Our data showed the influence of status differences and role relationships as well as the effects of the context on language use. In the two situations studied, it was found that professors display different sociolinguistic behaviour as compared to workplace bosses, possibly as a result of the particular pedagogic roles they assume. We have also pointed out certain linguistic markers of PP and NP used by Turks in the given situations.

Our findings point to different conclusions than the claims of Wolfson (1989) and Scarcella (1979). Wolfson claims that strategies of NP are expected to be used by the less powerful in interactions of unequal power. Claiming that strategies of NP are “central to deferential behaviour when addressing those higher in rank and characteristics of social distancing behaviour in general”, Scarcella (1979: 281) also found native speakers of English to use more NP to superiors than to status equals or subordinates. Yet, our analysis of politeness strategies used by native speakers of Turkish in the disagreement and correction situations showed that strategies of NP are favoured considerably more by the higher status interlocutor in the workplace, while no difference between NP and PP was found for the classroom context. On the other hand, Wolfson’s and Scarcella’s data were supported by our

findings for the correction situation where lower status students prefer NP over PP when addressing their professors. Such findings lead us to exercise caution in making generalisations from work done with native speakers of English to speakers of other languages, before doing empirical cross-cultural research that involves a range of speech situations. We thus would like to call for a movement away from Anglo-Saxon, especially English language orientation, in politeness research to a truly cross-cultural one to clarify conflicts in existing data.

In a theoretical discussion Bentahila and Davies (1989) make the claim that Moroccans are oriented towards NP whereas the British are oriented toward PP, though the authors do not provide us with empirical data or examples for comparison. Similarly, Sifianou (1992: 217) maintains that

Greeks tend to prefer more positive politeness strategies, such as in-group markers, more direct patterns and in general devices which can be seen as attempts to include the addressee in the activity ... The English, on the other hand, seem to prefer negative politeness devices as far as both structures and modifications are concerned.

It might seem from our findings that Turks are also oriented toward NP when we look at their cumulative NP and PP in terms of percentages. Yet, in higher to lower corrections situations and lower to higher status disagreements Turks display no particular preferences for NP or PP. Similar to the case of Modern Greek, however, as discussed by Sifianou (1992) and Tannen and Kakava (1992), Turkish people use certain markers of solidarity in disagreements. In their study of disagreements in taped everyday conversations among family members and friends, Tannen and Kakava (1992), for instance, found that Greeks used first names or figurative kinship terms, often in diminutive form, and they personalised the argument at the point of disagreement, as linguistic markers of solidarity. Unlike Modern Greek, we did not find instances of the above mentioned markers, mostly due to the more formal nature of the scenarios in our elicitation task. Nonetheless, our data showed other solidarity markers such as the use of the inclusive 'we' or 'let's' whereby the interlocutors in the workplace suggested working together on the project to improve it, while still disagreeing that it was a good plan. As shown by our findings and other cross-cultural research in pragmatics, many factors such as relative power due to social status, contextual factors, as well as factors like age, gender, socioeconomic status, geographical location, etc., interact to determine people's norms of effective and appropriate communication. These in

turn require more analysis in relation to the linguistic execution of politeness that aims at establishing a delicate balance in creating and maintaining social relationships.

In studying politeness phenomena it is important to bear in mind that perceptions of politeness as well as its linguistic realisation show variation across cultures. Blum-Kulka's (1992) study shows that metapragmatic conceptions of what constitutes politeness in the Israeli society are different from those governing English-speaking communities. She says that there are some settings in which certain types of behaviour will be seen as polite while there are other settings in which such politeness is viewed negatively. Blum-Kulka adds that the Israeli society is PP-oriented by being motivated toward minimising social distance and degrees of imposition, and that the affective factor as a social variable carries equal importance with social distance, power and imposition in accounting for politeness in that culture.

In a similar vein, Ide (1987) shows that the expressions of linguistic politeness are much more situationally conventionalized in Japanese society than they are in the English-speaking world. In many situations, the Japanese will opt for culturally determined and situationally appropriate linguistic forms (i.e., deferential forms), whereas many Westerners will need to make strategic decisions in various contexts. Ide's assertion is also supported by Hill et al.'s (1986) study showing Japanese society to be so discernment-oriented that speakers submit to the requirements of the system and choose the appropriately polite form, while Americans have a greater choice of creativity across situations. In the Turkish case, the context was found to have a strong influence on people's choice of politeness markers. Also, formulaic expressions were not widely used, contrary to the Japanese, who might be restricted by other norms in their society.

In studying the politeness markers in directives among Turkish immigrant family members in Holland, Huls (1988) showed that the direct bald-on-record strategy was the preferred norm by Turks while hints were also frequently used. Our findings showed that although bald-on record strategies were used between status unequals in the workplace and in the classroom, it was not the preferred mode of behaviour, and hints were not frequent. These point at intracultural variation across situations and participants, thus making generalisations on politeness rather superficial.

In interpreting our findings, especially in generalising them to other contexts in Turkish life we need to consider the following: this study looked at

two FTAs between status unequals, and results apply only to those situations where the social distance is great and the interlocutors' power is unequal. In order to get a true understanding of politeness and test B & L's claims of universality, such findings need to be analysed in comparison to the linguistic behaviour of Turks across the same situations but with status equal and status unequal friends, acquaintances and intimates like family members (cf. Huls 1988). Only then can we get a real picture of politeness in Turkish culture, decide on the relative weights of power, social distance and weightiness of the illocutionary force of the speaker's utterance, and determine whether Turks are discernment or volition-oriented (cf. Hill et al. 1986).

Secondly, our data focuses on elicited language that differs from spoken face-to-face interactions, which can bring about variation in people's use of politeness. Non-verbal communication cues need also be considered, such as eye movement, gestures, postures, and even prosodic factors like pitch can play a role in expressing politeness. Yet, despite its limitations, the present study shows that there are cross-cultural and cross-linguistic differences in language use and certain pre-determined factors might not have the same impact in different contexts. Thirdly, the experience that this age group has had about what happens in office situations is probably limited.

Finally, despite the significant body of research that now exists on the linguistic aspects of politeness, we need to address this issue from a more sociolinguistic and cross-cultural perspective by studying not only different cultures' expression of politeness but their perceptions of it as well. Although it appears that B & L's framework of politeness applies across many languages and many speech situations, there is also accumulating evidence challenging its claims of universality. However, it seems that "the concept of politeness is most probably universal and what differs from culture to culture is its specific connotations and manifestations ... (as) different sociocultural norms and values are reflected in all levels of the linguistic code" (Sifianou 1992: 49). Thus, there appears to be an acute need for the study of politeness in different sociocultural contexts and this needs to be an emic and microethnographic perspective in order to provide us with insights about different cultures' perceptions of politeness and its linguistic and nonverbal expressions in communication.

Findings from sociolinguistic research like the one attempted here can aid applied linguistics and studies in cross-cultural communication in general. Such linguistic markers and strategies of politeness can be taught to language

learners in an attempt to make their talk more polite, less face-threatening, and, therefore, more communicatively effective. We hope that the study we have attempted here provides some clues on politeness and factors governing its use across cultures and, more importantly, will trigger more empirical research across languages and cultures.

Notes

1. Goffman's (1967) notion of face-work is also referred to as "relational work", "image work" as well as "politic behaviour" in German linguistics.
2. Bald on record vs. on record categories:
Correction, Higher to Lower: 44% vs. 38%, $Z=0.84$, n.s.
Correction, Lower to Higher: 11% vs. 63%, $Z=8.82$, $p<.001$
Disagreement, Higher to Lower: 28% vs. 51%, $Z=3.14$, $p<.01$
Disagreement, Lower to Higher: 19% vs. 65%, $Z=6.11$, $p<.001$
3. PP vs. NP use by subjects across situations:
Correction, Higher to Lower: 42% vs. 58%, $Z=1.41$, n.s.
Correction, Lower to Higher: 41% vs. 59%, $Z=2.06$, $p<.05$
Disagreement, Higher to Lower: 24% vs. 76%, $Z=6.37$, $p<.001$
Disagreement, Lower to Higher: 47% vs. 53%, $Z=0.67$, n.s.

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Appendix A: Correction and disagreement situations between status unequals.

Situation 1: Correction from Higher to Lower Status

"You are a professor in a history course. During class discussion, one of your students gives an account of a famous historical event with the wrong date."

You:

Situation 2: Correction from Lower to Higher Status

"You are a student in a sociology class. During a lecture, the professor quotes a famous statement attributing it to the wrong scholar."

You:

Situation 3: Disagreement from Higher to Lower Status

“You are a corporate executive. Your assistant submits a proposal for reassignment of secretarial duties in your division. Your assistant describes the benefits of this new plan, but you believe it will not work.”

You:

Situation 4: Disagreement from Lower to Higher Status

“You work in a corporation. Your boss presents you with a plan for reorganization of the department that you are convinced will not work. Your boss says: “Isn’t this a great plan?”

You:

Appendix B: Strategies used by Turkish subjects in expressing positive and negative politeness in the speech acts of correction and disagreement. (For a list of all possible PP and NP strategies, see Brown and Levinson (1987)).

Positive Politeness: emphasises solidarity and rapport between speaker and listener by claiming common ground, and fulfilling the hearer’s wants.

Strategy 1. Noticing, attending to hearer’s interests, wants, needs by, for example, giving reassurance to the student (hearer) about his/her ability to give the correct answer.

Strategy 2. Including both the speaker and the hearer in the activity by using the inclusive “we” and “let’s”.

Strategy 3. Manipulations via negative yes/no questions which presuppose “yes” as an answer, by assuming knowledge of hearer’s wants and attitudes, thus seeking agreement.

Strategy 4. Avoiding disagreement via the use of token agreements (yes, but ...).

Negative politeness: minimise imposition on the listener, show deference.

Strategy 1. Minimising the size of imposition/threat by using diminutives, as in “Can I see you for a second” or “There was a *minor* mistake there.”

Strategy 2. Apologising as a means of communicating the speaker’s wish not to impinge on the hearer, “Please forgive /excuse me for calling so late.”, “I am sorry/excuse me, but (+ claim, criticism, announcement)”

Strategy 3. Using hedges as “kind of”, “sort of”, “perhaps” and quality hedges such as “I think/suppose”, etc., as in “This is the wrong answer, *I guess*” to modify/to hedge the assumptions inherent in one’s words.

Appendix C

Table 3. Status differences in the use of politeness markers to status unequals in the disagreement and correction situations

	Disagreement				Z	Correction				Z
	H - L S=41		L - H S=52			H - L S=30		L - H S=50		
<i>Positive</i>										
<i>Politeness</i>	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	
Str. 1	1	1	1	1	0.47	7	19	---	---	***3.95
Str. 2	9	12	11	15	1.24	2	6	---	---	*1.98
Str. 3	7	9	8	11	1.16	6	17	28	41	***4.61
Str. 4	1	1	14	19	**2.70	---	---	---	---	---
Cumulative	18	24	34	47	**3.14	15	42	28	41	0.05
<i>Negative</i>										
<i>Politeness</i>	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	
Str. 1	10	13	11	15	0.34	3	8	---	---	**2.42
Str. 2	28	37	13	18	**2.61	7	19	18	27	0.80
Str. 3	19	25	14	19	0.86	11	31	22	32	0.19
Cumulative	57	76	38	53	**2.94	21	58	40	59	0.05

All percentages are rounded off to the nearest tenth.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Politeness in the classroom?

Evidence from a Greek high school

Theodossia-Soula Pavlidou

Introduction

In the last two decades linguistics has been experiencing an unceasing politeness boom due mainly to the impact of the Brown and Levinson politeness theory (1978, 1987) on pragmatic and sociolinguistic research. The aim of the present paper¹ is to give an *intra-cultural* account of politeness in an institutionalized context, and more specifically in the classroom, which may later allow for systematic *inter-cultural* comparisons. While there is a considerable body of literature on politeness in institutional contexts (cf. Kasper 1997: 384), studies on politeness in classroom discourse are not only more limited, but also refer in the greatest part to the foreign language classroom. The prevalence of the latter context in the study of politeness in classroom discourse is easy to understand, since (a) politeness phenomena (or more generally, pragmatic phenomena) play a pivotal role in the acquisition of communicative competence in a foreign language and, hence, they should be included as a learning objective in the curriculum (cf. e.g. Lörcher and Schulze 1988; Kasper 1997a), (b) politeness strategies on the teacher's part seem to influence the learners' motivation, the efficacy of the teaching methods etc. and, consequently, recommendations for the teacher are in order (cf. e.g. Aeginitou 1994; Goatly 1995).

Useful as they may be, the results of studies on politeness in the foreign language classroom cannot be automatically extended to classroom discourse in general, since the foreign language classroom is almost by definition the scene of an encounter, if not to say clash, of two languages and cultures. Nor can it be inferred from the relatively smaller attractiveness of native classroom

discourse to investigators of politeness that politeness issues are not salient in this context. On the contrary: in one of the few studies that explicitly address politeness matters in native classroom discourse,² namely that of White (1989), the author indicates exactly the opposite: “after several years of observation [in an elementary school], I became aware that the politeness was unrelenting, an institutionalized presence that systematically skewed the generation of every lesson” (1989: 299). She argues that the politeness strategies used by a teacher in kindergarten “to obtain the student’s cooperation and to try to create a social context in which they will interact with her” (1989: 302) may have “long-term hidden costs”, especially with respect to the construction of knowledge in class, and goes on to suggest then several ways of saving both academic rigour and politeness.

The aspect of recommendations (for teachers) is also salient in Holmes (1995: 198–209). Holmes, whose main interest lies in the differential politeness patterns between women and men, and the consequences of such differentiations, discusses politeness with respect to classroom contexts at several points in her book and addresses a number of questions which are recurrent in the study of gendered interaction: who interrupts whom, who asks what kind of questions, who uses (and with what function) tags and minimal responses. But actually only very little of her data (cf. Holmes 1995: 30–71) comes from native classroom discourse. So her conclusions regarding classroom discourse, based on a reinterpretation — in the light of the Brown and Levinson politeness theory — of the results of previous studies, seem rather sweeping, for example: “Female students are generally not getting their fair share of talking time [in class]. *They are too polite* [my emphasis]. Males dominate mixed-sex classrooms, and male patterns of interaction, interruption and contradiction are consequently pervasive” (Holmes 1995: 199).

The present study, which is part of a larger project on native classroom interaction, explores issues of politeness based on data from a Greek high-school. The following questions have guided this research:

1. What, if any, are the politeness strategies employed by the students when talking to the teacher in class?
2. What, if any, are the politeness strategies that the teachers use when talking to students in class?
3. Are there differences with respect to politeness between students’ and teachers behaviour in class?
4. Are there differences with respect to politeness between girls’ and boys’ behaviour in class?

5. How marked is the classroom for politeness phenomena?

Due to space limitations, in the following discussion I will concentrate mainly on the students' talk to the teacher and will not go into great depth when examining the teachers' talk to the students. Also, for the same reason, I will focus on speaker's threats to addressee's face and will not discuss the interplay between saving both speaker's and addressee's face.

Classroom interaction at high school

Some general features

As several authors have stressed, classroom interaction is characterized by an institutional asymmetry in the teacher-student relationship³ or, as Cameron, McAlinden and O'Leary (1989: 86ff) put it, it is an unequal encounter. The teacher role is endowed with certain rights (and obligations) over the students, including the management of the interaction, evaluation of students' behaviour (both on the content and relationship levels), application of measures against "deviant" behaviour, and most importantly, the right to define "deviance" and decide when it occurs. This asymmetry in institutional and interactional power is manifest in several characteristics of the teacher-student interaction. For example, the teacher in a high school class can normally ignore a student striving for the floor, whereas a student could not simply remain silent if selected by the teacher as the next speaker, at least not without severe consequences.

Although there is variation to be expected in the way students and teachers interact in the classroom at Greek high schools (e.g. urban vs. rural, public vs. private etc.), there are some standard features of classroom interaction that reflect the institutional asymmetry in the teacher-student roles. High school teachers in Greece normally use the T-form when talking to a student and address him/her by first name. In some (rare) cases, students are addressed by their teachers with their last names, but the V-form when talking to students would definitely be an exception to the general rule. When addressing a group of students, teachers typically employ the address term *παιδιά*⁴ ('children', 'kids', 'guys'). Students, on the other hand, always use the V-form when talking to teachers and have no choice in addressing the teacher: *κυρία* ('Ma'am', 'Miss' or 'Mrs.' as in *Mrs. Smith*) or *κύριε* ('Sir', or 'Mr.' as in *Mr.*

Smith) is the only address term that they can use when talking to a female or male teacher respectively.⁵ *Κυρία/κύριε* is a general deferential address term indicative of social distance and/or status. Sometimes the last name of the teacher can be used as well, e.g. *κυρία Κανάρη* ('Mrs. Kanari').

The data

The data for this study are drawn from recordings in a Greek highschool in a province of Northern Greece which a teacher made in her own classes and in the classes of her colleagues (cf. Tsolakidou 1995). From the original corpus eight teaching hours were chosen to match for

- content: 'philological' lessons, i.e. Modern Greek, Ancient Greek, History,
- grade: grades B and C, i.e. the last two grades of the obligatory secondary education, two classes from each grade, two hours from each class,
- age: the grade B students (14 year olds) are — with a couple of exceptions — the same persons as the grade C students (15 year olds) a year later; in other words, the same students were recorded twice, once in grade B and then again in grade C.

On the whole, there are 37 grade B students (21 girls and 16 boys) and 38 grade C students (23 girls and 15 boys), thus yielding a total number of 75 students (44 girls and 31 boys). Three teachers are involved, two female (FT1, FT2) and one male (MT).

The attempt to meet the above criteria in the selection of the teaching hours brought a disadvantage with it: one of the eight hours had been originally transcribed not by the teacher herself but by another researcher who had not participated in the recordings and was not acquainted with the students themselves; as a result, the speakers could not be identified consistently throughout that lesson, and my original intention to work with scores (e.g. number of turns per speaker) had to be abandoned.

Another limitation of the corpus is the lack of visual information, like gestures, gaze etc., which play an important role e.g. in turn-taking. But use of video cameras would have not been possible for technical reasons; besides, as Cazden (1986: 456) remarks, "serious disadvantages to videotape have to be considered as well: the greater obtrusiveness of the equipment, the more time required for the analysis, and the ethical problems of privacy in any public display of the original protocols, because there is no visual analogue of a pseudonym". Furthermore, it is doubtful whether one video camera would

have sufficed; as Swann (1989: 139) notes with respect to her exploratory study of small group teaching with children from primary school, “two or more video cameras would be needed even to cope with a small group discussion (let alone a whole class)”, and this would have been in our case not only “unacceptably intrusive”⁶ but would not have been feasible given the particular research conditions.

I believe that the above drawbacks are partly counterbalanced by the fact that the recordings did not require the presence of a complete stranger in the classroom, but were conducted by a teacher who was well known to the students. Yet they do pose the dilemma of whether to go on with a research project when the data are not ideal or to drop the project altogether, when access to better data is impossible in a certain research situation. Adopting a realistic point of view, I opted for the first solution and carried out the project with full awareness, I hope, of the kinds of questions that can be asked and the extent to which the answers are generalisable.

In analyzing the student’s behaviour, both quantitative and qualitative methods are employed, taking as the basic unit the students’ turns.⁷ Because of the small number of teachers, analysis of their talk to the students is only qualitative. The statistical significance of the quantitative results is assessed with the chi-square test.

Students’ talk to teacher

Taking (verbal) initiative in classroom

The basic category in my analysis of student’s talk to the teacher in class has been “verbal initiative” (see Pavlidou 1999); this is a functional category that covers any non-passive turn to the teacher, either on the level of sequential organization of turns or on the level of the content of the utterance, like asking for the floor, asking a question, making a comment, disagreeing with the teacher etc. In other words, “initiative” is not identical with simply initiating a sequence or subsequence of acts in the interaction with the teacher, but covers as well e.g. dispreferred turns taken by the students which may appear in a non-initiating position in a sequence. In contrast to other studies of classroom interaction which handle interruptions on the same level as other kinds of student’s behaviour,⁸ I do not consider interruptions as a type of initiative, but

as an additional feature which may characterize an initiative turn (as specified above) and will leave it out of the discussion here.⁹

Since in a classroom it is the teacher who is in charge of running the class, verbal initiative in general on the students' part may be considered to be a possible threat to the teacher's negative face. On the other hand, participating in class and developing initiative is to a certain extent expected by the (Greek) educational system itself.¹⁰ Moreover, active participation in a discussion or expressing one's opinion is sometimes *expressis verbis* asked for by the teacher. Nevertheless, certain kinds of initiative, like requests or disagreeing with the teacher, i.e. speech acts which are considered to be inherently threatening (cf. e.g. Brown and Levinson 1987: 65ff) are more likely to give rise to politeness strategies than others.

Face threats to the teacher: "directive" and "non-compliant" turns

In the following, I will focus on two types of students' initiative turns: "directive", which represent threats to the teacher's negative face, and "non-compliant" turns, which represent a threat to the teacher's positive face. The category "directive turns" comprises three subcategories:

a. "Requests for floor", issued by

- addressing the teacher with the deferential term *κυρία* ('Ma'am', 'Miss') or *κύριε* ('Sir'), as already mentioned.¹¹ No instances of this address term combined with the teacher's last name (e.g. *κυρία Κανάρη*) have been found in my data;
- interrogative sentences with the main verb in the subjunctive (cf. Pavlidou 1991a);
- combinations of the previous two means, e.g.

Example 1 (8/31)

1 MT ((MT has been talking to whole class)) [*Συνέχισε, Μαρία.*]

2 **boy3** [*Κύριε,*] *να ρωτήσω κάτι;*

1 MT ((MT has been talking to whole class)). [Go on, Maria.]

2 **boy3** [*Sir,*] **can I ask something?**

b. "Requests re content", covering mainly questions about information or clarification on the subject of the lesson or, more generally, on the topic of the current discussion, e.g.

Example 2 (4/36)

1 girl3 [...]=
2 FT1 = *Ο Ηφαιστος. Ωραία. Προχώρα.*

3 **girl7** ***Τι λέει κνμάτιζαν εδώ πέρα;***

1 girl3 [...]=
2 FT1 =Hephaestos. Fine. Go on.

3 **girl7** **What is it saying here they were waving?**

c. “Other requests”, covering (mainly) all questions not subsumed under (b), that is, questions about information or clarification concerned with the management of classroom matters, regulation of turn-taking etc., e.g.

Example 3 (2/89)

1 FT1 [...] *γράψτε κάπου, [...]. [...] το εξής.*

2 **boy1** ***Είναι πολύ;***

3 FT *Μία σειρά, δύο. [...]*

1 FT1 [...] write some place, [...]. [...] the following.

2 **boy1** **Is it a lot?**

3 FT One or two lines. [...]

The second category of face-threatening turns, i.e. “non-compliant turns”, includes all those turns in which any sort of opposition to what the teacher is saying or doing is expressed, for example protesting or complaining, disagreeing with the teacher, correcting the teacher and so on, as in the following example:

Example 4 (4/201)

1 FT1 [...] *Και θέλω να σχολιάσουμε αυτό το τέλος. Είδαμε μ//*

2 **boy3** ***//Δεν είναι τέλος αυτό, κυρία.***

1 FT1 [...] And I want us to comment on this end. We have seen j//

2 **boy3** **//This is no end, Miss.**

Let us now look at the frequencies of the “directive” and “non-compliant” turns in relation to all other turns that the students take. In the following table, “unclear” comprises all instances of initiative turns which could not be classified under one of the other types of initiative turns, while “other”, under 2, includes all those types of initiative turns whose frequencies was relatively low in the data, e.g. joking, expressing one’s personal opinion, comments, etc.

Table 1. Students' turns

1. non-initiative turns		65.6% (1147)
to other students	2.5% (43)	
to teacher without initiative	41.5% (725)	
other non-initiative turns	21.6% (379)	
2. initiative turns to the teacher		34.4% (602)
directive	16.0% (278)	
requests for floor	5.7% (99)	
requests re content	4.1% (71)	
other requests	6.2% (108)	
non-compliant	7.4% (130)	
other	9.9% (174)	
unclear	1.1% (20)	
		100% (1749)

What Table 1 shows is, first of all, that students more frequently take turns addressed to the teacher without any initiative (41.5% of the total number of turns) than initiative turns (34.4% of the total number of turns). Leaving aside the heterogeneous “other” subcategory of the initiative turns, we can easily see that the most frequent initiative turns are the non-compliant ones (7.4% of the total number of turns). However, if we put together the frequencies of the various directive turns, we recognize that this type of initiative turn makes up the largest part (16.0%) of the total number of turns.

Redressing face threatening acts

As already mentioned, according to the Brown and Levinson politeness theory, both directive and non-compliant turns are inherently face threatening, the former to the teacher's negative face and the latter to his/her positive face. So, how do students go about redressing potential face threats to the teacher? Three seem to be the most common means: the address term *κυρία* ‘Ma’am’, ‘Miss’ or *κύριε* ‘Sir’ in connection with any type of initiative turn, conventional indirectness applying to requests for the floor, and certain positive politeness or off record strategies applying to non-compliant turns.

*Use of the address term *κυρία/κύριε**

As indicated above, the address terms *κυρία* (for a female teacher) or *κύριε* (for a male teacher) — either alone or in combination with an interrogative

sentence whose main verb is in the subjunctive — are used by the students to bid for the floor. Addressing the teacher in this way is the typical verbal means used to attract his/her attention and get permission to talk. But permission to talk can also be asked for without using an attention getter like *κνρία*, and of course students can start talking without asking for permission to do so (cf. e.g. example 2, turn 3, and example 3, turn 2). Moreover, examining the relationship between the use of this term and the type of turn, we find that it is not used exclusively to get the teacher's attention and/or bid for the floor. Table 2 shows the relationship between the use of *κνρία/κύριε* and the type of turn.

Table 2. Use of *κνρία/κύριε* in relation to type of turn

	without <i>κνρία/κύριε</i>	with <i>κνρία/κύριε</i>	ROW TOTAL
non-initiative	97.9% (1123)	2.1% (24)	100.0% (1147)
initiative			
requests for floor	14.1% (14)	85.9% (85)	100.0% (99)
requests re cont.	62.0% (44)	38.0% (27)	100.0% (71)
other requests	71.3% (77)	28.7% (31)	100.0% (108)
non-compliant	48.5% (63)	51.5% (67)	100.0% (130)
other	69.5% (121)	30.5% (53)	100.0% (174)
unclear	55.0% (11)	45.0% (9)	100.0% (20)
COLUMN TOTAL	83.1% (1453)	16.9% (296)	100.0% (1749)

($\chi^2 = 691.9$, $df = 6$, $p < 0.000$)

As Table 2 shows, *κνρία/κύριε* is used in only 296 out of 1749 turns, which make up about 17% of the total number of turns. Although not equally distributed across the categories of turns,¹² there is no exclusiveness in the use of *κνρία/κύριε*, that is, it occurs with all categories of turns, and not just with e.g. requests for the floor. However, the category that attracts the comparatively largest part of all instances of *κνρία/κύριε* is, as one might expect, asking for the floor (85 out of 296 turns with *κνρία/κύριε*, i.e. 28.7%). Moreover, requests for the floor are more likely to be accompanied by or accomplished through *κνρία/κύριε* (85.9%) than not (14.1%). The other two types of requests (“requests re content” and “other requests”) exhibit much lower frequencies in the use of *κνρία/κύριε*. This can be easily explained, since students often first indicate with the attention-getter *κνρία/κύριε* that

they want to say something, wait until they get permission to proceed and then go on to specify what they want to say, as in the following example:

Example 5 (1/118)

((referring to the spelling of the word “homosexual” in Greek, in which the first occurrence of the sound [i] is written with the letter “upsilon”, while the second with the letter “iota” of the Greek alphabet))

- | | | |
|---|------|--|
| 1 | boy2 | Κυρία. |
| 2 | FT1 | <i>Ορίστε.</i> |
| 3 | boy2 | Ομοφυλόφιλος, το γιώτα δεν είναι από [(το φίλος ;)] |
| 4 | FT1 | <i>[Φίλος, έτσι.]</i> |
| 1 | boy2 | Miss. |
| 2 | FT1 | Yes |
| 3 | boy2 | Homosexual, the ((letter)) iota is not from [(the stem friend ?)] |
| 4 | FT1 | <i>[Friend, yes.]</i> |

However, it is also interesting to observe that the next biggest number of occurrences of *κυρία/κύριε* is in connection with non-compliant turns, i.e. disagreement, protest etc. (67 out of 296 turns with *κυρία/κύριε*, in other words 22.6%). Moreover, non-compliant turns are slightly more likely to be accompanied by *κυρία/κύριε* (51.5%) than not (48.5%). One explanation could be that *κυρία/κύριε* is used in such turns as an attention getter, as in example 6:

Example 6 (1/256)

((some students want to listen to the recording that the teacher is making of them))

- | | | |
|---|------|--|
| 1 | FT1 | <i>Να την ακούσουμε <u>τώρα</u>; Δεν είστε με τα καλά σας ((laughing tone)).</i> |
| 2 | boy2 | Γιατί, κυρία; [Αφού και] αύριο κάνουμε τα κείμενα. |
| 1 | FT1 | We should listen to it <u>now</u> ? You must be out of your minds ((laughing tone)). |
| 2 | boy2 | Why, Miss? [Since] we can do the texts tomorrow too. |

In example 6, it can be argued that boy2 uses the address term in order to attract the teacher’s attention, since the teacher is not talking just to him.

However, in the next example the student is already involved in a dialogue, actually an argument, with the teacher, when she uses *κυρία* in a non-compliant turn to the teacher (turn 5).

Example 7 (1/36)

((girl3 is doing an assignment on the board and reflects on a spelling error, another student suggests that a particular word should be written with the letters “omikron and iota” of the Greek alphabet; girl3 in the first turn of the excerpt below presumably claims that what she has written is indeed “omikron and iota”))

- 1 **girl3** *Κυρία, (όμως)//*
 2 FT1 *//Πες, πες το.*
 3 **girl3** ***E [όμικρον γιώτα.]***
 4 FT1 *[Όμικρον γιώτα] είναι αυτό;*
 5 **girl3** ***E τι είναι κυρία δεν το βλέπετε; Όμικρον και γιώτα.***
 6 FT1 *Έλα, κάν'το καλό. [Εγώ για έψιλον γιώτα (τό 'βλεπα).]*
 7 boy2 *[()]*
 8 **girl3** ***Όχι και έψιλον γιώτα.***
- 1 **girl3** ***Miss, (however)//***
 2 FT1 *//Say it, say it.*
 3 **girl3** ***E-INTERJ [it's an omikron and a iota.]***
 4 FT1 *[That's an omikron] and a iota?*
 5 **girl3** ***E-INTERJ what else is it Miss don't you see it? Omikron and iota.***
 6 FT1 *Come now, make it better. [I (took it) for an epsilon and a iota.]*
 7 boy2 *[()]*
 8 **girl3** ***How could it ever be taken for an epsilon iota.***

While in turn 1 one can claim that *κυρία* functions as an attention getter, in turn 5 this is definitely not the case: girl3, already involved in a discussion with the teacher, uses the address term in an utterance with which she expresses her strong disagreement with the teacher. It may be argued that *κυρία*, being a deferential expression indicative of social distance and/or status, re-establishes what is common knowledge in the classroom, namely the difference in status between students and teacher; it thus serves to mitigate the threat to the positive face of the teacher involved in the act of disagreement. In such a context the address term can be interpreted as meaning “with your

permission". The same holds for other types of initiative turns in which *κνρία/κύριε* appears.¹³ However, no direct correlations between the weight of a threat and the appearance of *κνρία/κύριε* are overtly recognizable.

Conventional indirectness

The typical means for making polite, but not very formal, requests (or offers) in Greek is interrogative sentences with the main verb in the subjunctive, (cf. Pavlidou 1991a). This strategy, i.e. conventional indirectness, is found in my data only in connection with requests for the floor, as in the following example:

- Example 8 (2/85)
- | | | |
|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | FT1 | E:// |
| 2 | boy2 | //Από την αρχή. |
| | | (2) |
| 3 | boy1 | Να πω; |
| 1 | FT1 | U:h// |
| 2 | boy2 | //From the beginning. |
| | | (2) |
| 3 | boy1 | May I say? |

As indicated above, conventional indirectness may be combined with the address term *κνρία/κύριε* to make the request more polite (see example 1, turn 2, and example 9, turn 2, below).

The lack of conventional indirectness in the other types of directives, i.e. the requests for information or clarification, may be due to the sequential organization of the interaction. As also mentioned in connection with the use of the address term *κνρία/κύριε* (cf. discussion of table 2 above), students frequently first indicate that they wish to take the floor, and then proceed e.g. to ask a clarification question. Since the first student turn (request for the floor) in this sequence, when taken verbally, is already invested with politeness (use of *κνρία/κύριε*, conventional indirectness, or both), it does not seem necessary to expend more politeness when, e.g., a clarification question follows. Moreover, given the context of the classroom and the fact that students are expected to ask questions when they do not understand something, "requests re content" and "other requests" may represent neglectable threats to the teacher, despite the fact that they, too, are treated as directive speech acts in the classical speech act taxonomy (cf. e.g. Searle 1976).

“Yes, but” strategies, hedging opinions and use of rhetorical questions

Such positive and off record politeness strategies (cf. Brown and Levinson 1987: 113f, 116f, 223f) are found in my data in connection with non-compliant turns. Example 9, turn 4, shows an instance of a “Yes, but” strategy, while example 10 illustrates cases of rhetorical questioning (turn 2) and of hedging opinions (turns 4 and 9).

Example 9 (8/32) ((continuing example 1))

((during an Ancient Greek class, while discussing a passage from Thucydides’ history))

- 1 MT ((MT has been talking to whole class)) [*Συνέχισε, Μαρία.*]
- 2 boy3 [*Κύριε,*] *να ρωτήσω κάτι;*
- 3 MT *Λέγε ρε.*
- 4 boy3 ***Κύριε, ναι όμως. Εδώ πέρα αν πάνε/ οι: Αθηναίοι ξεκινήσουνε απ’ την Κέρκυρα θα πάνε στη Σικελία κατ’ευθείαν.***

- 1 MT ((MT has been talking to whole class)). [Go on, Maria.]
- 2 boy3 [Sir,] can I ask something?
- 3 MT Say, RE-PART.
- 4 boy3 **Sir, yes, but. Here if they go/ the: Athenians if they start from Corfou they will go directly to Sicily.**

Example 10 (5/133)

((during a history class in January 1991, the teacher brings up the war in the Persian Gulf and wants the students to express their opinions on the dramatic incidents that are going on at the time))

- 1 FT2 *↑Δεν άκουσα καθόλου την ε:/ το θέμα ΟΗΕ.*
- 2 boy3 ***Ε ο ΟΗΕ [(τι να πει)]***
- 3 FT2 [*Δηλαδή*] *θεωρείτε εσείς αυτή τη στιγμή [...] Ναι;*
- 4 boy3 ***Νομίζω ότι ο ΟΗΕ δε δίνει πουθενά λύση. Όπου: μπλέχτηκε ο ΟΗΕ, //***
- 5 FT2 *//Ναι.*
- boy3 ***πουθενά σε κανένα πόλεμο δεν έδωσε λύση. Ούτε με://***
- 6 FT2 *//Δηλαδή αρχίζουμε και αμφισβητούμε: [τη θέση του, ε;*
- 7 boy3 [*Ναι.*]
- 8 FT2 *Την ισχύ του [μάλλον.]*
- 9 boy3 ***[Νομίζω] ότι πρέπει να (έχει) και φιλοαμερικάν(οι) (.) στον ΟΗΕ. (.) Έτσι πιστεύω.***

- 1 FT2 ↑I haven't heard anything on the-FEM e:h/ the-NEUT issue of the UNO.
- 2 **boy3** E-ADVERS INTERJ the UNO [(what should it say)]
- 3 FT2 [In other words] you believe at this moment [...] Yes?
- 4 **boy3** **I think that the UNO does not give anywhere a solution. Where:ver the UNO got involved,//**
- 5 FT2 //Yes.
- boy3** **in no war anywhere did it ever give a solution. Neither wi:th//**
- 6 FT2 //That is to say, we begin to questio:n [its po]sition, don't we?
- 7 **boy3** [Yes.]
- 8 FT2 Its power [rather.]
- 9 **boy3** **[I think] that there must be some pro-Americ(ans) too (.) in the UNO. (.) That's what I believe.**

However, all these higher level politeness strategies have quite a limited presence in my data; as a matter of fact, only about 1/10 of the non-compliant turns involve such strategies). In other words, there is a large number of non-compliant turns without any redressive action, regardless of the seriousness of the threat.

"Unredressing"

Up to this point we have been looking at possible threats to the teacher's face and the most prevalent ways in which such threats are mitigated in my data. In the following, I would like to look at face-threatening turns from the point of view of what is missing, i.e. the eventual absence of typical markers of politeness in Greek, as well from the point of view of reducing redressive action in turns that look, on the face of it, redressed, and hence, not impolite.

Absence of typical markers of politeness

A striking thing about the directive turns is the total absence of typical markers of negative politeness that would normally accompany polite requests in Greek, i.e. *λίγο* ('a little') or *παρακαλώ* ('please') (cf. e.g. Pavlidou 1991a, Sifianou 1992a). Other hedges on requests — also markers of negative politeness — like *συγγνώμη* ('excuse me') or typical interrogative hedges like *μήπως* ('perhaps') (cf. Pavlidou 1991b) are also missing. Likewise, typical means of attending to the positive face of the interlocutor, like e.g. verbal

pleasantries, back-channeling etc., are either totally absent on the students' part or very scarce in their interaction with the teacher.

Prosodic features of the utterance, interjections

Moreover, the redressive action described above is not infrequently outweighed by prosodic features of the utterance or interjections which are not particularly "polite", like the prolongation of the last vowel of the address term, like e.g. *κνυρία*: ('Mi:ss') or the addressing interjection *ε* ('hey'), as in *E, κνυρία*. ('Hey, Miss.') (7/250). Such features are indicators of familiarity and intimacy between the interlocutors, but are rather impolite when coming from a student towards the teacher in class.

Repetition

But there is still another way in which a redressed act can be lacking on politeness, and that is via repetition. In example 11, the address term is emphatically repeated within the same turn (2); and in example 12, repetition extends over a sequence of turns: the polite request in turn 1 is repeated by the same student in turn 3.

Example 11 (4/45)

- | | | |
|---|--------------|---|
| 1 | FT1 | <i>Λέγε. [Ποιος θα πει;]</i> |
| 2 | Alex. | <i>[Κνυρία,] κνυρία, να πω κι εγώ; Κνυρία.</i> |
| 3 | FT | <i>Αλέξανδρε.</i> |
| 1 | FT1 | Say. [Who's going to say?] |
| 2 | Alex. | [Miss,] Miss, can I say too? Miss. |
| 3 | FT | Alexander. |

Example 12 (3/178)

- | | | |
|---|--------------|---|
| 1 | Alex. | <i>Κνυρία, να διαβάσω;</i> |
| 2 | FT1 | ((talks to another student)) |
| 3 | Alex. | <i>Κνυρία, να διαβάσω;</i> |
| 4 | FT1 | <i>Δεν διαβάζεις καλά ρε Αλέξανδρε.</i> |
| 1 | Alex. | Miss, shall I read? |
| 2 | FT1 | ((talks to another student)) |
| 3 | Alex. | Miss, shall I read? |
| 4 | FT1 | You don't read well RE-PART Alexander. |

One may argue that by means of repetition the students express their eagerness

to respond to the teacher or their involvement in class, and that this is appreciated by the teacher. Although this may be true in some cases (but certainly not in example 12, as turn 4 shows), the students' persistence puts the teacher under pressure, and hence the students' behaviour becomes more threatening to the teacher's negative face. Thus, an originally redressed request (e.g. example 12, turn 1) becomes less polite, if the speaker persists with it.

The same holds for non-compliant turns, where a single instance, e.g. of disagreement with the teacher, may not be a serious threat, but repetition of non-compliant turns over a sequence of exchanges between student and teacher may be quite face-threatening to the latter, especially when the argument does not end with an unequivocal gain on the teacher's part, as in the following example:

Example 13 (4/78)

((during a class on Ancient Greek, in which the last rapsodies from Homer's Iliad are discussed; in the excerpt below, boy3 tries to justify Achilles' cruelty in killing Hector))

- 1 FT1 [...] αλλά θέλει να έχει το χειρότερο θάνατο. (1) E:: //
- 2 **boy3** //Πόλεμος είναι κυρία, δεν είναι:
- 3 FT1 Ορίστε.
- 4 boy3 Πόλεμος είναι, δεν είναι
- 5 girl3 Και σε ένα πόλεμο [(δεν)];]
- 6 FT1 [Α, μια στιγμή.] Ο πόλεμος, εντάξει:
- 7 boy1 Έχει και τα όρια του.
- 8 FT1 Έχει και τα όρια του, πραγματικά.
- 9 **boy3** **Τι, κυρία () [(εχθρός του είναι κυρία)]**
- 10 FT1 [Εδώ δηλαδή] [[το παραξηλώνει.]]
- 11 **boy3** **[[Πόλεμος είναι, κυρία.]]**
- 12 FT1 [Ορίστε.]
- 13 **boy3** **[Ο εχθρός του είναι] (η)**
- 14 FT1 Τι;
- 15 girl1 [Αφού είναι βάρβαρος,] κυρία.
- 16 boy3 [(Εχθρός του είναι)] (την τύχη του θα έβλεπε.)
- 17 boy? [Η τύχη?]
- 18 FT1 [Ναι]. Θα μπορούσε να αρκεστεί στο να τον σκοτώσει,
[...]
- 19 η εκδίγησή του//
- 20 **boy3** //Ναι όμως, κυρία//

- 21 FT1 //>Από κει και πέρα< δεν είναι ανάγκη να κάνει τέτοια κουβέντα
- 22 boy3 **Οι: Τρώες, όταν σκότωσαν τον Πάτροκλο [προσπαθούσαν] να τον πάρουν όμως, κυρία.**
- 24 FT1 [Έτσι ήταν.]
- 25 FT1 *Ναι. Θέλω να πω ότι/μα και ο Έκτορας, [...]. Αλλά στην ίδια παγίδα πέφτει κι ο Αχιλλέας τελικά. Και θα 'ρθει και κεινού ο θάνατος. Προχώρα.* ((to another student who had been reading before the argument started))
- 1 FT1 [...] but he wants him to have the worst death. (1) U::h //
- 2 boy3 **//It's wartime Miss, it i:s not** ((incomplete))
- 3 FT1 What was that.
- 4 boy3 It's wartime, it's not ((incomplete))
- 5 girl3 And during a war [(don't)?]
- 6 FT1 [Oh, just a moment.] The war, all ri:ght
- 7 boy1 War up to a point.
- 8 FT1 Up to a point, indeed.
- 9 boy3 **What, Miss () [(it's his enemy Miss)]**
- 10 FT1 [Here in other words][[he is overdoing it.]]'
- 11 boy3 **[[It's wartime, Miss.]]**
- 12 FT1 [What was that.]
- 13 boy3 **[It's his enemy] (the)**
- 14 FT1 What?
- 15 girl1 [Since he's a barbarian] Miss.
- 16 boy3 [(It's his enemy)] (he would care for his fate.)
- 17 boy? [Fate?]
- 18 FT1 [Yes]. It could have sufficed to just kill him, [...]
- 19 his revenge//
- 20 boy3 **//Yes, but Miss //**
- 21 FT1 //>From that point on< it is not necessary to talk like that
- 22 boy3 **The: Trojans, when they killed Patroklos [they were trying] however to get him, Miss.**
- 24 FT1 [It was ju:st like this.]
- 25 FT1 Yes. I want to say that/ but even Hector, [...]. But Achilles falls in the same trap after all. And his death is coming too. Go on. ((to another student who had been reading before the argument started))

Blatant face threats

Finally, the students' behaviour sometimes strikes one — at least a third party outside the interaction itself — as quite threatening to the teacher, and yet the students do not trouble to redress it. Take for instance example 7, cited above. As already mentioned, turn 5 of this example contains the address term *κνρία* which acts redressively on the utterance with which girl3 disagrees with her teacher. But this is actually a rather small redress, if one takes into account the whole series of girl3's turns. In turn 3 (*Ε όμικρον γιώτα*. 'E-INTERJ it's an omikron and a iota. '), girl3 already uses the adversative interjection *ε*, which differs from the addressing interjection *ε* mentioned previously (the latter is stressed and is usually followed by a short pause, whereas the former is followed by the next word without pause, which builds the intonational peak of the utterance); the adversative *ε* indicates reluctance to accept or to do what the previous speaker said, to the point of very strong disagreement and indignation (as is the case in turn 5). Then, in turn 5, the redressed part (which also contains the adversative *ε*) is followed by an outright challenge to the teacher ([...] *δεν το βλέπετε; Όμικρον και γιώτα*. ('[...] don't you see it? Omikron and iota.')). Finally, girl3's last turn in the sequence, turn 8, (*Όχι και έψιλον γιώτα*. (literally: 'No and epsilon iota', in free translation: 'How could it ever be taken for an epsilon jota.')) is a syntactic structure typically used to issue rebuttals. In other words, the whole sequence of girl3's turns appears as an escalation of her disagreement with the teacher. It is quite evident that the presence of *κνρία* in one of the non-compliant utterances, can hardly stand up against the weight of the surrounding face threatening activity.

Variation with sex

As already mentioned, in the high school classes examined, there are more female (44) than male (31) students. However, as indicated in Pavlidou (1999), girls take fewer turns in class than boys (38.3% vs. 50.2% of the total number of students' turns); moreover, girls' turns are to a lesser extent initiative than those of the boys' (37.4% vs. 58.8% of the total number of students' initiative turns). Let us now examine, whether girls and boys differ with respect to the two types of initiative discussed above (cf. 2 in Table 1). Table 3 shows the distribution of initiative type according to sex.¹⁴

As the table below shows, both boys and girls take more directive than non compliant turns. Although girls seem to take slightly more non-compliant

Table 3. Type of initiative turns according to sex (N = 553 is the total number of girls'/ boys' initiative turns to teacher)

	directive	non-compliant	other	unclear	ROW TOTAL
girls' turns	46.8% (101)	24.5% (53)	25.5% (55)	3.2% (7)	100% (216)
boys' turns	50.1% (169)	19.9% (67)	26.1% (88)	3.9% (13)	100% (337)
COLUMN TOTAL	(270)	(120)	(143)	(20)	(553)

($\chi^2 = 2.04$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.75$)

turns (24.5% of the girls' initiative turns) than boys (19.9% of the boys' initiative turns), whereas boys take comparatively more directive turns than girls, the observed differences between girls and boys are not statistically significant. However, boys and girls do differ as to the type of directive and non-compliant turns that they take, as shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4 shows that boys and girls differ mainly with respect to requests for the floor: the boys' share of requests for the floor (75) is much greater than that of the girls' (20); moreover, requests for the floor represent the most prominent type of the boys' directive turns (44.4%). This does not necessarily imply that boys are more eager to participate in the classroom activity; it may also mean that girls use nonverbal means to get the floor more frequently than boys. Or, that teachers select girls more often than boys, so girls do not need to bid for the floor. On the other hand, the most prevalent type of directive turns in the girls' behaviour is "other requests" (47.5%), which means that girls ask more questions on class matters, turn-taking etc.

Table 4. Type of directive turns according to sex (N = 270 is the total number of girls'/ boys' directive turns to teacher)

	requests for floor	requests re content	other requests	ROW TOTAL
girls' turns	19.8% (20)	32.7% (33)	47.5% (48)	100% (101)
boys' turns	44.4% (75)	21.9% (37)	33.7% (57)	100% (169)
COLUMN TOTAL	(95)	(70)	(105)	(270)

($\chi^2 = 17.5$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.001$)

Table 5 shows that the non-compliance of girls applies mainly to the management of class matters, management of turn-taking etc. (67.9%), whereas the boys' non-compliant turns usually refer to the content of the lesson or the topic of the current discussion (58.2%).

Table 5. Type of non-compliant turns according to sex (N = 120 is the total number of girls'/boys' non-compliant turns to teacher)

	re content	re management etc.	unclear	ROW TOTAL
girls' turns	30.2% (16)	67.9% (36)	1.9% (1)	100% (53)
boys' turns	58.2% (39)	37.3% (25)	4.5% (3)	100% (67)
COLUMN TOTAL	(55)	(61)	(4)	(120)

($\chi^2 = 10.5$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.01$)

Boys and girls differ also in the use of the address term (*κνρία/κύριε*) to the teacher, as Table 6 shows. Boys use *κνρία/κύριε* more frequently (20.8%) in their turns than girls (15.4%). One plausible explanation for this is that *κνρία/κύριε* is used to a large extent when asking for the floor and since boys take such turns more frequently than girls, it is not surprising that the address term to the teacher is more strongly represented in the boys' turns. Another explanation might be that girls exploit to a greater extent nonverbal means when bidding for the floor.

Table 6. Distribution of *κνρία/κύριε* according to sex (N = 1547 is the total number of girls'/boys' initiative turns to teacher)

	without <i>κνρία/κύριε</i>	with <i>κνρία/κύριε</i>	ROW TOTAL
girls' turns	84.6% (566)	15.4% (103)	100% (669)
boys' turns	79.2% (695)	20.8% (183)	100% (878)
COLUMN TOTAL	(1261)	(286)	(1547)

($\chi^2 = 7.4$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$)

In addition to the differences discussed up to now, boys also tend to be more persistent both in their disagreements on the content of the lesson and in their requests for the floor (cf. examples 13 and 12 above, respectively). On the other hand, girls do not only take (relatively) more non-compliant turns on management matters, as indicated in Table 5, but tend also to negotiate their relationship to the teacher to a greater extent than the boys, as the next example indicates:

Example 14 (5/191)

((class has been discussing what to do in case of an earthquake; students make a noise, bell rings))

- 1 FT2 *Απλά αυτό/ αυτός/ αυτός ο:/ αυτός ο τρόπος είναι για να αποφευχθεί ο πανικός. [...] Και προσοχή στα κορίτσια που είναι υστερικές κιόλα. Μην αρχίσουν να ουρλιάζουν.*
- 2 **girl4** ***E όχι και υστερικές, κυρία.***
- 3 group ((students make noise))
- 4 FT2 *A και κάτι άλλο. [...]*
- 1 FT2 Simply this-NEUT/ this-MASC/ this-MASC the:/ this-MASC way is in order to avoid panic. [...] And watch out for the girls who are hysterical too. Not that they start screaming.
- 2 **girl4** **E-ADVERS INTERJ, no that's too much, to call us hysterical Miss.**
- 3 group ((students make noise))
- 4 FT2 Oh, something else, too. [...]

In example (14), it may be argued that it was the teacher's provocative comment (which actually exceeds the scope of her role as a knowledge transmitter) that brought about girl4's indignant reaction (cf. the use of the adversative interjection ε plus the syntactic structure of rebuttals, discussed above). But there are also other instances, where the teacher seems to act in accordance with her role and yet receives a very strong reaction, as in example 15:

Example 15 (3/132)

((class answers questions during a class on Modern Greek; the boy tries to clarify what he and others meant by a certain expression))

- 1 b y o *Να τους ξεσηκώσει, να τους ξυπνήσει. Όχι από ύπνο.*
- 2 FT1 *Τι θα γίνει μ' αυτό το θέμα της γλώσσας ρε παιδιά;*
- 3 **Anna** ***E κάνουμε και εκφραστικά λάθη κυρία (τι να [τα κάνουμε]***
- 4 FT1 *[E ναι αλλά] να/ τι να κάνουμε αν/ μέσω της γλώσσας επικοινωνούμε Άννα. Με τα πολλά εκφραστικά λάθη δεν καταλαβαίνομαστε. Γιάννη ((to another student)).*
- 1 boy To arouse them, to wake them up. Not from sleep.
- 2 FT1 What is going to be done with this problem of language RE-PART guys?

- 3 Anna E-ADVERS INTERJ so we make mistakes Miss (what can [we make them])
- 4 FT1 E-ADVERS INTERJ yes but/ what can we do if/ it is by means of language that we communicate, Anna. With this many mistakes we can't understand each other. Yannis ((to another student)).

Although the teacher uses an impersonalized rhetorical question (turn 2), addressed to all, the point is to reprimand the boy because of his (semantically) wrong answer. But Anna reacts (turn 3) quite drastically to the teacher refusing to accept the alleged severity of the error and implying that it is natural that they (students) make such errors. She thus not only takes implicitly the boy's part, and shows solidarity with her fellow students (cf. the use of the first person plural in the verb: 'we make mistakes'), but she also puts the teacher in her place (which the teacher does not accept, as the last turn shows).

Summary

Students' requests for the floor and non-compliant turns, both representing face-threatening activity, make up almost 40% of the students' initiative turns. Requests for the floor are redressed in a very conventional way, namely as interrogative sentences with the main verb in the subjunctive and/or with the address term *κνορία/κνοιε* to the teacher. The latter may also be employed to mitigate threats to the positive face of the teacher as implied by students' non-compliant turns. Other positive politeness strategies in non-compliant turns are quite limited and sometimes totally absent even when serious assaults to the teacher's face are attempted. Moreover, the redressive effect of politeness strategies may be mitigated by various mechanisms, like for example, repetition.

Contrary to such claims as those made by e.g. Holmes 1995, girls in this study have not been found to be necessarily more polite than boys, but are polite or impolite in qualitatively different ways from their male classmates. Although it is true that girls talk less and take less initiative than boys in class, girls tend to comply to a lesser (relative to their total number of turns) degree with the teacher and to challenge more severely the teacher's position in their relationship. Boys, on the other hand, may e.g. disagree with the teacher, and sometimes in a very persistent manner, but usually this disagreement refers to a topic other than the teacher's role and their relationship. And this I consider to be a less drastic challenge to the teacher's positive face.

Remarks on teachers' talk to students

As already mentioned, teachers are expected on account of their role to do certain things in class, like telling the students what to do, correcting them, reprimanding them etc., which are considered to be inherently face threatening in the Brown and Levinson politeness framework. This fact is reflected in the consistent use of imperatives, throughout my data, with which teachers e.g. allocate turns (cf. example 11, turn 1: *Λέγε.* ('Say.')), tell students to go on (cf. e.g. example 1, turn 1: *Συνέχισε, Μαρία.* ('Continue, Maria.')) etc. Such requests are never issued indirectly in my data, nor are they accompanied by typical politeness markers like *λίγο* 'a little' and *παρακαλώ* 'please'. The same holds for redress on interruptions (e.g. *συγγνώμη* 'excuse me', *με συγχωρείς* 'pardon me'), especially dominating ones.¹⁵

In contrast, positive politeness strategies are more widely employed and appear in connection with various types of speech acts. Some of these strategies are apparently aimed at creating an atmosphere of familiarity between the teacher and the students, e.g. the use of the particle *ρε*. This is a particle used only in informal conversations and indicates that the speaker perceives the communication situation as very relaxed and the relationship to the interlocutor as quite familiar.¹⁶ *Ρε* is the only redressive element that sometimes accompanies the teachers' imperatives (cf. example 9, turn 3: *Λέγε ρε.* ('Say, RE-PART.')). It can also mitigate threats to the positive face of the addressee, as in example 12, turn 4, where the teacher performs baldly a very serious assault to the positive face of the student who is trying (with great persistence, admittedly) to get permission to read: *Δεν διαβάζεις καλά ρε Αλέξανδρε.* ('You don't read well RE Alexander').

Another strategy employed by the teachers to mitigate threats to the students' positive face is the use of the first person plural in verbs, instead of the second person (either singular or plural), as in example 10, turn 6: *Δηλαδή αρχίζουμε και αμφισβητούμε: τη θέση του, ε;* ('That is to say we begin to question its position, don't we?'). The same means, however, is used more widely, i.e. not necessarily in connection with threats to the students' positive face; cf. for example the teacher's turn in example 4, turn 1: *[...] Και θέλω να σχολιάσουμε αυτό το τέλος. Είδαμε μ//* ('[...] And I want us to comment on this end. We have seen μ//'). In such instances, it is obvious that the use of the first person plural serves to create an atmosphere of solidarity. Although other mechanisms for enhancing solidarity, like joking, are to be found as

well, it is remarkable that one of the most typical means for Greek, namely diminutives¹⁷ of personal names or other address terms (e.g. *παιδάκια* ‘children-DIM’) is totally absent in my data. This indicates, I believe, that the ultimate purpose of the teachers in creating solidarity in the classroom is not e.g. towards a more intimate relationship, but towards a greater involvement in the classroom activity on the students’ part.

Teachers also use other means, e.g. tags, back-channeling etc. in order to get or keep the students involved in the discussion, but the most characteristic means of eliciting a reaction in the classroom, and thus activating participation on the students’ part, is the use of incomplete questions, as in the following example:

Example 16 (7/36)

- | | | |
|---|------|---|
| 1 | boy1 | <i>Να πω τ’ (άλλο κομμάτι;)</i> |
| 2 | FT2 | <i>Όχι, τα άλλα. [...] Ποιος άλλος λόγος; Η μείωση;</i> |
| 3 | boy1 | <i>Του πληθυσμού.</i> |
| 1 | boy1 | Shall I say the (next part)? |
| 2 | FT2 | No, the other ones. [...] What other reason? The decrease? |
| 3 | boy1 | Of the population. |

On the other hand, in contrast to what is reported in White 1989, teachers in my data do not hesitate to correct, reprimand, disagree with the students or do other things that are threatening to the students’ positive face with no or very little redress. A very clear instance of this is example 14 above, where the teacher tells the class to beware — in case of an earthquake — of the girls, who are hysterical and might start screaming. Even if this comment were supposed to be funny (!), the reaction of the female student to the teacher (turn 2: *Ε όχι και υστερικές, κυρία.* ‘E-INTERJ, no that’s too much, to call us hysterical Miss.’) makes clear that it was not understood, at least by some, as a joke. Nevertheless, the teacher continues in a manner that totally ignores the girl’s reaction and persists in attributing certain properties to the girls that make some students laugh:

Example 17 (5/193) ((continuing example 14))

- | | | |
|---|-----|---|
| 4 | FT2 | <i>Α και κάτι άλλο. Επειδή συνηθισμένες είναι οι ξαλάδες σε σας, άμα αρχίσει καμιά και ξαλίζεται, μη τιναχτεί επάνω και φωνάζει σεισμός. Μπορεί να ξαλίζεται το μυαλό της, όχι να [()]</i> |
|---|-----|---|

- 5 [((students laugh))]
- 4 FT2 Oh, something else, too. Since dizziness is common with you, if one of you starts getting dizzy, she shouldn't get up and shout earthquake. It may be her mind that gets dizzy, not that [()]
- 5 [((students laugh))]

On the whole then, there seems to be a neglect of the students' negative face in the teachers' behaviour which derives from the requirements of the particular institutional setting. This is compensated for, at least partly, by certain positive politeness strategies. It is as if teachers try to keep a balance between certain (role-required) face threatening acts and a conventionalized solidarity. Presumably, such a balance makes, on the one hand, the enactment of the teaching objectives — mainly knowledge transmission — possible and, on the other, does not impose a one-way development towards closeness in the interaction.

Conclusion

The examination of classroom interaction in a Greek high school, although not exhaustive, has yielded some answers to the questions that were posed in the introduction. It has shown that in contrast to teachers, students, while respecting in a conventionalized manner their teachers' negative face, tend to neglect his/her positive face wants. Teachers, on the other hand, seem to care less for their students' negative face and put a greater emphasis on the positive face wants of their students. On the whole, low-level politeness strategies seem to prevail, and this, in connection with the presence of unredressed face-threatening acts and the absence of certain typical politeness markers, leads to the conclusion that the classroom interaction discussed here is characterized by *minimal politeness investments*, especially on the students' part.

Although it would be premature to generalize this conclusion¹⁸ over e.g. Greek high schools or classroom interaction *par tout*, the results of this study are explicable in terms of the roles of students and teachers in the institutional setting of a classroom and the type of speech activity that is expected of each. For example, teachers have to perform certain face threatening acts, like correcting the students or telling them what to do, in order to attain the main objectives of the curriculum, and this is common knowledge to both students

and teachers. Consequently, certain acts that would be very face threatening in another setting are less so in classroom, and hence there is *no need for redressive action*.¹⁹ Moreover, as mentioned above, certain features of the teacher-student interaction are obligatory (exclusive use of T- or V-form on teachers' or students' part respectively, a specific address term to the teacher etc.). This obligatory social marking in the interaction indicates, I think, that students and teachers *perceive their relationship as being relatively fixed*, and as Kasper (1997: 383) remarks: "Most politeness appears to be expended in negotiable relationships with familiars but nonintimates, such as coworkers and friends. In more fixed relationships at opposite ends of the social distance continuum, intimates and strangers, politeness is found to decrease". Although teachers and students are neither strangers nor intimates, their relationship appears to be usually not negotiable as far as the *role constellation* is concerned; this does not mean of course that students do not ever challenge the teacher's position or rights (cf. e.g. examples 14 and 15).

Moreover, the differential choice of politeness strategies between students and teachers can be explained also in terms of the *group presence* of the former and the *solo appearance* of the latter: while students can usually count on the solidarity of their fellow students in a dispute with the teacher, and they do get it (cf. example 15), teachers stand alone in front of the group. So despite their greater institutional power, teachers have to do some work to win a benign attitude from their students, hence the prevalence of positive politeness strategies on their side. In contrast, if students are too nice to the teacher they run the *risk of losing their peers' solidarity*, because they may appear to their fellow students as ingratiating themselves with the teacher. As for differences between the sexes, girls do not emerge as unequivocally more polite than boys, as claimed in other studies. Regardless of certain quantitative differences which are usually taken to be indicative of a greater politeness on the girls' part, female students sometimes seem to be less sensitive to teachers' positive face wants than boys, and attempt more serious face assaults to the teacher.

In conclusion, I would like to make a more general point. With very few exceptions (e.g. Blum-Kulka 1990, Pavlidou 1994), politeness research has focused on decontextualized speech acts, which are taken to be inherently face threatening, e.g. requests. The discussion above shows that the context of an act can become operative both *in terms of sequencing* (e.g. repeated appearance of a polite request increases its impoliteness) and *in terms of the whole*

speech event through which the role and status of a speech act is specified — along with other contextual factors like social roles, power asymmetries etc. In other words, there seems to be hardly a ranking *an sich* of a speech act in a society, but at best rankings of the seriousness of speech act threats *within speech events*, and these may differ from one speech event to another. One implication of this is that, if we want to talk seriously about “the norms of politeness” in a society or “inter-cultural differences” in politeness,²⁰ we will have to make a much more systematic intra-cultural examination of contextual aspects in the study of politeness.

Conventions for transcription, translation, etc.

Transcription symbols are based on the conventions presented in Ochs, Schegloff and Thompson 1996, with the following deviations:

- / Single slash indicates self-repair.
- // Double slash indicates point at which the current utterance is interrupted by the next one, also marked with //.
- [...] Brackets enclosing three periods mean that part of a turn, or a turn sequence, has been left out.
- (2) Numbers in parentheses indicate silence, in seconds, while a dot in parentheses indicates silence less than a second.

bold Excerpts in bold letters highlight that part of the example that is pertinent to the discussion.

Numbers at the left column in the examples refer to turns in the excerpt, not lines.

Abbreviations:

MASC	masculine
FEM	feminine
NEUT	neuter
INTERJ	interjection
ADVERS	adversative
PART	particle
DIM	diminutive

Translation: The English translation of Greek examples and excerpts is only approximate; moreover, translation of certain multifunctional Greek words

may vary according to context. Greek particles or interjections with no English equivalent are not translated; they appear in uppercase in the translation, followed by PART or INTERJ respectively.

Notes

1. This paper is part of a longer involvement in classroom interaction which includes my supervision of K. Tsolakidou's Ph.D. thesis (1995) and A. Archakis' M.A. thesis (1992); both of them are to be thanked for providing me with data and discussing with me aspects of classroom life and problems. I would also like to thank G. Kasper for references on politeness in the foreign language classroom and the two editors of the present volume whose comments on the text have definitely contributed to its comprehensibility. Finally, special thanks go to P. Politis not only for providing me with two articles, but also for commenting on the text from the particularly valuable perspective of an experienced high school teacher who is also well-acquainted with the Brown and Levinson politeness theory, and to A. Archakis for exchanging his ideas with me on the final version of the paper.
2. As a matter of fact, White (1989) seems to have served as the exact model for Aeginitou (1994).
3. See, for example, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975: 6), Cazden (1986: 443), Swann (1992: 48). For a discussion more focused on Greek secondary schools see Tsolakidou (1995: 10–18).
4. Conventions for translation and transcription are to be found at the end of the text.
5. This is the typical way of addressing teachers in elementary school as well, but not at university, though a few younger students do carry on with this habit in university classes too, at least in the beginning. Being addressed as *κυρία* instead of *κυρία Παυλίδου* has always struck me as very odd, so I recently gave a questionnaire to my students, to check among others whether the addressing norms have been changing; the answer confirmed my expectations: almost everybody answered that they address their professors with *κύριε/κυρία* plus last name. More on the use of address and T/V-forms in Greek can be found in Bakakou-Orfanou (1989), Makri-Tsilipakou (1984), and Petrits (1989).
6. Even the one cassette-recorder seems to have been obtrusive, as indicated a two or three times in the data. For similar observations see also Kondyli (1990: 76).
7. For problems concerning the coding of this concept see Pavlidou (1999).
8. E.g. Altani (1992: 235) in classifying her pupil's turn-getting behaviour distinguishes interruptions along with self-select turns, bids, side comments etc.
9. On interruptions and their functions in Greek classroom interaction see Archakis (1992). His data stem from the same high school classes as mine, but besides having revised the transcriptions I used students' turns as the basic unit of my analysis, whereas his analysis is based on the transition of the floor from one speaker to another.
10. Cf. also Cazden (1986: 432): "Schools are the first larger institution to which children

come from their families and home neighborhoods and *are expected not only to attend (as in church) but to participate*" [my emphasis].

11. Requests for the floor can of course be performed nonverbally as well (e.g. by raising one's hand or by nodding); but for reasons indicated above, the present discussion is limited to the verbal means for bidding for the floor.
12. As may be expected, the address term appears very rarely in non-initiative turns. This is of no surprise, since this category comprises turns in which the student simply complies with the sequence which is initiated by the teacher, i.e. turns with no initiative and turns to other students.
13. Because of space limitations the role of the position of *κνρία/κύριε* cannot be discussed here.
14. The grand total in Table 3, i.e. 553, differs from the sum of initiative turns (602) as indicated in Table 1. This is due to the fact that a number of turns are either collective turns or that the speaker's sex could not be identified. The same holds for the tables to follow.
15. On the differentiation between dominating and cooperative interruptions in the classroom context see Archakis (1992).
16. The particle *οε* may also be used with strangers, but in that case its use is restricted to quarels, cursing etc.
17. On the use of diminutives in Greek see Sifianou (1992b).
18. There is also some evidence from the foreign language classroom that would support this conclusion; for example, Lörcher and Schulze (1988: 196) talk of "a deficit of explicit politeness formulae" with respect to the foreign language classroom.
19. This does not preclude of course the possibility that students (or teachers) may be intentionally impolite at times. But the Brown and Levinson framework does not provide the means for deciding whether a speaker is being impolite on purpose or whether s/he does not hold a certain act to be face threatening and, thus, does not undertake any redressive action.
20. For example, the investigation of politeness in the classroom has indicated that in this institutionalized setting the space for individual face wants, and accordingly for volitional behaviour attending to these wants, is restricted in a similar manner as has been described for e.g. Japan (cf. Matsumoto 1988, Ide 1989): along with the *volitional component* involved in the various politeness strategies observed, there is a *social marking* component which is pre-determined and unaffected by individual choices, quite reminiscent of the notion of *discernment*. So, although there is evidence (e.g. Sifianou 1992, Pavlidou 1994) that Greek society is oriented towards positive politeness, such conclusions should not be unduly generalized without a systematic examination of the various contextual parameters.

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Congratulations and bravo!

Marianthi Makri-Tsilipakou

Offering approbation

The expression of approval or approbation or praise is generally perceived as an undoubtedly laudable activity on the part of community members since it works towards consolidating social relations by addressing H's want to be liked, i.e. her/his positive 'face'. Within the Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness model, these practices, which convey that 'X is admirable, interesting', are linguistic realizations of the positive-polite, broad strategy of claiming common ground with H (1987: 102–3). According to the writers, the exchange of interest and approval is an integral part of "normal linguistic behaviour between intimates" (: 101) and it is exactly because of this association with routine familiar interaction that positive-polite utterances can be used "as a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy" (: 103).

The importance of this aspect of politeness is also recognized by Leech (1983) who stresses its significance even more by according it Maxim status, as part of the Politeness Principle within his Interpersonal Rhetoric scheme. He calls it the Approbation Maxim — which is *other*-focused and so more important than its twin, *self*-focused Modesty Maxim — and specifies it as comprising the submaxims of *minimizing dispraise of other*, and *maximizing praise of other* (: 132–3), the former being a more weighty consideration than the latter.

Conversation Analysts, on the other hand, have focused on the receiving end of the approbation/praise offering utterance. Pomerantz (1978) discusses the conflict inherent in accepting or rejecting compliments, since doing either violates different constraints regarding the preferences for agreement and self-praise avoidance, as a result of which members have evolved compromising strategies. This aspect of the praising exchange is also noticed by Brown and

Levinson who view approbation/praise as a threat towards both S's and H's face, although they claim that it is H's face which is being primarily threatened (1987: 66–8), in that H might have to take action to protect the object of S's desire and/or accept and reciprocate.

The Greek language possesses a number of expressions which can be used to convey the speaker's approval/approbation/praise, many of them formulaic in nature. Two such related approbatory expressions used in everyday interpersonal communication between Greeks, i.e. *συγχαρητήρια*,¹ 'congratulations', and *μπράβο*, 'bravo', 'well done' or 'good for you', have occasionally puzzled me lately, as I have at times found them misplaced, insincere, presumptuous, or outright rude.

In the following sections, I will attempt to look into their sometimes overlapping distribution, charting both their uses and, even more interestingly, their 'abuses', in search of some measure of clarification as regards their role in interpersonal everyday interaction, for the information of any interested member. I will start with an account of relevant semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic properties and proceed with the social parameters which affect the sociolinguistic distribution of the two expressions.

Some relevant, linguistic features

The Tegopoulos-Fytrakis Modern Greek Dictionary defines *συγχαρητήρια*-N.NTR.PL as the written or spoken expression of the speaker's joy to somebody over her/his success or some pleasant event. *Μπράβο*, on the other hand, is an exclamation, used to express approbation/approval. In the authoritative Kriaras Modern Greek Dictionary, *συγχαρητήρια* is given the additional meaning of praise, besides that of expressing joy, and *μπράβο* that of admiration, along with expressing approbation. Both are described as lending themselves to ironical uses.

Triantafyllides (1941) classifies *μπράβο* as an exclamation of approbation/praise and *συγχαρητήρια* as an exclamatory expression which can function as a wish (402–3). In Modern Greek, exclamations are associated with a specific intonation contour and structure (Holton, Mackridge and Philippaki-Warburton 1997: 424). Wishes are included in the category of exclamations because they both share "a marked intonation expressing emotion" and "are often structurally marked by using special particles or by being

elliptical” (: 426). Holton et al. (1997) classify both *συγχαρητήρια* and *μπράβο* as idiomatic expressions for wishes (ibid), obviously on the basis of intonation/syntax rather than meaning.²

Both expressions, which can be done by themselves, can also be followed, or preceded, by an animate noun³ in the vocative which specifies the recipient of the approbation/praise, as in *Μαρία μπράβο/συγχαρητήρια* or *συγχαρητήρια/μπράβο, Μαρία*, ‘Maria, bravo/congratulations’ or ‘congratulations/bravo, Maria’. From the two, only *μπράβο* can, however, be followed by a benefactive pronominal adjunct which occurs as a personal clitic pronoun in the genitive, e.g. *μπράβο σου/του/της*, etc, lit. bravo your/her/his, ‘well done to you/her/him’ or ‘good for you/her/him’, etc..⁴ This pattern is a common one for greetings, e.g., *καλημέρα σου/σας*, ‘good morning to you-SING/PL’; wishes, *περαστικά σου/σας*, lit. passingly to you-SING/PL, ‘get well soon’; other exclamations, e.g. *αλοίμονό σου/σας*, ‘woe betide you-SING/PL’. The effect of this structure is that the enclitic and the preceding word form a single phonological word, often triggering a second stress, e.g. *αλοίμονό σου*, in accordance with the ‘antepenultimate’ or ‘three syllable rule’ which constrains the placement of the stress within any Greek word, as falling no further than the third syllable from the end.

Συγχαρητήρια, on the other hand, requires a prepositional phrase consisting of *σε*, ‘to’, and the strong form of the personal pronoun in the accusative, *σένα/σας*, ‘you-SING/PL’. One reason why this is so might be because *συγχαρητήρια* is already a long word which will become an even longer phonological word with the attachment of the clitic pronoun.⁵

According to Tzartanos (1945), exclamations, which are no necessary part of the meaning of the sentence itself but convey the emotional state of the speaker at the time of the utterance, establish the logical relation of cause between themselves and the propositional content of the sentence/clause they accompany. This can be achieved through parataxis, the simple side-by-side placement of sentences, as in *Συγχαρητήρια! Η ομιλία σας ήταν εξαιρετική*, ‘Congratulations! Your-PL speech was excellent’, or *Μπράβο πολύ ωραία φωτογραφία*, ‘Bravo! Great photo’. As Mackridge (1987: 340) points out, parataxis which “avoids the rationalization of cause and effect” is by far the commonest pattern in spoken Greek, something Mirambel (1959: 432) treats as evidence to the characteristic preference for intensity of expression over objective representation in Modern Greek. I would also think that this practice testifies to the preference for involvement, i.e. the positive-polite

orientation of Greek society (Sifianou, 1992), since such a syntactic pattern leaves it up to the recipient to work out the connection between the two juxtaposed utterances. The desirability of such an inferencing process, which is quite straightforward in the case of parataxis, also underlies the elimination of all linguistic information when the two approbatory expressions are done just by themselves and so recipients have to invoke their knowledge of the world to decode them.

Nevertheless, both *συγχαρητήρια* and *μπράβο* can be followed by some complement which functions as the reason for the expression of approbation/praise, i.e. a prepositional phrase introduced by *για*, ‘for’, e.g. *συγχαρητήρια για την προαγωγή σου*, ‘congratulations on your promotion’, *μπράβο για το θάρρος σου*, lit. bravo [to you] for your courage, or a complement clause introduced by *που*, ‘that’,⁶ as in *μπράβο (σου) που έχεις τέτοιο θάρρος*, lit. bravo [to you] that you have got such courage, but, **συγχαρητήρια που πήρες προαγωγή* *‘congratulations that you got a promotion’. The fact that *συγχαρητήρια* resists the use of the complementizer *που*, further supports our earlier remark that it is less of an exclamation than *μπράβο*, as *που* encodes a “direct emotive reaction because/as a result of some event” (Christidis 1982: 145, my translation), which is stated in the complement.⁷ Additionally, *συγχαρητήρια* could arguably allow for the use of the complementizer *ότι*, ‘that’, as in, *?συγχαρητήρια για το γεγονός ότι είσαι πάντα στην ώρα σου* *‘congratulations on the fact that you are always on time’, which is interpreted as an “indirect, temporally unspecified, more permanent, emotive/evaluative attitude to what the complement states” (Christidis: 1982: 145, my translation), on the part of the speaker.⁸

Moreover, *μπράβο*, but not *συγχαρητήρια*, can follow a more elliptical syntax, which does away with the preposition introducing the noun which has triggered the presence of *μπράβο*, e.g. *μπράβο σουτ!*, lit. bravo shot, ‘what a [great] shot’ with reference to soccer, *μπράβο ειλικρίνεια*, lit. bravo frankness, ‘what [unbelievable/unexpected] frankness’, or *μπράβο κούρεμα*, ‘what a [nice] haircut’, *μπράβο μάτια*, lit. bravo eyes, ‘what [beautiful] eyes’ or the sexist *μπράβο γκόμενα*, lit. bravo dish, ‘what a dish’. Such expressions which have connotations of surprise or disbelief are somewhat indeterminate between praise/admiration and indignation/contempt, e.g. *μπράβο ειλικρίνεια* could mean exactly the opposite, ‘what total deception’ or ‘what a lie/liar’, and one has to rely on intonation, as well as other context cues to reach an accurate interpretation. In this syntactic pattern which is characteris-

tic of exclamatory clauses, *μπράβο* can be seen as taking up the slot normally filled by *τι*, ‘what’, or *πόπο*, ‘wow’, a structural possibility not open to *συγχαρητήρια* (**συγχαρητήρια σουτ/ειλικρίνεια/μάτια!*). This phenomenon which could be seen as an attempt at holophrasis can again be accounted for by the peculiar nature of exclamations which seems to have retained its bonds to this primordial way of expression (Christidis 1982).

As regards collocations, *συγχαρητήρια* co-occurs with the Katharevousa adjective *θερμά*, ‘warm’, a pattern it shares with other conventional expressions such as wishes, *θερμές ευχές*, or practices such as hospitality, *θερμή φιλοξενία*, or welcoming, *θερμή υποδοχή*, all of which can also be ‘warm’ in Greek.⁹ *Μπράβο*, on the other hand, can be modified by *μεγάλο*, ‘big’/‘great’, which, among other things, can define desirable as well as undesirable feelings, qualities or acts: *μεγάλη αγάπη/μίσος*, ‘great love/hatred’, *μεγάλο θάρρος/θράσος*, ‘great courage/big nerve’, *μεγάλη εφεύρεση/απάτη*, ‘great invention/big hoax’. Obviously *θερμά* stresses a qualitative or emotive aspect while *μεγάλο* builds up volume or intensity.

On the whole then, in terms of its semantics and syntax, *μπράβο*, seems to be more of an exclamation than *συγχαρητήρια* which lacks its urgency/spontaneity. In the following section, I will look into the pragmatic properties of these two expressions, which have already infiltrated this section unawares, in somewhat greater detail.

***Συγχαρητήρια* and *μπράβο* as speech acts**

Both Greek expressions can function as a vehicle for the illocutionary forces associated with the verbs *συγχαίρω*, ‘congratulate’, and *επαινώ/επιδοκιμάζω*, ‘praise’/‘approve of’, to which they are respectively related, at least at first glance. As such, they can be situated in the class of Searle’s expressives the illocutionary point of which “is to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content” (1979: 15), the truth of which is presupposed. By performing an expressive, in other words, the speaker expresses or makes known her/his feelings and attitudes about a state of affairs which the illocution presupposes. The property (not necessarily an action) specified in the proposition must be related to either *S* or *H* (Searle 1979: 16), and is usually something good or bad.

Most of the expressives, however, are hearer-directed (Searle and Vanderveken 1985: 211), a fact which seems to justify Verschueren's (1985: 192) further clarification of the expressive illocutionary point as not simply the expression of a psychological state as such but as "the expression of a psychological state important to the hearer." In the same manner, Leech (1983: 104) re-classifies some of Searle's expressives, e.g. thanking, congratulating, praising, etc, in terms of politeness as 'convivial', which he defines as the type of illocutionary function in the expression of which "the illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal". Such expressives are "intrinsicly polite" (: 106).

Each one of the above speech acts are analyzed by both Searle and Vanderveken (1985) and, in greater detail, by Wierzbicka (1987) in her semantic dictionary of English verbs. According to the former, in *congratulating* "the speaker expresses pleasure with the preparatory condition that the thing in question is beneficial or good for the hearer" (Searle and Vanderveken 1985: 212). The thing in question, i.e. some act or event which is stated in the proposition, must be related to H but need not be anything the hearer is actually responsible for. It could very well be just "some item of good fortune" (ibid). Congratulations can be directed only to the person(s) whose fortune is involved.

Wierzbicka (1987: 229) also observes that "we congratulate people because something good happens to them" — ranging from 'happy events', e.g. the birth of a child, to 'impressive actions' — but she contends that the addressee must be at least partly responsible for the happy event. This is the reason why it would be impossible to say 'well done' or 'congratulations' to a friend who has just come into an unexpected inheritance, without being ironic. Rather than an expression of the speaker's feelings, i.e. their pleasure at some H-related event, Wierzbicka claims that *congratulate* has the illocutionary point of 'causing the addressee to know', something supported by the syntax of the English verb which necessitates some object (congratulate someone). More specifically, she proposes that the speaker performs the congratulating act because s/he wants to cause the addressee to know how s/he feels because of the 'good event', in other words convey her/his reaction to the event in question.

Approving (of), on the other hand, is usually more of an attitude than a momentary event and something one does in their heads (Wierzbicka, 1987: 121). When it gets voiced, however, it implies that the speaker has "some kind

of imaginary authority over the other person ... a presumed ability to influence the other person's actions" (: *ibid*), as the approving (of) amounts to saying 'I think it is a good thing to do', on the part of the speaker, which enables the recipient to do what s/he wants to do (: *ibid*).

As an expression of the speaker's approbation, *praising* presupposes that the thing praised is good (Searle and Vanderveken 1985: 215). It is always aimed at persons whose involvement in the praiseworthy item/action is implied, even when not explicitly stated (Wierzbicka 1987: 198). So, although one can praise a person's eye colour, height, etc., s/he cannot praise her/him *for* them. Rather than the speaker's wish to please the addressee or express an opinion (which happens to be positive), praising seems to have the expression of a positive judgement as its illocutionary purpose (: 199), and in this respect it is similar to *complimenting*, something Searle and Vanderveken also recognize in their description (1985: 215). The difference between the two consists in that complimenting requires the physical presence of the recipient but not her/his responsibility for the 'good thing' (Wierzbicka 1987: 200), which, additionally, is not necessarily good for the hearer, e.g. heroism, self-sacrifice (Searle and Vanderveken 1985: 215).

The above analyses show that related speech acts share quite a lot of components and are often not easy to distinguish. Illocutionary forces seem to shade into one another as, for instance, approving merges with congratulating in that they are both meant to let the recipient know, or praising with complimenting in expressing a positive judgement, to mention just a few of the crossings. Because of this, it is questionable whether approbatory expressions could be exclusively related to any single one of the above acts. One wonders whether *μπράβο* can not be both approval and praise, and a compliment at the same time, or whether *συγχαρητήρια* does not have a praising component and a complimenting function, sometimes? Moreover, some of these acts seem to presuppose others, e.g. you normally do not praise a thing/person you do not approve of. As a result, one cannot always be absolutely sure as to what is being accomplished, on the basis of the linguistic expression only, without considering the whole context of situation, which invariably means social/cultural constraints, besides language-specific ones (Wierzbicka 1985). A few points, then, seem to be in line to make room for the language- and culture-specific peculiarities of these approbatory acts.

Starting with *συγχαρητήρια*, in accordance with Searle and Vanderveken's, and contrary to Wierzbicka's account, the absence of responsibility

on the part of the recipient of congratulations is a possibility for the Greek expression. For instance, it is often the case that the host or hostess of several television and radio programmes which feature lucky games for the benefit of viewers/listeners, routinely offers her/his congratulations to the occasional winner by saying, among other things: *Συγχαρητήρια, κερδίσατε!*, ‘Congratulations, you have won!’. All viewers/listeners normally have to do is pick out an object/number, which is later declared to be the lucky one, or, even less accountably, simply have their participation number picked out as the lucky one. Can this count as being ‘responsible for’ or ‘implicated in’ the ‘good act or event’? *Συγχαρητήρια*, could also be offered to the winner of the state lottery or the football pools while s/he is being officially handed the money check, though nowadays winners generally shun publicity. The only kind of agency the lucky guy has displayed is to buy a ticket. Obviously, agency is not a pre-condition for *συγχαρητήρια*. Rather, the ceremonial context, real or simulated, is what primarily triggers its use.

Although expressives are an expression of their sincerity condition (Searle 1969: 67), in that one is supposed to possess the psychological state the performative expresses, Leech’s (1983: 135) observation that “an unflattering subtitle for the Approbation maxim would be the Flattery maxim” raises the issue of their insincere execution, i.e. of lying in issuing approbation, especially as “everyone has to lie” (Sacks I 1995: 549) to abide by social rules. It is common knowledge that we can, and often do, fake psychological states or feelings, as the notoriety of compliments attests.

Of the two Greek expressions — barring sarcasm, irony and the like — *συγχαρητήρια* seems to be a more likely candidate for insincere execution, i.e. hypocrisy. We might, for instance, congratulate the bride and the groom on their wedding day while being desperately in love with either and not feeling the same as they do because of the ‘good event’. Due to its largely exclamatory status, *μπράβο* seems less vulnerable but not immune to insincere execution, as we might also, for instance, praise a child for doing something which hardly deserves praise, e.g. for baking an inedible cake, although again we would actually be praising the effort rather than the result.

This tendency is reflected in the syntax of the two expressions which we have already discussed in a previous section, especially the *που*-complementizer option for *μπράβο*, on the one hand, and the modification of *συγχαρητήρια* by *θερμά*, ‘warm’, on the other, which, on second thoughts, seems to address the potential lack of emotional involvement in its execution,

thus functioning as an emotive supplement.

Additionally, the parallel existence of a number of expressions which utilize the verb *συγχαίρω*, 'congratulate', either by itself or in combination with other verbs/modals, as in the performative utterance *σας συγχαίρω για το έργο σας*, 'I congratulate you-PL on your-PL work', *θέλω/θα ήθελα/πρέπει να σας συγχαρώ*, 'I wish/would like to/must congratulate you-PL', points towards the same direction. Their use seems to register the speaker's determination to express her/his sharing in the joy of the addressee, not only as a matter of formality, something which could allow for its insincere execution, but as a sincerely felt need, going beyond the culturally constructed expectation. Naturally, such expressions also seem to realize the congratulating force with greater strength than *συγχαρητήρια*.

As already pointed out, both *συγχαρητήρια* and *μπράβο* seem to carry some precondition regarding the age and/or status differential between the addressor and the addressee. For instance, it is not very likely for a pupil to say *συγχαρητήρια* to her/his teacher for being, for instance, promoted to the school principal, and certainly not *μπράβο*, approving of/praising the way the teacher conducts classroom interaction.

As regards the prescription for the physical presence of the recipient, it is true that one cannot congratulate someone in their absence, but we can forward our *συγχαρητήρια*, by saying to a third party: *να της δώσεις συγχαρητήρια (εκ μέρους μου)*, 'give her (my) congratulations', or *πες του συγχαρητήρια*, 'say congratulations to him', just like we can forward our praise, though we only 'say' rather than 'give' a *μπράβο* e.g. *πες της (ένα) μπράβο κι από μένα*, 'say (a) bravo to her on my behalf, too', which is one more indication for the exclamation status of *μπράβο* calling for its re-enactment by the messenger — a speech act by proxy.

Finally, an additional point can be made with respect to the existence of descriptive verbials, i.e. verbs and verb-like expressions, which could be used to report the linguistic action performed, as a proof of their cognitive salience (Verschuere 1985: 192), within a community. This conceptualization is only marginally possible, and more likely for *συγχαρητήρια* which could be reported as *την συνεχάρηκε*, 's/he congratulated her', though this use is marked for Katharevousa, the former High variety, and less likely for *μπράβο*, as in *την παίνεψε*, 's/he praised her', or *εξέφρασε την ευχαρίστησή/επιδοκιμασία της/του*, 's/he expressed her/his pleasure/approval', which again belongs to the formal register and is more likely to turn

up in writing. In everyday use, both are more likely to be reported by a descriptive phrase which repeats the expression, though, as already mentioned, we use either ‘say’ or ‘give’ for *συγχαρητήρια* but only ‘say’ for *μπράβο*. Whether the lack of a descriptive verbal for *συγχαρητήρια* means that this ‘happy event’ politeness formula is not important in social relations (Verschuere 1985: 192), especially as indicated by the receding use of the verb *συγχαίρω* to report the linguistic action performed by *συγχαρητήρια*, is something to ponder. I could tentatively offer an interpretation to the effect that it counts as an indication that Greek society is no longer placing a high premium on such routines or that it is moving towards less strictly defined uses of such formulaic expressions. Whether this is indeed the case we will have to wait for our data to find out.

On the basis of all the above, but more crucially in the light of ‘hard’ evidence culled from authentic use among Greeks, which might prove that different languages and different cultures indeed make for different speech acts (Wierzbicka 1985), I will now attempt to construct a composite pragmatic/sociolinguistic profile of *συγχαρητήρια* and *μπράβο*, starting with the cultural prescription for their appropriate use and proceeding with their uses and ‘abuses’.

Situations calling for *συγχαρητήρια/μπράβο* in Greek culture

Everyday (social) life in contemporary Greece gives rise to several situations which call for the display of approval/approbation/praise. Many of these occasions are covered by the use of a number of formulaic expressions¹⁰ which can be used instead of, or along with, *συγχαρητήρια* and/or *μπράβο*.

With regards to *συγχαρητήρια*, and in light of its etymological meaning as ‘sharing in another’s joy’, one should expect it to be used in a number of happy events, such as important social or personal occasions, celebrations, etc.. However, this is hardly the case as Greeks usually opt for other expressions.

For instance, we do not frequently use *συγχαρητήρια* to congratulate the parents of a new baby. Instead, we use *να σας ζήσει*, ‘[may] that s/he live to you’, *καλότυχο (να είναι)*, ‘[may] (that s/he have) good luck’, *γερό να είναι*, ‘[may] that s/he be healthy’, *να το καμαρώσεις όπως επιθυμείς*, lit. [may] that you proudly watch her/him as you wish, ‘may s/he fulfil all your

expectations'. When *συγχαρητήρια* does occur, the speaker usually belongs to the educated/urban class and, probably, so does the addressee, and, more significantly, their relationship is not a very familiar one, as displayed in the use of *συγχαρητήρια* which introduces an element of formality and/or distance. For instance, a person could say: *έμαθα ότι γέννησε η γυνναίκα σας, συγχαρητήρια*, 'I've heard your-PL wife has given birth, congratulations', but this would be rather distant in comparison to *να σου/σας ζήσει*, '[may] that s/he live to you-SING/PL', especially if one were to congratulate the mother herself in person-to-person interaction.

On the occasion of an engagement, some Greeks, mostly educated/urban, might use *συγχαρητήρια* but the formulaic wishes *να ζήσετε*, '[may] that you live-PL', to the couple themselves, and *να σας ζήσουν*, '[may] that they live to you-PL', to the parents/family, or *στεριωμένοι (να είστε/είναι)* lit. [may] (that you-PL/they be) fastened, 'for keeps', sometimes even *άντε και καλά στέφανα*, lit. URG. PRT. and good wreaths, 'an auspicious wedding', are much more frequent and could be used along with *συγχαρητήρια*. The same happens on the actual occasion of a wedding, or shortly after the event, when both the couple and the older relatives are offered wishes involving *life*, such as *να ζήσετε/να σας ζήσουν*, lit. [may] that you live-PL/[may] that they live to you; or *joy*, i.e. *να τους χαίρεστε*, lit. [may] that you-PL take joy in them. The unmarried young relatives and friends are offered *και στα δικά σου*, lit. and at yours, 'may that you, too, [get married]', which of course marks the pro-marriage orientation of Greek society, especially for female members. On the whole, in relation to other formulae, the use of *συγχαρητήρια* is not as prevalent in the above situations, although much more usual nowadays than in earlier times, and, as a rule, is saved for acquaintances rather than (close) friends.

When new possessions are at issue, rather than congratulating someone on buying a new car, house, etc., we wish them that the new acquisition should be *καλορίζικο*, 'of a good fate', or that they should come to possess it *με γειά*, 'in good health', and *με το καλό*, lit. with goodness, 'auspiciously'.

Similarly, we wish University/college graduates *καλή σταδιοδρομία*, lit. good stadium race, 'have a successful career', and when one does get a (new) job or a promotion we give them *σιδεροκέφαλος/η*, lit. ironheaded-F/M, which recognizes the possible difficulties of job adjustment, and *και σε ανώτερα*, lit. and to better-NTR.PL.ADJ, 'to your next promotion', respectively. Both of these occasions allow for the use of *συγχαρητήρια*, as well, especially between people who are not very close or are articulating the wish

within some formal frame, e.g. the graduation ceremony, the official announcement of a promotion, etc..

Generally, *συγχαρητήρια* which belongs to Katharevousa,¹¹ the former High variety, has a ring of formality and distance and is employed in situations which involve or intend to evoke, even if only metaphorically, some kind of formal frame and/or little familiarity and/or more distance. So, it is generally the case that official, or quasi-official, occasions such as, for instance, University graduation, swearing-in of the government or academics, award giving ceremonies for really impressive or rather trivial deeds, etc., call for the use of *συγχαρητήρια* towards the person whose social transition or achievement is being celebrated. *Συγχαρητήρια* seems to be an integral part of the ritual of each one of these occasions. Characteristically, *συγχαρητήρια* is usually accompanied by a hand shake, rather than by an embrace or a kiss, which mark familiar interaction and are more likely to accompany *μπράβο*. Of course, speakers can break through the constraints of a ceremonial role and voice their own personal approbation of the recipient, by saying *μπράβο*, or something to that effect, provided of course the social preconditions for such an act are satisfied.

As for *μπράβο*, the situations triggering its use are not, on the whole, as distinct or as clearly bounded as those calling for *συγχαρητήρια*, nor are they covered by formulaic expressions to the same extent, as *μπράβο* is more likely to crop up spontaneously, due to its largely exclamatory nature. Although its use is less easily outlined, it roughly obeys the logic of expression of approval or praise as instanced in its performance in the absence of the praisee, e.g. *μπράβο της*, 'bravo to her'. Some typical situations calling for such uses are the following: Parents say *μπράβο* to their kids when they behave appropriately, do the right thing or accomplish some desirable or praiseworthy deed, thus living up to their expectations. Teachers urge on or reward their pupils. Friends exchange it as an act of approval/praise, and audiences shout it out to performers in appreciation of their art. *Μπράβο* can be also used to express one's agreement with prior speakers as well as in lieu of 'thank you', for services rendered.

As already pointed out, both *συγχαρητήρια* and *μπράβο* carry an age/status precondition and would sound funny, i.e. presumptuous or condescending, if they were to be issued by a person whose age is considerably younger than that of the recipient, and/or if there is a status imbalance, especially when this is not overridden by familiarity.

The reason *συγχαρητήρια* seems to be out of bounds for the very young is because children are not culturally constructed as members who can figure in formal occasions calling for congratulations. Rather they are apprentices, gradually acquiring appropriate formulas in order of frequency of use, under the active supervision of full-members, i.e. adults (Ferguson 1981: 33). A very young person, for instance, who offers *να ζήσετε*, to a just-married couple, or *καλορίζικο* on the occasion of a significant purchase, sounds *μικρομέγало*, lit. a little adult, the word having a pejorative meaning, and the wish is very likely to be laughed off, or condescendingly commented upon, by adults.

Μπράβο is also to be issued top down, rather than the other way round, unless there is a metaphorical reversal of hierarchy/age or familiarity/intimacy takes over. The nature of *μπράβο* is accurately captured by the saying *μπράβο λένε στα γαϊδούρια όταν ανεβαίνουν την ανηφόρα/βγαίνουν από τη λάσπη*, ‘one says bravo to donkeys when they [manage] to go uphill/get out of the mud’, which is sometimes performed, especially by older people, in response to somebody else’s inappropriate *μπράβο*. The implications are obvious as regards the higher position of the speaker and the less-than-human status of the recipient.

The saying I have just cited also highlights an aspect of *μπράβο* not explicitly stated so far, that is that *μπράβο* seems to respond to some kind of physical deed/endeavor, especially a particularly strenuous one. Although *συγχαρητήρια* could be offered to a person who has just accomplished a physical task, it would be done in a kind of metaphorical code-switching manner because it would in fact be evocative of a ceremonial context, with the speaker being metaphorically vested with the relevant official role.

Naturally, both expressions can be done ironically, by speakers blatantly violating Grice’s Quality Maxim. Each such use has different connotations, even if done within the same context, and might call for different syntactic patterns some of which have been already presented.

To sum it up, *συγχαρητήρια*, which is part of a more formal register, seems to presuppose some culturally recognized event or ceremony and so it is more of a conventional expression than *μπράβο* which seems to be more of an exclamation done on the spur of the moment, in recognition of some minor or major achievement or skill, physical or otherwise, agreeable behavior or service rendered,¹² all of which require personal agency — something which is not as categorical a precondition for the use of *συγχαρητήρια*.

Instances of use

For the preceding discussion to have any real validity, we now need to look into some actual instances of use by Greek people and see how they compare to the theoretical points raised and the predictions made so far. I will cite some straightforward uses and then move on to the more problematic ones, hoping that their marginal position can shed more light on the functions of these approbatory expressions as a part of the general practice of approbation in Greek society nowadays.

I have personally transcribed¹³ and translated the original Greek data, which I have also collected during the last few months, mostly, though I have been keeping an interested eye on this kind of material for quite some time now.

Συγχαρητήρια

- 12/1/98, NET TV Channel. During an official ceremony, Mrs Yanna Angelopulu-Daskalaki, 40–45, who had chaired the successful bid of Greece for the 2004 Olympics, is being presented with an award by a Greek Athletic Confederation official of about the same age:

- (1) (m) O: *Συγχαρητήρια κυρία πρόεδρε. Έχετε την αγάπη μας.*
‘Congratulations Mrs Chairperson. You have our love.’

This use of *συγχαρητήρια* satisfies the ceremonial/formal frame prerequisite condition which is further enhanced by the mention of the addressee’s position as ‘chairperson’, though no longer valid at the time. The addition of the emotional second move, though, attests to the fact that *συγχαρητήρια* lacks itself an emotive component which could otherwise be fully supplied by *μπράβο*, only the use of such an expression would be highly inappropriate as the speaker would sound condescending and/or unduly familiar. Instead the speaker offers his love safely cushioned in the respectful plural form of the verb (*Έχετε*) and of the generalizing possessive pronoun (*μας*).

- 5/1/98, ΣΚΑΪ TV Channel (currently ALPHA TV), News. During a guest appearance meant to brief the theatre-going audience on the new play he was in, actor Yorgos Ninios, 40±, offers the anchorman, Nikos Evangelatos, 30+, congratulations on his winning the 3rd position in a car race:

- (2) (m) YN: *Συγχαρητήρια και για το κύπελλο στη Φόρμουλα III.*
'Congratulations on the Formula Three Cup, too.'

The use of *συγχαρητήρια* points to the official character of the event but sounds very much unlike the actor who has a reputation of being unconventional. Himself an avid biker and motorcycle cult follower chooses to do approbation by emphasizing the ceremonial aspect involved in prize getting, thus absolving himself from actually praising the winner himself for accomplishing the tough task. The implication is that he probably does not think of him as truly belonging to the racing in-group and so the use of *συγχαρητήρια* is just meant as a token of social courtesy, an act of reciprocal politeness towards the anchor who has after all offered him a forum for advertising his new play.

• 24/1/98. During a telephone conversation, a very good friend of mine informs me that she has just been elected chairperson to the board of a scientific association:

- (3) 1 M: *Τι έγινε στη συνέλευση;*
2 A: *Δεν τα 'μαθες; ((γελάκι))*
3 M: *Τι;*
4 A: *Σε πληροφορώ ότι μιλάς στην πρόεδρο!!*
5 (.)
6 → M: *Τα θεράμα μας συγχαρητήρια κυρία μου*
7 A: *((με γέλιο)) Ευχαριστώ πολύ.*
- 1 (f) M: What happened at the meeting?
2 (f) A: Haven't you heard? ((chuckles))
3 M: What?
4 A: I inform you that you are talking to the chairwoman!
5 (.)
6 → M: Our warm congratulations my lady!
7 A: ((laughingly)) Thanks a lot.

I need the pause (5) right after the announcement in order to step back and pretend some distance between me and my friend so as to be able to come up with an utterance which is meant to stress the importance of the office conquered (6). Nevertheless, the reality of our intimacy gets through in the pompous exaggeration of the plural personal pronoun and the formal address form.

• 18/1/98, ΣΚΑΪ, TV Channel, *Ο καλός, ο κακός και ο ...*, ‘The good, the bad, and the ...’, a talk show. Mrs Marika Mitsotaki, 65–70, the very visible wife of a former Prime Minister, is being interviewed and gets to speak openly about her cancer and the painful radiation treatment patients have to undergo, especially in the case of outdated equipment, in the context of which she states:

- (4) (f) MM: *...και πρέπει να συγχαρώ την οικογένεια Αγγελουπούλου από την εκπομπή σας ((προς το φακό)) διότι δώρισαν ένα τέλειο μηχανήμα ακτινοβολιών στον Άγιο Σάββα.*
 ‘... and I must congratulate the Angelopoulos family from this show ((to the camera)) because they have donated some state-of-the-art radiation apparatus to the Agios Savas hospital.’

The congratulating act is not activated by any ceremonial frame, a fact which makes its performance even more believable. The speaker opts for the modal+verb construction, not only because the addressees are not physically present to be directly addressed — something she repairs by looking into the camera — but also because she means to convey the genuineness of the act beyond any doubt the conventional politeness of *συγχαρητήρια* could cast on it. In this instance, one might want to claim that the congratulating expression, which is done in the absence of the addressees, has in fact the force of commending, in that it is a public act performed by a public figure (Wierzbicka 1987: 200), doubling up as thanking, in that the speaker herself is a patient who could potentially benefit from the philanthropic act.

• 12/97. During a chance meeting on an Aristotle University staircase, a 70-year-old ex-High School principal and current University student lets me know the following:

- (5) (m) P: *... βρήκα τελευταία κάτι δικό σας και θα το διαβάσω σύντομα. ... σας συγχαίρω διότι όλο κάτι φτιάχνετε.*
 ‘I have recently come across one of your papers and I intend to read it soon ... I congratulate you because you are always up to something.’

It is obvious that the speaker has not outgrown his former profession and probably thinks his opinion counts so he lets me know what he thinks of my

doing research. In congratulating me, he goes public with his approval, presumably thinking that he can influence my actions (Wierzbicka 1987: 121) and so encouraging me to ‘keep the good work up’, as a result. His choice of less frequent *σας συγχαίρω*, ‘I congratulate you-PL’ — which also clearly records both agency and recipiency in its SVO construction — over the more frequent *συγχαρητήρια*, is probably meant to add weight to the act which would otherwise sound both trivial and trite if performed as *συγχαρητήρια*.

- 21/2/98, ET1 TV Channel, *Ζώου biz*, ‘Animal Show’, a variety show. Yorgos Marinos, 60+, approaches the young female singer who has just performed a Eurovision Contest candidate song:

(6) (m) YM: *Μπράβο Βιβέτα! Συγχαρητήρια!*
‘Bravo Vivetta! Congratulations!’

The presenter spontaneously offers his approbation to the singer whose song he seems to have liked and whom he familiarly addresses by first name, but then he slips into his official role to give the appreciation the kind of weight which befits the contest character of the occasion.

- 2/98, Junior High School, the teacher, a woman of about 45, is checking on three incorrigible, non-conforming, male 3rd-graders who successively inform her that they have not done their homework, to which she collectively responds:

(7) (f) T: *Μπράβο! Συγχαρητήρια!*
‘Bravo! Congratulations!’

It is obvious that the co-occurrence of the two expressions reinforces the act of sarcasm performed by the utterance. The order in which they get voiced, however, chronicles the transition from a spontaneous, emotionally laden first reaction to a less direct, but more venomous description of the inappropriate behaviour on the part of the exasperated teacher, who thus turns her personal estimate into an official dictum.¹⁴

- 16/2/98, ΣΚΑΪ TV Channel, *Φως στο τούνελ*, ‘A light at the end of the tunnel’, a ‘missing persons’ program. An old regional dialect speaker calls in to give information concerning the biological mother of a middle-aged man who had been adopted as an infant, and concludes his account addressing him with:

(8) (m) S: *Τώρα σε χαίρομαι. Συγχαρητήρια που έγινης λεβέντης!*

‘Now I take joy in [seeing] you. Congratulations on becoming a handsome man!’

This occurrence of *συγχαρητήρια* is a rather strange one. The ‘good property’, *λεβέντης*,¹⁵ concerns the man’s looks as the caller has no way of knowing what his personality is like. Generally, it is not customary to congratulate someone on becoming tall, handsome and the like, since this can not count as an impressive achievement on the part of the person, especially when it is not under the person’s control, nor does it occur within a culturally constructed ceremonial context. Contrary to our prediction *συγχαρητήρια* is followed by a *που*-complement clause. It seems then that the caller, who is greatly moved by the sight of a grown-up man whom he had last laid eyes upon more than forty years ago, when he was just a new born baby, is doing his best to keep up with the occasion which is quite out of the ordinary for him. Hence the use of *συγχαρητήρια* which simply restates the first move of the utterance but, in the speaker’s mind, adds formality to the situation.

- 10/1/98, MEGA TV Channel, *Η ώρα η καλή*, ‘Auspicious Wedding’, a game show hosting engaged couples and their families. The parents of a soon-to-be-wed couple offer them presents together with a card which reads as follows:

- (9) (f/m) P: *Να σας χαιρόμαστε. Συγχαρητήρια. Να ζήσετε.*
 ‘[May] that we take joy in you. Congratulations.
 [May] that you live.’

This enumeration of wishes comprises the appropriate traditional formulas as well as a somewhat inappropriate intruder, *συγχαρητήρια*, which would normally be expected on the part of acquaintances or strangers but not immediate family members. This (slight) *faux pas* could probably be explained as medium-induced, since television often has the effect of triggering *ελληνικούρες*, ‘Sunday Greek’, or hypercorrective uses on the part of the less educated speakers (Makri-Tsilipakou 1997: 540).

Some deviant cases

The last few data have introduced some problematic aspects in the use of *συγχαρητήρια*. In this subsection, we will deal with a particular kind of ‘deviant’ cases clustering around the use of this approbatory expression by TV viewers as callers or participants in certain shows, such as ‘missing persons’,

‘match-making’, ‘reality’ and ‘personal’ ones.¹⁶

These instances display roughly the same organization, with the congratulating act either taking up the whole turn immediately after the initial greeting, or in combination with ‘how are you?’, compliments and wishes, all of which seem to belong to the opening sequence (Schegloff 1986; Hopper 1992) and which are intended to function as ‘interaction lubricators’. Here are some instances:

- (10) (f) C: *Γειά σου Γιούλη. Συγχαρητήρια για την εκπομπή σου.*
‘Hi Yuli. Congratulations on your program.’
- (11) (f) C: *Καλησπέρα σας κυρία Νικολούλη. Συγχαρητήρια για την εκπομπή σας.*
‘Good evening Mrs Nikoluli.
Congratulations on your program.’
- (12) (m) C: *Καλησπέρα σας κύριε Χαρδαβέλλα. Συγχαρητήρια για την εκπομπή σας.*
‘Good evening to you Mr Chardavelas.
Congratulations on your program.’
- (13) (m) C: *Γειά σου πρόεδρε. Συγχαρητήρια για την εκπομπή.*
‘Hi chairman. Congratulations on the program.’
- (14) (f) C: *Καλησπέρα. Συγχαρητήρια για την εκπομπή σας. Είστε ανεπανάληπτη.*
‘Good evening. Congratulations on your program.
You are one of a kind.’
- (15) (m) C: *Καλησπέρα. Χρόνια πολλά αυτές τις ημέρες και συγχαρητήρια για την εκπομπή σας.*
‘Good evening. Many happy returns of the
[holiday] season and congratulations on your program.’

Interactional initiation apart, the use of *συγχαρητήρια* in this context does not seem to satisfy the preconditions we have discussed so far. There is no ceremonial context or award-giving occasion, the speakers have no official role and appear to be at a social rank disadvantage in comparison to the presenters, most of whom enjoy celebrity status. Additionally, they are calling

in to offer real or imaginary tips as to the whereabouts of people, bear witness for or against some media conducted mockery of a trial, shop for a hard-to-find spouse, or simply talk explicitly, though not seriously, about sexual matters, rather than inform the presenter that they ‘share in her/his joy’ over the show. Surely they are entitled to their opinion, especially as a token of good-will or admiration towards the presenter, but the way they choose to express it establishes a pseudo-ceremonial context within which they are able to present themselves as arbiters of matters which they are also presenting as extremely important to the community at large. This rationale behind the use is explicitly stated in the following fragment:

- 17/1/98, MEGA TV Channel, *Η ώρα η καλή*, ‘Auspicious Wedding’, a ‘soft’ reality/game show with about-to-be-wed couples and their families who vie for several prizes. The father of the groom is called upon to place a question with the couple and starts by addressing the hostess, 50+, as follows:

(20) (m) F: *Πρώτα πρώτα θέλω να σας ευχαριστήσω και να σας συγχαρώ για αυτήν την εκπομπή διότι είναι λειτούργημα.*
 ‘First of all I would like to thank you and congratulate you on this program because it is a service to society.’

Obviously, participants construct the situation as an important event because in this way they can legitimate their participation in an otherwise questionable cultural product, mostly consisting of lowbrow at best, or trashy at worst — though highly watched, if one is to take the rates seriously — television, disguised as an important service to the community. In this sense, we could claim that the viewers are buying into the image promoted by some of the presenters themselves as concerned citizens with a social conscience which prompts them to offer their good offices to the public.

The presenters themselves are perfectly aware of the function of *συγχαρητήρια* and most of them have evolved a routine response consisting of appreciation tokens (Pomerantz 1978: 83), such as *ευχαριστώ πολύ, να ’στε καλά*, both translating as ‘thank you’,¹⁷ which they repeat call in, call out, besides sometimes completely disregarding the congratulating act and brusquely moving on. The most outspoken, cynical, or rudest of them — and so the one least liked by the mainstream majority — regularly puts viewers down by exposing their ploys, including their (hypocritical) use of wishes, compliments,¹⁸ and *συγχαρητήρια*:

- 1/98, STAR TV Channel, *Χρυσό κουφέτο*, ‘Golden Wedding Candy’, a match-making/variety show, with Anita Pania, in her late twenties:

- (21) 1 AP: *Πάμε στη γραμμή μας. Ναι;*
 2 → C: *Γειά σου Ανίτα. Συγχαρητήρια για την εκπομπή σου.*
 3 AP: *Ποια είστε εσείς;*
 4 → C: *Είμαι η Αμαλία. Συγχαρητήρια για την εκπομπή σας.*
 5 → AP: *Συγχαρητήρια και σε σας.*
 6 (.)
 7 AP: *Σε ποιον θέλετε να μιλήσετε;*
- 1 (f) AP: Let’s go to the phone. Yeah?
 2 (f)→C: Hello Anita, congratulations on your program.
 3 AP: Who are you?
 4 → C: This is Amalia. Congratulations on your program.
 5 → AP: Congratulations to you, too.
 6 (.)
 7 AP: Who do you want to talk to?

In this interaction which reveals the pre-planned employment of *συγχαρητήρια* by callers, who sometimes seem to have rehearsed the whole opening sequence to be activated on cue,¹⁹ Anita Pania — who generally wastes no good manners on her guests and callers — first treats its occurrence as irrelevant by asking the caller to identify herself (3), and then goes on to reciprocate it (5), much to the caller’s dismay who does not know what to do with it (6). In this way, the hostess seems to be commenting on what she considers an unjustifiable practice on the part of participants, though at other times she also plays the game.

There is another aspect in which I find this occurrence of *συγχαρητήρια* problematic. In comparison to *μπράβο*, which depends very much on the speaker’s perception of substantial agency on the part of the recipient, *συγχαρητήρια* seems to contain more of a ‘good fortune’ component and in that sense its use can be seen as actually demoting agency on the part of the recipient whom the speakers are ostensibly praising for her/his work.

Finally, one more reason why the above sounds like an awkward application of the expression is because the use of formal register *συγχαρητήρια* often contrasts oddly with what follows both in terms of the linguistic style,

which ranges from casual to inappropriately intimate, as well as with the contents of the callers'/participants' utterances, e.g. requests for gifts.

Μπράβο

I will now turn to the uses that *μπράβο* is put to, again moving from the relatively straightforward to the more problematic ones. As pointed out earlier, *μπράβο* spontaneously rewards physical but also mental endeavors, as well as appropriate skills and (moral) actions, and presupposes either an age/status difference, or familiarity between the interactants.

- 11/97. At the local gym, the female aerobics instructor, 35, to a somewhat non-athletic woman member, of about the same age, whom she had previously corrected and with whom she is on a first name basis:

(22) (f) AI: *Μπράβο Τασούλα. Αυτή τη φορά το πέτυχες.*
'Well done Tasula. You've got it right this time.'

This use satisfies the successful physical task, familiarity, and teacher-pupil dimensions we have proposed.

- 5/1/98, MEGA TV Channel, *Μεταξύ μας*, 'Among ourselves', a morning variety show. The hostess, 40–45, right after the live performance by a young singer, Dimitris Bassis, 25±, and a small band, while applauding and approaching and eventually patting the singer on the back, exclaims:

(23) (f) H: *Μπράβο σου! Μπράβο σου Δημήτρη! Μπράβο ρε²⁰ παιδιά! Μπράβο σε όλους σας!*
'Bravo to you! Bravo to you Dimitris! Bravo guys!
Bravo to all of you!'

The enthusiastic display of approbation follows the time-honored practice of audiences displaying their approval of, and pleasure with performers. The age difference also helps towards an unproblematic application of *μπράβο* within a context of familiarity, established by the use of the singer's first name, an in-group marker (*παιδιά* 'guys'), and, notably, the particle *ρε*.

- When my sons do me a favor, which usually consists in fetching my glasses from my attic study, I sometimes alternate thanks with *μπράβο*:

- (24) (f) M: *Μπράβο παιδί μου / Μπράβο ρε Οδυσσέα /
Μπράβο Λεωνίδα μου.*
'Bravo my son / Bravo Odysseas / Bravo my Leonidas.'

• 11/97. While giving my flu-suffering, fourteen-year-old son, a Vicks rub down, I follow instructions and get me a *μπράβο*:

- (25) 1 S: *Τρίψε λίγο παρακάτω*
(*((εκτελώ τις οδηγίες))*)
2 → S: *Μπράβο μαμά! Προοδεύεις!*
1 (m) S: Rub a little lower
(*(I do as instructed)*)
2 → S: Well done mum! You are making progress!

Upon issuing the *μπράβο* containing part of the utterance, the boy realizes the potential *faux pas* because of the age difference precondition — which is, however, overridden by intimacy in this case — and playfully builds upon it by issuing the teacher-like sounding last part.

• 6/2/98, ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΣ ΤΥΠΟΣ, newspaper. The film critic Iason Triantafyllides about a recent Greek film by the director Vangelis Serdaris:

- (26) (m) IT: *Χρόνια είχε να γυριστεί ταινία τέτοιου πάθους.
Ένα τεράστιο μπράβο στο Σερντάρη για μια
εξαιρετική ταινία.*
'A film of such passion had not been made in a long
time. A huge bravo to Serdaris for an exceptional film.'

Obviously, the film critic does not mean to extend the usual kind of routine approbation, as part of his film appraising job with the newspaper. He seems to have been deeply moved by the film; hence the exaggerated *μπράβο* which praises the director in his absence.

• 3/1/98, ΣΚΑΪ TV Channel, *Προσωπικά*, 'Personally', a one-to-one talk show. The guest, veteran variety show woman, Zozo Sapuntzaki, 65±, speaks favorably of a retrospective revue and praises the director of National Theatre, male actor Nikos Kurkulos, 60+, for having allowed for such 'light entertainment' to be put on in this bastion of 'serious' theatre:

- (27) (f) ZS: *Ήταν πολύ ωραία παράσταση και μπράβο
στον Κούρκουλο που το έβγαλε στο Εθνικό.*

‘It was a very good show and bravo to Kurkulos for having it staged at the National.’

- 2/98, ET3 TV Channel, *Επί παντός*, ‘Everything [under the sun]’, a variety show. The hostess, 30–35, is interviewing some senior citizens, amateur musicians and *bon vivants*, who are having a Carnival feast at a local tavern:

- (28) 1 H: *Εδώ είναι το καλύτερο ακορντεόν που άκουσα ποτέ. Πόσα χρόνια παίζετε;*
 2 M: *Σαράντα πέντε.*
 3 → H: *Γουάου Μπράβο, μπράβο, μπράβο!*
- 1 (f) H: Here is the best accordion I’ve ever heard.
 How long have you been playing?
 2 (m) M: Forty-five [years]
 3 → H: Wow! Bravo, bravo, bravo!

This use of *μπράβο* could be perceived as slightly condescending but seems to be offset by the familiar, relaxed atmosphere and the intensity of the approbatory expression which, in this particular context, could translate as true admiration for somebody who has been playing so skilfully for so long and is still going on strong, in his old age.

- 2/2/98, ANT1 TV Channel, *Πρωινός καφές*, ‘Morning Coffee’, a variety/talk show. The resident female cook, 60+, tenderly speaks of a High School House Economy teacher (Mrs Filitsa), who started her in her profession by teaching her how to cook, and whom she got to meet the previous evening at a school reunion. To this, a visiting female aerobics instructor, 28±, proffers:

- (29) (f) AI: *Υπέυθνη για όλα η κυρία Φιλίτσα δηλαδή. Μπράβο. Μπράβο!*
 ‘So Mrs Filitsa is the one responsible for all this.
 Bravo. Bravo!’

The young woman does not seem to realize how inappropriate her approval is in the face of the extreme age gap between all the participants, the occasional contact between her and the cook and the total absence of contact between her and the teacher, either of whom could be the intended recipient of her praise. Her lack of cooking expertise, which might have given her (qualified) licence to state her informed opinion, does not help either, and the only way one could rescue this use, which is also inappropriate in its first name indirect address

(Filitsa), is by postulating that the young woman is simply expressing her pleasure with the state of affairs. Even so, she could have opted for ‘how nice/wonderful/fortunate’ or the like, though.

- 3/1/97, ΣΚΑΪ TV Channel, News. The anchorman, Antonis Alafogiorgos, 30–35, is about to talk to the fiftyish mayor of a borough of major Athens, who is being interviewed by a reporter at his office for having provided a job for the unemployed father as well as shelter for a family of four, after they had been evicted for not paying their rent:

- (30) (m) AA: *Να πούμε κατ’ αρχήν μπράβο στο δήμαρχο και να μας πει ο ίδιος.*
 ‘Let us at first say bravo to the mayor and have him tell us about it himself.’

The young man is obviously aware of the potential incongruity of a directly addressed praise to a man who is both a stranger and considerably older than him, besides having an official position, and so he opts for indirect address which does the job as well without casting him as disrespectful.

- 10/6/97, Aristotle University, Department of English, early in the morning. M and A, both with the department, are on their way to the unbelievably hot room where staff meetings are held and look into the secretary’s office which temporarily doubles up as the office of K, the head of the Department:

- (31) 1 M: *Να βάλουμε και τ’ αρχονδίσια.*²¹
 2 K: *Τα βάλουμε, τα βάλουμε. Από τις οκτώ το πρωί.*
 3 → A: *Α! Μπράβο!*
 4 → M: *Μπράβο ρε Καίτη, είσαι και η πρώτη!*
 5 K: *Είδατε; ((με γέλιο)) Φροντίζω πριν από σας για σας.*
 6 M: *Είδες η ΔΕΗ;*
- 1 (f) M: We should turn the air-conditioning on, too.
 2 (f) K: We have, we have. Since eight in the morning.
 3 (f)→A: Oh! Good!
 4 → M: Well done Kate, you are the best!
 5 K: You see ((laughingly)) I take care of you before you do.
 6 M: You see [what] the Electricity Company [does for you]?

After the routine exchange of good-mornings, M suggests that a certain measure needs to be taken against the heat (1) and K assures her that it has already been done, to which A simply exclaims in agreement (3) while M explicitly praises K, focusing on her part in the laudable act which she deconstructs as pertaining exclusively to her (4) despite K's inclusive plural in (2). The fact that this is indeed a case of *μπράβο* doing praise is displayed in K's next turn (5) in which she downgrades the favorable assessment (Pomerantz 1978: 92) by quoting a well-known advertising slogan, thus equating herself with the Electricity Company which is notorious for not taking care of people and so, ultimately, avoiding self-praise. Although there is an age as well as a status difference in favor of K, the bravos uttered are perfectly alright since this is a highly familiar context, first established by M's playful pun (1) and further elaborated on by both K (5) and M (6).

Other-directed approbation?

During conversational interaction it is often the case that *μπράβο* is produced as a second by participants who respond to prior turns. At first glance, *μπράβο* seems to encode agreement but things turn out to be a bit more complicated. Before we can investigate the particular function to some depth, here are some relevant fragments:

• 16/2/98, SEVEN X TV Channel, *ARTfil*, an art program. The hostess, 35–40, is talking to a slightly younger male artist who transforms used chairs into sculpture:

- (32) 1 A: ... *είναι άλλες που πρέπει να τις πάω στο
 εργαστήριο και να έχω μαζί τους μια άλλη συ://
 νομιλία.*
- 2 H: *Συνομιλία.*
- 3 → A: *Ναι μπράβο!*
- 1 (m) A: ...there are other [chairs] I need to take to the studio
 and achieve a different in://teraction.
- 2 (f) H: Interaction.
- 3 → A: Yes bravo!

The artist rewards the hostess (3) for achieving a collaborative utterance (Jefferson 1973: 51), that is independently reaching the same end for his utterance (2) as himself (1).

- 20/1/98, ET1 TV Channel, *Ποικιλία*, ‘Assortment’, a program on healthy-eating habits. The guest, actress Katerina Gioulaki, 60+, speaks of her cooking preferences to the 50ish host, Kostas Bazeos:

- (33) 1 KG: *Η μητέρα μου όταν έκανε μουσακά έκανε δύο μέρες. Εγώ δεν έχω κάνει μουσακά. Κάνω άλλα πράγματα.*
- 2 KB: *Αντικαθιστάς το μουσακά με κάτι άλλο.*
- 3 → KG: *Μπρά:βο!*
- 1 (f) KG: Every time my mother cooked mussaka²² she would take two days. As for me I have never cooked mussaka. I cook other dishes.
- 2 (m) KB: You prepare something else in place of mussaka.
- 3 → KG: Bra:vo!

The host repeats the guest’s position in different words (2) and gets praised for that by her (3).

- 1989. Two couples are discussing the ‘inappropriate’ behavior of a famous basketball player’s wife, with one woman defending her, the two men trashing her, and the other woman having taken no sides so far:

- (34) 1 M: *... να παρουσιαστεί σαν ηγέτης της οικογένειας ενώ δεν είχε τέτοια φόντα ας πούμε.*
(nine turns later)
- 2 W: *Το θέμα είναι ότι η κοπέλα ήθελε να προβληθεί.*
- 3 → M: *Μπρά:βο!*
- 1 (m) M: ...to present herself as the head of the family while she wasn’t properly qualified so to speak.
(nine turns later)
- 2 (f) W: The fact is that the girl wanted to promote herself.
- 3 → M: Bra:vo!

The man expresses his approval (3) of the woman’s assessment (2) which coincides with his (1).

- 31/12/98, MAKEΔONIA TV Channel, *Σε πρώτο πλάνο*, ‘In the foreground’, a debate program. The speaker (K) wraps up his argument by stating that he has efficiently done his part, to which the journalist agrees, and so does K:

- (35) 1 K: *Νομίζω ότι τα είπα αυτά δεν τα 'πα;*
 2 J: *Είσαστε σαφής.*
 3 → K: *Μπράβο!*
- 1 (m)K: I think I've said all this, haven't I?
 2 (m)J: You have been quite clear.
 3 → K: Bravo!

In all of the above instances of use, the place of *μπράβο* could have very easily been taken by *ακριβώς*, 'precisely' or 'absolutely', as it often does. Both expressions can equally well shoulder the preferred agreeing second part in the adjacency pair initial assessment-agreement/disagreement (Pomerantz 1984, Makri-Tsilipakou 1991), or what looks like one. How is, then, *μπράβο* different from *ακριβώς*?

Ακριβώς, 'precisely', states that the propositional content of the first and second speaker's utterances completely coincides. In this sense, it is simply an act of identification between the two utterances. The *ακριβώς*-issuer compares the two, finds them identical and announces the outcome of the inspection. In issuing *μπράβο*, the speaker goes a bit further. S/he expresses her/his satisfaction with the fact that the two utterances possess the same content and since this match has been brought about by the second speaker — who has either successfully predicted the trajectory of the first speaker's utterance, as in coinciding endings (fig. 32), or managed to see the same point as the first speaker does, as in repetitions (fig. 33) and reformulations (fig. 34, 35) — s/he decides to do something about it and goes *μπράβο*-ing. Only, this *μπράβο* rewards the second speaker for repeating or echoing the first speaker's proposition, which is thus constructed as something deserving to be reproduced and adopted. This *μπράβο*, then, is essentially a self-serving one since it relates to the speaker.

Ultimately, we could claim that this use of *μπράβο* actually ends up as self-praise, at least by inference. There is, however, a strong constraint against self-praise, as evidenced in the way recipients of praise downgrade, shift or reassign it, under the preference for *self-praise avoidance* (Pomerantz 1978). As a result, speakers who do not avoid self-praise are seen as performing a dispreferred act. The possibility for accepting prior praise is also present, though, under the conflicting preference for *agreement* (ibid). As a result, it is not unusual for (Greek) people to adopt another's favorable assessment of themselves (Pomerantz 1978; Altani 1990: 41), especially, within a familiar

context and in a playful manner, but the choice between *ακριβώς* and *μπράβο* exists, and so opting for one over the other has different connotations for the way the speaker views her/himself, the interlocutor and the situation in general.

Related to this self-praising function of metalinguistic *μπράβο*, as an agreeing second to prior utterances which it also evaluates, is its employment in praising other-performed actions which are again, essentially, in the *μπράβο*-issuer's interest. In these cases, it is not inter-exchangeable with *ακριβώς* 'precisely', but rather with 'well done', 'good work' or 'good for you', which are of course performed sarcastically, usually within a disagreeing sequence.

• 31/12/98, MAKEΔONIA TV Channel, *Σε πρώτο πλάνο*, 'In the foreground', a debate program. The speaker (L), a casino public relations agent, protests against the repeated interruptions on the part of his opponent (S), a regular casino player accusing the casino of moneylender practices:

(36) 1 L: *Κύριε Σαρίδη το βούλωσα όταν μιλήσατε! //
Αναγκάζομαι να μιλήσω έτσι. ((πιο δυνατά))
Απαιτώ τον ίδιο σεβασμό.*

2 → S: *Μπράβο!*

1 (m) L: Mr. Saridis I shut up when you spoke! // I am forced to speak like this. ((louder)) I demand the same respect.

2 (m)→S: Good for you!

Shutting up while listening to other's accusations is hardly 'good for you' (2), unless of course S is praising K for observing the turn-taking system, something he has no use for, himself.

The self-praising function of *μπράβο* in doing disagreement is explicitly stated in the following excerpt in which the second speaker defiantly praises himself for doing something the first speaker disapproves of.

• 1/98. Myself to my sons just back from a call at the smelly local gyros/kebab shop:

(37) 1 M: *Πάλι τσίχνα μυρίζετε.*

2 → S: *Ε μπράβο μας!*

1 (f) M: You've got that stench again.

2 (m)→S: So bravo to us!

As an aside to our main discussion, I believe that by now it has become obvious that the functions of *μπράβο* presented in this subsection are primarily utilized by men rather than women, as a part of a more self-serving and aggressive style usually adopted by Greek men (Makri-Tsilipakou 1991, 1994a, b, c). This is even truer with the coercive function of *μπράβο* I will discuss in the following subsection.

Μπράβο as coercion

The last function of *μπράβο*, which is also related to self-praise, comprises a (veiled) threat component, in the sense of ‘you’d better watch it’, which sometimes warns the recipient a posteriori against slighting the speaker.

• 18/2/98, MEGA TV Channel, *Ακούνα ματάτα*, ‘No problem’, a road documentary show. The reporter, Nikos Ferentinos, 30±, meets a 60ish street peddler, selling a patent tie-knot device, who has moved from Athens to Thessaloniki:

- (38) 1 NF: *Ήρθατε να δώσετε τα φώ:τα // σας και στη
 Θεσσαλονί/κη!*
- 2 SP: *Φώτα.*
- 3 → SP: *Μπράβο!*
 ((several turns later))
- 4 NF: *Μετά από μια σκληρή μάχη δικαιώθηκε ο
 εφευρέτης κύριος.*
- 5 → SP: *Α να μπράβο!*
- 1 (m) NF: [So] you have come to enligh//ten Thessaloniki, // too!
- 2 (m) SP: Enlighten.
- 3 → SP: Bravo!
 ((several turns later))
- 4 NF: After a tough fight the inventor gentleman has been
 proven right.
- 5 → SP: Finally! Bravo!

The presenter good-humoredly flatters the peddler (1) who praises him for doing so (3). Their smooth interaction is threatened later on, when a bystander challenges the efficiency of the device on sale and NF keeps an equal distance from both men, until the argument is settled in favour of the peddler whom the presenter declares to be the winner (4), much to the peddler’s satisfaction who

had been impatiently waiting for this (5). If the first *μπράβο* is ultimately an instance of self-praise, the second — which is additionally reinforced by the preceding ominous exclamation-particle-combination *Α να* — counts as a veiled threat, in the sense of ‘now you are talking’ and if you had not changed your behavior soon enough I might have had to take some action to ensure that I got treated right.

In the following fragment the threatening force associated with *μπράβο* becomes even clearer:

- 17/2/98, MEGA TV Channel, News. An illegally built night club is about to be razed to the ground, and the male singer Stamatis Kokotas, 60+, is angrily shouting at the middle-aged woman bailiff supervising the demolition.

(39) (m) SK: *Εδώ δε θα πατήσει κανείς! Εδώ δε θα πατήσει*
 → *κανείς! Άντε μπράβο!*
 ‘Nobody is to set foot in here! Nobody is to set foot in here! There’s a good girl!’

The threatening last move in the speaker’s utterance consists of an urging particle (*Άντε*) which prompts the recipient to do as instructed by the speaker in his utterance so far, as well as the approbatory expression which praises her in advance for complying. In other words, the speaker is coercing the recipient into abiding by his wishes as expressed by his words, while simultaneously depicting this course of action as something that calls for praise. It takes a very self-confident or dominant or socially less sensitive person to take a priori for granted that others will do as s/he pleases, and so such usage is as a rule associated with (some) men.

The premium on involvement and its side effects

This paper has been an attempt at clarifying certain matters concerning the uses of *συγχαρητήρια* and *μπράβο*, both of which are usually perceived as instances of approval/approbation/praise.

As a starting point, I first looked into the dictionary meanings of these expressions, as embodiments of cultural knowledge about them, and proceeded with their syntax, hoping it could provide “reliable clues to their semantic structure” (Wierzbicka 1987: 24). Collocations were also brought in to illuminate their meaning. Next, I tried to investigate their speech-act status

and the illocutionary forces they are believed to realize, adjusting available descriptions so as to fit the locality of the acts. Finally, after sketching the cultural framework, within which language use acquires its meaning, I focused on the analysis of appropriate as well as ‘inappropriate’, situated applications of the two expressions.

The real language data I have cited have shown that neither of the two approbatory expressions can be associated exclusively with the illocutionary forces they were initially matched with, as there is always room for overlap among them, and the possibility for taking up not preconceived, additional functions can not be ruled out, either. The culture specific analysis of these forms, however, allows a certain measure of categorization in terms of the most appropriate contexts and prevalent or recurrent uses they are put to by members, without again excluding further exploitation of (un)related functions, in ‘inappropriate’ contexts.

On the basis of the evidence presented so far, then, we could claim that *συγχαρητήρια*, when carrying the congratulating force, falls mainly within the domain of conventionalized prepatterned expressions, occurring within more or less standardized situations, mostly significant cultural and personal events. As such, it has acquired a mechanical or automatic aspect which sometimes casts doubt on the genuineness of the presupposed ‘joy’ or ‘pleasure’ on the part of the issuer, something members repair by engaging emotive adjectives and intention-stressing verbs/modals. These acts can sometimes have the force of commending or approving of. Generally, the use of *συγχαρητήρια*, which belongs to the formal register, is evocative of a ceremonial context — which is also the most important precondition for its employment — within a human social formation, as the impossibility of a non-human recipient attests.

Μπράβο, on the other hand, appears to be much more flexible and so more convincing as approval/approbation/praise. It is appropriately done in response to a wide range of actions/qualities/skills — which could also be of the kind deserving the official recognition implied by *συγχαρητήρια* — but presupposes familiarity/intimacy between the participants or a status/age difference in favor of the addressor. As a result of its mobility, it has acquired a number of additional functions, e.g. thanking, exclaiming, agreeing, which go a little or a lot further than the one initially associated with its literal meaning. In comparison to *συγχαρητήρια*, which does not require (substantial) responsibility, *μπράβο* carries a strong precondition regarding agency on the

part of the recipient.

As the two expressions are hearer-directed and ‘convivial’, in that their illocutionary function coincides with the social goal of “establishing and maintaining comity” (Leech 1983: 104), they are both related to politeness, although *συγχαρητήρια* is more of a ‘purely social’ utterance, in the way greetings are, for instance. As realizations of the positive-polite strategy of ‘claiming common ground’ (Brown and Levinson 1987) with some H, by conveying that s/he is admirable, interesting, etc., both expressions are in alignment with the positive-polite orientation of Greek society (Sifianou 1992) which places a high premium on involvement.

As for Leech’s prediction that of the two Approbation Maxim submaxims, i.e. *minimizing dispraise of other* (avoidance of discord or negative politeness), and *maximizing praise of other* (seeking agreement or positive politeness), the former is more important a consideration (1983: 133), nothing can be farther from the truth for Greeks, who relish disagreeing simply for the purpose of agreeing (Tannen and Kakava 1992). More than avoiding discord, showing deference or respecting a person’s space, we are bent on showing *other*, especially if belonging to the in-group, that we think of them as *self* rather than *other*. Hence the relative scarcity of ‘thank yous’ and ‘pleases’ and ‘sorrys’, and the abundance of bald-on-record imperatives but also of positive-polite diminutives; the ordinariness of touching, kissing and hugging, but also of their obligatory opposites of shouting, arguing, fighting and the like.

On this basis, it is obvious that if *maximizing praise of other* is indeed a guiding principle for Greeks, who are also not to be seriously inhibited by discord considerations, and “exaggeration of interest and approval” is one of the ways one can claim common ground (Brown and Levinson 1987: 104), the act of offering approbation is just a short step from hypocritical politeness and presumptuous rudeness: One simply gets to overapply or misapply the principle. In this sense, then, the ‘problematic’ uses of *συγχαρητήρια* and *μπράβο* could be viewed as the inevitable excesses of the positive polite strategies the two expressions serve.

In particular, when *συγχαρητήρια* is (mis)used by TV callers/participants as a part of the opening sequence, it is apparently employed as a ‘social accelerator’, reflecting the wish of the speaker to ‘come closer to H’ (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 103), even when the relevant participant role and event requirements are not strictly fulfilled. In a way, *συγχαρητήρια* as a compliment might be triggered by the fact that viewers “develop some sense of

knowing the host vicariously” (Hopper 1992: 79), or that they think they have some imaginary authority over the course of the event which they can influence by stating their approval. Additionally, it might also be the case that — at least for some sections of the population — the specific occasion is in fact a new addition to the array of situations calling for the use of *συγχαρητήρια* within the changing Greek society.

In the case of *μπράβο* which sometimes ends up *self*-directed, unlike *συγχαρητήρια* which is strictly *other*-directed, the explanation might again be located in the (intended) familiarity between participants which tolerates self-praise, especially on the part of the most self-confident or dominant speakers. With respect to its (mis)use as warning/threat, we could postulate that maybe it is the case that the overriding preference for approbation turns it into a kind of a default pattern; a reflex which gets activated even when somebody is actually at odds with their interlocutors. In this way, you get to display your disaffiliation in the same way you show your affiliation with them. Hence the coercive use of *μπράβο* in adversary discourse which parallels its use in friendly discourse, a pattern which is not rare in Greek — the particle *οε*, for instance, is used to address both friends and enemies.

In sum, then, both expressions, either as routine formulas or unrehearsed responses, are driven by the positive polite concern for involvement, which most Greeks will mostly abide by, thus sustaining orderliness in interactions among community members, who are constrained to employ them as dictated by existing language and culture conventions, but also relatively free to re-shape or ‘abuse’ them.

Notes

1. Greek words preserve their original spelling, with the exception of the technical terms Katharevousa and Demotic, which refer to Greek diglossia, as well as Koine Nea Elliniki (KNE) which names the current standard. In the case of references and proper names an English-based transliteration of the Greek spelling is adopted. The notation used in the English translation of the original Greek utterances is as follows: Parentheses () indicate optional material, square brackets [] are for items which are included for the sake of translation, and a slash / means that there is choice between two realizations. Abbreviations, which are attached to the relevant words, represent grammatical information as follows: NTR= neuter, N= noun, ADJ= adjective, SING= Singular, PL= Plural, URG. PRT= urging particle.
2. Even if one were to concede that this could be a possibility for *συγχαρητήρια* —

especially in relation to other formulaic wishes and within an expanded explicit performative form *?σου/σας εύχομαι συγχαρητήρια, ‘I wish you-SING/PL congratulations’ — one could hardly claim the same for *μπράβο*, as in *σου εύχομαι *μπράβο*, ‘I wish you bravo’. Verschueren (1985: 194) accounts for such constructions by postulating an extension of wishing “to circumstances in which its object is already present” as a result of “quasi identification of the act with its object”.

3. Only *μπράβο*, however, allows for a non-human recipient, such as a dog, e.g. *Μπράβο Ρεξ!*, ‘Bravo, Rex!’
4. From this point on, I will refrain from translating *μπράβο* if its meaning is somewhat indeterminate, leaving it up to the reader to supply the appropriate ad hoc equivalent.
5. Additionally, the *-ια* ending consists of the sequence unstressed /i/ + vowel, which allows for glide formation, [j] + vowel in the Demotic, the former Low variety and now the standard (Koine Nea Elliniki), e.g. [*mira*], ‘thousands’, [*apridja*], ‘pears’. Although this allophonic variation does not apply to Katharevousa items (Joseph and Philippaki 1987: 234), e.g. [*stadia*], ‘stadiums’, the tendency seems to surface even more strongly in the case of enclisis, a process involving the attachment of a weak personal pronoun of the Demotic, which also motivates the appearance of a second, derived, but stronger, stress, placed on the last syllable of the host word, *[*sinxariti^uria su*]. The result is a rather bumpy phonological word which makes allophonic production of /i/ as [j] or [ç], as in [*xorja*], ‘villages’, [*fo^uca*], ‘fire’, even harder to resist.
6. Greek non-relative *πον*, as in *λυπάμαι πον ...*, ‘I am sorry that ...’, is only partly captured by English ‘that’ which can also be used to cover Greek *ότι/πως ...*, as in *ξέρω ότι/πως ...*, ‘I know that ...’. The former introduces complements to expressives, while the latter to assertives or, more rarely, to commissives (Pavlidou, 1982).
7. For Searle, the impermissibility of that-clauses after English expressives is due to the fact that there is no direction of fit, that is “the speaker is neither trying to get the world to match the words nor the words to match the world, rather the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed” (1979: 23).
8. All examples and counter-examples in this and the following two sections are based on my knowledge of language use as a competent member of Greek society. Most of them are, however, tentatively offered, because, just like anybody else who has dealt with real language use, I am perfectly aware of the possibility for any ‘impossible’ construction to actually occur, as social actors can, and often do, reconstruct (linguistic) reality.
9. Greek adjectives are inflected for gender and number, hence *θεομά, θεομές, θεομή*, etc.
10. Tannen & Öztek (1981: 38) who have studied Greek & Turkish formulas define the paradigm of a formula as “one which is invariable in form (except of course for tense, number and person changes), and is very limited if not invariable in applicability. The same expression is used by everyone in that culture in the appropriate situation, no one in that culture would use any other expression, and the failure to use it is socially marked.”
11. A Demotic equivalent *συγχαρίκια*, deriving from the same root, has an extremely restricted distribution nowadays as it is mostly used by older regional dialect speakers.
12. I chanced upon quite a representative sample of relevant situations when a gossip show (27/2/98, ANTI TV Channel, *Κάτσε καλά*, ‘Take it easy’, asked several celebrities to

- name something that had got them a *μπράβο*. The answers were as follows: pancake baking (son to mother), singing (night club audience to female/male singers), baking an apple-pie (mother to daughter), being a dutiful daughter (parents to daughter), doing well in school (teacher to student), acting (theatre audience to actor).
13. Transcription notation is based on Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974: 731–34). The double oblique, //, indicates the point at which a current speaker’s talk is overlapped by the talk of another which follows in serial order. Parentheses enclosing a full stop, (.), represent short untimed pauses or gaps, while double parentheses, (()), indicate features of the audio material other than actual verbalization, or verbalizations which are not transcribed, and colons, :, that the prior syllable is prolonged. Finally, numbers, 1, at left of lines mark turns, letters, (f) (m), identify the speaker by sex, and arrows, →, highlight points of analysis.
 14. This incident was reported to me by my 14-year-old son, himself a member of the same class at the time.
 15. The cultural term *λεβέντης* applies to males and pertains to both looks, e.g. being tall, handsome, well-built, and qualities such as being dignified, brave, manly, etc..
 16. The two ‘missing persons’ shows are *Ρεπορτάζ στην ομίχλη*, ‘Reporting in the fog’, with Kostas Chardavelas, a veteran journalist in his late 50s, and *Φως στο τούνελ*, ‘A light at the [end of the] tunnel’, presented by his female counterpart, fortyish Angeliki Nikoluli, also a journalist. The ‘match-making’ ones are *Χρυσό κονφέτο*, ‘Golden wedding candy’, with the notoriously outspoken, female ex-teacher of French Anita Pania, and *Λογοδοσμένοι*, ‘Betrothed’, with ‘cute’ Yuli Iliopulu, an actress, in their mid-twenties and early thirties, respectively. Among the many reality shows, by far the commonest genre, there are *Επιτέλους μαζί*, ‘Together at last’, with male ex-rocker Andreas Mikroutsikos, 50+, *Αληθινές ιστορίες*, ‘Real life stories’, with 30ish male journalist Dimitris Markou, and *Το κεντρί*, ‘The sting’, with journalist Natassa Ragiou, in her mid-thirties. Finally, the ‘personal’ ones are *Ερωτοδικείο*, ‘Sex court’, and *Στο αυτόφωρο*, ‘Summary Court’, both of which simulate a tribunal for explicitly stated sex/love crimes presided over by Vicky Michalonakou, an eccentric female journalist, 50+, and a picturesque male lawyer-turned-TV-personality, Petros Leotsakos, 60+, respectively.
 17. According to Pomerantz (1978: 83), appreciation tokens simply recognize the status of the prior utterance as a compliment without focusing upon the referent.
 18. To a man offering her Seasons Greetings in late January she exclaimed *που το θυμήθηκες αυτό ρε Χρήστο*, ‘what on earth have you remembered that for Christo?’, and to a young woman who thought of her as ‘very beautiful’, immediately after receiving an imitation fur coat from her, she pointed out that she is even more so when she gives out fur coats, *και άμα δίνω γονναρικό είμαι πιο ωραία*.
 19. As in the following instance in which, after the initial hitches due to hearing difficulties (1–3), communication is established and the caller goes on to automatically recite the usual series of well wishing formulas (5) right after the hostess’s cue (4).

11/1/98, ΣΚΑΤ TV Channel, *Λογοδοσμένοι*, ‘Betrothed’, a match-making show.

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 | C: <i>Ναι;</i> |
| 2 | H: <i>Ναι</i> |

- 3 (.)
 4 H: *Σας ακούω*
 5 C: *Α τώρα κατάλαβα! Λοιπόν χρόνια πολλά, καλή χρονιά,
 να χαίρεσαι την οικογένειά σου.*
- 1 (f) C: Hello?
 2 (f) H: Hello
 3 (.)
 4 H: You are on
 5 C: Oh I see! Well, Many happy returns, Happy New Year,
 [may] that you take joy in your family.

20. The Greek familiar particle *ρε*, which usually co-occurs with address forms and epithets, has a very high frequency in every day conversations and can equally well shoulder both agreement and disagreement, but always establishes an informal context. Cf. frgs. 24 (*ρε Οδυσσέα*), 31 (1.4, *ρε Καίτη*), fn. 18 (*ρε Χρήστο*).
21. The speaker playfully distorts the usual Greek rendition of the loan word *ερκοντίσιον* [erkondison], ‘air-conditioning’, to *αρκουδίσια* [arkudisja], making it sound like its near homonym ‘of a bear-NTR.PL.ADJ’ or ‘bear-like’. The introduction of Greek phonology — as instanced in the softening of /d/ into /ð/, a voiced interdental fricative, and the glide formation [j] between /i/ and /a/ — as well as the Greek morphological inflection, together with the completely incongruous meaning of the Greek-sounding word — which additionally ushers in an aspect of the world of nature as opposed to world of civilization air-conditioning represents — all seem to work towards totally debunking the foreign word. This practice, which is meant as an ironic comment, is usual among Greeks resisting foreign usage (cf. Makri-Tsilipakou, 1999).
22. A traditional eggplant-and-meat dish.

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Advice-giving in Turkish

“Superiority” or “solidarity”?¹

Arın Bayraktaroğlu

Introduction

There is a common phenomenon in conversation observable when a speaker informs the other speaker(s) of the existence of a personal problem. The subsequent talk revolves around this trouble for a number of exchanges forming a unit in the conversation where the stated problem becomes the topic of the talk (see Jefferson’s work on “troubles-talk”, 1980a, 1980b, 1984a, 1984b; Jefferson and Lee 1981; also Bayraktaroğlu 1992)

Disclosure of a personal problem creates certain expectations in the conversation just as a question sets up expectations of an answer. In other words, it is a case of a few possible speech activities becoming “conditionally relevant” (Schegloff 1972). Most cultures have fixed phrases like “I’m sorry to hear that” or “That’s too bad”, usable in these conversational slots, and some languages, and Turkish is one of them, are particularly rich in their repertoire of conversational formulas and set expressions to acknowledge trouble types (Coulmas 1981; Tannen and Öztekin 1981; Nicolas and Flamain 1978). Some examples are, *Allah şifalar versin* ‘May God give health’, and *Allah düşmanıma bile vermesin* ‘May God not give it even to my enemies’ for ill-health; *Geçmiş olsun* ‘May it pass’ for a variety of personal mishaps, and *Allah kavuştursun* ‘May God re-unite’ for separation. There are also less formulaic ones for a variety of occasions (see Bayraktaroğlu 2000). These convey, in ready-made packages, the sympathy and solidarity that are occasioned by the trouble-disclosure, but one thing they cannot do is deal directly with the problem that initiated this talk unit in the first place.

Problems are attractive because they represent a direct challenge to the

human faculty of problem-solving. In fact, it can be said that the less accessible the solution seems, the more attractive the problem becomes, because each attempt, if it does not provide a solution to the problem, will increase the stimulation in the exercise, thus making the satisfaction of reaching a solution more enjoyable. Every abortive effort will also make the solution more accessible through the elimination of candidate solutions, a fact which will encourage the perpetuation of the process. Roberts and Forman (1972), who examine the mechanics of problem solving, suggest that this can be an autonomous or an interactional undertaking. It is autonomous when, for instance, an individual tests himself by trying to make sense of an aerial photograph. In interaction “self-testing” turns into “contesting” with an extra sense of wanting to solve a problem that one is presented with, and if applicable, to solve it before anybody else does. A prime example of this is in riddles where the problem-solving skills are explicitly invited although they may not always be put to full use (Teresaki 1976).

It is only natural that the telling of a trouble stimulates the tendency in human beings to search for solutions to the problem. On the announcement of a trouble, the recommendation of a course of action which is recognisable as a potential solution becomes conditionally relevant. It is by means of this underlying link that a statement can be heard as advice. Grice (1975: 51) provides an example in which Speaker A makes an announcement that he is out of petrol and Speaker B makes a subsequent announcement, “There is a garage round the corner”. Grice proposes that so long as Speaker B believes that the garage is open and has petrol to sell, he will be observing the maxim of relevance, which, in this case, relates a piece of advice to a statement of trouble.

There are, however, certain drawbacks to giving advice, as it carries serious implications for the interpersonal relationship. Granting superiority to the advice-giver and posing a challenge as to the severity of the trouble are just two such implications.

In this paper advice-giving as one of the responses to the announcement of trouble will be examined. During this examination an important aspect of this speech activity will emerge: advice-giving, which is said to be highly face-threatening in English culture, is widely used in Turkish to underline and consolidate solidarity.

The speech act of advice-giving

Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), whose theory of politeness provides the most comprehensive framework for the study of face considerations, distinguish between the “positive” face and “negative” face needs of an individual. Within this framework they place “advice” among those dangerous acts (FTAs) that threaten the negative face of the addressee (S threatens A’s negative face) and, like most dangerous FTAs, have to be softened with redressive action. They suggest that “apologies and confessions are essentially threats to S’s face... and *advice* [my emphasis] and orders are basically threats to H’s face” (1987: 76). FTAs are considered as essentially unidirectional and advice-giving is no exception. Apart from this, Brown and Levinson also distinguish a specific type, “sympathetic advice”, which is primarily in H’s interest and given to “convey the speaker’s care about H and therefore about H’s positive face” (1987: 98) like “Your slip is showing” or “Enjoy yourself”. They also say that sympathetic advice is delivered without any mitigation.

This distinction, however, raises a couple of points which can be contested. To start with, examples such as the ones given above (“Your slip is showing” and “Enjoy yourself”) for the “sympathetic” category are not “without any redressive action”, as Brown and Levinson claim them to be. These are statements which bring the trouble to the attention of the addressee. By replacing “Pull up your slip” or “Fix your wig”, they are, indeed, redressed. Secondly, some other examples in the same category such as “Enjoy yourself” and “Have fun” are more appropriately designated “well-wishes”, similar to “Enjoy your food” and “Have a nice journey”, rather than advice. Finally, dividing the act of advising into two categories is misleading, since if this specific type is “sympathetic” and conveys Speaker’s care for Hearer, the other general type which is mitigated is, by implication, “unsympathetic” and uncaring.

Leech (1983) similarly takes a negative approach to advice-giving and claims that the person engaged in this activity is not observing Politeness Maxims, especially those which are closely related to the avoidance of praising the self and dispraising the other. His reason for regarding advice as impolite rests on the fact that S’s superiority in knowledge or experience or judgement to H is taken for granted in advice-giving.

There are others who prefer to look at this speech activity from a wider angle, involving both speakers within the perspective. One such detailed

analysis of advice comes from Wardhaugh. Although we are not interested in the pre-conditions of an utterance as in Speech Act theory, Wardhaugh's comments about the activity from the viewpoints of both speakers may add some insight to the progress of the argument. From the advice-giver's point of view, he says (1985: 184):

What conditions must prevail if you are genuinely to offer advice to another person in a conversation? First of all, you must assume that he is likely to do (or not to do) something if you refrain from offering advice, and you must regard a different course of action as more appropriate for him and in his best interests. In offering advice, you want the other person to know this, to know what you think, and also to understand that you believe that the course of action you are setting forth is quite within his capabilities. Moreover, you assume that the other person wants to know all this. If these are the necessary preconditions for advising another person, it is very easy to appreciate how the process can go wrong. Your perception of what someone else proposes to do or not to do may be incorrect, your opinion about what he might find an acceptable alternative may be without foundation, or your role as a possible adviser may be called into question.

From the advice recipient's point of view (1985: 185):

You may not find it easy to respond to an utterance like 'Why don't you do X?'. It is not just a simple question, but a suggestion that you actually do X. If you are not anxious or willing to do X, you will probably have to provide some kind of reason for not doing it. But something more is involved: *the speaker* has suggested a course of action to you, and in a sense, *has put himself into a superior position* — [Emphasis is mine] particularly if you proceed to act on the suggestion — for he has proposed a solution you apparently did not see or were reluctant to adopt without the proffered advice. We can observe that if you consider the suggestion to be a poor one, *you can, in refusing it, exhibit a certain superiority of your own*. [Emphasis mine]

Similarly, DeCapua and Huber (1995: 126) state that, in informal speech situations, "advice-givers are asserting some uninvited expertise with respect to the recipient, as well as assuming the right to evaluate the situation, make judgements, and issue directives. The recipient can interpret the proffered advice in such cases as negative criticisms and an insult to the recipient's social competence".

All these analyses converge at the point that advice-giving in ordinary English conversation incorporates a serious offence for several reasons. By making an unsolicited recommendation one is heard to be claiming the upper hand and disregarding the other's freedom of action. There is also the danger

of preparing the ground for damage to one's own standing: a speaker who opts for giving advice is also risking his or her own face because a refusal by the advice recipient is a strong possibility in this location. Wardhaugh's evaluation of the advice-recipient's stance, i.e. that s/he can, by refusing the suggestion, exhibit a certain superiority of his/her own, shows that giving advice in Anglo-American culture is regarded as a challenge which can then be counter-challenged.

Because of the negative implications attributed to advice-giving in English language contexts, there are even those who think that remaining silent is far better than proposing ideas to solve the other speaker's problem. Banerjee and Carrell (1988), for instance, purport that:

The suggestion is an affront to the hearer's negative face. It impinges upon the hearer's personal space. In our society we frequently hear, 'Be wary of giving advice. Wise men don't need it and fools won't heed it'... With society telling one not to be too quick to give suggestions to others, the speaker may decide it is best not to say anything in many situations (1988: 319).

The understanding which regards advice-giving as the culmination of several offensive acts fails to explain why advice-giving in Turkish is one of the most common forms of reaction to the disclosure of a trouble, and why people choose this option and risk the current relationship when there is a safer option of opting for an appropriate formulaic response. The popularity of the act is too great to be explained only by the attraction presented to the human mind by an unsolved problem.

An alternative approach to advice-giving is, while accepting its potentially dangerous implications, to recognise the fact that it also demonstrates the advice-giver's concern for the trouble-stricken person and willingness to help in the eradication of the problem. Tannen (1994), in fact, prefers to take this stance and classifies advice-giving under a larger behavioural frame of "being protective". Similarly, Wierzbicka takes a moderate approach and in her dictionary of English speech act verbs says that:

If one does offer *advice* [emphasis mine] without having reasons to think that it would be welcome, one acts in a presumptuous manner. The speaker's grounds for expecting that his [sic] view will be welcome are not specified. It may be knowledge, it may be experience, but it may be his [sic] close personal relationship with the addressee (1987: 181–2).

This "close personal relationship with the addressee" and the rapport-building potentiality of advice do receive a mention in the literature, but even there the

underlying supposition is the authority of one speaker over the other:

the advice event somehow acts to alter or strengthen the relationship between the giver and receiver. It not only gives the interlocutors something to talk about, but can serve to further intimacy by flattering the giver and showing willingness on the part of the seeker to be supplicant, i.e. to acknowledge or grant the giver higher status in terms of being more knowledgeable, at least about this particular topic. (DeCapua and Huber 1995: 124–5).

Solidarity consolidating effects of advice in close relationships and the characteristics of advice-giving in such circumstances are aspects which are overlooked in the literature, probably because English speaking communities are orientated more towards negative politeness, and advice as an act of solidarity is not widely practised.

Giving advice may be an imposition to the hearer in Western culture, as reflected by Brown and Levinson, Leech, and Wardhaugh in their respective evaluations of this speech activity, but such norms are not universal.² Sifianou (1992), for instance, referring to cultural differences between the Greeks and the English, states that “On the verbal level, their [the Greek people’s] requests and wishes, *advice* [emphasis mine] and suggestions are expressed structurally more directly than in English because they are not perceived as impositions to the same extent” (1992: 42).

On the assumption that this is a more realistic route to take, and intuition tells us that it is, it becomes necessary to accept that advice-giving incorporates conflictive concerns: On the one hand, the advice-giver is showing interest in his/her partner’s affairs (i.e. advice with positive implications), and on the other, s/he is telling the other person what to do (i.e. advice with negative implications). Which potentiality is at the forefront probably depends on the cultural inclinations of any given society and the distance between any given actors. Furthermore, in speech communities where negative politeness is the norm, advice may have more weight as an FTA in a wide variety of situations but in positive politeness societies it may imply solidarity in broader contexts than in the former.

Advice-giving in the literature

Studies on advice-giving as a speech event are scarce even in English, the most extensively researched language so far, and focus is on the strategies and

structural forms in which this activity is realised, with the exception of the work done by Mandala (forthcoming) and Jefferson and Lee (1981), who prefer conducting a sequential analysis. Most findings point to the same characteristics: that advice-giving has negative implications and needs to be mitigated for the interaction to proceed unproblematically.

DeCapua and Dunham (1993) who analyse excerpts from radio advice programmes find that even in situations where the advice-giver's role is that of an authority, and the advice-seeker joins in the interaction primarily to receive advice, the directive "is not always a clear-cut statement in the sense of 'You should do X or Y'. Instead, the advice-giving in many cases is a complex process whereby hearers [of a problem] (a) help callers reach their decision as to how this problem can be resolved, and (b) offer global or encompassing advice that will serve to help not only the caller, but also anyone who may be in a similar situation" (1993: 526–7).

Similarly, in her examination of speech in radio phone-in programmes, Hudson (1990: 288) finds advice constructions featuring "pseudo-cleft sentences, conditionals, and sentences in the form 'I would do X'" and says that these are "mechanisms for agent de-emphasis", in use to avoid a crude directive to the advice-recipient that he should take a certain course of action.

Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990) examine how native and non-native speakers negotiate non-congruent (status-challenging) suggestions in academic advising sessions. They exemplify the ways natives (university teaching staff) make use of status-preserving strategies in the interaction, while non-natives (university students) show lack of linguistic skills in doing so, thereby creating non-congruence in speech (obviously, from the English speakers' point of view).

DeCapua and Huber (1995) examine the manifestations of social norms of authority, expertise and intimacy as reflected in the formulations of advice. The examination focuses on speech samples of both native and non-native speakers of American English. The authors find that "in order to avoid unwarranted bossiness", advice-givers resort to measures such as telling a story with references to a similar situation, and use softeners, downgraders, mitigators and hedges in advice constructions (1995: 125).

Banerjee and Carrell (1988) similarly concentrate on the structural forms of advice-giving, basing their findings on the speech samples of American native speakers and non-natives (Spanish students). They then group their findings under Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies. Thus, components

like “Do you think...”, “Don’t you feel...” fall under “Seeking agreement” (positive politeness), “If I were you...” under “Changing focus from A to S” (positive politeness) and “Why don’t you...” under “Asking reasons/explanation” (positive politeness). On the other hand, components like “I think”, “it seems”, “sort of”, “...or something” are classified under “Hedges” (negative politeness). They argue that the actual formulation of advice is selected under the influence of context-specific factors like the urgency of the situation, the degree of embarrassment in the situation and social distance between the interlocutors. The authors conclude by saying that the non-natives use more direct utterances of advice as compared to the natives.

Among the existing literature Jefferson and Lee’s work (1981) is one of the only two studies (the other one is by Mandala forthcoming) with a broad analysis, looking at what happens in the conversation both before and after the advice turn. They note that advice is recurrently occasioned in speech by the telling of a trouble. Instead of concentrating on how advice is formulated, they investigate the interactional consequences of this speech activity and display the type of response that it prompts from the advice-recipient

Jefferson and Lee (1981) call advice a “precursor of dispute” because its occurrence after a statement of trouble in ordinary conversation usually triggers resistance in the advice-recipient. They claim that the “proffering of advice in the course of troubles-telling...may implicate an altogether different form of talk, i.e. not troubles-telling, but a service encounter, in which the criterial categories are service-seeking and service-supplying” (1981: 410). In troubles-telling the most commonly used reciprocity form is “affiliation” (e.g. “Oh my”, “Jesus”, “Good Lord” etc.) and in service encounters it is “service supplying”. Mismatching of the pairs, i.e. service supplying in ordinary troubles-telling and affiliation in service encounters will be perceived as inadequacies of both, resulting in ungrounded authority for the former, and inept servicing for the latter.

All of the examples by Jefferson and Lee depict contexts where (1) a trouble is told by one speaker, (2) this is followed by a piece of advice by the second speaker, and (3) advice is rejected in the third round by the speaker who has started the talk with his/her trouble in the outset. There is one interesting example, which, not only includes a repetitive use of the 3-step development, but also goes on to show what happens in the fourth turn, accommodating the reaction of the advice-giver to the rejection of his/her advice. This example is partly quoted below. The trouble is to do with the nails

on the injured foot of one of the speakers:

Example 1

- (1) Emma: The *other* one may have to come o:ff on the *other* toe
I've got it in *that* but it's not *infected*.
(0.8)
- (2) Lottie: Why don't you use some *stuff* on it.
- (3) Emma: [t I've got peroxide I
put on it but *uh* hhhh the *other* one is *healing* very *we:ll*:
(1a) I looked at it the other day I put a new *ta:pe* on it every
day so hhhh hhh
- (2a) Lottie: [Why don't you get that *nay-uh::*: Revlon
na il:::
[
- (3a) Emma: *hhh* Well that's not *therapeutic* Lottie really it says
on the (0.4) *thi::ng* e-th-when you g-ah *this* *pero:xide* is:
uh: kind of uh,hh hhh hh
- (4a) Lottie: [What do you mean *uh* th-u *do:ctors* use it.

The case is noteworthy because it shows a clash of opinions, which is a potential development in any unsolicited advice situation, as predicted by various speech act theoreticians. In step (1) the trouble is given a mention. Advice in (2) receives a mild rejection in (3) with the speaker confirming that she has already used some stuff (i.e. peroxide), thus implying that the suggestion is redundant. In the second round of the triple, the troubled person's further remarks on the problem (1a) prompts from the advice-giver a more specific remedy (2a) which is rejected again on the grounds that it is not "therapeutic" (3a). Then we notice the first signs of a potential dispute in (4a) where the advice-giver asks for justification of the rejection, in a defensive style, "What do you mean...". If it is a cure used by experts (i.e. doctors), what right does this troubled person have to refuse the practice? It is unfortunate that Jefferson and Lee do not quote the rest of the conversation but common sense tells us that voicing differences of opinion does not stop at this point, especially as step (4a) contains a question which has to be answered in the next available slot.

Mandala (forthcoming) similarly describes advice-giving in natural English conversations as “a species of conflict talk” (: 1), and states that the reactions to advice in her corpus are mainly “rejections (90%), deflections of some kind where the advice is left unresolved; or muted acceptances... which are highly rejection implicative” (: 3). In her analysis of a piece of data (: 6), which is too long to quote here, she finds that the rejection to advice prompts from the giver a more sharply worded suggestion, instead of “a re-offer stated in terms more amenable to the recipient” (: 7). As the style of advice-giving gets harsher in the consecutive turns, so does that of the rejection in response to it, and the talk turns into an escalated aggression between the parties.

In search of a reason why people do not go for the option of accepting advice even without necessarily intending to make use of the suggested ideas, Jefferson and Lee (1981) propose that showing resistance to advice is an interactional matter. In line with these remarks, the Turkish data also shows that unsolicited advice recipients routinely refuse the recommendation given to them. However, Jefferson and Lee’s labelling of advice as a “precursor of dispute”, and Mandala’s description as “a species of conflict talk” seem to be too extreme definitions, suggesting that perhaps this is an area where cultural differences emerge. Declination of advice is a common procedure in Turkish but the decision whether to develop it into a negotiation talk or change the subject altogether at this point is an interactional matter resolved by the participants *a loci*, and in neither case can the interaction be considered argumentative. A second point which emerges from the current data is that the post-declination talk is affected by the social distance between the speakers. Newly acquainted speakers generally focus on a different aspect of the trouble or change the topic completely after the declination. This might be because the negative implications of advice are stronger in such contexts and overdoing it might strain the relationship. Speakers whose relationship is not characterised by formality, on the other hand, tend to carry on with the same advice or make new recommendations, without necessarily getting into a dispute. There are enough signs of the latter practice indicating that persistent advice-giving in Turkish is not an invitation to a contest over “superiority”, but a show of solidarity, similar to the case of disagreements contributing to sociability in some societies (Schiffrin 1984; Tannen and Kakava 1992).

Data

The data consist of conversations recorded partly in Cambridge (England), partly in Ankara, but mostly in Eskişehir, a town half way between Ankara and Istanbul in Turkey.

The taping was done during house-visits, some of which were occasioned by specific events like a religious holiday, Ramadan (the month of fasting in Islam), a death in the family, serious illnesses and operations, in the event of the host buying a new house, or having a close relative staying, or before long separations, all of which are reasons to have an open house. Other visits were occasioned for no other reason than “I was passing by, so I’ve just called in”, something quite acceptable in Turkey so long as the time selected for the visit is the right one. Only a small number of visits were of a previously arranged and more formal nature.

The recording was conducted in 12 different homes, 2 being in Cambridge, 3 in Ankara, and 7 in Eskişehir, so although some of the participants took part as conversationalists in more than one setting, they were not always in the same contextual role relationships (host-guest) to one another. The conversations of 46 people, both male and female, in the age range of 18–65 and with different professional backgrounds were recorded.

A pocket model Sony tape recorder was used in the 23 hours of taping. The small size of this recorder made it possible to carry it either in the pocket or in a bag and the microphone also being inconspicuously small was attached to the collar.

At the time of taping the participants were completely unaware of the fact that their conversations were being recorded. Most of the participants were later told about the circumstances and some in fact helped with the first “loose” transcriptions of the conversations. None requested confidentiality.

This state of affairs enabled the data to be as “natural” as possible, and quite distinct from data gathered in experimentally constructed contexts where the experimenter decides in advance on the choice of speakers by taking into account their sex, profession, social standing, age, etc. and manipulates their behaviour by selecting the topics and the distribution of turns at talk.

Despite relying merely on the audio recordings, no difficulty has been experienced in the analysis of data, except for a small number of instances where more than one pair of participants were holding separate conversations and such instances have been left out of the study.

The notational system developed by Gail Jefferson over a period of many years (see the explanation of it in Schenkein 1978) is used in the transcriptions and the relationship of the speakers in each case under study is explained (e.g. “an aunt and her niece”, “two friends”, etc.)

The “troubles-telling + advice + rejection” triplets

Not all troubles-talk sequences incorporate an advice turn, nor does advice always appear after the mention of a personal problem, but the occurrence of the two in the same stretch of talk is fairly common.

An interesting feature to note is that advice is not placed straight after the first mention of the trouble and the teller is given a chance to develop it further as a topic. In the example below, for instance, between A’s disclosure of a problematic situation in (1) and S’s advice in (2), there are 8 moves taken:

Example 2

(The talk is about A’s recently circumcised son who, during the recuperation period, wears nothing under his purpose-made, long shirt. The location is the house of A’s mother-in-law and S is someone A meets there for the second time.)

- (1) A: *Kerem hasta, bugün hasta Kerem.*
 S: *A::: yazı:::k. Ne grip falan mı?*
 A: *Gibi, ha. Grip heralde. Sinan dün fenaydı. Sinan kalktı, Kerem yattı.*
 S: *Vah va:::h*
 A: *Ya::: (.) Şey açık sünnet dolayısıyla*
 S: *Ha:::*
 A: *Bişi yok içinde. Dünde balkonda oynadılar, galiba üşüttü.*
 S: *Ha::: ne de olsa alır*
 A: *Altyo*
- (2) S: *Havadan alır (.) Giyinse kilot filan gibi biti, olmuyo heralde*
- (1) A: Kerem is ill, today Kerem is ill.
 S: Oh::: what a shame. What, is it something like a flu?
 A: Yes, something like it. Probably it is flu. Sinan was ill yesterday; today he’s got up and Kerem has “got down”.
 S: Oh, I’m sorry.

A: Ye:s (.) The thing is open because of circumcision

S: I see::

A: There's nothing under (his shirt). And yesterday they played on the balcony, I think he caught cold (there).

S: He must have caught cold.

A: He must have.

- (2) S: One can catch it from the air (.) It isn't possible, I suppose for him to wear pants or something?

Similar to a professional context where an expert probes into the specifications of the trouble for the right diagnosis, here too the stretch of talk between (1) and (2) helps the advice-giver to understand the cause of the trouble better and consequently to make the most useful suggestion. Only after a considerable amount of information about the trouble is released may advice become appropriate. In Example 2, we note that the advice is withheld until after the reason for the trouble has been repeated four times, twice by each speaker, but in slightly different words each time. After the last attempt, "One can catch it from the air", which releases no new information, the suggestion appears, but even then there is a short pause (.) registered prior to it. A hasty move of suggestions right after the initial mention of the trouble indicates that either the second speaker does not believe that there are enough makings of a trouble in the case, or is uninterested in the other's affairs, or in a hurry to close the talk off. The way to expand on the topic is to place sympathetic continuation responses (e.g. *Ya:::*, *Ha:::*, *Deme:::*, *Sahi mi? Allahallah? Ay:::* etc.) all of which are similar to the emphatic "Oh God", "You don't say!", "Really?" etc. This, of course, runs contrary to the distinction made earlier by Jefferson and Lee (1981) who equate one with informal speech (sympathetic response) and the other with service encounters (advice). A similar distinction is also made by Tannen and Kakava (1992), but their concern is with gender differences. They say that women, when told about troubles, tend to give sympathetic responses while men in the same circumstances favour advice-giving; a dichotomy causing friction in relationships. If sympathetic responses are emotive and advice is common sense, as Tannen and Kakava seem to propose, the fact of both taking place within the same stretch of talk in Turkish, regardless of the gender of speakers, is something to be noted with interest. As it is not possible to accept that all Turkish speakers are irrational in exhibiting contrasting behaviour when faced with a problematic situation, then we have to consent to the opinion that either sympathetic responses are not as emotive

as they are claimed to be, or advice is not that void of emotions. Indications in the data point to the latter.

In some cases advice is solicited; in others it is not (see also Hernandez-Flores 1999). There are noticeable differences between these two. A solicited advice turn exhibits the characteristics of a “preferred turn type” (Pomerantz 1984, Atkinson and Drew 1979, Levinson 1983); it is short, to-the-point, with the fewest hesitation markers and incorporates the bare essentials. A sample from the speech of an aunt and her niece below is a good example of it:

Example 3

S: *Hani sen o (0.2) öküz kuyruğu diye bi çorba verdindi*

A: *Hı::*

S: *O hala duruyo bende, onu ben nasıl yapıcım?*

A: *Karıştırın, hiç bişey eklemenize em şey yok,*

S: *Ha*

A: *koyun karıştırın.*

S: You remember, you gave me some (0.2) oxtail soup

A: Yes.

S: I’ve still got that, how do I make it?

A: You stir it, you don’t uh need to add anything, just put it

S: Hmm

A: in (and) stir it.

In this instance, S, the aunt of A, is A’s superior both in age and in household matters, of which cooking is one. The unequal situation between the two is obvious from A’s use of the formal plural *siz* (vous) form toward S, and S’s use of the *sen* (tu) form towards A, with the corresponding verb suffixes respectively (A: *iz-*; *-In*; S: *-n*). However, by appealing to A for the instructions for preparing a packet of soup, the aunt submits to A’s knowledge of the foreign culture and cuisine the packet comes from. Consequently A’s directive is formed in the least complicated way, and without extra components: “just put it in and stir it”.

In comparison, unsolicited advice turns are marked with sentential breaks, new sentence starts, repetitions, pauses, and hesitation sounds, similar to what happens in “dispreferred” turn types in English (Pomerantz 1984, Atkinson and Drew 1979, Levinson 1983). This is especially noticeable in conversations among distant partners. In example 3, K is a new tenant in the block of flats that A owns:

Example 4

K: *Akşamları ne sivrisinek oluyo, ne sivrisinek oluyo, anlatamam.*
[several turns, in which the trouble is detailed, are omitted]

A: *E, şeyyapın eee ne derler adına, hani cibirlik falan geçirin yatağın üstüne*

K: I can't explain to you how many mosquitoes, how *many* mosquitoes we have there at night.
[several turns, in which the trouble is detailed, are omitted]

A: Well then, do the thingummybob, uhm, what do they call it, you know, put a mosquito-net or something over the bed.

The advice turn here starts with the sound (e) translated as “well then”, which connects the turn to the previous statement of trouble, and marks the forthcoming activity as “advice”. Next is a temporary word substitute, “thingummybob”, followed by a hesitation sound (uhm), and two more word substitutes, “what do they call it” and “you know” which give the impression that the speaker is postponing the advice because she has not yet found the right words to express it in. The words in question are “mosquito-net”, but even after this hesitation lingers on; and another item of uncertainty, “something” appears. The final part of the advice, “over the bed” rules out the possibility that “mosquito-net” too is a substitute for the still unfound word or words; indeed, what else can be put over the bed for protection from mosquitoes? Therefore, even if the other hesitation markers in this turn are to be explained as the speaker's search for some words, the positioning of “something” allows no such explanation.

Familiarity/non-familiarity between the interlocutors as well as the presence/absence of a request for advice, therefore, are important factors in the shaping of advice turns in Turkish, too. If social distance dictates aloofness, the utterance reflects, as it does in English, the uneasiness felt by the advice-giver in issuing directives.

Another similarity with English can be seen in the next step of the troubles-talk sequence: unsolicited advice is routinely rejected in Turkish, too. However, excluding the highly formal contexts where giving directives may cause the “eyebrows to be raised” in both language contexts, the resemblance stops here because, as we shall see later, the reason why advice is rejected in many informal Turkish speech environments is *not* to contest “superiority” but to consolidate solidarity.

Rejection takes several forms. One way of doing this is to claim that the

recommended action has already been thought about, is implemented and eliminated as a solution to the problem:

Example 5

A: *E, şey yapın eee ne derler adına, hani cibinlik falan geçirin yatağın üstüne*

K: *Geçiriyoruz gene de hiç bi faydası yok.*

A: Well then, do the thingummybob, uhm, what do they call it, you know, put a mosquito-net or something over the bed.

K: We have used one, still with no success.

Alternatively, a piece of advice may be claimed redundant by the recipient because the giver is not fully knowledgeable about the circumstances surrounding the problem. In the next example the first speaker is complaining about the over relaxed atmosphere at the State Hospital where she went to see a specialist. The other speaker is her distant cousin:

Example 6

G: *Kimsenin kimseden haberi yok. Umurlarında bile değil.*

N: *E, şey bide fakülteye gitsen?*

G: *Ben İşçi Sigortalarına kayıtlıyım.*

G: No one knows (what) the other (is doing). They don't care.

N: Well then, what if you went to the faculty (hospital) as well?

G: I am registered at the Social Services (hospital).

It is said that a rejection at this conversational point in English is a rejection of the advice-giver's show of superiority, but in Turkish it is possible to find other explanations for the occurrence. It may be a way of signifying a sympathetic attitude, i.e. "We think alike so we have found the same solution". Alternatively, the advice-recipient may be offering a chance to the giver to come back with a different suggestion and, in this way, prolonging the satisfaction that s/he feels from his/her partner's concern in his/her affairs. Furthermore, s/he may be producing a mild rebuke to the other for not knowing his/her real circumstances; a rebuke which would only make sense in a close relationship. A rejection after advice in the Turkish context is usually a face boosting act (Bayraktaroğlu 1991, Holmes 1995), underlining the solidarity that exists between the speakers, an occurrence which we will see in more detail in the three case studies set out in the next section.

The sequential development after advice-giving

Complaint/advice/declination triplets may, but do not necessarily, end at this point, either with a change of focus or of the topic altogether. In our data, however, we have come across many instances where the sequence is prolonged. Social distance between the speakers seems to be the decisive factor at this point. In those encounters where the participants are first time or recently made acquaintances, declination commonly turns out to be the final point in this unit of talk. The next example comes from the conversation of a hostess and her recently made acquaintance. The original complaint has been about the recent electricity cuts:

Example 7

N: *Bi generatör olsa*

A: *De çok pahalı*
(0.3)

N: *Müşterek olursa ucuz olur.*

A: *O.: bizim apartmandakiler öyle şey değildir. Dünyada kimse vermez.*
(0.5)

N: *(.hhh) hh ben de demin yukarı çıkarken düşündüm. Şi- dedim şimdi hi dursa naporam?*

N: If only there was a generator

A: But they are too expensive
(0.3)

N: If it is shared (by all the tenants) it will be cheap.

A: Oh, those in our block are not like that. Nobody will pay at all.
(0.5)

N: (.hhh) hh I also thought about it when I was coming up a short while ago. Si- I said if it stops now what will I do?

The speakers in this example are new acquaintances and once Speaker A declines the advice, Speaker N produces no response for 0.5 seconds. When she starts her turn after the silence, there seems to be a turbulence in her breathing pattern which may be signalling the difficulty she is experiencing in the sudden change of focus on the topic. She keeps the talk still on the subject of electricity cuts but now the attention is directed from the generators to the

fear she felt about the possibility of the lift stopping between floors due to a power cut. If she had renewed her advice in another form, she would probably have sounded either too imposing or too intimate. Her change of focus here, therefore, is a clever move towards keeping the present relationship intact.

In close relationships it is typical for the advice-sequence to be carried forward even after the declination. It is either the advice-giver who insists on the original advice or makes a new suggestion. The stretch of talk does not exhibit any signs of getting the upper hand in a contest over “superiority”, or of turning into a clash of power, as predicted in similar situations in English; on the contrary, it is usually marked with affectionate terms and vocabulary stressing “in-groupness”. Furthermore, advice-giving seems to occur in these circumstances not only to clear away the disclosed trouble, but also to achieve other solidarity-consolidating tasks, as is obvious in the next three cases.

Case one

The most prominent case encountered in the data is the following extract which turns out to be a lengthy chunk of conversation with several advice/declination pairs in it.

S has been working abroad, at a polytechnic. The exchange takes place between him and his wife on one of his short visits home, at the dinner table. The first turn starts with an appreciation of the food on his plate and proceeds with a complaint about the necessity of eating fish-and-chips every night back at his work place.

Example 8

- S: *Akşam yemeklerinde böyle yemekleri özledim. Akşam yemeklerinde her akşam fişençips, **her** akşam fişençips, hiç şaşmıyo ama*
- A: *Hadi::.*
- S: *Valla*
- A: *E, yiycek bişi yokmu, başka bişiler ye, başka*
- S: *Yok, yiyemiyorum başka orda yiyebileceğim bişi yokki benim*
- A: *Eg::-g kadına söyle alsın özel sana yapsın.*
- S: *Kadın- kadında yemiyorum akşam yemeğimi hayatım=*
- A: *=**Hayır** söyle yapsın.*
- S: *Politeknikte yiyorum ben. Kadın beşbuçukta yemek yiyo yahu. Beşbuçukta ben politeknikte*
- A: *E, politeknikte böyle bişi falan yok mu?*

- S: *Yok, işte talebeler için olan yer-*
 A: *Hayır hayır em: şoping yapılacak ufak böyle bi yer yok mu?*
 S: *Va::r, ama nerde pişirecem, napıcam?*
 A: *Kadına sorsan mutfağı kullanabilirmiyim diye*
 S: *Ha kullandırmıyo kadın*
 A: *Kullandırtmıyo mu? Ha::*
 S: *Kadın çok titiz, kadın öyle-*
 A: *Ha::*

(0.5)

Dün telefona çıkan omuydu ?

- 1 S: I miss meals like this in the evenings. For supper every evening
 2 it's fish-and-chips, every evening it's fish-and chips, without
 3 fail.
 4 A: Come off it!
 5 S: I swear.
 6 A: Well then, isn't there anything else to eat? Eat other things.
 7 Other...
 8 S: No, I can't, there's nothing else there that I can eat.
 9 A: Oh well, tell the woman to get something and make
 10 it especially for you.
 11 S: I *don't* eat dinner at the woman- woman's place, darling=
 12 A: =No, tell her to make it.
 13 S: I eat at the polytechnic, and the woman eats at half past five. At
 14 half past five I'm at the polytechnic.
 15 A: Well, isn't there such a thing or the like at the
 16 polytechnic?
 17 S: No, you see, the place for students
 18 A: No, no, emm, isn't there a little place where you
 19 can do shopping?
 20 S: Yes, but where can I cook it, how shall I do it?
 21 A: What if you asked the woman whether you could use the kitchen?
 22 S: Ah, the woman doesn't let me use it.
 23 A: Doesn't she? Oh, I see.
 24 S: The woman is very house-conscious. The woman
 25 A: I see
 26 (0.5)
 27 Was it her who answered the phone yesterday?

The first piece of advice, “Eat other things”, gets a strong declination. Failing in her first attempt, A suggests something completely different, “Tell the woman to get something and cook it especially for you” (lines 9, 10). The “woman” in question is S’s landlady. This also proves to be an unsuccessful attempt, because S does not eat dinner at the bed-and-breakfast place where he stays. A is reluctant to accept the second declination, possibly being unable to see why he cannot eat dinner at home, and insists on the same point (line 12). Realising that A has not got the whole picture, S gives further facts about his life, that he is at the polytechnic at half past five when the landlady has dinner ready at home. Then comes a new suggestion, cooking his own food himself. However, A’s starting point is not very clear to S, so when she says “Isn’t there such a thing or the like at the polytechnic?”, meaning a sort of a supermarket or grocery where he could buy the ingredients, S thinks that she has come back to the subject of the students’ cafeteria. While he is about to provide more information about this place, Speaker A steps in to repair the misunderstanding, “No, no, isn’t there a little place where you can do shopping?” Now S gets the point, yes, there is a place where he can do shopping, but what good is it when one does not have a place to do the cooking in. The next suggestion is geared to dismiss this sub-category of the main trouble, “What if you asked the woman whether you could use the kitchen?” (line 21). Another strong objection is voiced by S due to the fact that his landlady does not allow this. Reference to the woman being house-proud is possibly made here as an explanation as to why she does not allow a lodger to mess up her kitchen. Eventually the end of the negotiation comes with A giving up on finding solutions to the problem with “I see” (lines 23, 25).

Examination of these turns reveals three strategies that are adopted by the advice-giver during the interaction. The first one is defending or insisting on the original advice after it has been declined:

No tell her to make it

The second is taking each declination as final and proposing a completely new solution for the main trouble. In the extract there are three such proposals:

Eat other things at the restaurant

Tell the woman to get something and make it especially for you

Buy and cook your food for yourself

The third strategy is taking the declination as representing a new trouble spot and working on this newly emerged trouble rather than on the main one which

started the unit initially. We can see how in the following extract the advice-giver moves away from the main trouble to a newly created one:

A: Isn't there a little place where you can do shopping?

S: Yes, but where can I cook it, how shall I do it?

A: What if you asked the woman whether you could use the kitchen?

As exemplified here, the advice-giver can alternate between these three strategies in the course of the negotiation period. In such long-winded advice sequences the advice-giver may keep on finding new solutions to the problem and the advice-recipient may keep on rejecting them. If the sequence is prolonged with a succession of advice moves, the change of topic occurs only after one of them backs down from the original stance. In the example under examination this is achieved by the advice-giver producing a "Ha:::" which marks a repaired misapprehension. The nearest equivalent of this in English is "Oh", identifying a "change-of state" in the speaker, including the repair of a misunderstanding (Heritage 1984). By producing a repaired misapprehension token, Speaker A at the same time displays her resignation from giving further advice.

It is ironical that when this point in the conversation is reached, no progress has been made for the eradication of the trouble despite the lengthy talk, and the case is "back to square one", so to speak. This, however, does not mean that advice is futile but that it has the additional potential to accomplish things other than finding solutions to a problem. In this extract we note that advice-giving is only incidental to the fact that the two speakers are trying to catch up with their respective lives. In this sense, by the end of the sequence, A has indeed acquired knowledge of her husband's living conditions and problems, while S has successfully done complaining cum briefing. In other words, advice-giving has acted in this instance as a vehicle for the business of showing interest and concern.³

Case two

The second case is an excerpt from the conversation between two people in Cambridge, England. The male participant is a pre-university student who is about to complete his English language training in one of the language schools in the city. He has applied to several British universities to read Business Studies but the only prospect of a place seems to be at the new local university,

which also has a second campus elsewhere. He is reporting his telephone conversation with the university's admissions office to a female friend, whom he met a year ago, on his arrival in the city.

Example 9

K: *Chelmsford kampusuda olabilirmiş. Nereye alabilirlerse artık*

A: *Ya:::*

K: *Şeyde karar veririz dedi, ı::: interviyuvda*

A: *Ha:::*

K: *Orada sadece eee işletme var*

A: *Ha::? E:::?*

K: *Burda işletmeyle birlikte Almancaymış. Em::: ikisi birden (.)*

A: *Ay ben olsam burası derdim*

Cambridge'denim demek düşünsene. Nerden olduğunu kim bilcek

K: *Bide Almanca'yı beceremem yani. İngilizce için-*

A: *A-a, becerirsin yau.*

Almanca çok ra:bette şimdi

K: *İngilizceyi daha halledemedim. İkinci dil çok gelir.*

A: *Yo:: niye İngilizcende ne var ki?*

K: *Zorlanırım.*

A: *Yok canım, o da eee aradan çıkar öylece. hhhh Abdullah*

gibihhh çok dilli olursun fena mı hahhh hahhh ha::

(a couple of lines omitted)

A: *Valla bence adamı tekrar arasan iyi olur.*

K: *Öylemi diyosun?*

A: *Kesinlikle*

1 K: It may well be the Chelmsford campus. So it is wherever

2 they can fit (me) in

3 A: Really?

4 K: He said they would decide at the uhm:: interview

5 A: I see

6 K: Apparently they have only the uh business studies there

7 A: Is that so? I see

8 K: Whereas here it is business studies together with German. Uhm

9 the two together (.) But,

9 A: Oh, if I were you I would go for here. To say "I'm from

10 Cambridge, think of it. Who would know where (which

- 11 university) you are from.
- 12 K: I don't think I can cope with German. For English-
- 13 A: Well of course you can cope
- 14 (with it). German is *very* popular nowadays.
- 15 K: before I can get on top of English. A second language
- 16 A: No::, what's wrong with your
- 17 English?
- 18 K: will be too much. I would be stretched.
- 19 A: Not at all. That too uhm can easily slip in. Hhhh You will be
- 20 *multi*-lingual, like Abdullah, is that bad, hahh hahh ha:
(a couple of lines omitted)
- 21 Really, in my opinion, you should call the man again.
- 22 K: You think so?
- 23 A: Definitely.

Having gone through a long period of applying to universities and then receiving rejections from them one after the other, the student is apprehensive about the present topic. The fact that his last chance may lie in a remote campus of this new university, which, since its status was turned into a university, has always been under the shadow of the traditional one, does not bother him; he is ready to accept anything. It is obvious, however, that the friend, unlike him, is not easily satisfied with the minimum and tries to inject some of her enthusiasm and aspirations into her conversational partner. The initial point where this extract starts also means different things to them. While the student is probably positive about the prospects of going to a distant campus, she evaluates the situation as a problematic one. In the course of the extract she produces two traditionally mitigated pieces of advice, and several comments with persuasive effect. The advice in line 9, "If I were you I would go for here" and the other one towards the end (line 21), "Really, in my opinion, you should call the man again", despite being mirror images of negatively polite advice constructions in English, are not similarly distancing or presumptuous in Turkish; on the contrary, they are samples of a persuasion technique; the linguistic "wizardry" by which two speakers are conjured up into one. She hypothetically puts herself into his place, and in this way, shows that what she is advising him is what she would do for herself, not for "agent de-emphasis" (Hudson 1990), but to stress the fact that she is suggesting the best option.

These two pieces of advice are also noteworthy for their temporal order.

The student should first be persuaded that the Cambridge campus offers him better academic prospects before he can “ring the man” and tell him of his choice. However, there is no indication in the talk between these two advice turns, that the student is prepared to take the first suggested course of action. (In the omitted lines, they joke about a mutual acquaintance who keeps on throwing English and French words into his speech). If anything, the student voices serious reservations about the present location and gives reasons why he should go away to the distant, less known campus. The second advice, therefore, takes for granted that the first one is accepted: an authoritative style used for persuasion.

The second noticeable feature in this conversation is the friend’s forceful pressure on the student. Disregarding the jocular side utterance about the mutual acquaintance, probably introduced to clear the air after too many self-derogatory remarks by the student, the friend produces several reasons why this location should be preferred. To start with, she draws attention to the fact that it is unknown (in Turkey) that there are two universities in Cambridge and to say “I’m from Cambridge” will be prestigious and leave a better impression on others. An appeal to his imagination at this point, “Think of it”, is also a weighty persuasion technique. Then, she emphatically refers to the popularity of German which is available only on this campus. Furthermore, she sweeps away all self-derogatory remarks as nonsense, and claims that he will learn German as easily as he has done English (“That too uhm can easily slip in”).

The speakers in this extract start with and stand by their differing opinions until the advice-recipient shows signs at the end that he might concede to what is suggested, but the interaction up to that point can hardly be considered a dispute. What happens instead is that one speaker advises the other to take a certain course of action, and at the same time builds up his low self-esteem. As it is apparent here, to tell the other person what is in his/her best interest can be highly supportive, and not competitive at all.

Case three

This is a piece of conversation taking place between two distant relatives, accompanying their dress fitting session. Both are over 60, although N is slightly older and of a higher economic standing. The event is taking place in R’s house, and in the presence of N’s daughter-in-law, A, who stays outside

this dialogue, except for joining in the merriment towards the end of the talk.

R has put on her recently-bought dress to show her cousin how ill-fitting it is. The dress has a deep shoulder line, plus it is puckered-up around the bust area, both of which cause the underwear to show through the arm holes. To solve the problem, various ideas are suggested and refused by the speakers in this literally “hands on” job: while they talk, they handle the material, pulling at it, straightening it, or gathering it into double folds. Both know how to carry out minor dress adjustments but neither is experienced in more demanding aspects of dress-making.

Example 10

R: *Omuzdan almak olmuyo.*

N: *Yo:: bu pensi daha derin alacaksın.*

R: *İyi de o zaman da daha içeriye giriyo bak.*

N: *Yok canım.*

R: *[she increases the pleat next to the bust, as a result of which the arm cavity grows even wider, showing more of what there is under the dress.] İşte böyle oluyo.*

(0.8)

N: *O zaman koltuk altından alınacak şekerim.*

R: *Koltuk altından olmuyor Neriman abla, bu yandaki fermuara baksana nasıl dikilmiş. Ben aynı bunun gibi dikemem ki.*

N: *Dikersin be, aynısı olmayıversin. Nolucak, üstten dikersin.*

R: *E şimdi niye bozucam güzelim fermuarı?*

N: *[tries to arrange the bust pleat again] Şuraya bir parça koysan?*

R: *Böyle görünen yere, yama yapmış gibi ayol*

N: *[smiling] O zaman sana söylüyim. Sütyeni atacan*

A: *[laughs].*

R: *[laughs] Hah:: bravo buldun. Niye düşünemedik ki.*

N: *Moda şimdi böyle dersin, .hhhh.*

R: *Hahh, evet.*

1 R: One can't take it in from (the top of) the shoulder.

2 N: No:: You have to take in from this dart.

3 R: Yes, but then it opens up further here, you see.

4 N: I don't think so.

5 R: [she increases the pleat across the bust line, as a result of which the

- 6 arm cavity grows even wider, showing more of what there is under
 7 the dress] There, it becomes like this.
 8 (0.8)
 9 N: In that case, it has to be taken in from under the arm, my sugar.
 10 R: It can't be taken in from there, Neriman sister, look how the
 11 zip is stitched. I can't stitch it like this.
 12 N: You can; even if it is not exactly the same. Stitch it over the zip.
 13 R: But why should I
 14 damage the fine stitching?
 15 N: [tries to arrange the pleat again] What if you put a patch here?
 16 R: In a visible place like this, it will stick out like a sore thumb, dear.
 17 N: [smiling] Well in that case, wear it without a bra.
 18 A: [laughs]
 19 R: [laughs] Oh, well-done, you've found the answer. Why didn't we
 20 think of this before?
 21 N: You can say, 'this is the fashion now.'
 22 R: Oh:: yes.

Modification to the garment should be so as to do away with the bagginess and also to make the arm hole smaller. Three reasonable suggestions are made and rejected in sequence. These are to increase the size of the dart by the arm hole; to tighten the puckered-up material under the arms, and to put a patch around the armpit to cover the unseemly appearance of the underwear. All these suggestions are turned down because of the new problems that they create. Making a larger pleat across the bust line causes the opening to be drawn even further into the bust area. Tightening the rucked-up material under the arms will mean destroying the professional stitching of the long, side zipper, and putting on an additional patch will look too conspicuous. In the course of this trial and error process, a variety of advice and refusal comments are placed in the talk, in a mixture of direct and mitigated utterances. "You have to take in from this pleat" (line 2) and "Stitch it over the zip" (line 12) on the one hand, and "it has to be taken in from under the arm" (line 9) on the other. Similarly the rejections are either blunt, "It can't be taken in from there" (line 10) or softened, "Yes, but then it opens up further here" (line 3), with positive politeness to avoid disagreement.

While the two speakers work their way through the problem, one suggesting ideas and the other proving them wrong, they decorate their language with endearment terms like "dear", "N. sister", and "my sugar", demonstrating that

there are no hard feelings meant or registered. On a closer inspection, it becomes clear that R uses more demonstrative language, enriched with attention-drawing words like “you see” (line 3), “there” (line 7), and “look” (line 10). This emphasis on the visual side seems to be used to justify her objections. She is probably providing concrete, observable evidence of the inapplicability of the recommendations, in recognition of the fact that her conversational partner is doing her a favour by trying to find solutions. The end of the unit comes when N, in desperation, suggests a course of action which is wearing the dress without underwear. Considering their age, status (both married), the physical structure of R (she is well-built above the waist) and the conservative social structure that they live in, this is something utterly unacceptable. The advice-giver, therefore, resorts to making a joke, disguised as a piece of advice. Advice-givers can sometimes use such jokes to confess that they have exhausted all possible avenues, and to signal the end of the advising session, at least for the time being — in this case both speakers later agree that the garment should be taken to a professional dress maker, for adjustment.

Laughter from both parties plus the onlooker at the last suggestion proves the inapplicability of it, which, ironically, turns out to be the only acceptance in the unit of advice — at least in form if not in function (lines 19–20 and 22). By approving an unworkable suggestion, the recipient shows that she understands the joke and retaliates in kind. What we see here, then, is joint work to solve the problem of only one of the speakers, but when this proves to be difficult, a joint playful exit of the sequence; hardly a sign of a mutual testing of strength for superiority.

Conclusion

The present investigation demonstrates that theories which are based on intuitive descriptions of speech activities do not always reflect these activities correctly, or even if they do for one language and culture, there may be others which fall out of the limits drawn. Advice-giving in Turkish is a case in point.

In the literature this is defined as an act which includes a hidden claim to know better or constitutes a presumptuous effort to get the other to do something against his or her own will. It is claimed that either potential is sufficient to make it a threat to the face needs of the advice recipient (Brown

and Levinson 1978, 1987) and a blow for the maxims of politeness (Leech 1983). There are even suggestions that advice has the potential to turn the interaction into a battle over “superiority” (Wardhaugh 1985).

The present study has uncovered that solicited advice constructions are without complications: they are plain, prompt and fluent, regardless of the sociological factors affecting the speech event. Unsolicited advice, however, shows some variation in the sense that socially distant partners, like those on first encounters or of considerably lower status, produce advice turns heavily marked with hesitation, while intimate speakers alternate between crude and mitigated utterances. This is clear for observation in Example 7, where the advice-giver uses both “naked” advice (line 5: “Eat other things”; line 10: “tell her to make it”) as well as mitigated advice (line 16–17: “isn’t there a little place where you can do shopping?”; line 19: “What if you asked the woman”) within a span of a couple of seconds. These findings indicate that in distant-relationship contexts, face threatening aspects of advising are strong, but among close partners mitigation serves purposes other than hiding superiority. Among other things, mitigation may carry the import of apprehension about one’s lack of knowledge in the circumstances surrounding the troubled person, as it does in Example 8, or may be used as a persuasion technique to stress sincerity as in Example 9 (line 9: “If I were you I would ..”).

Advice rejection is another area of interest. It does not appear in cases where one’s opinion or expertise is invited to solve a problem, but in unsolicited advice situations it invariably occurs. How talk develops after this point is again very much influenced by the distance/closeness that exists between the speakers. People who are not familiar with one another resign from the topic or sequence at this point, but those in informal relationships favour repeated advice and go to great lengths to find a solution. Whether or not they find one is only circumstantial, because advice and declination pairs additionally serve other relationship strengthening purposes at the same time.

Recent interest in oriental cultures and languages has been revealing substantial differences between these and their more familiar, and more researched Western counterparts (Spencer-Oatey 1997; Ervin-Tripp et. al. 1994; Kim et. al. 1994). One dimension where a major dissimilarity appears is the way an individual takes his/her place in society. Oriental norms encourage *collectivism* while in the Western world going “solo” and projecting *individualism* (Hofstede 1980) are more important. The shell which encapsulates the Westerner’s personal space is not so spacious and impregnable elsewhere in

the world. A “one for all” attitude which is characteristic of *collectivism* seems to exist both in Turkey and Greece. Makri-Tsilipakou (in this volume), for instance, shows that the act of approval in Greece takes different forms (*sinxaritia* and *bravo*) depending on the formality/informality of the context and the social distance/closeness between the speakers. In the functional analysis of these she identifies the Greek tendency to think of *other* as *self*. Advice-giving in Turkish is similarly sensitive to relationships and puts a similar emphasis on sharing, provided that the company is the right one. In contrast to Western individualism and competition for superiority, it signifies affection and brings the parties together for the eradication of the problem. Even if the problem is not eliminated, at least the interest in the other’s well being is put on record, the unknown circumstances are brought to light, and care, support and encouragement are extended. Distant partners tend to keep the “trouble announcement + advice + declination” sequence to a minimum, as overdoing it may suggest an inappropriate show of intimacy, but close partners can make a chain out of this triplet by adding further “suggestion + declination” pairs and stretching the talk to considerable length. The process is carried out without any signs of a confrontation, indicating that, unless the social distance between the speakers acts as a deterring factor, efforts to find a solution to the other’s problem are, in fact, a show of solidarity.

The main concern in this paper has been to demonstrate the differences that exist between American/British English and Turkish in the making of suggestions. Our claim is not in terms of quality but of quantity. In other words, although there is no support from the existing literature to this effect; we expect advice to make an appearance in similar form, function and sequential location in English conversations too, as it does in the examples presented here. However, we anticipate that, because the English speaking environment is the one nurturing *individualism*, these characteristics are found only in the encounters of “special others”, limited to such minority circles that they have not attracted the attention of researchers so far. Whether or not this is the case awaits further work.

Notes

1. I am grateful to my colleagues (and friends) Maria Sifianou, Rachel Harris, and Valerie Bevan for reading the text and making invaluable comments. The remaining shortcomings are, of course, attributable to the author.

2. In a radio programme a BBC correspondent (*From our Own Correspondent*, Hugh Schofield, 20 March 1996) exemplified such cultural differences when he referred to his experiences in Paris. He said he was amazed at the freedom with which advice was given to him in France by total strangers on child-rearing whenever he and his wife were out with their young children. He even felt intimidated when he was told that a baby should not be taken bare-foot out into the open-air. While the French were probably practising positive politeness by making such remarks, the correspondent, unaccustomed to such invasion of his personal preserves, was feeling that his negative face needs were overlooked.
3. I am grateful to Mariathi Makri-Tsilipakou for bringing this aspect to my attention.

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The use of pronouns and terms of address in Turkish service encounters

Yasemin Bayyurt and Arın Bayraktaroğlu

Introduction

The interest shown in the use of pronouns and terms of address has been intensified since the claim by Brown and Gilman (1960) and Brown and Ford (1964) that the dimensions of status/power (P) and solidarity/distance (D) are the most crucial factors affecting the speaker's linguistic choice in addressing people of the same or different rank, age, gender, etc. The wealth of literature which has accumulated as a result of this has become extremely diversified and now covers not only the most widely spoken languages in the world today, like English (Wolfson and Manes 1982), French (Lambert and Tucker 1976), and Spanish (Moles 1974), but also less widely used European languages such as Slovene (Kess and Juricic 1978), Icelandic (Haugen 1975), Serbo-Croat (Kocher 1967), and Hungarian (Ostor 1982). Other languages ranging from Russian (Friedrich 1966), and Yiddish (Slobin 1963) to Thai (Filbeck 1973) and Indonesian (Wittermans 1967) have also been included in the wealth of information thus collected. Even exotic ones like Jarawa (Conant 1961), have not been left out. Context-specific parameters have been the concern of some studies (Jonz 1975, McIntire 1972), while others have concentrated on gender differences in pronominal use (Kramer 1975, McConnell-Ginet 1978). Multi-lingual explorations have been carried out to compare two or more languages in terms of the use of their pronouns (Braun 1988, Kroger and Wood 1992). Naturally, Turkish (Horasan 1987, König 1990) and Greek (Makri-Tsilipakou 1984, Petrits 1990) feature among this rich selection of global information gathered on the use of terms of address.

The main framework in these studies is generally as follows: power and solidarity are the main determining factors in the speaker's choice between the

two distinct address pronouns to a single addressee, namely, the second person singular pronoun (T from the Latin *tu*) and the second person plural one (V from the Latin *vos*). The power may result from differences in age, status, knowledge, gender and other sociological factors. The power semantics would usually occasion the non-reciprocal use of the T/V pronouns while the solidarity semantics would lead to their reciprocal use. With an increase in subordination there is an increase in the tendency for the subordinate to use the “V” pronoun in addressing the other, and conversely, with an increase in superordination there is an increase in the use of the “T” pronoun by the superior. On the other hand, the distance between the speakers is also a determining factor in the choice of pronouns, and indeed of all terms of address, ranging from nicknames to deferential honorifics. The more familiar or closer the speakers are, or wish to become, the greater the tendency to use the “T” pronoun reciprocally. As the social distance increases between them, this is reflected in the utilisation of the V pronoun, which is sometimes referred to as the “distancing” pronoun (see Braun 1988).

As studies in the field have grown in numbers, so has the diversity in the key words, *power* and *solidarity*, which have either been changed or replaced with new terms like “status,” “dominance” and “authority” for the former, and “intimacy,” “familiarity,” “like-mindedness,” and “closeness” for the other. Spencer-Oatey (1996) is dissatisfied not so much with the proliferation of new terminology, as with the lack of adequate explanations for it. One thing is clear, however, and that is the inadequacy of the original terms to cover all the intricacies involved in the way people choose terms of address in interaction. It is suggested that clear-cut divisions between the two concepts cannot be drawn, as the two are intermingled. In Tannen’s (1994: 22) words, “power and solidarity are in paradoxical relation to each other. That is, although power and solidarity, closeness and distance, seem at first to be opposites, each also entails the other”. The matter, therefore, rests with the relative strength of each factor, and the researchers’ job is to give at least the dominant one its due.

Focusing specifically on the Turkish use of address terms, König (1990: 182) suggests that “the choice of the *sen/siz* (T/V) pronouns necessitates a multi-dimensional decision”. She also indicates that the decision is dependent on a number of factors such as solidarity and deference. She mainly looks at the demographic features affecting the choice of pronouns and classifies the variables affecting this decision under three main headings: biological, psychological and sociological. By biological she means variables such as age,

kinship, generation and sex; by psychological she means closeness, formality, distance and solidarity; and by sociological she means social class and/or social status. Horasan's (1987) study relates her findings to demographic features as well. She says that "the social variables, age, sex, education, place of residence and place of birth, played an effective role in the choice of address terms and pronouns" (: 44) by her informants.

In this study we will look at two aspects of nominal and pronominal use as is exhibited in Turkish service encounters. One aspect is the variation affected by the economic prestige attached to the setting, as well as the familiarity between the interlocutors. As the strength of the economic setting increases, the customers are found to be distancing themselves from the sales people by resorting to indirect forms of speech and the increased use of the V pronouns. The customers' familiarity to the setting, on the other hand, encourages the opposite: in the shops of frequent visits solidarity emphasising nominal and pronominal use is more dominant. The second aspect is gender differences as perceived in these conditions. The linguistic characteristics of the male customers show that they are influenced by the economic affluence of the setting more than the females and that they are more at ease to switch to the solidarity forms in shops of frequent use than the female counterparts.

The following sections will focus on: (i) the evaluation of two theories of politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987 and Watts 1992), (ii) the application of "politic" and "polite" speech distinction to the examples taken from Turkish service encounters, (iii) a short survey of gender differences in the use of forms of address, and (iv) the description of the method used, giving due consideration to the settings that form the backbone of the data. The questionnaire will be analysed in the final section.

Pronominal and nominal address terms and politeness

Disregarding Braun (1988) who analyses nominal and pronominal address forms against the yardstick of "adequacy", and attracts criticism (Watts 1992) similar to that directed at Fraser's (1990) "conversational contract" theory, two main approaches to politeness have considered the use of nominal and pronominal address; these are by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Watts (1992) respectively.

Underlying Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness are the premises

that (a) all rational human beings are protective of their social image (“face”), which they constantly endeavour to improve; and that (b) they have two major needs, which are to some extent in conflict with each other: the desire to be liked and approved of by others on the one hand, and the desire to be free from all impositions, on the other. The same theory makes the further claim that all speech acts carry an inherent threat to the face of the alter or the self, and have to be refined before execution to reduce the impact. One way of achieving this is by using the strategies and grammatical components of positive politeness which emphasise the need in human beings to be sociable. This is the domain where the familiar pronoun resides: “the use of a T (singular non-honorific pronoun) to a non-familiar alter can claim solidarity” just like the “terms of address, *mate, buddy, pal, honey, dear, duckie, luv, babe, Mom, blonde, brother, sister, cutie, sweetheart, guys, fellas*” (1987: 107–8). The second route to the same end (i.e. reducing the threat in the act) goes through negative politeness, using the techniques in one’s repertoire to show respect for the other’s need to be free from impositions, and this is the area where the plural pronoun is to be found. Brown and Levinson propose two possible motives for the use of the plural “you” pronoun to a single addressee. One is to avoid “singling out”, “as if the speaker were giving H the option to interpret it as applying to him rather than, say, to his companions”, and the other to treat the individual as a member of a corporate entity, i.e. “to embed persons referred to in the groups to which they belong” (: 199).

Assigning the quality of politeness, albeit of a different nature, to both forms of address seems to be convincing. However, because Brown and Levinson claim that every conversational move is a threat to the image that one or one’s addressee has developed, without making room for unmarked utterances, or indeed face-supportive acts (Bayraktaroğlu 1991, Holmes 1995, Sifianou 1995), they leave certain aspects of speech behaviour out of their framework. In their approach, every speaker is either an offender (i.e. one who does not prune the thorns of his or her speech with the strategies of politeness) or a polite speaker (i.e. one who camouflages the threat in his or her utterances behind politeness strategies) or a mute one (i.e. one who opts for silence).¹ No provision is made for neutral encounters that we experience almost every day in our lives, those which leave no impact on us as being either polite or rude, but are recorded as simply “ordinary”, and do not usually pass beyond our short-term memory. There are even societies where “being ordinary” scores better than “being polite” (see Blum-Kulka 1992, for instance). Lack of

politeness, therefore, does not always denote impoliteness.

This gap is closed by Watts (1992) who analyses the use of terms of address in British phone-in programmes in consolidation of a theory of politeness. His starting point is the exploitation of the “polite” forms by the ruling elite in the 18th century as a means to protect their in-group identity, to keep outsiders away, and to hide their not-so-elegant intentions under an elegant cover. The social needs of the contemporary world, however, are quite different. Today, the main concern of the social being is to keep personal relationships conflict-free and in a state of equilibrium, as otherwise the contact is in danger of being broken. What satisfies Braun (1988) as adequate, and therefore, is described as being polite, falls short of Watts’ definition of politeness. He argues that the minimum conditions for achieving a state of equilibrium are not enough to achieve politeness; these can only be considered as forms of “politic” behaviour; forms to keep the status-quo unchanged. Politeness is when the ego attempts to enhance his/her standing in the eyes of the alter, by performing more than is expected of him in the situation to keep the lines of interaction open.² This distinction finds strong evidence in oriental cultures where the “discernment”, i.e. the encoding in speech of the ranks and roles of the speaker, hearer and the referent, is indispensable and therefore static, while there is also a wide range of possibilities from which one can choose at his or her own will (i.e. “volition”), to appease one’s addressee (Ide 1989).³

Watts shows that whenever a term of address which is either more respectful or more familiar than is necessary appears in speech, the impact of the unexpected nature of it can be noticed. Getting too friendly by using endearment terms when the exchange of greetings is on the formal side, or using forms that are too stiff like “sir,” or “madam” in speech environments where first names are normally exchanged, stand out as special efforts on the part of the speaker to score. Without these, what is said is adequately inoffensive and therefore politic, but with them it becomes significant because the speaker is signalling that s/he is giving the addressee more than his or her share, of either respect or friendship, and s/he is doing this at his or her own free will.

The examples Watts uses come from the introductory stage of the call-in programmes; a point where it is customary for the programme moderator to greet the new person by name for the sake of the listeners as well as for the expert who is present in the studio, and for the caller-in to respond similarly using an address term to the host(s). The point Watts makes is that if the

address forms are not compatible (see Ervin-Tripp's (1972) sociolinguistic rules for a similar point), the possibility is that one of them is a politic form, and the other a polite one; e.g. "Moderator: Good morning *M.*; Caller-in: Good morning *me dear*" (: 63). Here the moderator exhibits a "politic" behaviour by addressing the caller by her first name — after all, it is a programme which aims to create "an in-group identity for moderator, expert and callers at least for the duration of the programme" (: 64). The caller's intimate reply, "*me dear*", however, surpasses expectations and becomes a "polite" one.

There is also the other side of the coin; and that is producing non-politic or even rude behaviour, either by mistake or on purpose. This will have drastic consequences for the relationship, which may be strained or even terminated.

Politic and polite behaviour in service encounters

In service encounters the parties are, in general, first-time speakers, who do not have a shared history nor will, probably, have any future together either. Their parts are prescribed and they are there only to play these parts. It is a case of "get in, do the job, and get out again." In such a straightforward situation, there is no apparent reason why people should exhibit any more than "politic" behaviour, but in actual fact, even in these circumstances the majority of the players enhance their parts with spontaneous and impromptu performance including attention-getters, address terms, unexpected use of pronouns, and indirectly communicated message types. The following examples from Turkish service encounters will highlight some of these points:

- (1) C: *Cumhuriyet geldi mi?*
Has *Cumhuriyet* arrived?
(Do you have the newspaper, *Cumhuriyet*?)
- S: *Dışarda, rafın en altında.*
Outside, on the bottom shelf.
- (2) C: *Bir milyon bozuğun varmı komşu?*
Do you have change for one million, **neighbour**?
- S: *Bozuyoruz.*
We will change it.

- (3) C: *Marlborough geldi mi?*
Has Marlborough come?
- S: *Gelmedi, beyim.*
No, **(my) sir**, it hasn't.
- (4) C: *Zeytinden bir kilo tartıversene, usta.*
Could you weigh a kilo of olives, **expert**.
- S: *Siyahıtan mı istiyorsun, abla?*
Do you want from the black ones, **big sister**?
- (5) C: *Pardon, şunu verirmisiniz, hanım kızım?*
I'm sorry, could you hand that down (for me), **my lady daughter**?
- S: *Tabii, beyefendi, siz rahatsız olmayın.*
Of course, **sir**. Don't you trouble yourself with it.

In (1) both speakers keep themselves within the “politic” behaviour. They do not violate any social forms; the terms they use are adequate to communicate their respective parts, but there is no trace of any overt attempt to enhance the standing of the ego in either of them. In comparison, the customer in (2) uses an address term which is “positively polite” (neighbour) while the seller is content with “politic” behaviour.⁴ The situation is reversed in (3) where “politic” behaviour by the customer gets a “polite” response from the seller, but it is from the “negative politeness” category, showing respect to the former’s higher status. The seller is not obliged to mark this difference in their respective status; he does it of his own accord, so it counts as a “polite” act on his part. In (4) both speakers use the singular form of the verb and are equally amicable in their choice of address terms from the “positive politeness” range. Considering that they are complete strangers, they signal their wish to form solidarity, at least for as long as the transaction lasts. Example (5) is significant in the sense that it involves numerous signs of “polite” behaviour: the customer first makes a “refined” demand for attention by selecting a word of French origin (always thought to be a sign of a certain social “class” in Turkey), which functions as an apology for the disturbance created. He additionally uses the 2nd person plural suffix (-siniz), a suffix attached to the verb, and employs a “hybrid” term of address which joins two items, one from each politeness type: *hanım* ‘lady’, a negative politeness form, and *kızım* ‘my

daughter', a positive politeness one. The fact that in self-service shops the attendant is not responsible for the handing-out of goods may account for the buyer's extreme politeness in this case, but the seller's response is a similar combination of politeness: she exhibits concern for the customer's well being (positive) and uses a highly deferential form of address, *Beyefendi* 'Sir' (negative).⁵

Not enough research has been carried out yet to test the applicability of the politic/polite distinction in a wide range of contexts, but within the restricted world of service-encounters, where role relationships and speech activities are limited in nature, it works perfectly well.

Gender differences in the use of address terms

Differences are noted in the use of address terms, in the way they are both directed to and utilised by men and women.

The gender of the speaker and addressee determines the way people speak in many cultures (see, for instance, Antonopoulou in this collection). It is reported that in some Dutch dialects women receive the T pronoun while men are addressed to with the V pronoun. Braun (1988) attributes this distinction to V denoting size and roughness, which are more appropriate qualities for a male addressee, and T symbolising smallness and tenderness, which are the qualities indicative of the female gender. Lakoff (1975) highlights the discrepancy in the rules of professional naming. At least in academia, she says, there is a tendency to address women by their first name, rather than last name alone or title plus last name, sooner than men who are in similar positions.

Differences are also found in the way men and women address others. Kramer (1975) notes the richer repertoire of familiar address terms used by male speakers in comparison to females. She especially notes the ease with which men, and not women, in service encounters utilise endearment terms to female customers although the male customers are often called "sir". Wolfson and Manes (1980) too find the same occurrence in American shops and garages where female strangers are greeted by salesmen in first time encounters with terms such as "honey", "love", "sweetheart", etc. On the other hand, Braun (1988) reports from Irish English that this kind of familiar address behaviour is common among speakers with lower social standing, regardless

of their sex. She quotes an informant, explaining that female “sales clerk[s] or waitress[es], might just as well address an unknown male customer as *sweet-heart* or *honey*” (: 26).

In a recent study, Hayasi (1998) has analysed a Turkish television family drama series and found that there are striking gender differences in the form and content of the language used in the programme. The female speech is characterised by more frequent use of terms of address including those of endearment (*canım* ‘my soul’), and kinship (*evladım* ‘my child,’ *kız* ‘girl’, ‘daughter’, *abla* ‘elder sister’) as well as first names. In comparison, male speech features a high frequency of coarse speech particles, like *yahu* and *be* (both untranslatable) addressed to the hearer, but fewer kinship or endearment terms. Moreover, there is an emphatic use of the first person singular pronoun, *ben* ‘I’ in the husband’s speech (more than twice as often as in the wife’s), indicative of strong self-assertion.

Studies of gender differences in the Turkish language (Hayasi 1998, Kamlı and Doğançay-Aktuna 1996) and the use of address terms (Kral 1975, Horasan 1987) in particular, are scarce, and examination of these in service encounters, to the best of the authors’ knowledge, does not exist.

In the present investigation the focus will be on the differences that men and women exhibit in their use of address terms, pronouns and attention-getters. These will be examined in situations where the type of speech act (a request for goods), speaker roles (customer versus seller), and the speech event (service encounters) are kept stable but variation is allowed for the familiarity between the interlocutors and the affluence of the setting (ranging from an open market place to a reputable high-street fashion store). The findings will, we hope, highlight the behavioural patterns of the sexes in formal/informal relationships and in the face of the economic strengths/weaknesses of the setting.

Method

The methods adopted to investigate the use of pronouns and various address terms are a questionnaire with two sections and, in the case of observed occurrences, note-taking.

In the first part of the questionnaire, personal information about the informants was gathered. In this way, factors affecting the linguistic choice,

such as age, sex, birthplace, and educational background were collated. The present study, however, concentrates only on the gender differences as reflected in the use of pronouns, terms of address and attention-getters.

In the second part of the questionnaire, informants were given 6 situations involving service-encounters and asked to write down an utterance that they would naturally use in each one of them. The situations were selected so as to cover both a continuum of the economic aspect ranging from weak to strong, and the variability of formality and informality that is expected in each one of them.

The first setting was the open market place. This is a location where buyers go periodically but less frequently than they would to their local greengrocery or grocery shops. Markets take place in the same location only once a week, and the sellers cover six or seven different locations in the same area, erecting their stalls in a different place each day of the week. The market is the place where the seasonal vegetables and dairy products are sold by the farmers themselves or by a rotating team of family members. They come from the countryside, spend a week or so in the city, sleep rough on their stalls, and leave for home after handing over the responsibility to the next one in line. As for buyers, they tend to go to the nearest market once a week, although housewives with a tight budget may try different locations on several days, even if it means taking a bus to reach some of them. As there is no intermediary involved, the prices at the market are rock bottom. Large markets include other goods, too, like bric-a-brac, towels and tablecloths, garments and leather goods, all at a fraction of their price in the shops. The goods are not price-tagged as they would be in the grocery or greengrocery shops, which means the market is a natural setting for bartering. This may create a good cause for the purchasers to become friendly with the sellers, but because of the volume of work and the intensity of transactions in the market place, small talk is not as common, or at least not as lengthy, as it is in other locations.

The second setting is the *döner-kebab* kiosk. Some of these are converted trolleys or vans, moving about to different locations depending on the mobility of the would-be customers (near educational establishments in the winter and at the sea-side in the summer, perhaps covering the football stadiums at weekends too), but some others are fixed in the same place (near the ferry-boat quays or main coach stations). Buyers may go to the same kiosk owner once in a while, so there might be some familiarity involved here, but *kebab* is not something that one would eat too often, even in Turkey, so the relationship

may be a distant one in terms of the frequency of contact. On the other hand, as the repeated contact suggests that the buyer has appreciated the food in previous transactions (something so important that it occasions a formulaic approval both in Turkey and Greece — see Sifianou in this volume), even being there again to have the same experience is reason enough to consolidate familiarity.

Included in the range are the familiar settings like the local grocery and greengrocery shops. These are usually two different shop types, although they may be combined to include both under the same roof. The grocery shop is always indoors and the greengrocery is partly indoors (where the money changes hands) and partly out-of-doors (where the goods are displayed in all seasons and passers-by are summoned to them with calls. Where there is a constellation of shops of the same kind, these calls, in competition with one another, violate the quietness of the area).

The grocer is usually thought to be the more familiar shopkeeper. The reason may be explained by the fact that he sells the bread, the daily necessity in every household. There may also be reasons other than the frequency of contact for the establishment of this particular rapport. Traditional grocers allow customers to buy on credit, as a result of which the expression, *Deftere yaz* ‘Write it in the book’ has been coined. As payment is made only once a month, the relationship is free from the institutionalised effects of the setting for the rest of the time. The covered setting also helps the customers to develop small talk with the grocer in long winter months. *Köşe Bakkalı* ‘the corner grocery shop’ is a phrase indicating familiarity and does not have an equivalent for the greengrocery. In terms of familiarity, therefore, the grocer is thought to come first on the list, followed by the local greengrocer.

The fifth setting is *Migros*, a supermarket of Swiss origin, but now the Turkish rights are owned solely by a national company. It has outlets all over Turkey, as well as in Moscow and the capitals of the Central Asian Republics. It has a reputation for stocking good quality consumables, in high quality packaging, but the prices are advertised as being more competitive than those at some other reputable supermarkets, like the French owned *Carrefour*, and the Turkish/German owned *Metro*. It is a self-service setting and the attendants are on location only to control stock and arrange and re-stock the shelves, so a customer/sales person interaction is not the norm and familiarity between the two is not expected in this setting.

The last location is *Vakko*, a fashion store of very high reputation. The

prices are probably the highest in Istanbul (or even in the whole of the Middle East for that matter) and the customers are usually the most affluent, although it is not unusual for people with modest spending power to get a small present from there on important occasions, not so much for the quality, as for the apparent prestige of the label. The attendants are employed for their presentable looks and their linguistic skills, and are dressed in quality clothes. No familiarity between the customer and the sales person is expected there.

Despite the changes of location, the questionnaire investigates only one speech act type, and that is the making of a “request.” This is an act which has been extensively studied for the intensity of face-threat it is said to involve (Brown and Levinson 1987, Labov and Fanshel 1977, Blum-Kulka et al. 1989, Clark and Schunk 1980, Walters 1981). In this case, however, it is an act expected to occur in this environment, and should not, therefore, be as imposing as it might be in other circumstances. (See also Sifianou 1992a, and Antonopoulou this volume). In these settings, the request has consequences beneficial for both parties, resulting in diminished face threat, one would assume, for both of them. Service encounters are realised as a result of the buyer exercising his/her right to make a request for a purchasable good, and the seller satisfying the demand, as is his/her obligation. Even the silence of a regular customer who is given his or her routine shopping before s/he has the chance to ask for it incorporates a request. Without a request being made, either verbally or non-verbally, and being responded to, again either verbally or non-verbally, the encounter is not materialised. Keeping the speech act unchanged is thought to give us a clearer picture of the use of pronouns by men and women in different settings of service encounters and to make it possible for us to attribute the differences not to the use of a different speech act in each setting but to the formality/informality expected in each of these settings and the speakers’ reaction to their economic characteristics.

The total number of subjects who answered the questionnaire was 70 (37 males and 33 females). 91% of the subjects were from a higher education background (33% undergraduate, 58% graduate). The rest were as follows: 2% of secondary education level (compulsory education in Turkey) and 7% lycee (high school).

Most subjects belonged to the 20–24 and 25–30 age bands (23 and 30 informants respectively). There were only 2 people who fell into the 50 and above age band, 12 people who came into the 31–40 age band, and 3 people who were in the 41–50 age band. Most of the subjects, therefore, were, from

more or less the same generation, that is, from 20 to 30.

The subjects were born in different parts of Turkey but the majority (52%) came from big cities such as Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir. In terms of gender, most of the females (75%) were from big cities.

Making sense of the data

In the analysis of the data, two aspects of speech are concentrated on: (a) when making requests, do the informants use a specific address term, an attention-getter or an honorific to address shop assistants, street vendors, sellers at the market place, and grocers, and (b) which pronoun do they mark with the verb suffix when talking to their interlocutor? Before we move on to these aspects, however, we will have a brief look at the speech act of requests in this specific context.

Requests in service encounters

In service encounters in Turkey customers do not always verbalise their intention as to what they would like to buy. It is possible for them to ask for something just by pointing at it with a finger or indicating it with a movement of the head, usually with the chin coming forward towards the item wanted. Alternatively, some customers may take what they want from the shelves and bring it to the seller for him to weigh or package it, in which case the transaction may be conducted in total silence (see also Antonopoulou in this volume for the same habit).

Bald-on-record requests are not rare in service encounters but they are usually softened with familiar terms of address and are used more by men than women. These may indicate familiarity in repeat encounters or a wish to establish solidarity in first time encounters:

- (6) *Bir döner ver, amca.*
One doner give, uncle.
Give me a doner-kebab, uncle.
- (7) *Bir kutu çilek verin, kızım*
One box strawberry give, my daughter
Give me a box of strawberries, my daughter.

These kinship terms produce the impression that it is a kind of a family affair and soften the impact of the unmitigated directives.

Requests may also appear in the special conditional tense which underlines encouragement to the addressee or impatience on the part of the speaker:

- (8) *Şunu versene.*
That give (COND-2nd person singular)
Go on, give that to me.
- (9) *Şunu versenize.*
That give (COND-2nd person plural)
Go on, give that to me.

An indirect verbalisation of requests which has acquired the status of a direct request (like the much quoted “Can you pass the salt?”) due to its high frequency, is the interrogative, i.e. asking the seller if he will do something (to weigh, to give, to hand over, to bring, to show, to wrap up, etc.):

- (10) *Bir kilo fasulya tartar mısınız?*
One kilo green beans weigh (question suffix+2nd person plural suffix)
Will you weigh one kilo of green beans?
- (11) *Vitrindeki çantayı gösterir misiniz?*
The one in the window the bag show (question suffix+2nd person plural suffix)
Will you show me the bag in the window?
- (12) *Bir kutu çilek verir misin?*
One box strawberries give (question suffix+2nd person singular suffix)
Will you give (me) a box of strawberries?

Such requests may also include a modal verb as in (13):⁶

- (13) *Bir kilo fasulya tartabilir misiniz?*
One kilo green beans weigh (MOD+ present tense suffix)
(question suffix+2nd person plural suffix)
Could you weigh one kilo of green beans (for me)?

Although a direct reference “you” is unavoidable in the English translations, these requests do not contain the pronouns in their Turkish originals. What is

there in the structure is the 2nd person singular verb suffix (-*sin*) and 2nd person plural verb suffix (-*siniz*) which indicate the type of the pronoun hidden behind the structure. In Turkish the pronoun appears in the sentence together with the verb suffix only in special conditions: when the addressee is not the rightful recipient of the utterance, or when the speaker has doubts if the addressee has the means to carry out the instructions.

As verb suffixes are clear indications of their respective pronouns, similar to '-s' at the end of a verb in English indicating the 3rd person singular (s/he), despite the fact that *sen* and *siz* are not present in most utterances in the data, they are understood as if they are. Our references to the T and V pronouns throughout this paper, therefore, should be read as references to the corresponding verb suffixes indicative of them.

Verbalisation of intent in this speech event is also possible by diverting the attention away from the seller, in which case the personal suffix tailing the verb does not appear in the utterance. One way of doing this is by focusing on the self (customer) rather than the other (seller). In this case the speaker asks if s/he can do certain things (to see, to try, to take, to buy, to handle etc.):

- (14) *Bir kilo peynir alabilir miyim?*

One kilo cheese buy(MOD) (question suffix+1st person singular suffix)

May I buy a kilo of cheese?

- (15) *Vitrindeki kıyafeti görmek istiyorum.*

The one in the window dress to see want (present progressive tense suffix+1st person singular suffix)

I want (would like) to see the dress in the window.

- (16) *Bir kutu çilek alayım.*

One box strawberry buy (subjunctive suffix+1st person singular suffix)

Let me buy a box of strawberries.

In self-orientated utterances, the verb can be converted to the past tense for reasons of formality:

- (17) *Vitrindeki kıyafete bakmak istiyordum.*

The one in the window dress to look want (past progressive tense tense+1st person singular suffix)

I wanted to see the dress in the window.

Alternatively, reference to either of the interlocutors can be avoided, for instance, by naming a third person for the responsibility of making the request, and this is a linguistic practise not necessarily adopted by children only:

- (18) *Annem bir kilo beyaz peynir istiyor.*
 My mother one kilo white cheese want (present progressive tense suffix)⁷
 My mother wants a kilo of white cheese.
- (19) *Babam "bir Cumhuriyet al" dedi.*
 My father one *Cumhuriyet* buy say (past tense suffix)
 My father asked (me) to buy the *Cumhuriyet* (newspaper).

Or the requested item can be named together with a reference to its quantity, with or without the word, "please":

- (20) *Yarım ekmek içi döner, lütfen.*
 Half bread inside doner, please
 Doner-kebab inside half a loaf of bread, please.

These elliptical structures may be considered to be too blunt in normal circumstances but in the context of service encounters, they suggest that the focus is only on the transaction, and therefore can be considered as examples of "politic" behaviour, rather than a "non-politic" one.

Checking the availability or the quality of the item may also divert attention away from either of the speakers:

- (21) *Bir kutu çilek var mı?*
 One box strawberry existent (question suffix)
 Is there a box of strawberries?
- (22) *Fasulya iyi mi?*
 Green beans good (question suffix)
 Are the green beans good?

Checking the price first and then approving it either verbally or by a nod of the head may also function as the request:

- (23) *Bir kilo patlıcan kaç?*
 One kilo aubergine how much?
 How much is a kilo of aubergines?

Aspects under observation

The features searched for in the data were pronouns, terms of address, and attention-getters embodied in the requests of the above list.

The pronouns are as follows:

- Sen* (T, second person singular) (Informal)
Siz (V, second person plural) (Formal for one addressee;
 formal/informal for 2 or more addressees)

and the verb suffixes indicating these are:

- sin-* for T
-siniz- for V

Turkish is an agglutinative language where suffixes attached to the verb stem regulate the meaning. If the addressee is the object of the sentence, personal pronouns are used, but if the addressee is the subject of the sentence, personal suffixes are sufficient.

The attention-getters found in the data are either those invoking the act of looking on the part of the seller, or apologising on the part of the buyer. These not only help to establish contact between the two participants, but they also display the first indication as to how the addressee is regarded in terms of power and solidarity, before the business at hand commences:

Bakar mısın? (T)
 'Will you look?'

Bakar mısınız? (V)
 'Will you look?'

Baksana (T)
 '(Come on) look'

Baksanıza (V)
 '(Come on) look'

Afedersiniz (V)
 'Excuse me'

Afedersin (T)
 'Excuse me'

Additionally, some greeting forms which warm up the air prior to the transaction are used as attention-getters:

İyi günler
'Good day'

Hayırlı sabahlar/akşamlar
'A blessed morning/evening to you'

Merhaba
'Hello'

Selam
'Greetings'

Terms of address are further means with which the speakers indicate where they place the addressee on the matrix of power and solidarity. Their occurrence is expected and has indeed become the norm at certain conversational points in telephone openings (Schegloff 1979) and the initial phase of the radio programmes where new callers are introduced (Watts 1992). In these contexts they do act as politic behaviour. In other instances where their appearance is not a matter of tradition, however, they may stand out as polite behaviour. Service encounters are one such speech environment where the exchange of address terms is done on a voluntary basis.

Turkish has a rich selection of deferential or solidarity consolidating address terms (see Bayyurt 1992, Bayraktaroğlu 2000), comprising of

honorific titles:

Hanım/Bey 'Lady, Ms/Sir, Mr'

Hanımefendi/Beyefendi 'Madam/Sir'

Bayan/Bay 'Ms/Mr'

Efendim, is the only honorific title which does not distinguish between the sexes (similar to "your majesty" in this respect), and can be used to replace either *hanımefendi* 'madam' or *beyefendi* 'sir'.

Attached to proper names, *Hanım/Bey* take the posterior (Ayşe hanım, Ahmet bey) and *Bayan/Bay* the precedent (Bayan Ayşe, Bay Ahmet) positions, although the latter are more common with full names. *Bay* and *Bey* hardly ever exist on their own, but in conjunction with the first person singular suffix (*Bayım*, *Beyim*) they function as "Sir" (literally "My sir"). Contrary to the address forms in English where "sir" is used on its own, but "lady" is

always personalised with a “my”, *Hanım/Bayan* do not take the personal suffixes.

occupational titles:

Doktor hanım/bey ‘Lady/Gentleman Doctor’ etc.

humble occupations with no honorifics:

Postacı ‘Postman,’ *Sütçü* ‘Milkman,’ etc.

kinship terms for non-relatives:

Abla ‘Big sister,’ *Dede* ‘Grandfather’ etc.

endearment terms:

Şekerim ‘My sweet’

Bir tanem ‘My one and only’

Canımın içi ‘Inside of my soul’

Hayatım ‘My life’ etc.

diminutives: attached to all address terms, and always together with the possessive pronoun for the 1st person singular (i.e. *Ahmetciğim* Ahmet+DIM+1st Person possessive suffix, similar to ‘My little Ahmet’).

Most of these practices have mirror images in Greek too (see Sifianou 1992b). However, out of this rich repertoire of possibilities, the only ones which appear in the data are as follows:

Hanımefendi/Beyefendi (‘Madam/Sir’ to the shop assistant in a department store)

Amca (‘Paternal uncle’ to the grocer, greengrocer...)

Arkadaşım (‘My friend’)

Usta (‘Expert’)

Dayı (‘Maternal uncle’)

Kardeş (‘Brother/sister’)

Additionally, FN address terms appear only in the local grocery situation and range from a family address term *FN+Amca/Ağabey* FN+uncle/elder brother, to *FN+Bey*, FN+honorific. In some cases the informants indicate that they would address the grocer by his/her first name, which is an indication of the familiarity existing in this setting of service encounters.

Some requests are formed by focusing away from the seller. When this is the case, there are no personal suffixes in the verb, no terms of address, nor any attention-getters. These are indicated in the results as “indirect prompts.”

The questionnaire makes room for “opting out,” a term which is explained by Bonikowska (1988) as the speaker’s choice not to perform an act, in most cases because of the high face-threat that it involves. Although, as explained above, the face-threat should be low in the act of requesting in this speech event, there have been instances of “opting out” in our data. The reasons for this may have to do with individual peculiarities rather than the threat involved in the act: an informant may not be accustomed to eating *döner-kebab*, strawberries, or any of the other edible goods mentioned in the questionnaire, or s/he may not go to a fashionable high-street store, as a matter of principle. Such cases are indicated as “opt out” in the results.

Irrelevant answers to the questionnaire are coded as “n.a.”

The results of the questionnaire

The following charts demonstrate the percentage scored in the questionnaire in terms of how men and women use pronouns, address terms, attention-getters, etc.

1. Ask the seller at the market place for a kilo of aubergines.

	Males	Females	Cumulative
	%	%	%
Address term or attention getter	24.0	15.0	19.0
Sen	27.0	15.0	21.0
Siz	46.0	55.0	50.5
Indirect prompt	24.0	27.0	25.5
Opt out	-	-	
n.a.	3.0	3.0	3.0

2. Ask the vendor at the kebab kiosk to prepare *döner* for you inside half a loaf of bread.

	Males	Females	Cumulative
	%	%	%
Address term or attention getter	8.0	6.0	7.0
Sen	14.0	6.0	10.0
Siz	32.0	55.0	43.5
Indirect prompt	45.0	36.0	39.0
Opt out	6.0	3.0	4.5
n.a.	3.0	-	3.0

3. Ask your local grocer for half a kilo of white cheese.

	Males	Females	Cumulative
	%	%	%
Address term or attention getter	58.0	64.0	61.0
Sen	41.0	24.0	32.5
Siz	30.0	67.0	48.5
Indirect prompt	16.0	-	8.0
Opt out	10.0	9.0	9.5
n.a.	3.0	-	3.0

4. Ask your local greengrocer for a kilo of green beans.

	Males	Females	Cumulative
	%	%	%
Address term or attention getter	32.0	36.0	34.0
Sen	24.0	27.0	25.5
Siz	46.0	43.0	44.5
Indirect prompt	24.0	30.0	27.0
Opt out	6.0	-	3.0
n.a.	-	-	-

5. Ask for a box of strawberries from an attendant at *Migros*.

	Males	Females	Cumulative
	%	%	%
Address term or attention getter	32.0	25.0	27.5
Sen	-	-	-
Siz	69.0	72.0	70.5
Indirect prompt	30.0	28.0	29.0
Opt out	1.0	-	0.5
n.a.	-	-	-

6. Ask for the dress in the shop window from the sales-person at *Vakko*.

	Males	Females	Cumulative
	%	%	%
Address term or attention getter	38.0	30.0	34.0
Sen	-	-	-
Siz	62.0	67.0	64.5
Indirect prompt	32.0	24.0	28.0
Opt out	6.0	9.0	7.5
n.a.	-	-	-

Analysis of the results

General results:

In the cumulative use of attention-getters, we note that the highest occurrence is found in three settings: the local grocer (61.0), the chic fashion-shop (34.0) and the local greengrocer (34.0), the last two jointly taking second place. Then follows *Migros* (27.5), the reputable supermarket. The grocery and the greengrocery are where the greatest familiarity between the speakers is expected and the other two (*Migros* and *Vakko*) are the top qualifiers on the economic strength scale. This shows that both sexes feel the need to preface their moves with an extra component either when they are in a familiar setting or where material affluence is a dominant characteristic. Familiarity and the imposing wealth of a setting, therefore, seem to be the two most important factors,

producing polite behaviour in service encounters.

Sen, the familiar pronoun, is in the highest cumulative use in the local grocery (32.5), and greengrocery (25.5). The location where its use is at its lowest is the *kebab* kiosk (10.0) which scores even worse than the market place (21.0) in this category. In the chic fashion-shop and the reputable supermarket it does not appear at all. It is clear to see that the T pronoun is precipitated, in general, by the familiarity of the seller on the one hand (the grocer and the greengrocer), which is expected, and the humble circumstances of the trading area on the other (market place and the *kebab* kiosk), which is not so much expected, considering that the addressees in the latter are in as distant a relationship with the speaker as those in the chic fashion-shop and the reputable supermarket. That it is not used as freely to the vendor at the *kebab* kiosk as to the market place trader is a surprising result even for us.

The V pronoun, *siz*, as expected, shows a reversal of the pattern explained above: the highest cumulative occurrence is registered in the most affluent circumstances, i.e. at the reputable supermarket (70.5), and the chic fashion shop (64.5). At the bottom of the scale the modest trading places and the familiar traders appear: the doner kiosk (43.5), local greengrocer (44.5), local grocer (48.5) and market place (50.5). There are two interesting points to note here. In the market place a higher percentage of the formal pronoun is scored than in the familiar settings, which proves that social distance, either vertical or horizontal, is the determining factor in the use of *siz*. However, the market place seller deserving the formal pronoun more than the kiosk owner is again a surprising result. This anomaly might be explained by the fact that the sellers at the market are usually from the rural areas; they come to the city for a certain period, do their trade, and go back to their provincial areas. They are considered to be naïve, honest and unspoilt, and not looked upon as potential claimants for urban resources. The kiosk owners, on the other hand, are generally migrants from rural areas, integrated into the urban life, but living in the squatters' districts in the outskirts of the city. Such districts are where social disorder is common and the crime rate is high. Buyers' use of the distancing pronoun to the kiosk owner probably marks more of their prejudices against the slum areas and their apprehension in interacting with a member of the problematic districts of the city, than their unfamiliarity or scorn for modest trading circumstances.

The order of settings where focus is diverted away from the seller (i.e. indirect prompts) is the *kebab* kiosk (39.0), the reputable supermarket (29.0), the chic fashion shop (28.0), the local greengrocer (27.5), the open-market

place (25.5), and the local grocer (8.0). Disregarding the kiosk owner, at the top of the list are those in economically strong settings, while those at the bottom are the opposite. This indicates that buyers prefer “you” avoidance, a strategy of negative politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987: 203), where they most feel the weight of wealth. The avoidance of a direct address to the *kebab* seller, however, is probably of a different nature, the reasons for which have just been surmised.

One last point of interest to mention is the ratio in the results of this questionnaire between the use of address terms/attention-getters and indirect prompts. The two cases in the extreme ends of the scale for these items are:

	Terms of address/ attention getters	Indirect prompts
The grocery shop	61.0	8.0
The <i>döner</i> kiosk	7.0	39.0

The feature to note here is that the highest intensity of cumulative use for terms of address/attention-getters is the grocery shop, but it is also the place where the least indirect prompts appear. In contrast, the *kebab* kiosk owner receives the least of address/attention-getters but he is the champion in receiving indirect prompts. This suggests that there is a rule of opposites operating in the use of terms of address and the agent-focus. Where terms of address are used freely, utterances are other-directed; where they are spared, utterances are either self-directed or do not include an agent.

As for the significance of the locations for this specific point, the only explanation we can think of rests on the issue of trust. The grocery shop is the well-known environment where people feel at home, hence (as mentioned before) the kinship terms. In comparison, the travelling kiosk does not perhaps inspire the same confidence, for the associations people may make with the owner and the inner-city problems. In other words, trust brings with it other-directed and talkative behaviour; mistrust diverts one’s attention elsewhere and discourages volubility.

Gender differences:

In prefacing their utterances with an attention-getter, both sexes put the grocer at the top of the list, with an overwhelming percentage (58 for men and 64 for women). The proportion is also interesting here; as compared to men, women use more attention-getters at the grocery, probably demonstrating their incli-

nation to make a social gambit in a familiar environment before starting the trading activity. Women also place high importance on the greengrocer in this sense (36.0), as this is the second popular seller in their list, followed by the fashion shop (30.0) and the supermarket (25.0), the affluent settings. Their preference, therefore, is first for the familiar sellers, then for the economically strong ones. For men, affluence is as important as the familiarity factor, because the chic fashion store (38.0), follows the grocery (58.0) in their list. For both sexes the market place is the fifth in line, and the *döner* kiosk is the last. These two do not seem to be treated with frivolous verbosity as do the other known or unknown traders. This will make sense in the case of the market place which is always too noisy and hectic to hold any social conversation in, and as for the travelling kiosk, the possible reasons can be found above.

Gender comparisons in the use of second person singular pronoun show us that males use T more than females in the settings of the open market place, the *döner* kiosk, and the grocery, i.e. in 3 locations out of 4 (in the last two, T does not appear at all). The only trader to whom women use this pronoun more than the other sex is the greengrocer. Although this was not predicted before, the occurrence might be attributable to the fact that greengrocers, being in the open air, call out to the indecisive customers to convince them to purchase goods (see Petrīts 1990 for the same happening in a Greek market place), and in the case of young female shoppers, these calls usually hide some street remarks, like *Taze, taze, taze, taze!!* 'Fresh, fresh, fresh, fresh' or *Yeme de yanında yat* 'Don't eat (it) but sleep next to it.' It is possible that the use of the familiar pronoun is a riposte to the harmless, symbolic flirting of the greengrocer. Overall, however, men tend to utilise the familiar pronoun more than women in service encounters, even when there is no familiarity involved.

When it comes to *siz*, the (V) pronoun, females prefer it in more contexts than men. Men use it more in only one setting: at the greengrocer. In all other places, women use it with noticeable generosity — at the same high proportion of 67.0 % in two different places: the chic fashion shop, and the grocery. In the context of obvious wealth (the chic fashion shop) this is understandable but in the most familiar setting (the grocery) the high percentage of the V pronoun is surprising. This may be interpreted as the female sensitivity in keeping distance in conversation with the opposite sex (the majority of traders/attendants are male in Turkey). In a society where taking the first step at familiarisation still rests with men, and women are considered to encourage

expectations in the male listener if they opt for anything but *siz*, distance keeping becomes a reputation-protective female behaviour. On the other hand, by utilising a large number of attention-getters and terms of address (as mentioned before), women tend to balance the distancing effects of *siz*, which is also interesting to note.

Conclusion

In this paper we have analysed the use of terms of address, pronouns and attention-getters *in situ*, and noted the differences in the performance of males and females in response to certain contextual characteristics.

If a language makes a distinction between the pronouns of the familiar and formal variety, by choosing one or the other speakers can manifest the value they attach to any relationship on the matrix of power and solidarity. This double-edged system can be availed of by the user to code the one-to-one relationships either horizontally (how far apart the alter is from the self, in terms of familiarity, solidarity, like-mindedness, social closeness, etc.) or vertically (whether one's addressee holds a higher, lower or equal status/power in relation to the self). Similarly, familiar or deferential terms of address are the means through which speakers mark their standing in relation to the addressee. Depending on where one places the hearer on the matrix, one exhibits behaviour either adequate for the situation (politic), or exaggerated and ingratiating (polite).

It is claimed that talk in service encounters differs from that in everyday conversation, in terms of both style and functionality (Merritt 1976, Goffman 1976, Petrits 1990, Jefferson and Lee 1981). It entails clearly defined speaker roles, rights and obligations. Furthermore, the speech acts expected to occur in service encounters are limited in kind and the speaker roles are unchangeable. The rigidity of the boundaries surrounding the event encourages expectations of a non-emotional, task-orientated interaction where the emphasis is on the making and supplying of a demand. It is a speech context where "politic" behaviour is adequate, and where there is not much room (or need, for that matter) for "politeness". Even in this inflexible territory, however, it is interesting to note that factors like a change in the setting and speaker relationships cause variations in the participants' behaviour: Familiarity with the addressee or geographical prejudice may prompt different reactions, just as the economic affluence of the setting influences varied behaviour types.

Examination of the way people act in a selection of commercial settings shows that men, in general, project an inclination for close relationship even in first time encounters. Women, on the other hand, may be inclined to keep their distance in their dealings with the opposite sex. The female preference for *siz*, the V pronoun, is something shaped by societal norms, which can, of course, be compensated for by increased volubility and other forms of positive politeness. Both sexes are sensitive to the frequency of contact. Justified or unjustified trust in the addressee is another important factor in making linguistic choices: mistrust usually leads to the diversion of attention from the addressee, cuts out signs of amiability and urges the use of distance-keeping V pronouns, while the effects of confidence are exactly the opposite.

A weighty influence on the use of address terms is that of the economic strength of the setting. Where this is obviously affluent, the addressee becomes associated with the setting, and is offered respectful and distancing language. In economically weak surroundings, on the other hand, the addressee may get only adequate behaviour. The effect of economic affluence is so strong that it affects the ratio of pronominal alternatives. In a scale of economic strength, the freedom of choosing one or the other pronoun disappears at the top of the scale, and formality becomes the norm.

Power and solidarity are two universal concepts which are influential in the use of numerous speech elements, including second person pronouns and terms of address. Each speech community, however, has its own rules as to how its speakers communicate these concepts through the elements at their disposal, and many social tendencies such as the geographical prejudices, the role expectations from the sexes, and the social value attached to economical strengths or weaknesses can be traced in their utilisation.

Appendix

The questionnaire

The questionnaire includes the following questions:

1. *Karnınız acıktı ve hemen yanınızda bir büfe var. Yarım ekmek içinde döner isteyiniz.*

‘You are hungry and there is a (kebab) kiosk nearby. Ask the vendor to prepare *döner* inside half a loaf of bread for you.’

2. *Pazarda alışveriş yapıyorsunuz. Pazarcıdan bir kilo patlıcan isteyeceksiniz. Nasıl istersiniz?*
'You are shopping at the market place. You want to ask for a kilo of aubergines from the seller. How would you word it?'
3. *Mahalle bakkalından yarım kilo beyaz peynir isteyeceksiniz. Nasıl istersiniz?*
'You are going to ask the local grocer for half a kilo of white cheese. How would you word it?'
4. *Mahalle manavındasınız. Kendisinden bir kilo taze fasulye nasıl istersiniz?*
'You are at the local greengrocery shop. How would you ask the grocer for a kilo of green beans?'
5. *Migros'taki sebze kısmı elemanından bir kutu çilek isteyeceksiniz. Bunu kendisine nasıl söylersiniz?*
'You want to ask the person working in the vegetables section in *Migros* for a box of strawberries. How would you word it?'
6. *Vakko'nun vitrininde bir kıyafet beğendiniz ve almak istiyorsunuz. O bölümdaki satış elemanından bu kıyafeti denemek üzere isteyiniz.*
'You like the dress you have seen in the window of *Vakko* and would like to buy it. Ask the sales-person to bring the dress to you.'

Notes

1. See, however, Sifianou (1997) in her evaluation of silence as a form of politeness.
2. For a similar division under different terminology ("social politeness" and "tact") see Janney and Arndt (1992).
3. Kasper (1997) claims that there is not enough evidence in the literature to support the static nature of "discernment" as proposed by Ide and that the existing observations, in fact, point in the opposite direction, i.e. that social indexing in Japanese allows a linguistic choice and "unmarked use of honorifics simply reflects speakers' adherence to accepted politeness norms" (: 380).
4. The seller's use of the 1st person plural refers to the capacity of the shop to provide the change, rather than to himself as a person.
5. *Beyefendi* is higher on the scale of deference than *Beyim* which appears in example (3). The former is more associated with educated speakers whereas the latter indicates a working class background or inclination for slang.

6. Like all tenses, the future tense is expressed via a suffix in Turkish. There is no modal “will” and those appearing in the translations of examples 10–12 are there for convenience, to ease reading. The same is true for “could”; it is a suffix, *-ebil*, attached to the verb, as in example 13, where *tart* is ‘to weigh’, and *-ir* is the suffix for the present tense.
7. There is no personal suffix for the 3rd person singular. When the verb plus the tense suffix appear on their own, it is obvious that the agent is he/she/it.

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Brief service encounters

Gender and politeness¹

Eleni Antonopoulou

Introduction

Brief service encounters involve mainly requests besides optional greetings and leave-takings. In the data under analysis, requests are made for a specific item to be bought in a news-agent's, as well as for information relating to the exchange (e.g. the price or availability of an object). The nature of requests performed during these encounters and the brevity of the exchange make the specific context particularly interesting.

The particular context under investigation is institutionalized in such a way that the following characteristics emerge clearly:

1. The encounter is goal-oriented (Drew and Heritage 1992) with the two main interactants, buyer and seller, exhibiting a specific and clearly defined relationship. Therefore, in this context, requests performed deviate considerably from the prototypical type of request commonly examined in the literature. Requests are normally understood as FTAs, intrinsically threatening the addressee's negative aspect of face primarily (Brown and Levinson 1987). In the present situation, they can hardly be seen as threatening since they are performed to the mutual benefit of both interactants, in accordance with their institutional roles as buyer and seller.
2. The roles enacted by interactants involve unequal distribution of power, with the buyer being in a privileged position. This further distances the buyer's act from the implications of face threat. On the other hand, frequency of contact contributes to the establishment of familiarity, which may distort the picture of power distribution.
3. Encounters in this specific context are typically brief and to the point for

the mutual benefit of both parties. Prices are fixed and buyers have already decided on the exact product to be purchased.

The interaction of these factors determines, to a large extent, the appropriate polite behaviour in the specific context.² Since there is no imposition involved, for instance, politeness devices for its mitigation are superfluous. Conventionally indirect requests are not therefore to be expected. When encountered, they have to be explained in terms other than those of negative politeness. Besides, although the setting is public and the interactants are unequal in terms of power, familiarity contributes characteristics of the private domain which legitimize positive politeness strategies (James and Drakich 1993: 285), like in-group identity markers and elliptical forms, the latter also deriving from the brevity requirement.

With respect to gendered linguistic behaviour, it has been argued that women are linguistically “more polite” than men; more specifically, it has been suggested that a) women are more positively polite and b) their speech is characterized by more elaborate, indirect requests, whereas men are more direct and straightforward (see Lakoff 1975, Holmes 1992 and 1995).³

A number of problems arise with respect to such claims: social and relational context is disregarded (Dendrinou and Ribeiro-Pedro 1997: 220), the sex of the addressee is rarely taken into consideration, and there would appear to be a clash between women’s being allegedly more positively polite and at the same time more indirect. In this paper, the language preferred by males and females is examined against the background of a specific social and relational context and in relation to the gender of the addressee. Context specific conclusions are drawn about gender and politeness which may call into question general statements on gendered linguistic behaviour. Differences between male and female customers are detected especially regarding the necessity of opening and closing the encounter (the interactional part of the exchange), as well as the preferred forms of the request in accordance with the addressee’s gender (the transactional part of the exchange). Interestingly, supposedly typical female characteristics, such as accommodation, are equally frequently present in male intercourse. On the whole, both men and women show a preference for positive politeness devices, selecting, however, different ones, probably functioning on the basis of distinct internalized stereotypes of expected behaviour. Positive politeness is generally expected in such contexts not only because of the frequency-familiarity factor, but also because as, for example, Triandis and Vassiliou (1972: 312) note, Greeks

attribute greater intimacy to the relationship between sales persons and customers than do Americans.

Data collection

The data was collected in Athens, in a suburban setting, and specifically in a small news agent's located in a building including primarily offices (e.g. the headquarters of a TV channel and an advertising company) but a few shops as well. Early attempts to tape record service encounters failed because of the small size of the shop which led to the recording of all kinds of noises, (e.g. the engine of the refrigerator). Thus an alternative approach to the collection of data was adopted. I myself recorded interactions on a specially prepared observation sheet. On each sheet I noted down the sex, the approximate age of the customers in relation to that of the shop owners, as well as the degree of their familiarity. The customers, whose age ranged between early twenties and early forties, were 180 women and 200 men. Most of them were regular customers, and thus acquainted with, or friends of the shop owners. Moreover, their social background was roughly the same, since most of them work in the two neighbouring companies. Age differences do not seem to play an important role. Customers came for newspapers, magazines, cigarettes, ice-creams and other small items (like batteries). The shop is owned by a couple in their early forties which afforded me the opportunity to collect data addressed to both sexes. Since there was only one female and one male addressee involved in each interaction, it is difficult to draw any general conclusions as to whether it is the gender, the personality of the addressees or both which influenced their language use. I assume that it must be both. Yet, because both owners are of a very similar disposition, i.e., very friendly and open-hearted, I believe that the addressee's gender is a more influential factor than his/her character.

The data was grouped and examined considering the sex of both interlocutors, that is in same- and mixed-sex interactions. Thus the notations $F \rightarrow F$ and $M \rightarrow M$ indicate same-sex speakers while $F \rightarrow M$ and $M \rightarrow F$ indicate mixed-sex speakers.

Service encounters

Service encounters are instances of face-to-face interactions between a seller who is in the shop and a customer who is present. The interactions are oriented to the satisfaction of the customer's need for service and the seller's concern to provide that service (cf. Merritt 1976: 321). Bailey (1997: 331) delineates two types of such encounters: a) the socially minimal, which include openings, negotiations of the exchange and closings and b) the socially expanded, which include in addition discussion on interpersonal topics. Socially minimal service encounters are the predominant type in these data. Typically service encounters proceed in three phases: a) an optional initial phase including greetings, b) a medial phase which is the main part of the interaction and includes mainly requests on the part of the customer and c) an optional final phase including thanking expressions and/or leave-takings. In Laver (1975: 218), the functions served by the language used in such phases are specified as follows: (a) in the initial phase the main functions are "to lubricate the transition from noninteraction to interaction, and to ease the potentially awkward tension of the early moments of the encounter"; (b) in the medial phase to conduct "the main business of the encounter" and (c) in the final phase to ease "the transition from full interaction to departure". In other words, the first and the last phases of such encounters are 'interactional' while the second one is primarily 'transactional'. In our data absence of the first and the final phases is frequently noted (cf. Bailey 1997: 332). This probably indicates high frequency of contact or clearly defined interactants' roles (Laver 1975: 218) rather than impoliteness. Interestingly, not only the initial and the final phases but also the medial one can include very little or even no verbalization. The specific activities and the way language is used in such service encounters are unaffected by the index of 'gendered style' (cf. Freed 1996: 67) i.e. both males and females are equally expected to shop in a news agent's. Despite this, it is plausible that some of the observed differences are attributed to gender dependent conceptions of the setting. In the next three sections my findings will be discussed in relation to the three phases mentioned earlier irrespective of male-female differences, which will be addressed in a subsequent section.

Initial phase

Typically polite behaviour seems to require an initial greeting by the customer

entering the shop probably accompanied by some other expression of “phatic communion” like “how are you”, comments concerning the weather, and/or other small talk. Laver (1975) identifies a number of functions served by such initial phatic exchanges. The relevant function here seems to be to get the interaction under way. In addition, initial greetings can function as attention-getters, that is as attempts to establish contact by drawing the seller’s attention in view of the subsequent transaction. In a few cases initial exchanges include unconventional expressions, terms of address and joking comments, which are interpretable as markers of a friendly attitude. Showing friendliness, even non-verbally through smiling or eye-gaze, is often observed. Such behaviour is thought to be highly appreciated in Greek society (Sifianou 1992a: 91). Moreover, it is noteworthy that the linguistic tokens of the ‘neutral’ category (Laver 1975: 223) are the least frequently chosen. For example, despite the fact that the data was collected during a heat wave in Athens only in two encounters is the weather mentioned. The rest are either ‘self-oriented’ or ‘other-oriented’ tokens which indicates a relationship of equality (see Laver *ibid.*) or other statements of what Dendrinos (1986: 43), using Laver’s distinction, calls ‘committed’, observing that they characterize Greek verbal and non-verbal behaviour alike.

As will become evident, the choice of formulaic greetings and “phatic communion” often depends on the characteristics of both speaker and addressee. On the whole, it seems that slightly fewer than half of the customers felt it was necessary to greet before performing their request. As already pointed out, this may be explained either in terms of high frequency of contact or in terms of greetings being understood as unnecessary formalities in the particular activity.

Medial phase: Form and function of requests

As one would expect requests are the principal acts employed in service encounters. These are either requests for action (give me X) or requests for information (do you have X? / how much is X?). As mentioned earlier, these acts can also be enacted non-verbally. When verbalized they are either elliptical or fully articulated to a slightly different extent, 39.5% versus 43.25%, respectively.

Since requests are by definition acts threatening the negative aspect of the addressee’s face one would probably expect negative politeness to predomi-

nate. However, the distribution of request types points to more positively polite interactions which can be explained in terms of the specific setting in which the majority of the interlocutors are acquainted and meet frequently, which may override, to some extent, their asymmetrical social relationship. Since the buyer wants to buy an item which the seller wants to sell, requests in this context do not benefit the speaker by imposing on the addressee but are, rather, beneficial for both interlocutors. As Sifianou (1992b: 160) observes, in Greek culture, as in many other cultures, there are situations where requests are not considered to be impositions. This is particularly the case when participants have specific, culturally and situationally determined roles to perform particular acts, or when the result of a request benefits the addressee. As already pointed out, requests for services offered by shop-assistants involve such specific roles, with clearly defined rights and obligations, and benefit both partners, not just the speaker. In such contexts, softening devices are hardly necessary to mitigate impositions, as there are no impositions involved. Clearly, there can be no attribution of degree of politeness to the three distinct request forms encountered in the data under examination. It can, however, be argued that explicit, fully verbalized messages constitute more typical instances of the expression of conventional politeness. Let us now proceed with the kinds of requests encountered in this data.

“Silent” requests

Many requests in the data were made and dealt with in silence. This silent interaction was of two types. Either the customer would pick the desired item and bring it to the counter, or the shop owner who, knowing from experience what the desired item was, would bring it to the counter without being asked for it. In the former case, the customer knows exactly what s/he wants, finds and brings the item to the counter. The shop owner checks it out, the customer pays and leaves. In this case, the customer can be considered helpful in that s/he performs the act instead of requesting that the seller should perform it. It thus entails the employment of a positive politeness strategy. In the latter case, the shop owner deals with a regular customer and, by bringing the goods to the counter before being asked to do so, s/he presupposes and declares common ground with the customer, based on previous encounters of the same kind. This is also a positive politeness strategy which both male and female shop owners use in my data with either male or female customers.

Remaining silent is for Brown and Levinson (1987: 72) the utmost

expression of politeness because silence does not just mitigate the possible threat but avoids it altogether. This position reflects encounters where lack of verbalization results in an unsatisfied goal. In the data collected for this study, lack of verbalization of the expected requests reflects a basic positive politeness strategy, that of showing the addressee knowledge of his or her desires and eagerness to satisfy them. An interesting example from the data where this strategy was employed, is the following: an absent-minded woman walked into the shop asking herself aloud “Oh, what was it that I wanted?” and the male shop owner produced a box of cigarettes simultaneously responding “I know”.

It should be noted that in these encounters the absence of words does not mean that only a single turn is missing. The whole exchange can be performed in silence. The very presence of the specific buyer in the shop is a signal engendering an implicit request and the interaction can be completed silently. Thus both acts, that of requesting and that of issuing the goods are being transformed into offers, with the seller offering the good(s) and the buyer offering money in return. This transformation could be seen as rendering their acts polite; offers are viewed as inherently polite acts in Leech’s (1983: 83) ‘absolute’ politeness terms and are preferred to requests according to ethnomethodologists (see Levinson 1983: 355).⁴ Waiting for an explicit request or asking a regular customer “can I help?” could be seen as the equivalent of name-forgetting or asking a close friend how they drink their coffee.

Thus we could conclude that, in general, “silent” transactions among Greek speakers in service encounters are not face-threatening and can be interpreted as reflecting a positive politeness interactional ethos, regardless of whether this is intentional on the part of the speaker. However, silent transactions are the least frequent in my data (16.1%). The most frequent ones involve fully articulated requests (44.3%) (e.g. *θα μου δώσετε ένα Camel παρακαλώ*; ‘will you give me a (packet of) Camel please?’ M → M 32), while elliptical forms occur at 39.5% (e.g. *ένα Marlboro μαλακό* ‘a (packet of) Marlboro soft’ M → M 73).

Fully verbalized requests

It transpires from the data that in the medial phase of the transaction there are two clearly discernible parts. The first one consists in the customer’s acquiring the required item(s) and the second in paying for it/them. In the context of service encounters fully verbalized requests could be seen as exploiting

Grice's (1975) maxim of quantity and thus as being rather impolite since they are simultaneously wasting the addressee's time. Brown and Levinson (1987: 5) suggest, however, that politeness principles are reasons for deviation from Grice's maxims. Therefore, full verbalization is commonly associated with the elaboration and indirectness of negative politeness. Nevertheless, it can also have positive politeness ramifications: it shows the speaker's interest in the addressee firstly by giving him/her more time rather than rushing the encounter and secondly by ensuring that misunderstandings and consequent waste of time are avoided (cf. Placencia 1995: 132).

It is interesting to examine the kinds of constructions employed in this medial phase and their functions. Both parts, if fully verbalized, would involve primarily interrogatives and declaratives. Imperative constructions, though not infrequent as requesting devices in Greek (see Sifianou 1992a), were extremely rare in our data (only 3 occurrences). As mentioned earlier, one chooses to become more verbose for reasons of politeness. Addition of an imperative verb form (e.g. 'give me'), however, would contribute nothing to either the politeness index of the utterance or to its propositional content. Thus imperatives will be excluded from our discussion. We will focus on interrogative constructions first and then proceed with declaratives.

Interrogatives. Interrogative requests can range from simple to very elaborate constructions. The latter exploit Grice's maxim of quantity, because the new information, that is the item requested, is embedded in a more elaborate construction. Simple yes/no questions are distinguished into two types. They are both in the present tense indicative with requesting force: explicit or direct as in (1) and implicit or indirect as in (2). For example:

- (1) *Μου δίνετε τα Νέα;*
Will you give me the News? (a newspaper)
- (2) *Έχετε τα Νέα;*
Do you have the News? (a newspaper)

In (1) the desired act is explicit and the speaker appears optimistic that the addressee has got the specific newspaper. There is no ambiguity involved. It is clearly and directly a request. In (2), the speaker sounds more tentative and uncertain as to the outcome of the request. In other settings, the same constructions would give the addressee a clearer escape route to respond negatively to an assumed information question. In this setting, such constructions are pre-

requests⁵ although there is no reason for the speaker to assume that the addressee may be unwilling to react to the assumed request; the speaker is rather checking the conditions for the successful performance of the intended act. The first example is a very conventional means of requesting in Greek if one wants to avoid the ‘bluntness’ of the imperative, whereas the second one has a more literal ring to it, although it can of course also function as a request in the absence of the more explicit request as in (1). Interrogative pre-requests of the form *έχεις* (sing.)/*έχετε* (pl.) *X*? ‘do you have *X*?’ involve verbs and pronouns in the singular form if the participants are acquainted, and verbs and pronouns in the plural when interactants are not acquainted. This practice was followed by both men and women in both male-female and same-sex interactions.

Other forms of pre-requests are the impersonal constructions *έχει/υπάρχει το X*; ‘is there *X*?’ and *ήρθε το X*; ‘did *X* arrive?’, thus, in a sense, avoiding the attribution of blame to the addressee for not having the desired item. Sometimes these pre-requests are introduced with the dubitative marker *μήπως* ‘by any chance’ which indicates the speaker’s stronger doubt as to the availability of the desired item and makes the utterance sound pessimistic as to the outcome of the request.

Though (1) above is a very common requesting construction in Greek (Sifianou 1992a), it is rather rare in our data. More frequent were interrogative requests involving the particle *θα* ‘will’ used to form the future tense of the indicative. For example:

- (3) *Ένα Rothmans, θα μου δώσετε;*
Will you give me a Rothmans?

This explains why most interrogative requests which involve *θα* ‘will’ are followed by a verb in the plural form (*θα μου δώσετε* ‘will you-give-pl. me’ and not *θα μου δώσεις* ‘will you-give-sing. me’), another formality marker. This is a request strategy used by male and female informants who are not well acquainted with the shop owner (either male or female). As Sifianou (1992a: 138) argues, interrogatives with *θα* ‘will’ distance situations from the speaker’s deictic centre and shift focus away from present reality thus contributing formality to the utterance.

More elaborate formal constructions were extremely rare, e.g. *θα μπορούσατε να μου δώσετε X*; ‘could you give me *X*’, probably sounding too formal and distancing in this context. Requests for price are typically of

the form *πόσο κάνει/έχει το Χ*;⁶ ‘how much does X cost?’ sometimes accompanying a simple pointing or eye-gaze at the item in question. External politeness markers are sometimes used with all the above constructions, typically *σας* (pl.)/*σε* (sing.) *παρακαλώ* ‘please’.

Declaratives. The declarative is another formal variant for requests though not used as frequently as the interrogative. Declaratives fall into two main groups: “need statements” and “hints” (see Ervin-Tripp 1976). Hints are evidently inappropriate and therefore absent in our data. Want statements (as one could call Ervin-Tripp’s “need statements”) are direct expressions of a speaker’s desire which can constitute the reason for the addressee’s act. The want statements in this corpus are frequently indirect, indicating distancing, that is, *ήθελα/θα ήθελα Χ* ‘I wanted/would want (like) X’ rather than *θέλω Χ* ‘I want X’ with or without the formal politeness marker *παρακαλώ* ‘please’.

Rare also are constructions like *θα πάρω* ‘I’ll take’ or *παίρνω* ‘I’m taking’ indicating positive politeness, which describe the speaker’s action and inform the seller accordingly, and *δεν βρίσκω* ‘I can’t find’ which signals the speaker’s inability to obtain the required item without the addressee’s help.

Elliptical requests

Communication among people who are acquainted is characterized by what Ervin-Tripp (1976: 44) calls “communicative abbreviation”, that is, a way of speaking much favoured by closed networks where, because of the amount of common knowledge, the need to be explicit is practically non-existent. The same view is also expressed by Sifianou (1992a: 155), who argues that “in most cultures, the more intimate and informal the relationships, the less precise and articulate the participants tend to be”.

The simplest and most economical way of asking for something in a news agent’s is by simply identifying the item concerned, as for example, *τα Νέα* ‘the News’ (the name of a newspaper), thus adhering to Grice’s (1975) maxim of quantity. In contexts where the requested action is obvious, elliptical constructions, specifying the new information only (sometimes accompanied by politeness markers) are frequently used (see Ervin-Tripp 1976: 30 and Sifianou 1992a: 125, 152).

The data examined provided many instances of elliptical requests.⁷ The verb is missing while the noun phrase present may be followed by politeness markers. For example:

- (4) *Ένα Bake Rolls πράσινο και μια κόκα-κόλα παρακαλώ.*
One green Bake Rolls and a Coke please.

These are examples of what Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik (1985: 883) call “situational ellipsis” in contrast to “strict ellipsis” which has to do with information recovered from the linguistic context. As Hymes (1986: 66) suggests, service encounters present a direct linguistic interest “because a logically expected part may so often be omitted and implied”. Ellipsis reduces redundancy and is desirable in brief and sometimes hasty encounters. It is, however, restricted to familiar styles, as Quirk *et al.* (1972: 537, 538) observe. Such elliptical utterances can become more elaborate by the addition of optional linguistic elements, which do not contribute to the meaning but usually to the politeness of the utterance.

Final phase

The final phase may include formulaic expressions of farewell, like *γειά σας* ‘good bye’ and/or thanking expressions. Like the opening phase, the final phase of interaction may be omitted in situations very similar to those where the opening is absent, as for example when interlocutors assume they will meet very soon or when their roles are so clear that such phatic expressions are rendered unnecessary, as Laver (1975: 227) observes. Parting expressions seem largely unnecessary for our informants. The transactions are usually very brief and business oriented and a large number of customers turns up regularly, often on a daily basis. In fact, Coulthard (1981: 16) wonders whether greetings and leave-takings do not constitute parts of the structure of a particular interaction, but are rather markers of the beginning and end of situations during which interactions occur. The assumption that can be drawn from Coulthard’s suggestion is that people may have different conceptions as to whether greetings and partings are parts of the structure of a service encounter or not. This issue will be taken up in a subsequent section of this paper.

As far as gratitude is concerned, people typically use thanking expressions when they believe they have benefited by some prior action of the addressee. Depending on the extent of benefit received, the identities of the interlocutors and the setting, there may be no verbalization of gratitude, a brief ritualized expression or an elaborate one. Given the nature of service encounters, I did not expect and did not find any elaborate thanking expressions.

One could of course claim that in service encounters thanking expressions may not necessarily express gratitude but mark conventionally the end of the encounter like leave-takings. As Coulmas (1981: 81) notes, in British and Australian English, “thank you” marks formally the segments of certain interactions and does not involve any heart-felt gratitude. In my view, this is evidenced by the fact that the appropriate response to *ευχαριστώ* ‘thank you’ in such encounters is not one of the responses appropriate to expressions of gratitude like *παρακαλώ* ‘please’, but repetition of *ευχαριστώ* preceded by a stressed *εγώ* ‘I’.

Gender and politeness

As has been mentioned earlier, women are supposed to use, more often than men, speech that involves markers of politeness, tact, hesitancy and uncertainty. The main explanations offered are in terms of sociological rather than linguistic factors (Deuchar 1988) and fall in three major categories. The *deficit* model which assumes that women are disadvantaged speakers because of their upbringing. The *dominance* model which assumes that women are socially powerless in relation to men. The *cultural difference* model which draws a parallel between gender and other social variables like ethnicity is singled out in Cameron (1996: 40), because it “neither disparages the way women speak nor casts men as oppressive villains”. This issue is obviously complex and far from being resolved. The analysis attempted here is strictly context specific and therefore no general statements will be made as to an overall explanation of male-female linguistic behaviour, although some of the main aspects of gendered discourse discussed in the literature will be addressed.

Accommodation and civilities

The present data lead me to focus on a) the form of requests, b) the use of questions, and c) joking and civilities at the initial and final stages of the interaction.⁸ Although most research focuses on the speaker’s gender as playing the major role in determining linguistic choices, the data indicate that it is the gender of the addressee rather than that of the speaker which emerges as a decisive factor. Contrary to the common assumption that women but not men engage in speech demonstrating sensitivity to the addressee’s characteris-

tics, the data show that men are equally accommodating and addressee oriented. This is perhaps the major finding of the present piece of research.

Specifically, three types of different request forms were identified in section 3.2: elliptical (E), fully verbalized (FV) and non-verbalized (NV) ones. Of these the E type predominates (61.5%) in intermale exchanges while in interfemale exchanges the FV type is strongly preferred (71%).⁹ The relative preferences, as can be observed in Table 1, run as follows:

F → F: FV (71%) → E (20.5%) → NV (8.5%)
 M → M: E (61.5%) → NV (24.5%) → FV (14%)

Table 1

GENDER	FV	E	NV	TOTAL
F → F	71%	20.5%	8.5%	100%
F → M	36.5%	53%	10.5%	100%
M → M	14%	61.5%	24.5%	100%
M → F	56%	23%	21%	100%

Since the pattern most typical of male requesting style in this setting consists in elliptic utterances, it is remarkable that in men addressing the female shop owner fully verbalized requests are predominantly used. Notice that in M → M interactions only 14% of the speakers employ fully verbalized requests while in M → F interactions the percentage rises to 56%. Similarly, while women interacting with another woman use fully verbalized requests at 71%, when they address the male they tend to follow the male pattern and resort to elliptical requests, i.e. F → M: 53% versus F → F: 36.5% of fully verbalized constructions. It is therefore plausible to suggest that caught between the need for maximal budgeting of time and the expression of conventional politeness, where the former would require very brief messages (elliptic or even non-verbalized requests) and the latter fully verbalized ones, women and men follow different strategies. In same sex interactions speakers tend to follow the gender determined norm, while in mixed sex interactions both sexes “accommodate” in the direction of the addressee.

Since the tension between being maximally brief and being courteous is present mainly in the medial phase, greetings and partings reflect more clearly how speakers enact conventionally polite behaviour. In this context, greetings are apparently a female rather than a male preoccupation hence the difference between F → F: 49% and M → M: 22%. Interestingly, half of the men offering

greetings do this in an unconventional manner, with a lively intonation pattern, like *καλημέρα* ‘good morning’ with a low rise or a very high fall, colloquial terms of address (like M → M 18: *δικέ μου, καλημέρα* ‘my friend, good morning’) and classical Greek morphology (e.g. M → M 48: *τι κάνομεν*; ‘how are we doing?’). Foreign words are also used (like M → M 68: *bonjour*), while broad smiles signal friendliness and solidarity even in the absence of any verbalization (including the request). Solidarity is also expressed with “ethic dative” (e.g. M → M 27 and 51: *τι μου κάνεις*; ‘how for me are you doing?’ (see Antonopoulou and Sifianou 2000), or first plural to a single addressee (e.g. M → M 78: *τι κάνουμε, καλά*; ‘how are we? Fine?’ (cf. also M → M 48 above). Considering that only 12% (out of 49%) of interfemale interactions involve unconventional greetings, it is possible that women interpret the particular activity as necessitating the use of a formal introduction of the transaction. The strategies used for unconventional greetings are similar to the ones just discussed, only considerably longer. With a male interactant women offer greetings to an even higher degree (F → M: 68%). Only 13% non-routine greetings are noted, including diminutives (like F → M 77: *καλημέρα Διονυσάκη* ‘good morning Dionysis-DIM’), jokes (like F → M 72: *όχι ότι κάνει ζέστη; Όχι — έτσι; Θα κάνει* ‘not that it is hot? No. Right? It will be’ (said instead of a greeting when the temperature was about 40°C). The same type of difference is observed in the case of M → F interactions where the percentage rises to 36%. Once again only 8% are non-routine, which seems to corroborate the assumption that greetings in such settings are, on the whole, conventional and determined by the gender of both speaker and addressee.

The picture presented by expressions of parting is very similar to that of greetings. Women exchange them more frequently (37%) than men (8%). Both percentages increase in inter-gender exchanges to 55% (F → M) and 24% (M → F), respectively. Speaker determined behaviour is even clearer at the final stage of the interaction with women being on the whole more conventionally courteous than men. Thus 18% of F → F interactions include both an expression of gratitude and leave-taking compared to only 1% in M → M exchanges. If “thank you” is interpreted as “a kind of verbalized punctuation mark of interaction” (Coulmas 1981: 91) then it is to be expected that combinations of thanking with leave-taking expressions are extremely restricted, especially between men.

The expression of gratitude presents an interesting deviation from the

pattern noted for greetings and partings. The percentages of inter-gender thanking expressions drop (rather than rise) from 68% to 50% for women speakers and from 35% to 28% for male speakers. This may be due to the perception of showing gratefulness as an intimacy marker, attributed to Greeks by Triandis and Vassiliou (1972: 316). If we assume the existence of greater distance between different sex interlocutors, Triandis and Vassiliou's remark could perhaps explain the discrepancy between thanking and the other civilities already discussed.

Thanking expressions are much more frequent than leave-takings, with interfemale interactions at the top (i.e. F → F: 68%) and male to female interactions at the bottom (i.e. M → F: 28%).¹⁰ Over half of the female customers employed short thanking expressions whether interacting with a male or a female, probably viewing the interaction not only as a business encounter but also as a social one, necessitating this type of closing. It is possible that *ευχαριστώ* 'thank you' is interpreted literally by men, hence M → F 8: *χαίρετε, να με ευχαριστήσετε όταν θα τα φέρω* 'good bye, thank me when I bring it (i.e. the money)' said by a male client who was going to pay later, as a response to the seller's routine use of *ευχαριστώ*. Notice that men refuse to follow this routine even when interacting with the male seller who always expresses gratitude at the end of the transaction. Partings are considered even less necessary, especially between males. As can be noticed in Table 2, the lowest percentage in these data marks M → M partings at 8%.

Table 2

GENDER	GREETINGS	PARTINGS	GRATITUDE
F → F	49%	37%	68%
F → M	68%	55%	50%
M → M	22%	8%	35%
M → F	36%	24%	28%

Tentativeness and insecurity

Questions have been stereotypically associated with female conversational style. Lakoff (1973) was among the first to claim that women not only tend to use more questions and question tags but also turn their declaratives into questions by using rising intonation. This tendency, according to Lakoff, can be interpreted as indicating hesitation, insecurity and social powerlessness.

However, more recent research has challenged this claim showing that depending on the context men and women use questions to the same extent (for example, Freed 1996). Moreover, it has been argued that questions can serve various functions and do not necessarily indicate uncertainty (see, for example, Coates 1996, Freed and Greenwood 1996). As mentioned earlier, many of the questions exchanged between females in our data do not indicate hesitation but rather co-operation. Deciding on a nice ice-cream in the following exchange (F → F 25) is a joint task. The shop owner's knowledgeable ability on the issue is taken seriously:

- (5) C: *Να πάρω παγωτό. Έχεις πύραυλο;*
 S: *Όχι.*
 C: *Ποιο είναι πιο ωραίο;*
 S: *Είναι το ξυλάκι με φράουλα, αν σας αρέσει.*
 C: *Όχι, δε μ' αρέσει η φράουλα Θάλεια, αυτό τι είναι;*
 S: *Όχι, Θάλεια, Μάνια, κυρία Ειρήνη.*
 C: *Ωραίο είναι αυτό;*
 S: *Ναι, καλό είναι.*
 C: *Καλά, θα πάρω αυτά τα δύο.*
- C: Let me get an ice-cream. Do you have cones?
 S: No.
 C: Which one is nicer?
 S: It's the strawberry (flavour) ice-cream on the stick, if you like it.
 C: No, I don't like strawberry Thalia, what's this?
 S: Not Thalia, Mania, Mrs Irini.
 C: Is it nice?
 S: Yes, it's nice.
 C: Well, I'll take these two.

In this case, the older woman, the customer, appears to want to establish a closer relationship with the shop owner. This is evidenced in her attempt to make the shop owner a co-operator (a positive politeness strategy) and in her use of the shop owner's first name, which, as it happens, she gets wrong. The customer takes no notice of the shop owner's correction and insists on the atmosphere of collaboration she is trying to establish. Finally, her request comes as the result of the two women's co-operation. Similar instances are, however, also found in encounters involving male interactants, as in the following example (M → M 12):

(Male picking up and looking through a comic book)

(6) C: *Το παίρνω για την κόρη μου και κοιτάζω να δω αν είναι αυτοτελής.*

S: *Πόσων χρόνων είναι;*

C: *Πέντε.*

S: *Έλα, πάρτο, καλό είναι.*

C: I'm buying it for my daughter and I'm checking if it is complete.

S: How old is she?

C: Five.

S: OK, get it, it's good.

In this case it is a male customer who seeks the help of the male seller. The customer does not request but makes a statement followed by an explanation of his action (positive politeness) which constitutes an indirect request for help. He thus minimizes the imposition on the addressee while at the same time evading the threat to his own face by not asking for help directly.¹¹ What is also noteworthy in this exchange is that the topic of their interaction (i.e. children's concerns) is of those which have been attributed to interfemale interactions. Notice that in these data, customers explicitly asking for the addressee's opinion are absent from mixed-gender interactions. In both examples positive politeness strategies are used to achieve the same end, although through the use of different linguistic means.

Both males and females in these data use questions to make requests to the same extent (about 12%). Some of these questions are introduced with the dubitative marker *μήπως* 'by any chance' commonly associated with tentativeness either in order to minimize a possible imposition or because the speaker is genuinely pessimistic about the outcome, e.g.

(7) *Μήπως ήρθε το Εξπρές;* (M → M 4)
Has the Express (magazine) come by any chance?

(8) *Μήπως έχετε το Είμαι;* (F → F 9)
Have you got the Ine (magazine) by any chance?

Characteristic uses of the imposition minimizing function of *μήπως* occur in questions peripheral to the core act, especially those involving (small) change, to which we will return at a subsequent point.

Other devices to minimize imposition were also used by both males and females as in M → M 13:

- (9) *Να ρωτήσω κάτι;*¹² *Το Music Cafe το έχετε;*
May I ask something? Have you got Music Cafe? (magazine)

and M → F 40:

- (10) *Μήπως υπάρχει καμμιά σακούλα;*
Is there a carrier bag by any chance?

In the first example, the speaker uses a token request for permission and in the second one the word *μήπως* is followed by an impersonal verb (*υπάρχει* 'is there') which distances the addressee from the responsibility of the possible unavailability of the desired item. All these examples indicate that customers irrespective of their gender or the gender of their interlocutor used constructions entailing tentativeness whenever they felt that their acts involved imposition. The clearest examples of these are cases which involve big notes handed to pay for something which costs little. Such acts threaten the addressee's negative aspect of face (by imposing on him/her) and also the speaker's positive aspect of face (by risking being disliked).

Customers are aware that they should have the right or nearly right amount of money so as to avoid performing the face threatening acts. It is worth noting that such exchanges are fully verbalized to indicate concern. For example:

- (11) *Σας βολεύει περισσότερο το πεντακοσάριο;* (F → M 71)
Would a 500 drs note be more convenient for you?

If customers do not have small notes, verbalizations become very elaborate, pessimistically phrased, sometimes including apologies and tentativeness markers. For example:

- (12) *Δεν πιστεύω να έχεις ρέστα από δεκαχίλιαρο;* (M → F 14)
'I don't believe you have change from a 10,000 drs note?'
(13) *Αν ζητήσω ένα πακέτο τσιγάρα και δώσω δεκαχίλιαρο;*
(F → M 78)

If I ask for a packet of cigarettes and give a 10,000 drs note?

Moreover, when the seller cannot provide the appropriate change, customers, especially women, consider it their duty to offer a solution. For example:

- (14) *Θα πάω να πάρω καφέ στη Μαρία και θα χαλάσω.* (F → M 44)
I'll go and buy coffee at Maria's and get change.
- (15) *Έρχομαι σε λίγο για να φέρω ψιλά.* (F → M 74)
I'm coming back soon to bring change.

The pattern concerning money transactions reveals some differences between the sexes. Men interacting with either men or women appear to be concerned with knowing the cost of the required item(s). Thus, they feel embarrassed if they do not, apologize and offer excuses, mainly to protect their positive self-image. So a man asking for the price of a packet of cigarettes reacts to the seller's response, saying:

- (16) *Αχ, ναι, τς!* (M → F 19)
Oh, yes, but of course!

expressing shame for having forgotten. If more money is provided than necessary, an excuse seems appropriate, e.g.:

- (17) *Ωπα! Πολλά σου 'δωσα. Συνήθως παίρνω δύο και...* (M → F 34)
Oh! I have given you too much. I usually take two and...
- (18) *Έχω πεντακοσάρικο αλλά είναι για τα διόδια...* (M → F 22)

I do have a 500 drs note but it is for the toll...

In same sex interactions men also tend to show their knowledgeability¹³ by telling the seller the amount of change he should give them back, probably seeing this as an offer of help. Women in interactions with men do not appear concerned with being knowledgeable. On the contrary, after having paid they sometimes ask if the money is enough. For example, they use *εντάξει*; 'O.K.?' or *φτάνει*; 'is it enough?'. This difference may not be unrelated to Coates's (1996: 160–61) observation that men, unlike women, prefer to play the role of expert in conversation by choosing subjects in the sphere of their knowledge and interests. Women in same sex interactions are usually apologetic when they do not have change, e.g.:

- (19) *Δε φταίω εγώ, του Μανόλη είναι.* (F → F 15)
It's not my fault, it's Manolis's.

used as an excuse for issuing a 5,000 drs note for a packet of cigarettes. They even use constructions indicating that they consider provision of the right amount a condition for the purchase, e.g.:

- (20) Ένα μπουνκαλάκι νερό θέλω αλλά να δω αν έχω ψιλιά.
(F → F 5)

I want a small bottle of water but I'll see if I've got any change.

From the analysis of the data, it transpires that in this specific context, the linguistic behaviour of men and women displays not only differences but also noticeable similarities. Questions and other tentativising devices are not exclusively used by women to indicate uncertainty and lack of commitment as most previous research would have us believe. It is clear that irrespective of their gender and that of their addressee, our informants use a series of questions which secure co-operation between interlocutors. Women do ask more questions concerning the amount to be paid, especially when interacting with other women, than men do. This, however, can be seen as indicating the security of a person who is not afraid of losing face through asking a question. Apologies and excuses were employed by both males and females when they viewed their acts as imposing. Producing big notes was perceived by both as an imposition necessitating minimization while men, unlike women, also provided excuses when they risked appearing as ignorant of the amount to be paid. This is in agreement with Holmes's (1995: 185) finding that "men tend more than women to use strategies which focus on the apologizer's loss of face" while her claim that "women use significantly more apologies than men" is not evidenced in my data.

In conclusion, unlike most previous research the data described here do not show any significant differences between male and female strategies indicating tentativeness or concern for non-imposition.

Expression of solidarity

Another feature characteristically associated with female interaction is the expression of solidarity. Solidarity can be expressed on the morphosyntactic level through the use of diminutives, informal address forms, etc. and on the discourse level through jokes, etc. The data examined do not prove any significant cross-gender differences in the expression of solidarity. Both men and women use greetings like *τι μου κάνεις*; 'how are you doing for me?'

(M → M 27 and 51) and *τι κάνουμε*; ‘how are we doing?’ (M → M 33, 48 and 78) and *ας πάρουμε κι ένα Τηλέραμα* ‘let’s get a TV Times as well’, to indicate friendliness and closeness by including both interlocutors in the act through the use of inclusive forms (i.e. first plural and ethic dative). They also use diminutives as in *τι έγινε Μανίτσα*; ‘what happened Mania-DIM?’ (M → F 10), *παγωτάκια φέραμε*; ‘have we brought ice-creams-DIM?’ (F → M 30), *ευχαριστώ Διονυσάκο* ‘thank you Dionysis-DIM’ (M → M 59).

Solidarity is often expressed through joking, especially by men (Edelsky 1993: 220). Jokes occur in all three phases of the encounter. Requests may take the form:

- (21) *Θέλω ένα Marlboro γλυδάτο.* (M → M 21)
I want a (packet of) ‘luxurious’ Marlboro.

The joke may be sustained in more than one turn, e.g.:

- (22) C: *Έμαθα ότι έχεις φρέσκα τσιγάρα.* (M → M 84)
S: *Όχι. Μόλις τα 'δωσα. Έχω όμως φρέσκια σαρδέλα.*
C: *Καλά. Βάλε μου δυόμισι κιλά.*
C: I heard that you have ‘fresh’ cigarettes.
S: No. I’ve just sold out. But I do have fresh sardines.
C: O.K. give me two and a half kilos then.

This exchange takes place while the seller provides the cigarettes the customer regularly buys and the latter pays for them. Teasing among males is a definite marker of closeness:

- (23) *Όλο τις ίδιες αηδίες έχεις.* (M → M 72)
You always have (sell) the same rubbish.
(24) *Έχεις κανένα παγωτό που να τρώγεται;* (M → M 95)
Do you have any ice-cream which is edible?

When interacting with women, men may sometimes sound patronizing in their jokes, treating them like children, for example,

- (25) *Μπράβο παιδί μου.* (M → F 32)
Bravo my child.

said by a younger male to the female seller in appreciation of her picking up the right change from his hand, or

- (26) *Ευχαριστώ. Είστε πολύ καλή!* (M → F 65)
Thanks. You're very kind!

with an emphatic high fall on *πολύ* 'very' at the closing of a very simple exchange. Joking with one another or with males, women can be self-deprecating, e.g.:

- (27) *Αύριο είναι; Η ζέστη με πείραξε.* (F → M 35)
Is it tomorrow? the heat (must have) got to me.

where the female customer has made a mistake about the day on which the magazine she buys comes out and blames herself for having forgotten.¹⁴ Similarly in a same gender encounter, where the two women are talking about their daughters, the customer says:

- (28) *Η δικιά μου με περιμένει σαν τρελή. Όχι πως δεν είναι τρελή!*
(F → F 11)
My own (daughter) is waiting for me like mad. Not that she isn't mad!

Even when the two women are barely acquainted, solidarity is sought through playful tone, foreign words, diminutives or long encounters involving exchange of personal information.

- (29) *Ένα Milko please [sic] κι ένα μικρό νεράκι.* (F → F 17)
Κι αυτές εδώ τις τσίχλες. Καλά! Για το Milko ήρθα κι όλο το μαγαζί θα πάρω!
One Milko (carton of milk) please and a small (bottle of) water.
And these chewing gums. Well! I came for the Milko and I am about to buy the whole shop!

Another female customer, much younger than the shop owner, consults the latter on the taste of an ice-cream and they then engage in a personal conversation:

- (30) C: *Ωραίο είναι αυτό το παγωτό;* (F → F 14)
S: *Ωραίο αλλά άγλυκο.*
C: *Αυτό;*
S: *Ε! Εντάξει! Το ίδιο.*
C: *Ω! Γαμώτο!*¹⁵
S: *Τι θες παιδί μου;*

C: *Ήθελα ένα άλλο.*

S: *Τι είναι αυτό το μαύρισμα;*

C: *Ε! Κάνω μπάνια.*

S: *Καλά! Τέλη Αυγούστου πώς θα είσαι;*

C: *Γιατί; Θα συνεχίσω όσο θέλω!*

C: Is this ice-cream good?

S: It is good but not sweet (enough).

C: This one?

S: Eh! O.K.! the same.

C: Oh fuck!

S: So what do you want then? (*simulating anger*)

C: I wanted something else.

S: What is (all) this sun-tanning?

C: Eh! I go swimming.

S: O.K. What are you going to look like at the end of August?

C: Why? I'll go on as long as I want! (*defiantly*)

The overall picture which emerges from careful consideration of these data is that both sexes show solidarity and concern but they use different means to that end. Women are more likely to verbalize their concern, especially when addressing another woman, but also with a male interactant, e.g.:

(31) *Πάρτα σε ψιλιά. Τώρα κατάφερα να σου τα μαζέψω.*

(F → M 63)

Take it in small change. I've just managed to put it together for you.

said by a woman who left and then returned to bring the right amount of money, or:

(32) *Κρατήστε το κατοστάρικο και πάω να φέρω τα υπόλοιπα.*

(F → M 11)

Keep the 100 drs note and I'll go fetch the rest.

where the female customer undertakes the responsibility to provide a solution and verbalizes it fully. In a similar case where small change is necessary for completion of the transaction, the male customer does not verbalize his efforts, but resorts to a joke to minimize the imposition (providing a 5,000 drs note):

- (33) *Δεν το γλυτώνεις τελικά!* (M → M 47)
 You can't escape finally!

It should be pointed out that this customer does not communicate verbally throughout the encounter except to make this joke. This attitude is very characteristic of male to male interactions in my data. Men probably consider that silence will not be interpreted as a sign of indifference or hostility (Laver 1981) by other men in transactional settings. Even when the medial phase involves imposition (which is only the case with small change in this setting) negative politeness devices are hardly attested. There are only 2 cases of very elaborate requests to minimize imposition, e.g. F → F 31 *μήπως θα μπορούσατε να μου χαλάσετε πεντοχίλιαρο;* 'would it be possible by any chance for you to give me change for a 5,000 drs note?' where the imposition is particularly great as it does not involve custom. Even in the case of hardly any acquaintance between interlocutors, no features of formal discourse are present. Interactants of both sexes seem to be preoccupied with expressing friendliness and concern employing positive politeness strategies in accordance with the model elaborated in Sifianou (1992a).

Concluding remarks

Observations attributing higher degrees of politeness to women than to men are only supported by a superficial examination of the present data. For example, Holmes (1995: 144) suggests that women are more positively polite than men and are consequently expected to use more devices expressing positive politeness, such as greetings, expressions of gratitude, friendly address forms and leave-takings. This is in fact attested in the data under analysis, but closer inspection reveals a much more complex picture. Although the actual linguistic patterns that emerge cannot be characterized as typically male or typically female, different strategies are used and it can be argued that marked differences occur in relation to the *construal* of the event. For males, service encounters are perceived as primarily transactional and do not necessarily require exchange of civilities. The first and third phases, which are purely interactional/social, are considered omissible without cost to the face of either interactant. When greetings, partings and thanking expressions are used, they are usually unconventional and directed to the personal relationship rather than to the transaction. In the middle phase, which is transactional,

preference is shown for elliptical and non-verbalized requests, adhering to Grice's quantity maxim.

For females, the same type of encounter seems to be clearly construed as a tri-partite event. It therefore necessitates interactional features to a much greater extent. This could explain why greetings, partings and thanking expressions are required and more conventional forms are used. This may be related to the fact that in the transactional part preference is shown for fully verbalized requests. The different construals attested in male versus female linguistic behaviour need not be explained away as the result of the emphasis Western cultures place on the use of politeness routines by females.

A completely unexpected result of this investigation concerns the medial phase, where both men and women are found to be accommodating to their addressees by opting for the strategies that are considered more comfortable for the opposite sex. Specifically, when addressing a male, women tend to adopt the request patterns (elliptical constructions) mainly characterizing intermale exchanges. The same also applies to men, however, who tend to adopt the typically interfemale pattern (fully verbalized requests) when addressing a female. This is explainable on the assumption that both interlocutors have a vested interest in being pleasant: the seller in order to maintain the customers' custom and the customers in order to maintain the seller's helpfulness, whether they be male or female. So although previous research commonly associates accommodation with female discourse (e.g. Holmes 1992), the data discussed here show men to be equally accommodating with women. Depending on the interlocutor's sex, male and female speech style changes considerably adopting gender features attributed to the opposite sex.

Other features, which are commonly associated with female discourse, such as questions, are found to be used by both men and women and to serve the same purpose of enabling speakers to relate to their addressees. In my understanding, questions in this context show co-operation rather than tentativeness. Moreover, both males and females are found to express concern, friendliness and solidarity although through different means. Joking, for instance, and teasing in particular, is more characteristic of males, while especially when they are interacting with each other, self-deprecating funny comments are more typical of women's talk. Concern for knowledgeable ability was also found to be a characteristic of men rather than women, as expected, while concern for non-imposition (in the paying part of the transaction) seemed to be shared by both sexes.

The interactional components of the transaction, look at first sight as being simply speaker-determined with women employing considerably more civilities than men. Interestingly, however, both genders use a lot more civilities when addressing the opposite sex than when addressing their own. This may indicate that for both genders initial greetings and partings constitute formalities appropriate for rather distant relationships. If an increase of the distance is signalled by the difference in gender, a parallel increase in formalities is perhaps explainable. This leaves unexplained the lower percentage of thanking expressions in mixed-gender exchanges compared to same-gender averages. One way of understanding this discrepancy could be following suggestions to the effect that expressing gratitude indicates intimacy and closeness in Greek society.

Notes

1. I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues Arın Bayraktaroğlu, Bessie Dendrinou, Angeliki Tzanne and especially Maria Sifianou for their insightful comments and bibliographical suggestions.
2. In the same vein, Bayyurt and Bayraktaroğlu, this volume, talk about ‘politic’ rather than ‘polite’ behaviour in such contexts.
3. Such differences have been attributed by scholars to various sources (see Cameron 1996 for an excellent review).
4. The preference for offers over requests in Greek is exemplified by Sifianou (1992c) in relation to off-record indirect requests.
5. Levinson (1983: 357–59) argues that requests like “do you have X?” could be understood as pre-requests checking the conditions for the successful performance of the actual request, especially in service encounters where the most common explanation for refusal is the unavailability of the desired goods. Since request refusals are dispreferred turns, such pre-requests, on the one hand, hinder the performance of an act (the request) that could be rejected and, on the other, pave the way for an offer to be made.
6. The elliptical phrase *πόσο*; ‘how much?’ was not encountered in these data.
7. These are comparable to the cases discussed in the section on “silent” requests where it was not some part but the whole request which was not verbalized.
8. Interruption and hesitation were not present in the data since the situation is fixed and does not offer itself for such phenomena.
9. For an illuminating exploration of women’s verbosity see Makri-Tsilipakou (1997).
10. Makri-Tsilipakou (1997: 133) also finds female beggars to be using more expressions of gratitude than male beggars.

11. Although the medial turns in this example look like an insertion sequence, the seller asks for information not immediately related to the customer's statement probably considering that knowledge of the age of the prospective reader of the comic book will enable him to provide substantial help.
12. For a discussion of such constructions see Pavlidou (1990).
13. See also Dendrinou and Ribeiro-Pedro (1997).
14. See Georgakopoulou (1995) for a preference for patterns of self-deprecation and self-mocking in Greek female story-telling.
15. Although it is unusual for Greek women to use this category of swearing, the particular customer is in her early twenties and probably tries to exhibit macho behaviour.

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“What you’re saying sounds very nice and I’m delighted to hear it”

Some considerations on the functions of presenter-initiated simultaneous speech in Greek panel discussions¹

Angeliki Tzanne

Introduction

When watching panel discussions on Greek television, one notices frequently occurring stretches of discourse where more than one interactant speaks at the same time. In these cases, a second speaker starts their utterance either at the beginning or in the middle of the first speaker’s talk in order to claim the floor from the current speaker or to comment on what the first speaker is saying. These stretches involve presenter and guests alike and, although the guests usually employ simultaneous speech as a means of claiming the floor from the current speaker, presenters’ simultaneous talk often relates to the creation of an atmosphere of solidarity and familiarity in the encounter.

The data discussed in this paper were recorded between January 1997 and February 1998 and comprise 5 hourly all-male panel discussions which involve one presenter and four guest speakers each. Two discussions are concerned with the then current state of political parties in Greece, one with the spirit and organisation of the Olympic Games in view of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, the fourth one discusses the qualities needed in order for a young person to become a politician and the last one the future of tertiary level education in Greece. The five discussions involve three different presenters.

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My transcription of the programmes in question is a linear representation of the discussion and is based on my interpretation of what counted as a 'turn' for the current speaker. In transcribing, my main point of reference was the floor holder's turn (this is easily discernible in single floors but not in 'collaboratively developed ones' (Edelsky 1993)) which I typed so as to occupy a whole line of the word-processed text. Any other turns that were produced concurrently with this line I typed on a separate line under the first speaker's talk, marking the onset of the overlap with square brackets on each line.

Simultaneous talk resolved in the following ways: (i) the first speaker yielded the floor to the second speaker; (ii) both first and second speakers ended their turns at the same time; (iii) the first speaker continued to speak during the overlap and after the second speaker had ended his turn. The last of these three possibilities required special attention as, in the case of producing a turn of more than one line long, the first speaker's turn could be misrepresented and consequently misunderstood as a separate turn. In this case, I marked the end of the overlapped line and the beginning of the same speaker's next line in the transcript by '>>' in order to indicate that this was a skip-connecting turn which continued for (at least) two lines that were separated by another speaker's turn.

In example 1a, 'E's' (the presenter's) turn continues after the overlap of 'A' and is marked as a skip-connecting turn both at the end of the overlapped line ([1]) and at the beginning of the next line which represents the continuation of 'E's' turn ([3]). The numbers at the beginning of the lines mark speaker changes in the transcription, while the numbers mentioned in the text refer to the English translation of the examples.

- (1a) 1 E: μπορεί να'χετε επαναπατρισμό από τη φοιτητική
επα[νάσταση (.) γιατί να έχει ο άλλος το γιο του >>
2 A: [θα έχουμε, αλλά -
3 E: >> στην Ουγγαρία και να μην τον [φέρει στην Ελλάδα.
4 A: [συμφωνώ
1 E: you may have repatriation from the students' revolutio[n (.)>>
2 A: [we will do,
but-
3 E: >> why should someone have their son in Hungary and not
[bring him to Greece.
4 A: [I agree

Furthermore, I sometimes represented a series of brief exchanges in the form of a musical score (see example 1b) as I found this a better representation of the snappy style of the conversation at that point. In the example that follows, ‘Pr’ is the presenter and ‘Pa’ one of the guests.

- (1b) 1 Pa: (*γελώντας*) μας παρασύρατε σε κάτι τέτοιο κύριε
Πρετεντέρη; κι εσείς;
2 Pr: ότι τί; ότι ήθελα να χάσετε την
ονομαστική ψηφοφορία; (*σοβαρεύοντας*) όχι
1 Pa: (*laughing*) did you drag us into something like that Mr
Pretender? *et tu?*
2 Pr: that what? that I wanted you to miss the
nominal division? (*getting serious*) no

In this exchange, rapid speaker change creates a staccato effect in the flow of the conversation which would be lost if I presented each of the brief utterances as separate turns.

The forms and functions of simultaneous speech have been examined by a plethora of studies that have used different terms and criteria to describe and interpret the phenomenon. In the section that follows I review the functions of simultaneous speech scholars have identified so far and the criteria on which this identification has been based. I conclude the section by discussing the relation of the main functions of simultaneous speech to the threat they address to the face of the participants involved. In the next section, I present some considerations concerning the methods of identifying different types of simultaneous talk in the data. My findings are presented and discussed in the last two sections in terms of the politeness orientation of Greek society.

Simultaneous speech: an overview

Simultaneous speech has been traditionally associated with interruptions and overlaps, the former meaning, more often than not, disruptive (or violative) interruptions. In some studies (Edelsky 1993; Jefferson 1986), simultaneous speech has been discussed in relation to a type of floor which is built collaboratively by participants and where speakers often operate on the same wave-length and say the same thing at the same time. In such cases, simultaneous speech has been found to be dissociated from any disruptive function. Finally,

other studies (Goldberg 1990; Tannen 1993; Ulijn and Li 1995 among others) have suggested that simultaneous speech is not of a disruptive nature only, but it can also be relationally neutral or supportive.

Simultaneous speech as ‘interruption’ and ‘overlap’: terms and definitions

The literature on simultaneous speech has made use of a variety of terms to which different meanings are assigned. Disruptive and aggressive simultaneities have usually been referred to by the term ‘interruption’, sometimes qualified as ‘deep interruption’ or ‘marked interruption’. The same term has also been used to refer to simultaneous talk without any negative connotations. Furthermore, ‘unmarked interruption’ and ‘overlap’ are terms that have been used to refer to simultaneities which are neither disruptive nor supportive, whereas ‘overlap’ has also been used to refer to cooperative simultaneous talk.

In my analysis, I make use of a set of descriptive terms, that is terms that refer to the occurrence of concurrent talk, and a set of interpretive terms, that is terms that refer to its functions in the particular context of situation. The first set comprises the terms ‘simultaneous speech’, ‘simultaneity’, ‘intervention’ or ‘overlap’, whereas the latter comprises the terms ‘neutral simultaneity’, ‘disruptive simultaneity’ or ‘disruption’, and ‘supportive / cooperative simultaneity’.

Let us now have a closer look at the criteria which previous studies have used for determining the nature of individual instances of simultaneous talk.

Formal and operational criteria

One of the rules laid out in the first work ever on the organisation of conversation (Sacks *et al.* 1974: 706) states explicitly that “overwhelmingly, one party talks at a time”. This implies that simultaneous talk is unruly and problematic conversational behaviour. Although Sacks *et al.* (1974) talk only about ‘overlapping talk’, Schegloff (1973 lecture, cited in Bennett 1981: 172–173) differentiates *overlap* from *interruption* on the basis of the proximity of the second speaker’s beginning to the first speaker’s possible turn completion point. In his terms, simultaneous speech which occurs near a possible completion point is an overlap; if, however, it occurs well before a possible completion point, it is an interruption.

Following Sacks *et al.* (1974), West and Zimmermann (1983: 103–104) define *interruptions* as “violations of speakers’ turns at talk” and *overlaps* as

“brief simultaneities in the proximity (e.g. within a syllable) of possible completion points”. While they (1983: 104) consider *overlaps* to be largely produced by constraints of the turn-taking system, they view *interruptions* as having no systematic basis in the provisions of Sacks *et al.*'s (1974) turn-taking model in that they penetrate well within the syntactic boundaries of the current speaker's utterance. In another study, Uljin and Li (1995: 592) use the term *interruption* as a synonym for ‘simultaneous speech’ which corresponds to Sacks *et al.*'s (1974) ‘overlap’. On the basis of ‘nearness to each possible turn transition place’ they distinguish between *unmarked* and *marked* interruptions. Finally, some studies (Ferguson 1977; Tannen 1983b among others) distinguish between *interruption* and *overlap* according to whether the first speaker completes her/his utterance: while an *overlap* leads to speaker switch after the first speaker has completed her/his utterance, an *interruption* results in speaker switch with first speaker ceasing to speak and leaving her/his utterance incomplete.

The formal and operational criteria used for the identification of *interruptions* and *overlaps* have been criticised and rejected by studies that follow the ethnographic approach and analyse simultaneous speech qualitatively. One main problem that emerges from the use of criteria such as the ones outlined above is associated with the identification of possible turn completion points (Murray 1985). Furthermore, it has been shown that the different ways in which the two sexes conceive of the same instance of simultaneous talk override “seemingly straightforward criteria” such as length of simultaneous speech (Murray and Covelli 1988: 110). Finally, verbal constructions that have been suggested (Sacks 1992) to indicate the occurrence of an interruption turn out to be inadequate when linguistic context is also taken into account (Bilmes 1997). In fact, a number of studies (Beattie 1981; Coates 1989; Edelsky 1993; Goldberg 1990; Murray and Covelli 1988; Tannen 1993; Uljin and Li 1995 among others) have levelled serious criticism at the context-free nature of the works that employ formal criteria for the interpretation of simultaneous talk and argue convincingly that the initiation of simultaneous speech can be accounted for satisfactorily only when interpreted on the basis of the larger context in which it occurs.

The studies that reject ‘form’ as a valid criterion for the identification of *interruptions* and *overlaps* suggest ‘function in context’ — including textual evidence for ‘participants’ responses’ — as a reliable method of classifying instances of simultaneous speech.

Context as the main criterion for interpreting simultaneous speech

Stressing the importance of situational context for the interpretation of simultaneous speech, Tannen (1993: 176) argues that in order to assign function to a simultaneity “one must consider the context (for example, cooperative overlapping is more likely to occur in casual conversation among friends than in a job interview), the speakers’ habitual styles, and the interaction of their styles”. Other studies examine the functions of simultaneous speech by focusing on the linguistic context in which it occurs. Gallois and Markel (1975 cited in Beattie 1981: 17) suggest that the meaning of concurrent talk depends on the phase of the conversation in which it appears, whereas Goldberg (1990) classifies ‘interruptions’ [her term for instances of simultaneous talk] according to the roles of the speakers that produce them and their relation to topic management in the conversation. In another study, Murray (1985: 32) claims that interactants judge the intention of the person who begins to speak in the middle of another’s talk according to, firstly, the content of what s/he is saying and, secondly, “a folk weighing of distributive justice, which includes how long someone has been talking and whether anyone else has some particular claim to reply or to comment”.

Concentrating exclusively on evidence from the turns that follow the onset of simultaneous speech, some studies (Bennett 1981; Bilmes 1997; Hutchby 1992; Murray 1985; Talbot 1992) promote a participant-centred approach to the interpretation of simultaneities and argue that the nature of such cases should be interpreted solely on the basis of the response of the first speaker to the second speaker’s initiation of concurrent talk.

Finally, it is argued (Murata 1994; Tannen 1984; Ulijn and Li 1995) that the study of simultaneous speech in context should take into account not only the linguistic context or the context of the immediate situation but also the cultural background, where simultaneities play different roles. For example, one culture discourages simultaneous talk, while another may welcome and cultivate it; in the former case, simultaneous talk is usually considered to be disruptive, whereas in the latter it is usually perceived as supportive.

In conclusion, as James and Clarke (1993: 247) argue

only an analysis which takes into account the larger context in which the interruption [the authors’ term for simultaneous speech] takes place, including the semantic content of the interruption, the general trend and content of the conversation up to that point, and the relationship between the participants — and which also considers the conversational style employed by the interruptor, given that individual’s cultural background — is likely to ascertain

adequately the role which an interruption was intended to perform. [the text in square brackets is my addition]

In agreement with the above studies, I interpret the role of simultaneous speech on the basis of linguistic context, which includes participants' responses, the context of situation, which involves the participants' social roles and their roles in the particular activity, and the cultural background and traits of the society in which the panel discussions examined are taking place.

Simultaneous speech in context: the good, the bad and the neutral

Since simultaneous talk began to be examined and interpreted in context, research has shown that under certain normative pressures the production of such talk is systematic and 'warranted' and therefore not violatively interruptive (Goldberg 1990; Hutchby 1992; Jefferson 1986 among others). What is more, it has been found that there are simultaneities that indicate the second speaker's active involvement and interest in the conversation and convey rapport and solidarity with the first speaker (Beattie 1981; Bennett 1981; Coates 1989; Edelsky 1993; Makri-Tsilipakou 1991; Murata 1994; Tannen 1983b, 1984 and 1994 among others). In some cases, supportive simultaneous talk is closely related not to singly-developed floors, where only one person speaks at a time, but to collaborative ones, where two or more people either take part "in an apparent free-for-all or jointly build one idea, operating 'on the same wavelength' " (Edelsky 1993: 189). Simultaneous speech in collaboratively produced discourse is characterised by a high degree of involvement as participants "work together to produce shared meanings" (Coates 1989).

The most comprehensive classification of simultaneities belongs to Goldberg (1990) who argues that 'interruptions', as she calls them, can be either 'power-related', or 'rapport-related', but also 'neutral', as some interruptions are totally unrelated to personal or relational displays of power or rapport. In her study, neutral interruptions are associated with the speaking rights of the presenter in panel discussions.

Goldberg (1990: 886–887) argues that interruptions arise "in response to the inherent conflict between interactional norms which promote single speakership and normative pressures which are often satisfied by flouting those turn-taking constraints". Such pressures may relate to the need to display active and continuous listenership, to address the interactional requirements entailed by one's role and situation (for instance, the role of moderator

in a panel discussion), or to satisfy one's own 'face wants' (Brown and Levinson 1978). In addition, in order to protect the current speaker's face, conversationalists need to decide between opposing politeness norms (Brown and Levinson 1978), that is to show the speaker camaraderie and intimacy or deference and distance.

Goldberg (1990: 892–893) distinguishes between 'power-' and 'rapport-type interruptions' which address the interrupted speaker's 'positive' and 'negative face' (Brown and Levinson 1978). Power-interruptions "involve topic change attempts accomplished by questions and requests (*process control strategies*) or by assertions or statements (*content control strategies*) whose propositional content is unrelated to the specific topic at hand" (for a similar classification of intrusive simultaneities see Murata 1994). While 'process control strategies' relate to control over substance but not direction of discourse, 'content control' ones relate to control over both floor and topic. 'Process control' strategies are less face-threatening than 'content control' ones, whereas, on the whole, rapport interruptions, which "often strive to bolster the interruptee's positive face", are less face-threatening than interruptions of the power type.

In addition to 'power-' and 'rapport-type interruptions', Goldberg (1990: 888–889) identifies a third category of interruptions which she terms 'relationally neutral'. Relationally neutral interruptions "address the immediate need of the communicative situation" and are not intended to direct threat to the current speaker's face, nor are they intended to snatch the floor from the interrupted speaker. Nevertheless, the current speaker is expected to temporarily yield the floor to the interrupter. Once these sequences are completed, the interrupted speaker is 'allowed' to continue her/his talk where s/he had left off. Prompt return to the first speaker renders such simultaneities only minimally disruptive (for a similar argument see Murray 1985).

In the next section some considerations are expressed concerning the identification of neutral, face-threatening and face-supportive instances of simultaneous speech in the data.

Identifying types of simultaneous speech in context

In this paper, presenter-initiated simultaneities were not assigned meaning on the basis of pre-constructed interpretive categories, but they were interpreted

on the basis of their own linguistic and situational context of occurrence. In particular, in order to categorise a simultaneity as disruptive, supportive or relationally neutral I took into consideration the social context of the particular activity and the roles and goals of the participants taking part in it. More importantly, however, I took into account the linguistic context of the simultaneousities identified, as it was constructed turn-by-turn in the course of the programme. The participants' verbal reactions to the occurrence of simultaneous speech constituted an essential component of this context.

With regard to social context and participants' roles, it has been argued that people assign communicative intent to simultaneous speech on the basis of the speaking rights of the person who has initiated it (Bennett 1981; Edelsky 1993; Murray 1985). The role of the moderator of a discussion, the presenter in my data, entails rights and obligations such as addressing questions to the guests, asking for points to be clarified, summarising and/or illustrating points for the benefit of the audience, ensuring that time is distributed evenly and that topical coherence is maintained, and controlling the flow of the conversation.

As we have seen, Goldberg (1990: 887–8) argues that the simultaneousities moderators initiate are unrelated to personal or relational displays, as they are part of the speaking rights and obligations of their role. In other words, presenter-initiated simultaneousities are 'relationally neutral', which means that such simultaneousities are not usually face-threatening for the current speaker, nor are they (or should they be) perceived as such by her/him.

I have found that this claim holds true for many of the cases where the presenter begins to talk in the middle of the guest's turn in order to manage the development of the discussion. Below is a simultaneity which is tolerated by 'M', the current guest speaker.

- (2) 1 M: θυμάμαι παλιότερα σε μια Επιτροπή Παιδείας του κυβερνώντος κόμματος ότι είμασταν αισχρή μειοψηφία αυτοί που υποστηρίζαμε, γιατί είχαμε κληθεί ως εμπειρογνώμονες να συμμετάσχουμε, τέτοιου είδους μέτρα (.) μέσα σ' αυτήν την αισχρή μειοψηφία περιλαμβάνεται κι ο σημερινός πρωθυπουργός, αλ [λά ε-
- 2 E: [εννοείτε ότι ο κύριος Σημίτης είχε παρόμοιες απ[όψεις;
- 3 M: [από το ογδόντα πε- ογδόντα οκτώ τις άκουγε ευμενώς (.)

- 1 M: I remember at older times in an Education Committee of the ruling party that we were a meagre minority those of us that supported, because we had been invited to participate as experts, measures of this kind (.) in this meagre minority is included the current Prime Minister, [but e-
- 2 E: [do you mean that Mr Simitis had similar [views?
- 3 M: [since eighty fi- eighty eight he had been favourable to them

In general terms, in the context of the panel discussions analysed, presenter-initiated simultaneities relating to 'process-control' or 'content control' strategies which Goldberg (1990) considers as highly face-threatening, are usually responded to by the participants as relationally neutral, as it appears to be generally accepted that it is the right of the presenter to steer the development of topic and the general flow of the conversation.

As an exception to this general observation, some simultaneities relating to content-control are interspersed with politeness strategies attending to both the positive and the negative face of the participants, which may indicate that the presenters see them as a potential face-threat (see examples 5 and 6). Similarly, some of these interventions are resented openly by the participants themselves, which led me to categorise them as disruptions of the current speaker's talk. In the example that follows, the presenter's ('E's') request for clarification in [6], which is directly preceded by other similar interventions in [2] and [4], is responded to as a disruption and a threat to the speaker's face.

- (3) 1 T: η γνώμη μου είναι ότι πέρα από τα επιχειρήματα αυτά υπάρχουν και άλλα μείζονα επιχειρήματα τα οποία δεν αναφέρθηκαν (.)=
- 2 E: =μείζονα υπέρ εννοείτε κ. Τσουκαλά;=
- 3 T: =υπέρ, βεβαίως υπέρ=
- 4 E: =όπως;=
- 5 T: =όπως το εξής (.) δεν είναι δυνατόν η εκπαίδευση να αντιμετωπίζεται σαν ένα ετερόνομο υποσύστημα (.) η εκπαίδευση του τόπου δεν είναι μόνο εκ[παίδευση, >>
- 6 E: [δηλαδή κ. Τσουκαλά
- 7 T: >> είναι παιδεία (.) θα εξηγηθώ (ενοχλημένος) (.)

- 1 T: in my view in addition to these arguments there are other major arguments which have not been mentioned (.)=
- 2 E: major arguments *for*, you mean Mr Tsoukala?=
 3 T: =*for*, of course, *for*=
- 4 E: =such as?=
 5 T: =such as this one (.) it is not possible to treat education as a dependent subsystem (.) education in a country is not only [schooling, it is also culture (.) I will explain >>
- 6 E: [that is Mr Tsoukala?
 7 T: >> myself (*annoyed*) (.)

The interpretative problem that arises in this case is that the presenter's last request for clarification in [6], which is a rightful contribution on his part, is responded to as being face-threatening ('I will explain myself' (*annoyed*)). In other words, in the first instance the request appears to be expected and the speaker does not seem to mind the temporary interruption of his turn, whereas in the second one, a question of the same illocutionary intent is much resented by the interrupted speaker who probably feels his negative face (his want to complete his turn unimpeded) threatened by the presenter's intervention.

An explanation for the disparate reactions to the same kind of contribution from the presenter can be found in the linguistic context that precedes the occurrence of the simultaneity in question. When examined in the immediate context of the discussion, the request for clarification that is seen as disruptive by the speaker is found to be the last of a series of similar interventions that are either latched onto the speaker's pauses or produced while T was still talking. What seems to be the case then is that the negative interpersonal force that was assigned to this request was created cumulatively as a result of all the previous latches and overlaps which made the speaker feel that his negative face was seriously threatened. This leads to the conclusion that the nature of the presenter's contributions is heavily constrained not only by the general rights and obligations of his role but also by the linguistic context of the specific encounter which the analyst should take into account in order to assign interpersonal meaning to an instance of simultaneous talk.

Disruptive, supportive and relationally neutral simultaneities in Greek panel discussions

My first impression from videoing and transcribing the above discussions was that there was a lot of simultaneous talk involving the presenters who not only moderated the discussion in this way but also made jokes, expressed their agreement or (rarely) disagreement with the current speaker, or offered him reassurance or support. At first glance this appeared to be a very interesting attitude in that it contrasts sharply with the findings of other studies on the conversational behaviour of media presenters who are 'neutral' and 'formally objective' (Greatbatch 1988), 'confrontational' and 'aggressive' (Bennett 1981; Hutchby 1992), or 'impolite' (Yemenici this volume). In what follows I will discuss the function of presenter-initiated simultaneities in terms of the presenters' speaking rights and obligations as well as in terms of the satisfaction of the participants' negative and positive face wants (Brown and Levinson 1978).

The presenters whose conversational behaviour I have investigated produce simultaneous speech that relates, firstly, to managing the flow or the topic of the conversation with no address to the face of the current speaker, secondly, to managing the conversation while, at the same time, attending to the guest speaker's negative and positive face wants, and, finally, to enhancing the positive face of the participants, their own face included. The first three of the sections that follow involve simultaneities employed in the management of the discussion, whereas the last one involves simultaneities which relate exclusively to the cultivation and enhancement of the participants' positive face.

Relationally neutral simultaneities

Researchers have argued that deviating from the smooth speaker-switch norm in the form of overlapping talk poses varying degrees of threat to the first speaker's face, depending on the rights and obligations of the second speaker in the given encounter. Some studies suggest that there are interruptions that arise as a direct consequence of the interactants' respective participatory rights and obligations (Bennett 1981; Edelsky 1993; Murray 1985). Simultaneous speech produced in panel discussions has been characterised as 'relationally neutral' (Goldberg 1990), which means that such simultaneities are not meant

to be face-threatening for the current speaker, nor are they perceived as such by her/him.

A neutral simultaneity in the form of a request for clarification was presented in example 2 above. Other instances in the data, which are received and responded to as rightful contributions on the part of the presenter, are cases of summarising, simplifying or illustrating the main point of the current speaker. The example that follows (with 'E' as the presenter) is a case in point.

- (4) 1 G: επομένως πρέπει η πολιτική ηγεσία να μην ταυτίζει ένα νομοσχέδιο, ο κάθε άνθρωπος, ο κάθε υπουργός, με τον εαυτό του (.) η κάθε κυβέρνηση, αλλά να αποφασίσουνε ότι η παιδεία είναι κάτι μακροπρόθεσμο, θα αποδώσει μετά από είκοσι χρόνια που εμείς όλοι πιστεύοντας να έχ[ουμε φύγει από δω -
- 2 E: [άρα ζητάτε πολιτική συναίνεση.
- 3 G: πολιτική συναίνεση ζητώ συναίνεση στην εκπαιδευτική κοινότητα και να θυσιάσουμε όλοι μας και να κάνουμε και μια αυστηρή αυτοκριτική [...]
- 1 G therefore the political leadership should not identify a bill, each person, each minister, with themselves (.) each government, but they should decide that education is of a long-term nature, it will bear fruit after twenty years when all of us believing that we will [have gone-
- 2 E: [you are therefore seeking political consensus.
- 3 G: political consensus I seek consensus within the educational community and that we all make sacrifices and embark on severe self-criticism [...]

In this case, the presenter ('E') intervenes to summarise 'G's' position in a rephrase, which appears not only to be tolerated but also approved of by 'G', as he instantly adopts the phraseology used by the presenter. There are many similar cases in the data which indicate that contributions on the part of the presenter that have one of the aforementioned functions are perceived as relationally neutral by the guest speakers.

Disruptive simultaneities: participants' responses

As participants' responses show, some presenter-initiated simultaneities are considered to be disruptive and face-threatening by the current speaker. These are usually simultaneities which acquire their negative force cumulatively in the course of the discussion (see example 3) and which are unrelated to the presenter's intentions to direct threat to the guest speaker's face. In such cases, expression of discomfort and slight annoyance on the part of the speaker evokes a baffled look and no further response from the presenter.

The only simultaneity in the data which is intentionally disruptive and responded to as such is the one presented below, with 'Pr' being the presenter.

- (5) 1 Πα: αυτοί οι άνθρωποι που σήμερα είναι οι βασικοί υπουργοί της κυβέρνησης είναι οι άνθρωποι με την καλύτερη κυβερνητική τεχνογνωσία θα 'λεγα ήταν υπουργοί τα περισσότερα χρόνια της μεταπολίτευσης το ΠΑΣΟΚ έχει πλέον 13-14 χρόνια κυβέρνηση και πολλοί απ' αυτούς έχουν χρηματίσει σε διαδοχικές κυβερνήσεις (.) ήταν φυσικό λοιπόν σε μια εξαιρετικά δύσκολη περίοδο να αξιοποιήσει όλα αυτά τα ιστορικά έμπειρα στελέχη του ΠΑΣΟΚ (.) [θέλει όμως- [μη >>
- 2 Pr: [να κάνω μια παρένθεση; [μια >>
- 3 Πα: >> με διακόπτετε στο [κρίσιμο σημείο
- 4 Pr: >> παρένθεση [μήπως προσπαθεί να φτιάξει το νέο ΠΑΣΟΚ [με παλιά υλικά; [μήπως προσπαθεί >>
- 5 Πα: >> [μη με [μη με διακόπτετε >>
- 6 Pr: >> να φτιάξει [το νέο ΠΑΣΟΚ [με τα παλιά στελέχη;
- 7 Πα: >> [όχι [μη με διακόπτετε θέλει λοιπόν θέλει λοιπόν ο κύριος Σημίτης εν ονόματι των εθνικών συμφερόντων της χώρας όλα αυτά τα πρόσωπα όλο αυτό το δυναμικό το πολύ σημαντικό δυναμικό μαζί με την κυβερνητική τεχνογνωσία την οποία διαθέτουν να δείξουν και την πίστη τους σ' ένα σχέδιο το οποίο σχέδιο έχει την υπογραφή όλων ως ένα σχέδιο συμφωνίας για μια Ελλάδα προς το 2000 και προς τον 20ο [sic] αιώνα
- 1 Pa: these people who are presently the basic ministers of the government are the people with the best knowledge on technical

- matters I would say they were ministers most of the years of the political changeover, PASOK has been the ruling party for 13-14 years now, and most of them have served in successive governments (.) therefore at a particularly difficult time it was natural {for Mr Simitis} to make use of all these historic experienced members of PASOK (.)
- [he wants however - [don't interrupt me >>
- 2 Pr: [can I make an intervention? [an intervention >>
- 3 Pa: >> at this [crucial point >>
- 4 Pr: >> [is he perhaps trying to make the new PASOK >>
- 5 Pa: >> [don't [don't interrupt me >>
- 6 Pr :>> [with old material? [is he perhaps trying to make
[the new PASOK [with the old members?
- 7 Pa: >> [no [don't interrupt me he wants therefore
Mr Simitis therefore wants in the name of the national interests
of the country all these people all this manpower this very
important manpower together with the technical knowledge
they have to show their faith in a plan which is signed by
everybody as a plan of agreement towards Greece of 2000 and
of 20th [sic] century

In this example, it is clear that the presenter's ('Pr's') intervention constitutes a disruptive simultaneity, an interruption, for 'Pa', the current speaker, who is an MP of the ruling party. Of note are two things, both of which make manifest the presenter's attempt to reconcile his rights and obligations with his consideration for the guest speaker's, but also for his own, face. First, the presenter asks the speaker's permission to intervene, which shows consideration for Pa's negative face. Furthermore, he phrases his criticism of PASOK in the form of a 'yes-no' question, as a request for (dis)confirmation, which allows the speaker to answer the question in the negative and thus to reject the criticism ('no' in [7]). Finally, the presenter's use of the dubitative marker 'perhaps' adds to the tentativeness with which he delivers his turn. In this way, the presenter attends to the interrupted speaker's negative face but also to his own positive face, since a direct criticism on the ruling party would cause the MP's disapproval. The over-cautious way in which the presenter phrases this intervention could be explained in terms of the asymmetrical relation that holds between the guest speaker and the presenter. More specifically, it is reasonable to argue that the higher social status of the guest speaker (an MP of

the ruling party), as compared with that of the presenter (a journalist), leads 'Pr' to phrase his intervention in such a way as to ensure that only a minimal face-threat is directed to the face of the more powerful participant.

The above example is the only instance of disruptive simultaneity in the data which was clearly in the intentions of the presenter and can be accounted for on the basis of the two people's political beliefs (the MP belongs to the socialist party, whereas the presenter is known to support the conservative party) in this programme which is concerned with the role of both the socialist and the conservative parties in view of the 21st century. The occurrence of this kind of simultaneity in this particular programme is in line with Yemenici's (this volume) finding that televised political debates involve disruptive simultaneities on the part of both the presenter and the participants.

In other cases, where the speaker's response makes the presenter feel that a prior contribution of his has been (mis)interpreted as face-threatening and disruptive, the presenter rushes in to clarify his intentions, thus attending to the more powerful participant's (and to his own) face want to be liked and approved of by the others. The following example between the presenter ('E') and the Minister of Education ('A') illustrates this point.

- (6) 1 E: κύριε υπουργέ σας ρωτώ ευθέως γιατί υπάρχει θέμα (.)
υπάρχει ενδεχόμενο να υπάρξουν και δίδακτρα πια σ'
αυτή τη λογική της απελευθέρωσης του πανεπιστημίου;
2 A: ναι, κυτάχτε να τα δούμε αυτά εγώ θέλω να το
ξεκαθαρίσω αυ[τό το θέμα δηλαδή στην πρόταση >>
3 E: [ναι εγώ σας ρωτώ απόλυτα
4 A: >> που κάνουμε [διατηρούμε τον χαρακτήρα της >>
5 E: [χωρίς αιχμή
6 A: >> δωρεάν παιδείας [...]
- 1 E: Minister I am asking you directly because there is an issue here
(.) is there a possibility of having fees as well in this rationale of
freeing the university?
2 A: yes, look let's see these {issues} I want to clarify [this issue >>
3 E: [yes I am
asking absolutely
4 A: >> that is in the proposal we are making [we maintain >>
5 E: [without insinuation
6 A: >> the practice of free education

In this case, the minister's 'I want to clarify this issue' is what probably makes the presenter feel that the minister has perceived his question in [1] as face-threatening. The fact that 'E' starts talking in the middle of the minister's turn in order to make clear to him that he had no intention of implying anything unpleasant about his proposals indicates that the presenter assigns greater significance to the minister's positive rather than negative face (the pressure to reassure the minister that his proposals are liked and accepted is greater than the pressure to satisfy the minister's want to finish his turn unimpeded). Considerations for the participants' positive face overriding those for their negative face is common in the data, where the presenter is often found to start speaking in the middle of a guest speaker's turn in order to attend to and enhance the latter's, but also his own, positive face.

Potential disruptions: dealing with a prospective face-threat

As we have already seen, the role of the presenter entails rights such as making requests for information or clarification, summarising or illustrating the guest speaker's points for the sake of the audience (the viewers), or controlling the direction or the substance of the discussion. Exercising any of these rights is, or should be, a relationally neutral act, that is a non-face-threatening contribution on the part of the presenter. Although this is indeed the case with most such contributions, I have found that the presenters who are about to exercise control on the subject matter of the conversation, that is to put 'content-control strategies' (Goldberg 1990) into practice, are careful to address also the negative and/or positive face of the current speaker. The negative and/or positive politeness strategies used in these cases indicate that the presenters feel that what they are about to say may threaten the speaker's face. Controlling the content of the conversation is the only time when presenters in the data feel their contributions to be face-threatening. This observation ties in with Goldberg's (1990) claim that 'content-control strategies' pose greater threat for the current speaker's face than 'process-control' ones, even in a situation where both strategies belong to the intervening speaker's rights and obligations. In example 7 the presenter ('P') apologises to the guest speaker ('N') for the diversion he is going to make in order to provide the viewers with some background information on the topic currently discussed.

- (7) 1 N: το δεύτερο {θέμα} είναι μια σκληρή δουλειά όπου θέλει τεχνοκράτες θέλει ανθρώπους που να 'χουνε γνώση στα οικονομικά στα τεχνικά σε πάρα πολλά ζητήματα και θα ήθελα να πω ότι αυτούς τους ανθρώπους θα πρέπει να τους επιλέξει η κυβέρνηση το μόνο αν θέλετε παράκληση την οποία έχει η ελληνική Ολυμπιακή Επιτροπή ήτανε αυτά τα πρόσωπα να είναι να έχουν επιλεγεί πριν από τις 4 Φεβρουαρίου (.) τώρα θέλω να πω να τοποθετηθώ και σε κάτι άλλο=
- 2 M: = να πληρούν όμως και ορισμένες [προϋποθέσεις
- 3 N: [βεβαίως είπα
προηγou[μένως-
- 4 Π: [η 4η Φεβρουαρίου είναι η παρουσίαση
[στο Nagano =το αρχικό σχέδιο=
- 5 N: [πρέπει να παρουσιαστεί εις το Nagano=
=το αρχικό σχέδιο (.) εδώ θέλω να πω το εξής σωστά η Διεθνής Ολυμπιακή Επι[τροπή-
- 6 Π: [θα πρέπει να εξηγήσουμε με
συγχωρείτε για τη διακο[πή >>
- 7 N: [βεβαίως
- 8 Π: >> και στους τηλεθεατές μας ότι στο Nagano της Ιαπωνίας θα ξεκινήσουν οι χειμερινοί Ολυμπιακοί αγώνες [και και η ολομέλεια της [Διεθνούς Ολυμπιακής Επιτροπής
- 9 N: [και σα σύνολο [ακριβώς πρέπει να παρουσιαστεί τα πρόσωπα και πώς σκεφτόμαστε να διοργανώσουμε τους αγώνες (.)
- 1 N: The second {issue} is a hard job which needs technocrats it needs people with knowledge on financial matters, on technical ones, on a lot of matters and I would like to say that these people should be selected by the government the only if you like request of the Greek Olympic committee was that these people should have been selected before 4 February (.) now I would like to take a stance on something else=
- 2 M: =they should meet certain [requirements though
- 3 N: [of course I said [earlier on-
- 4 P: [4 February is the

- 5 N: presentation [in Nagano =of the initial plan=
[must be presented in Nagano=
=the initial plan (.) at this point I want to say this rightly the
International Olympic Co[mmittee
- 6 P: [we should explain I'm sorry for the
inte[rruption >>
- 7 N: [certainly
- 8 P: >> to our viewers as well that in Nagano, Japan, will begin the
Winter Olympic Games [and and the plenary session of >>
- 9 N: [and as a whole >>
- 10 P: >> the[International Olympic Committee
- 11 N: >> [exactly it has to present
the people and how we are thinking of organising the games (.)

The presenter's intervention in [6] is justified by his role in that it is his obligation to ensure that the audience has enough information to follow the discussion. However, he seems to detect a potential face-threat in his intervention which will not only cut the current speaker short before he touches upon the issue he has in mind, but it will also change the speaker's topic, at least for a while. At the same time, pressure rises to provide the necessary information at a point when it is still relevant. This results in the presenter producing an intervention which is interspersed with politeness strategies that attend to the speaker's negative and positive face. More specifically, in [6] the presenter apologises for what he perceives to be a disruption of 'N's' turn, which attends to 'N's' negative face (Brown and Levinson 1978: 192ff), and in [6] and [8] he states the reason why he has to interrupt, thus attending to 'N's' positive face as well (Brown and Levinson 1978: 133). Explaining the reason for the interruption leads to cooperation between presenter and guest speaker as in the end 'N' collaborates with the presenter in providing the audience with the information they need in order to follow the discussion.

In the next example, the presenter ('Pr') is trying to bring about a more drastic change of topic with an intervention that is again interspersed with negative and positive politeness strategies.

- (8) 1 Πα: έχει τεθεί το θέμα έχει [τεθεί (.) να διαβάσουμε
δημοσιεύματα [κύριε Προετντέρη
- 2 Αν: [υπάρχει όμως μια ανεπανόρθωτη
ζημιά [κύριε Πασχαλίδη-

- 3 P_Q: [όχι όχι κύριε Λιάνη αν μου επιτρέπετε αν μου επιτρέπετε θα 'λεγα να κλείσουμε το θέμα του απολογισμού για να (.) έχουμε μπροστά μας ένα τέταρτο ακόμα να περάσουμε λίγο στις προοπτικές (.)
- 1 P: it has been raised the issue has been [raised (.) let's read some publications [Mr Pretenderi
- 2 Ln: [there is however irreparable damage [Mr Pashalidi-
- 3 Pr: [no no Mr Liani if you will allow me if you will allow me I would suggest that we should finish with the issue of the review so that (.) we've only got a quarter of an hour left so that we pass on to the prospects (.)

In this example the presenter intervenes to end an argument between two of the guest speakers ('P' and 'Ln') in order to introduce a topic change in the conversation. In his turn, which cuts off the contribution of the second speaker, the presenter addresses the second speaker and asks for his permission to shift from the topic of 'review' to the topic of 'prospects'. This is again a rightful contribution on the part of the presenter which is, however, expressed in a way that indicates intense preoccupation with the interrupted speaker's face. More specifically, the presenter's intervention involves asking for the speaker's permission to occupy the floor with an adverbial-clause hedge ('if you will allow me') that addresses the speaker's negative face (Brown and Levinson 1978: 167–168), and his actual suggestion is prefaced by another hedge ('I would suggest') and cut into two by the reason for making it ('we've only got quarter of an hour left'), which address the speaker's (and the rest of the participants') negative and positive face, respectively. The point to be made here is that, although the presenter has every right to control the flow of the topic, the way he exercises this right indicates that he perceives it as a threat to the speaker's face, and seeks to remedy it by using politeness strategies.

In this case, as in example 7 above, a possible explanation for the use of face-saving strategies on the part of the person who plays the most powerful role in the activity (presenter-moderator of the discussion) may relate to the social role and status of the presenter's guests. More specifically, in addressing an MP ('Ln' in example 8) or the President of the Olympic Committee ('N' in example 7), the journalist-presenter ('Pr' in example 8 and 'P' in 7)

may have the power asymmetry that characterises the encounter uppermost in his mind and thus consider his rightful interventions to be a threat directed to the face of people of a higher social status than his own.

The last example discussed in this section is another case of the presenter ('P') detecting a prospective face-threat in what he is about to say to the current speaker ('K') and employing face-saving strategies to avoid damaging the face of the speaker. In this case the presenter intends to challenge the applicability of what the speaker is saying, but instead of phrasing his intervention as a direct attack, he intersperses it with strategies that attend to the speaker's as well as to his own face. It is my contention that, similarly to examples 5–8, the use of these face-saving strategies in example 9 can be accounted for on the basis of the power asymmetry that holds in the encounter, with the less powerful participant (the journalist-presenter) making every possible effort to maintain and cultivate the face of the participant with the higher social status (the MP) in the discussion.

- (9) 1 K: εάν λοιπόν σήμερα πρέπει να συζητήσουμε κάτι είναι το έλλειμμα δημοκρατίας που υπάρχει στο θεσμικό πλαίσιο του πολιτικού μας συστήματος που ξεκινά από τη χρηματοδότηση των κομμάτων και τον τρόπο λειτουργίας τους από τον τρόπο λειτουργίας των μέσων ενημέρωσης και τη διαπλοκή τους με οικονομικά συμφέροντα κι αν καταφέρουμε να σπάσουμε το φαύλο κύκλο και τον ομφάλιο λώρο μεταξύ χρήματος και πολιτικής τότε θα έχουμε επιτελέσει την αποστολή μας [να φέρομε όλα τα σημαντικά εκείνα άτομα >>
- 2 Π: [κύριε Κεφαλογιάννη >>
- 3 K: >> [που είναι εκτός πολιτικής σήμερα-
- 4 Π: >> [ακούγονται πολύ ωραία αυτά τα οποία λέτε κι εγώ προσωπικά τα ακούω με ιδιαίτερη ευχαρίστηση (.) πρακτικά όμως αυτά είναι δε θα έλεγα ευχολόγιο ίσως είναι ένα πολιτικό στοίχημα η πράξη όμως και η ζωή κινείται κάτω από άλλους κανόνες
- 1 K: if there is something we should discuss today that is the lack of democracy that exists in the institutional framework of our political system which begins from the funding of political parties and the way they operate from the way the media

- operate and their involvement in financial interests and if we manage to break the vicious circle and the umbilical cord between money and politics then we will have accomplished our mission [to bring all those important people >>
- 2 P: [Mr Kefaloyanni >>
- 3 K: >> [who are out of politics today-
- 4 P: >> [what you're saying sounds very nice and personally I am delighted to hear it (.) in practice however it is I wouldn't say wishful thinking perhaps it is political stakes (.) reality however and life operate under different rules

The presenter's criticism of the speaker's suggestions concerning the improvement of the world of politics begins before the speaker has finished his turn and contains various face-saving strategies that aim to remedy the potential threat of the utterance. In particular, the intervention is formed in a statement that boosts the (positive) face of the current speaker (the concept of Face Boosting Acts belongs to Bayraktaroğlu 1991 and will be presented in more detail below). This statement acts as a preface to the criticism that follows and the whole turn aims at 'avoiding disagreement', which addresses the speaker's (and the presenter's) positive face (Brown and Levinson 1978: 118). Furthermore, the presenter avoids directing additional threat to the speaker's negative face (the speaker's negative face has already been seriously threatened by the initiation of simultaneous speech that resulted in his yielding the floor to the presenter) by hedging his opinion on the speaker's speculation ('it is *I wouldn't say* wishful thinking *perhaps* it is political stakes') (Brown and Levinson 1978: 150). Finally, by expressing his disagreement as a general observation ('reality operates under different rules') he distances himself from the source of the threat, thus avoiding damage to his own positive face. In this way the 'avoid (personal) disagreement' strategy is intensified and together with his previous 'personally I hear it with great pleasure' attends to the presenter's positive face wants in the encounter.

In general terms, the presenters in the panel discussions examined phrase their overlaps in such a way so as, firstly, to make topically relevant points and, secondly, to attend to the participants' negative and positive face wants, their own face wants included. Consideration for face is not only shown in simultaneities that are considered to be disruptive by the guest speakers, but also in simultaneities that the presenters themselves interpret as a potential face-threat directed to people of a higher social status than their own.

Supportive and face-boosting simultaneities

So far we have seen presenter-initiated instances of simultaneous talk which are employed as means of controlling the direction or the topic of the conversation, or providing summaries, examples or additional information for the sake of the audience. These functions relate to the rights and obligations of the role of presenter and, although most of them have been dictated by normative pressures of the moment, they all involve strategies that attend to the participants' face. The simultaneities that will be discussed in this section differ from the ones presented above in that, firstly, they are not dictated by what can be considered as the typical rights and obligations of the role of a panel discussion moderator, and, secondly, they exhibit exclusive preoccupation with the face of the guest speaker and/or the face of the presenter. The primary motivation for these simultaneities seems to be the presenter's considerations for his face and for the face of his guests. As we shall see, the positive face of the participants is almost always the focus of these considerations.

Self- and other-FBAs

According to Bayraktaroğlu (1991: 15), in addition to Brown and Levinson's FTAs there are "face-boosting acts' (FBAs) which *satisfy* the face wants of the addressee and/or speaker." An FBA can boost the face of the speaker her/himself (FBA/self) or the face of some other interactant (FBA/other). The FBAs Bayraktaroğlu discusses concern the positive face wants of the speaker/addressee and include acts like boasting (FBA/self) or compliments (FBA/other).

In my data presenters often initiate simultaneities that function as FBAs. These FBAs bolster not only the face of the current speaker (FBA/other), but also the presenter's own positive face (FBA/self).

- (10) 1 Pa: νομίζω ότι πρέπει να το πούμε [και αυτή είναι και η
πραγματικότητα
2 Pr: [το λέτε καθαρά και
είναι προς τιμήν σας
1 Pa: I think we should say this [and this is how things are
2 Pr: [you're saying it clearly and it is
much to your credit

In this case, the presenter speaks concurrently with the guest speaker and expresses his approval of the guest's straightforward attitude concerning the issue currently discussed. This expression of overt approval boosts not only the guest speaker's positive face but also the presenter's own positive image vis-à-vis the current speaker.

The example that follows is a case of an FBA/other which is made not *to* the current speaker but *about* him. 'G' is the Dean of the Medical School of the University of Ioannina (in Western Greece), 'E' is the presenter, and the Minister mentioned is the Minister of Education, also participating in the programme on the future of tertiary level education in Greece.

- (11) 1 G: αν πάνε πενήντα χιλιάδες φοιτητές {στην επαρχία} θα πάνε και πενήντα χιλιάδες εργαζόμενοι αυτό το πράμα ε[μείς τα υπόλοιπα πανεπιστήμια να θυσιάσουμε- >>
- 2 E: [κάθε φοιτητής φτιάχνει και μια θέση εργασίας δηλαδή
- 3 G: >> να θυσιάσουμε και 5% του προϋπολογισμού μας [...] μπορεί να παντρευτεί, να μείνει εκεί θα γνωρίσει ο Αθηναίος την επαρχία (.) αν φέρου[με τον επαρχιώτη >>
- 4 E: [αυτή είναι μία καλή πρόταση κύριε υπουργέ είναι μία καλή πρόταση
- 5 G: >> και τον φέρουμε στην Αθήνα και μείνει 12 χρόνια δεν ξαναγυρίζει στην επαρχία (.)
- 1 G: if fifty thousand students go {to the provinces} another fifty thousand working people will go too this thing [we the rest of the universities should sacrifice- >>
- 2 E: [each student creates a working post in other words
- 3 G: >> we should sacrifice even 5% of our budget [...] they can get married there stay there the Athenian will get to know the provinces (.) if we [bring a person from the >>
- 4 E: [this is a good suggestion Minister it is a good suggestion
- 5 G: >> provinces and we bring him to Athens and he stays for 12 years he won't go back to his province (.)

'G' is currently arguing that more universities should be created in the provinces so that people from the provinces do not all come to Athens to

study. His talk is intertwined with relationally neutral simultaneities on the part of the presenter such as requests for information or clarification, or recapitulations of the speaker's main points. However, the presenter's simultaneity in [4] is no longer a neutral one, but one that bolsters the speaker's positive face, as it expresses the presenter's overt approval of the suggestion. What is interesting about this FBA/other is that it is formed as an address to another guest, the Minister, which, I believe, makes it even more face-enhancing. More specifically, [4] is not only an expression of the presenter's approval of 'G's' suggestion, but it is also the presenter's attempt to draw the Minister's attention to the value of 'G's' suggestion and consequently, an invitation to the Minister to appreciate the value of the current speaker. The presenter's approval is then augmented by the fact that it is considered suitable to be shared by a Minister. This act boosts not only 'G's' positive face, but, similarly to the previous example, also the presenter's positive face vis-à-vis the current speaker. Once again, the data give evidence of the presenter's consideration for positive face overriding his consideration for the current speaker's negative face ('G's' want to complete his turn unimpeded).

Other simultaneities attending to positive face wants

In addition to initiating simultaneities with the aim of boosting the current speaker's and their own (positive) face, presenters employ positive politeness strategies that cultivate an atmosphere of solidarity, closeness and familiarity. This distinguishes Greek panel discussions from other panel discussions on similar topics that have been researched so far (Bennett 1981; Greatbatch 1988; Hutchby 1992). In all Greek discussions, the presenters make numerous supportive backchannels and jokes, express their agreement with the speaker overtly and offer encouragement and reassurance on issues that appear to worry the guest speakers.

Example 12 is part of an animated political discussion, where the turn of one of the guest speakers ('Lp') triggers off a joke, a positive politeness strategy (Brown and Levinson 1978: 129). The joke is initially made by the presenter ('Pr') who starts to speak while the current speaker's turn is under way, probably in an attempt to secure 'sequential implicativeness' (Schegloff 1987) for the joke. The presenter's initiation is immediately picked up by the rest of the participants ('K', 'Lp' and 'Ln') who join in in chorus and produce the joke collaboratively.

- (12) 1 Λπ: και κάτι άλλο (.) εδώ που συζητάμε τώρα είναι πολύ πιθανό το ΠΑΣΟΚ να έχει χάσει την ονομαστική ψηφοφορία στη βουλή για το φορολογικό νομοσχέδιο (.) αντιδρούν οι βουλευτές του ΠΑΣΟΚ (.) πώς βλέπετε λοιπόν εσείς ότι όλα πάνε καλά σ' αυτό [το κόμμα >>
- 2 Πρ: (χαμογελώντας) [κύριε Πασχαλίδη [θα [θα τη χάσετε >>
- 3 Λπ: >> ας ευχηθώ [εγώ να πάνε όλα [καλά
- 4 Πρ: >> την ονομαστική ψηφοφορία; είστε αρμόδιος υφυπουργός επί θεμάτων [οπότε [λείπετε
- 5 Κ: (γελώντας) [λείπει [λείπει
- 6 Λπ: (γελώντας) [λείπει [λείπει
- 7 Λν: (γελώντας) [λείπει [λείπει
- 8 Λν: εγώ δεν έχω λείψει ποτέ
- 9 Κ: δύο λείπουν
- 10 Πρ: θα τη χάσει; δύο με το [Γιώργο
- 11 Λπ: [δύο ένα [XX τέσσερα
- 12 Κ: [το 'στησε ο Λιάπης αυτό
- 13 Πα (γελώντας) μας παρασύρατε σε κάτι τέτοιο κύριε Πρετεντέρη; κι εσείς;
- 14 Πρ: ότι τί; ότι ήθελα να χάσετε την ονομαστική ψηφοφορία; (σοβαρεύοντας) όχι
- 15 Πα: (σοβαρεύοντας) λοιπόν κλείνουμε;
- 16 Πρ: εσείς κλείνετε
- 1 Lp: there's something else (.) while we talk here it is very likely that PASOK has lost in the nominal division at the parliament concerning the tax bill (.) PASOK MPs express their opposition (.) how can you say that all is going well with [that party let me [wish that everything goes [well
- 2 Pr: (smiling) [Mr Pashalidi [are you [are you going to miss the nominal division? you are the deputy minister in charge of issues [therefore [you're absent
- 3 Κ: (laughing) [he's absent [he's absent
- 4 Ln: (laughing) [he's absent [he's absent
- 5 Lp: (laughing) [he's absent [he's absent
- 6 Ln: I've never been absent

- 7 K: two are absent
 8 Pr: is {PASOK} going to lose? two with [George
 9 Lp: [two one [XX four
 10 K: [it was Liapis
 who set this up
 11 Pa: (*laughing*) did you drag us into something like that Mr
 Pretenderi? *et tu?*
 12 Pr: that what? that I wanted you to miss the
 nominal division? (*getting serious*) no
 13 Pa: (*getting serious*) right, shall we round up?
 14 Pr: you round up

The above exchange begins as a one-at-a-time floor which turns into a collaboratively developed floor (Edelsky 1993) with a series of cooperative simultaneities ([3]-[5], [8]-[10]) as soon as the presenter starts his joke. The first set of these simultaneities ([3]-[5]) takes the form of ‘cooperative sentence-building’ and ‘choral repetition’ which relate to attending to the positive face of the current speaker (Tannen 1983b). The joke concerns ‘Pa’, the deputy Minister present, who also joins in towards the end ([11]). The joke the presenter starts creates an atmosphere of cooperation and evokes a sense of familiarity also detected in the participants’ use of address terms (‘George’ in [8], ‘Liapis’, surname without title in [10]), despite the fact that the participants belong to different political parties. Such incidents occur in all the panel discussions examined and it is interesting to note, firstly, that they can occur in the middle of the most animated and serious part of the discussion, and secondly, that, once jokes are initiated by the presenter, all participants join in eagerly and elaborate on the joke collaboratively.

In addition to jokes, in the panel discussions examined, there is ample evidence for supportive interventions in the form of ‘yeah’ or ‘sure’ (back-channels) or of ‘saying the same thing at the same time’. These instances satisfy one of the speaker’s positive face needs, the need to be noticed and attended to by his co-participants (Brown and Levinson 1978: 108). Examples 13a and 13b illustrate this function of presenter-initiated simultaneities. The presenters involved are ‘E’ in 13a and ‘P’ in 13b.

- (13a) 1 Γ: ο κύριος Παπανδρέου, με τον οποίο συνεργάστηκα, είχε προτείνει το δίπλωμα να μην, το πτυχίο, να μην είναι αποτέλεσμα, να μην δίνεται από το Τμήμα, από ένα,

- αλλά από ένα πρόγραμμα σπουδών που είναι ολκής,
 είναι ο [ο ελεύθερος κύκλος σπουδών ουσιαστικά
 2 E: [ο ελεύθερος κύκλος σπουδών
- 1 G: Mr Papandreou, with whom I collaborated, had suggested that
 the diploma should not, the degree should not be the result,
 should not be granted by the department, by one department,
 but by a programme of studies of great calibre, this is [the free
 programme of studies in effect
- 2 E: [the free
 programme of studies
- (13b) 1 M: η συνέπεια πάνω στο χρονοδιάγραμμα δεν εξαρτάται
 απολύτως από την πολιτεία αλλά και από άλλους
 παράγοντες οι οποίοι θα πιέζουν την πολιτεία με
 δεδομένο ότι εμείς θα πρέπει την τάδε του μηνός να
 παρουσιάσουμε το έργο θα πιέζουμε είτε για
 [νέες κοστολογήσεις είτε οτιδήποτε [άλλο
- 2 Π: [επαναδιαπραγμάτευση [μάλιστα
- 1 M: punctuality concerning the schedule does not depend totally on
 the state but also on other factors which will put pressure on the
 state on the grounds that we will have to present the work on
 the such-and-such of the month they will put pressure either for
 [new costings or for anything [else
- 2 P: [renegotiation [right

In 13a, the presenter becomes involved in a choral repetition with the speaker, a cooperative instance of simultaneous talk (Tannen 1983b). In 13b, guest and presenter say similar things at the same time, which is followed by a back-channel from the presenter. Simultaneities such as these display active listening or intense involvement in the conversation, which enhance the current speaker's positive face and promotes a relationship of cooperation and solidarity between him and the presenter.

The last two simultaneities discussed in this paper involve two more positive politeness strategies, 'asserting common ground' (Brown and Levinson 1978: 122ff) and 'giving gifts' in the form of reassurance (Brown and Levinson 1978: 134). These cases are presented in examples 14 and 15, respectively and involve the same presenter ('P').

- (14) 1 K: όσοι μπήκαν την τελευταία στιγμή όσοι υποψήφιοι μπήκαν την τελευταία στιγμή για να συμπληρώσουν τα ψηφοδέλτια και δεν ήξεραν ότι έπρεπε να καταθέσουν ισολογισμούς σ' αυτούς βάλουμε τις ποινές αυτοί είναι οι άνθρωποι οι οποίοι [θα πληρώσουν τις ποινές και >>
- 2 Π: [ήταν ένα από τα μελανά σημεία αυτής της προσπάθειας αυτό γιατί πραγματικά όταν είδαμε τη λίστα με τα ονόματα -
- 3 K: >> όσοι καταστρατήγησαν το νόμο και σας λέγω ότι όλοι οι ισολογισμοί όλων των βουλευτών είναι πλαστοί και πλασματικοί *όλοι* και είναι πλασματικοί όχι γιατί οι ίδιοι κατέθεσαν πλασματικούς ισολογισμούς αλλά διότι οι απαιτήσεις του νόμου ήταν γελοιότατες για το τι χρειάζεται να βάλεις σα δαπάνη
- 1 K: whoever got in the last minute the nominees that got in the last minute in order to fill in the ballots and didn't know that they had to hand in a balance of payment they were penalised those are the people who [are going to pay the penalty and those >>
- 2 P: [that was one of the dark aspects of this attempt because really when we saw the list with the names-
- 3 K: >> who circumvented the law and I am telling you that all balances of payment of all MPs are false and fictitious not because the MPs themselves handed in fictitious balances of payment but because the requirements of the law with respect to what counts as expenses were utterly ridiculous

Expressing his opinion in the middle of the guest speaker's talk secures the presenter topical relevance. With this simultaneity, the presenter expresses his agreement with the current speaker concerning the weak points of the law under discussion and asserts common ground with him on the basis of belonging to the same category of people, those who disagreed with the names that were in the list.

- (15) 1 Φ: οι Ολυμπιακοί αγώνες ξεχάσαμε κάτι έχουν ένα πρωταγωνιστή τον αθλητή κι αν δεν έχουμε Έλληνες αθλητές που ν'ανέβουν στα βάρθρα (.) είναι η παράμετρος την οποία πρέπει να υπογραμμίζουμε (.) οι Ολυμπιακοί αγώνες θα έχουν ένα έλλειμμα πολύ σοβαρό ο λαός μας

- περιμένει και προσδοκά να έχουμε και [Ολυμπιακές >>
 2 Π: [αυτό είναι βέβαιο
 3 Φ: >> αθλητικές νίκες έξω από τις λαμπρές [διοργανώσεις
 4 Π: >> [έχουμε να
 δούμε πολλές Ξάνθου στα βάρθρα είναι βέβαιο αυτό
- 1 F: we forgot something in the Olympic Games the leading role belongs to the athlete and if we haven't got Greek athletes to win medals (.) this is the factor we should underline (.) the Olympic Games will have a very serious shortfall our people expect and look forward to having [Olympic athletic >>
 2 P: [that's for certain
 3 F: >> victories apart from resplendent [organisations
 4 P: [we're going to see lots of
 Xanthou {an Olympic medallist} winning medals that's for certain

In this case, the simultaneities convey reassurance to the current speaker (and, indirectly, to the viewers) that there will certainly be lots of Greek athletes who will win medals in the 2004 Olympic Games. In this way, the presenter satisfies the guest's positive-face want to be understood and cared about, a want which also concerns the rest of the Greek people on whose behalf the current speaker is talking. There are many cases of giving reassurance to the current speaker in the data, a finding which provides additional proof for the presenters' intense preoccupation with the participants' positive face.

Discussion

As we have seen, presenter-initiated instances of simultaneous speech relate, first of all, to the particular context of situation which determines the rights and obligations of the participants involved. In other words, simultaneous speech relates to the presenters' intention to control the direction and the substance of the discourse. Such simultaneities are expected in panel discussions and are responded to as relationally neutral by the participants, except for cases where the last of a series of similar interventions acquires a cumulative threatening force for the negative face of the current speaker.

Close examination of the simultaneities that are employed in the manage-

ment of the discussion reveals that, in addition to the relationally neutral ones, there are cases which involve politeness strategies attending to the speaker's negative and/or positive face wants. Even more surprising is the finding that presenters initiate simultaneous speech with the exclusive aim of boosting the participants' positive face and of creating an atmosphere of closeness and solidarity in the encounter. Jokes produced in collaborative floor, backchannels, choral repetitions and Face Boosting Acts expressed in the middle of the guest speaker's talk are some of the supportive simultaneities identified in the data.

Given the gender of the participants involved and the context of the situation (televised panel discussions on political and social issues), these findings are at odds with the findings not only of studies concerned with the functions of simultaneous speech in all-male discussions, but also of studies analysing simultaneities in all-male televised panel discussions on similar issues. Concerning the former category of studies, it has been suggested that all-male conversations may involve more dominance-related, disruptive overlaps than other contexts (James and Clarke 1993) and that cooperative simultaneities are the most typical function of all-female simultaneous speech (Coates 1989). As regards the latter category of studies, the panel discussions examined have been found to involve only disruptive simultaneities, which is claimed to be in line with the set and rigid confrontational and aggressive character of these programmes. More specifically, in his work on argument sequences in radio talk, Hutchby (1992) outlines the conversational behaviour of hosts in the programmes he examines as one which is primarily confrontational and in which hosts initiate overlaps in order to control the development of the callers' line of talk. In another study, Greatbatch (1988) ascertains that panel discussion moderators withhold from expressing personal opinions and that they remain 'formally objective', a behaviour which falls under the restrictions of the British law. Finally, Yemenici (this volume) accounts for the occurrence of highly disruptive and 'impolite' interruptions in political news interviews in Turkey on the basis of the competitive nature of these programmes whose aim is to increase viewing by turning the interview into a heated debate.

The conversational behaviour of the presenters in the above studies is in contrast with that observed in the panel discussions I examine, where the presenters often express their approval of, and agreement with, the current speaker. Moreover, although their overlaps are associated with maintaining control over the flow of the conversation, they also relate to conversational strategies that cultivate an atmosphere of solidarity and camaraderie. Making

jokes, offering reassurance or encouragement, apologising for interrupting the speaker are some of the strategies Greek presenters employ in televised panel discussions in order to attend to the guests' as well as to their own face wants. In my data simultaneous talk initiated by the presenter is not intended to be disruptive, whereas additional care is taken so that overlaps do not damage anyone's face, especially anyone's positive face.

The findings of my study do not seem to be explained on the basis of the gender of the participants nor on the basis of the particular type of encounter (televised panel discussions). It is my contention that the conversational behaviour of the presenters observed in my data can be explained mainly on the basis of a cultural trait that characterises the Greek people. In particular, I want to argue that the supportive simultaneities found in the Greek panel discussions I have analysed are closely related to the positive politeness orientation of the Greek people, that is to their preference for cultivating the positive aspect of face of their interlocutors.

According to Sifianou (1992), the Greeks place emphasis on involvement and favour displays of solidarity and familiarity, which means that they consider the positive aspect of face to be more important and more essential to maintain than the negative aspect. In their encounters, Greek people tend to cultivate relations of intimacy and closeness with their interlocutors, even when they meet for the first — and sometimes last — time (Tzanne 1997). In general terms, the Greeks have been found to use politeness strategies that cultivate informality, closeness and involvement (positive politeness) rather than formality and distance (negative politeness) (Marmaridou 1987; Sifianou 1989; Tannen 1983a). Further supportive evidence for this tendency is also found in research on some Greek television informative and entertaining programmes where, through the constant use of positive politeness strategies, the presenters cultivate an atmosphere of closeness and familiarity that engulfs guests, studio technicians and TV audience alike (Tzanne 1999).

With respect to the panel discussions examined in this paper, I would like to argue that it is the same positive politeness orientation of Greek society that can account for the presenters' conversational behaviour, as they appear to honour positive face above all and prefer imposing on the participants' negative face to refraining from showing rapport and involvement with the current speaker. There are indeed many cases in the programmes where the presenters do not hesitate to project their talk in the middle of a guest's talk (thus threatening the guest's negative face, that is his wish to act unimpeded by

others) in order to express their agreement with and approval of the point currently made by the guest (thus attending to the guest's positive face want to be liked and approved of by others).

At first glance, the manifestation of the Greeks' positive politeness orientation in the programmes examined appears to be slightly at odds with the context in which it is observed, as panel discussions involving ministers, MPs and other people who differ in backgrounds and political beliefs are not the type of encounter one would normally expect to find jokes, teases, whole-hearted expressions of agreement and other supportive remarks. However, adopting a conversational behaviour on television which is similar to one's everyday way of interacting may be a manifestation of the general tendency for 'conversationalisation' (Fairclough 1995) already established in the British media and now evidenced in the Greek media as well (see Sifianou and Tzanne 1999). This tendency accounts for the presenters' efforts to moderate the discussion in an atmosphere of solidarity and cooperation.

As a final point, it should be noted that the presenters' conversational behaviour is not unrelated to the topic of the panel discussions examined. In particular, contrary to what happens in the political debates examined by Yemenici (this volume), the topics discussed in the Greek programmes are probably not of the kind that could turn the discussion into a heated debate where the participants would constantly interrupt one another in their attempt to take and hold the floor. This gives the Greek presenters the opportunity to introduce and maintain a relaxed atmosphere of closeness and solidarity in the discussion, which, in turn, allows the rest of the participants to attend to all interactants' positive face, their own face included. My intuitions are that panel discussions related to election campaigns in Greece or concerned with major political scandals would involve many more and more seriously disruptive interruptions. However, more work needs to be done in this area before we can talk with any certainty about the relation of the topic of the discussion to the conversational behaviour of the participants.

Key to transcription symbols

=	latching
(.)	pause
>>	skip-connecting turn

[onset of simultaneous speech
XX	unintelligible segment
-	cut off speech
[...]	omitted text
(text)	extralinguistic information
text	stressed segment
{text}	clarification or comment provided by the analyst-author

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Analysis of the use of politeness maxims in interruptions in Turkish political debates

Alev Yemenici

Introduction

This chapter investigates the functions of interruptions and the use (upholding and violation) of politeness maxims in interruptions employed by interviewers (henceforth, IRs) and interviewees (henceforth, IEs) during political debates in news interviews broadcast live on private Turkish TV channels.

In ordinary conversation, according to Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), only one party is expected to talk at a time. If simultaneous speech occurs or the speaker switch is not “smooth” (James and Clarke 1993: 237) in the sense that the second speaker starts talking or “attempts to take over a turn before a prior speaker has given any indication of reaching the end of it” (Lakoff 1990: 47), overlap or interruption is produced.

An interruption may aim to shift the topic, but an overlap occurs “when a speaker is clearly about to finish. It generally reinforces the speaker’s point or amplifies the topic” (Lakoff 1990: 47). In other words, interruptions may be heard as “aggressive” speech acts while overlaps may be perceived as “supportive” (Lakoff 1990: 47).

Supportive and cooperative simultaneous speech turns into aggressive or disruptive interruptions when the balance/symmetry in conversation is lost (Tannen 1993: 176). When the larger context in which interruption or overlap occurs is considered, the distinction between them becomes clearer. According to Tannen (1993), cooperative overlapping may occur mostly in casual conversation among friends but not in a job interview. In other terms, in formal settings, overlaps are more likely to be defined as interruptions since “interruptions to the speech of another may be negative in effect, disrupting another’s turn and restricting their contribution” (Holmes 1995: 54). Many people, especially

those who have cultural backgrounds that attribute negative characteristics to any kind of interruption or overlap, would regard interruptions as non-supportive or disruptive no matter what intention or function lies behind them.

Interruptions in ordinary conversation are generally considered inherently impolite (Leech 1983: 139; Brown and Levinson 1987: 67). Similarly, interruptions made especially by interviewers in the news interview context may be perceived as rude (Clayman 1993: 174). According to Gökyay,¹ interruptions during political debates in the Turkish Parliament are extremely rude since they show that the members of the Parliament do not know how to listen to the other party or how to set out their arguments and thus set bad examples to the audience.

Data

The corpus comprises seven full interviews recorded from Kanal D, Show TV and HBB, amounting to 6 hours. These interviews involve one interviewer and one (or more) interviewee(s). If the interview hosts more than one interviewee, IE₁ is generally interviewed in the TV studio while IE₂ participates in the debate via cable connection. If there is a third party, IE₃ participates in the debate by telephone. The participants in these interviews are generally well-known politicians and prominent public figures.

The interviews were broadcast between December 1996 and May 1997 and were video recorded. The conventions introduced by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) were used in the transcriptions of the data. However, the transcripts have been partially simplified to prevent confusion that may arise due to translation.²

Before going into a detailed analysis, an overview of the research done on the institutional character of news interviews, on interruptions and on the politeness phenomena will be presented.

Institutional Character of News Interviews

Turn-taking

Turn-taking procedures in the news interview setting display significant differences when compared with those in mundane conversational interactions.

The institutional character of news interviews specifies certain roles for IRs and IEs, putting various constraints on the allocation, management and production of types of turns. Basically, IRs ask questions while IEs answer them (Clayman 1988; Heritage and Greatbatch 1991; Schegloff 1992). In other words, there is a turn-taking system in which “particular types of turns to speakers with specific institutional identities” (Greatbatch 1988: 404) are pre-allocated. For Schegloff (1992: 118), too, there is a pre-allocated question-answer format in news interviews.

IRs tend not to go beyond their institutional role of “report elicitors”, thus appointing the audience as the “primary addressee” of the news interview (Greatbatch 1988, 1992). IRs confine themselves to asking questions while “withholding a range of responsive activities” such as “acknowledgement tokens and news receipt objects” (Greatbatch 1992: 269–270); they refrain from issuing responses such as “oh” receipts, newsmarks (Greatbatch 1986, 1988) and assessments (Pomerantz 1984: 57). The major reason for this is that issuing of recipient tokens clearly identifies the issuers as the primary addressees of the current talk, who acknowledge the receipt of information and express their own reactions. When IRs do not use such cues, they do this in favour of the overhearing news audience, registering the audience as the primary recipient of the talk (Heritage 1985; Schegloff 1992; Greatbatch 1992). However, when a departure from the turn-taking provision occurs, for instance when an IE directs his/her answer or assessment to a co-IE, in general they are “careful to maintain the IR, rather than the co-IE, as the direct addressee of their statements” (Heritage and Greatbatch 1991: 113). They do this by employing third person singular in referring to the co-IE. If the IR refrains from producing back-channel communication at this point, then the talk will be directed to the audience; thus, the news interview norms will be preserved.

Furthermore, withholding responsive actions during IEs’ extended multi-unit turns indicates that IRs display co-operation with IEs in not interfering with their talk, thus allowing them to speak longer than expected (Heritage and Greatbatch 1991: 100).

While formulating questions, IRs employ a “compound form” which embodies “an initial prefatory statement” (Heritage and Greatbatch 1991: 99), i.e. statement turn-components which come prior to IRs’ production of questioning turn-components. These statements provide contextual information and lay the groundwork for the question. IEs recognise these and regard IRs’

statement turn-components as preliminaries to questions and treat them accordingly. Instead of perceiving the IRs' statement turn-components as transition relevance places (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974) where IEs may get the floor, IEs prefer not to initiate their turn (Greatbatch 1988:410).

In addition, IEs tend to withhold back-channel cues such as 'mm-hmm,' 'uh-huh' which are not perceived as a claim to get the floor in mundane conversation. On the contrary, back-channel communication in mundane conversation is generally employed by the hearers to send the signal which assures the speaker that they will not initiate a turn: "a back-channel communication does not constitute a turn or a claim for a turn ... when a speaker is displaying a turn-yielding signal, the back channel is often used by the auditor to avoid taking his speaking turn" (Duncan 1972: 288). Withholding of back-channel communication by IEs implies that IEs are oriented to IR rights in the context of an interview, which further indicates that IEs collaborate with IRs in withholding speech until IRs properly complete their questions (Heritage and Greatbatch 1991: 99–100).

When back-channel cues are produced at transition relevance places (henceforth, TRPs), IEs refrain from initiating an answer before IRs' statement+questioning turn-components come to a full stop. In addition, "they avoid treating the possible completions of such turn components as TRPs, that is, as places at which they have a right to talk" (Greatbatch 1988: 411). However, when they occur in the news interview setting, they generally occur in a hostile interview environment, indicating

1. the abandonment of news interview turn-taking procedures;
2. the abandonment of the "footing" of the news interview that is associated with those procedures; and
3. incipient escalation into either disagreement with a co-participant or attempted interdiction of the continuation of a co-participant's turn at talk. (Heritage and Greatbatch 1991: 129).

The news interview turn-taking system requires that IRs manage turns, open and close interviews and that IEs do not initiate questions or comments on co-IEs' answers (Heritage and Greatbatch 1991: 97–98). However, departures from the norms of the standard turn-taking system and the question-answer format may occur. For instance, when IEs do not address themselves to the question asked by the IR, and when IEs speak "out of turn" (Greatbatch 1988: 418), they violate turn-taking norms. If they are to take a departure from the norms, IEs may issue a request for permission before they start speaking. They

may utter either a genuine or token request (Greatbatch 1988: 419). On the whole, the departures from the standard question-answer format do not cause “a complete breakdown of turn-type pre-allocation” (Greatbatch 1988: 421) because finally IRs come back to the normative line by asking their previously intended question. If the departure poses a serious threat to both the standard news interview format and the IR’s status “as competent report elicitor” then IRs “sanction the conduct of the IEs” (Greatbatch 1988: 421) to restore the standard format.

Neutrality

The institutional character of the news interview setting requires that IRs display a neutral stance by avoiding the projection of explicit personal assessments, opinions and challenges (Greatbatch 1988, 1992; Clayman 1988, 1992) since they occupy the role of a report elicitor who elicits information on behalf of an overhearing news audience. Clayman emphasises that preservation of a neutralistic stance can only be achieved through a collaborative effort on the part of both IRs and IEs (1988: 480).

According to Clayman (1988, 1992), IRs produce assertions, assessments and strongly evaluative statements as statement turn-components that come prior to questioning turn components or as independent utterances. While doing this, they “shift footings” (1992: 165). Footing (Goffman 1981) helps IRs to assume the role of “animator” through which IRs distance themselves from the opinionated statements to preserve their neutralistic stance (Clayman 1992: 165).

During an interview, IRs may project strong assessments, challenges or assertions that may arouse strong objections on the part of the IEs. However, to sustain neutrality, they should depend on a third party, thus adopting the role of animator. They rely on another source to reduce the amount of threat that would be posed otherwise. In other words, animated utterances function as objective strengtheners to IRs’ assertions and assessments directed to IEs’ stated positions, indicating that “the viewpoints they report originated elsewhere” (Clayman 1992: 173) and that “by declining to affiliate with/against statements involving others as principals, IRs do not project themselves as principals in their own right” (1992: 174). Hence, IRs emphasise the importance of the credibility of their assertions by referring to authoritative opinions and views (Clayman 1992: 180).

In various contexts IRs shift footing to preserve their neutralistic stance. They use footing shifts (1) when they introduce new but controversial topics using provocative statements, (2) when they wish to disagree with IEs' statements by presenting "divergent contrasting points of view" (Clayman 1992: 176), (3) when they intend to lead to contentious debates between/among IEs, and (4) when they need to counter accusations from IEs.

In addition to footing shifts, IRs may use some other techniques to preserve neutrality. Papatiantafyllou (1997) argues that Greek journalists employ techniques such as mitigation, absence of third-turn receipt tokens and formulations along with footing shifts and statement turn components.

Notwithstanding the effort to preserve the neutralistic stance, when IRs make clearly opinionated and challenging statements without assuming the animator role, they either (1) mitigate the effect of their utterances using "action projections" (Clayman 1988: 487) which inform the IEs of the nature of the oncoming question and of the IR's own stance, or (2) are disposed to effect self-repair that aims to carry the IR back to the neutral footing.

Interruptions

According to Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson's (1974) turn-taking model, in mundane conversation, there usually is only one speaker doing the talking at a time. The recurrence of speaker change and turn allocation are organised by the turn-taking mechanism. Although "occurrences of more than one speaker at a time are common", they are "brief" (1974: 700). Sacks *et al.* (1974) propose that a turn is composed of "unit-types" which consist of single words, single phrases, clauses or sentences. Since speakers are "initially entitled, in having a turn, to one such unit" (1974: 703), when they reach a completion point of such a unit (TRP), another party may get the floor. However, Beattie (1982: 100–103), employing Ferguson's (1977) model, argues that "smooth speaker switch" occurs when there is no simultaneous speech and when the speaker has completed her/his utterance at the time of speaker change.

Zimmerman and West distinguish between overlaps and interruptions. When a speaker other than the current speaker starts talking "at or very close to a possible transition place in a current speaker's utterance (i.e., within the boundaries of the last word)" (1975: 114) when the current speaker's speech is in progress, this is termed an overlap. On the other hand, interruptions are

defined as breaching of the turn-taking provisions which dictate that transitions from one speaker to another should occur at TRPs or at possible completion points (Zimmerman and West 1975: 114). In general “the word ‘interruption’, both in ordinary usage and in the usage of most researchers, has negative connotations, implying violation of another’s right to speak. The term ‘overlap’ has been used by Tannen and by some others to indicate simultaneous talk without any negative connotation” (James and Clarke 1993: 237).

According to Bull and Mayer (1988) overlaps occur due to simultaneous speech in which, before the first speaker completes her/his turn, the second speaker begins. Bull and Mayer (1988: 37) claim that overlaps may be indicative of “enthusiasm or involvement” on the part of the hearers so they “should not necessarily be seen as intrinsically interruptive”. According to Holmes, “simultaneous speech, which technically ‘interrupts’ the other speaker, may function positively to encourage and support them” (1995: 54). Tzanne (this volume) argues that IRs in Greek panel discussions use positive politeness strategies while interrupting IEs with the aim of creating an atmosphere of rapport and familiarity. In informal contexts people often build up the discourse collaboratively. Simultaneous talk, which superficially appears to be an interruption, may actually represent joint participation and solidarity in the talk.

Tannen (1994) distinguishes between two styles of speakers. Speakers who have “high involvement” styles tend to start speaking while another party is already speaking because they show “involvement” or display “the need for positive face” (Tannen 1994: 63). During their conversation high involvement speakers do not feel that their speech is disrupted by the overlap. Moreover, if the other speaker’s discourse lacks overlaps or interruptions, it may indicate lack of interest (James and Clarke 1993: 240). However, the speakers who have “high considerateness” styles feel interrupted and even dominated when an overlap occurs as they do not share the “high involvement” styles (Tannen 1994: 64).

Tannen (1993) prefers to use the term “overlap” to “interruption” in her study where simultaneous talk takes on positive connotations as it is rapport-building. An overlap turns into an interruption only when communication between two parties becomes asymmetrical (1993: 176) where one party overlaps all the time and the other gives up his/her right to the floor. Its effect is ‘domination’, not solidarity. “If both speakers avoid overlap, or if both speakers overlap each other and win out equally, there is symmetry and not domination, regardless of speakers’ intentions” (1993: 176).

During a conversation, the speaker's turn-yielding cues which might include a phonemic clause having rising or falling intonation at the juncture between clauses, the termination of various hand movements with the exclusion of "self-adaptors and object-adaptors," and the use of expressions such as "but uh," "or something", or "you know", following a sentential unit (Duncan 1972: 287) might be misleading so that hearers may attempt to gain the floor; and consequently interruptions may occur. Duncan claims that when the speaker is making hand movements, although s/he may display successive turn-yielding cues, the hand movements function as "an attempt-suppressing signal" which "maintains the turn" for the speaker (1972: 287).

On the other hand, Murray argues that "completion rights are not absolute" (1985: 33). If hearers come to a consensus as to the amount of talk of a current speaker, even though s/he has not reached a possible completion point in her/his talk, the cutting off of the speech by hearers is not considered interruption. Murray suggests that "a fuller analysis of context than counting syllables of simultaneous speech" (1985: 38) is required to solve the problems posed by the occurrence of interruptions and by how interlocutors recognize interruptions. For Murray, the cutting off of the speaker's current topic is as important and as severe an interjection as the interruption of the speaker's turn (Murray 1985: 38).

To identify the function of an interruption and/or whether an interruption or an overlap is used by a speaker, the interrupter's intention and "the larger context in which the interruption is used" should be taken into account (James and Clarke 1993: 242).

Interruptions play an important role in institutional contexts as they serve to intensify disagreements. Greatbatch (1992: 273) argues that disagreements in the interview setting differ from those that occur during ordinary conversation in various ways. In the news interview context, IRs elicit disagreements from IEs by asking questions, and consequently IEs direct their answers including disagreement components to IRs, thus preserving the question-answer format and the institutionalised footing of the news interview context. These disagreements are not delayed or mitigated, as is the case in ordinary talk. They are not marked by extra components such as "appreciation" signs, appreciation intensifiers, "hesitation signs", etc. (Bayraktaroğlu 1991: 20). On the contrary, they are "characteristically produced promptly and in a straightforward and unvarnished fashion" (Greatbatch 1992: 279). The only mitigation in this context is accomplished when IEs direct their disagreements

through IRs because “the news interview turn-taking provisions make no allowance for the disagreeing parties, the IEs, directly addressing or responding to one another, so the preference features cannot properly be produced or treated as ‘forestalling’ devices” (1992: 279).

When IEs initiate talk that includes disagreement components, they may depart from the turn-taking rules: their disagreements may take pre-/post response position, may occur immediately after a co-IE’s turn or may occur in the middle of a co-IE’s turn. Greatbatch emphasises that although these departures occur because IEs’ disagreements are not produced in response to IR questions, IEs still conform with the turn-taking provisions by directing their responses to IRs, thus designating the IR as the “default addressee” (1992: 284). When they do so, they automatically mitigate their disagreements.

However, there are unmediated instances where IEs drop their institutional footings. If they remove IRs as their “default” addressee and direct their disagreements to co-IEs, then disagreements become stronger because departures from the question-response format occur, and IEs undermine the “standard turn order as well as the standard turn-type format of the news interview” (Greatbatch 1992: 286). The major reason for this move is to “strengthen” or “upgrade” their disagreements. In sharp contrast with the ordinary conversation process where interlocutors upgrade their disagreements by withdrawing “some or all of the preference features” (1992: 285), in the news interview context IEs may prefer to produce their disagreements without waiting for an IR to ask a question. Thus, they may either interrupt a co-IE or wait for a possible completion point (TRP). Interruptions are deviations from the turn-taking rule which dictates that only one party should speak at a time, rather than wait for a relevant juncture in IEs’ turns. Employment of such interruptions intensifies disagreements. In Greatbatch’s words, “IEs commonly *escalate* their disputes by (a) moving out of (and often quickly abandoning) their institutionalised footings, and by (b) producing their talk interruptively” (1992: 291). Sacks emphasises that if interlocutors wish to express their anger and annoyance as well as their positive emotions such as amusement, they choose to interrupt (1992: 642–643).

According to Bull and Mayer (1988) “a high frequency of interruptions” occur in political interviews. Major reasons for interruptions to occur are: (1) politicians generally do not answer questions asked by IRs: politicians talk for some time without providing answers so IRs may need to reformulate their questions and ask probing follow-up questions or ensuing questions interrup-

tively, (2) IEs prefer to interrupt in order to disagree effectively rather than wait for the co-IEs to come to a possible completion point (1988: 38), and (3) IRs interrupt, in general, if IEs provide untruthful information (Karavit 1986).

Politeness

According to Leech (1983) there are some illocutions which are inherently polite and some illocutions which are inherently impolite. Leech distinguishes between two types of politeness: “Positive politeness consists in maximising the politeness of polite illocutions” while “negative politeness...consists in minimising the impoliteness of impolite illocutions” (1983: 83–84).

Leech (1983: 104) classifies the illocutionary force of utterances into four types according to their relation to how people establish and maintain interpersonal relationships. These are *Competitive*, *Convivial*, *Collaborative* and *Conflictive* functions. Competitive and convivial functions are closely related to the Politeness Principle (PP), having negative and positive politeness respectively, while collaborative and conflictive functions are not since the character of politeness is neutral in the former case and politeness is out of the question in the latter.

Leech provides an elaborate explanation of how the PP and the illocutionary acts are related. For instance, assertives are collaborative, directives/impositives are competitive, and commissives and expressives are convivial. Since declarations are institutional, Leech emphasises that they do not involve politeness (1983: 106).

Leech records various politeness maxims in conversation, the most important of which is the Tact Maxim. Tact is measured against a cost/benefit scale. Politeness increases as cost to the hearer is kept at the minimum and benefit to the hearer at the maximum. For instance, if the speaker upholds the Tact Maxim, then s/he should minimise the cost and maximise the benefit to the hearer. Moreover, as the level of indirectness increases, so does the degree of politeness because indirectness provides optionality through which the hearer is allowed the option to say no (in the case of impositives) and because the force of the indirect illocutions is weak (Leech 1983: 108–109).

Leech explores the PP maxims in terms of the expression of polite/impolite beliefs they convey. In this theory, (i) the Tact maxim (in impositives and commissives) minimises cost and maximises benefit to other, and (ii) the

Generosity maxim (in impositives and commissives) minimises benefit and maximises cost to self. In comparison, (iii) the Approbation maxim (in expressives and assertives) minimises dispraise and maximises praise of other, while (iv) the Modesty maxim (in expressives and assertives) minimises praise and maximises dispraise of self. In comparison, (v) the Agreement maxim (in assertives) minimises disagreement and maximises agreement between self and other and (vi) the Sympathy maxim minimises antipathy and maximises sympathy between self and other (1983: 132).

In order to see how maxims work in the context of a news interview, one may resort to “face work” (Brown and Levinson 1987) as Jucker (1986) does. According to Jucker, in news interview settings, when IRs question IEs’ opinions by asking yes/no questions or by using the declarative form (1986: 94), they may threaten the IEs’ face as “such an opinion might reduce the interviewee’s face, at least for part of the audience” (1986: 77). There are twelve ways for IRs to threaten IEs’ faces during an interview. For instance, the IR may ask the IEs to confirm their opinions with the presupposition that they are demeaning; to accept discrepancy between their opinions and their actions and between their opinions and reality; to take responsibility for the action they performed with the presupposition that it is demeaning; to justify the action they are believed to be responsible for; to state that the other party’s face is demeaning and to accept that their own face is demeaning (Jucker 1986: 77).

In some instances, the IE’s face might be damaged if s/he provided a positive answer. For instance, commitment to a future act or an opinion on the part of the IE would limit his/her freedom to a certain extent since s/he would not have the freedom not to do the action or not to change the opinion in the future. In addition, the IE might find it difficult to observe the Approbation Maxim in cases where s/he cannot maximise praise of the other party because s/he is a member of the opposition. The IR’s question may force the IE to “state that the other’s face is demeaning” (Jucker 1986: 95), thus forcing the IE to violate the Approbation Maxim. When the IE is forced to save his/her face against the presupposition encoded in the IR’s question that the IE’s “face is demeaning”, s/he has to breach the Modesty Maxim. According to Jucker, IRs use techniques that reduce the FTAs in their questions, and, similarly, IEs retain their politeness when they violate one or the other of the maxims of the PP. Moreover, they may use various techniques in order to hedge the question altogether: they may respond to the question without answering it (1986: 95).

Framework of analysis

In the present study, a distinction is made between interruptions depending on their goal. The interjection with a competitive goal produced by one party is considered an interruption when the speaker's utterance is completed grammatically but the propositional content of the utterance is not. This type of interruption is called "aggressive" interruption (Tannen 1994) or "disruptive" interruption (Holmes 1995), which appears especially when the interrupter aims to gain the floor and keeps it for a while. When the goal of the interruptive utterance is supportive and cooperative, the intervention is considered "cooperative" or "supportive" (Tannen 1994).

Interruptions are analysed within the framework of the news interview context. The turn-taking provisions attribute to IEs and IRs pre-specified institutional roles. Thus IRs are expected to stay within their roles to manage the interview, ask questions, keep a neutralistic stance, conduct openings/closings/exits from disagreements, control the topic organisation and assign the overhearing audience as their primary addressee. In turn, IEs are expected to answer IR questions, be oriented to IR turns, avoid topical shifts and cooperate with IRs in maintaining their roles. However, although the creation of IEs' "extended turns is the product of shared expectations about news interview talk which are realised as a collaborative achievement in which, on the one hand, the IE talks extendedly and, on the other, the IR withholds any form of intervention that would influence the IE's extended talk" (Heritage and Greatbatch 1991: 102), there are deviations from the turn-taking provisions when there is a need to strengthen disagreements. Thus aggressive/disruptive interruptions in the present study are regarded as disagreement intensifiers which are a form of deviation (Greatbatch 1992).

In the present study, interruptions are first identified. Then the functions of interruptions are analysed, and placed into two major categories according to goal. These are (a) the illocutionary goal of the utterances, and (b) the conversational goal of the utterances. Finally the politeness maxims employed in interruptions are explored. The PP maxims employed in interruptions are evaluated in terms of turn-taking provisions.

Interruptions in political interviews are generally regarded as impolite and require mitigation. When one party interrupts the current speaker, the interrupter is expected to minimise the impolite belief inherent in the act of interruption or mitigate the illocutionary force of the interruptive utterance.

In the news interview context, the institutional character of pre-allocation of turns specifies that both parties should observe the news interview provisions and act accordingly. Therefore, the breaching of these provisions by IRs or IEs contributes to the violation of the maxims of the PP. In other words, the news turn-taking provisions are taken as a criterion by which the employment of the maxims of the PP in interruptions is assessed. The preservation of the institutional roles of IEs and IRs is taken as a mitigating agent which functions to preserve the maxims of the PP.

Analysis

In the present study interruptions made during political interviews are examined under two major categories: IR interruptions on IE talk and IE interruptions on IE talk.

IR interruption on IE talk

In the present corpus, IRs use interruptions to ask ensuing follow-up questions. In the Turkish news interview setting, IRs produce continuers such as *evet* 'yes', *anlıyorum* 'I see', *tabii* 'sure', which are rare in news interviews (Greatbatch 1988: 407). IRs produce these continuers at TRPs while the IE's current talk is in progress. They do not signal that the IE is free to talk further, but rather they prepare him/her for a possible turn transition at the end of which IRs will get the floor. One such example is shown in extract (1) where AA, a former Interior Minister and a Welfare Party deputy, is interviewed about a controversial photograph taken at a wedding party. AA and Hüseyin Baybaşı, who has been sought by the Turkish Police for drug smuggling, were captured together in the photograph.

(1) SHOW TV

- 1 IR: *İyi akşamlar tanıyor musunuz Abdülkadir Bey bu Hüseyin Baybaşı'nı?*³
 2 AA: *Efendim⁴ ben önce Diyarbakırlı'yım, Diyarbakır milletvekiliyim, ve =*
 3→1 IR: *[evet*
 4 AA: *= Hüseyin Baybaşı'nı de Diyarbakır'lı, Lice'li. Bunu gösteren fotoğraf=*
 5→2 IR: *[evet. Tanıyor musunuz kendisini?*
 6 AA: *=ee bir Diyarbakır gecesinde çekilmiş olan bir fotoğraf. ...*

- 1 IR: Good evening do you know this Hüseyin Baybaşın Abdülkadir Bey?³
 2 AA: Efendim⁴ first of all I'm from Diyarbakır, I'm a Diyarbakır deputy, and=
 3→1 IR: [yes
 4 AA: = Hüseyin Baybaşın is also from Diyarbakır, from Lice. The photograph=
 5→2 IR: [yes. Do you know him?
 6 AA: =that shows this uhm is a photo taken at a Diyarbakır night. ...

In this excerpt, the IR displays a continuer (arrow 1) which will lead to his stealing the floor temporarily by interrupting the IE (arrow 2). The IR's interruption is a follow-up question that pursues the answer of a previously asked question. In this example, the IE avoids answering the question at first by violating the news interview question-answer (henceforth, Q-A) format. The IE starts explaining that Hüseyin Baybaşın is from the same town as he is. Since the IE is breaching the standard Q-A format, the IR cuts off the IE's talk at a pause which is a TRP grammatically and seeks the answer of the previously asked question. The fall in the IE's intonation helps the IR to interrupt, however, the IE continues because he has not completed the propositional content of his talk. Then the IR continues with his question and simultaneous talk occurs. The IR tries to pull the IE back into the news interview Q-A format, by displaying the IR footing, which is observable in his follow-up question. The follow-up question lacks mitigation which would have reduced the impoliteness inherent in the act of interruption. The IR's ensuing question clearly gains a competitive basis since he further forces the IE to give a more direct answer. By violating the IR footing through his use of continuers which appoint the IR as the primary recipient of the talk, and by interrupting the IE, he maximises the cost to the IE. In addition, the IR limits the IE's option of delaying the answer in order to provide background information. Thus, the IR does not observe the Tact Maxim.

IRs interrupt to rephrase IEs' answers. An example is located in extract (2) where the IR asks a deputy (NM) if there is a possible solution to the direct involvement of certain government officers with narcotics smugglers.

(2) SHOW TV

- 1 IR: ...ee bu soruna bir çözüm var mı? Size en son onu sormak istiyorum.
 2 NM: Elbette ki herşeyin çözümü var ee bi defa bu haberlerin kaynaklarını ve
 3 neşet ettiği yerleri bulup devlet gerek bürokratyyla gerek siyasetçisiyle bize
 4 görev düşüyorsa biz yarından tezi yok gidip bu mesele nereden kaynaklandı en
 5 alt tabandan haberleri toplamak suretiyle meselenin öğrenilmesini, eğer bu
 6 konuda eee suçlu olan varsa o suçlu olanların gerekli işlemlerinin
 7 yapılmasını ama haksız yersiz isnatlar varsa o zaman da gereğini yalnız

- 8 *burdaki Türk televizyonlarına değil Avrupa'da, ee bu ülkelerde televizyon*
 9 *kiralamak suretiyle (↑) doğruları o kamuoyuna anlatmak mecburiyetindeyiz.*
 10→1 IR: [*yani siz diyorsunuz ki* [Türk polisi bunu
 11 *çözebilir,*
 12 NM: *Mutlaka çözer, Türk polisi bu konuda çok şerefli geçmişinde mücadele*
 13 *etmiştir bu narkotik konusunda, az evvel konuşmamın başında söyledim yani*
 14→2 *o fotoğraf meselesi hakkaten üzüntü verici bir olay, yani =*
 15→3 IR: [tabi
 16 NM: *=zaten bu insanlar bürokratlar ve siyasetçiler çevresinde bulunan =*
 17→4 IR: [*hayır ama bu fotoğraf*
 18 NM: *=insanları tayin etmek durumunda değiller katıldıkları yerlerde,*
 19→5 IR: [*yani bir*
 20 *yerde de dikkat etmesi gerekiyor herhalde yani ee bütün ee*
 21 NM: [*ama tanyamazsınız yani*
 22 *şimdi siz de tanyamazsınız bu kadar program yapıyorsunuz mesa (mesela)*
 23→6 IR: [tabi [a yo gayet
 24→7 *tabii*

- 1 IR: uhm is there a solution to this problem? Finally, I'd like to ask you this question.
 2 NM: Of course everything has a solution uhm first of all we must find the
 3 sources of the news and its origin the government both with its bureaucrats
 4 and politicians if its our job we have to find out about the situation the origin of
 5 the problem as soon as possible by gathering information from the original source
 6 and spread the truth about the situation, if someone is guilty we should make sure the
 7 necessary actions regarding the guilty people be taken but if there are unjust unfounded
 8 accusations then not only on the Turkish TV channels here but in Europe as well, uhm
 9 uhm by renting (↑) TV channels in these countries we have to tell the truth to that public
 10→1 IR: [so you say that [the Turkish police
 11 can solve this,
 12 NM: Definitely they can, the Turkish police in this field have worked hard in
 13 their very honorable past in the field of narcotics, a few minutes ago at the beginning
 14→2 of my talk I said I mean the problem of that photograph is really grievous, I mean =
 15→3 IR: = [of course
 16 NM: well these people these bureaucrats and politicians they are not obliged =
 17→4 IR: [no but this photograph
 18 NM: =to select people around them when they attend social occasions,
 19→5 IR: [well one way or
 20 the other presumably he has to be careful supposedly I mean uhm the whole uhm
 21 NM: [but you can't
 22 recognize I mean now even you can't recognize the photograph though you're making=
 23→6 IR: [of course not
 24 NM: =so many TV programmes for instance
 25→7 IR: [oh no of course not

In this example, the IR wants to cut off the IE's talk as the IE talks for 37 seconds, providing detailed information about how to solve the problem, and thereby controlling the topical line of the talk. The overlapping talk (arrow 1) and the increase in the IE's pitch (line 9) when he hears the IR's interruptive preface, clearly show that the IE does not wish to give up the floor. The IE's intention at this point is to put an end to the increasing doubts regarding the relationship between government officials and drug smugglers, and to assure the audience that the Turkish Police can solve this problem by explaining detailed precautions that should be and will be taken. However, the IR, believing that the IE has responded and having realized that he will continue with forms of prevention of such situations, attempts to cut his talk (arrow 1) and reformulates the IE's answer stated in line 2. Only when the IE ignores the attempt and continues with his talk which has developed the topical line, does simultaneous talk occur for a brief duration and then the IR gives up after completing his reformulation (arrow 1). Though the IR's reformulation reinforces the IE's point, he, nevertheless, interrupts the speaker. His interruption lacks mitigation and the only politeness marker used in this intervention is the use of *siz* ('vous' form).⁵ His use of the reformulation aims to shift the topical line of the IE's present talk. The IR's interruption accomplishes the shift of the topical line. The interruption does not aim to keep the floor after the IR has stated the reformulation and immediately after that he releases the floor. After the shift of the topical line of the talk, the IE develops his point on the reformulation. He mentions the role of the Turkish Police first and then shifts to the photo problem (arrow 2), which is discussed in extract (1). The IR does not aim to keep the floor; his attempt, which enables him to shift the topic, gains a collaborative dimension where PP is irrelevant.

One other reason why IRs interrupt IE talk is to disagree with IEs and to assert their own viewpoints. In the above example, the IR projects an agreement token (arrow 3) just after the IE reaches a possible completion point (arrow 2). Then the IE starts with a reformulation preliminary (*yani*- 'I mean', arrow 2) but does not complete the attempted reformulation. At that point the IR projects the disagreement unit *hayır ama* 'no but' (arrow 4) and then releases the floor. The IR intends to initiate a discussion with a conflictive goal without the observation of any of the PP maxims but the IE does not release the floor. However, the IR takes over at the first possible completed unit where the IE's intonation pitch falls (arrow 5). At this opportunity, the IR projects a disagreement unit slightly mitigated by the use of *herhalde* (line 20) 'presum-

ably' (line 20) which provides the hearer with the speaker's point of view. It should be noted here that the IR steps out of his institutional footing as he does not animate the disagreement component but, instead, adopts the authorship of the utterance. Therefore he projects a competitive utterance which is only slightly mitigated since he does not emphasise his certainty but rather his assumption. In effect, he challenges the IE by stepping out of the turn-taking provisions, which indicates that he violates the Agreement Maxim where the speaker should minimise disagreement between the parties (arrow 5). Later the IE formulates his talk in such a way that the IR is obliged to produce agreement tokens which appoint him as the primary recipient of the IE talk (arrows 6 and 7). This is another indication that the IR steps out of the turn-taking provisions and does not maintain his neutralistic stance because he evaluates the truth value of the IE response by "producing news receipts, overt agreements/disagreements, assessments or straightforward challenges" (Greatbatch 1986: 86). The IR does observe the PP, however, when he assumes his institutional footing.

In other instances the IR interrupts to reformulate the IE's answer in order to assert his own viewpoint and mislead the audience. In the following extract, the IR is asking an ex-MIT (Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı-National Intelligence Service) Istanbul District Supervisor about the Susurluk accident.⁶ He asks questions as to whether the Service hires people such as drug dealers to gather intelligence.

(3) SHOW TV

- 1 NG: *Biz her konuda her konuda istihbarat toplamışızdır, bu da kişilerle olur, =*
 2 IR: *[evet]*
 3 NG: *= istihbarat toplama kişilerle olur şahıslarla olur [P] ama bunlar herhalde u=*
 4 IR: *[evet]*
 5 NG: *= benim burada ifade ettiğim gibi bu kadar Çatlı var bu kadar bilmem ne var*
 6 *bunlar uydurma şeyler ayıp şeyler bunlar, zabıtlar var orda !/?/*
 7→1 IR: *[evet]*
 8→2 *oradaki kişilerle evet efendim yani sizin istihbarat kişilerle götürülür diyorsunuz,*
 9 NG: *[efendim?]*
 10 IR: *ee istihbaratı kişilerle yapıyoruz diyorsunuz?*
 11 NG: *tabii kişilerle yapılır istihbarat*
 12→3 IR: *[bunlar tabii ee yani illa ki Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı'nın*
 13 *içersinde çalışan kişiler olmuyorlar kadrolu kişiler olmuyorlar, dışardan kişiler oluyorlar*
 14→4 NG: *[hayır efendim hayır hayır*
 15 *olur mu öyle şey? ...*

- 1 NG: We've gathered information on all subjects, and this requires people, =
 2 IR: [yes
 3 NG: =gathering information requires people, individuals [P] but these uhm supposedly=
 4 IR: [yes
 5 NG: = as I've stated here there're this many *Çatlıs*, there're this many I don't
 6 know who these are, these are lies, these are embarrassing, there are official records ?/?
 7→1 IR: [yes
 8→2 with those people there yes *efendim* I mean your you say intelligence=
 9 NG: [what?
 10 IR: =requires people, uhm you say intelligence is carried out with people?
 11 NG: of course intelligence is done with people
 12→3 IR: [these uhm I mean aren't always necessarily the people in the
 13 Intelligence Service not people who work there on a permanent basis, they're outsiders
 14→4 NG: [no *efendim* no no is such a thing possible? ...

In this extract the IR attempts to interrupt the IE (arrows 1 and 2) in order to gain the floor by first issuing acknowledgement tokens (*evet* 'yes', lines 2, 4 and 7). Then he reformulates the IE's answer, which functions as an assessment preface (arrow 2) leading to the IR's imposition of his own viewpoint (arrow 3) that is contrary to what the IE has said (line 6). From the beginning of the interview the IR has been trying to impose his view that people from outside the Intelligence Service, such as Abdullah Çatlı, have been hired by the Government to gather intelligence.⁷ The IE once again objects to this misleading assertion immediately since this is the IR's third attempt (the first two are excluded from the excerpt) in a series of attempts that aim to force the IE to admit that the Service hires such people. The illocutionary goal of this utterance is competitive in nature because the IR forces the IE to admit what his statement presupposes. In Jucker's terms, the IR presupposes "the demeaning nature of the action" and forces the IE (arrow 3) to "confirm" or "deny" that "the action or event took place at all" (1986: 86). The IR clearly violates the institutional turn-taking provisions and threatens the IE's face when he assumes the authorship of the opinion he states since "speakers who act as IRs may not properly engage in actions other than questions" (Heritage and Greatbatch 1991: 97). Thus, trying to maximise the cost to the IE, the IR violates the Tact Maxim. The use of the honorific *efendim* does not function as a mitigator because *efendim* is of a phatic nature in the political context. The IR violates the Agreement Maxim due to insistent repetition of his own imposing viewpoint (not included in the extract) from the beginning of the interview, which maximises disagreement between the IR and the IE. The IE's

emphatic objection clearly shows this (arrow 4).

Yet another instance is where IRs interrupt to change the addressee in the interview. An example is located in (4) where two members of different parties are being interviewed about the assassination plot against the leader of the main opposition.

- (4) KANAL D
- 1 YO: ... *ama buna benzer hergün çok sayıda yerden bi takım ihbarlar, bi*
 2 *takım kimi doğru kimi yalan artık onları tabi ayıklama imkanına sahip =*
 3 IR: [evet
 4→1 YO: = *değiliz, u şeyler geliyor.*
 5→2 IR: [*u Yaşar Bey ben hemen sayın Doğu Perinçek'e dönmek istiyorum*
- 1 YO: ... but every day from various sources some tips like this, some of
 2 which are true others lies now we can of course never tell, =
 3 IR: [yes
 4→1 YO: = uhm (the things) we are receiving.
 5→2 IR: = [uhm Yaşar Bey now I'd like to turn to Mr Doğu Perinçek right away, ...

In this extract the IE answers the question of whether the Interior Minister has ever provided him with information regarding the plot (see excerpt 8 for a larger context). The IE provides the answer to the question and moves in another direction. The IE does not end his turn. Then the IR interrupts just before the IE issues a continuer *u* “uhm” (arrow 1) which is a hesitation marker. His intonation falls (arrow 1) almost simultaneously with the IR’s interruptive transition preface *u* “uhm” (arrow 2) as the IE has completed two interrelated points in his turn. Although the IR attempts to gain the floor at a possible TRP, because the IE has not completed his utterance, the IR’s attempt is considered an interruption. The IR’s interruption aims not only to gain the floor but to give it to a co-IE, which is competitive in nature. The IR attempts to preserve his institutional footing and uphold the maxims of the PP. The transition preface (arrow 2) serves to mitigate the impoliteness of the interruptive act as the IR tries to minimise the cost to the IE, observing the Tact Maxim, by informing him of his intention to shift the addressee. The IR’s act of mitigation indicates that he has regarded the attempt as an interruption.

IRs interrupt to close interviews. An example taken from the same interview analysed in excerpt (4) (where the major topic is the assassination plot against the leader of the ANAP) is as follows:

(5) KANAL D

- 1 YO: ... hukuk müşavirine u talimatı bu akşam verdi. Herhangi bi şey yok, =
 2→1 IR: [peki teşekkür ediy
 3 teşekkür ediyorum sayın Okuyan teşekkür ediyorum sağolun Sayın Okuyan
 4 teşekkür ediyorum sağolun
 5 YO: = gayet saçma sapan iddialar.
- 1 YO: ...he's given the necessary instructions to the legal adviser uhm this evening.=
 2→1 IR: [OK
 3 thank you Sayın Okuyan thank you thank you Sayın Okuyan thank you thank you
 4 YO: = Nothing is wrong, these are utterly nonsensical claims.

In this excerpt the IR aims to gain the floor and close the interview. He waits for the IE to complete his utterance and issues his thanks (arrow 1). However, the IE starts again and makes two more points, producing simultaneous talk with the IR (lines 1 and 2). IR's turn (arrow 1) is regarded as an interruption for two main reasons. First, he wants to end the IE's turn and second, he does not concede when he realises that simultaneous talk is occurring. Therefore, the IR's talk is competitive in this sense. At the same time he preserves his neutral stance. He tries to mitigate his attempt to gain the floor by issuing several thanks. Furthermore, as he tries to minimise the cost of losing floor to the IE, he observes the Tact Maxim.

One final example (6) shows an IR interrupting to challenge an IE when the IE is assumed to be misleading the audience. In this example, the Parliamentary Deputy Speaker is being interviewed about an act of voting in the Turkish Parliament, when some of the members of the Parliament used votes in place of other members who were not at the meeting. In his preceding turn, the Deputy Speaker says that this was due to some mistake, thus unintentional, and that it was not possible to find out whose names were used. At this point the IR challenges the IE, stressing that on the previous news programme, the names of the Parliamentary members in question were stated.

(6) KANAL D

- 1 YH: biz onu biz bilemeyiz kimin yerine kullandı onu bilmemiz mümkün değil yarın=
 2 IR: [ben kimin
 3 yerine kullanıldığı biliyor,
 4 YH: =araştıracağız, divan toplanacak divanda bakılacak gerçekten
 5→1 IR: [efendim az önceki
 6→2 haberimizde biz yayınladık, kusura bakmayın sözünüzü kesiyorum da Ergün Özkan
 7 Ergül Özdemir ve bir diğer milletvekili Şamil Ayırım yerine oy kullanılmış kimlerin
 8 yerine kullanıldığı belli de kimlerin yaptığı belli değil.

- 1 YH: we can't know that it's impossible for us to know whose names were used we'll=
 2 IR: [I know whose names were used
 3 YH: =investigate tomorrow the council will get together it will be examined in the=
 4→1 IR: [efendim
 5→2 during our news a while ago we broadcast, excuse my interruption but votes were used
 6 in place of Ergün Özkan Ergül Özdemir and another deputy Şamil Ayrım whose
 7 names were used we know but who did it we don't.
 8 YH: =council meeting whether really

In line 2 the IR interrupts the IE by assuming the authorship of the claim first but upon realising this, she shifts footing and starts to formulate a passive construction (observable in the original text only). However, she releases the floor as the IE continues with his talk. Then after a short while she makes another attempt to gain the floor (arrow 1). In her attempt, the IR openly challenges the IE's previous statement by stating just the opposite of what he says, implying "a discrepancy between the IE's opinion and reality" which "amounts to lying" (Jucker 1986: 83); a threat to the IE's face. She interrupts the IE before he reaches a possible completion point (arrow 1), though the IE has made two points in his turn. The IR regards her interjection (arrow 1) as an interruption she should mitigate. In the Turkish political arena, floor-bidding attempts are regarded as interruptions since IEs wish to keep the floor until they feel that they have got their messages through and can release the floor. Therefore, she apologises to the IE (arrow 2). The IR has shifted footing to preserve her institutional stance, stressing the fact that the names were announced on their news programme a while ago, thus backing up her challenge with what she believes to be concrete evidence. As she keeps the floor for some time to provide details and counter proofs that contradict the IE's claims, her interruption acquires a competitive nature. However, her preservation of neutral footing helps her to avoid appearing rude and violating the Tact Maxim. Otherwise she would have forced the IE to breach the news interview provisions and the Agreement Maxim to disagree with the IR on a personal basis. Thus she would have violated the Generosity Maxim if she had maximised benefit to herself as an IR who wishes to receive appreciation from the audience for having asked the right question at the right time to put pressure on the IE. She violates the Agreement Maxim, but mitigates the force of her disagreement when she apologises to the IE for having interrupted him.

To summarise briefly, in this study IRs interrupt IEs to (1) project ensuing follow-up questions when IEs evade answering previously asked questions; (2) rephrase the responses of the IEs; (3) disagree to assert their

own viewpoints; (4) project misleading response reformulations; (5) change the addressee; (6) close interviews; and (7) challenge IEs when their responses are misleading.

The illocutionary goal of most of the interruptions is generally competitive, especially of those that are used to gain and maintain the floor to ask follow-up questions, assert viewpoints, or challenge IEs. They violate the Tact Maxim and the Agreement Maxim. However, in the present corpus, the IR interruptions which aim to reformulate IE responses and shift the topical line of the IE talk without aiming to steal the floor are regarded as collaborative. These are instances of interventions where PP is irrelevant.

In these interviews, what determines the degree of the use of the PP maxims and the illocutionary goal of the interruptions is the news interview turn-taking provision. The more the IRs leave the institutional footing, the more they breach the PP maxims. The major instances of IRs moving away from the institutional footing are (1) when they produce continuers and news receipts to gain the floor, (2) when they endorse the authorship of the opinion statements rather than animating them, and (3) when they affiliate/disaffiliate with contentious assertions.

IE interruption on IE talk

IEs interrupt a co-IE when they wish to present opposing viewpoints. They may produce disagreements preceded by agreement prefaces. In the following example (7), the Labour Party leader DP is arguing with a deputy from the ANAP about the Labour Party warning of a possible assassination plot organised to murder the leader of the ANAP. The deputy from the ANAP, YO, emphasises that they have been receiving warnings for a long time, some of which they do not take seriously, and that he was not well informed about the warning DP made regarding the plot. He thus indicates his disbelief of what DP says. He adds that DP's claim that he has saved their leader's life is pretentious, as God and their party have been protecting Mesut Yılmaz (excluded from the excerpt).

(7) KANAL D

- 1 YO: *Şimdi tabii önce Sayın Perinçek'in deminki açıklamasına kısa bi u cevap vermek*
 2 *istiyorumDoğu Perinçek Bey beni mazur görsün ama yani Mesut Yılmaz'a*
 3 *suikastını ben önledim şeyi biraz fazla iddialı bir söz olarak geldi, u pek*
 4→1 DP: *[peki evet olabilir tabii*

- 5 *yani o insanlar açıklayacak Yaşar Bey yani o bu v v görevi almış bu görevi bu görevi ver bu=*
 6 *YO: [tabi hayır yani şey olarak söylüyorum hayır ben*
 7 *ben bişey söylemiyorum teşekkür ettim,*
 8→2 *DP: = normal bunda bi üstünlük yok ya size de birisi gelse Doğu Perinçek'e suikast*
 9 *yapmak için bana görev verdiler dese, siz bunu önlediğiniz zaman diil mi?*
- 1 *YO: Now of course first I'd like to answer briefly uhm Sayın Perinçek's explanation*
 2 *made a while agoDoğu Perinçek Bey should forgive me but I mean that I prevented*
 3 *Mesut Yılmaz from being assassinated comes a little too pretentious, uhm very*
 4→1 *DP: [OK yes possible of*
 5 *course I mean those people will explain Yaşar Bey, I mean he this has undertaken this=*
 6 *YO: [of course not I mean I'm saying this*
 7→2 *DP: this is natural there is no superiority involved in it what if someone came to you*
 8 *and said I was appointed to kill DP, when you prevented this. Don't you agree?*
 9 *YO: no I'm not saying anything I thanked,*

After the detailed explanation DP provides as to how they found out about and prevented the assassination (excluded from the excerpt), the IR asks YO for his opinion on the matter. He then proceeds with another question which seeks the truth behind the alleged meeting between the main opposition party leader and Oral Çelik, who was accused of the murder of journalist Abdi İpekçi, the editor-in-chief and a columnist for the newspaper Milliyet. The question does not aim to initiate disagreement between DP and YO. However, YO aims to suspend his answer to the IR's question for a short while, producing an action projection (line 1) which stresses that he will leave the turn-taking provisions temporarily and will produce noncompliant talk to make his own point clear. YO casts doubt on DP's claim that the Labour Party saved the leader of the ANAP. Thus, stepping out of the turn-taking provisions, the IE accomplishes a pre-response topical shift (Greatbatch 1992). He issues a token request for forgiveness from DP. Although it may seem to function as a mitigating element, this request proves to be phatic later in his turn when he casts doubt on DP's statement that the Labour Party saved Mesut Yılmaz's life (lines 2 and 3). In other words, YO downgrades DP's explanation that his party had provided the major opposition party with the necessary information regarding the plot to kill their leader. Thus, he violates the Generosity Maxim because he maximises benefit to self; his downgrading is a covert invitation to disagreement, therefore maximising disagreement with the other party and violating the Agreement Maxim. Consequently, before YO starts answering the IR's question and reaches a relevant juncture, DP interrupts (arrow 1) by uttering agreement components. This, however, is an unusual occurrence in this set-

ting. “By virtue of being addressed to a third party, disagreements which are produced as answers to an IR’s questions are *automatically* mitigated, in that mediated disagreements are intrinsically weaker than unmediated ones” (Greatbatch 1992: 279). Therefore, in the news interview setting IEs generally produce disagreements straightforwardly without employing any kind of verbal mitigation. In this instance, however, DP uses agreement components (arrow 1) to mitigate his interruption as he steps out of the turn-taking provisions, when he directly addresses the co-IE (line 5) without seeking the mediation of the IR. Then he speaks with reproach to imply that his party did not accomplish an act which is superior in nature so there is no need denying the fact that the Labour Party saved Mesut Yılmaz’s life. Thus, DP maximises cost to his co-IE thereby violating the Tact Maxim; maximises benefit to self thereby violating the Generosity Maxim; and maximises disagreement with the co-IE thereby violating the Agreement Maxim.

IEs may interrupt to effect exits when disputes escalate. In the news interview context, exits from disputes are expected to be accomplished by IRs, not by the disagreeing parties (Greatbatch 1992). In the above excerpt [example (7)], however, YO interrupts DP at line 6 to emphasise that he has already thanked him and not downgraded his efforts. At this point, since he has expressed his opinion (lines 2 and 3), he wants to stop further disagreement. He tries to uphold the Sympathy and Agreement Maxims by trying to minimise antipathy and disagreement between them while at the same time violating the news interview provisions.

IEs may interrupt to escalate disagreements to the level of dispraise. An excerpt taken from the same interview is located at (8). In this extract the assassination plot mentioned above is again being discussed.

(8) KANAL D

- 1 YO: *Hayır ben detayı bilmiyorum Sayın Perinçek*
 2→1 DP: *[ya ya demek böyle bir ihtimal var.*
 3→2 *Hayret yani. Yani sizinle hiç dayanışma falan yapmamak lazım. Demek =*
 4 YO: *[Hayır. Ben [P] ben şimdi ihtimal filan değil ben bu*
 5 DP: *= böyle bir ihtimal var. Ben beklerdim ki sizin bu detayını bilmiyorum. =*
 6 YO: *[Sayın Perinçek, ben böyle bir ihtimal vardır diye*
 7 DP: *= Detayını bilsen ne olacak Bay Yaşar Okuyan yani detayını bildiğin zaman*
 8 *başka bir sonuca mı varıcaksın? Çok ayıpladım sizi.*
 9 YO: *bir şey söylemedim*
 1 YO: No I don’t know the details Mr Perinçek
 2→1 DP: [so so there is a possibility like this

- 3→2 Amazing! So to begin with we should never co-operate. So there is=
 4 YO: [No. I [P] I now this is not a possibility or anything
 5 DP: = a possibility like this. I would expect that your I don't know the details =
 6 YO: [Mr Perinçek, I didn't say anything like there
 7 DP: = What if you (tu) knew the detail Mr Yaşar Okuyan I mean if you knew the
 8 details would you come to a different conclusion? I think you should feel ashamed.
 9 YO: is such a possibility

In this excerpt, YO still insists that he does not know the details of the plot and DP's role in the rescue. DP's interruption at line 2 gradually escalates and comes to its peak at line 7 where he stops using *siz* (vous) and starts using *sen* (tu) whose usage in formal settings is a clear indication of the speaker's sense of disdain and intended rudeness for the hearer. His interruption (arrow 1) which aims to cast doubt on the reliability of YO's party (arrow 2), is conflictive in nature. His moving out of the institutional footing and thus entering into an unmediated disagreement at line 7 becomes more obvious and more conflictive when he addresses the co-IE personally, using his name and surname preceded by an address marker which is an honorific, *bay* 'Mr.', instead of the formal address marker *siz* (vous) required in this context. So his use of such a deviation doubles the effect of rudeness created by the flouting of the maxims of the PP. In other words, DP uses a speech act of reprimanding whose illocutionary goal is conflictive; and conflictive illocutions are "by their very nature, designed to cause offence" (Leech 1983: 105).

IEs may interrupt to direct questions to co-IEs. According to the pre-allocated turn-taking provisions, IRs are supposed to ask questions and IEs are supposed to provide responses. However, in the following instance (example 9), DP directs a question to his co-IE, thus violating the norms once again. His question, within the argumentative talk frame is not an ordinary question, but is ironic in nature.

- (9) KANAL D
 1 YO: ...*artı konuyla ilgili hiçbir bilgi yok. Kocaeli Emniyet'ini bulamıyorum*
 2 *demin ifade ettim hiçbir şekilde ulaşma imkanımız olmadı, bilgi =*
 3→1 DP: [*Kardeşim*⁸ *Kocaeli Emniyeti'ni [evet*
 4 YO: = *hayır yani şimdi sizin açıklamalarınızı da burda duydum.*
 5→2 DP: [*Kocaeli Emniyeti'ni bulsanız DP'in böyle bir suikast emri*
 6 *verdiğine dair bir bilgi mi olacak?*
 7 YO: [*hayır bakın ben o manada söylemiyorum. Sizin ...*
 1 YO: ...in addition there is no information on the matter. I cannot reach the
 2 Kocaeli Police I said a while ago we didn't have any means to reach them, =

- 2 Kocaeli Police I said a while ago we didn't have any means to reach them, =
 3→1 DP: [Kardeşim⁸ Kocaeli Police
 4 YO: = information no I mean I've just heard your explanation here and now
 5→2 DP: [yes [If you found
 6 the Kocaeli Police would there be information like this saying that DP ordered to kill?
 7 YO: [no no look I don't mean that. Your ...

DP interrupts YO's explanation at line 3 to take the floor; however, YO resists leaving the floor and simultaneous talk occurs. DP releases the floor temporarily and then issues a question along with the continuer *evet* 'yes' to see whether the co-IE has something more to say. Before YO reaches a possible completion point at line 4, DP interrupts and formulates a question (lines 5 and 6). Thus he assumes the role of the IR and appoints himself as the sole recipient of YO's talk. His use of *kardeşim* (line 3) does not indicate a mitigated attitude on the part of DP. Instead, he uses this word to contradict the co-IE after an upgraded exchange and his use of the word reduces the formality of the situation and the distance between them but not for purposes of solidarity. The use of *kardeşim* in this context raises the speaker to an asymmetrically higher position. This is reminiscent of DP's move in excerpt (8) where he drops *siz*, which establishes a formal distance between the interlocutors (König 1990). Once again he moves out of the institutional footing. His interruption in the form of an ironic question is competitive in nature. He violates the Tact Maxim when he maximises cost to the co-IE, the Generosity Maxim when he maximises benefit to self, and the Agreement Maxim when he maximises disagreement with the other party.

IEs interrupt to counter and downgrade the co-participant. For instance, IEs' interruptions may aim to project hypothetical statements. In the following excerpt the IE (DP) formulates a hypothetical statement to counter and downgrade the political party the co-IE (YO) represents.

- (10) KANAL D
 1 YO: ...*bakın ben o manada söylemiyorum. Sizin*
 2→1 DP: [*Bana birisi gelse dese ki Mesut Yılmaz*
 3 *Doğu Perinçek'e suikast emri vermiş gülerim ve bunun hiçbir şekilde olmayacağını*
 4 *bilirim ve söylerim. Siz toplumun önünde bu hakikatleri açık açık söyleme*
 5 YO: *Sayın Perinçek*
 6→2 DP: =*cesaretine sahip değilsiniz ben onun için onun için zaten bu olayların üzerine*
 7→3 *gidemiyorsunuz. Ben şimdi sizi çok daha iyi anladım. Niye Anavatan Partisi'nin evet*
 8 YO: [*Sayın Perinçek, Sayın Perinçek şimdi*
 9 *ben demin sizin ağızınızdan ilkeze sizin de polis tarafından suçlandığınıza dair bir*

- 10 *ifadeyi şu anda uyd u duyuyorum. Haberdar olmadığım bir konu*
 11→4 DP: *[ama buna ilk bir tepki*
 12 *göstermeniz lazım.*
- 1 YO: ...look I don't mean that. Your
 2→1 DP: [If someone came to me and said that Mesut Yılmaz
 3 had plotted an assassination against Doğu Perinçek I'd laugh and I'd know that this
 4 is impossible and I'd say that. You don't have the courage to state all these in =
 5 YO: [Sayın Perinçek
 6→2 DP: = front of the public openly I for this reason for this reason you can't challenge
 7→3 these incidents. Now I've come to a better understanding. Why Anavatan Party yes
 8 YO: [Sayın
 9 Perinçek, Sayın Perinçek now I this is the first time I've ever heard from you that you
 10 were also accused by the police. This is something I've had no knowledge about.
 11→4 DP: [but you should first
 12 react to it.

In this instance DP interrupts YO's talk (arrow 1) where YO repeats himself over and over again to assure DP that it is the first time he has ever been informed of the matter in such detail. While YO tries to mitigate the dispute, DP projects another conflictive assessment (lines 4, 6 and 7). As the disagreement becomes more and more serious, IEs tend to step out of the institutional footing. In line 5 YO addresses DP directly, without seeking the mediation of a third party, namely the IR, and DP issues a continuer *evet* 'yes' in line 7, by assigning himself as the primary recipient of YO's talk. Then DP aims to gain the floor and he accomplishes this, which has a competitive goal (arrow 4). Instead of minimising the impolite belief inherent in the competitive act, DP escalates the disagreement by being more conflictive. By means of the hypothetical statement (arrow 1), he proceeds to downgrade the main opposition party first (arrows 2 and 3), violating the Approbation Maxim, and reproaches the whole Party due to their passivity in taking action. Thus DP's interruption in line 2 violates the Tact Maxim since he maximises cost to other; the Generosity Maxim since he maximises benefit to self; the Agreement Maxim since he escalates disagreement, the Approbation Maxim since he maximises dispraise of other and the Modesty Maxim since he maximises praise of self (lines 2, 3 and 4).

To summarise, IEs interrupt IE talk when they wish to (1) disagree with a co-IE's opinion/assessment statement; (2) terminate a dispute; (3) escalate disagreements; (4) ask ironical questions to a co-IE; (5) take the floor; (6) project hypothetical statements; and (7) counter co-IEs.

The illocutionary goals of most of the interruptions in this group are competitive and conflictive. Competitive interruptions violate the Tact Maxim, the Generosity Maxim, and the Agreement Maxim; conflictive interruptions violate all the maxims of the PP. Only when one of the IEs tries to accomplish an exit from the dispute does his interruption become convivial in nature, upholding the Sympathy Maxim and the Agreement Maxim.

The more IEs leave the institutional footing, the more they breach the PP maxims. The major instances of IEs moving away from the institutional footing are when they (1) produce agreement prefaces; (2) make pre-response topical shifts; (3) accomplish exits from disputes assuming the role of the IR; (4) enter into unmediated disagreements; (5) issue continuers and news receipts; and (6) ask questions to co-IEs.

Conclusion

The present study has focused on interruptions and the maxims of the PP encoded/breached in interruptions that were employed in news interviews, where politicians and prominent public figures were interviewed.

The news interview setting abroad (especially in Britain) provides for a unique turn-taking system distinct from that in mundane conversation and the institutional footing forms the basis of this system.

In the present study interruptions made during political interviews in Turkey are regarded as rather impolite acts, the impolite beliefs of which should be minimised to uphold the maxims of the PP. The present study investigated the types and functions of interruptions and whether in the news interview setting the participants would care to uphold the PP or violate the maxims for particular purposes when they interrupt the party currently speaking. The use of the maxims of the PP is evaluated within the framework of the institutional news interview context with the turn-taking provisions and their underlying footing.

The interruptions are distinguished as (1) rapport-building interruptions whose illocutionary goal is convivial and (2) aggressive or disruptive ones whose illocutionary goal is competitive and/or conflictive. In the course of the study kinds and illocutionary/conversational goals of interruptions are identified. Interruptions are examined under two categories: IR interruptions on IE talk and IE interruptions on IE talk.

In the news interviews that host politicians and prominent public figures, there is an important rating struggle among the private TV channels in Turkey. Not only do channels compete with one another, but interviewers and news programmes do so as well. Therefore, to capture the audience and to increase viewing, IRs tend to make news interviews full of heated debates in multi-party interviews, even by inviting people known for their temperamental, aggressive nature. In single-party interviews they force/urge their guests to answer their challenging and pressing questions.

IEs, especially politicians, on the other hand, are anxious to get more votes and to appeal to both their own voters and potential voters. One way to accomplish this task is by keeping the floor as long as possible even if it means repeating oneself to make a point.

IRs and IEs use interruptions as a strategy to achieve their aims. In so doing they move out of the turn-taking provisions and their underlying institutional footing. IRs try to make the interview more interesting and appealing and the IEs try to make their points and stance clear to boost their parties' views. Some IR interruptions on IE talk are found to be convivial in nature and polite especially when IRs employ politeness strategies such as mitigation and apologies for interruption. These findings are in line with Tzanne's findings (this volume) which show that in panel discussions, Greek journalists employ interruptions mitigated by means of a variety of politeness strategies with the aim of boosting IE's positive face. These politeness strategies include creating an atmosphere of solidarity, expressing approval and agreement with the speaker, offering reassurance and encouragement.

However, due to the competitive nature of political news interviews in Turkey, which appear to be in sharp contrast with the nature of panel discussions in Greek (where people seem to prefer "high involvement styles"), IEs tend to breach some or all maxims of politeness with the aim of saving their faces from serious accusations rather than presenting themselves as polite conversationalists. When all the maxims are breached in an aggressive interruption whose illocutionary goal is not only competitive but also conflictive, the result is impoliteness or even rudeness. The more Maxims of the PP one speaker violates, the higher the level of impoliteness. In other words, there is a correlation between the level of impoliteness and the number and kind of Maxims being violated. Only when IRs and IEs resume their institutional roles or shift to the institutional footing (which functions as redressive action or mitigation), and are careful enough to employ politeness strategies, can they uphold the maxims of the PP.

Transcription conventions

The transcription symbols presented by Sacks et. al. (1974) were used in the present study. There are additional symbols that should also be noted:

[:	indicates interruption
.	:	indicates sentence final falling intonation
,	:	indicates clause final falling intonation
?	:	indicates rising or falling intonation that construct questions
↑	:	indicates high pitch
/?/	:	indicates inaudible utterance
...	:	indicates that there are preceding or following utterances
.....	:	indicates omitted lines
[P]	:	indicates pause

Notes

1. Birten Gökyay was the Vice President of the Organization of the Studies of Women's Social Life (Kadının Sosyal Hayatını Araştırma ve İnceleme Derneği İkinci Başkanı) in 1977. The interview was taken from "Yansımalar" broadcast on 15.9.1997 on TRT 1 Channel.
2. The transcribed interviews were translated by the researcher. While translating the data, the researcher aimed to preserve the original syntactic structures to mark the interruptions correctly. However, due to the English/Turkish word order difference (SVO vs SOV, respectively) this could not be accomplished in some cases. Therefore, when interruptions occurred, the interrupted word was marked as an interruption no matter where it stood in the sentence. If the interruption occurred at a TRP, this juncture was marked. At this point it is worthwhile noting that due to the consideration of providing almost an exact translation of the Turkish data, interpretation is not generally included. Therefore, there may be instances of awkward English translation. However, there are some instances where interpretation is included since otherwise the translated version of the data would be meaningless.
3. *Bey* is a polite, formal address form, an honorific, which is used for males. It is used after the first name. In this study this address form is not translated. However, *Bay* which is another formal honorific used with the surname or full name is translated as 'Mr.'
4. *Efendim* is used to express respect and politeness to indicate social status or age difference, in certain contexts, especially formal contexts, such as in greetings: 'How do you do sir?' *Nasılsınız efendim*. In this context *efendim* can be translated as 'sir/madam.' However, in the context of political interviews and debates it has lost its original meaning and has been used as a filler, interruption marker or attention getter. Therefore, it is not translated in this study. Similarly, *Sayın*, which is also an honorific required in formal settings, is not translated in this study. This address form is used before *Bay/Bayan* and

- before the full name or the title of the addressee. In the political interview context, the IRs use this form because they are required to use it; IEs may use it ironically or as an interruption marker.
5. *Siz* pronoun is used in Turkish to distinguish between formal/informal situations and intimacy and distance. It is also a politeness marker. Its use is similar to the French use of 'vous' address forms. *Siz* indicates formality and social distance while *sen* indicates informality, intimacy and solidarity. In the news interview context, due to the institutional character of the interviews, *siz* is the expected and most commonly used pronoun. Therefore, since the use of *siz* is required in this context, it is not considered an instance of politeness. However, failure to use this pronoun is considered a clear violation of the rules that govern exchanges in institutional/formal settings.
 6. The Susurluk accident was a controversial car crash in the western Anatolian town of Susurluk. The accident happened on November 3, 1996. After the accident the illegal activities between state officials, drug smugglers and money launderers were revealed to the public. The Prime Ministry Inspection Board report confirmed the above-mentioned police-mafia-politician links in January 1998.
 7. Abdullah Çatlı was a former right-wing militant who was killed in the Susurluk accident. He was accompanied by a police chief and a parliamentary deputy from the True Path Party. Çatlı had been sought for a long time by Turkish police on charges of murder and by Interpol for drug smuggling.
 8. Kardeşim means 'brother' or 'lad'. However, this word is not translated as the meaning encoded in this usage is not solidarity-oriented. It raises the speaker to a higher position.

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Relevance theory and compliments as phatic communication

The case of Turkish

Şükriye Ruhi and Gürkan Doğan

Introduction

With a focus on complimenting in Turkish, this chapter studies complimenting within the framework of Relevance Theory (henceforth RT) as outlined by Sperber and Wilson (henceforth S&W) (1986, 1995).

It may be claimed that it is difficult to accommodate a social phenomenon in a cognitive model of information processing. For instance, the metaphor employed in the definition “communication is a process involving two *information-processing devices*” (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 1, our emphasis) might sound too mechanical to cover social aspects of human interaction, and Relevance Theory has suffered from similar criticisms (Mey and Talbott 1988). In the second edition of *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (1995), one can see the effects of such criticisms, as a result of which S&W (1995: 279) acknowledge that two important and related domains have hardly been explored from a relevance-theoretic standpoint:

the theory has been developed from the point of view of the audience of communicative acts, and without taking into account the complex sociological factors richly studied by sociolinguistics. The cognitive processes at work in the communicator, and the social character and context of communication are, of course, essential to the wider picture, to the study of which we hope relevance theory can contribute, and from which it stands greatly to benefit.

Following the quotation above, this study assumes that the core of RT and sociologically motivated aspects of language use are compatible with each other.

Based on the implications of the theory that utterances are processed in terms of both content and relationship level assumptions and that there is no ‘categorical distinction’ between the two in utterance processing, the study argues that complimenting is a form of phatic communication. The discussion of phaticness in communication and its relation to complimenting is carried out through an analysis showing the interaction between linguistic structure and contextual assumptions. This analysis is then related to politeness, sincerity, and style in complimenting.

The description of complimenting in RT forms the basis for an examination of some of the sociolinguistic aspects of behaviour in Turkish. In this respect, the analysis focuses on the location of compliments in conversation and compliment topics. The discussion on topic selection is further developed with regard to gender and social distance variables. References to cultural values and norms of behaviour are made where relevant to account for differences observed in the data. The chapter, thus, attempts to draw some of the links between utterance processing and cultural knowledge of complimenting in Turkish.

Compliments and relevance

As an attempt to account for the role of complimenting in communication, it is possible to argue that no matter how close the interlocutors are, their ‘esteem’ is at risk most of the time. Being aware of the fact that nobody wants to lose face, individuals tend to use language so as to regulate their social relationships with others. Support for this claim comes from Turner (1989: 22) as he contends that “languages provide devices (greetings, etc.) to maintain the presence of a shared language (the phatic use) and the spirit of sharing (politeness formulas)”. We entirely agree with Turner except for our reservation that there is no need for particular devices in language which specifically establish “the presence of a shared language and the spirit of sharing among people”. It has been stated above that such mutuality can be achieved even in the absence of a code. It seems better to talk about stimuli used for checking if the channel of communication with the audience is open. It is important to note that eagerness/reluctance for communication is easily noticed in social relations as it has positive/negative and encouraging/discouraging social implications. In this sense, complimenting seems to be a very useful means of

maintaining positive social relationships. It is like giving someone a gift and Sifianou (this volume) argues that compliments are generally used to follow social conventions of polite behaviour rather than expressing genuine feelings and that the major function of compliments is to consolidate, increase or negotiate solidarity between interlocutors. In the following section we will dwell on the way(s) compliments are interpreted by relating the issue to two concepts, namely 'phaticness' and 'politeness'.

Interpreting compliments

In *Relevance* (1986/1995), it is claimed that utterance interpretation involves three main stages. In the first stage, because linguistic expressions vastly underdetermine the real content of the message the speaker wants to convey, the sense of a sentence is considered as an incomplete *logical form* — an output of the linguistic processing that takes place in the language module. The second stage is the development of this logical form into a complete *propositional form* as a result of a number of inferential subtasks such as reference assignment, disambiguation and enrichment. S&W call a fully propositional form an *explicature* if it is mutually manifestly intended to be conveyed by the speaker. The third stage is the derivation of implicatures. In RT, S&W distinguish between two kinds of implicature: *implicated premises* and *implicated conclusions*. Implicated premises are the implications that logically follow the propositional form provided by the speaker and the contextual assumptions retrieved from it by the hearer. Implicated conclusions are the implicatures derived by the hearer by contextualising the new information together with the contextual assumptions that have become manifest.

In this section, we will try to account for the way compliments achieve relevance in the process of utterance interpretation as briefly outlined above. To be able to do this, let us specify what is social and what is cognitive in compliments. Given our preliminary assumption that social aspects of human communication can easily be accommodated within the cognitive framework of RT, we will assume that a compliment is a linguistic or non-linguistic stimulus whose interpretation has positive social implications for the audience. Consider (1):

[Contextual assumptions: Cer and Cee are colleagues]

- (1) a. *Cer: Her gün yeni değişik bir kolye*
 ‘Every day a new and different pendant’
 b. *Cee: İlgi çekmeye çalışıyoruz*
 ‘We’re trying to attract attention’¹

In accordance with the principle of relevance, which says that every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of its own optimal relevance, it is Cee’s task to find where the relevance of (1a) lies. It is stated in RT that there are two kinds of intention, namely:

- (2) a. informative intention that makes a set of assumptions manifest or more manifest,
 b. communicative intention that makes (a) mutually manifest

Following Žegarac and Clark (1999: 330), the distinction between (2a) and (2b) applies to the compliment in (1a) as follows:

- (3) a. Cee wears a new and different pendant every day.
 b. Cer intends to make manifest that Cee wears a new and different pendant every day.
 c. Cer intends to make mutually manifest that Cee wears a new and different pendant every day.

(3a) is the proposition expressed by (1a). Firstly, (4) is an implication which is *solely* based on (1a):

- (4) Cee wears a new and different pendant every day.

It is crucial to note that the relevance of (4) lies in Cee’s ability to recover in full the propositional form of (1a), i.e. (3a).

Secondly, by depending on (3b), it is possible for Cee to recover (5):

- (5) Cer makes mutually manifest that she notices that Cee wears a new and different pendant every day.

Thirdly, regarding (3c), Cee becomes entitled to interpret (6):

- (6) Cer wants to make mutually manifest to Cee that she likes Cee’s choice of pendants.

(6) is of a different nature from (4) and (5) in the sense that it is the only

implication which has immediate impact on the future of their communication and it is solely to do with Cer's communicative intention.

Some utterances mainly achieve relevance through implications connected with the relationship between the interlocutors. Jucker (1988: 378) refers to the distinction drawn by Watzlawick et al. (1967: 51–54) between two different levels of communication in discourse, namely the content level, and the relationship level of communication.² As opposed to the content level which contains all those assumptions that are communicable (irrespective of whether they are asserted or implicated or indeed whether they are true or false), the relationship level covers information about the status of the message, about the speaker, about the speaker's opinion of the addressee, and about what she, in turn, thinks his opinion of her may be, and so on. Similarly, Carretero (1995–1996: 245) mentions the same duality by contending that “not all assumptions that a speaker communicates need relate to the content; they may also concern, for instance, the status of the message and S's attitude towards A”. These kinds of assumptions can be said to belong to the relationship level, in contrast to the content level. Thus, given the two levels of communication mentioned above, it is possible to say that all implications that become derivable from one's communicative intention belong to the relationship level of communication. In this sense (1a) is an exchange that takes place on the relationship level of communication. The reason why we focus the discussion on ‘communicative intention’ and the ‘relationship level of communication’ relates to our intention to point to the connection between communicative intention and the relevance-theoretic sense of ‘phaticness’.

Phaticness and relevance

Since Malinowski (1923, 1975: 315) it has been accepted that “phatic communion is a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words.” Laver (1975) elaborates on the notion of phatic communion — communion achieved through speech — and argues that it not only serves to establish and consolidate the interpersonal relationship between the participants but also eases the transitions to and from interaction. He concludes that “phatic communion is a complex part of a ritual, highly skilled mosaic of communicative behaviour whose function is to facilitate the management of interpersonal relationship” (1975: 236).

Phaticness, as discussed by Žegarac (1998: 330), is conveyed by utter-

ances “whose main implicit import has to do with the speaker’s disposition towards establishing and/or maintaining a social relationship with the hearer”. In other words, it is essential to distinguish between utterances that tell about a certain state of affairs without affecting the nature of the relationship between the interlocutors and the ones that particularly connect with the relationship in question. Following Malinowski (1923) and Jakobson (1960), Žegarac and Clark (1999) emphasise that in phatic communion the mere meaning of the words is almost irrelevant and the linguistic expressions are exploited to fulfil a social function. One might point out here that it is not always so easy to draw the borderline between these two domains but it is also true that (7) and (8) are different from each other in terms of the speaker’s disposition towards maintaining a social relationship with the hearer:

- (7) The manager asked to see you a minute ago. (Mehmet to Suzan, in the morning, they are colleagues, Suzan walks into the office)
- (8) It’s a lovely day. (Mehmet to Suzan, in the morning, they are officemates, Suzan walks into the office)

It is possible to assert that the relevance of (7) pertains to the information that is communicated strongly whereas (8) has basically to do with Mehmet’s communicative intention. In (8), as soon as Mehmet involves himself in social behaviour with Suzan, he displays some social attitude towards her and the propositional content of this attitude does not get foregrounded. Thus, the test for phaticness can be summarised as follows: “if the processing of the proposition built on the linguistic meaning of the utterance fails to yield enough effects in any readily available contexts, the hearer is likely to go one step up, as it were, and consider whether some effects could be derived from the evidence presented by the act of ostension itself” (Žegarac 1998: 337). Then, for instance, if Mehmet is not confirming their earlier plan to go on a picnic, (8) sounds like an ordinary phatic utterance which achieves its relevance not through the information communicated by its propositional form but through Mehmet’s communicative intention which makes it mutually manifest that:

- (8’) Mehmet is eager/willing to engage in communication with Suzan.

The route from (8) to (8’) has significant social implications in terms of the relationship between Mehmet and Suzan and the cognitive explanation goes like this (Žegarac 1998: 338):

- a. the interpretation of phatic utterances exploits both linguistic and non-linguistic properties of the utterance;
- b. the information communicated by exploiting the proposition built on the linguistic meaning of the utterance is comparatively strongly communicated; the information communicated by exploiting the act of ostension is comparatively weakly communicated;
- c. the information which is communicated strongly (and is based on linguistic meaning) is relatively low in relevance; the main relevance lies with the act of ostension;
- d. the proposition built on the linguistic meaning of the utterance provides some contextual assumptions exploited as evidence about whether the social attitude is positive or negative;
- e. in acts of phatic communication two things are mutually manifest: (i) it is mutually manifest both to the speaker and hearer that the main relevance of the utterance lies with the act of ostension (ii) the circumstances in which the proposition built on the linguistic meaning of the utterance would be highly relevant are also mutually manifest.

In accordance with the conditions specified above, it is possible to say that the linguistic meaning of (8) is relatively low in relevance and the main relevance is achieved through the act of ostension. ‘Weather’ as a discourse topic is a very casual one and safe enough to mark Mehmet’s positive social attitude towards Suzan. As a result, it becomes mutually manifest that the main relevance stems from ostension. If this reasoning is correct, Suzan is supposed to arrive at the interpretation that Mehmet thinks it is nice to talk to her and such an interpretation has to do with the social world between the given interlocutors through a phatic stimulus. It goes without saying that (7), on the contrary, achieves relevance in a completely different way — merely through the linguistic meaning of its propositional form — and hence it is not phatic at all.

If it is true that human beings generally like being acknowledged in society, any utterance serving this purpose would certainly be phatic and socially important. Going back to the conversation between Mehmet and Suzan again, it is interesting to note that Mehmet is contextually obliged to utter (7) in order to inform Suzan of the state of affairs described in his utterance but no one could force Mehmet to produce (8), which is a clear indication of willingness to communicate with her. To sum up, people tend to use phatic utterances whenever they want to make it mutually manifest to their communicators that they are aware of them and they wish to communicate

with them. Such an attitude has definitely to do with polite behaviour, and politeness as another social phenomenon could also be accommodated by RT.

Politeness and relevance

It goes without saying that all human beings have self-esteem — face, public self-image — and when people communicate their face is at stake most of the time. Brown and Levinson (1987) propose a number of politeness strategies that can be used to compensate for what is called a face-threatening act (FTA). In other words, the following guidelines are suggested for politeness by which one can maintain good social relationships with others: notice/attend to hearer's wants, exaggerate interest/approval, intensify interest, use in-group identity markers, seek agreement, avoid disagreement, presuppose common ground, joke, be optimistic, give or ask for reasons, assume/assert reciprocity, include speaker and hearer in the activity, give gifts to hearer (goods, sympathy, etc.). All these devices support the generally accepted view that every person desires to be well thought of by others. This assumption covers things like the desire to be admired by others, the desire to be understood by others, the desire to be treated as a friend, etc. (Blakemore 1992: 33). Brown and Levinson (1987: 103) specify that “positive politeness strategies can be used not only to mitigate FTAs, but also as a kind of social accelerator, where the speaker, in using them, indicates that she wants to come closer to the hearer”.

As a pragmatic attempt to account for politeness through ‘world knowledge’, Escandel-Vidal (1996: 640) argues that “social aspects of communication have to be explained in terms, not of inferential patterns working on universal principles, but of the structure and contexts of specific knowledge.” Such an approach puts the emphasis especially on context, and not on inferential devices. Escandel-Vidal's account depends particularly on the notion of ‘frame’ which is defined as sets of organised knowledge made easily accessible. According to Escandel-Vidal (1996), the relationship between linguistic form and politeness is maintained by activating such frames that enable interlocutors to evaluate something as polite or not.

Then, the crucial question is whether there are certain linguistic structures and strategies specific to the communication of politeness. Such a question can only be meaningful if one accepts the view that politeness can be communicated linguistically. However, Jary (1997: 6) argues against this intuition by claiming that politeness is not something that can be conveyed as a message:

on Brown and Levinson's norm-based view of communication, the aim of politeness is to communicate politeness, and sincerely engaging in polite behaviour — by using polite linguistic forms or strategies, for example — necessarily communicates politeness. In contrast, RT predicts that neither politeness nor anything else above and beyond the underlying message will necessarily be communicated by the use of these forms and strategies.

Jary (1997) contends that politeness is the outcome only when the evidence produced by the speaker is *incompatible* with the hearer's mutually manifest assumptions about their relationship. This can happen in either of the following ways:

- (9) a. the speaker holds him in higher regard than he had assumed mutually manifest
- b. the speaker holds him in lower regard than he had assumed mutually manifest.

In accordance with the assumptions above, politeness is subject to the condition that the evidence provided by the speaker is incompatible with what the hearer might anticipate. According to Jary (1987: 8), if the speaker's (verbal) behaviour constitutes evidence for the hearer that the speaker's assumptions regarding their relationship are *compatible* with the hearer's, this exchange as far as the hearer is concerned, is unmarked in terms of politeness. However, we argue that even when the speaker's (verbal) behaviour is *compatible* with the hearer's mutually manifest assumptions about their relationship, it can still be polite by nature. Our argument depends on the condition that the already existing mutually manifest environment should include the following assumption: that "the speaker holds the hearer in high regard". Bearing this in mind, the processing of a politely engineered utterance will yield the following:

- (9) c. the speaker still holds the hearer in high regard, which is already mutually manifest.

In our argument, the aim of the speaker is to increase the mutual manifestness of the above assumption. Hence, (9c) achieves relevance simply by strengthening an already existing assumption. The sense we assign to politeness is a more general one that can be communicated between interlocutors who intend to reinforce/strengthen the mutually manifest presence of politeness in their shared cognitive environments. In such cases the hearer may anticipate politeness and this anticipation is observed by the speaker. In accordance with the justification outlined so far, the conditions for polite/impolite behaviour can

In this situation, the belief set Sibel already has about Suzan makes her anticipate that Suzan will help her with the luggage and (12) can only mean politeness through (10 b), by confirming Sibel's belief that her friend still holds her in high regard. If Suzan had failed to offer Sibel help with the luggage, this would have immediately been noticed by Sibel as impolite behaviour. The difference between the ways (11) and (12) are interpreted proves that there are degrees of politeness and such a conviction seems to support our objection to Jary's (1987) account of politeness.

To sum up, we believe that human beings' concern about how other people regard them affects their self-esteem and *any* information that is related to one's self-esteem would naturally modify mutual cognitive environments via politeness and/or impoliteness.

Complimenting, phaticness and politeness

After presenting an account of how 'phaticness' and 'politeness' can be treated within the framework of RT, we can now show how comfortably complimenting fits into the same frame. Consider (13) below:

[*contextual features*: Suzan and Sibel are colleagues. During talk on a project, Sibel serves coffee.]

- (13) a. Suzan *Ay çok güzel fincanlar bunlar.*
 'Oh these are very nice coffee cups'
 b. Sibel *Teşekkür ederim*
 'Thank you'

It seems that (13a) stands at a juncture where complimenting, phatic use of language and politeness intersect:

- i. The interpretation of (13a) depends both on linguistic and non-linguistic properties of the utterance.
- ii. The information that is based on the propositional content of (13a) is relatively low in relevance and the main relevance lies with Suzan's communicative intention. In other words, the main implicit import of (13a) has to do with Suzan's attempt to maintain a social relationship with Sibel.
- iii. The cognitive effects achieved after processing (13a) provide evidence that is compatible with Sibel's assumptions about her relationship

with Suzan. Suzan's social attitude is obviously positive because it increases the mutuality of the assumption that she holds Sibel in high regard.

iv. (13a) basically functions on the relationship level of communication.

It has been stated earlier that complimenting cannot be confined to certain linguistic patterns and thus (14a) below, which is linguistically similar to (13a), achieves relevance in a completely different way:

[*contextual assumptions*: Suzan and Sibel are colleagues. On their way from work, they are looking at a shop window while trying to buy a wedding present for one of their friends.]

- (14) a. Suzan *Kahve fincanları çok güzel*
 'The coffee cups are very beautiful'
 b. Sibel *Ben de beğendim*
 'I like them, too'

Although (13a) and (14a) are structurally more or less the same, (14a) does not count as a compliment at all due to the following reasons:

- i. The information communicated through the propositional content of (14a) is comparatively strongly communicated and the information communicated through Suzan's communicative intention is comparatively weakly communicated.
- ii. The information that is strongly communicated is high in relevance and the main relevance lies with the propositional content of (14a).
- iii. The cognitive effects achieved after processing (14a) have mainly to do with the contextual implication that Suzan thinks the cups in question would be a nice wedding present. This information does not affect the level of regard in which Suzan already holds Sibel. In other words, (14a) is, as far as Sibel is concerned, unmarked in terms of politeness.
- iv. (14a) basically functions on the content level of communication.

As a result of the discussion above, the following conclusions can be drawn with respect to the connection among complimenting, phaticness and politeness:

- (15) a. Complimenting is necessarily an act of phatic communication.
 b. Complimenting is necessarily an act of polite communication.
 c. Not all phatic communication is necessarily complimenting.

- d. Not all polite communication is necessarily complimenting.
- e. Not all phatic communication is necessarily polite.
- f. All (im)polite communication is necessarily phatic.

Let us refer to the exchanges (16–18) below to exemplify our assertions above:

[*contextual assumptions*: Cer and Cee are secretaries and close friends. This conversation takes place in the office.] (+compliment, +phatic, +polite)

- (16) Cer *Mavi gömlek gözlerine çok güzel uymuş*
 ‘That blue shirt suits your eyes so well’
 Cee (Smiles)

[*contextual assumptions*: Ahmet and Mehmet are colleagues but not close friends. This conversation takes place in the office.] (-compliment, +phatic, +polite)

- (17) Mehmet *Bir akşam bize yemeğe gelin*
 ‘One of these nights you ought to come to us for dinner’
 Ahmet *Sağol*
 ‘Thanks’

[*contextual assumptions*: Mehmet lives in a foreign country and for various reasons has to get a visa not from his own embassy but from the police department of the host country to be able to go to another foreign country. The conversation takes place at the police department.] (-compliment, +phatic, +impolite)

- (18) Officer I will gladly give it to you since you will be leaving my
 country.
 Mehmet (silence)

Complimenting and sincerity

Some phatic utterances are used just for the sake of conforming to a social norm; they are produced simply because failure to do so might cause social problems. A simple “Hello”, when omitted, may cause problems to a relationship, and because of this, people may feel obliged to get involved in phatic communication. Of course, this does not mean that all phatic exchanges are insincere. People do get engaged in phatic communication because of genuine

interest in their conversational partners. There are, however, occasions where the hearer may not be able to tell whether the speaker is sincere, or is simply observing a social norm, or both. S&W (1995: 263) point out that the system does not distinguish true from false assumptions. Readers enjoy science fiction and similarly people accept and process information whose truth is debatable.

We have stated before that human beings can attribute intentions to others. As a result of this and in accordance with one's cognitive environment (belief sets), an individual can guess how a particular person might behave under certain circumstances. Let us imagine that Suzan utters (19) below when Mehmet fails to remember their wedding anniversary:

- (19) Suzan to Mehmet *Hayatım, biliyorum şu sıralar yoğunsun*
'I know you have been busy recently, darling'

Mehmet knows Suzan well enough to understand that although she produces (19), she is hurt and what she actually means is (20):

- (20) No matter how busy you were, you should have remembered our wedding anniversary.

Similarly, compliments can also be treated with respect to the difference between what people say and how they actually feel. 'Anticipation' is central to this discussion and the attitude in a given culture may cause scepticism and difficulty in distinguishing sincere compliments from insincere/political ones. What is certain is that when people choose to compliment, they express certain feelings towards their audience and it is up to the audience to decide whether these feelings are genuine or not. Bach and Harnish, quoted in Sifianou (this volume), say that such feelings are expressed "to satisfy the social expectation that such a feeling be expressed". Compliments are thus viewed primarily as acts of courtesy. Under the social imposition of such an expectation, people may find it inappropriate to withhold a compliment. It seems that compliments are useful means to avoid looking envious and they may inevitably be employed despite the risk of appearing insincere. As for hearers, they tend to welcome compliments as expressions of true feelings, and this is also compatible with Žegarac's (1998: 346) division regarding the ways a compliment may achieve relevance:

- (21) a. by virtue of providing evidence of the speaker's genuine and unqualified interest in the hearer,

- b. by virtue of providing evidence of the speaker's observance of a social norm of verbal behaviour, and
- c. by virtue of both (a) and (b).

Let us consider the following examples in these terms:

- (22) Mum *Yeni elbisen çok şık.*
 'Your new dress is very elegant'
 Daughter (Smiles)

[*contextual features*: Suzan and Sibel are friends and Sibel has been dating Susan's ex-boyfriend.]

- (23) Suzan *Yeni elbisen çok şık*
 'Your new dress is very elegant'
 Sibel (Smiles)

[*contextual features*: Suzan and Sibel are just friends.]

- (24) Suzan *Yeni elbisen çok şık*
 'Your new dress is very elegant'
 Sibel (Smiles)

In (22) above, mum expresses her sincere feelings towards her daughter and there is no apparent reason why daughter should suspect her sincerity, provided that nonverbal cues do not lead her to sense irony in the discourse. In this case mum's compliment achieves relevance through (21a). In (23), on the other hand, Sibel may have some good reason to believe that Suzan is not being sincere. Thus, (23) can be interpreted in accordance with (21b), as a compliment achieving relevance only by virtue of providing evidence of Suzan's observance of a social norm of verbal behaviour. According to Leech (1983), in such contexts lack of praise means dispraise and similarly Sifianou (this volume) points out that in some cases it is the lack of praise which may be interpreted as a face-threatening act implying envy. In exchanges like this, the complimentee may realise that it is social obligation rather than sincerity that is prompting the compliment. In addition to (21a) and (21b), a compliment may also become relevant when the complimenter both shows genuine interest in the complimentee and complies with a social norm at the same time. Thus, (24) achieves relevance through (21c) by representing a case where the complimentee is faced with a two-edged compliment: a combination of a genuine compliment and a socially motivated one. Such a case possibly

includes the elements of both sincerity and social obligation embedded in the same compliment. The interpretation will, of course, depend on contextual features such as age, sex, social status, power relations, etc.

Style of complimenting

In this section, we will try to relate style to complimenting within the framework of RT.³ There are two general and complementary arguments in RT that would certainly have strong and dynamic implications for any attempt to relate pragmatic theory to style:

- (25) a. Style is the relationship.
- b. Style arises in the pursuit of relevance.

In the relevance-theoretic approach, style is regarded as a mirror reflecting the nature of the interaction between interlocutors. In view of this, S&W (1986: 217–218) maintain that from the style of communication, it is possible to infer things like:

- (26) a. What the speaker takes to be the hearer's cognitive capacities;
- b. How much help or guidance she is prepared to give him;
- c. The degree of complicity between them;
- d. Their emotional closeness or distance.

According to S&W (1986) a speaker does two things at a time: she intends to modify the mutual cognitive environment and while doing this she also assumes a certain degree of mutuality. This degree of mutuality is indicated, and sometimes communicated, by her style. In this sense, no speaker can avoid making a choice of style and complimenting is a good case in point. Compliments as acts of both phatic and polite communication provide very good evidence to support the relevance-theoretic assumptions stated in (25) and (26) above.

In Turkish, compliments, as opposed to most phatic use of language, are more likely to occur between individuals who have common background. One can be phatic and/or polite towards a stranger but complimenting communicates the presumption of mutuality in the first place. Our data strongly support this claim by revealing the fact that compliments in Turkish occur mostly in equal status, friendly relationships. While people generally tend to go in for phatic expressions at the bus stops or in the lifts, such places rarely witness acts of complimenting.

We can argue that compliments in the context of close relationships mainly achieve relevance as sincere acts presenting genuine interest. These are mostly formulaic compliments conveyed through standard and/or conventional utterances:

- (27) Cer to Cee *Kravatın çok güzel*
 ‘Your tie is so nice’
- (28) Cer to Cee *Kek nefis olmuş*
 ‘The cake is very tasty’

Such standard and/or conventional compliments help people maintain/build warm relationships easily by allowing fast access to the relevant chunk of information and by claiming low processing effort with minimum risk of miscommunication. They are stereotypical but also very useful in maintaining solidarity without demanding too much mental effort. A compliment counts as formulaic not only in terms of the routine lexical items it involves, but also in terms of its linguistic structure. In our data (NP+adj) and (NP+pred) appear to be the two most common linguistic strings leading complimenters to formulaic compliments. This argument also relates to the concepts ‘standardisation’ and ‘conventionalisation’ as suggested by Žegarac (1998).⁴ Compliments that encode such standard structures as the above are more likely to be processed with relatively minimum significant cognitive effort. It is interesting to note that these examples seem to belong to informal language. In connection with this point, it can be argued that the affective difference between (29–30) below owes to the structural difference between them:

- (29) Cer to Cee *Çok güzel bir şiir*
 ‘A very nice poem’
- (30) Cer to Cee *Şiirin çok güzel*
 ‘Your poem is very nice’

Given that both (29) and (30) are uttered in identical contexts we argue that (30) would cause more affective and personal contextual effects as compared to (29), which has no reference to the particular person in question. (29) sounds like a statement telling about a fact whereas (30) stands on the relationship level of communication. Thus (30) is more likely to maintain closeness between Cer and Cee. This point has to do with style in the relevance-theoretic sense of the concept: “style is the relationship and style

arises in the pursuit of relevance".⁵

Not all compliments are formulaic. People may implement different complimenting strategies with the aim of triggering non-formulaic effects. Teasing can be considered in this fashion as a way of showing interest in other people:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| (31) Father to Son | <i>Yine zayıf aldın, di mi?</i>
'You got a bad mark again, didn't you?' |
| (32) Mother to Daughter | <i>Ay pek çirkin olmuşsun.</i>
'Oh you look so plain' |

According to Turner (1989: 21) teasing can be affectionate and with respect to our data, it should be noted that teasing tends to occur mostly in friendly relations but it has one-way traffic between unequals, from more powerful to less powerful (parents to children, employer to employee, etc.):

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| (33) Customer to Waiter | <i>Servis her zamanki gibi mükemmeldi</i>
'The service was perfect as usual' |
| (34) Customer to Waiter | <i>Servis her zamanki gibi berbattı</i>
'The service was terrible as usual' |

The regular customer in (34) seems to be trying to underline the intimacy between himself and the waiter through teasing but such a choice certainly assumes mutuality. Teasing and the risk of causing embarrassment often go hand in hand in communication and a complimenting teaser needs to be careful enough in order not to sound critical and distant to the addressee.⁶

In particular contexts, people may attempt to avoid routine compliments with the purpose of adding colour and fun to the relationship. Teasing and metaphors are cases in point. These are non-routine ways of maintaining closeness and complicity between interlocutors. S&W (1986: 218) state that the more information the speaker leaves implicit, the greater the degree of mutual understanding she makes it manifest that exists in the relationship. Such examples are few in our data but seem to be the instances of implicit/indirect communication and must be considered in the light of the assumptions in (26c, d) above. As compared to the formulaic ones, creative compliments demand more cooperation, ask for relatively more processing effort and yield relatively richer contextual effects. The gain here is a higher degree of closeness through the sense of complicity:⁷

- (35) Husband to Wife *Gözbebeğimsin*
 ‘You are the apple of my eye’
- (36) Boyfriend to girlfriend *Saçların ahenkle dans ediyor*
 ‘Your hair dances in harmony’

Whether formulaic or not, every compliment results in a positive cognitive effect which contributes positively to the fulfilment of cognitive functions or goals, i.e., organising mutual cognitive environments. This attempt ultimately means to establish and/or to maintain social relationships. The organic relations among cognitive effort, cognitive effects and stylistic varieties make RT relevant to the discussion of the possible ways people choose to compliment. There is always the risk of miscommunication in complimenting. A slight mismatch between the speaker’s judgement and the hearer’s abilities may cause communication failure. In this sense, complimenting is a matter of finding a balance between rather dull compliments and exaggeration. It is, of course, the choice of the individual: to compliment or not to compliment.

Sociolinguistic dimensions of complimenting

The preceding discussion has identified complimenting as a form of phatic communication that may contribute to creating/maintaining a positive mutual cognitive environment between the complimenter and the complimentee. As S&W (1995: 279) are careful to point out, “the social character and context of communication are ... essential to the wider picture” of understanding communication. This statement, in fact, is already implicit in S&W’s (1986: 81–93) discussion of the nature of conceptual knowledge.

S&W argue that concepts are “psychological objects considered at a fairly abstract level” which are “address[es] in memory, a heading under which various types of information can be stored and retrieved” (S&W 1986: 86). Of these types of information one category is particularly relevant to the discussion in this section, the encyclopaedic entry. Knowledge in this entry incorporates notions such as schemas, frames, prototypes and scripts that are fairly “stereotypical assumptions and expectations about frequently encountered objects or events”. These types of assumptions are highly accessible units of information.⁸ They can vary from individual to individual, and partially determine the context in which the content of an assumption is processed

(S&W: 88–89). Thus, this section focuses on the clues that the data provide on the content of encyclopaedic entries for the concept ‘compliment’ insofar as individuals in Turkish culture are concerned.

To this effect, the section discusses the location of compliments in conversation and the selection of compliment topics with respect to gender and social distance variables in Turkish. In this way it attempts to reveal some aspects of the stereotypical knowledge that speakers of Turkish have on complimenting. The discussion mainly focuses on compliment topics since an understanding of which topics are appropriate/conventional in various settings is likely to reveal cultural aspects of its contribution to phatic communication.⁹

The analysis of Turkish compliments is based on a corpus of 660 compliment exchanges gathered through the ethnographic method. The vast majority are work place situations, gatherings of friends and acquaintances, and family contexts in urban, middle class settings. An observation sheet similar to that in Sifianou’s study (this volume) was used for recording exchanges in which the authors were not participant observers.¹⁰

Where available, the discussion on the social significance of complimenting is supported with qualitative data collected from native speakers in the form of spoken and written comments. We also refer to social norms in Turkish discourse that have a bearing on complimenting. Within the scope of this study, it is impossible to go into a full discussion of the social conceptualisation of complimenting. Therefore, what we have to say on its conceptualisation may best be regarded as introductory statements.

Regarding the perceived communicative functions of complimenting, native speakers of Turkish remark that they are a way of being nice and supportive. They also note that they can express gratitude, indicate common interests, flatter, initiate courtship, avoid confrontation, and enable one to be covertly sarcastic or insulting. People also admit that they sometimes feel obliged to compliment because other people expect them to.

The list of functions above corroborates the discussion in the first section: compliments are linguistic strings that are mainly processed on the relationship level (Žegarac and Clark 1999; Žegarac 1998) even though they make manifest content level information about the addressee. Furthermore, the wide range of functions shows that they can lead to an array of strong and weak implicatures regarding the cognitive and social environment of the interlocutors depending on the social context in which they are uttered.

Location of compliments in conversations

Part of the knowledge that speakers have of linguistic behaviour includes judgements about when to exhibit it. Therefore, as a means of regulating relationships, compliments need to be studied in their relationship to conversational sequences in discourse to understand their contribution in the communicative setting (Johnson 1992: 52, Holmes 1986). RT views the change or maintenance of a mutual cognitive environment as the essence of communication. In our data compliments very frequently occur after greetings or can replace the greeting itself in friendly exchanges. Some occur during lapses in conversation and as pre- or post-sequences to criticism. Others have been noted in sequences where an act of the interlocutor is interpreted as an achievement or accomplishment.

In a relevance-theoretic perspective, the occurrence of compliments after greetings is not surprising given that the initial step in communication is to mark the interlocutors' awareness of each other (Roberts 1991). A compliment occurring after greetings or instead of them indicates the attention of the complimenter beyond greeting formulas and makes manifest that the speaker positively values the addressee. Such compliments are usually related to appearance. The example below is one instance of complimenting between two close colleagues and occurs in the greetings slot:

- (37) Cer *Aman kuyruğunu sevsinler!*
 'Oh, what an adorable ponytail!'

The occurrence of compliments in lapses of conversation or before and after criticism can readily be accounted for on the grounds that the interlocutors may want to maintain a cognitive environment where they care for each other's self-esteem. A discomfoting period of silence in interaction may be ended with a compliment to erase weak implicatures to the effect that the interlocutors do not have a high regard for each other or that they do not consider each other to be worthy of interaction.¹¹ Similarly, a criticism can be bracketed with compliments that function as face-redressive strategies. The sample below is an example of a compliment that occurred after a lengthy, discomfoting period of silence between interlocutors at a friendly gathering. The compliment referent was then taken up for topical development:

- (38) (Suzan is reaching out to look at Cee's bracelet)
 Suzan *Çok güzel bişey bu*
 'That's very nice'
 Sibel *fil*
 '(It's) an elephant'

Such compliments contribute to the smooth flow of conversation.

Compliments that interpret an act of the interlocutor as an achievement or accomplishment have fairly predictable locations in conversation. For example, they occur after food is offered or after acquiring information about an outstanding behaviour of the recipient. How such compliments interact with the purpose of creating mutual cognitive environments will be taken up in the sections below.

Topics in compliments

The topic distribution in the data strongly supports the validity of proposing a single principle to account for verbal communication: the principle of relevance. Topics in compliments have to appeal to the interlocutors' interests and belief sets if they are to contribute to the creation of a mutually manifest cognitive environment, and this is clearly observable in the topic distribution. In an economical way too, RT explains how communication can break down or utterances may be interpreted as impolite if a speaker utters a compliment, the content of which clashes with the hearer's belief sets. For example, in one exchange in the data, a complimenter comments on how much the complimentee resembles a famous actress, implying that the complimentee is beautiful. The complimentee retorts, 'Me? Couldn't you find anyone else to compare me to?'

Table 1 below displays the topic distribution in descending order of frequency:¹²

Table 1. Topic distribution

<i>Topics</i>	<i>no. of instances</i>	<i>%</i>
appearance	253	38.4
accomplishments	185	28
personality	100	15.1
possessions	87	13.2
affect	35	5.3

Overall, a large number of compliments are directed to appearance, accomplishments, and personality traits. Together these make up around 81.5 per cent of the total number of compliments, with accomplishments and personality traits being slightly higher than appearance (43.1% and 38.4 %, respectively). Items in accomplishments include skill in housework such as cooking and house maintenance, and competence at work. A survey carried out by Tezcan (1974: 252) among university students of various backgrounds indicates that achievements at work and accomplishments related to national affairs are highly valued aims in life. This could explain why accomplishments are complimented quite frequently in the data.

Among personality traits, individuals mostly compliment consideration for others, maturity and directness in interpersonal relations. Compliments on appearance make frequent reference to how a particular item of clothing suits the complimentee (cf. sample 16 above). There is also quite a high number of compliments as to the beauty of female addressees, the eyes and hair being the most frequently complimented physical features.

We should point out here that topics change not only according to the gender of the complimentee but also according to age group. Complimenting appearance is far more frequent among younger adults (age group 18–25) as in sample (36) above. On the other hand, compliments on accomplishments increase if the complimenter is married, and is older and higher in status than the complimentee. From a relevance-theoretic point of view, such variation in distribution suggests that, as a way of maintaining mutual cognitive environments, individuals pick up topic referents that are likely to be within the interests of the participants. Thus, it is not surprising to find that there should be compliments on achievements and skill at work among the older age group (35 and above).¹³

Within the same perspective, it is possible to account for the low occurrence of compliments on possessions across age, gender, and social distance variables. In Turkish culture, there is a deeply ingrained custom of appearing to be of modest means. Therefore, compliments on possessions would be counter-productive in creating a positive mutual environment since they do not appear to be standardised or conventionalised phatic topics in Žegarac's (1998: 341–348) sense. Comments on possessions usually have the form of formulaic utterances expressing good wishes, such as saying 'use laughingly' (Turk. *güle güle kullan*) for a new car.¹⁴

The phatic nature of compliments in Turkish is revealed through another

set of topics in the data that we have categorised above as ‘affect compliments’ for want of a better term. By this we mean compliments that directly address the nature of the relationship between the interlocutors. Some identify the complimentee as a member of an in-group; others include terms of endearment and love. Two examples of such exchanges are given below:

- (39) S1 ... *siz aileden sayılırsınız*
 ‘you can be considered a member of the family’
- (40) Cer *Senin aşkınla ağırlaşan bu başım ancak senin*
 dizlerinde sükûn bulacaktır
 ‘My head that is getting heavy with my love for you
 will only find peace on your knees’

Children are frequent referents or recipients of compliments in family gatherings. Turkish culture views children as a *sine qua non* of the family (Kağıtçıbaşı 1981, 1996); hence, it is not surprising to find that children are frequently topics of conversation in Turkish discourse. Indeed, asking questions about whether one has children or not is a conventional topic in conversational openings even among strangers in settings such as TV and radio talk shows and other entertainment programmes (Ruhi 2000: 69–70; Zeyrek, this volume). Even if nothing else is complimented, children are complimented for having grown up quickly or for resembling either of the parents.

If the compliment takes place in the presence of the parents, it is likely that the parents are also recipients of the compliment. Indeed, very often a compliment that praises the child is uttered with the gaze moving from the child to the parent. This could trigger the implication that the speaker holds both addressees in high regard. The exchange below between two female acquaintances whose children are playmates corroborates this assessment. The complimentee’s son enters the room during the chitchat. Upon noticing him, the complimenter says to his mother:

- (41) Cer *Çok seviyoruz biz Ahmed’i*
 ‘We like Ahmet very much’
- Cee *Sağ olun*
 ‘Thank you’

There is also a tendency to praise husbands and wives to their partners. Compliments on this topic can occur even during business exchanges, the utterance in (42) being just one example:

- (42) Cer *Ahmet çok iyi bi aile babası oldu. Çok beğeniyoruz onu*
 ‘Ahmet has become a very good family man.¹⁵ We
 admire him a great deal’

It has already been mentioned earlier that complimenting is a way of interpreting someone else’s behaviour as an achievement or accomplishment. As such, they reinforce informational processing regarding cultural knowledge. That compliments play such a role in creating mutual cognitive environments is especially apparent in the way they would lead to the inferencing of what is desirable behaviour in social life (cf. Wolfson 1984 for a similar assessment of compliments). For instance, in the exchange below, a mother makes manifest her cognitive environment — her beliefs regarding what is valued in society. The exchange is also particularly interesting in that it predicts the future behaviour of children selecting topics on appearance in complimenting:

- (43) Cer *Ahh! Aman Allahım gözlerim kamaştı. Yoksa oğlum*
ben yokken dişlerini mi fırçalamış
 ‘Oh my God! My eyes are dazzled. Could it be that my
 son has brushed his teeth while I wasn’t here?’
- Cee *Eveet* (all teeth are shown for a long while)
 ‘Yeees’
- Cer *Artık kreşteki bütün kızlar oğluma bayılacak, erkekler*
de kskanacak
 ‘From now on all the girls at the nursery are going to
 adore my son and the boys are going to envy him’
- Cee *Annee*
 (bashfully) ‘Moommy’

Though it is not a form of complimenting *per se*, expression of concern about an individual’s health or misfortune is a standard topic of phatic communication in Turkish that needs to be mentioned here. People who do not normally exchange compliments invariably exhibit concern for another’s well being after an illness or even a slight misfortune. Given that phatic utterances achieve relevance by “providing evidence” of either the “speaker’s genuine and unqualified interest” or his/her “observance of a social norm of verbal behaviour” (Žegarac 1998: 346), such exchanges could trigger the inference that the addressee is regarded as a close friend, colleague, or the like (Žegarac and Clark 1999, Coulmas 1981: 77). Manifesting concern could, then, be a compliment in itself in Turkish culture, provided the addressee is inclined to

view the relationship as such.¹⁶ The passage below from an autobiography exemplifies how even just asking about somebody can be interpreted as a compliment:

Ben evde yataarken ağabeyim Uludağ'dan Ankara'ya döndü ve bana uğradı. Orada herkesin beni sorduğunu söyledi. Bu söz bana iltifat gibi gelmiş ve hoşuma gitmişti. Oysa ki, daha önceki yıl ikimizi beraber görenlerin bu yıl yalnız birimizi görünce öteki nerede diye sormaları doğal bir tepki idi. Ama insan, kendisi söz konusu olunca hiç bir yaşta böyle makul düşünmüyor. Doğal bir tepkiyi özellikle yapılmış bir iltifat diye kabul ediyor.

While I was laid up in bed, my elder brother returned from Uludağ to Ankara and dropped by my room. He said that everyone had asked about me there. I took this as a compliment and liked it. In fact, it was quite natural that those who had seen us [the author and his brother] together last year should have asked where the other one was when they saw just one of us. But when it comes to things about oneself, one never thinks reasonably like this whatever one's age may be. One accepts a natural reaction as a compliment.¹⁷

Excluding the frequent selection of appearance topics, which as mentioned above usually occur in or after the greeting slot, topic selection in complimenting in Turkish does not exhibit a regular pattern. However, as will be discussed below, there are constraints with respect to gender and social distance variables. From another perspective, if we take topics pertaining to personality and the affect type as one general category, it will be noticed that encyclopaedic entries for complimenting in Turkish incorporate the rather strong communicative intention of marking positive evaluations of the relationship.

Gender and complimenting

The one factor that remains constant throughout the data is the relation between gender and complimenting in the different settings the study incorporates. The data show that men compliment women more, and that women compliment other women more than they do men. The number of compliments among men is as low as that from women to men. The discussion below concentrates on topics that appear to be characteristic of each gender relationship in order to present some of the stereotypical assumptions of complimenting in Turkish.

Table 2 below presents the direction of compliments according to gender and will be taken up for discussion in the ensuing sections.

Table 2. Direction of compliments according to gender

<i>Direction</i>	<i>no. of instances</i>	<i>%</i>
women to women	232	35.2
men to men	86	13
men to women	266	40.3
women to men	76	11.5
Total	660	

Compliments among women

Of the 660 instances of complimenting in the data, compliments between women make up 35.2 per cent of the total. This figure is in sharp contrast with the lower frequency of complimenting among men. One factor contributing to the high number of instances of complimenting both among women and from men to women could be the degree to which Turkish women exhibit belief in internal control and external control of reinforcement. Belief in internal control is a “tendency to assume full responsibility for one’s actions in life” Kağıtçıbaşı (1981: 80–81). Kağıtçıbaşı notes that this belief, which implies an autonomous, self-reliant behaviour, contrasts with external control, which is a “tendency to attribute ... responsibility to an outside agent, such as God, fate, other people.” She indicates that, in contrast to men, Turkish women show more belief in external control. Regarding complimenting, then, women are more likely not only to accept external evaluation of their behaviour but also use complimenting for supportive purposes. The utterance below exemplifies how a compliment can be uttered for boosting the self-image of the addressee:

- (44) Cer *Sen ondan daha iyisini hak ediyorsun*
 ‘You deserve someone better than him’

The frequency of complimenting behaviour between women increases slightly with age. This could be attributed to patterns of social networking in Turkish culture. Excluding family friendships and close colleagues, older adults are more likely to form in-groups with other members of the same gender rather than socialise in mixed gender groups in friendly relationships (Hotham 1972: 131, Tezcan 1974: 84–86, Kandiyoti 1981: 238). Table 3 shows topic distribution among women:

Table 3. Topic distribution among women

Topic	no. of instances	%
appearance	81	34.9
accomplishment	78	33.6
personality	21	9.1
possessions	43	18.5
affect	9	3.9
Total	232	

The distribution suggests that topics pertaining not only to appearance but also accomplishments are highly accessible knowledge frames in women's discourse. This is to be expected since a large proportion of the exchanges in the data involve working women and university students in a highly competitive environment; hence achievements at work and school would form part of their cognitive environment. Even so, the accomplishment that is most frequently complimented in friendly gatherings is the culinary skill of the hostess, and as among Greek women, appreciation of the food offered is strengthened by asking for recipes.

With respect to appearance, women of all ages and status relations compliment each other on elegance, hairstyle, perfume, jewellery, and having lost weight while those in the younger age group (18-25) also compliment each other on beauty and skill in doing make-up.¹⁸ Compliments to personal attributes among women (and men, too) may take the form of epithets related to legendary figures or personalities in Turkish folklore. The exchange below occurred between friends while the complimentee was talking about how her parents moved to another city. The epithet, *Hızır*, in the compliment is a legendary figure that comes to people's rescue at the right moment in Turkish folklore:

- (45) Cee *"Baba," dedim "Antakya'daki evi kiraya verin, Ankara'ya gelin". Babam işte 'eşyalar orda' falan dedi. "Bana bırakın," dedim. Kiraladım bir kamyon, geldiler.*
 ' "Father," I said, "Let the house in Antakya, and come to Ankara". Well my father said things like "the furniture is there." "Leave it to me," I said. I hired a truck, and they came.'

Cer *Hızır Suzan*

Regarding the cognitive and socio-cultural perspective that this study has adopted, such expressions are theoretically interesting stylistic choices in the way they indicate how the two perspectives can complement each other. These expressions involve an increase in cognitive processing effort on the part of the complimentee since they do not express the positive assessment directly (cf., for example, an utterance like ‘You’re very helpful’). On the other hand, by appealing to shared cultural knowledge, the compliment both eases cognitive processing and increases the sense of complicity between the interlocutors.

The functions of complimenting in English have been explained as establishing, maintaining or consolidating solidarity (Manes and Wolfson 1981, Holmes 1988, Herbert 1990). As already mentioned, complimenting might also be a way of shaping behaviour in the way it provides information for the addressee on what is valued in a culture. Whatever the meaning assigned to it by the complimentee, it is clear that any compliment is necessarily an evaluation of behaviour in society (Wolfson 1984). As Žegarac (1998: 350) notes too, “politeness is not a necessary feature of phatic communication: communicative behaviour can be polite or impolite, while being, or not being, phatic”. It was pointed out in the section on complimenting and sincerity that compliments achieve relevance in three ways: by providing evidence of genuine interest in the hearer, by observance of a social norm, or by both (Žegarac 1998: 346). In this respect, the cognitive advantage of complimenting is that it presents the norm with positive implicated conclusions through reference to the complimentee, while making the topic of the compliment part of the mutual cognitive environment. Complimenting may be one polite way of inculcating social norms.

Thus, compliments among women need not necessarily function to strengthen social ties, but indicate approval of appropriate behaviour.¹⁹ Indeed, some women who contributed as informants to this study remark that they very frequently ‘dress up’ not because they want to, but because they are expected to do so by same sex co-workers and friends.

Compliments among men

There are 86 samples of compliments between men in the data. Table 4 below lists the distribution according to topic.²⁰

Table 4. Topic distribution among men

<i>Topic</i>	<i>no. of instances</i>
appearance	14
accomplishment	41
personality	15
possessions	12
affect	4
Total	86

The distribution above indicates clearly that the cognitive environment in male discourse predominantly includes topics of social achievement. This distribution parallels the questionnaire results in Tezcan's (1974: 256–7) study, which reveal that males regard failure to accomplish one's goals as the most dreadful thing that could happen to them in life after universally significant topics such as loss of family and health.²¹ In addition, there are fewer compliments on clothing and appearance. Sofu (forthcoming) notes that items bought for boys by mothers are invariably functional. Given this tendency in gender-biased behaviour, it seems reasonable to conclude that appearance related matters are not likely to form phatic communication topics in male to male conversations.

The distribution according to topic and frequency of complimenting in this group shows remarkable differences according to social distance and age. While younger men compliment each other on accomplishments and personal attributes in friendly and close relationships like among siblings, in workplace settings and friendly relationships, older men utter few compliments to each other. The numbers for these groups are 71 (14.8%) and 15 (8.3%), respectively. The compliments in the former group incorporate social functions like giving support or expressing admiration. Others seem to have the ulterior motive of eliciting the addressee's help in return for the compliment. In these respects, they are similar to compliments recorded between young women. Compared to young men, older men compliment each other very rarely even in friendly relationships and the family context. The data record a few exchanges with topics like skill in household maintenance and achievements. The distribution in this group thus forms a sharp contrast to complimenting behaviour among women (cf. Table 3 above) where differences according to age were not as conspicuous.

Whether the higher number of compliments among young male adults is attributable to changes in cultural norms of male discourse or whether social status changes are the determining factors is an issue that cannot be pursued in detail within the limits of this study. However, some remarks are due as regards cultural values. We would suggest that one factor leading to fewer compliments between men is that the speech act implies expression of affect. Turkish sex role perceptions value independence, self-composure, containment, and competence for males (Kağıtçıbaşı 1981: 89–90). The expression *erkek adam* ‘a manlike man’ includes concepts such as being ‘strong, brave, sincere, and abiding by one’s word in interaction, and not showing one’s feelings.’ Also, due to its incorporating an element of social assessment, complimenting men would clash with the value that men place on internal control and independence. In this sense, complimenting men may be an FTA.²² Furthermore, complimenting among men could also generate an implicated conclusion of inadequacy regarding the complimenter, which might be more face-threatening for men given the importance attached to autonomy and competence. The utterance that follows the compliment in (46) is particularly revealing in that it underscores the emergence of feelings of comparative inadequacy. A father-in-law utters the compliment to the son-in-law during a dinner for which the son-in-law has prepared a barbecue:

- (46) Cer *Çok güzel olmuş. Mahcup oluyorum biz mangal yapmıyoruz (...)*
 ‘It’s very well done. I feel ashamed we don’t do barbecues’
- Cee *Pişirmeden yenir bu*
 ‘This can be eaten raw’ (referring to the barbecue)

The responses that men give to compliments also suggest the presence of differing social norms of presentation of the self. In contrast to the high number of expressions of gratitude and downgrading uttered by women in response slots, it is noteworthy that the few compliments that do occur between men are usually responded to with a smile or jocular boasting, but rarely with thanking. The exchange in (47) takes place between friends and incorporates a response that might be interpreted as boasting and a show of self-confidence owing to the presence of a self face-boosting utterance (‘magnificent man’) and an upgrading of the assessment in the compliment (‘magnificent’ versus ‘perfect’) — if it were not so clearly ironic!:

- (47) Cer ... *dört dörtlük olmuş*
 ‘... it’s perfect’
 Cee *Ee, muhteşem adamın muhteşem ödevi olur*
 ‘Well, the magnificent man’s assignment is magnificent’

In her study on RT regarding the implications of the theory in terms of interaction, Jaszczolt (1996: 710) notes that “the hearer affects what the speaker is saying to a greater or lesser degree” (cf. Goffman 1976: 280 for a similar analysis). She points out that assumptions are “created ... in a dynamic manner” between interlocutors such that hearers not only “*recover*” meaning, but “*assign*” meaning to utterances depending on the psychological state of both participants (Jaszczolt 1996: 720, original emphasis). In this sense, responses to compliments manifest information not only on how the utterance is perceived, but also on how the addressee wishes to be perceived. Thus, in the response in (47) the addressee brings to the foreground a sense of self-confidence, which is in line with the value attached to internal control and competence.

The above considerations could partially explain why complimenting might not be the norm in conversations between males. Does this mean that the expression of regard and appreciation does not exist in male to male interaction? While this may appear to contradict the statements above, a show of regard such as the acknowledgement that a person has been missed is present. However, the data indicate that taking up topics of common interest in talk and making it clear that the interlocutor is a member of an in-group are the more conventional strategies for maintaining phatic communication in male discourse. Such expressions appear in conversations introducing males, for example, to other individuals in the interaction. The example below occurs in such a context, where the complimenter introduces the complimentee to his wife. The topic taken up is one that is of common interest to the speaker and the addressee:²³

- (48) Cer *Ali beyin de minibüsü var*
 ‘Ali Bey, too, has a minibus’
 (*bey*: deferential form of address to men)

The discussion so far reveals some marked differences in complimenting behaviour in male and female discourse. The selection of topics suggests differences in encyclopaedic entries concerning topic appropriateness. Furthermore, responses to compliments among men suggest that men are more

likely to infer weak implicatures such that their behaviour is being assessed in terms of social worth. This implies that conceptualisation of complimenting varies according to gender.

Compliments between men and women

Compliments to women. As mentioned above, men compliment women more than women compliment men. To illustrate this with figures from the data (cf. Table 5 below), of the total number of 660 compliments, 266 compliments are uttered by men to women. The number of compliments to women from men is higher among young, unmarried adults. It is also higher than the number of compliments between females in the same group. Discussing why women receive more compliments in American English, Wolfson (1984: 243) puts forward the argument that male behaviour is perceived as “normative and requires little comment or judgement, while females must be constantly reminded to behave in socially approved ways”. We would go along with Wolfson to account for the high number of compliments directed to women in Turkish culture.

Table 5. Topics in compliments by men to women

<i>Topic</i>	<i>no. of instances</i>	<i>%</i>
appearance	132	49.6
accomplishment	42	15.8
personality	51	19.2
possessions	23	8.6
affect	18	6.8
Total	266	

Compliments to women vary in terms of topic depending on marital status, age, and social distance. Men who are married and above 40 compliment women on accomplishments and personal attributes in equal status, acquaintance, and work place relationships. On the other hand, unmarried, younger male adults compliment female friends more on appearance and personal attributes. A pattern of complimenting in this group is first to pay a compliment on appearance or possession and then connect it to the person. The exchange below is one example:

- (49) Cer *Telefonun ne kadar şirin*
 ‘Your cellular telephone is so cute’

- Cee *Teşekkür ederim*
 ‘Thank you’
- Cer *Tıpkı senin gibi*
 ‘Just like you’
- Cee *Bu bir iltifat mı?*
 ‘Is that a compliment?’

Exchanges like the above suggest that complimenting clothing, beauty, and the like may function as indirect ways of indicating the speaker’s social relation to the addressee in a way that would not endanger the current relationship status. As already discussed, complimenting can lead to miscommunication. The first compliment in (49) paves the way, so to speak, for the more personal compliment in the second turn by initially taking up a less personal referent. That complimenting between sexes may lead to interpretations of attempting to form a closer relationship is apparent in the following exchange between two colleagues:²⁴

- (50) Suzan *Ahmet bey siz de hiç iltifat etmiyorsunuz bize*
 ‘Ahmet bey you don’t compliment us at all’
- Ahmet *Kusura bakmayın Suzan hanım, bizde bir bayana iltifat etmek ona asılmaktır*
 ‘Forgive me Suzan hanım, where I come from to compliment a woman is to make a pass at her’
- (*hanım*: deferential form of address to women)

This may be one reason why the number of compliments to women is low in friendly exchanges between men and women who are married and why clothing and physical appearances are not complimented frequently in the same group. Such referents are likely to be perceived as more personal topics and could generate implications of an attempt to change the mutual cognitive environment in a stronger sense than would compliments on accomplishments, for example. From a relevance-theoretic perspective, we clearly see not only how encyclopaedic entries vary according to individuals but also how such variations are likely to generate different implicatures in communication and affect patterning of complimenting either by enabling its performance or by constraining it.

One feature that distinguishes the complimenting behaviour of men from that of women is the greater frequency with which men compliment women on personal attributes (cf. Tables 5 and 6). Of the total number of a hundred in this

group, 51 exchanges are men complimenting women, while 13 occur in the opposite direction. Taking this distribution into consideration, it is plausible to say that while women may express appreciation and approval of personal attributes amongst themselves, the same form of behaviour does not carry onto complimenting men. It could be an FTA due to the generation of weak implicatures regarding the hearer's sense of autonomy and self-assurance.

Compliments to men. The number of compliments to men from women is 76, and there are only slight differences in terms of frequency in this group regarding age, marital status and social distance variables. Table 6 below presents the topic distribution in this group:

Table 6. Topics in compliments by women to men

<i>Topic</i>	<i>no. of instances</i>
appearance	26
accomplishment	24
personality	13
possessions	9
affect	4
Total	76

Topics in compliments to men show some variation according to age, work and marital status. While unmarried young women compliment men with a comparatively lower frequency especially on appearance and possessions, women in workplaces compliment their male associates with more or less the same frequency as do men. It is likely that women feel less inhibited in complimenting men with increase in age, which goes along with change in marital status and work. Delaney (1991) notes that women in rural areas become more forthright as they grow older. Even so, the total number of compliments for both men and women in work places is rather low. The same is probably true of women in cities too, which would account for the slight increase in number. The age factor is probably quite important in Turkish culture. Another influential factor in this distribution is that women rather than men would be regarded as being forward in uttering a compliment in situations where the relationship is not close.

The topic distribution in the data for the younger age group supports the above account: women compliment men more on accomplishments and personal attributes that are socially valued like being direct, honest, and hard-

working (cf. Tezcan 1974: 285). In this way, compliments that pick up such topics could be interpreted on a more impersonal level than compliments to appearance would be. The compliments that do focus on appearance refer to smartness and there are none on handsomeness or a particular physical feature. This tendency is similar to the compliments recorded for the older age group in friendly and distant relations. The example below is typical of exchanges where the complimenter is a woman:

- (51) Cer *Takım elbise ne kadar yakışmış*
 ‘How well the suit becomes you’
 Cee (smiles)
 Cer *İş adamı havası vermiş sana*
 ‘It’s given you the air of a businessman’²⁵

Also, affect type compliments such as those uttered by young male adults do not occur in compliments from young women to young men, and compliments on appearance are not followed up by compliments on personal attributes.

Tezcan’s (1974: 280) survey of positively valued characteristics in females shows that young, male adults regard honour and virtue, considerateness, and maturity (in order of importance) as the most desirable attributes in females. It is likely that such cultural knowledge leads young women to avoid complimenting physical attributes since they may generate weakly implicated conclusions of personal liking. One would hardly expect a woman to pay the following compliment in our data to a man she may have seen in a restaurant:

- (52) Cer *Tam bir saattir yemek yemenizi seyrediyorum, sizi*
 günün en güzel kızı seçtim. Çatalı tutuşunuz bile bu
 seçimi doğruluyor
 ‘I’ve been watching the way you eat for exactly an hour;
 I’ve chosen you as the most beautiful girl of the day. Even
 the way you hold the fork shows that this choice is correct’
 Cee (silent)

(Note of data collector: the complimentee could not give any response. The complimenter made the compliment, gave his greetings and left. The girl was shocked.)

The social constraints on complimenting men are also revealed in the stylistic contrasts in the data. While compliments to men are on the whole rather formulaic in structure, those directed to women may be less formulaic. The

example below is a compliment uttered to a female colleague by a senior male colleague during a talk on administrative policies and problems, and occurs after the female expresses an intention to take action that could endanger her promotion:

- (53) Cer *Suzan, seni şöyle ellerimin arasına alıp yükseğe koyup, koruyasım geliyor. O kadar değerlisin. Sırası gelir bunların.*
 ‘Suzan, I feel like taking you into my hands and placing you somewhere high. You are so precious. A time will come for these.’

In terms of cognitive processing, such non-formulaic utterances could produce greater contextual effects on the relational level.

Social distance and complimenting

This section describes the data regarding intimacy and status relations in complimenting. The data exhibit a three-way division in this respect. The first category includes work place relationships marked as distant unless close friendship is indicated on the observation sheet. Similarly, neighbourhood relationships are marked as either distant or friendly. The second category is that of close friendships, the third being the family context, which includes exchanges between members of both the nuclear and the extended family. Style in complimenting appears to validate such a division, as teasing occurs mostly in friendly relations, if we exclude a couple of samples that are directed to interlocutors of lower status. Table 7 displays the distribution of these categories.²⁶

Table 7. Distribution of compliments according to social distance and topic

<i>Distance</i>	<i>Topic</i>					<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
	<i>app.</i>	<i>accomp.</i>	<i>pers.</i>	<i>poss.</i>	<i>affect</i>		
Distant	66	72	35	32	16	221	45.6
<i>(equal status)</i>	<i>(46)</i>	<i>(49)</i>	<i>(21)</i>	<i>(25)</i>	<i>(14)</i>	<i>(155)</i>	<i>(32.2)</i>
<i>(higher status)</i>	<i>(10)</i>	<i>(17)</i>	<i>(9)</i>		<i>(2)</i>	<i>(38)</i>	<i>(7.9)</i>
<i>(lower status)</i>	<i>(10)</i>	<i>(6)</i>	<i>(5)</i>	<i>(7)</i>		<i>(28)</i>	<i>(5.8)</i>
Friends	72	60	34	18	15	199	41.3
Family	19	35	7	1		62	12.8
Total	157	167	76	51	31	482	

The data reveal that compliments in Turkish occur mostly in equal status, friendly relationships (cf. Durmuşoğlu 1990 for a similar distribution). In work places compliments are invariably exchanged between close associates of equal status. Close friendships make up 41.1 per cent of the total. The family setting is the category that has the lowest number of compliment exchanges, 62 (12,8%). The former two groups make up around 88% of the total number of cases. The distribution supports Wolfson's Bulge Theory (1989), where she proposes that complimenting behaviour is characteristic of acquaintanceships and friendly relationships.

Following Altman and Taylor's (in Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey 1988: 186–191) stages of social penetration, the data suggest that complimenting in Turkish is a characteristic of the second and third stages, which involve "exploratory affective change and affective exchange". The samples of compliment exchanges that occur between strangers, excluding service encounters, where they would be expected to occur as part of 'pleasing the customer', are either responded to with surprise or rejected rather strongly in most cases. This implies that complimenting in Turkish in the initial stage involves an element of risk. The exchange below is typical in terms of responses to complimenting in encounters between strangers. The complimenter is a photocopy machine attendant and the complimentee is a young woman:

- (54) Cer *Lütfen bayan bu tarafa*
 'Over here ma'am'
- Cee *Ben şurada sıradayım, burada çektireceğim*
 'I'm in this line; I'm going to have (the photocopy) done here'
- Cer *Aaa, olur mu? Sizin gibi güzel bir bayanın fotokopisini*
 ben çekebilirim ancak
 'Ooh, that's impossible. Only I can do the photocopying for such a beautiful lady like you.'
- Cee *Ay! Ne kadar yapmacıksınız.*
 'Ugh! You're so artificial!'

The distribution above calls for an explanation regarding the perception of communicative intentions in complimenting. If compliments occur mostly among close friends and close associates in work places, this implies that the encyclopaedic entry for complimenting in Turkish would incorporate it as appropriate behaviour among individuals who already share a common cogni-

tive environment regarding their relationship. Thus, it appears that complimenting in Turkish is largely a form of in-group phatic communication. Hofstede (1998: 33) marks Turkish interpersonal communication as exhibiting a high degree of collectivism and moderate masculinity. These values imply different forms and standards of behaviour exhibited to members of the in- and out-group and a high value attributed to people and nurturance in relationships (Gudykunst and Matsumoto 1996: 23, Hofstede 1998: 42). These findings parallel the distribution of compliments along the social distance scale and also suggest that compliments may trigger implicatures as regards ingroup membership. However, the fact that compliments do not occur frequently among family members would seem to contradict this evaluation. This apparent contradiction can be resolved through the argument developed earlier, namely that complimenting as a form of polite behaviour incorporates the element of making manifest to the addressee that he is “*still* held in high regard”. This line of reasoning is compatible with Wolfson’s Bulge theory since it accounts for the emergence of complimenting as a strategy used for reassuring interlocutors that they are viewed in a positive manner. The fact that complimenting is rare in the family context would then imply that such ostensive communication might be perceived as superficial among family members. The family context might require styles in communication that presume a greater sense of complicity.²⁷

While the above argument might explain the low occurrence of complimenting among family members, it is necessary to take into consideration a cultural aspect of phatic communication among interlocutors of unequal power in Turkish. Parents with traditional backgrounds rarely praise children in their presence since praising and showing affect is deemed to influence children negatively. Such norms, together with the ‘evil eye’ belief, which makes people say *maşallah* ‘wonderful!, marvellous’ (lit. ‘what wonders God hath willed’) to avert the evil eye when they hear or utter something good, probably has a diminishing effect on the frequency of uttering compliments in intimate relationships.²⁸

The number of compliments between interlocutors of equal status in distant relationships forms 70 per cent of the total in this category. Those directed to participants of higher status make up around 12.7 per cent, while compliments to those of lower status form 17.2 per cent of the data. Native speakers say that because their conduct may be misunderstood as currying favour, they feel reluctant to compliment people in authority. People in work

places also remark that those of higher status very rarely express appreciation of their work. It may be that the reserve with which traditional parents act in complimenting and praising children is carried over to work settings for fear of producing 'spoilt' subordinates.²⁹ Compliments from superiors are mostly in the form of a show of affection or teasing. Some also occur as responses to expressions of gratitude and compliments from subordinates. The sample in (55) is a compliment uttered by a male chairperson (Ahmet, age 53) to a female research assistant (Sibel, age 25) in the presence of a female colleague (Suzan, age 42):

- (55) Ahmet (to Suzan) *Ben bu çocukları çok seviyorum*
 'I like these kids very much'
 Suzan *Ben de*
 'Me too'
 Sibel (smiles)
(bu çocukları: refers to Sibel and other research assistants³⁰)

Compliments from subordinates in work places mostly pick up accomplishments and there are a few on things like the fragrance of perfume or clothing, the latter two being mostly uttered by male subordinates to females. Regarding compliments between women of unequal status, it is noticeable that the few that have been recorded are mostly related to accomplishments and rarely to appearance even in fairly close, unequal power relationships like teacher-student relationships. In contrast, men compliment female teachers, for example, on elegance and youth. This suggests that being of the same sex does not override power differences in topic selection in compliments but that maleness creates status equality in male-to-female situations. In this respect, the style, too, of men is comparatively less formulaic in that they include expressions that normally do not occur in compliments in formal settings. The compliment in (56) is uttered by a male student to the teacher:

- (56) *Student Hocam bugün kelebek gibisiniz*
 'My teacher, you're like a butterfly today'

Considering these differences from a cognitive perspective, it can be argued that accomplishments are conventionalised, hence, safe topics for complimenting in distant and unequal power relationships. Furthermore, the fact that complimenting in unequal, distant status relations occurs more or less with the same frequency in both directions suggests that complimenting in Turkish is

perceived as an in-group form of phatic communication, where interlocutors can rely on already existing positive assessments of each other. The occurrence of affect compliments in close, equal status relationships appears to support this conclusion.

Summary and conclusion

RT is a cognitive attempt to explain human communication in general and this study depends on the assumption that it should also be able to account for social aspects of language in an inferential fashion. In this sense, the first section of the chapter treats 'compliments' as instances of phatic language uttered with the purpose of modifying the addressee's cognitive environment through politeness. The basic motive here is to increase/reinforce the degree of assumed mutuality between interlocutors and to maintain social closeness.

It is argued in the study that whenever compliments are concerned, the propositional content of utterances is more likely to become of minor importance. Instead, the very act of 'providing the addressee with a politely engineered (non)linguistic stimulus' becomes particularly relevant. Such stimuli are therefore classified as input on the relationship level. Complimenting, then, goes hand in hand with phaticness and politeness. In this framework, the study makes special reference to a number of crucial relevance-theoretic concepts, namely 'cognitive environment', 'mutual manifestness', and 'implication'. Such concepts are theoretically instrumental in explaining social phenomena like 'willingness to interact', 'positive social attitude', 'sharing', and 'face'. RT argues that style is the relationship; hence, a brief account of 'style of complimenting' is also given with respect to the distinction between conventional and creative compliments.

The data reveal that most compliments in Turkish are formulaic and occur mostly in friendly relationships. Lexical and structural standardisation breeds routine compliments which are processed at very low cost due to habituation. On the other hand, individuals seem to prefer creative compliments whenever there is a risk of causing an FTA or whenever the communicator wants to show affect. Such non-routine compliments demand more processing effort and result in richer contextual effects. Thus, impressions and affective implications are more likely to be triggered by non-formulaic or creative compliments.

Complimenting in Turkish occurs in a wide variety of discourse contexts

and this study has only been able to touch upon its functions in interpersonal communication. To recapitulate a few, compliments can be uttered as greetings; very often, they appear within the environment of criticism or may function as the criticism *per se*; they provide opportunities for conversational topic development, and reinforce positively valued behaviour. The presence of a higher number of compliments on appearance for women and the preponderance of accomplishment topics for men implies that their communicative intentions may incorporate the strengthening of assumptions on role perceptions.

What appears to transpire from the data is that frequency, topic selection, and style in complimenting in Turkish vary according to age, gender, and status. Complimenting among same sex interlocutors is far more frequent among women of all age groups, while complimenting of women by men predominantly occurs in the younger age group. Furthermore, status relations affect complimenting such that complimenting between interlocutors of unequal status is far less frequent than between those of equal status in distant relationships.

Another cultural value that has not been dwelt upon in this chapter but needs to be mentioned here is the effect of the high value placed on modesty and humility in interpersonal communication in Turkish (cf. Zeyrek, this volume, for similar observations). These values particularly influence the structure of responses to compliments, and a more comprehensive study of complimenting in Turkish has to take these values into consideration. Such culture-specific behaviour underscores the relevance of Brown and Levinson's (1987) and S&W's qualifications of their theories to the effect that social and cognitive approaches may complement each other, the former in providing the backdrop for assumption schemas, the latter in accounting for implicatures generated in communication.

Finally, the data suggest that Turkish has a variety of other linguistic forms such as the use of diminutives and epithets in forms of address, which may function as successful markers of polite, phatic behaviour and function in a way similar to that of complimenting. Native speakers talking about compliments say that these are forms of complimenting in Turkish. However, how such forms interact with complimenting patterns requires further investigation.

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Notes

1. All examples of compliments in this section come from the data collected for this study.
2. Turner (1989) claims that sharing is the most basic use of language and that it has to do with consolidating the relationship without necessarily exchanging information. This assertion supports the distinction between content level and relationship level of communication.
3. cf. Doğan (1992) for a discussion of the relation between pragmatics and style.
4. cf. Žegarac (1998: 347–348) for a discussion of 'standardization' and 'conventionalisation' in phatic communication. See also Sifianou (this volume) for 'automatic compliments' with weak semantic load.
5. Similar differences hold for the complimenter's choice between active and passive constructions. For instance "The paper is presented well" and "You presented your paper well" trigger two different kinds of mutuality due to different sentential structures that start different information processing.
6. cf. İmer and Doğan (1997) for an experimental study of sarcasm in Turkish discourse.
7. cf. Doğan (1992) for a discussion of poetic effects and implicit/indirect communication.
8. cf. Escandel-Vidal (1996) on the role of frames in evaluating politeness in utterances.
9. Kachru (1994: 45) and Hinkel (1994) point out the crucial role of topic selection in complimenting and in social conversations in general for successful interaction.
10. The observation sheet differs from Sifianou's in that observers were not asked to indicate social distance and status for family and relative relationships since these might include incorrect interpretations regarding intimacy and power relations. The authors share the

opinion that complimenting is mainly an urban phenomenon in Turkish culture. Population movements are extensive in Turkey, and a more detailed study on complimenting would require indications of personal background, especially years of residence in a city to be able to describe patterns of complimenting behaviour.

The study of complimenting, like all other linguistic behaviour requires, we believe, a participant observer method if its functioning in communication is to be thoroughly understood. This would allow studies to examine its role in social networks in a more informative manner concerning intra- and cross-cultural variation. For example, part of the data in this study includes a six hour recording of conversation in friendly gatherings between women, which is comparable to Durmuşoğlu's (1990) data in terms of length of recording. While Durmuşoğlu's data reveal a hundred instances, the same situation in this study included only a handful of samples. It is possible that there are differences in social background, although the majority of participants in both situations are women working as teachers in high schools and university settings. Similarly, frequency regarding topics of compliments also indicates highly different distributions. For example, while compliments on appearance are high among students in one university setting, another university setting shows a higher incidence of compliments on accomplishments and very few instances of complimenting between women. From the point of view of RT, this means that encyclopaedic entries for complimenting are different for the individuals in these settings. Therefore, generalisations on behaviour need to be compared with data in different geographical settings.

11. cf. Basso (1972: 83) on the interpretation of silence as ambiguity and uncertainty in social relationships.
12. Achievements are subsumed under the accomplishment category.
13. Due to space limitations, the distribution of the data according to age is not presented in the study.
14. cf. Tannen and Öztekin (1981) for other politeness formulas in Turkish and Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988: 48) on the relatively low value attached to possessions in cultures which exhibit low masculinity.
15. The translation of '*aile babası*' had to be rendered as 'a family man.' However, this is not quite accurate since the concept in Turkish does not necessarily incorporate a person who is very fond of his wife and children and likes to spend a lot of time with them (cf. Kağıtçıbaşı 1981 and Bolak 1995 on the perceived responsibilities of husbands).

It should be pointed out here that the concept of 'family' frequently appears as a metaphor for manifesting closeness in relationships in phatic communication in Turkish culture. Sample (39) above exemplifies how stating that someone is regarded as a member of the family can be interpreted as a compliment. We may also refer here to responses to compliments that make reference to being accepted as if one were a member of the family. The response was recorded from a TV program and clearly indicates the significance of the metaphor (cf. Tezcan (1974) and Kağıtçıbaşı (1996) on the concept of 'family' in Turkish culture):

Beni ailelerinden biri olarak görmeleri çok onur verici
'That they regard me as one of the family is very honouring'

16. Cultural differences in interpretation of style in phatic communication should be pointed out here. In their discussion of style in speech, Žegarac and Clark (1999: 338–339) argue

that in the utterance below the speaker is 'going out of her way' in the interest she shows in the addressee's experience:

Pauline: I was really sorry to hear about what happened to you when you were abroad. It must've been really awful. I hope you've managed to get over it OK.

Arthur: Yes. I'm fine, thanks.

It is clear that the addressee has experienced some rather serious problems. Insofar as Turkish discourse is concerned, the speaker's show of concern for the hearer's well-being in such a style would be considered perfectly 'neutral.' Indeed, in such contexts more standardised utterances like '*Nasılsın?*' 'How are you?' would imply that the speaker is insincere in her concern and is merely asking about the speaker to fulfil a social norm, but in a rather impolite manner (cf. Kachru 1994 for similar comments on cross-cultural stylistic differences).

17. The extract is from the autobiography of Erdal İnönü, a famous physicist and formerly active politician in Turkey (İnönü, Erdal. 1995. *Anılar ve Düşünceler* [Memories and Reflections]. İstanbul: İdea, 125). *Uludağ* is a popular skiing resort in Turkey.
18. Sofu (forthcoming) notes that ornaments are items more frequently bought for girls, which suggests that these may become cognitively more accessible information for women.
19. Sofu's (forthcoming) study has found a greater incidence of motherly advice on socially appropriate behaviour directed to girls.
20. Percentages have not been indicated in Tables 4 and 6 below due to the comparatively low number of total occurrences.
21. Females too mark this as important, but the social pressure on males tends to be greater in this respect on a macro scale in spite of significant changes in women's socio-economic roles (Kağıtçıbaşı 1981: 89–90, Kandiyoti 1981).
22. Holmes (1995: 126) remarks that "an awareness of men's ambivalence about compliments and of the possibility that men may regard some compliments as face-threatening acts, as embarrassing and discomfiting, or experience them as patronising strategies which put the speaker 'one-up'" may be one reason why males are not complimented so often as females. It is possible that the factors mentioned by Holmes regarding men's reception of compliments are relevant in Turkish culture too.
23. The complimentary nature of the remark may be rather obscure for an outsider. The men in this interaction are in the process of changing their minibuses into campers and are members of a camping association. Members of this association form fairly closely-knit social networks and share the view that camping is the best type of holidaying, which, according to them, reflects a sincere love of nature among other positive attributes. Cognitive processing of such an exchange would be rather different for an individual who does not share the assumptions of the association, and it is very likely that the remark would achieve an interpretation close to boasting due to the reference to a possession (cf. the second section for a discussion on topics pertaining to possessions).
24. The exchange in (50) is interesting in the way it indicates that complimenting may receive a range of interpretations from the recognition of the act as a mere show of attention or genuine interest to weak implicatures of liking in Turkish (cf. the first section for the

discussion on interpreting compliments). This range is logically plausible since noticing implies attention spent. Given that one would normally spend cognitive effort on things that fall within one's interest, conclusions such as liking are just one further possible step in inferential reasoning. This aspect of interpreting compliments in Turkish parallels dictionary definitions of the term (*Türkçe Sözlük* 1959, 1983, 1999):

iltifat: Yüzüne bakma, güler yüz gösterme, tatlı davranma, ilgilenme, saygı gösterme, beğenme, rağbet etmek, gönül okşayıcı söz söylemek
 'compliment: to turn one's face to (to look at), to act in a friendly manner, to act in a pleasant manner, to show interest, to esteem, to admire, to say words that appeal to the heart and mind'

The connection between looking at somebody and caring for somebody is etymologically present in the extension of meaning that the verb *to look* has undergone in Turkish: *to look* also means *to look after*.

25. The content of the second compliment in this exchange is of special interest here in the way it links smartness to a profession that is highly regarded among young adults. It is noteworthy that none of the appearance type compliments in the direction of men to women includes such information.
26. The total number of cases examined in this section is lower since samples in the data that did not include information on social distance have been excluded.
27. This discussion does not imply that the need to be "still" held in high regard does not exist in intimate relationships. What we suggest is that phatic communication in such contexts would be of a stylistically different quality compared to more distant relations (cf. Cupach and Metts 1994 on complicity in intimate relations).
28. Kachru (1994: 45) notes that the 'evil eye' belief constrains complimenting on the health and appearance of children but that topics pertaining to accomplishments are acceptable in South Asian societies. In Turkish culture, all types of compliments may trigger the use of 'maşallah', suggesting that the constraint is wider in terms of topic appropriateness.
29. This statement has to be qualified in the case of teacher-student relationships in Turkish, which are characterised by a greater degree of intimacy. The existence of compliments between teachers and students corroborates this assessment. Doğançay and Kamışlı (1996, 1997) also note fairly close relationships in such settings (cf. Zeyrek, this volume for similar observations), and students and apprentice teachers sometimes use kinship terms in indicating closeness to teachers and mentors (cf. Spencer-Oatey 1997: 297–299 for similar observations in China).
30. As a form of address, *çocuklar* 'children' is also used among friends and by teachers to students. Among friends it is close in meaning to 'guys, fellas' and connotes affection and intimacy.

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“Oh! How appropriate!”

Compliments and politeness¹

Maria Sifianou

Introduction

Complimenting behaviour has received a lot of attention by scholars.² Compliments have been defined as overt or covert expressions of praise and/or admiration for somebody other than the speaker (Holmes 1988: 446).³ They have also been found to be extremely formulaic (see for example Manes and Wolfson 1981), and, with the exception of “street remarks” (see Kissling and Kramarae 1991), to occur in familiar contexts typically between status equals and women. As expressive acts (Searle 1979) that satisfy social expectations, compliments are culturally specific. This is amply demonstrated by the growing literature on complimenting behaviour (see, for instance, Dendrinos 1986; Holmes 1995; Jaworski 1995; Manes 1983; Tannen 1984; Yläanne-McEwen 1993; Wieland 1995). Cross-cultural differences have been found to relate to features such as appropriateness, frequency of occurrence and recognition of utterances which count as compliments. Furthermore, quite naturally, appropriate responses to compliments attest to similar variability (Pomerantz 1978; Herbert and Straight 1989).

The main aim of this paper is to investigate the extent to which compliments are formulaic in Greek, their most salient functions and their relationship to politeness. In addition, the widely attested gender-specific patterns will be explored. On the basis of an extensive corpus, it is claimed that compliments are not as formulaic in Greek as has been shown to be the case with most other languages investigated so far and that their function is very similar to that of offers. Moreover, the gender pattern revealed seems to support earlier findings, namely, that women both pay and receive significantly more compliments than men.

To this end, a corpus of over 450 compliment exchanges was collected using the ethnographic method. Students and colleagues from the Faculty of English Studies assisted me with the collection, which also ensured variability in terms of social and educational backgrounds. Most of those involved were given a specially prepared observation sheet where they were asked to write down the exact exchange as it occurred as accurately as possible along with part of the interaction which preceded and/or followed the compliment. Moreover, data collectors were also asked to fill in relevant contextual information, such as the setting, the gender, the approximate age, the status and degree of familiarity between interlocutors. Most of these data come from informal interactions between friends and will be analysed qualitatively rather than quantitatively.

The speech act of complimenting

Considering the speech act of complimenting, it is interesting to note that compliments hardly ever appear in classifications of speech acts. For instance, compliments do not appear in Searle's (1979) taxonomy, although, presumably, they belong to his category of "expressives". Austin (1962: 151, 160) groups them under "behabitives" ("a shocker" of a category as he states) which have to do with attitudes and social behaviour; more specifically, he views compliments as a means of expressing sympathy along with congratulations, condolences and felicitations. For Bach and Harnish (1982: 51–52) compliments are a subcategory of congratulations along with felicitations and thus fall in their category of "acknowledgments". For them acknowledgements express certain feelings towards the addressee whether genuine or perfunctory. "Because acknowledgments are expected on particular occasions, they are often issued not so much to express a genuine feeling as to satisfy the social expectation that such a feeling be expressed". They are thus viewed primarily as "acts of courtesy".

The above statements reflect the fact that such acts are associated with a strong possibility of the speaker simply following social conventions of polite behaviour rather than expressing genuine feelings. Consequently, compliments in particular, as they are not reactions to any objective reality like condolences and congratulations but to an entirely personal assessment of a situation, are likely to be viewed suspiciously as expressing insincere feelings

and flattery.⁴ It may be for this reason that the verb “to compliment” is hardly ever used as an overt performative. For example, “I compliment you on your delicious meal” is quite unacceptable or marked.⁵ As a matter of fact, no equivalent performative verb exists in Greek but only a periphrastic form with the verb *κάνω* ‘do’/ ‘make’ plus the noun *κομπλιμέντο* ‘compliment’ or the more formal *φιλοφρόνηση* ‘compliment’. Such phrases can never occur as overt performatives but are rather used to describe the speech act, as in *αντάλλαξαν κομπλιμέντα/φιλοφρονήσεις* ‘they exchanged compliments’, expressions which have connotations of performing one’s socially expected duties. However, what can be found in many languages (cf. Jaworski 1995: 70, for Polish) is a negatively phrased overt performative. For example (between friends):

- (1) C: *Μαγειρεύεις καταπληκτικά και δεν είναι κομπλιμέντο.*
 R: *Σ’ ευχαριστώ πολύ, καλοσύνη σου.*
- C: You cook superbly and that’s not a compliment.
 R: Thanks a lot, you are very kind.

When speakers feel that they should reinforce their positive comment, in order to ensure that their utterance will not be interpreted as flattery and to strike a balance between sincerity and the assumed inherent insincerity in compliments, they can employ disclaimers. Utterances, such as “that’s not a compliment”, “I’m telling you the truth” or “it’s true” can either precede or more frequently follow the positive comments, in an attempt to diminish the possible negative connotations. For example, an older man at the wedding of a friend’s daughter while congratulating the bride says:

- (2) C: *Είμαι σίγουρος θα σας το έχουν πει ήδη πολλοί, είσαστε η ωραιότερη νύφη που έχω δει ποτέ.*
 R: *(laughing) σας ευχαριστώ πολύ.*
 C: *Την αλήθεια λέω.*
- C: I’m sure that many people have already told you, you are the most beautiful bride I’ve ever seen.
 R: *(laughing)* Thank you very much.
 C: I’m telling (you) the truth.

The complimenter in this occasion not only asserts that what he is telling the bride is true but he also prefaces his compliment with the statement “many

people have already told you” in order to underline that the ensuing utterance should be taken as a fact rather than simply his personal, perhaps incorrect, evaluation.

Compliments are probably unique among speech acts in their flexibility to be used together with, instead of or in response to other speech acts. More specifically, they often appear as reinforcing devices along with or instead of acts like thanks, greetings, congratulations, requests and advice (see, for instance Wolfson 1983; Norrick 1978; Jaworski 1995). In the following example, between two very close male friends on the recipient’s promotion, where we would normally expect congratulations, a compliment is produced.

- (3) C: *Καλά λέμε έσκισες, τι άλλο να σου πω;*
Well, O.K. you’ve surpassed everybody, what else can I say?

It is presumably the informality of the context and the interlocutors’ close relationship which render this substitution acceptable despite the fact that achievements like promotions usually elicit congratulations.

In the following example (4), between two very close female friends, the speaker produces a compliment to express her gratitude to her addressee for having collected and brought the complimenter’s ticket from the agent’s.

- (4) C: *Είσαι θησαυρός! Τι θα ’κανα χωρίς εσένα;*
You are a gem! What would I do without you?

Wolfson (1983: 88) says that role expectations are a key factor determining whether thanks or compliments are appropriate, that is, compliments are more appropriate than thanks when the service offered falls within the duties of the recipient whereas thanks are more appropriate when it does not. This suggestion, however, is questionable, at least for Greek, as example (4) above indicates. It may be the case that thanks in relation to compliments are more distancing devices. Wolfson’s illustration is of most traditional American families, where it is considered rather inappropriate for the husband or children to thank the wife/mother for cooking for them, since this is seen as part of her duties, whereas expressions of appreciation invested in compliments are welcome and more appropriate. In Greek, too, compliments rather than thanks are appropriate in such contexts (see Altani 1991: 104) but not in British English where thanks are more frequently used. In fact, events of food sharing are conducive to compliments as one should not only compliment the host/ess on the quality and amount of food prepared but can also soften the rejection of

an offer with a compliment (ibid.). Compliments can, in other words, be used in response to other speech acts, such as offers, as the following example at the dinner table between female friends illustrates:

- (5) A: *Έλα πάρε λίγο ακόμη.*
 B: *Είναι όλα καταπληκτικά αλλά έχω σκάσει.*
- A: Come on have some more.
 B: Everything is superb but I'm full (I'm bursting).

Similarly, compliments can be used in response to other acts like apologies (cf. Altani 1991: 103) and self-deprecations. The following example (6) between colleagues in B's office is illustrative of a compliment as a response to an apology while (7) involves a response to self-deprecation. The joking nature of the compliment-response in (6) should also be noted:

- (6) A: *Χίλια συγγνώμη που ενοχλώ συνέχεια.*
 B: *Ναι όντως ενοχλείς αλλά μας κάνει μεγάλη χαρά να σε βλέπουμε.*
- A: A thousand apologies for continuously disturbing you.
 B: Yes you're indeed disturbing but it gives us great pleasure to see you.
- (7) A: *Ωχ θάλασσα τα 'κανα πάλι. Μα τι ηλίθια που είμαι.*
 B: *Το ξέρεις ότι είσαι τελειομανής; δεν έχω δει καμία άλλη να τα καταφέρνει τόσο καλά.*
- A: Oh! I've made a mess again. What a fool I am.
 B: You know you're a perfectionist. I haven't seen anybody else to manage (things) so well.

Combinations of expressions of gratitude with compliments are also frequent. These combinations are "so commonplace that the compliment is seen as part of the expression of gratitude" (Wolfson 1983: 88). Consider the following example, between intimate female friends:

- (8) C: *Καλέ τι καταπληκτικό δώρο ήταν αυτό! Χίλια ευχαριστώ.*
 Well, what a superb present that was! A thousand thanks.

Such combinations are also found in formulaic expressions of gratitude like "thank you, that was very kind of you" or "that was lovely, thank you".

As it transpires from the above discussion, compliments are probably of those few acts that can be used instead of or along with other acts, can occupy either a first or a second turn position in adjacency pairs and can occur at the inception, cessation or even in the middle of an interaction, to fill in silences, etc. These are among the properties of compliments which indicate their interactive dimension, an issue which is related to their politeness and will be discussed in a later section.

The politeness of compliments

Compliments as outputs of the “Give gifts to H” strategy

As mentioned earlier, compliments are generally viewed as expressions of praise consolidating or increasing solidarity. Thus, they can be clearly seen as devices used to express positive politeness in Brown and Levinson's ([1978] 1987) terms. Most accounts relating compliments to politeness (see, for example, Holmes 1995: 118) consider them prime examples of the first positive politeness strategy, that is, “Notice, attend to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods)” (Brown and Levinson 1987: 103). This is not surprising since complimenters indicate that they have noticed and attend to the recipients' needs and interests and attempt to make the addressee feel good. However, since the theory's main interest at this point seems to be restricted to compliments used to redress other face-threatening acts, one could suggest that compliments could also be seen as the output of their second positive politeness strategy, that is, “Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H)” (ibid.: 104). It is true that compliments are associated with a certain degree of exaggeration which is reflected in the use of intensifying modifiers and in various types of responses. Nevertheless, what I would like to suggest here is that compliments could be seen as clearer concomitants of Brown and Levinson's last positive politeness strategy, that is, “Give gifts to H” elaborated as give “goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation” (ibid.: 129). This, Brown and Levinson regard as a classic positive politeness strategy in that the speaker knows the addressee's “human relations wants” to be liked and admired and tries to satisfy them. In other words, compliments are closely related to offering gifts (not only tangible) to others.

The close relationship between offers and compliments is also alluded to

by Leech's (1983: 104) classification of illocutionary acts based on their functions "according to how they relate to the social goal of establishing and maintaining comity". His category of "convivial" functions, where "the illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal", includes acts like offering, inviting, greeting, thanking and congratulating. Although Leech does not include compliments in his list, one could reasonably assume that compliments belong to this category, too.⁶ The "gifts" people give in the case of compliments are verbal praise, whereas in the case of offers it can also be material goods. People "offer compliments" in the same way they "offer gifts" to underline their cooperation and understanding of other people's desires. Compliments have also been characterised as verbal gifts by Kerbrat-Orecchioni (reported by Herbert 1990: 219), Jaworski (1995: 69) and Wieland (1995: 810).

Moreover, Brown and Levinson (1987: 125) consider offering a positive politeness device on the grounds that, whatever the speaker assumes the addressee would like, s/he would be helped by the speaker to acquire. Compliments are related in that they indicate that whatever the addressee liked and has achieved or acquired, the speaker approves of highly. The relationship between offers and compliments becomes clear also in that they are both seen as acts threatening the addressee's negative aspect of face since they can both incur debts (Brown and Levinson 1987: 66 and 247). By contrast, Leech (1983: 105) views convivial acts as intrinsically courteous, positively polite means of "seeking opportunities for comity".

It seems that in many cases, compliments, among friends in Greek at least, can function like offers, that is, they are offers of "gifts", "understanding" and "cooperation" (cf. Jaworski 1995: 75) and can both receive the appreciative response *ευχαριστώ* 'thank you' or some kind of return offer. For example, a compliment can be responded to by a return of a compliment, by providing information about the complimented item or even by giving it away. The following examples between female colleagues are illustrative:

- (9) C: *Μια χαρά είσαι σήμερα.*
R: *Και συ το ίδιο, Βάλλη μου.*

C: You are (look) great today.
R: You too, my Valli.

- (10) C: *Τι ωραίο σημειωματάριο!*
R: *Το πήρα από ένα μικρό μαγαζάκι εδώ πιο κάτω.*

C: What a nice notebook!

R: I bought it from a little shop-*dim*. a little further down.

These examples illustrate the kind of reciprocity which is frequently immediate in compliments but may be delayed in offers. It seems that both compliments and offers constitute part of the social give and take in daily interactions. One cannot go on complimenting and offering cooperation, understanding, etc. to somebody who never reciprocates.

The positively polite nature of compliments is further reinforced by compliments occurring in second turn position, that is, praising which comes as a reaction to another act. Such second turn acts are difficult to interpret as anything other than positively polite, affective actions.

Are all compliments FTAs and unidirectional?

Irrespective of the particular strategy they are outputs of, compliments are clearly positive politeness devices, as mentioned earlier. Although Brown and Levinson (1987: 66) view them primarily as acts threatening the addressee's negative aspect of face and similarly compliment responses as threatening the speaker's positive aspect of face and group them together with expressions of envy or admiration,⁷ there is evidence that acts like compliments are primarily face-boosting (Bayraktaroğlu 1991) or face-enhancing (Sifianou 1995). The explanation given is that such acts indebt the recipient who has to pay the debt back in some way. In addition, compliments are viewed as possibly implying that the speaker covets some of the addressee's goods and can constitute reasons for the addressee to either take action to protect his or her belongings or give them to the speaker. Responses to compliments like "return compliment" have been interpreted as highlighting this indebted nature of compliments. Similarly, responses like "offer of the complimented item" and "encouraging the complimenter to acquire the complimented item" rather than offering the item itself have been interpreted likewise as indicating envy or want (Chen 1993: 58). Although imposing through indebtedness and indication of envy may be culturally- or situation-specific readings of first turn compliments, such reactions do not uniformly reflect such readings, as will be illustrated below.

There are two issues worthy of consideration here relating to the face-threatening aspect and the unidirectionality of compliments, and speech acts in general. Brown and Levinson (1987: 65) assert that "*certain kinds of acts*

intrinsically threaten face, namely those acts that by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or of the speaker” (emphasis mine), yet nowhere in the book are we given examples of acts they do not consider face threatening. On the contrary, all speech acts included in their illustrative classification are interpreted as threatening some aspect of face of either of the interlocutors. This assumption is probably reinforced by and/or results from their main preoccupation with acts like requests which rather clearly, though not unexceptionally, threaten the negative aspect of the addressee’s face. Moreover, viewing all acts (compliments included) as primarily face-threatening probably reflects a bias towards the importance attached to non-imposition where even mere verbalisation of any act could be considered face-threatening. It is fair to add here that Brown and Levinson mitigate their statements with adverbs like “mainly” and “primarily” as for example in “we may distinguish between acts that *primarily* threaten H’s face ... and those that threaten *primarily* S’s face” (emphasis mine) (1987: 67). This modification leaves some leeway for one to assume that they envisage additional face threatening, or even face enhancing aspects in speech acts and consequently some kind of multidirectionality. Yet, as mentioned earlier, nowhere do they mention explicitly any acts which they regard as primarily face-enhancing or even non-face threatening nor do they provide any examples of the multidirectionality of acts.

What I would like to suggest at this point of the discussion is that probably all acts, but more specifically, compliments, can be seen as multidirectional, that is, they are not merely or primarily threats oriented to the addressee’s negative aspect of face. Compliments can threaten the addressee’s positive aspect of face, if for instance, in uttering a compliment, the speaker intends it as face-enhancing for the addressee, who may nevertheless perceive it as face-threatening, if, for instance, it is perceived as flattery or patronising encouragement rather than a genuine compliment. In addition, if a compliment is used together with an FTA it may be oriented to soften the imposition on the addressee’s negative aspect of face. If we now turn to the complimenter’s face, this cannot remain intact either. In producing a face-enhancing compliment for the addressee, if interpreted as such, the speaker simultaneously enhances his or her own positive self-image by presenting him/herself as a cooperative interlocutor, who knows and observes social conventions of appropriate behaviour, can share the addressee’s pleasure in attaining a goal and/or cares about other people’s wants. If, on the other hand, the speaker

produces a compliment which is interpreted as face-threatening by the addressee, this will undoubtedly have repercussions on the speaker's own face.

Consequently, acts like compliments may be regarded as primarily face-threatening in some contexts in that they may impose on the addressee who "may have to take action to protect the object of S's desire, or give it to S" (Brown and Levinson 1987: 66), yet undoubtedly in others, such acts primarily enhance the addressee's self-image, in that they make him or her feel good. At least some people prefer to be liked and praised even if they feel that such acts reflect social convention rather than genuine feelings and are generous enough to satisfy similar needs of others. Moreover, irrespective of whether a speaker threatens or enhances some aspect of the addressee's face, his or her act has repercussions on his or her own face. Consequently, the function of compliments as clearly face-threatening or face-enhancing acts is hard to determine universally. They are typically rather multidirectional, crucially depending on the specific context in which they occur. It is, I suppose, this multidirectionality which contributes to the interactive dimension of compliments, an aspect which will be discussed later.

In addition to the multidirectionality of compliments, one could also suggest that in some contexts it is the lack of praise rather than the offer of praise which may be interpreted as a face-threatening act implying envy.⁸ Changing appearance, acquiring new possessions or performing well in particular tasks creates social expectations to which others are socially obliged to respond. Lack of any such response may lead to disappointment which some people may overcome by fishing or asking directly for an opinion. In Leech's (1983: 136) words, "the lack of praise implicates dispraise". Certainly people can decide not to make an offer or not to pay a compliment but in so doing they may be undermining the social harmony at which politeness is directed; in other words, evading such actions may be more face-threatening than their performance (see Sifianou 1995). It is the multidirectionality of compliments which is partly responsible for the variation in complimenting behaviour between men and women that has been attested.

Male/Female complimenting patterns

Women have been found to focus more on the social or affective aspect of language whereas men focus on its referential aspects (see, for instance, Holmes 1995: 115). Consequently, this may be what is reflected in findings by

scholars (see, for example, Wolfson 1984; Herbert 1990; Johnson and Roen 1992 and Holmes 1995), namely that women both pay and receive more compliments than men. This is what clearly emerged from this data as well, as the figure below illustrates:

Table 1

Gender of Interlocutors	Number of Compliments	Percentage (%)
F → F	302	67
F → M	53	12
M → F	71	16
M → M	24	5
Total	450	100

On the whole, women paid 79 per cent of the compliments collected for this study and received 83 per cent of them. By contrast, compliments between males were extremely rare (i.e. only 5 per cent) and even taking into account the compliments offered to men by women, men received considerably fewer compliments (i.e. only 17 per cent). Holmes suggests that the propensity of compliments delivered to and produced by women reflects the value attached to them by women, a trait also recognized by men. The same pattern appeared in Antonopoulou's study (this volume) where men and women differed in terms of preferred patterns but each gender tended to use the patterns preferred by the other gender in interactions with them. Holmes (1995: 123) contends that the striking differences in complimenting behaviour may reflect a different perception of the functions of compliments. More specifically, she claims that women may regard compliments as positively polite acts whereas men may view them as primarily evaluative judgements or as potentially negative face threatening acts. She relates this to her finding that women pay and receive mostly compliments on appearance whereas men tend to compliment, only other men, on possessions. Compliments on appearance are generally interpreted as positively polite utterances indicating solidarity while compliments on possessions may be interpreted as implying desire or envy of the complimented item, as Holmes (*ibid.*: 131) suggests, in that in theory the complimented item can be transferred from the complimentee to the complimenter.

The pattern emerging from this data supports the tendency reported by Holmes (*ibid.*) for women to be complimented on their appearance more frequently than men. Over half (58 per cent) of the compliments women received concerned aspects of their appearance. Women also paid more

compliments on appearance (58 per cent to other women and 41 per cent to men) than men did (17 per cent to other men and 57 per cent to women).

In contrast to Holmes' finding, that men exchange compliments on possessions, the pattern emerging from this data is that men prefer compliments on ability. A considerable number of the compliments exchanged (67 per cent) between men involved ability. This ability related mostly to efficient performance of job related tasks and to good memory. Women compliment men on their ability as frequently as on their appearance (i.e. 41 per cent) while men compliment women on ability, skills and performance rather infrequently (only 26 per cent). Women were complimented on their cooking skills but also on their artistic talents in dancing and singing. Some of these were given as forms of encouragement and can be seen as patronising (see Holmes 1995: 134).

Thus it may be the case that Greek men and women perceive the function of compliments differently, too. Women's emphasis on appearance may reflect their interpretation of compliments as social affective positive politeness acts while for men compliments on ability may be interpreted more as referential evaluative acts. However, the face-threatening aspect involved in compliments on possessions in that they may be regarded as "expressing desire for or envy of the object referred to" (Holmes 1995: 131) does not apply in this case, in that skills and ability cannot be transferred from the complimentee to the complimenter. Compliments on possessions were extremely rare in this data. Men paid slightly more compliments on possessions to one another (8 per cent) than to women (6 per cent). Women, on the other hand, paid considerably more compliments on possessions to men (12 per cent) than to other women (1 per cent). Although one could assume that material possessions are not valued in Greek society and consequently people do not exchange compliments on their acquisition, a more plausible explanation for the scarcity is that new possessions or remarkable changes can elicit formulaic wishes rather than compliments.

For instance, new possessions can elicit wishes such as *με γειά σου*⁹ 'may you wear it in good health' for a new garment or a hair-cut and *καλορίζικο, να το χαιρέσαι* 'good fate/well-rooted, may you be happy with it' for more substantial new possessions such as cars or flats. For the effects of one's efforts in embroidery, knitting or cooking, praise is expressed with the formulaic wish *γειά στα χέρια σου* 'health to your hands'. Thus, wishes in these contexts can be seen as removing any implications of desire or envy (cf.

Sifianou 1992b).

Combinations of both wishes and compliments are also possible. For example between female friends:

- (11) C: *Ωραία σκουλαρίκια! Με γειά. Από πού;*
 R: *Ναι; Από ένα μαγαζί στη Νέα Σμύρνη.*

C: Nice earrings! May you wear them in good health. Where from?

R: Yes? (do you like them?) From a shop in Nea Smyrni.

It is noteworthy that these formulaic wishes, despite their frequency of occurrence and their frozen structures, are not considered insincere. It is as if there is a tacit agreement to accept them as always fresh and sincere expressions of feelings. Although as Tannen and Öztekin (1981: 46) observe, it is older people residing mostly in villages rather than in Athens who tend to use such formulaic wishes, the ones mentioned earlier, especially the first two, are common irrespective of age and location. The authors add further that “cultures that have set formulas afford their members the tranquillity of knowing that what they say will be interpreted by the addressee in the same way that it is intended”. In Brown and Levinson’s terms, wishes are positively polite means of assuring recipients that complimenters like them and share the pleasure of their achievement (cf. Makri-Tsilipakou 1997: 130).

The function of compliments

It has been widely suggested that the major function of compliments is to consolidate, increase or negotiate solidarity between interlocutors (Herbert 1990: 207; Holmes 1988: 447; Wolfson 1983: 86). However, given the attested multifunctionality of language and of speech acts in particular, it is not surprising to find that compliments serve a variety of more specific functions.

Referential versus Affective

Johnson (1992) and Johnson and Roen (1992) argue that although the primary function attributed to compliments is social, in the peer-reviews they examined, compliments appear to serve both ideational (or referential) and interpersonal

(or social affective) functions. In agreement, Holmes (1995: 118) suggests that “it is possible that some compliments are intended and perceived as conveying a stronger referential message than others”, as for instance in the following example from my data between female friends, where R’s response indicates that the positive evaluation was interpreted as referential. This example also clearly illustrates the interactive nature of compliments, discussed later, in that the illocutionary force of C’s utterance is ratified by R’s response.

(12) C: *Μπορείς να μου πεις τι κάνεις και λάμπει το πρόσωπό σου από υγεία και ομορφιά;*

R: *Υγιεινή διατροφή και άσκηση.*

C: Can you tell me what you do so that your face glows with health and beauty?

R: Healthy diet and exercise.

Such differential functions of compliments can lead to cross-cultural misunderstandings. Tannen (1984) gives examples from her personal experience in Greece, where her utterances intended as compliments were interpreted as statements conveying information and were consequently followed by disagreement which surprised her unpleasantly as inappropriate responses to compliments. This brings to mind Pomerantz’s (1978) pioneering work on compliments where she lucidly illustrates the systems of constraints operating on compliment responses since compliments can be simultaneously perceived as “supportive” and “assessment” actions.¹⁰ As Holmes (1995: 118) suggests, the relationship between interlocutors is crucial in interpreting the function of compliments. She illustrates this point by bringing in examples from contexts where complimenting utterances may serve as expressions of praise rather than offers of solidarity. This is frequently the case of compliments paid downwards. On the other hand, compliments paid upwards are usually interpreted as acts of “flattery” and are rather inappropriate.

Eliciting information

Jaworski (1995) finds from his Polish data that compliments can function as indirect requests for information about the source and/or the price of the complimented item. In Greek, it seems that when speakers would like to elicit this information, they verbalise their requests directly. An illustration of this is example (11) above. It is, however, arguable that even in cases of requesting

information, the recipient will profit from it. These questions simply reinforce the positive comments by expressing genuine interest and similarity of taste. One may suggest that information concerning a specific shop, which sells garments, jewellery, etc. of one's taste, can be profitable in a general sense of knowing where one can find items of comparable quality, style or price.

In some cases, although requests are not verbalised, recipients respond as if they had been asked to provide information concerning the complimented item. However, as this information is usually vague and/or incomplete it sounds more like information for information's sake rather than actual information the complimenter can profitably use. It is, in other words, a "gift" in return to the complimenter's "gift", as mentioned earlier. The following example, between colleagues in response to a prior compliment on C's scarf is illustrative:

(13) C: *Και σένα σου πάει πολύ αυτό το φόρεμα.*

R: *Σ' αρέσει; Laura Ashley.*

C: This dress also suits you a lot.

R: Do you like it? Laura Ashley.

Here the information concerning the shop where the dress was bought is of no use to the complimenter since the exchange took place in Athens where the specific English shop had no branch at the time the compliment occurred. Moreover, knowing the complimenter, it is extremely unlikely that she would wear a dress of this style and this is probably reflected in her utterance "this dress suits you", that is, it looks good on you.

Jaworski (1995), aligning with Herbert, attributes the high incidence of compliments on new possessions to the scarcity of material goods in Poland at the time of his data collection. The 'information seeking' function of compliments is explained along these lines. This very interesting explanation cannot account for similar examples in Greek. The available variety of consumers' goods makes it rather inappropriate for the complimenter to purchase an item identical to the complimented one, and a garment in particular. It is rather embarrassing for people to encounter others wearing the same clothes, especially if the information concerning their source has been offered in response to a compliment.

In my data three groups of compliments appear to be responded to by means of offering information: a) those concerning possessions (as in example 13 above), b) those relating to cooking and other abilities and c) those referring to achievements. The following examples between female friends

are illustrative:

- (14) C: *Μμ τι καταπληκτικό κοτόπουλο είν' αυτό!*
 R: *Σ' αρέσει; Είναι πολύ εύκολο, να σου δώσω τη συνταγή.*
 C: Mm what terrific chicken this is!
 R: Do you like it? It is very easy, I should give you the recipe.
- (15) C: *Καλέ πως αδυνάτισες έτσι; Μια κονκλάρα έγινες!*
 R: *Ναι έχασα αρκετά κιλά. Βρήκα μια καταπληκτική δίαιτα, να στη δώσω αν θέλεις.*
 C: How did you manage to lose so much weight? You look wonderful!
 R: Yes, I've lost some kilos. I found a special diet, I'll give it to you if you like.

It seems that the offer of information in the response is conventional rather than substantial since recipients rarely proceed with the provision of the recipe on the spot. In other words, the complimenter offers verbal praise and the complimentee offers to provide information and thus goodwill in return. Moreover, such responses minimise the praise in that they present the complimented item as nothing important or difficult to obtain or achieve. If the complimenter is genuinely interested in the recipe, he or she usually asks for it on a later occasion. Requests performed at that point, as in the following example, are conventional strengthening the compliment:

- (16) C: *Ουφ, έφαγα μέχρι σκασμού, δεν ήξερα ότι μαγειρεύεις τόσο ωραία.*
 R: *Σου αρέσει να υπερβάλεις νομίζω.*
 C: *Όχι το φαγητό σου ήταν πραγματικά υπέροχο. Καιρό έχω να φάω τόσο καλά και τόσο πολύ. Συγχαρητήρια, θα ήθελα να μου δώσεις τη συνταγή.*
 R: *Βεβαίως όποτε το θελήσεις στη διάθεση σου.*
 C: Ah! I ate too much, I didn't know you cooked so well.
 R: I think you like to exaggerate.
 C: No your meal was really delicious. I haven't eaten so well and so much in ages. Congratulations, I would like you to give me the recipe.
 R: Of course, whenever you'd like it, I'm at your disposal.

The following exchange between a young woman and her uncle is illustrative of the lack of usefulness of the information provided, which is simply given to emphasise the simplicity of the task.

- (17) F: *Μα τι καταπληκτικά ραφάκια!*
 M: *Σκίζουν ε; (laughs) Πήρα τα ξύλα από το Πράκτικερ, βίδες και λοιπά. Το μέτρομα είναι λίγο μανίκι, για να βγούν ίσια. Κατά τα άλλα είναι μισής μέρας δουλειά ...*
- F: These shelves are really superb!
 M: They are unbeatable, aren't they? *(laughs)* I bought the wood in Praktiker, screws, etc. Measurement is a bit tough, to be cut the same size apart from that, it's half a day's job ...

In this case the complimentee volunteers the information concerning the source of the goods and the preparation needed for the shelves as if recounting a story while working. This practice may not be unrelated to Friedl's (1962: 81) observation that "apparently routine activities are carried on to the accompaniment of a stream of comment and advice and that only a small proportion of what is said genuinely influences the person to whom the advice is given". If the speaker believed that the information provided would be used he would have been more specific, responding to specific questions asked rather than recounting a story.

Indirect requests

It is not rare in Greek for the complimenter to receive as a gift a complimented object. Durrell (1978: 60) describes this gift-giving tendency of Cretans very vividly. He says that "it is dangerous to express admiration for something, for you will certainly find it in your baggage as a farewell gift when you leave. You cannot refuse. They are adamant. I knew of a lady who got a baby this way". However, in the light of what was observed earlier about the relationship between compliments and offers, I would like to suggest that in Greek, such expressions of praise are not generally understood as indirect requests. Rather the complimentee responds with something tangible instead of merely verbally. The addressee does not feel socially obliged to offer the complimented object, as in a Samoan cultural context (see Holmes 1988: 448) where this kind of interpretation, other things being equal, seems to be frequent; it is rather his or her personal decision to react in this way in the specific context.

Such reactions to compliments occur in familiar contexts and reveal trust in the speaker's sincerity and in his or her concern to satisfy the addressee's positive face-needs by sharing. The following example between intimate friends is illustrative:

(18) C: *Καλέ τι ωραίο χρώμα έχει το μολύβι αυτό!*

R: *Πάρ' το, έχω κι άλλα.*

C: Hey, what a nice colour this pencil has!

R: Have it, I have more.

Such behaviour does not usually involve valuables but even if it involves some sacrifice on the part of the offerer, it is the pleasure of offering that counts more. This is in accord with Leech's (1983: 150) observation that in Mediterranean cultures high value is placed on the generosity maxim, which entails cost to self and benefit to the other.

The embarrassment which may ensue even between people who are conversant with this cultural tendency is not due to the misinterpretation of one act for another but results from the imbalance in the exchanged goods, that is, the response to a verbal praise is not only verbal but also accompanied with something tangible. It is probably for this reason, that such offers are accompanied by accounts such as "I have more" (in example 18 above) and "I've had it for years and haven't been wearing it", as in the following example between female colleagues, intimate friends:¹¹

(19) C: *Πολύ ωραία η καρφίτσα σου. Δεν την έχω ξαναδεί.*

R: *Σ' αρέσει; Πάρ' την. Την έχω χρόνια και δεν τη φοράω.*

C: (*embarrassed*) *Α, σ' ευχαριστώ πάρα πολύ.*

C: Your brooch is very nice. I haven't seen it before.

R: Do you like it? Have it. I've had it for years and haven't been wearing it.

C: (*embarrassed*) Ah thank you very much.

In this case, C was clearly not requesting for the brooch and R did not interpret the compliment as a request, an assumption which I verified with the interlocutors. So C's embarrassment was the result of the spontaneity of the reaction, the rather unexpected response to the verbal praise because although offering the complimented item can occur it is not the norm.

There are also cases, as in the following example, where both the compli-

menter and the complimentee deny the possibility of an implied request. C's denial may also reflect a rule that some people follow, namely that one should not accept an offer the first time.

- (20) C: *Πολύ ωραίο αυτό το φουλάρι.*
 R: *Το θέλεις; Πάρ' το.*
 C: *Δεν τό 'πα για να μου το δώσεις.*
 R: *Το ξέρω. Εγώ στο χαρίζω.*
- C: This scarf is very nice.
 R: Do you want it? Have it.
 C: I didn't say it so that you give it to me.
 R: I know. I'm giving it to you.

In Greek, it is not rare for gifts to be offered on no special occasion, as the following example among close friends illustrates:

- (21) A: *Γιατί λουλούδια; Μήπως έχω γενέθλια και δεν το θυμάμαι;*
 B: *Περνούσα απ' τη λαϊκή, τα είδα και σκέφθηκα ότι θα σου αρέσουν.*
- A: Why (are you giving me) flowers? Is it my birthday and I don't remember?
 B: I was going by the open air market, saw them and thought that you'd like them.

Thus, it is not surprising that complimented items may be given to the complimenter, in a similar way. In other words, since gift-giving is not necessarily restricted to special occasions but can occur at any time, giving away the complimented item exhibits the same concern for the addressee. Although it is impossible to know the speaker's exact intentions in uttering a compliment, it is my contention reinforced by the views of many of my informants that compliments are not normally interpreted as indirect requests in Greek. The offer of a complimented item is not a response to an implicit request but rather reflects the positive politeness strategy of giving gifts discussed earlier.

Formulaicity of compliments

Routine versus non-routine compliments

Before proceeding with the discussion of the formulaicity of Greek compliments, it seems pertinent to draw a distinction between “routine” or more or less automatic compliments and “non-routine” compliments as this seems to have repercussions on both their form and function. By routine, automatic compliments, I mean those rather formulaic positive evaluations exchanged between acquaintances who feel socially obliged to make a positive comment or by friends who make a positive comment in passing. In such cases people turn to rather fixed recurrent expressions for ease and convenience.

In other words, among acquaintances, compliments may simply satisfy social expectations. Thus, complimenter appear eager to wave any implications of insincerity aside and recipients to refuse any self-praise by resorting to common formulaic compliment constructions. For example between acquaintances; C has just received a home-made cake from R:

- (22) C: *A! σας ευχαριστώ πάρα πολύ για το γλυκό, ήταν πάρα πολύ ωραίο!*
 R: *A, δεν ήταν τίποτε και δεν ξέρω πώς μου χάλασε η φόρμα.*
 C: *Η φόρμα δεν έχει και τόση σημασία αλλά η γεύση. Ήταν πραγματικά καταπληκτικό και ο αδελφός μου ξετρελάθηκε.*
 R: *Ναι, Είναι πάρα πολύ εύκολο, να σας δώσω τη συνταγή.*
 C: *Oh! thank you very much for the cake, it was very nice!*
 R: *Oh, it was nothing and I don't know how its shape got spoilt.*
 C: *It's the taste rather than the shape that matters. It was indeed delicious and my brother also liked it very much.*
 R: *Really? It is very easy, I should give you the recipe.*

The recipient of the expression of gratitude cum compliment on the cake responds to the expression of gratitude by minimising the value of the cake and to the compliment by providing her unfavourable assessment of the shape the cake has taken. It is a kind of qualified disagreement with C's prior positive assessment (see Pomerantz 1978: 99). When C discredits R's disagreement by pointing out that it is the taste rather than the shape that counts and also that her brother who liked it very much is of the same opinion, R

seems to be trusting C's sincerity and retorts that it is easily made and offers to give the recipe. Given the nature of the relationship, mere acquaintances, one cannot be sure whether the interaction would have been different had C not liked the cake. It is a social convention that polite people should express their gratitude for a gift irrespective of whether they like it or not.

On the other hand, what I call non-routine compliments are more creative and can usually occupy many turns. They do not necessarily occur in cases in which compliments are socially expected and can lead to verbal play. Among close friends, social conventions are not those of the society at large and one is expected to be sincere unless he or she is risking to hurt more than to benefit the addressee. For example, between very close female friends:

- (23) C: *Πολύ ωραίο βάζο αυτό το μπλε! Εγώ στο έχω κάνει δώρο;*
This blue vase is very nice! Did I give it to you as a present?
- (24) C: *Ωραία τα μαλλιά σου κοντά, αλλά μου άρεσαν καλύτερα πριν.*
Your hair is nice short, but I liked it better before.

Among friends in Greek, a comment like "you look tired today" is not uncommon which indicates that the speaker's expression of sincerity and concern for the addressee's well-being is more important than the offer of a conventional compliment or even silence to avoid the face threat.

In my data, there are exchanges between intimate friends where the complimenter's praise is followed by the addressee's agreement. The following example (8 repeated here as 25) is C's expression of gratitude for R's previously given present.

- (25) C: *Καλέ, τι καταπληκτικό δώρο ήταν αυτό! Χίλια ευχαριστώ.*
R: *Και σ' εσένα σου άρεσε; Και μένα μου άρεσε πολύ.*
- C: Well, what a superb present that was! A thousand thanks.
R: Did you like it too? I also liked it very much.

Then R went on to explain where she had bought it and what it was made of. Although such responses could be interpreted as instances of accepting self-praise, they reflect the need to be sincere rather than falsely modest with close friends. Moreover, what is interesting to notice is that the addressee agrees with the positive comment thus emphasising the fact that they both share very

similar tastes, which indicates in-groupness and solidarity. The question in R's response, common in compliment responses, on the one hand, could be interpreted as indicating distrust for the complimenter's evaluation but on the other, as allowing the respondent to appear modest by not immediately accepting the compliment (see Valdés and Pino (1981: 60) for similar responses among Mexican monolinguals).

The syntax and semantics of compliments

Manes and Wolfson (1981) claim that compliments in American English are extremely formulaic both in terms of constructions and of the lexical items used to carry positive evaluation. Most subsequent research (see, for example, Johnson 1992; Johnson and Roen 1992) attests to similar formulaicity. This may be the result of researchers' focussing on overt expressions of positive evaluation, as Jaworski (1995: 64) observes, adding that "the focus on overt compliments can lead to a one-sided or unidimensional view of this speech act". In other words, it seems that the focus is on what I have called routine compliments.¹²

Even a cursory look at my Greek data reveals that besides the formulaic compliments there are not only cases of covert expressions of admiration which cannot be interpreted as compliments outside the contexts in which they occurred but also cases of very creative complimenting exchanges contributing fun to interactions. We will first consider the extent of formulaicity of Greek compliments and then proceed with those which are either totally original or do not follow any such patterns.

Manes and Wolfson (1981) argue that on the semantic level the overwhelming majority of their data contain one of a highly restricted set of semantically positive adjectives and that most of the non-adjectival compliments make use of a few semantically positive verbs. They claim in fact that actually 96 per cent of their data consist of compliments using five semantically positive adjectives, namely "nice", "good", "beautiful", "pretty" and "great" and two verbs, namely, "like" and "love".

By contrast, in Greek, although *όμορφος/η/ο/* and *ωραίος/α/ο* both meaning 'beautiful' are the most frequently used adjectives with automatic compliments (which like their English equivalent "nice" carry a weak semantic load) there is a number of other adjectives, like *χαριτωμένος/η/ο* 'charming', *τέλειος/α/ο* 'perfect', *καταπληκτικός/η/ο* 'superb', *φανταστικός/η/ο* 'fan-

tastic', *φοβερός/η/ο* 'terrific' and *υπέροχος/η/ο* 'magnificent' which are also frequently used. In addition to the restriction on the adjectives used, Manes and Wolfson (1981: 122) detect morphological constraints on the adjectives, that is, they are usually used in their base form. As "superlatives are a standard device for extreme evaluations" (Bach and Harnish 1982: 67), compliments employing adjectives in the superlative are usually indirect, that is, referring to somebody other than the addressee. For example from my Greek data the utterance using the superlative refers to a female friend of the addressee.

- (26) C: *Μα είναι ωραιότατη κοπέλα.*
But she is a most beautiful girl.

This does not mean that compliments with superlative forms are not used directly in Greek. For example between intimate female friends, in the middle of a conversation:

- (27) C: *Έχεις τα ωραιότερα μάτια που έχω δει ποτέ.*
You've got the most beautiful eyes I've ever seen.

However, the fact that the commonly used adjectives of positive evaluation in Greek are polysyllabic and non-gradable may not be unrelated to this constraint concerning the use of superlatives. Another noticeable difference between American English and Greek compliments is that the frequent complimenting formula "I (really) love/like NP" in American English is almost absent from my Greek data. Like Finnish (Yläne-McEwen 1993: 503), Greek compliments are usually addressee-oriented. The above construction seems to be found mainly in cases in which the complimenter proceeds with a question concerning the source or the price of the complimented item as for instance "I like your blouse, where did you buy it?". Verbs like "love" and "like" share an element of personal assessment. Verbs like "have" and "be" used or implied in many compliments in Greek present the positive evaluation as inherent to the entity referred to; thus the favourable judgement is not presented as a personal but a general view, probably shared by many others. The following examples occurred in different contexts among very close female friends:

- (28) C: *Είσαι μια κονκλίτσα, φρέσκια και ξεκούραστη.*
You are like a little doll, fresh and relaxed.
- (29) C: *Προσέχω έχετε¹³ πάρα πολύ όμορφα πόδια.*
I notice that you've got very beautiful legs.

This preference could be seen as removing the subjectivity and possible insincerity involved in complimenting utterances.

According to Manes and Wolfson (1981: 120), the compliment structure is also restricted on the syntactic level. The vast majority of their data fall into three syntactic patterns:

- 1) NP $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{is} \\ \text{looks} \end{array} \right\}$ (really) ADJ
- 2) I (really) $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{like} \\ \text{love} \end{array} \right\}$ NP
- 3) PRO is (really) (a) ADJ NP

In my Greek data no such systematicity could be detected. Notice the following examples which are of the non-routine, creative type:

- (30) C: *Πω πω! κοίτα ομορφιές! Θα σε δω στο δρόμο και δεν θα σε γνωρίσω.*
Wow! look at the beauty! I'll see you in the street and won't recognise you.
- (31) C: *Με το φουλάρι και το ριχτό, θυμίζεις αιθέρια ύπαρξη.*
With the scarf and the loose dress you remind one of an ethereal creature.
- (32) C: *και οι φοβερές γάμπες της κυρίας X (looking at and commenting on a photograph of the addressee)*
and the terrific legs of Mrs X.

As Coulmas (1981: 12) suggests in relation to the lack of institutional binding on compliments, it seems that in Greek "there is no apparent restriction on the speaker's imagination other than that something positive should be said to the addressee". Moreover, the positive evaluation can be overt or covert. Implicit compliments contribute fun and novelty to interactions. For example, the speaker, instead of complimenting directly on smart appearance, asks whether the recipient works in a fashion agency although she knows that this is not the case:

- (33) C: *Πες μας παιδάκι¹⁴ μου, σε οίκο μόδας εργάζεσαι;*
Tell us dear, do you work in a fashion agency?

All this does not mean that there are no formulaic compliments in Greek but rather that non-formulaic compliments are equally frequent. Formulaic compliments are usually saved for cases in which one needs something handy to respond automatically to a situation. Such compliments usually take the form of either

- 1) (very) ADJ your NP or 2) What (a) ADJ NP!

It should be added here that in addition to the fixed formulas discussed earlier, Greeks also use other set colloquial phrases in conjunction with or instead of compliments. They sound more original in that they are not entirely fixed and usually have a jocular note. For instance, a complimenting expression which can be used before a meal, provoked either by the smell of the food or its sight, is something like *θα φάμε καλά απόψε* ‘we’ll eat well tonight’. Young people, in particular, use a whole set of those to express admiration for somebody’s intellectual abilities or appearance, like *σκίζεις* ‘you’re a knock out’ *δίνεις ρέστα* ‘you’re beyond competition’ *δεν παίζεσαι* ‘you’re unbeatable’ and *με κόλλησες στον τοίχο* ‘you pinned me to the wall’, as in-group identity markers. Mackridge (1985: 343) notes this “highly idiomatic nature of colloquial Greek speech” and adds that even educated people use slang vocabulary in their informal speech. Wolfson (1981: 119) has also observed a similar use of “proverbs and other precoded ritualized phrases” by Iranian and Arabic speakers.

Turn position and interactive nature of compliments

As mentioned earlier, concentration on overt complimenting expressions hinders full understanding of the act of complimenting and its multifunctionality. In theory any utterance can function as a compliment depending on the context as well as its position in a sequence. In other words, most accounts to date have considered positive evaluations occurring as first turns followed by specific kinds of responses constituting adjacency pairs. This is presumably partly responsible for findings attesting to the extreme formulaicity of compliments while at the same time obscuring their interactive character. For example, the phrase “how appropriate” in response to “I’ll be waiting for you by the flower stand” was meant as a compliment but such a phrase cannot be understood as

a compliment outside the specific context in which it occurred. Similarly, the phrase “as if that would be difficult”, a male student’s response to a classmate’s statement “I’m collecting compliments” while distributing her observation sheets to her classmates, was meant as a compliment; it is, however, highly unlikely that anybody can understand this utterance as such outside the specific context in which it occurred. The following two examples are also illustrative of the significance of context, of the face-enhancing aspect and the interactional character of compliments. The first one (34) occurred between a secretary and a client at a doctor’s office while the second one (35) at an Olympic Airways office where the lady went to collect her ticket and requested the discount for those over sixty:

- (34) S: *Έτος γεννήσεως;*
 C: *Τριάντα οκτώ.*
 S: *Όχι την ηλικία, το έτος γεννήσεως σας ζήτησα.*
 C: *Κι εγώ το έτος γεννήσεως σας είπα.*
 S: *Δεν το πιστεύω, φαίνεστε τόσο νέα!*
 C: *Α σας ευχαριστώ πολύ, μου το λένε συχνά αυτό.*
 S: Year of birth?
 C: Thirty eight.
 S: Not your age, the year of birth I asked you for.
 C: And I told you the year of birth.
 S: I can’t believe it, you look so young!¹⁵
 C: Ah, thank you very much, they frequently tell me so.
- (35) L: *Θα μου κάνετε βέβαια και την έκπτωση.*
 A: *(looking at the lady rather angrily)*
Για ποιον είναι το εισιτήριο;
 L: *Για μένα, έχω και ταυτότητα μαζί μου αν δεν με πιστεύετε.*
 A: *Δεν είναι δυνατόν! Να μην λέτε πουθενά την ηλικία σας.*
 L: *(laughing)* *Γενικά ναι, εδώ όμως πρόπει.*
 L: You will of course give me the discount.
 A: *(looking at the lady rather angrily)*
 Who is the ticket for?
 L: It’s for me, I’ve got my identity card if you don’t believe me.
 A: Impossible! You shouldn’t tell your age to anybody.
 L: *(laughing)* In general yes, I should though here.

These are very clear examples of non-routine, non-formulaic compliments which occurred at moments when they were not socially expected. They also clearly exemplify the fact that complimenting exchanges are not necessarily restricted to certain formulaic utterances with specific kinds of responses constituting adjacency pairs. They can frequently occur in second turn position and may require more than one turn to be complete.

Such compliments are not only extremely creative and occur totally unexpectedly but also contribute enjoyment to the interactions and in general an atmosphere of solidarity. The following example, between a girl and her friend's mother on the telephone, is very similar where the compliment comes in response to another act:

- (36) A: *Είστε σίγουρη ότι δεν είναι πρόβλημα να μείνω σπíti σας το βράδυ; Δεν θέλω να είμαι βάρος.*
 B: *Τέτοια βάρη είναι καλοδεχούμενα και πάντα ευπρόσδεκτα, θέλουμε να έχουμε νέο κόσμο.*
 A: *Α, σας ευχαριστώ πάρα πολύ κυρία Ελένη, είσαστε πάντα πολύ καλή μαζί μου.*
- A: Are you sure there is no problem if I stayed in your house for the night? I don't want to be a burden.
 B: Such burdens are always welcome, we want to have young people in our house.
 A: Ah, thank you very much Mrs Eleni,¹⁶ you are always very kind to me.

Example (37) below, between a passenger and a taxi-driver also shows the multifunctionality and interactive nature of complimenting utterances. The passenger feels that she should express her positive evaluation of the driver's driving. The recipient, who is uncertain of the function of the utterance, asks for clarification. Only when he is sure that his way of driving is indeed appreciated does he respond to the compliment.

- (37) P: *Οδηγείτε πολύ σωστά.*
 D: *Δηλαδή, τι;*
 P: *Να, δεν φρενάρετε απότομα.*
 D: *Κυτάχτε, εγώ είμαι ήρεμος άνθρωπος.*
- P: You drive very well.
 D: What do you mean?

P: I mean, you don't brake abruptly.

D: See, I'm a calm person.

Generally speaking, it can be deduced from my data that compliments can be paid in response to questions asking for one's opinion and in response to statements concerning mishaps. Such responses serve to boost the troubled person's morale and reaffirm or increase solidarity between interlocutors. For example (between very close friends):

(38) A: *Λέω ν' αρχίσω γυμναστήριο, τι λες;*

B: *Γιατί ν' αρχίσσεις; Μια χαρά είναι το σώμα σου. Μακάρι να 'μουν κι εγώ σαν και σένα. Εγώ θα 'πρεπε να πάω γυμναστήριο, όχι εσύ.*

A: *Σιγά μην έχεις πρόβλημα εσύ. Μωρέ ας είχα εγώ το σώμα σου και τα λέγαμε.*

A: I think I should start going to the gym, what do you think?

B: Why should you start? Your figure is fine. I wish I were like you. It's me who should go to the gym, not you.

A: Come on now, as if you had a problem. If only I had a figure like yours and then we would see.

The following exchange is in response to a mother's asking her daughter why she is so upset and is crying.

(39) D: *Μανούλα μου χώρισα με τον Αλέξανδρο.*

M: *Και τι έγινε; Μια κονκλάρα σαν και σένα θα βρει χίλιους σαν και αυτόν και καλύτερους.*

D: My dear mother, I split up with Alexander.

M: So what? A doll like you will find a thousand like him and even better (ones).

Such unexpected compliments are not infrequent in Greek and clearly reveal their interactive rather than formulaic nature and their function as acts of solidarity. As mentioned earlier, any utterance can function as a compliment as long as it is ratified by the recipient as such.

Metaphors in compliments

The creativity found in Greek compliments is also made evident in the use of

metaphors to compliment. Metaphors are central to a large proportion of ordinary language use (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Levinson 1983: 147) and compliments are no exception as they allow speakers to combine everyday language with devices that create special effects. For example (among close young friends):

- (40) C: *Μ' αυτό το συνολάκι είσαι κουφέτο.*
In this outfit you are (like a) sugared almond.

By using this metaphor, the complimenter creates an implicit comparison between the girl and something sweet, a sugared almond. Even more illustrative of the use of metaphors in and of the interactive nature of complimenting is the following example, between two male friends, while greeting and joking with the bride and the groom, very good friends of theirs. C₁ uses a sweet metaphor (a Turkish delight) to describe the bride and C₂ not only agrees but uses another metaphor from the “domain of flowers”. The bride is now compared to the freshness, youth and beauty of a flower bud.¹⁷

- (41) C₁: *Λουκούμι είναι η νύφη.*
C₂: *Ναι μπουμπούκι, μπουμπούκι.*
C₁: The bride is a Turkish delight.
C₂: Yes, a flower bud, a flower bud.

Moreover, in many examples, various metaphorical expressions have been used to indicate approval for a smart answer or admiration for the intellectual abilities of the recipient in such a way that the full compliment emerges from the interaction between interlocutors. For example:

- (42) C₁: *Κόβει το μυαλό σου, αετός.*
C₂: *Τσακάλι, τσακάλι, σπύργο αναμένο είσαι, πιάνεις πουλιά στον αέρα.*
C₁: You've got a sharp mind, an eagle.
C₂: A jackal, a jackal, you are a lit match, (sharp as a whip you are), you catch birds in the air.

C₁ compares the recipient's mind to a sharp knife and a fast bird (eagle) while C₂ upgrades by using the metaphor of a fast animal and a very competent hunter who does not need a gun to catch his prey, thus jointly expressing extreme admiration in a jocular manner for the recipient's speed and skill.

Metaphorical expressions are also employed to describe a recipient's personality attributes. In the examples *είσαι διαμάντι/θησαυρός* 'you are a diamond/treasure' the recipient is compared to a precious stone and a jewel which are rather hard to find. Whereas in the *έχεις καρδιά περβόλι* 'you have a heart like an orchard', the speaker compares the recipient's heart to an orchard, a symbol of freshness, opulence and pleasure.

It should be noted here that metaphors could also occur in responses to compliments, as in the following example among close friends:

- (43) C: *Ο καφές σου έχει ξετρελάνει τους πάντες, τύφλα νάχει ο Λουμίδης.*
 R: *Το στόμα σου στάζει μέλι.*
 C: Your coffee has driven everybody crazy, you've surpassed Lumidis' (well-known coffee firm).
 R: Your mouth leaks honey (your words are honeyed).¹⁸

Another related figure of speech used to compliment is that of simile.¹⁹ In such cases the person complimented is explicitly compared to something else which has excellent qualities of power, beauty, freshness, etc. The following examples are illustrative:

- (44) C: *Ας είχα τα μαλλιά σου μόνο που είναι σαν χείμαρος.*
 If only I had your hair which is like a torrent.
 (45) C: *Είσαι μια κούκλα σαν τα κρύα τα νερά.*
 You are a doll like cold (fresh) water.
 (46) C: *Ψηλή, ψηλή η κοπέλα σου, σαν κυπαρίσι και κορμί λαμπάδα, να τη χαίρεσαι.*
 Your girlfriend is very tall, like a cypress and (with a) figure like a candle, you should be proud of her.

Besides physical entities, many compliments involve comparisons with well-known individuals with excellent characteristics or skills. The implication here is that the referent equals or surpasses the individuals mentioned in skill, beauty, etc. For example (among close friends):

- (47) C: *Σαν μανεκέν ήσουν σήμερα με τα μαλλιά επάνω, σαν βασίλισσα.*
 You were like a fashion model today with the hair up, like a queen.

- (48) C: *Ούτε Γκάλης να ήσουν, μας τρέλανες όλους με το παιχνίδι σου.*
As if you were Galis (a famous basketball player), you drove us all crazy with your game.
- (49) C: *Πω πω ομορφιές, τύφλα νάχει η Σκλίβα* (previous Greek Miss World).
'Wow beauty! Skliva (previous Greek Miss World) pales next to you.
- (50) C: *Καλώς την Σίντυ Κρόφορντ.*
Welcome to Cindy Crawford.

As mentioned earlier, concentrating on more or less automatic, routine compliments may deter our understanding of the functions of compliments and the verbal play which they frequently involve. Of the most interesting examples in my data are those in which the complimenter's metaphoric expression is responded to by another rather irrelevant metaphor (as in 51 below) or an utterance defrosting²⁰ the initial metaphor (as in 52 below). In both cases there is a play on words which displays linguistic creativity and contributes fun to the interactions. For example:

- (51) C: *Καλά ε θα σκίσεις²¹ απόψε, στο υπογράφων.*
R: *Τι θα σκίσω; Γάτες;*
C: Well, you'll be a knock out (lit. you'll tear) tonight, I can assure you.
R: I'll tear what? Cats?
- (52) C: *Πω πω Καίτη, απόψε δίνεις ρέστα!²²*
R: *Ωχ και δεν έχω ψιλά!*
C: Wow Keti, tonight you're beyond competition (lit. you give change)!
R: Oh and I don't have cash!

It should also be noted that among intimate friends or even strangers in the street, especially of young age, song lyrics are adopted and adapted to the specific situation to express praise and admiration in a jocular manner. These are mainly derived from popular love songs and can have flirtatious connotations as the following examples from my data indicate:

- (53) C: *Μια ματιά σου μόνο φτάνει αεροπλάνο να με κάνει.*
Just one look from you is enough to send me flying (like an airplane).
- (54) C: *Θα σε περιμένω, τσιγάρο αναμένο.*
I'll be waiting for you like a lit cigarette.
- (55) C: *Είσαι ότι καλύτερο μου έχει συμβεί στη ζωή μου.*
You're the best (thing) that has ever happened in my life.

In the following example, the recipient of the compliment also responds with a rhyming verse from the same song, slightly changed in that the actual verse uses the third person plural verb form *σταματούν* 'they (i.e. the trams) stop' whereas the recipient here uses the first person singular *σταματώ* 'I stop (them)':

- (56) C: *Απόψε κάνεις μπαμ.*
R: *Και σταματώ τα τραμ.*
- C: Tonight you look smashing (cause explosions).
R: And I (shall) stop trams (from running).

In many cases, especially among young people, complimenting exchanges appear to be treated as a kind of mental game of ping-pong. For example:

- (57) C: *Σου έχω πει ποτέ ότι είσαι ότι καλύτερο μου έχει συμβεί στη ζωή μου;*
R: *Μόνο όταν θέλεις κάποια χάρη.*
C: *Και το πιο ετοιμόλογο;*
R: *Έλα έλα πες μου κι άλλα, μου αρέσουν.*
- C: Have I ever told you that you are the best (thing) that has ever happened in my life?
R: Only when you want to ask for a favour.
C: And the most witty?
R: Come on tell me more, I like it.

In a sense, figures of speech and colloquial phrases used in compliments could be perceived as contributing formulaicity if they are regarded as fixed expressions. However, such examples have not been included in accounts attesting to the formulaicity of compliments. Moreover, it could be argued that the

ensuing responses to such compliments actually deconstruct the formulaicity of the first turn, thus interactively rendering them non-conventional, more creative and novel. This verbal game lucidly demonstrates the interactional dynamic character of metaphors (see Kyratzis 1997) and of language on the whole (see Thomas 1995: 203). Such examples not only presuppose but also contribute to the maintenance of solidarity between interlocutors. The particular interactional development of compliments indicates solidarity in at least two ways: first, the addressee willingly participates in the game set up by the speaker by responding in this way rather than employing a conventional response and, secondly, by choosing to challenge or even ridicule the speaker's utterance, which seems to be an in-group strategy in Greek.²³ In conclusion, I would like to add that this playfulness evidenced in compliments but also in Greek telephone openings (see Sifianou forthcoming) may derive from and reflect a certain significance attached to it in Greek culture. As Mackridge (1992: 113) observes "language in Greece can be seen as a form of game". The ease with which words are dissociated from their meanings in a full exploitation of verbal play in Greek is also observed by Hirschon (1992) in relation to adult-child interactions.²⁴

Concluding remarks

Compliments in Greek have been found to be multifunctional. They can be of a referential or a social/affective nature and can express the speaker's praise and admiration. They can be used along with or instead of many other acts, such as expressions of gratitude and compliments, as well as in response to other acts like apologies. These functions are similar to those observed in other studies concerning various societies. The proliferation of such examples in my data leads me to the tentative suggestion that compliments being prime examples of positive politeness may replace or accompany other acts which may have a more face threatening or formal orientation. However, what seems to emerge from this study clearly is the close relationship between compliments and offers. Compliments are interpreted as giving gifts, whether they refer to the quality and quantity of food prepared and offered to guests (cf. Wieland 1995: 810) or to the recipient's appearance and skills. Various compliment responses point to this interpretation, the clearest examples of which are the offer of the complimented item and offers of information

relating to the source of the item, recipes, etc. Such reactions to compliments are clearly not due to the interpretation of compliments as indirect requests. They are acceptable verbal and non-verbal responses to compliments and fall within an observed tendency of Greeks to offer. This tendency may reflect a diachronically evident characteristic of Greek culture: that of offering illustrated by offerings to Gods, to kings and leaders as well as offerings among ordinary people, even if these required sacrifice on the part of the offerer. Consequently, it is not surprising that in this framework there should develop linguistic acts expressing offerings to reinforce a solidarity based culture.²⁵

It is suggested that a distinction between routine and non-routine or genuine compliments is necessary. The former are frequently formulaic while the latter are not. Moreover, compliments have been found to occur not only in first but also in second turn position and to develop interactionally in discourse. Complimenting like most verbal activity is a joint process between two interlocutors who interactively interpret and contribute meaning to each other's utterances. These as yet not fully explored aspects of compliments could facilitate our understanding of the extent to which they are formulaic or genuinely creative. The extensively attested formulaicity of compliments is not verified by this data. In Greek, young, closely related people, in particular, seem to be very creative, poetic and playful with their use of compliments. This reinforces the view that compliments are positive politeness devices offering concern, understanding and cooperation and aiming at revealing and consolidating or increasing solidarity between interlocutors. At least in Greek compliments function as primarily face-enhancing positive politeness devices. This is not surprising given the positive politeness orientation of Greek culture (Sifianou 1992a; Pavlidou 1994; Makri-Tsilipakou this volume). Moreover, compliments have been shown to be multidirectional affecting either the positive or the negative aspect of face of either interlocutor and not just acts threatening the negative aspect of the addressee's face. This also explains the differential understanding of compliments by women and men, both in terms of function and aspects which call for compliments.

All this clearly indicates, that complimenting behaviour is a complex sociolinguistic skill, as Holmes (1988: 449) suggests, and its full understanding necessitates consideration of the cultural and situational context in which compliments occur. Further research is needed to refine and extend these findings to other areas of politeness phenomena, such as the multifunctionality and multidirectionality of other acts.

Notes

1. I would like to express my gratitude first of all to my students, friends and colleagues who helped me not only with the collection of data but also with their insights. More specifically, I should record special thanks to my colleagues and friends E. Antonopoulou, A. Bayraktaroğlu, V. Moschovou and A. Tzanne for their valuable comments and long discussions on complimenting behaviour. Above all, my gratitude goes to my colleague and friend S. Marmaridou for making the time to read the paper more than once and share with me her excitement and expertise on cognitive aspects of language use and metaphors, in particular. Likewise, A. Jaworski deserves my gratitude for his insightful and expert comments. The usual disclaimers obviously hold.
2. See for example, Herbert 1989, 1990; Herbert and Straight 1989; Holmes 1988, 1995; Holmes and Brown 1987; Jaworski 1995; Johnson 1992; Johnson and Roen 1992; Manes 1983; Manes and Wolfson 1981; Pomerantz 1978; Valdés and Pino 1981; Wolfson 1981, 1983, 1984; Wolfson and Manes 1980; Yläne-McEwen 1993.
3. This definition raises questions as to whether utterances attributing credit to someone other than the addressee who is not present count as compliments. The issue is rather controversial and will not be pursued here. Suffice it to say that they do not count as compliments for Herbert (1991) while they do for Holmes (1988). To my mind, in addition to complimenting indirectly or pleasing the addressee by attributing credit to a related third party, underlying intentions (Holmes 1988: 447) and possible future use are worth considering. For instance, a reported compliment can be much stronger than a direct one.
4. Even noticing a new possession which constitutes reaction to reality is sometimes turned into personal assessment by non-observant people.
5. As Dr. Bayraktaroğlu pointed out to me one can of course say “My compliments to the chef” in English, the equivalent of which in Greek would be “congratulations to the chef”.
6. Leech’s (1983: 104) other categories are: 1) the “competitive” where “the illocutionary goal competes with the social goal” as in ordering and demanding, 2) the “collaborative” where “the illocutionary goal is different to the social goal” as in asserting and instructing and 3) the “conflictive” where “the illocutionary goal conflicts with the social goal” as in accusing and threatening.
7. Brown and Levinson (1987: 247) offer the example of “debt-sensitive” and “shame” cultures where compliments can be regarded as very big face-threatening acts since they incur debts.
8. I owe this point to Dr. Bayraktaroğlu.
9. *γεία* ‘health’ is a shortened form of the full form *υγεία* ‘health’. It is what Ferguson (1981: 31) calls weakening of politeness formulas. This form is encountered only in various formulaic expressions such as greetings and wishes.
10. “Supportive” actions, like offers, invitations, gifts and praise can be either accepted or rejected in the next turn. “Assessment” actions, like statements and remarks can be followed by either an agreement or a disagreement as a next turn. Although acceptances and agreements are the preferred follow-ups to such acts, due to a third constraint, that of

“minimise self-praise”, compliments are not usually responded to with straightforward acceptances and agreements.

11. It is obvious that such accounts are used to reduce the value of the offered item and thus facilitate the addressee’s acceptance. However, extra care should be taken so as not to reduce the value to a ridiculous extent. It is interesting to note here that older people in both Greece and Turkey recount stories of such *faux pas*, where speakers in their attempt to facilitate the addressee’s acceptance said things like “have some more food please, it will otherwise go into the bin later on” and “you can have it because I don’t need it and I was going to throw it away, anyway”.
12. See also Boyle’s (2000) interesting discussion on implicit compliments (vs. explicit ones).
13. The plural of formality *έχετε* ‘have’ (instead of the singular *έχεις*) has a jocular tone here.
14. This is the diminutive form of *παιδί* ‘child’ used as an in-group term of address not necessarily related to any age difference.
15. Telling somebody that they look young is a compliment in Greek but not in all other cultures, like the Japanese where maturity is assumed to come with age and telling somebody they look young may imply signs of immaturity.
16. In Greek, T+FN is frequently used as an in-between solution to the formal T+LN and the informal FN.
17. The sexist aspects of these metaphors are beyond the scope of this paper.
18. Dr. Bayraktaroğlu pointed out to me that exactly the same phrase *agzından bal akıyor* is found in Turkish.
19. See Kyratzis (1997: 102–105) on the relationship between similes and metaphors.
20. Kyratzis (1997: 199) explains that “having the same word in its literal and metaphorical sense in conversational proximity has as a result the defrosting of the latter” and adds that “defrosting can also occur when a word is metaphorically ambiguous”.
21. The verb *σκιζώ* literally means ‘tear’ (*θα σκίσεις* ‘you will tear’) while the colloquial expression *σκιζω τη γάτα* ‘I tear the cat’ means being decisive and achieving control over.
22. The phrase *δίνω ρέστα* literally means ‘give change back’, a metaphor originating in gambling.
23. I am grateful to S. Marmaridou for suggesting these aspects of metaphors to me and for bringing relevant bibliographical references to my attention.
24. I would like to note here that when Tannen and Öztekin (1981: 38) claim that Greek has many more fixed formulas than English they refer primarily to the abundance of formulaic wishes.
25. One could suggest that it is possible that complimenting has been diachronically motivated as the illocutionary substantiation of the physical act of offering. In fact, complimenting could also be cognitively supported as an abstract, symbolic realisation of the physical act. (On the relationship between physical experience, linguistic meaning and illocutionary force, see Sweetser 1990).

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