

Politeness and its Parasite: Strategies and Framework

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1. Introduction

In general, politeness theories have concentrated on how we employ communicative strategies to maintain or promote social harmony:

The role of the Politeness Principle is "to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place." (Leech, 1983: 82)

"... politeness, like formal diplomatic protocol (for which it must surely be the model), presupposes that potential for aggression as it seeks to disarm it, and makes possible communication between potentially aggressive parties." (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 1)

"Politeness can be defined as a means of minimizing confrontation in discourse - both the possibility of confrontation occurring at all, and the possibility that a confrontation will be perceived as threatening." (Lakoff, 1989: 102)

Impoliteness is the use of strategies that are designed to have the opposite effect - that of social disruption. These strategies are oriented towards attacking face, an emotionally sensitive concept of the self (Culpeper, 2005:2).

In this paper there is a consideration of inherent impoliteness and mock impoliteness. In addition, the contextual factors that are associated with impoliteness are discussed and there is a proposal of a list of impoliteness strategies. The study is limited to the discourse of drama i. e., the politeness strategies followed in **Twelfth Night** and **Much Ado about Nothing**. The impoliteness ones in **Macbeth** and **Hamlet**: an example from each. Therefore, the researcher hypothesizes that Leech's claim (1983: 105) that

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conflictive communication tends to be "rather marginal to human linguistic behaviour in normal circumstances", does not apply.

2. Relative Politeness and Absolute Politeness

Leech (Ibid.) draws a distinction between 'Relative Politeness' and 'Absolute Politeness'. Relative politeness refers to the politeness of an act relative to a particular context, whereas absolute politeness refers to the politeness associated with acts independent of context. Within absolute politeness, Leech argues, "some illocutions (e.g. orders) are inherently impolite, and others (e.g. offers) are inherently polite" (Ibid.). Similarly, Brown and Levinson (1987:65), working within a face-oriented model of politeness, write : "it is intuitively the case that certain kinds of acts intrinsically threaten face"; in other words, they argue that certain acts (e.g. orders, threats, criticisms) run counter to one's positive face, the want to be approved of, and/or one's negative face, the want to be unimpeded.

If one considers acts in the abstract, one might broadly concur with the idea that some acts are inherently polite, whilst others are inherently impolite. However, one must bear in mind that any assessment of politeness outside the theorist's vacuum will take context into account. Fraser and Nolan (1981:96) make this point:

"... no sentence is inherently polite or impolite. We often take certain expressions to be impolite, but it is not the expressions themselves but the conditions under which they are used that determine the judgment of politeness."

It is not difficult to think of examples where a supposedly impolite act will be judged as polite in a particular context (or as falling somewhere between the two extremes on a continuum ranging from politeness to impoliteness). An order could be conceived as polite in a context where it is thought to be of benefit to the target (for example, "Go on, eat up" as an order for a dinner guest to tuck in to some delicacy).

However, in some instances the conjunction of act and context does give rise to impoliteness that may be said to be inherent, since it cannot be completely mitigated by any surface realization of politeness.

The notion of inherent impoliteness irrespective of contexts only holds for a minority of acts. For example, acts which draw attention to the fact that the target is engaged in some anti-social activity (e.g. picking nose or ears) seem to be inherently impolite. It is difficult to think of politeness work or a change of context that can easily remove the impoliteness from an utterance such as "Do you think you could possibly not pick your nose?"² The reason why these acts may be described as inherently impolite is as follows. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 1), politeness comes about through one's orientation towards what Goffman (1971: 138ff.) called the 'virtual offense'. In other words, by demonstrating concern for the face-threatening potential of an act, one shows that one has the other's interests at heart. An inherently impolite act does not involve **virtual** or **potential** offence; it is in its very performance offensive and thus not amenable to politeness work. In the example, "Do you think you could possibly not pick your nose?", the face-threatening potential in the request to desist from a particular line of activity can be mitigated by politeness work, but the face damage incurred in drawing attention to an anti-social habit cannot.

3. Mock Impoliteness

Mock impoliteness, or banter, is impoliteness that remains on the surface, since it is understood that it is not intended to cause offence. An example from Culpeper (2005:4) states that "I once turned up late for a party, and upon explaining to the host that I had mistaken 17.00 hours for 7 o'clock, I was greeted with a smile and the words "You silly bugger". I knew that the impoliteness was superficial, it was not really meant, and that I had been accepted into the party". Leech (1983:144) attempts to capture this kind of phenomenon within his Banter Principle:

"In order to show solidarity with h, say something which is (i) obviously untrue, and (ii) obviously impolite to h" [and this will give rise to an interpretation such that] "what s says is impolite to h and is clearly untrue. Therefore what .s really means is polite to h and true."

Leech (Ibid.) argues that banter reflects and fosters social intimacy (i.e. relative equality in terms of authority and closeness in terms of social distance): the more

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intimate a relationship, the less necessary and important politeness is. In other words, lack of politeness is associated with intimacy, and so being superficially impolite can promote intimacy. Clearly, this only works in contexts in which the impoliteness is understood to be untrue. Leech, however, neglects to specify what these contexts might be.

If lack of politeness is associated with intimacy (an idea which is reflected in Brown and Levinson's model), surface impoliteness is, paradoxically, even more likely to be interpreted as banter in non-intimate contexts, where it is more clearly at odds with expectations. This can be illustrated with the advertising slogan, "Eat beef - You bastards", (Simpson, 1994:), used by an Australian meat retailer. One may suppose that the prototypical customer is both socially distant from the retailer and more powerful than the retailer "in so far as" the customer has the power to determine the success or otherwise of the retailer's goals). Clearly, the retailer is not in a position to employ a derogatory term of address, and has nothing to gain from doing so: it is obviously banter. Some support for this argument can be found in Slugoski and Turnbull's (1988) investigation of the interpretation of ironic compliments and insults. Though the power variable was not included in their model, they did examine the effect of social distance. Subjects tended to interpret an insult as polite (i.e. as banter) in conditions of high social distance. More importantly, their study revealed the even stronger influence of affect (liking or disliking) operating as an independent variable.

The more people like each other, the more concern they are likely to have for each other's face. Thus insults are more likely to be interpreted as banter when directed at targets liked by the speaker.

4. When Are We Impolite?

To answer the question when we are genuinely impolite, it is useful to consider the assumptions behind the presence of polite behaviour. Brown and Levinson (1987:61) put it thus:

"In general, people cooperate (and assume each other's cooperation) in maintaining face in interaction, such cooperation being based on the mutual vulnerability of face. That is, normally everyone's face depends

on everyone else's being maintained, and since people can be expected to defend their faces if threatened, and in defending their own to threaten others' faces, it is in general in every participant's best interest to maintain each others' face ..."

There are circumstances when the vulnerability of face is unequal and so motivation to cooperate is reduced. A powerful participant has more freedom to be impolite, because he or she can (a) reduce the ability of the less powerful participant to retaliate with impoliteness (e.g. through the denial of speaking rights), and (b) threaten more severe retaliation should the less powerful participant be impolite. The fact that impoliteness is more likely to occur in situations where there is an imbalance of power is reflected in its relatively frequent appearance in courtroom discourse (Lakoff, 1989:123; Penman, 1990:33). As Penman points out, the witness has "limited capacity to negotiate positive and negative face wants", whereas the barrister has "almost unlimited capacity to threaten and aggravate the witness's face" (Ibid.: 34).

In particular, Lakoff (Ibid.) found systematic impoliteness in the case of defendants who have been found guilty of first-degree murder in a Californian court. Here the jury, having decided on the defendant's guilt, has the additional job of recommending the death sentence or life imprisonment without parole. The prosecution needs to demonstrate to the jury that the defendant is inhuman and loathsome. As a result, the prosecution uses impoliteness in the hope that the defendant will be provoked and lose control.

The factors influencing the occurrence of impoliteness in equal relationships are complex. If lack of politeness correlates with intimacy, can we assume that genuine impoliteness, as opposed to mock impoliteness, will be more likely to occur in an extremely intimate relationship? There is some evidence for this. It is discovered that even in happy marriages spouses were typically more hostile towards each other than strangers. In a familiar relationship one has more scope for impoliteness: one may know which aspects of face are particularly sensitive to attack, and one may be able to better predict and/or cope with retaliation that may ensue. However, it seems absurd to

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argue that the more intimate one becomes with someone the more impoliteness one employs (Culpeper, 2005:6).

Part of the problem is that intimacy is a vague notion that covers a number of independent variables; it is not just familiarity. If one follows Brown and Gilman (1989) and takes intimacy to mean that intimate participants have more in common, then impoliteness may well be self-defeating. Close friends in this sense are more likely to have close identity of face wants (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 64). Thus the scope for impoliteness is reduced, since in normal circumstances one presumably wishes to avoid self face damage. Sometimes intimacy is also taken to mean affect. It seems highly plausible that impoliteness correlates with negative affect. Slugoski and Turnbull's study (1988:65) provides evidence to the effect that people expect less concern for face when the relationship is one of dislike.

5. Impoliteness Strategies

Following the pattern of the previous section, there is an examination of politeness strategies, specifically those of Brown and Levinson (1987:69), and then according to Culpeper(2005) a framework for impoliteness in relation to these will be built .This is more than a device of expository convenience; impoliteness is very much the parasite of politeness.

Brown and Levinson (1987:69) argue that if one wishes to perform a potentially face-threatening act, but wishes to maintain the face of those involved, one will undertake politeness work appropriate to the face threat of the act. Following from this, a speaker's first step will be to calculate the degree of face threat involved in the act to be performed. This is done by considering the main dimensions affecting face threat, namely relative power, social distance, and the rank or size of imposition of the act involved. Values on these dimensions are summed to produce the 'weightiness' of a particular face-threatening act (hereafter FTA). The less the imposition of the act is, the less powerful and distant the other participant is, the less polite one will need to be. Brown and Levinson proposed five superstrategies for performing an FTA. These are systematically related to the degree of face threat. Briefly outlined below, the first superstrategy is associated with least face threat, and the last with the highest:

- (1) **Bald on record** - the FTA is performed "in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible" .
- (2) **Positive politeness** - the use of strategies designed to redress the addressee's positive face wants.
- (3) **Negative politeness** - the use of strategies designed to redress the addressee's negative face wants.
- (4) **Off-record** - the FTA is performed in such a way that "there is more than one unambiguously attributable intention so that the actor cannot be held to have committed himself to one particular intent". In other words, perform the FTA by means of an implicature .
- (5) **Withhold the FTA.**

Each of these politeness superstrategies has its opposite impoliteness super-strategy. They are opposite in terms of orientation to face. Instead of enhancing or supporting face, impoliteness superstrategies are a means of attacking face.

- (1) **Bald on record impoliteness** - the FTA is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimized. It is important to distinguish this strategy from Brown and Levinson's Bald on record. For Brown and Levinson, Bald on record is a **politeness** strategy in fairly specific circumstances. For example, when face concerns are suspended in an emergency, when the threat to the hearer's face is very small (e.g. "Come in" or "Do sit down"), or when the speaker is much more powerful than the hearer (e.g. "Stop complaining" said by a parent to a child). In all these cases little face is at stake, and, more importantly, it is not the intention of the speaker to attack the face of the hearer.
- (2) **Positive impoliteness** - the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants.
- (3) **Negative impoliteness** - the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants.
- (4) **Sarcasm or mock politeness** - the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realizations. The

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understanding of sarcasm presented here is close to Leech's (1983) conception of irony. He states the Irony Principle (IP) as follows:

"If you must cause offence, at least do so in a way which doesn't overtly conflict with the PP [Politeness Principle], but allows the hearer to arrive at the offensive point of your remark indirectly, by way of an implicature." (Ibid.: 82)

This definition is not far removed from Brown and Levinson's notion of Off record politeness. However, Leech (1983:142) later expands:

"Apparently, then, the IP is dys-functional: if the PP promotes a bias towards comity rather than conflict in social relations, the IP, by enabling us to bypass politeness, promotes the 'antisocial' use of language. We are ironic at someone's expense, scoring off others by politeness that is obviously insincere, as a substitute for impoliteness"

This is, of course, the opposite of the social harmony that is supposed to be promoted through Brown and Levinson's Off record politeness. The researcher prefers the use of the term **sarcasm** to Leech's irony, since irony can be used for enjoyment and comedy. Sarcasm (mock politeness for social disharmony) is clearly the opposite of banter (mock impoliteness for social harmony).

(5) **Withhold politeness** - the absence of politeness work where it would be expected. Brown and Levinson touch on the face-damaging implications of withholding politeness work:

"... politeness has to be communicated, and the absence of communicated politeness may, ceteris paribus, be taken as the absence of a polite attitude." (1987: 5)

For example, failing to thank somebody for a present may be taken as deliberate impoliteness (Culperper, 2005:8).

Brown and Levinson's formula for assessing the weightiness of an FTA still applies for impoliteness. The greater the imposition of the act is, the more powerful and distant the other is, the more face-damaging the act is likely to be.

Much of Brown and Levinson's work is devoted to the linguistic realizations of output strategies for positive and negative politeness. Each output strategy is a means of satisfying the strategic ends of a superstrategy. Brown and Levinson provide open-ended lists of possible output strategies. Below, Culperper(2005:8) suggests a provisional list of some output strategies for positive and negative impoliteness. It must be stressed that this list is not exhaustive and that the strategies depend upon an appropriate context to be impolite.

A-Positive Impoliteness Output Strategies:

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

B-Negative Impoliteness Output Strategies:

- Frighten** - instill a belief that action detrimental to the other will occur.
- Condescend, scorn or ridicule** - emphasize your relative power. Be contemptuous. Do not treat the other seriously. Belittle the other (e.g. use diminutives).
- Invade the other's space** - literally (e.g. position yourself closer to the other than the relationship permits) or metaphorically (e.g. ask for or speak about information which is too intimate given the relationship).

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-Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect — personalize, use the pronouns T and 'you'.

-Put the other's indebtedness on record etc.

There are other important means by which impoliteness can be transmitted. The structure of conversation itself is sensitive to violations. Brown and Levinson point out that

"... turn-taking violations (interruptions, ignoring selection of other speakers, not responding to prior turn) are all FTAs in themselves, as are opening and closing procedures." (1987: 233)

Moreover, we need to be aware of the fact that some areas of politeness are not well represented in Brown and Levinson's politeness model; otherwise those deficiencies could be carried over into an impoliteness framework. Their model is primarily geared to handling matters relating to linguistic form. A result of this, as they admit (1987: 11), is that impolite implicatures can slip through their framework. In contrast, Leech's politeness model is primarily concerned with linguistic content, and may be used to complement Brown and Levinson's model. Thus, reversing Leech's Politeness Principle (1983: 81), one general way of being impolite is to minimize the expression of polite beliefs and maximize the expression of impolite beliefs. Furthermore, Brown and Levinson have little to say about paralinguistic or non-verbal politeness. Avoiding eye-contact or shouting, for example, could be a means of conveying impoliteness.

Politeness and Impoliteness in Drama .6

It is not surprising that the courtroom has been the basis for numerous films and television dramas. Aggression has for thousands of years been a source of entertainment. The courtroom provides a socially respectable and legitimate form of verbal aggression. Moreover, the researcher would argue that there are good reasons why drama in general thrives on verbal conflict. Impolite behaviour, either as a result of social disharmony or as the cause of it, does much to further the development of character and plot. Hochman (1985), writing on literary characterization, specifically associates conflict with well-developed, complex characters - or, in E.M. Forster's

(1987) terminology, with 'round' characters. 'Flat' characters tend to be relatively static. They are not buffeted by conflict and thus not put in a position where they have to change in order to resolve a conflict.

As far as plot is concerned, impoliteness can be related to what people working in narrative analysis have said about the development of plots in stories and novels (e.g. Bremond, 1966:4-32). In a nutshell, it has been suggested that the prototypical plot is constructed by means of a movement from a situation of equilibrium, through a situation of disequilibrium, to the re-establishment of equilibrium. Impoliteness may be seen as a symptom of a situation of disequilibrium.

A number of studies have demonstrated that politeness frameworks can be used to account for aspects of dramatic dialogue and can shed light on literary critical issues, notably characterization (e.g. Simpson, 1989:171-193; Leech, 1992:259-280). However, no study has systematically described the occurrence of impoliteness in drama or attempted to explain its importance. The politeness and impoliteness framework suggested in this paper can be applied to drama by analyzing a passage from **Twelfth Night**, **Much Ado about Nothing**, **Macbeth** and **Hamlet** where politeness and impoliteness play an important role in the development of character and plot. Of course, the fact that these texts were written in the seventeenth century raises a number of issues about the applicability of modern linguistic theories. To fully address these issues would require separate and lengthy argumentation. However, one might note that Brown and Gilman (1989:159-212) have successfully applied Brown and Levinson's (1987) model to discuss the operation of politeness phenomena in four of Shakespeare's plays including **Macbeth** and **Hamlet**.

6.1 Politeness in Twelfth Night

- Curio** (asking Duke Orsino whether he would like to go (1)
?hunting) Will you go hunt, my lord
- (Duke Orsino** (abruptly asking Curio to repeat his question
?What, Curio
- (.Twelfth Night (I.i**
- (Olivia** (asking Cesari to speak pretending not to be Olivia (2)

.Speak to me; I shall answer for her

?Your will

Viola (praising Olivia for her beauty and telling her how
(difficult it is for him/her to deliver his/her message

Most radiant, exquisite and unmatched beauty,- I pray
you, tell me if this be the lady of the house, for I never

saw her: I would be loath to cast away my speech [waste my
,efforts], for besides that it is excellently well penned

I have taken great pains to con it [learn it by heart]. Good

beauties, let me sustain no scorn [suffer no derision]; I am very compatible

.[sensitive], even to the least sinister [wrong] usage

(.Twelfth Night(I.v

In (1), **Curio**, **Orsino**'s courtier, addresses **Orsino**, the Duke, with a direct

speech and another point for the deferential title my lord, which gives negative politeness. The Duke's response to **Curio**'s question reflects the asymmetry power relation existing between the two. He is not concerned about framing his answer with polite markers and prefers the bald on-record alternative. The notable contrast in the two speeches in (2) lies in the efficiency of the first and the politeness of the second.

Olivia, who is a countess, satisfies Grice's Maxims of Conversation in that she communicates only what is necessary. The order speak to me and the question your will are not mitigated by any polite markers and thus score no points for politeness.

Viola, a shipwrecked girl who is pretending to be a man on his way to deliver a love message from **Orsino**, responds with a speech that says more than is necessary and so sacrifices efficiency in order to accomplish politeness. Positive politeness is used numerous times, including complimenting (beauty, and beauties), giving reasons (for I never saw her, for besides it is excellently well penned, I have taken great pains to con it, I am very compatible, exaggerating (even to the least sinister usage) and hedging the admiration for Olivia through the items (most, radiant, exquisite, unmatched, good). With regard to mitigating admiration, Brown and Levinson argue that "one positive politeness output (strategy 2) leads S to exaggerate [...]. For this reason, one

characteristic device in positive politeness is to hedge these extremes, so as to make one's opinion safely vague. Normally hedges are a feature of negative politeness [...] (but some hedges can have this positive function as well" (1987, 116

Politeness in Much Ado about Nothing 6.2

CLAUDIO (addressing Don Pedro to ask whether Leonato has any (1)
(son

.My liege, your highness now may do me good

(Much Ado about Nothing (I.i

CLAUDIO (rejecting Don Pedro's suggestion that he should go and see(2)
(Benedick and tell him of Beatrice love

Never tell him, my lord: let her wear it out with good
counsel [endure and overcome it with
wise reflection].

(Much Ado about Nothing (II.iii

In **Much Ado about Nothing Claudio** (1), talking to Don Pedro, clearly makes two speeches of unequal extremity. The second one is moderately polite: the honorific title my Lord stands for negative politeness (give deference). His first speech is, however, strikingly more polite. The indirect request (My liege...), the honorific title your highness and the modal may function as a mitigating .marker

Claudio's behaviour in his second speech suggests that he has in mind an
.extreme request

:The conversation continues

?**Claudio:** Hath Leonato any son, my Lord

(Much Ado about Nothing (II.iii

which reveals the purpose of the request: Claudio wants to know whether Hero is Leonato's only heir. From the start he is a prudent lover and investigates Hero's prospects; Prouty argues from a study of Elizabethan marriage customs that Claudio is a careful suitor with an interest in finances. Being aware of the seriousness of his FTA, **Claudio** makes his first speech more polite and

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communicates his real message to Don Pedro without being 'overtly obtrusive'
...on Don Pedro's 'freedom of action

6.3 Impoliteness in Hamlet

- (1) **Hamlet** Ay, lady, it was my word. Thou
 wretched, rash, introducing fool, farewell! I took thee for thy better. Take
 thy fortune. Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger. Leave wringing of
 your hands. Peace! sit you down, And let me wring your heart for so I shall
 If it be made of penetrable stuff, If damned custom have not braz'd it so
 That it be proof and bulwark against sense.
- (2) **Queen** What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue In noise so rude against
 me?

Hamlet (III.iv)

Since **Hamlet** is pretending to be mad, he is talking directly to his mother without showing any respect and wishing that she was not his mother. Therefore, he accuses her of being wicked and of killing his father and rushing to marry his brother. Impoliteness is clear when he orders his mother to be quiet and sit down and listen to him. This act justifies the **Queen's** surprise of hearing such accusation and disrespect by wondering how he screams so loudly and rudely forgetting that she is his mother.

6.4 Impoliteness in Macbeth

In **Macbeth** one can see chains of equilibrium and disequilibrium. Disequilibrium in the social structure of the state has been created by the murder of Duncan, the former king. The fundamental objective of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in the banquet scene is to reestablish equilibrium, to reinforce their social position by strengthening relations with the Lords. A result of this is that, at the beginning of the scene, the Macbeths go to extraordinary lengths in pursuing politeness strategies that support the Lords' faces, far beyond the requirements of the host operating in a formal situation. Disequilibrium, however,

is created by the arrival of the ghost. Macbeth loses his nerve and starts blaming the Lords for the appearance of the ghost. Lady Macbeth pulls him to one side and, presumably out of earshot of the Lords, uses impoliteness to knock him back into line. The impoliteness is detrimental to Macbeth in the short-term, but of benefit to their long-term goal of concealing Duncan's murder and establishing their position in the state.

(1) **Lady Macbeth** Are you a man?

(2) **Macbeth** Ay, and a bold one that dare look on that
Which might appal the Devil.

(3) **Lady Macbeth** O proper stuff!

This is the very painting of your fear; This is the
air-drawn dagger which you said, Led you to Duncan. O, these
flaws and starts -Impostors to true fear - would well become A
woman's story at a winter's fire, Authoris'd by her grandam.
Shame itself! Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

(4) **Macbeth** Prithee, see there.

Behold! look! lo! how say you?
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.
If charnel-houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [Ghost disappears.]

(5) **Lady Macbeth** What! quite unmann'd in folly?

(6) **Macbeth** If I stand here, I saw him.

(7) **Lady Macbeth** Fie! for shame!

Macbeth III. iv.

Lady Macbeth's strategy within this interaction is consistent across her four turns. In each turn she uses impoliteness to attack **Macbeth's** face. She expresses impolite beliefs in order to goad his masculine ego and thereby get him to pull himself together. **Lady Macbeth's** question "Are you a man?" (Turn 1), flouts the Maxim of

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Quality (Grice, 1975): it is obvious that **Macbeth** is a man. She implicates the impolite belief that he is so lacking in those characteristics which she perceives as male that his gender is called into question. She has a rather peculiar notion of gender: earlier in the play, she equates being a man with performing the murder of Duncan. To her being masculine means being cold and ruthless. Macbeth is apparently the converse: emotional and suffering pangs of conscience. Further, on (turn 3), she attacks his masculine ego by suggesting that his fears are suitable for "A woman's story at a winter's fire I Authoris'd by her grandma". Also, in her following turn (turn 5), her question "quite unmann'd in folly?" flouts the Maxim of Quality, implicating the impolite belief that his foolishness casts doubts upon his masculinity.

Her first exclamation (turn 3) employs the impoliteness superstrategy of sarcasm." O proper stuff!" flouts the Maxim of Quality; she implicates the opposite, that his behaviour is preposterous. She employs positive impoliteness by pouring scorn on him" Shame itself" (turn 3), and" Fie! For shame!" (turn 7), and by ridiculing his fears" Impostors to true fear" (turn 3).

Lady Macbeth's impoliteness tactics appear to succeed. **Macbeth** regains stability and returns to the banquet table. In terms of characterization, one might note that **Lady Macbeth's** impoliteness helps divorce **Macbeth** from the values that cause him such guilt. One way of coming to terms with the murder he has carried out is to adopt values that make it more acceptable. During the course of the play he shifts from a man of conscience to a relatively desensitized murderer who organizes the gratuitous killing of Macduff's wife and son.

7. Conclusion

In this paper the researcher has brought together some ideas and observations about an area of discourse that has been much neglected. As Craig et.al. (1986:437-468) argue, politeness theory needs to consider confrontational strategies, if it is to preserve analytical coherence. Furthermore, it is clear that in some circumstances impoliteness plays a key role, not a marginal one. Such a result verifies the researcher's hypothesis. Then this paper goes some way towards providing a framework that can capture politeness and impoliteness. In spite of the fact that

Twelfth Night and **Much Ado about Nothing** are expected to include some characters that use sarcasm and mock strategies of impoliteness since they are comedies, they include some instances of politeness strategies. And in **Macbeth** there is no character (especially a clown) who is employed to mock or belittle other characters, but it is found that a major character, like Lady Macbeth, used impoliteness strategies to get her goals to return Macbeth to his normal estate. With **Hamlet** the case is a little bit different. Since he is suffering a psychological problem, he must convince others that he is mad to act according to his aims especially with his mother he must be rude and impolite to reveal his sorrow and sadness towards her rush marriage.

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