WOMEN'S AND MEN'S PERCEPTIONS REGARDING PERCEIVED SPEAKER SEX
AND POLITENESS OF GIVEN UTTERANCES

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the University of North Texas in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Deanna Michelle Johnson, B.A.
Denton, Texas
May, 1995
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Women's and men's responses regarding perceived speaker sex and the politeness of given utterances were examined through the use of a questionnaire administered to 90 people, 45 men and 45 women. The questionnaire required respondents to rate the politeness of each utterance and label each as being more likely spoken by a man or by a woman. Factors possibly affecting perceptions—such as power, prestige, and the stereotypical conversational structures of both men and women—were addressed through others' research in this area. Additionally, all tested sentences were analyzed in light of linguistic politeness theory regarding on-record and off-record speech. This analysis details each utterance through examining the type of politeness strategy each utterance typifies.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The subject of gender differences in communication is one which has fascinated researchers over the last two decades (e.g., Lakoff, 1975; Goodwin, 1980; Baxter, 1984; Hebert, 1990; Tannen, 1990), and which was started in large part by Lakoff's (1973) observations concerning speech that was stereotypically associated with women. Since that time, researchers have sought not only to identify certain speech characteristics as being sex-typed, but to prove connections between this sex-typed speech and such factors as power, prestige, confidence, and politeness. The focus of this paper is the connections that society draws between politeness and sex-typed speech.

Both the observations and the empirical research of many linguists have noted factors that seem to mark gender differences in communication (e.g., Brend, 1975; Dubois & Crouch, 1975; Graves & Price, 1980). My goal was not only to investigate whether these traits truly seemed stereotypically sex-typed to a specific portion of the population, but to gauge that group's reaction, in terms of politeness, to their use. Because the study took the form of a questionnaire,
factors that might otherwise skew the results—such as actual speaker sex, intonation, and body posture—were eliminated.

I expected that this study would reveal not only a clear sex-typing for previously researched stereotypical language traits, but also a tendency by subjects to label those utterances that were seen as more closely associated with women as being more polite, as well. This line of thought follows common stereotypes (which are inarguably sexist) that women are the "gentler" sex, while men are more direct. Some previous research would seem to buttress this idea (e.g., Brown, 1980; Baxter, 1984). In accordance with this line of thought, I also expected that the various forms of politeness put forth by Brown and Levinson in their text Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage—bald-on-record, positive, negative, and off-record—would follow sex-typed lines, with negative politeness and off-record strategies being more closely associated with women, and positive and bald-on-record politeness being more closely associated with men.

Most of the factors previously outlined have been explored by researchers in the past (e.g., Dubois & Crouch, 1975; Kramer, 1977); through the current study, I sought to validate whether their findings were still applicable to today's society and to add new observations of my own. The specific use to which I put the questionnaire I devised allowed me to attempt this validation in a comprehensive manner I did not find use of in other research. The findings
are enlightening and can be analyzed on many levels. The most fundamental aspect of this survey is that the nature of the instrument allowed both men's and women's responses to each statement in the survey be examined in light of the reactions of the opposite sex.

The study of sex-based differences in language use is one that is fascinating and holds importance for both women and men in today's society. In this paper, an attempt is made to gauge whether people's perceptions regarding women and one small facet of language use--politeness--have changed over the years since this subject was brought to the forefront of sociolinguistic thought with Lakoff's 1975 text.

Language use, as with many other facets of the lives of individuals, is one in which significant stereotyping is present. Language use is an area, in particular, in which these stereotypes hurt both men and women. While women are often stereotyped as not being forceful or aggressive enough, men are often viewed as being unsympathetic or uncaring. With a changing world, however, one has to wonder whether these stereotypes are being inexorably altered, and one always hopes they are.

In the review of the research, attitudes about, perceptions of, and differences between the language use of men and women are explored. Sociolinguistic research over the past two decades is examined in order not only to find the areas in which real or perceived differences exist in women's
and men's use of the language, but to attempt to find the underlying reasons why these differences are in place.

After examining the research on the subject of sex-based differences in language usage, I discuss the methods whereby my own research was carried out. The methods portion of the paper includes information on the preliminary study, the respondents, the selection of samples in accordance with previous research, and the final process of analysis. The research for the study was undertaken through the use of a questionnaire, and each sample selected for the questionnaire will be discussed in detail according to the individual factors each was chosen to represent; ties to others' research in this area are shown in regard to these factors to aid the reader's better understanding of the results and conclusions drawn from the data.

The arrangement of the methods section of the paper allows the results of the study to be presented in the next chapter unencumbered by conclusions or extraneous information. Respondent perceptions regarding the sex of the speaker of each utterance provided in the study, as well as perceptions regarding the politeness of each utterance, are presented according to averages that incorporate the responses of both women and men. These averages are then more closely examined by separating the surveys from male and female respondents, re-averaging the responses, and analyzing men's and women's responses as comparisons.
Once the results from both male and female respondents have been analyzed individually, discussion proceeds with the conclusions drawn from this analysis. Information from the studies discussed in the review of the research is enmeshed with the discussion in the conclusions section as I examine possible explanations for the results of the study. Each item in the survey is examined individually according to this previous research, and the paper then concludes with a discussion of the generalizations that might be drawn from the overall analysis.
A fair amount of research has been done on the question of whether women are more polite than men. Through correlating the central ideas found in much of this literature, a common theme tends to emerge. This theme reveals that women are consistently perceived to employ different, usually weaker, speech acts than those of men, even when empirical research fails to find actual differences between women's and men's speech.

In order to understand these perceptions, one must look at several different factors that have been explored by researchers: power, the stereotypical conversational structures of men and women, the politeness associated with certain speech characteristics employed by women, and the difference between linguistic and common definitions of politeness.

Linguistic definitions of politeness are most clearly seen in Brown and Levinson's (1987) classic text *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. A layperson reading through this text might notice that many of the behaviors described as polite by Brown and Levinson fit much more neatly into our definition of the word "polite," as they are
essentially used as a way of getting something the speaker wants. This idea contrasts with most people's perception of politeness, as can be seen from the following dictionary excerpt.

2 a: showing or characterized by correct social usage
b: marked by an appearance of consideration, tact, deference, or courtesy c: marked by a lack of roughness or crudities. (Webster's, 1983)

In order to understand how and why linguistic definitions of politeness differ from common definitions, we must examine Brown and Levinson's work in detail.

Central to Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness is the concept of "face." Face, in their theory "...is something that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). A familiar analogy to many might be the concept of "losing face" that is inherent in many Asian cultures. Brown and Levinson go on to further define two separate types of face:

**negative face**: the want of every "competent adult member" that his [sic] actions be unimpeded by others.

**positive face**: the want of every member that his [sic] wants be desirable to at least some others (1987, 62).

It is the type of politeness deriving from negative face, negative politeness, that Brown and Levinson note is familiar to us as formal politeness. This type of politeness
is based on not imposing upon another. Positive politeness, on the other hand, addresses other needs of the speaker or hearer, as we shall see later.

At the core of Brown and Levinson's theory then, is the need to address these two types of face. "Politeness" is the terminology used to indicate this behavior. However, conversational interaction and simple needs sometime require one to make acts that might threaten either one's own face or someone else's. Brown and Levinson refer to these as face-threatening acts, FTAs, and the same terminology will be employed here.

There are several types of FTAs discussed by Brown and Levinson. The first distinction in these types is based on whether the act threatens positive face or negative face. Negative face is threatened for the hearer when a speaker indicates the hearer's freedom might in some way be impeded by the FTA. Acts that could accomplish this include not only those that might come to mind of threats, orders, advice, suggestions, reminders, and so on, but also compliments, offers, and promises. Compliments might imply that the speaker is in some way envious of the hearer, for instance, and offers and promises put the hearer in the position of acceptance or rejection of the act, which might result in the owing of a debt to the hearer.

Positive face is threatened for hearers when speakers indicate in some way that they do not care about the hearer's
wants or feelings. These FTAs include contradictions, challenges, disapproval, criticism, misuse of address terms, boasting, and so on. Brown and Levinson go on to note that many FTAs intrinsically threaten both types of face. These include, for example, strong displays of emotion, requests for personal information, complaints, and interruptions.

FTAs are further distinguished by whether they threaten the hearer's face or the speaker's face. Acts that offend the speaker's negative face include, in part, excuses, responses to a faux pas on the part of the hearer, and the expressing and acceptance of thanks. These acts constrain speakers to behave in certain ways in order to be unimpeded in their wants. Some acts that offend a speakers' positive face include apologies, acceptance of a compliment, self-humiliation, and admissions of guilt or responsibility. Acceptance of a compliment, for instance, may make the hearer feel compelled to denigrate the object of the compliment.

Brown and Levinson note a number of different ways in which FTAs can be accomplished: on record, off record, and baldly, without redress. On-record statements are unambiguous yet address face; they employ a clear communicative intention. An example of an on-record statement that addresses negative face, for example, is shown in number 47 in the survey, "I know you're really busy, but could you help me with this?" With off-record statements, on the other hand, "...there is more than one unambiguously attributable
intention so that the actor cannot be held to have committed himself to one particular intent" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 69). One example of an off-record statement is shown in number 49, "It's hot in here! (meaning 'turn on the air conditioner')." Bald-on-record statements involve no attempt at addressing face and are direct, clear, and unambiguous. This type of statement is shown in number 10, "Hand me that book over there."

Positive and negative politeness both utilize on-record strategies, but differ in respect to FTAs.

Unlike negative politeness, positive politeness is not necessarily redressive of the particular face want infringed by the FTA; that is, whereas in negative politeness the sphere of relevant redress is restricted to the imposition itself, in positive politeness the sphere of redress is widened to the appreciation of alter's wants in general or to the expression of similarity between ego's wants and alter's wants. ...Positive politeness utterances are used as a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy, to imply common ground or sharing of wants to a limited extent even between strangers.... (Brown and Levinson, 1987, pp. 101-102)

Negative politeness, on the other hand, is described this way.
Negative politeness is redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face: his [sic] want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded. It is the heart of respect behavior, just as positive politeness is the kernel of "familiar and joking" behavior....Where positive politeness is free-ranging, negative politeness is specific and focused; it performs the function of minimizing the particular imposition that the FTA unavoidably effects [sic].

(Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 129)

Brown and Levinson further note that off-record strategies usually involve the violation of a Gricean Maxim as a trigger to notify hearers that they must make an inference. These statements are very different from on-record strategies. In effect, off-record strategies leave the speaker with the excuse that the hearer misinterpreted the FTA—that an FTA was not intended at all. One amusing such example provided by Brown and Levinson illustrates this strategy.

If I say, "Damn, I'm out of cash, I forgot to go to the bank today," I may be intending to get you to loan me some cash, but I cannot be held to have committed myself to that intent (as you would discover were you to challenge me with, "This is the seventeenth time you've asked me to lend you money"). (1987, p. 69)
It is clear from the discussion above that societal and sociolinguistic definitions of politeness differ. One strategy within positive politeness, for instance, is the notice strategy in which one can jokingly recognize a faux pas on the part of another person rather than ignore it. This strategy serves the function of showing the person committing the faux pas that he or she need not be embarrassed by it. Two examples given by Brown and Levinson of this type of strategy are "God you're farty tonight!" and "We ate too many beans tonight, didn't we!" It is easy to see that neither of these two instances would be considered refined or cultured or would ever earn praise from a parent as an instance of a child having good manners. The use of these statements, however, does fulfill a politeness function.

With this discrepancy in mind, it is small wonder that little to no empirical proof exists showing that women in the United States are in fact more polite than men when politeness is defined with more rigorous guidelines. However, the most common response I receive when revealing my topic of research to associates--male and female--is something along the lines of, "Well, everybody knows that women are more polite."

It is interesting to note the elements that make up this stereotype. This topic of discussion was popularized in large part by Lakoff's (1975) work on the subject, in which she described many speech factors as being "women's speech."
These items included hesitations, tag questions, hedges, "trivializing" adjectives, and expanded color vocabulary. Lakoff also claimed, in general, that women were more polite than men. Numerous other studies attempted to gauge differences between men's and women's use of language; some, such as Dubois and Crouch (1975), focused on individual arguments proposed by Lakoff, others, such as O'Barr and Atkins (1980), focused on the reasons certain speech patterns might be perceived as being more typical of male or female speech. While some of this research is not empirically valid by today's statistical standards, it still provides a look at the scholarly opinions of the period. Furthermore, it reveals perceptions of men and women that may or may not hold true today. It is interesting to note that most of the research of this period did not even make the attempt to separate women's responses from men's to see if their views differed.

Even should we find these stereotypical perceptions to still be in effect today, it is clear that women are viewed now as being much more physically present in society than they once were. The elimination of sexist language is now an important concern for anyone doing professional writing, as is evidenced by sections addressing such elimination in style books such as the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (1994). Such publications note that the exclusive use of "he" as a generic pronoun is no longer acceptable in professional writing. In addition, terms such
as "firefighter" have replaced "fireman" in reference works such as *Roget's International Thesaurus* (1992).

It is certainly not always to women's advantage to be thought of as more polite than men. It is surely common knowledge that men still outnumber women in the managerial ranks of today's society, and women are often thought of as being not "strong" enough or "forceful" enough to manage others. (Of course, women that do exemplify these characteristics are likely to be quickly labeled "bitches" or "nags," a term for which no corresponding male-typed word exists in English.) However, it remains to be seen whether the same perceptions that held true 15 and 20 years ago are still in place today. Some of the research on these perceptions and on actual differences is addressed here.

In a study done by Seigler and Seigler (1976), strong assertions were more often attributed to men while tag questions were more often attributed to women. Tag questions are a form of politeness that allow the listener to contradict what the speaker is saying (Brown & Levinson, 1987). To take an example from Seigler and Seigler, "Football is a bloodthirsty game" is a strong assertion, while "Football is a bloodthirsty game, isn't it?" is a tag question. Tag questions can be viewed as more polite than direct statements because they allow the hearer to offer a differing opinion. It was Lakoff's opinion that tag questions are a typical item marking female speech (1975). It is true,
however, that tag questions can fulfill many different functions. In the example above, the topic is football, still an area in which men tend to be more knowledgeable than women. The tag question in this instance can serve the function of conveying hesitation or lack of knowledge. Had the sentence been altered to read "Soap operas are pretty sappy, aren't they?" it is doubtful that the responses would have remained the same. (For a discussion of the many uses of tag questions, see Holmes, 1983.)

Another small study that reveals the opinion that women are more polite than men is related in Kramarae (1981) in which the following transcript between a restaurant server and a patron was shown to 12 people.

Patron: I'm sorry, but this isn't mine.
Server: What did you order?
Patron: The turkey plate.
Server: Must be someone else's.
Patron: Sorry.
Server: I'll get yours in a minute.
Patron: That's fine. Thank you. (Kramarae, 1981, p. 150)

Kramarae reported that most of the people she showed this transcript to guessed that the patron was a female and the server a male. The reasons given for supposing that the patron was a female included such comments as the patron was "overly polite" and "more apologetic than a man would be" or "than she had to be" (Kramarae, 1981, p. 151). In this study,
the patron actually was a female and the server was a male, but we begin to see some of the stereotypes of women and politeness reflected here. It is not implausible for the sexes in this instance to be reversed, but women were thought to have been more likely to use the particular style of speech represented by the patron in the study.

Based on some of the evidence presented so far, a layperson might think it obvious that women are more polite than men. One could say, for instance, that the server in Kramarae's study was more polite simply because she was female, or that tag questions would not be so often attributed to women were there not some basis for doing so. Most empirical evidence done on this subject, however, shows that these stereotypes are not accurate.

As an example, one study based on a tape of a workshop showed that men in the audience asked 33 tag questions while women asked none at all (Dubois & Crouch, 1975). These results, unfortunately, would be far more revealing had a ratio of men to women been obtained, but one must hope that such research would not be carried out so frivolously as to include few or no female subjects.

Another stereotype of female speech posited by Lakoff was the use of yes/no question intonation on straightforward statements, as if asking for approval (Lakoff, 1975, 1977). Such an act involves both negative politeness and positive face, for it consists of trying not to impede the other
person while at the same time desiring that the other person want what you want. One team of researchers, however, reexamined the example Lakoff used to show this factor exists in women's speech, the answer to the question "When will dinner be ready?" when the answer is "Oh...around 6 o'clock?" (Lakoff, 1975, as quoted in Dubois and Crouch, 1975, p. 290). Many people reading this example would be able to imagine a woman saying it, but would not so readily be able to imagine the sentence as being spoken by a man. Dubois and Crouch asserted, however, that the reason it is difficult to imagine a man using the utterance above is based on the context in which the scenario is set. Even in today's society, and certainly 20 years ago, cooking meals is more often associated with women than it is with men. Acting on this hypothesis, Dubois and Crouch changed the context to one that was not so stereotypically linked to women and asked students whether they thought the statement would be more likely spoken by a man, by a woman, or by either sex. The new question read, "When are you leaving?" and the reply was, "Oh...around 8 o'clock?" As can be seen, nothing about the statement but the context was changed, yet Dubois and Crouch reported that 75% of the students believed that the reply was just as likely to be spoken by a man as it was by a woman. Of the remaining 25%, less than 20% thought that a woman would be more likely to make the reply than would a man.
There do appear to be some genuine differences, however, between men's and women's speech. Herbert (1990), doing an in-depth analysis of compliment behavior, noted for instance that "...as might be expected, the somewhat stereotypical I love X occurs only in women's speech, and significantly more often in Female-Female than Female-Male interactions" (Herbert, 1990, p. 206). This behavior reinforces Lakoff's (1975) assumption of specific vocabulary items being typical of women's speech.

In a study by Edelsky (1979), however, women were found to be judged differently than men who used the same speech patterns. In this study, which dealt again with question intonation in answers, judges heard replies with different intonational contours and were asked to label the intonation as being more typically masculine or feminine based solely on the contour. The researcher found that "when female voices used falling or fall-rise contours, they were punished [labeled as having a more stereotypically feminine trait] more than men who used the same patterns" (Edelsky, 1979, p. 29). Question intonation in replies, as stated previously, can be a negative politeness strategy.

Further research attempting to illustrate language differences between males and females was carried out by Goodwin. In this study, Goodwin compared Black, working-class boys and girls, ages 8 to 13, at work on gender-separate projects. The boys' project consisted of making slingshots
with which to have a fight, and the girls' project was that of collecting empty beverage bottles from which to make rings. Goodwin notes the following regarding speech differences between the boys and the girls,

Boys directives are formatted as imperatives, or requests, but girls phrase theirs as proposals for future activity and frequently mitigate even these proposals with a term such as maybe. Girls tend to leave the time at which an action should be performed somewhat open, while a boy states that he wants an action completed right now. (Goodwin, 1980, p. 168)

Goodwin's study showed boys using what is defined by Brown and Levinson (1987) as "bald-on-record" statements, while it showed girls frequently including both the speaker and the hearer in the activity with the word "let's". However, it must be noted that the boys' activity was somewhat more imperative than was the girls', and we cannot assume, of course, that the differences illustrated by the study carry over into adult behavior.

Brouwer (1982) also undertook a study comparing politeness by men and by women. In Brouwer's study, actual politeness use was measured, and great care was taken to ensure that the speech events, factors, situation, setting, and topic were the same for all informants for the study. These ends were accomplished by recording the requests for subway tickets made at one window of the Central Station in
Amsterdam. Even though the interaction times observed were understandably small, one would expect to see politeness differentiation between the sexes for at least such small items as "please" and "thank you" if these differences did actually exist. However, no significant politeness differences between men and women manifested themselves in the study. Brouwer said of her study, "It could be suggested that differences between men and women will disappear as differences in status become less marked" (Brouwer, 1982, p. 706).

The quote by Brouwer echoes an idea on which much of the research in the area of sex differences in politeness has focused. The hypothesis in this area is based on power and posits that many of the polite forms women seemingly use more than men are based on inferior position rather than sex differences. O'Barr and Atkins (1980) illustrated this hypothesis by measuring the use of polite forms such as "sir" and the use of intensifiers and hesitations by women and men in a courtroom setting. In this study, people in powerless positions, such as female homemakers and lower- to middle-class men, used roughly equal amounts of the variables studied, while men and women with more power, such as doctors and lawyers, used almost none of the variables (O'Barr and Atkins, 1980).

Lack of power as a basis for politeness is also substantiated in work by Brown (1980) in which the women of
an extremely male-dominated Mayan community—one in which women were commonly beaten by male relations and where they could be forced into marriage by being captured by a man—used substantial amounts of avoidance-based negative politeness to men while using similarly high amounts of support-based positive politeness with other women.

Also enmeshed with the idea of power is the presence of stereotypic perceptions of males and females regarding assertiveness and aggressiveness. Pearson (1985, p. 135) notes the following of this perception.

When people do not know the sex of the person who is behaving in an aggressive or an assertive manner, they generally assume that the person who is behaving aggressively is male while the person who is behaving nonassertively is female.

Compound requests, which have been shown to be considered less assertive than direct requests, are also seen as being typical of women's speech (Newcombe & Arnkoff, 1979). A request becomes compound when extra words, such as "please," I hate to bother you, but..." or "could you," are added to a direct request, such as "Do this." As Pearson (1985), who offered these definitions, phrased this usage by women, "Women are more likely to ask others to do things for them with more words than their male counterparts would use" (Pearson, 1985, p. 188).
Even though the evidence is very convincing, it can certainly be argued that the theory of power alone cannot account for the differing perceptions of men’s and women’s speech. To further understand the stereotypes applied to women’s speech, it is important to look not just at what women say, but why they say it and how they do so.

Part of the answer to the question of why women’s utterances are judged to be more polite than men’s may be tied to stereotypes of the general conversational practices of men and women. To quote Coates (1986, p. 115), "It seems that men pursue a style of interaction based on power, while women pursue a style based on support and solidarity." A more general version of this idea that we can call a sex role differentiation hypothesis posits that men specialize in instrumental or task behaviors while women specialize in socio-emotional activities. In other words, this hypothesis states that men talk to get something done, and women talk to make themselves or someone else feel better. I must mention that I have found no empirical research to prove this hypothesis, but present it simply as background information. Considering the fact that men regularly perform socio-emotional speech acts such as complimenting others on new acquisitions, giving sympathy, joking, and complaining, while women regularly perform task-oriented speech acts such as teaching, giving instructions and directions, and directing behavior, it is clear that this hypothesis alone cannot
account for all of the reasons that women are viewed as more polite than men.

Another factor guiding perceptions of women's speech versus men's speech is based on the well-documented fact that women tend to prefer overtly prestigious language forms. Trudgill (1975) and Labov (1966) have both noted that women tend to use more standard speech than men, a fact reinforced by other empirical research showing that men tend to use more slang and nonstandard forms than do women (Graves & Price, 1980). Trudgill (1975) further documented, however, that when men and women were asked what percentage of given standard variables they utilized in their speech, men tended to underreport their use of those variables, while women tended to overreport their use of the same variables. Men and women, therefore, were shown to have differing perceptions of their own speech.

Given that women tend to use more standard speech than men, then, there are many studies that show people form better impressions of speakers of standard dialects than of dialects associated with more covertly prestigious factors. A number of these studies have been performed with children. We cannot, of course, simply assume the validity of these studies with regard to adult perceptions, but they are interesting nevertheless.

Giles and Powesland (1975), for instance, tested dialect perceptions by asking children to evaluate the quality of an
argument. The same argument was presented to different groups using several different accents. The ratings the children gave the accent increased as the overt prestige of the accent increased.

Giles and Powesland (1975) also performed a study in which a man gave a lecture about psychology to two similar groups of schoolchildren. One group heard the lecture in a local accent, while the other heard it in a standard accent. Upon being asked to rate the man's suitability as a university professor, and specifically to rate his intelligence, the children who heard the lecture in the standard accent gave him much higher scores than did the other group.

Here we have seen that intelligence can be associated with standard speech: Other research with children shows that wealth can be associated with it, as well. Hudson (1980) notes a study by Rosenthal (1974), for instance--which was not available to me--wherein children were asked to choose a present from either a box from which a voice using a Black dialect was heard or one from which a standard dialect issued. Seventy-three percent of the children in this study thought that the box from which the standard dialect was heard would have a better present in it, even though the voices made exactly the same claims about the presents and even though most of the Black children in the study liked the
voice speaking Black English better than the voice using the standard dialect.

Yet another factor that may be related to the view of women being more polite than men comes down to the issue that women are judged as being more polite based simply on their femininity. Many of the aspects of femininity have nothing whatsoever to do with what a woman says, but rather how she says it. Even in nonverbal language, many women emanate a sense of demureness in the way they sit and in that they are more hesitant to touch males than males are to touch them (Henley, 1975). It can be argued that this body language is based on the negative politeness of avoidance, as is the case with the severely male-dominated Tenejapa women studied by Brown (1980), but it is also likely that this behavior is continued in some societies simply because it has become associated with being "womanly." This idea echoes thoughts by O'Barr and Atkins (1980) in reference to powerless speech in general, for they say it is likely that powerless speech is "part of the cultural meaning of 'speaking like a woman'" (p. 96).

Another factor in which women's speech differs from men's is that women typically use a higher pitch of voice than can be accounted for biologically. Among prepubescent children, for example, there is no average difference in the size of articulatory mechanisms, and there should not, therefore, be any difference in the voices of prepubescent
boys and girls (Saches, Lieberman, & Erickson, 1973). However, an interesting study by Saches, Lieberman, and Erickson showed that adults are often able to readily identify taped children's voices as being male or female. The researchers in this instance showed that adults were able to judge the sex of a child correctly in 81% of the cases offered simply on the basis of one taped sentence: "I thought I saw a big blue meanie outside." The researchers suggested that "the children could be learning culturally determined patterns that are viewed as appropriate for each sex" (Saches et al., 1973, p. 80).

Pitch also manifests itself differently in the speech of men and women with regard to intonation patterns. Men consistently avoid many polite intonation levels because of the high, womanly pitch associated with them (Brend, 1975). If men consistently avoid these levels, then it could be argued that they have come to be associated with politeness simply because they are used by women, and because women, in general, are considered to be the more polite sex.

At the time much of the research in this area was done, women were perceived as having very different speech patterns than men, even though empirical proof generally failed to substantiate real differences in politeness. Many factors could account for these perceptions, but Edelsky (1979), articulated one idea quite well, as seen below.
It is not necessarily true that female speakers' use of the language reflects and perpetuates their lesser status, but that their lesser status is reflected in the listeners' attitudes toward female speakers. These listener attitudes themselves could then perpetuate the different statuses of the sexes by acting as a filter through which equivalent utterances by male and female speakers attain different values and meanings by virtue of being identified as spoken-by-male vs. spoken-by-female. (Edelsky, 1979, p. 31)

What my research attempts to do, then, is verify whether these perceptions regarding male and female speech are still as strong as they once were. Interest in sex-based differences in speech is again on the rise, due largely to the success and acceptance of Tannen's, You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation (1990). While many of the studies mentioned here are classics in sociolinguistic research, the world has changed significantly enough in the last 20 years for these perceptions to now be inaccurate in at least some measure.

In attempting to determine whether these perceptions are still in place, I devised a study consisting of fifty utterances using various politeness strategies and speech use stereotypically associated with either men or women. The study asks respondents to measure not only whether they think each statement is more likely spoken by a man or by a woman,
but to rate the politeness of the utterance as well. This study should provide information on whether speech use that was considered stereotypically male or female in past research is still considered to be stereotypically male or female today, and, if so, whether both men and women hold those perceptions. In addition, the study should reveal to some extent whether politeness seems to be linked to either sex or to certain types of politeness, and whether men and women differ in their perceptions of that politeness.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The instrument consisted of three versions of a questionnaire containing 50 different utterances. Most of these utterances were taken or modified from Brown and Levinson (1987), and a few of them were created to measure specific uses of gender-stereotyped speech patterns. (A complete list of these utterances, broken down by type of politeness, is provided in Appendix A. The utterances will be discussed in the order presented in Appendix A throughout the paper except where otherwise noted for reasons of clarity or comparison.) Respondents provided biographical data such as their age and sex, and they were required to label each statement in the questionnaire as being more likely spoken by a man or by a woman. In addition, respondents were asked to rate each utterance on a politeness level of 1 to 4, with 1 being the least polite. I administered a preliminary study to a small group of 10 people in order to eliminate potential problems in the final questionnaire, and the final questionnaire reflects modifications resulting from that study.

Preliminary Study
The preliminary study was administered to a group of ten subjects, five males and five females. Eight of the subjects were over 50 years of age, and all lived in the same neighborhood in Fort Worth, Texas. An analysis of this preliminary study allowed a view of several shortcomings which were then repaired.

The preliminary questionnaire asked subjects to rate each utterance with a "male," "female," or "either" response. Subjects were also asked to rate each utterance on a politeness level of 1 to 10. The preliminary questionnaire revealed a need to limit the choices of sex to only "more likely female or "more likely male" and also to limit the politeness levels requested to a scale of 1 to 4. These changes, recommended by Lynn Eubank, resulted in much cleaner averages than those shown by the preliminary questionnaire. Respondents in the preliminary questionnaire often labeled sentences as being equally likely to be spoken by either a man or a woman and also labeled many sentences with a politeness level of 5, thinking, perhaps, that this number was the middle of 1 through 10. The written scale of 1 through 4 allowed subjects to see clearly that there was no middle answer. Because subjects were instructed to label each sentence as to whether it was more likely spoken by a man or by a woman, the validity of the study was not compromised by the exclusion of an "either" option.
Other changes resulting from the preliminary questionnaire included the elimination of several questions that were revealed to be sex-typed due to reasons other than speech patterns. In first deciding how to improve the preliminary study, I isolated those items that received the strongest responses for either politeness or sex and examined them to determine if factors extraneous to the study might be causing those answers. Through this technique, for instance, the statement "I know you must be hungry. How about some lunch?" was eliminated. Every female in the preliminary study had labeled this question as being more likely spoken by a woman, and 4 out of the 5 male respondents also labeled it in this manner.

While the statement was an example of the notice strategy of positive politeness, I became aware that the situation it depicted might be associated with the nurturing behavior still viewed as common primarily to women in our society. A similar statement in the preliminary study, "You look really tired. Why don't you rest for a while?" received a more even distribution of answers, with only 60% of the respondents labeling it as more likely spoken by a female. Through such comparison strategies, several potentially problematic statements were eliminated or modified.

Another worrisome factor revealed by the preliminary study was the need to incorporate more statements that were likely to receive "more likely male" responses. An analysis
of the preliminary data showed that very few of the original statements yielded such a response. In order to rectify this problem, several new statements were devised to reflect items stereotypically viewed as marking male speech—curse words, slang, and direct requests.

The preliminary study is essential to any well-executed process of data-gathering. Through it, I was able to redesign the questionnaire so that the final product more effectively addressed the needs of the study.

**Final questionnaire**

In creating the actual utterances that appeared in the questionnaire, I used or adapted a variety of sentences from Brown and Levinson's *Politeness* and created several sentences on my own using knowledge of stereotypical male and female speech patterns. The intent in adapting some utterances was to change not the type of politeness in which they were couched, but to eliminate any descriptions of stereotyped behavior that might lead subjects to be more likely to label a sentence as being spoken by a male or by a female by simple virtue of their inclusion. Any sentences that included nouns or verbs indicative of male or female stereotyped behaviors were modified. Hence, despite the fact that our society has become more egalitarian in many ways, sentences which spoke of mowing a lawn or buying a dress were changed to reflect non-stereotyped behaviors such as reading a book or eating a meal.
In modifying these utterances to eliminate stereotypical behaviors, however, great care was taken not to eliminate from them stereotypical speech patterns. Requirements of this study made it imperative to analyze the subjects' perceptions of these patterns. Hence, elements that have been stereotypically linked to either male or female speech appear in many of the statements.

In addition to the incorporation of these speech patterns into the instrument, a wide variety of types of politeness as defined by Brown and Levinson (1987) were included in the survey, as well. Because this thesis focuses in part on whether certain types of politeness are more often associated with one sex over the other, the instrument contained 20 examples of positive politeness, 19 examples of negative politeness, 10 examples of off-record speech, and 1 example of bald-on-record speech. Multiple strategies of politeness within positive, negative, and off-record speech were included in the questionnaire in order to test whether these certain strategies might be perceived as being favored by one sex over the other.

It is important to note, however, that normal spoken speech often utilizes multiple politeness forms. It was essential for this study that the sentences represent speech the respondents could actually imagine someone saying. Because of this fact, many of the samples within the survey represent several different forms of politeness. The results
regarding all forms of politeness are analyzed on a sentence-by-sentence basis to address such issues.

While length considerations precluded the inclusion in the instrument of an example of every different strategy and substrategy within politeness theory, a wide variety of samples were included in an attempt to address every major strategy within on-record and off-record speech. Often, the samples selected show the use of more than one politeness strategy, though they may be more indicative of one strategy than another. These cases have been noted wherever applicable, and they will be further discussed in the results section.

As stated previously, examples will be discussed in groups representing the various forms and strategies of politeness detailed below. For the reader's ease of reference, a complete outline of these strategies is provided in Appendix A. This list is titled "Politeness Variable Breakdown" and includes the number and politeness strategy of each statement in the questionnaire.

Selection of Samples

To represent the positive politeness strategy of claiming common ground with the hearer, I included examples of the substrategies of noticing and attending to the hearer; exaggerating; using in-group identity markers through contraction and ellipsis; avoiding disagreement through hedging opinions; joking; and presupposing/raising/asserting
common ground through gossip and small talk, point of view operations such as time switch and place switch, and the presupposition manipulations of showing knowledge of the hearer's wants and attitudes and of showing familiarity in the speaker-hearer relationship.

The first example of noticing and attending to the hearer was number 2, "The Smiths say they love your house." This sentence, in addition to being an example of the strategy noted, included the stereotypically female-typed word "love." As seen earlier, Herbert (1990) noted that the compliment form "I love X" occurred only in female speech in the samples he studied. This sentence was included in order to measure perceptions of whether this avoidance by men might carry over into reported speech.

Number 11 was the second sentence in the notice category; it read "Damn! Do you have gas or what! (said jokingly)" and was stereotypically male-typed by its inclusion of vulgarity. The third example in my questionnaire was created to judge whether adjective use in compliments is still perceived as being primarily female-oriented. Lakoff (1975) noted that women employ adjectives such as "lovely" that are avoided by men. Because "lovely" seemed to be too age-typed for the group to which the study was being administered--college students--the word "phenomenal" was used instead. One would expect this word to yield results more on the neutral side than would be seen with something
like "precious." The statement thus created was number 29, "I hear you've got a phenomenal GPA."

The substrategy of exaggeration was accounted for in the study through the inclusion of two samples. The first, 48, was male-typed by its use of cursing: "That is kick ass!" The second example, 26, was female-typed by its use of the term "absolutely incredible." This sample read, "How absolutely incredible!"

The use of in-group identity markers through contraction and ellipsis was shown by examples 12 and 31. Number 12 read, "Mind if I smoke?" and number 31 read "I'm borrowing your book for a sec, ok?" Because males more typically employ nonstandard forms, as noted in Graves & Price (1980), for instance, these statements would be fairly male-linked if these perceptions still apply.

Avoiding disagreement through hedging opinions was represented by the sample "You really should sort of try harder. As discussed in Lakoff (1975), for instance, women are thought to be more likely to use hedges than are men.

Still within the positive politeness strategy of claiming common ground, the substrategy of presupposing/raising/asserting common ground was addressed through a number of substrategies of its own: These included small talk, point-of-view operations, and presupposition manipulations. Small talk was addressed through number 6, "(after a period of small talk) 'By the way, do you have an
extra dollar on you?" Point-of view operations were further divided into time switches and a place switch. Both time-switch examples involved statements that were also indicative of the notice strategy of positive politeness, numbers 2 and 29, "The Smiths say they love your house" and "I hear you've got a phenomenal GPA," respectively. The example of place switch was "Here, have a drink," number 34. Presupposition manipulations were addressed through an example showing knowledge of the hearer's wants and attitudes and an example showing familiarity in the speaker-hearer relationship. The first of these, number 18, read "Don't you want a drink?" and the second read "Look, we're good friends, so how about...."

The last substrategy addressed under the strategy of claiming common ground was that of joking. Two samples were used for this speech behavior. The first, number 25, read "How about loaning me this old heap of junk (your new Lexus)." The second example was also indicative of the notice substrategy of claiming common ground; it was number 11, "Damn! Do you have gas or what! (said jokingly)."

To represent the second category of positive politeness, in which the speaker conveys that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators, I included examples of asserting or presupposing knowledge of and concern for the hearer's wants, offering and promising, being optimistic, including both the speaker and the hearer in the activity, asking for reasons, and asserting reciprocity.
Asserting or presupposing knowledge of and concern for the hearer's wants was exemplified by two statements. The first, number 13, read "I know you have an appointment later, so shouldn't I go to town now?" The second read "You look really tired. Why don't you rest for a while?"; it was numbered 3.

Offering and promising were represented by two examples. The first example included an outright promise: "I promise I'll get this back to you right away." The second was an implied promise or offer and read, "I'll come by next week." These statements were numbered 30 and 8, respectively.

The example representing the substrategy of being optimistic has been previously mentioned under the strategy of claiming common ground through contraction. This sentence is number 31, "I'm borrowing your book for a sec, ok? As with the previous two strategies mentioned, optimism in assuming an FTA can be accomplished conveys that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators. In this example, the speaker assumes that the FTA is agreeable to the hearer.

The substrategy of including both the speaker and the hearer in an activity is, as discussed in Goodwin (1980), typically seen as marking of women's speech. This strategy was represented by the sentence "Let's stop for a bite," number 40. This sample also includes the use of slang, which falls under the positive politeness strategy of claiming common ground through the use of in-group identity markers.
Giving or asking for reasons is another way of conveying that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators. This strategy was represented in the survey with number 39, the question "Why not lend me that book for the weekend?" As can be seen, this question can also be viewed as being slightly aggressive.

The last substrategy of conveying that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators is seen in the question "Will you take notes for me this week, since I took them for you last week?" This question, number 19, is an example of asserting reciprocity in the speaker-hearer relationship.

The third positive politeness strategy, in which one fulfills the hearer's want for something, is represented by many of the examples above. As Brown and Levinson (1987) note, this type of politeness involves the giving not only of tangible gifts, but of "...human relations wants such as the desire to be liked, admired, cared about, understood, listened to, and so on" (p. 129). As such, it is fairly difficult to separate from other positive politeness strategies.

The negative politeness samples utilized in the questionnaire included the strategy of showing that the speaker is not presuming or assuming through the use of hedges on illocutionary force, hedges address to Grice's maxims, and prosodic and kinesic hedges. To represent the strategy of not coercing the hearer, I selected samples that
illustrated being pessimistic, minimizing the imposition, and giving deference. Communication of the speaker's desire not to impinge on the hearer was shown through apologizing by admitting the impingement and by indicating reluctance and through impersonalizing the speaker and hearer by the use of an impersonal verb, passive voice, "you" avoidance, and point-of-view distancing. An example of going on record as incurring a debt to the hearer was selected to represent the strategy of redressing other wants of the hearer.

The negative politeness strategy of not presuming or assuming was shown through various types of questioning and hedging. All these samples illustrate to the hearer that the speaker does not automatically assume the FTA will be acceptable and will not presume upon the hearer if it is not.

The first example of questioning and hedging, number 14, a hedge on illocutionary force, was accomplished through an adverbial clause hedge with the sentence "Would you call the vet today, if you don't mind?" Hedges addressed to Grice's maxims included one to relevance and one to quantity. The relevance hedge, number 32, read "Excuse me if I mention this while I'm thinking of it...." The quantity hedge, number 16, read "I'll just say he's not easy to get along with" and incorporated its hedge through the use of the word "just," as though the statement were minor. A prosodic hedge was incorporated into the study with number 50, "Umm, will you loan me your pen?" Such hesitations, as discussed in the
review of the literature, are often viewed as marking both powerless speech and women's speech.

Samples showing that the speaker was not coercing the hearer included the use of pessimism, minimization of the imposition, and the giving of deference. All these substrategies show the hearer that the speaker is not trying to force the hearer into complying with the FTA.

Three samples were used for showing pessimism. The first of these was number 4, "Could you do something for me?" The second was number 43, "I don't suppose I could possibly ask you if I could borrow your pen, could I?" This sentence corresponded in many ways to the next one, number 15, "I don't imagine there'd be any possibility of you loaning me your car." These two sentences differed in the use in number 15 of an additional contraction, a positive politeness strategy, and through the fact that number 43 incorporated three steps of pessimism, "I don't suppose I could possibly ask you if I could borrow...."

Minimization of the imposition was shown in number 42, "I just want to ask you if I could borrow a little paper. The words "just and "little" in this sample show the speaker implying twice that the FTA is small. I expected that this statement would elicit an overall response of "more likely female."

The giving of deference to the hearer was utilized in the study through three samples, including a very interesting
pair. This pair comprised numbers 17 and 44, "Excuse me, sir" and "Excuse me, ma'am," respectively. These examples showed deference through the use of honorific address terms. The third example of showing deference was number 9, "I think I must be absolutely stupid, but I can't understand this (as a request for help)." This sample shows deference by using abasement of the speaker.

The communication by the speaker of the desire not to impinge upon the hearer is addressed in the study in part through apologies by admitting the impingement, by indicating reluctance, and by giving overwhelming reasons. Additionally, this strategy is shown with an impersonalization of both the speaker and the hearer through the use of an impersonal verb, passive voice, address terms as "you" avoidance, and point-of-view distancing.

For the first apology strategy, admitting the impingement, two very similar examples were utilized. The first example, "I'm sorry to bother you, but..." was the first question on the questionnaire, and the data provided by it might not be accurate, as respondents might change the tenor of their responses over the course of the study. So the data provided by this statement would not be lost, the similar version was included later in the questionnaire. This question, number 47, read "I know you're really busy, but could you help me with this?"
The other apology strategies were accomplished through similar sentences. The strategy of apology through indicating reluctance was accomplished through number 35, "I hate to have to say this, but...," and the strategy of begging forgiveness was shown in the sentence "I'm sorry to bother you, but...."

Another strategy of communicating a desire not to impinge upon the hearer is the impersonalization of both the speaker and the hearer. This technique distances the actors from the FTA and is accomplished in the study through the use of impersonal verbs, passive voice, address terms as "you" avoidance, and point-of-view distancing.

Various types of sentences represent this strategy. The use of an impersonal verb is seen in example 38, "It seems that no one has thought this out very well," while the use of the passive voice is seen in number 22, "It would be appreciated if this could be taken care of...." Examples of address terms as "you" avoidance can be seen in numbers 17 and 44, which were discussed earlier as examples of giving deference through the use of honorifics. Point-of-view distancing is seen in the example "I was wondering if you could do me a favor."

The last major negative politeness strategy addressed in the questionnaire is that of redressing other wants of the hearer. The sample chosen accomplished this strategy through going on record as incurring a debt to the hearer, and it was
also indicative of positive politeness through exaggeration. This statement was number 37, "I'll be in your debt forever if you'll do this for me."

Off-record strategies, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), often involve the violation of Gricean maxims. The two strategies used to do this in the questionnaire involve violating conversational implicatures and being vague or ambiguous. The samples representing the first strategy involve giving hints and presupposing, which are violations of the relevance maxim; understating and overstating, violations of the quantity maxim; and using contradictions, being ironic, and using rhetorical questions, violations of the quality maxim. The second strategy, being vague or ambiguous, was represented by a vague statement, two statements showing overgeneralization, and an example of an uncompleted statement. I expected that the off-record strategies would be attributed primarily to women.

The various strategies for using conversational implicatures were represented by a wide variety of statements. The first of these, number 49, showed the use of giving hints: "It's hot in here! (Meaning 'Turn on the air conditioner.')" The second of these samples showed a presupposition of prior knowledge with the sentence "I washed the car again today" (number 36). Understatement was represented with number 46, "Looks like somebody might have had too much to drink," while overstatement was shown with
"There were a million cars on the road tonight (to explain being late)," which is number 7 and is also an example of exaggeration.

Examples showing the invitation of conversational implicatures continued with contradictions, irony, and the use of rhetorical questions. Contradiction was represented in number 41, which read "(In answer to the question, 'Are you mad?') Well, yes and no." Irony was represented by number 21, "Pat's a real genius. (after the person has done twenty stupid things in a row)" The rhetorical question "Can't you come five miles to come see us?" was number 23.

The off-record strategy of being vague or ambiguous was represented by four samples in the questionnaire that showed not only outright vagueness but overgeneralization and the use of incompletions or ellipsis. The example of vagueness utilized is also indicative of understatement and is seen in the example "Looks like somebody might have had too much to drink," number 46. Overgeneralization is represented in statements 28 and 5, "That dog has got to be trained" and "Well, if the show fits, wear it," respectively. Overgeneralization is also a factor in the sample representing the use of an incompletion, as seen in number 5 "People who live in glass houses...."

For each utterance, subjects were asked to judge whether the speaker was more likely a male or a female and to rate the politeness level of the utterance on a scale of 1 to 4.
with 1 being the lowest. The versions differed in the order in which they were to perform the above tasks. The first page of version 1 contained the following instructions.

In this questionnaire, please decide how polite each sentence is on a scale of 1 to 4, with

1 being the **impolite** end

and

4 being the **polite** end

Circle the appropriate answer. Please DO NOT use check marks.

**ALSO,** decide whether you think each sentence would be more likely spoken by a male (M) or a female (F) and insert the appropriate letter in the blank beside the sentence.

Please do not base your judgments on the object or favor being mentioned, but on the way the utterance is worded. (For instance, even if you think it is always rude for someone to tell you something negative about yourself, there are more polite and less polite ways they can do it.)

In version two, the instructions concerning the politeness level were moved to a separate page at the end of the questionnaire, and an admonition on the first page asked respondents not to skip ahead in the survey. In version 3, the respondents were asked to respond to the politeness level first, and the instructions regarding judging each sentence
as being more likely spoken by a male or a female were moved to the end of the questionnaire. Again, the admonition appeared on the first page warning respondents not to skip ahead. Because the instructions regarding the second phase of the questionnaire on versions 2 and 3 were on a separate page at the end of the survey, a note after statement 50 instructed respondents to turn to the next page. Still, many questionnaires in these versions had to be eliminated because respondents failed to turn the last page and complete the questionnaire.

The politeness level respondents assigned to each question was not intended as much to gauge how polite any particular statement was, but to gauge respondents' perceptions of that statement in comparison with others. In addition, this data can be used to determine whether men and women differ in overall opinions of how polite any particular statement is.

**Respondents**

Thirty samples of each of the three different versions were analyzed, with each version's 30 samples being comprised of the answers of 15 male and 15 female respondents. In obtaining personal data from each subject, knowing the sex of the respondent was critical.

In addition to obtaining the sex of each respondent, I requested that each provide a number of other items that might be of use in analyzing the results of the
questionnaire. These items included age, place of birth, native language, major places in which the subject had lived, ethnicity, and the longest amount of time the subject had ever been involved in a long-term, intimate relationship. Because of differences that might be attributed to comprehension, any surveys that indicated a native language other than English were eliminated.

All respondents were taken from freshman-level courses in English, sociology, or psychology, and so represent a fairly homogeneous age range. This age range contrasted sharply with that used in the preliminary survey, as 8 of the 10 respondents used for that questionnaire were over 50 years of age. People of different generations vary considerably in language use and in cultural expectations of men and women, and different age ranges are likely to yield differing results.

Analysis

A database was created to analyze the 90 questionnaires used in the study in a number of different ways. All material form the 90 surveys was input into this database, and printouts were obtained which analyzed the data both as a whole, with no regard to sex of the respondents, and individually, with sex analyzed. In all, I analyzed the following: overall averages of the politeness rating and perceived speaker rating allotted each utterance, an average of the politeness rating broken down by sex of the
respondents, and average of the sex rating broken down by sex of the respondents. This analysis was aided by the use of several charts showing the individual numbers of men and women who allotted each different politeness rating of 1 to 4 when particularly interesting discrepancies arose between males' and females' averages.

Because the politeness ratings were numbers between one and four, these numbers were simply averaged. The ratings regarding the sex each respondent labeled as being more likely to answer a question were more problematic. In the end, a straight percentage was obtained by coding all responses for one sex as zero and all responses for the other as one. Subtraction of the "1" percentage from 100 was then the only step necessary to determine the percentage for the opposite sex, as well.

In the analysis of the data, items that have politeness averages between 2.4 and 2.6 on the scale of 1 to 4 are considered neutral for politeness. Percentages of 45% to 55% are considered neutral for the perceived sex of the speaker. It is possible to analyze this data in a less conservative manner, but very few of the utterances in the study showed neutrality within these specifications; those that do, as we will see, are interesting for that very reason.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The structure of the instrument allows the data collected to be analyzed at several different levels. Of most relevance to this thesis is the overall analysis of the data for each statement compared with that obtained when broken down by sex of the respondent. This analysis allows discrepancies between men’s and women’s answers to be singled out for further review.

We turn first to the overall averages obtained without regard to respondent sex or type of politeness, then factor in the respondents' sex and watch changes occur in the averages. In order to see these changes most clearly, the analysis by respondent sex will be addressed as a comparison to the original data.

Overall Averages

As stated previously, very few statements elicited overall responses in the neutral ranges. Of the statements that fell within the neutral range of 45% to 55%, there were only four: 12, 19, 24, and 46. Twenty-four of the statements received "more likely female" averages (items 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 37, 41, 42, 43, 47 in the appendix). Twenty-two of the statements
received "more likely male" averages (items 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 15, 18, 21, 25, 28, 31, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40, 44, 45, 48, 49, 50).

When we compare this information with that obtained in when viewing overall politeness, we see that polite statements are usually ascribed to females, while impolite statements are generally attributed to males. Of the 24 statements labeled more likely female, only two (numbers 20 and 23) fell toward the impolite end of the scale, and only four (9, 16, 35, and 41) scored as neutral for politeness, with averages between 2.4 and 2.5. In contrast, however, only four of the statements labeled overall as more likely spoken by a male scored toward the polite end of the spectrum (4, 36, 40, and 44), and four of the statements that were neutral for politeness were labeled as male (15, 18, 34, and 50). It is important to note that some of the results shown above may be based in part on factors within each statement; this data should not be interpreted yet as an assumption that men are less polite than are women, an issue I will discuss further in the conclusions chapter.

Only two statements, 19 and 46, scored in the neutral range for both politeness and sex of speaker. As we saw earlier, these two neutral statements come from differing aspects of politeness: 19 is from positive politeness and 46 is an example of off-record politeness.
Only one of the polite statements attributed to men scored better than a 3 average. This was question 44, "Excuse me, Ma'am," an example of negative politeness in which one gives deference. In contrast, thirteen of the polite statements attributed to females scored averages of higher than a 3 (items 2, 3, 13, 14, 17, 26, 27, 29, 30, 33, 43, 44, 47).

**Breakdown by Politeness Types**

The following paragraphs list items as broken down by type of politeness and perceived sex of the speaker, but does not take into account the sex of the respondents. We shall see, when we factor in the variable of respondent sex, that many of these items are altered.

Of the 21 items in the questionnaire that were framed in positive politeness, 11 were ascribed primarily to men, 8 were attributed primarily to women, and 2 were considered gender neutral. Of the 19 negative politeness samples in the questionnaire, 13 were attributed primarily to women, while the other 6 were attributed to men. The perceived-speaker breakdown in breakdown in the off-record strategies revealed one gender neutral statement, 6 statements which were thought to be more likely spoken by a man, and 2 statements thought to be more likely spoken by a woman. The bald-on-record statement, number 10, as expected, was attributed to men over 83% of the time. I will here further detail the breakdown above, factoring in the sex of the individual respondents.
Positive Politeness

Several positive politeness strategies representing the claiming of common ground were utilized in the questionnaire. The first substrategy in this area, noticing and attending to the hearer, included three examples. Two of the examples, 2 and 29, were attributed to women and one, 11, to men. On statement 2, only 5 men and 3 women thought the sentence to be more likely spoken by a man. On number 29, 25 men and 31 women thought the statement more likely to be spoken by a woman. The statement attributed primarily to men utilized a curse word and was attributed to men in more than 94% of the responses (only 2 men and 3 women answered more likely female); one of the statements attributed to women utilized the word "love" and the other utilized the word "phenomenal."

In the substrategy of exaggeration, one example, number 48, was attributed to men and the other, number 26, to women. The statement attributed to men contained a curse word, and only 2 men and 3 women attributed the sentence to women; the other statement utilized the phrase "absolutely incredible," and only 13 males and 6 females thought the sentence would be spoken by a man.

Examples that showed the substrategy of using in-group identity markers revealed one statement, 31, attributed to males, with 32 males and 32 females in agreement, and
another, 12, revealed as neutral. Number 40 used in-group identity markers through slang and was attributed to men by 34 women and 34 men. This sentence also utilized the word "Let's" to include both the speaker and the hearer in an activity, a strategy also combined in number 31, which showed optimism in assuming that the favor requested would be agreed to; 32 men and 32 women labeled it as being more likely spoken by a male.

Still within the strategy of claiming common ground, the technique of avoiding disagreement through hedging opinions, number 20, was attributed to females in the majority of the responses (25 women and 26 men). The opinion in this instance was hedged with the phrase "sort of." This statement was one of only two attributed to women that were scored at the impolite end of the politeness scale; the overall average attributed to this statement was 2.08.

Of the positive politeness strategy in which one presupposes, raises, or asserts common ground, four of the six statements were attributed primarily to men. The statements attributed to men included both of the samples of presupposition manipulations, 18 (39 women and 27 men) and 45 (38 men and 42 women), the one example of gossip/small talk, 6 (39 men and 38 women), and the use of a place switch for point-of-view operations, 34, which 39 men and every one of the 45 women thought was more likely to be spoken by a man.
Interestingly enough, the only two statements not attributed to men in the category of presuppose/raise/assert common ground were examples of a time switch for point-of-view operations and were also examples of the notice strategy of positive politeness, in which one attends to the hearer. These were statements 2 and 29, which were discussed earlier. Both the notice strategy and that of presupposing/raising/asserting common ground are substrategies of claiming common ground with the hearer.

Joking was the last substrategy of claiming common ground. Both examples within the instrument of joking behavior were attributed to men; one of these examples, number 11, was also indicative of the notice strategy and, as noted above, was the one statement in that strategy that was attributed primarily to men; it was also given a lower overall politeness average than any other item on the survey, a 1.44. This statement was labeled male by 43 of the men and 42 of the women. The other statement, number 25, was rated male by 41 men and 43 women and received a low politeness average as well, with a score of only 1.72.

As we move on to the second major strategy of positive politeness represented in the questionnaire, we see that females were thought more likely overall to use the four examples in the survey representing the substrategies that include asserting or presupposing knowledge of and concern for the hearer's wants and of making offers or promises when
making an FTA. Three of these, 8 (30 males and 31 females), 13 (35 females and 35 males) and 3 (35 and 35 again), were very clear-cut. One other was rated as more likely female by women and as neutral by men. This was number 30 (32 females but only 21 males). All of these sentences fall into the larger strategy of conveying that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators, of which there were 8 examples.

Of the other four examples in this category, 3 of them were attributed to men--numbers 31 (by 32 men and 31 women), 40 (by 34 men and 34 women), and 39 (by 39 men and 29 women)--and one, number 19, was attributed to males by men and to females by women. A breakdown of this example will be given later as Figures 7 and 8. One of the examples, 31, showed the strategy of being optimistic and also included elements for the strategy of claiming common ground by using contraction. The most surprising of the responses, however, was for the strategy of including both the speaker and the hearer in the activity. Men were thought more likely to use the statement "Let's stop for a bite", number 40, in more than 75% of the surveys (34 men and 34 women). The statement representing the positive politeness strategy of asking for reasons why an FTA cannot be accomplished, number 39, as stated, was attributed to men by 31 men and 38 women, while the strategy of assuming or asserting reciprocity was the item on which men and women differed. These two substrategies comprise the end of the
material on positive politeness, and the data on negative politeness can now be addressed.

**Negative Politeness**

Of the 19 negative politeness examples in the questionnaire, 3 were controversial and 12 were thought to be more likely spoken by women. Only 4 statements were thought by both men and women to be more likely spoken by men. One of these statements attributed to men, number 6, combined aspects of both positive and negative politeness.

The first negative politeness strategy addressed was that of not presuming or assuming. Of the 5 statements in this category, one utilizing a prosodic hedge, number 50, was attributed to male speech by the majority of the women (29 of them) and was attributed neutrality by men (24 out of 45 thought it was more likely male). One of the statements, number 6, used a hedge addressed to the Gricean maxim of relevance. Number 6 also utilized aspects of positive politeness through its use of small talk. It was judged to be more likely male by 39 men and 38 women. The hedge on illocutionary force, number 14, was judged female by 38 women and 31 men. The other hedge addressed to the Gricean maxim of relevance, number 32, will be addressed under discrepancies, as men thought that men were more likely to say it, and women thought that women were more likely to say it. The hedge
addressed to the Gricean maxim of quantity, number 16, was attributed to women by 39 females and 33 males.

When we move to the negative politeness strategy of not coercing the hearer, we see that, of the three examples showing pessimism about the possibility of the FTA being accomplished, two are attributed to men, numbers 4 and 15, and one is attributed to women, number 43. Females just barely scored number 4 just out of the neutral range, with 25 of them labeling it as more likely male, but 29 males thought the statement more likely to be spoken by a woman. Number 15 was rated more likely male by 28 men and 27 women, and number 43 was rated more likely female by 32 males and 33 females. The strategy showing minimization of the imposition, 42, was attributed to women by 25 males and 31 females; one of the 3 examples that showed giving deference, number 9, was attributed to women by 30 men and 31 women.

One of the above examples attributed to women involved the denigration of the speaker, and the other utilized the word "sir." An example in this category that was attributed to men when viewed without knowledge of the breakdown of responses by respondents' sex was a twin to the example using the word "sir" except for its substitution of the word "ma'am." These two statements, 17 and 44, become especially interesting when viewed according to a breakdown by sex of the respondent. These statements will be discussed in further
detail later in the paper due to the large differences shown between men and women on their labeling.

The next strategy addressed within negative politeness involves the speaker communicating her or his desire not to impinge upon the hearer. Of the 4 examples of various types of apology within this category, 3 were judged by both males and females to be more likely spoken by a woman; these were numbers 1, 47, and 27. One apology, number 35, was judged neutral by men and more likely female by women, as shown later in Figures 17 and 18. The breakdown on number 1 was 29 males and 36 females; 47 was judged female by 31 males and 38 females; and 48 females and 31 males thought 27 was more likely to be spoken by a woman, a difference of more than 25% that will be graphed in Figures 5 and 6.

In the substrategy of impersonalizing both the speaker and the hearer, the results were very mixed. One example, 33, was rated female by 29 women, but was rated neutral by men. Statement 22 is addressed under discrepancies. Numbers 17 and 44, which incorporated the strategy of utilizing address terms as "you" avoidance are, as stated earlier, addressed under discrepancies. Number 38 was attributed to men by 30 men and 26 women and involved the use of an impersonal verb.

The last negative politeness strategy used in the questionnaire involved redressing other wants of the hearer by going on record as incurring a debt. This example, number
37, utilized elements of exaggeration, a positive politeness strategy, through the use of the word "forever" and was attributed to women by both men and women. Number 37 had 34 men and 28 women label it more likely female.

Presentation will now proceed with results of the off-record politeness samples.

Off-record Strategies

Surprisingly enough, men were attributed 6 of the 10 statements utilizing off-record politeness strategies, while women were attributed only 2 of them. (Two off-record statements scored as gender neutral.) One of these statements, number 23, was one of only two impolite statements attributed to women.

In the strategy of inviting conversational implicatures, men were thought most likely to use the statements involving hinting (number 49, by 27 men and 31 women), presupposition (number 36, by 39 women and 36 women), overstatement (number 7, by 33 men and 34 women), and irony (21, by 36 women and 36 men). Women were thought more likely to use the statements that involved uses of contradiction (41, by 34 men and 37 women) and a rhetorical question (23, by 31 women and 33 men). The use of the rhetorical question in this category was scored lower for politeness than any other question attributed to women, with a 2.07 average. The sample
utilizing understatement, number 46, was considered more likely male by 27 men and 31 women.

All strategies of being vague or ambiguous to go off-record were attributed either to men or to gender neutrality, though two statements were considered more likely female by women. The act of simply being vague is also indicative of understatement, discussed above, and was one of the statements that scored as gender neutral for men but as more likely female by women. Both samples of overgeneralization were attributed to men—number 28 by 35 men and 35 women, and number 5 by 36 men and 37 women—while the use of an incomplete statement that was also an overgeneralization, 24, was considered gender neutral by men but more likely female by 26 women.

I will now turn to a discussion of male-female discrepancies in both politeness and perceived speaker sex.

**Male-Female Discrepancies**

As can be seen from the data above, both men and women scored items on the same side of both the politeness spectrum and the sex of speaker spectrum in most cases. It is further clear, however, that there are instances in which men's and women's responses differ rather substantially, revealing the imperative need for any researcher in this area to do such a breakdown. Following is a discussion of items on which either women and men differed substantially on agreed sex of speaker
or on politeness, or on which men and women scored items on opposite sides of either scale.

In analyzing male-female discrepancies for politeness of the speaker, I will here examine in closer detail those items for which men's and women's averages either differed by .4 points or more or for which averages on opposite sides of the scale were obtained, regardless of the amount of difference. (The reader will recall that "opposite sides of the scale" for politeness shall here refer to items below 2.4 and above 2.6.) In analyzing discrepancies based on the perceived sex of the speaker, I will detail instances in which men's and women's averages differed by 20% or more, or in which men and women scored items on opposite sides of the scale (below 45% or above 55%).

The largest and most interesting discrepancy for perceived sex of speaker occurred with number 17, "Excuse me, Ma'am," which stands in direct contrast to number 44, "Excuse me, Sir," which was noted earlier for the fact that it was the only statement attributed to men that scored higher than a 3 average. Interestingly enough, this statement, "Excuse me, Ma'am" was labeled as being more likely spoken by a female by female respondents and more likely spoken by a male by male respondents (89% female for the female respondents and 58% male for the male respondents). This data can be broken down by analyzing the number of respondents who
answered male or female to the question. This breakdown can be illuminating and is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

![Bar chart showing percentages of perceived sex of speaker](image1)

**Figure 1.** Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 17 by female respondents.

![Bar chart showing percentages of perceived sex of speaker](image2)

**Figure 2.** Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 17 by male respondents.

The data obtained for number 44 was, interestingly enough, almost completely reversed from that seen in 17. Whereas females gave high levels of "more likely female" responses for 17 while males gave more even responses, males
gave high rates of "more likely male" responses on 44 while females gave more even scores, as is shown in Figures 3 and 4.

**Figure 3.** Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 44 by male respondents.

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**Figure 4.** Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 44 by female respondents.

While women scored both these statements at the same level of politeness, 3.73, men labeled question 17 as being slightly more polite than question 44 (3.48 to 3.42). As can
be seen, women scored both these statements at a higher politeness level overall than did men.

Another item that men and women scored quite differently for perceived speaker sex was number 27, "I'm sorry to bother you, but...." Women thought this statement to be more likely spoken by a woman 96% of the time, while men though it more likely to be spoken by a woman only 69% of the time. The breakdown of men's and women's responses may be useful and is shown in Figures 5 and 6.

![Figure 5](image)

**Figure 5.** Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 27 by female respondents.
The next item that men and women scored differently for speaker sex was number 19. This statement, "Will you take notes for me this week, since I took them for you last week?" appears to be gender neutral when viewed without a breakdown by sex of the respondent. When analyzed according to such a breakdown, however, we see that women thought that women were more likely to utter the question 56.6% of the time, and men thought that men were more likely to ask the question 60% of the time. Figures 7 and 8 on the following page illustrate this situation.
Figure 7. Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 19 by male respondents.

Figure 8. Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 19 by female respondents.

Men judged this question to be more polite than did women, with the men's average at 2.69 and the women's at 2.4. These averages can be viewed on an individual basis in Figures 9 and 10.
While female respondents thought that statement 22, "It would be appreciated if this could be taken care of," was more likely spoken by a female 73% of the time, males judged this statement to be gender neutral, with a 49% response of "more likely male." Women thought this statement to be only slightly more polite than did men, with averages of 2.78 and
2.6 respectively. The individual results of politeness ratings are shown in Figures 11 and 12.

Figure 11. Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 22 by male respondents.

Figure 12. Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 22 by female respondents.

A similar result was obtained for statement numbers 30, 32, and 35, all of which were scored by females as more polite and as more likely spoken by a woman. Men in all three instances scored these statements as gender neutral, showing a small shift from the more likely male answer above. On
number 30, "I promise I'll get this back to you right away," women thought that women were more likely to utter the statement 71% of the time, while men judged it gender neutral, with a 53% score of "more likely male". The perceived sex of speaker rating is shown in Figures 13 and 14.

![Figure 13](image1)

**Figure 13.** Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 30 by female respondents.

![Figure 14](image2)

**Figure 14.** Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 30 by male respondents.
Women rated the statement as being more polite than did men, though with a .31 difference over the .15 difference shown in 22.

We see this discrepancy between men's and women's opinions again at question 32, "Excuse me if I mention this while I'm thinking of it...." Giving the statement an average politeness rating of .29 higher than the men's rating, women also thought the statement to be more likely spoken by women over 82% of the time, while men gave it a neutral score of 49% male. Figures 15 and 16 show the breakdown of women's and men's responses.

Figure 15. Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 32 by female respondents.
Number 35 revealed a politeness-rating difference of only .14, but women believed the statement to be more likely spoken by a woman over 73% of the time. The percentages allotted the statement by both males and females are shown in Figures 17 and 18.
Figure 18. Percentages of perceived sex of speaker accorded to number 35 by female respondents.

When analyzing politeness levels, any average falling between 2.4 and 2.6 was considered neutral for politeness. In four instances, women and men scored items on opposite sides of this average. In several other instances, men and women experienced variation of more than 10% in their scores. All these examples are discussed here.

The first example in which men and women scored the utterance on opposite sides of the politeness scale was number 18, "Don't you want a drink?" and was rated at 2.22 by females and at 2.69 by males. Women thought this question to be more likely spoken by a man 86.7% of the time, while men thought it to be more likely spoken by a man 84.4% of the time. The politeness breakdowns by sex are provided in Figures 19 and 20.
The next example, number 34, "Here, have a drink," was rated by women at a politeness level of 2.18, while males rated it a 2.67. In this instance, every woman in the survey thought that this statement was more likely spoken by a man than by a woman. Politeness breakdowns for number 34 are provided in Figures 21 and 22.
Figure 21. Numbers of male respondents answering at each politeness level for number 34.

Figure 22. Numbers of female respondents answering at each politeness level for number 34.

Number 35 was scored almost within the neutral politeness level by both men and women, but women rated it at 2.38 while men rated the statement at 2.51. As noted above, number 35 showed a rather substantial difference between men's and women's opinions of the sex of the speaker, with only 26.7% of the women believing the statement to be typical
of male speech, and 51% of the males believing the statement was typical of male speech.

Number 50 was the last example on which men and women scored politeness on different sides of the neutral value. This statement, "Umm, will you loan me your pen?" was rated at 2.33 by women and at 2.69 by men. The numbers of men and women rating the statement at each different politeness level are shown in Figures 23 and 24.

**Figure 23.** Numbers of male respondents answering at each politeness level for number 50.

**Figure 24.** Numbers of female respondents answering at each politeness level for number 50.
Men scored the statement as gender neutral, while women believed it would be more likely spoken by a man 64% of the time.

In addition to the politeness items shown above, 5 items in the survey had overall responses by men and by women that differed by more than 10%, as did 18 and 34, already discussed. Number 1 also had male and female politeness scores that differed by more than 10%, but it is doubtful that those scores are useful, since they were obtained from the first item on the questionnaire. While the remainder of these statements had overall scores on the same side of the politeness spectrum, the differences between the scores can still be revealing.

The first such example is number 10, "Hand me that book over there." This is the only example of bald-on-record usage in the study, and both men and women tended to rate the statement toward the impolite end of the scale, with the women's overall average at 1.42 and the men's at 1.86. The comparison of answers from male and female respondents is shown in Figures 25 and 26.
Another example in which men's and women's politeness averages differed by more than 10% was number 21, "Pat's a real genius (after the person has done 20 stupid things in a row)." Both women and men rated this statement toward the impolite end of the scale, but men tended to rate the statement as being more polite than did women. The women's
overall average was 1.44 and the men's was 1.88, and the
politeness levels accorded the statement by both men and
women are illustrated in Figures 27 and 28.

Figure 27. Numbers of male respondents answering at each
politeness level for number 21.

Figure 28. Numbers of female respondents answering at
each politeness level for number 21.

The example that generated the largest difference in
women's and men's perceptions of politeness was number 23,
"Can't you come five miles to come see us?" This statement
was rated at an overall politeness average of almost three-quarters of a point higher by males than it was by females. The breakdown of this statement by sex of the respondents is illustrated in Figures 29 and 30.

![Figure 29](image-url)  
*Figure 29. Numbers of female respondents answering at each politeness level for number 23.*

![Figure 30](image-url)  
*Figure 30. Numbers of male respondents answering at each politeness level for number 23.*

Example number 48—"That is kick ass!"—also experienced politeness variation of more than 10%. This statement was
also rated toward the impolite end of the scale and judged as more polite by men than it was by women, with women's averages at 1.86 and men's at 2.37. The numbers of men and women supplying each level of politeness are illustrated in Figures 31 and 32.

**Figure 31.** Numbers of female respondents answering at each politeness level for number 48.

**Figure 32.** Numbers of male respondents answering at each politeness level for number 48.
The last example on which women's and men's politeness scores differed by more than 10% was number 49, "It's hot in here! (Meaning 'Turn on the air conditioner')." Women rated this statement at 1.71 overall while men rated it at a level of 2.17 overall, showing again that the men in the study viewed the statement as being more polite than did the women. The number of men and women responding at each politeness level are illustrated in Figures 33 and 34.

![Figure 33](image1.png)

**Figure 33.** Numbers of female respondents answering at each politeness level for number 49.

![Figure 34](image2.png)

**Figure 34.** Numbers of male respondents answering at each politeness level for number 49.
All instances within the data that are not represented by a figure, either for politeness or for perceived speaker sex, did not differ greatly for men and women. There were six instances, in fact, in which men's and women's percentages were absolutely tied in agreement as to the sex of the speaker (numbers 3, 6, 13, 25, 28, and 40). Statements that were rated as a tie on politeness were numbers 2, 3, and 41.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Here I will examine closely the items for which men and women were found to show substantial variation on either politeness, perceived sex of speaker, or both. Similarly, those items for which men and women both generated neutral responses will be discussed. This data can be linked to previous research through examining the different linguistic variables that make up each individual statement and then judging whether overall perception of that behavior in men and women has changed over time.

While it is interesting to apply a bit of "armchair sociology" to this data, it is important to note that we cannot truly know why men and women differed for their responses to these questions. In many instances, it may be quite likely that if a person cannot imagine themselves uttering a particular sentence, they judge that the opposite sex is more likely to say it, and this reasoning—if it is being applied—may not be valid. The truly useful facet of this research lies in judging whether people's perceptions of women and "women's language" have begun to alter over time.

Women were more likely to judge the bald-on-record statement, number 10, as being more likely spoken by a male.
Only 4 female respondents thought that this statement would be more likely spoken by a woman, in comparison with 11 male respondents. These findings fit with research such as Goodwin (1980) that show bald-on-record statements are more likely spoken by males.

For item 2, the sentence utilizing the word "love," only 3 women and 5 men thought this statement would be more likely spoken by a man. The word "love" was chosen for this for this instance to test whether the compliment form "I love X"--which has been proven to be much more common in women's speech than in men's (Herbert, 1990)--would be perceived to be more common to women's speech than to men's even when in reported speech. Lakoff (1975) illustrated this characteristic with adjectives such as "divine" and "lovely," but it is obvious that adjectives quickly change in language and become very age-typed. To include a sentence utilizing an adjective as Lakoff described them, a more contemporary adjective for college students was utilized in 29, "I hear you've got a phenomenal GPA." Twenty of the men in the study thought that men would be more likely to use the sentence, but only 14 women thought the same thing. Women, again, considered the sentence to be much more sex-typed than did men.

Number 11, which utilized a curse word, crudity, and joking, was only thought by 3 women and 2 men to be more likely used by women. Number 48, which also utilized
profanity, scored exactly the same. Another sentence utilizing only joking, number 25, was labeled as more likely female by 4 males and 2 females. It would seem, then, that the perception of women as using less profanity than men is still in place for both men and women, though it would seem that it is ever so slightly more in place in men's minds than it is in women's. The factor of joking could also be said to be viewed as common primarily to men, though it is also possible that the sentences utilizing joking were allotted to men because they were generally considered to be impolite. As we shall see, only two of the impolite statements in the survey were attributed more often to women than to men.

Many of the sentences in the study utilized in-group identity markers through contractions or slang, as it was important to make these sentences conform to normal speech patterns as much as possible. Only those sentences in which the contraction or slang is a distinguishing feature will be discussed, and they will be discussed under other strategies if they yielded interesting results. The statement utilizing ellipsis for this purpose, as discussed earlier, was rated neutral by both men and women.

The statement showing avoidance of disagreement through hedging opinions, number 20, was considered to be more likely female by both men and women, with almost equal results by each sex. This would seem to indicate that the stereotype of women hedging their opinions, as stated by Lakoff (1975), for
instance, is still in effect. As we shall see, similar results were obtained for many of the other hedges within the survey.

All but one of the statements under the positive politeness strategy of presupposing/raising/asserting common ground were labeled as more likely male. There may be a tendency here for this strategy to be viewed as being more typical of males' speech than of females'. More than 86% of both men and women in the study believed that number 5, for instance, which illustrates the raising of common ground though small talk, was more likely spoken by a male. While stereotypes indicate that women gossip and engage in trivial talk more than do men, it is perhaps informative in analyzing this statement to realize that it was given a very low politeness rating by both males than females, probably due to the fact that the small talk was followed by a request. As stated previously, women were credited with only two statements that received an overall politeness average of less than 2. This fact may be caused by a stereotypic view of women as the "fairer sex," for respondents may have been more hesitant to label impolite statements as being spoken by a female.

Statement 34, "Here, have a drink" is fascinating because, while 39 men in the survey thought that the statement was more likely spoken by a man, every single woman in the survey labeled the statement this way. I did not
anticipate such clear-cut results for women on this statement, as this is the only instance in which all 45 women agreed, and there were no instances in which all of the men agreed. One possible explanation is that the statement, while utilizing a place switch, also makes use of a bald-on-record statement. It is worth noting, however, that the other bald-on-record statement in the survey, number 10, was labeled as more likely female by 4 women in the survey. A number of explanations could account for this. The first, in retrospect, could be related to the fact that "drink" in this context almost invariably refers to alcohol, the consumption of which may be viewed as being more typical of men than of women. Another possible explanation is that the act may be seen as somewhat aggressive, as though the hearer may be powerless to refuse the drink. This explanation may be upheld by the fact that women thought this statement to be substantially less polite than did men, with a difference of half a point that put men and women on separate sides of the politeness scale, as seen in Figures 21 and 22 in the previous chapter.

Both presupposition manipulations were thought by men and women alike to be more likely indicative of male speech. One of these statements, 18, was very similar to number 34, above, in that it made the request "Don't you want a drink?" The fact that this statement was labeled more likely male may indicate, again, that the use of the term "drink" in this
context was a poor choice. I had actually utilized a different statement illustrating this strategy in the preliminary study, but had eliminated it because it was overwhelmingly labeled as more likely female. That statement was, "I know you must be hungry. How about some lunch?" The utterance seemed too typical of nurturing behavior to put in the study, so it was altered to the form in 34. However, given that this statement had a less positive "more likely female" result in the study, it could be that the results in 34 are based at least partly on other variables than the word "drink."

The other presupposition manipulation, number 45, had more females than males label it as male, even though both figures clearly indicated that the sentence was male-typed. Analysis of the responses to this statement revealed very little differentiation between men and women for politeness, though women's overall scores put it at slightly below the neutral value assigned to it by the men's scores. This statement asserts familiarity and utilizes a place switch. It is possible that the outright assertion in this statement earned it its label of being more likely male, or the results could indicate a tendency to view this aspect of positive politeness as being more likely male in the absence of any female-typed vocabulary, as we see that the vast majority of the sentences in this section fit this mold.
Sentences that utilized the strategy of conveying that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators varied fairly evenly according to the substrategy employed. Both sentences conveying assertion or presupposition and concern for the hearer's wants were labeled as more likely female. It must be noted, however, that these sentences are very similar to the presupposition of these same elements under raising common ground. The critical difference is the fact that the speaker displays concern here for the hearer's wants. Oddly enough, the numbers for both men and women were the same for both sentences in this category: 35 men and 35 women for both sentences thought that numbers 13 and 3 would be more likely spoken by women. It could be, as stated for the sentence eliminated from the preliminary questionnaire, that number 3, "You look really tired. Why don't you rest for a while?" is simply indicative of nurturing behavior that women are more likely to be viewed as employing. Number 13, however, "I know you have an appointment later, so shouldn't I go to town now?" sounds almost as though the speaker is wheedling or asking for permission. The results on that statement, then, may be tied to a power differential between men and women.

Under the category of offering and promising, the offer, number 8, was attributed to women, and the outright promise was split, with men regarding the statement as neutral and women believing it to be more likely spoken by a woman. In trying to explain number 30, one might wonder whether women
perhaps view men as being more unlikely to make promises than men view themselves. The results for number 8, "I'll come by next week," are much more difficult to explain. Only 14 men and 15 women thought that this statement would be more likely spoken by a woman, yet one might expect this statement to be fairly neutral. The results might be a product of a belief that women form closer-knit social networks than do men, as a future visit with the addressee seems to be implied.

The strategy of being optimistic was also one in which contraction was used. This statement, number 31, "I'm borrowing this book for a sec, ok?" was viewed as more likely male by both the men and the women in the survey. I believe, however, that this result was obtained not just because of the contractions, but because the optimism inherent in this statement does not easily allow the hearer to refuse what is actually a request. Men and women were extremely close in their politeness judgments on this sentence, with both averages being barely over 2, or what could be termed in words as "somewhat impolite."

The results for the next statement, "Let's stop for a bite," number 40, were surprising. As discussed in a review of the data, research such as Goodwin (1980) holds that the behavior of making suggestions in which both the speaker and the hearer are included in an activity is typical of women's speech. It was disconcerting, then, to see that 34 of both the male and the female respondents believed this statement
was more likely spoken by a man. Further reflection on this statement revealed that an overriding variable may have been introduced into the data with the inclusion of slang, a commonly cited factor of men's speech (e.g. Graves & Price, 1980). Although many women I know use slang extensively, it is true that "proper" speech is much more often associated with women than with men (e.g. Trudgill, 1975). (I owe this revelation to a friend who noted that she would have said the question were more likely female if only it had said "Let's stop and get something to eat," rather than utilizing the slang seen here. My personal opinion would have been that other women might tend to do as I do and simply ask "Are you hungry?" meaning, of course, "I'm starving! Stop somewhere!"

The statement wherein the speaker asked for reasons why a favor might not be granted, number 39, was attributed to males, though women attributed it to them at a higher rate than did men. This sentence, "Why not lend me that book for the weekend?" again seems to me to be one that is rather aggressive. Thirty-eight of the women in the study felt this statement to be more likely spoken by a man. It is important to note, however, that this strategy could be used in a nonaggressive manner. For instance, if an offer has already been made, one might say, "Ok, why don't you loan that to me then." In this instance, as can be seen, the statement turns into an agreement with the speaker, essentially a confirmation that the speaker has made the offer.
The next statement we examine is number 19, an example of positive politeness in which reciprocity is asserted. This statement, "Will you take notes for me this week, since I took them for you last week?" Twenty-five males thought males more likely to utter this sentence, and twenty-seven women thought women were more likely to utter it. These results put men and women on differing sides for perceived sex of speaker. Because the results were so close, and because the statement is one that is not gender-typed in any way, one must assume that men and women believe this statement to be fairly neutral. In such an instance, it is likely to be quite normal to label a sentence as being more likely spoken by your own sex if you can imagine yourself saying it.

Because number 19 was also a statement where men's and women's averages for politeness levels put them on opposite sides of the scale, I will address that data here, as well. In general, there was much more individual variation on 19 among males for politeness than there was for females. While women's overall average was 2.4, we see that more than half the women in the survey actually rated the statement at 3. Men, whose overall average was 2.68, gave fairly even scores at 2 and 3, with slightly more at 2. Only 2 females in the survey, however, gave 19 a politeness rating of 4, as compared to 10 males. This data would seem to imply that the sentence is interpreted on a fairly personal and individual level by males, with results all along the range, whereas it
is judged much more generally by women, with the results more concentrated at what could be described in words as "fairly polite." Perhaps, if prior research that shows women favor support-based networks is true, women see this sentence in a more positive light than do males.

As we move on to the data from negative politeness, I would first like to address a number of negative-politeness statements for which similar results were obtained. The results for these statements were so similar that it is more useful for the reader to see them all together, rather than individuated by politeness strategy.

The next statement that was differentiated for perceived sex of the speaker was number 22, "It would be appreciated if this could be taken care of." Males scored this sentence almost equally between "male" and "female" responses, but women thought that women were much more likely to make the statement. This statement is an example of a negative politeness avoidance strategy wherein both the speaker and the hearer are impersonalized, and--unlike 38, a similar example that was almost evenly distributed on the male side for both men and women--this sentence implies no criticism. It would appear, then, that either women view themselves as less likely to criticize than do men, or they view themselves as more likely to make a request in an indirect manner where they impersonalize themselves as speaker.
Very similar results to those obtained for 22 were also obtained for 30, 32, and 35. Number 33, which did not differ by more than 20% for men and women, was nevertheless rated in a similar manner, with women believing the statement to be more likely female, and men believing it to be gender neutral. Number 30 is the only one of these items that is couched in positive politeness, and it reads "I promise I'll get this back to you right away. This strategy is one that conveys the speaker and the hearer are cooperators. One can only assume that women view themselves as being more likely than men to make promises.

Examples 32, 33, and 35, like 22, are all examples of negative politeness, and generally received politeness averages between 2 and 3 for both men and women. (Number 33 was the one exception, receiving an average from women of 3.08.) The first of these samples utilizes a hedge, the second shows point-of-view distancing to impersonalize the speaker and hearer, and the third indicates hesitation to criticize. Hedges are commonly believed, as espoused by Lakoff (1973), to be a function of women's speech. Women in the context of 32, then, may believe themselves much more likely to employ a hedge than do men.

Number 35, "I hate to have to say this, but..." is particularly interesting because of the nature of the imposition: The speaker is understood as preparing the hearer for a negative statement. It might be argued that perhaps
women view themselves as more likely to indicate reluctance to say something presumed to be negative than would a man. The fact that the scores for men were rated gender neutral would not correspond with prior interpretations of a tendency by men to underreport such variables in their own speech. However, it is possible that different respondents view this sentence in different ways. While the women and men who answered "more likely female" may be responding to an impression that women would apologize in saying something negative, men and women who responded "more likely male" may see males as more likely to utter a negative statement to someone in the first place, perhaps bringing the discrepancies in answers back to the issue of a power differential between men and women, after all.

For number 33, "I was wondering if you could do me a favor," an analysis would have to take into account the fact the sentence especially distances the speaker from the request being made, as though the making of the request were something for which the speaker might be perceived negatively. Women may simply not be able to relate such a request to the speech of males, whom they may unknowingly perceive to be in a more powerful position and therefore not required to distance themselves from a request.

Coming back to the original ordering of the data, we see that the strategy of using an adverbial clause hedge on illocutionary force was attributed primarily to women. While
this statement was originally intended to represent the use of a tag question, I realized too late that it did not adequately fit the classical definition of one in that the question was appended to another question, rather than to a statement. The statement is still interesting, however, because it represents proper speech and because it might be said by some to be, as one of the respondents in Kramarae's 1981 study suggested of her transcript, "overly polite." The statement also gives the hearer the opportunity to say "no." Given these variables, it is unsurprising that 14 was labeled more likely female.

The hedges addressed to Grice's maxim of relevance, 32 and 6, have been previously discussed in other sections. Number 16, address to Grice's maxim of quantity, was labeled as being more likely female. This example can also be indicative of understatement, an off-record politeness strategy.

The prosodic hedge included, number 50, was labeled neutral by men and more likely male by women. This statement was also one for which men and women were on opposite sides of the politeness scale, as seen in Figures 23 and 24 in the previous chapter. Figure 24 revealed that more than half of the women in the study allotted 50 a politeness rating of 2, while Figure 23 showed that an even higher number of men allotted it a 3. Five males each gave statement 50 a 1 and a 4, while only one woman gave the statement a 4, but four gave
it a 1. In general, the figures reveal that women considered the statement to be more impolite than did men. It may be that women are labeling this statement to be more impolite simply because they view it as being more likely spoken by a man, but this is impossible to know with the current analysis.

The three statements that fall under the category of being pessimistic had varying answers. Number 4, which I believed would be gender neutral, scored barely out of that range with women and clearly out of it with men; women also viewed this statement as slightly more polite than did men. If we compare this statement with 14, which included a direct request, we see that they do not differ substantially, but that 14 essentially uses an additional statement tacked on to the end of the request.

Numbers 43 and 15 are particularly interesting when viewed together because of this same reason. Number 43 uses more words and modifies the statement more for a small request (the loan of a pen) than does 15 for a much larger request (the loan of a car). Number 43 was labeled as being more likely spoken by a woman, and number 15 was labeled as being more likely spoken by a man, though it must be noted that the women's scores for perceived speaker sex on 15 were just barely out of the neutral range.

The statement illustrating minimization of an imposition was shown to be judged more likely female by both males and
females, and was given roughly the same scores by both for politeness. Again, this statement uses more words than would be necessary for the request, further modifying it with "just" and "little". It should be noted that this statement just barely missed being scored in the neutral range for perceived speaker sex by males.

The first item we will examine under deference is 17, "Excuse me, ma'am," which stands in opposition to 44, "Excuse me, sir." We see from Figure 1 that of the 45 women in the study, only 5 thought a man would be more likely to utter the statement than would a woman. When we examine the data in Figure 2 provided by male respondents, however, we see that the responses are much more even, though 25 of the 45 men indicated a belief that the likely speaker was male. Had we seen similar results for number 44, the obvious tack of reasoning would be that women simply view themselves as more likely to use negative politeness than men so. This line of reasoning could easily be tied in with the research of Trudgill (1975) concerning under- and overreporting of standard speech variables. As we see when we re-examine the data from 44, however, the situation there depicts an almost complete reversal of the information in 17.

Thirty-nine of the male respondents in 44 believed that this sentence, "Excuse me, sir" would be more likely spoken by a male, as illustrated by Figure 3; 29 females believed the same thing, as shown in Figure 4. The reasoning behind
these two breakdowns is puzzling. If the answer lies in the research by O'Barr and Atkins (1980), explored earlier, it could very well be tied to the notion of power, which would imply that men are still viewed as superior in our society today. This hypothesis certainly accounts for the results in 17, where women clearly think it unlikely for a man to use the term "ma'am". However, in order to account for the results in 44, where women were more likely to imagine men using the deference term "sir," the question must be approached from a different angle.

Let us assume that men are unlikely, because of power differentiation, to use the term "ma'am" to a woman. The statement utilizes deference and appeases the speaker's negative face, but an imposition is being requested. While we really have no clear idea of on what these perceptions are based, it is perhaps possible to reason that women would be less likely to request an imposition from a man than they would be from a woman. It is worth noting that these are the only two items in the survey in which the sex of the addressee is clearly distinguished, and they each showed substantial variation for men and women.

The other item that was representative of deference in the survey was number 9, "I think I must be absolutely stupid, but I can't understand this." This statement was thought to be more likely spoken by a female by 30 women and 31 men. In addition, it was given average politeness scores
of about 3, with little differentiation between the men's and women's averages. This statement obviously involves denigration of the speaker, and it must be theorized that respondents may view women as more likely to use such self-abasement due to a power differential. However, since the study only contained two examples in which the sex of the addressee was evident, this hypothesis would be much more valuable if a study were designed that could show whether women tend to use such self-abasement with other women or only with men, and whether men might use such abasement if talking to higher-status men.

As we move into the strategy in which the speaker communicates a desire not to impinge upon the hearer, we see that statements 1 and 47--examples of apologizing through admitting the impingement--are almost identical, save that 47 incorporates an actual request rather than simply showing a trailing off. Near-identical samples were used in this instance because of a fear that the results for item 1 would be inaccurate because of its position as the first item on the survey: Respondents might start out by judging the first few statements differently. The results for these two statements were very close with regard to the speaker being perceived as female (36 women and 29 men for number 1, compared to 38 women and 31 men for 47), but quite different for males in regard to politeness. Males judged number 1 to be substantially more impolite than did females, and judged
number 37 to be slightly more polite than did females. Females maintained roughly the same score. The results on this statement may be tied to under- and overreporting.

The next item we address is number 27, "I'm sorry to bother you, but...." Both men and women viewed this utterance as being more likely spoken by a woman, but it is interesting to note that while only 2 women thought the sentence would be more likely spoken by a man, 14 men thought the same thing. Since both men and women viewed this apology as being more likely spoken by a woman, we can analyze the results according to the same power hypothesis we used for 17 and 44, or we can note that the results may be based on underreporting of politeness by men and overreporting by women.

Number 38, "It seems that no one has thought this out very well," was rated as being more likely spoken by a male by both men and women, and men's overall politeness ratings for this statement were higher than women's by one-third of a point. This sentence impersonalizes both the speaker and the hearer through the use of an impersonal verb; we see, however, that when the impersonalization is accomplished through passive voice in a statement discussed earlier, number 22, "It would be appreciated if this could be taken care of," men rate the sentence as neutral while more than 73% of the women tended to believe the sentence to be more likely spoken by a woman. As with the analysis on number 35,
it is possible that women are viewed as being less likely to criticize than are men.

Question 37, "I'll be in your debt forever if you'll do this for me," was reported to be more likely spoken by a female by both men and women. The sentence can also be interpreted as an example of the positive politeness strategy of exaggeration, but the "more likely female" designation given to it is probably due to the use of the word "forever" in the statement, as the word was included specifically to test that variable. As with several other items on the survey, men are most likely perceived as simply not using certain words in particular contexts, "forever" being one of those words.

Moving into the strategies of off-record statements included on the questionnaire, we see that most of the statements in this category were overwhelmingly attributed to men by both men and women. There were a few instances in which men and women differed in their assessments of speaker sex, and their was only one statement that was clearly attributed to female speech. These results were surprising, considering the fact that women are often stereotyped as "never coming out and saying what they mean," "hinting around," and "beating around the bush," all statements which describe off-record strategies to a tee.

The first example under off-record strategies, number 49, was a hint that read, "It's hot in here! (Meaning 'turn
off the air conditioner." Perhaps the only factor to explain why this sentence was attributed to men is an extralinguistic feature: Women may be seen to stay colder than men. Because this sentence was attributed to men by 60% of the men and 69% of the women, this factor may have pushed the sentence away from a neutral or even female rating. However, it is quite likely that no explanation is necessary. It could very well be that men are simply perceived to be likely to hint.

The sentence choice on the next statement analyzed, number 36, may have been poor in that it may not be clear that an FTA is being committed. Part of the problem in this area is that, in real speech, the FTA would not be clear, so it is debatable as to whether or not a cue, such as that used with 49, should be used. Statement 36 reads, "I washed the car again today," and was meant to imply that the speaker should not have had to do so. It is possible that, as is, the sentence might be read almost as a type of offer: "I washed the car for you again today; wasn't that nice of me?" This sentence was attributed to men by more than 80% of the men and women in the study.

Sentence 46, "It looks like somebody may have had too much to drink," was attributed to women by 26 women and to neutrality by men. These results might again go back to those showing that men perceive fewer differences in speech use than do women. An analysis could also be tied, however, to
the fact that women are often stereotyped as gossiping more than men.

Statement number 7 is an example of overstatement or exaggeration. This sentence was considered to be more likely male by both men and women; it read "There were a million cars on the road tonight (to explain being late)," and rated politeness scores just below the neutral range. I believe this example is one in which an excuse is perceived as being offered, so perhaps people are responding to excuses as being linked more to male's behavior than to female's.

The use of contradiction to accomplish an off-record strategy, number 41, was considered to be more likely female by more than 75% of both men and women in the survey, with the women's average actually being closer to 82%. This result was expected due to the preconceptions and stereotypes of women discussed earlier. Men are apparently viewed as being more likely to come right out and say what they mean.

The use of irony was attributed to men by more than 80% of men and women in statement 21, "Pat's a real genius (after the person has done 20 stupid things in a row)." Again, this statement implies criticism, even though it does so off-record, and it can be argued, based on the many such example we have seen, that women are simply viewed as being more hesitant to criticize than are men. The reader will note that there have been two exceptions to this idea in the survey: One was with another off-record politeness strategy, 46, in
which it was noted that someone was drunk, and the other, number 20, utilized a hedging device seen as typical of women's speech.

The use of a rhetorical question, number 23, was labeled more likely female and garnered lower politeness averages than any other statement on the survey attributed to women. This statement was judged especially harshly by women, who scored it at almost three-quarters of a point below the men's average, the largest politeness difference in the study. Figures 29 and 30 in the previous chapter show that the reason for the lower politeness average from women differs from the men's not in where the majority of the responses lay, at number 2, but in how many responses were placed at the ends. Women were more than twice as likely as men to give this statement a politeness rating of 1, and no woman in the survey allotted the statement a 4. Fewer women than men gave the statement a politeness rating of 3, as well. I can only surmise on this statement that men may be viewed as being more stoic than women with regard to a perceived neglect. It is important to note from the politeness ratings, however, that women would apparently choose some other strategy to convey this feeling of neglect if they were trying to be polite.

There were three examples of overgeneralization on the questionnaire, two of which utilized clichés (one of which represented an incomplete statement). The statement utilizing
an incompleted cliché was attributed to neutrality by men but was considered more likely female by women. Both of the other overgeneralizations were attributed to men. In looking at these statements, it is easy to see that they both seem rather "harsh." Research shows that women tend to avoid harshness and anger in their speech (Kramer, 1978). Even though 24 and 5 utilize similar clichés, the use of the incompletion in 24, "People who live in glass houses..." renders the statement much less critical than does the use of a full proverb in 24, "Well, if the shoe fits, wear it." Statement 28 also implies criticism, and as noted earlier, women were not thought to have used very many such statements in this survey.

In examining the data above for which men and women differed for perceived sex of the speaker, it is interesting to note that men seem to see women as being, in general, on a much more even footing regarding speech use than women see themselves. This generalization appears to be true regardless of whether the statement in question had averages that scored toward the polite or the impolite end of the spectrum.

In an overall analysis of the data gathered from this survey, it seems that many of the stereotypes about "women's speech" are still in place today, even though much of the research done in this area is 15 to 20 years old. It also still seems to be the case, as noted previously, however, that men perceive fewer differences between the sexes in
regard to language use than do women. This may indicate that men do not have as many stereotypes as do women about language use, though they tend to agree in their stereotypes regarding items such as an avoidance of cursing by women and an avoidance of certain female-typed speech patterns by men, as in the compliments noted by Herbert (1990), "I love X" or "I hear you've got a(n) ADJ N," where the adjective might be female-linked. Items that state or imply criticism also seem to be generally attributed to males, though with specific exceptions.

While only one of the statements attributed to men in this survey was allotted more than an average of 3 for politeness level, this material is not useful without further statistical analysis, and without such analysis this information cannot be said to prove that men are perceived as being less polite than women, or that women are perceived as being more polite than men. Certainly, as well, the information provided here cannot be claimed to be representative of actual speech use; it is rather merely an indication of the attitudes of men and women toward politeness in general.
APPENDIX A

POLITENESS VARIABLE BREAKDOWN
Politeness Variable Breakdown

Bald-on-Record:

10. Hand me that book over there.

Positive Politeness:

Claim common ground:

Notice, attend to H:

2. The Smiths say they love your house.

11. Damn! Do you have gas or what! (said jokingly)

29. I hear you've got a phenomenal GPA.

Exaggerate:

48. That is kick ass!

26. How absolutely incredible!

Use in-group identity markers:

Contraction and ellipsis:

12. Mind if I smoke?

31. I'm borrowing your book for a sec, ok?

Avoid disagreement:

Hedging opinions:

20. You really should sort of try harder.

Presuppose/ raise/ assert common ground:

Gossip/ small talk:

6. (after a period of small talk) By the way, do you have an extra dollar on you?
* This sentence also incorporates negative politeness through the hedge violating Grice's Relevance maxim.

Point-of-view operations:

Time switch:
See 2 and 29 above

Place switch:
34. Here, have a drink.

Presupposition manipulations:

Knowledge of H's wants and attitudes:
18. Don't you want a drink?

Familiarity in S-H relationship:
45. Look, we're good friends so how about...

Joke:
25. How about loaning me this old heap of junk? (your new Lexus)

See also 11, above.

Convey that S and H are cooperators:

Assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern for H's wants:

13. I know you have an appointment later, so shouldn't I go to town now?

3. You look really tired. Why don't you rest for a while?

Offer/promise:

30. I promise I'll get this back to you right away.

8. I'll come by next week.

Be optimistic:

see 31 above

Include both S and H in activity:
40. Let's stop for a bite.

Give or ask for reasons:

39. Why not lend me that book for the weekend?

Assume or assert reciprocity:

19. Will you take notes for me this week, since I took them for you last week?

**Negative Politeness:**

Don't presume/assume:

Question/hedge:

Hedges on illocutionary force:

Adverbial clause hedges:
14. Would you call the vet today, if you don't mind?

Hedges addressed to Grice's maxims:

Relevance:
32. Excuse me if I mention this while I'm thinking of it...

See also 6, above.

Quantity:
16. I'll just say he's not easy to get along with.

Prosodic and kinesic hedges:

50. Umm, will you loan me your pen?

Don't Coerce H:

Be pessimistic:

4. Could you do something for me?

43. I don't suppose I could possibly ask you if I could borrow your pen, could I?

15. I don't imagine there'd be any possibility of you loaning me your car.
Minimize the imposition:

42. I just want to ask you if I can borrow a little paper.

Give deference:

17. Excuse me, Sir.

9. I think I must be absolutely stupid, but I can't understand this. (as a request for help)

44. Excuse me, Ma'am.

Communicate S's want not to impinge on H:

Apologize:

Admit the impingement:

47. I know you're really busy, but could you help me with this?

1. I know you're really busy, but...

Indicate reluctance:

35. I hate to have to say this, but...

Beg forgiveness:

27. I'm sorry to bother you, but...

Impersonalize S and H:

Impersonal verbs:

38. It seems that no one has thought this out very well.

Passive and circumstantial voices:

22. It would be appreciated if this could be taken care of.

Address terms as "you" avoidance:

See 17 and 44, above.
Point-of-view distancing:

33. I was wondering if you could do me a favor.

Redress other wants of H:

Go on record as incurring a debt or as not indebting H:

37. I'll be in your debt forever if you'll do this for me.

Off-record:

 Invite conversational implicatures:

Give hints:

49. It's hot in here! (Meaning, "Turn on the air conditioner.")

Presuppose:

36. I washed the car again today.

Understate:

46. Looks like somebody might have had too much to drink.

Overstate:

7. There were a million cars on the road tonight! (to explain being late)

Use contradictions:

41. (In answer to the question, "Are you mad?") Well, yes and no.

Be ironic:

21. Pat's a real genius. (After the person has done twenty stupid things in a row.)

Use rhetorical questions:

23. Can't you come five miles to come see us?
Be vague or ambiguous:

Be vague:

See 46, above.

Over-generalize:

28. That dog has got to be trained.

5. Well, if the shoe fits, wear it.

Be incomplete, use ellipsis:

24. People who live in glass houses...
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRES
Please fill out the information below as accurately as possible. Do not put your name on the study. All information will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Sex:

Age:

Place of Birth:

Native Language:

Ethnicity:

Longest Amount of Time Involved in a Long-Term, Intimate Relationship:

Major Places You have Lived (please indicate amount of time in each place):

In this questionnaire, please decide how polite each sentence is on a scale of 1 to 4, with

1 being the impolite end

and

4 being the polite end

.Circle the appropriate answer. Please DO NOT use check marks.

ALSO, decide whether you think each sentence would be more likely spoken by a male (M) or a female (F) and insert the appropriate letter in the blank beside the sentence.

Please do not base your judgments on the object or favor being mentioned, but on the way the utterance is worded. (For instance, even if you think it is always rude for someone to tell you something negative about yourself, there are more polite and less polite ways they can do it.)
1. I know you're really busy, but....

2. The Smiths say they love your house.

3. You look really tired. Why don't you rest for a while?

4. Could you do something for me?

5. Well, if the shoe fits, wear it.

6. (after a period of small talk) By the way, do you have an extra dollar on you?

7. There were a million cars on the road tonight! (to explain being late)

8. I'll come by next week.

9. I think I must be absolutely stupid, but I can't understand this. (as a request for help)

10. Hand me that book over there.

11. Damn! Do you have gas or what! (said jokingly)

12. Mind if I smoke?
13. I know you have an appointment later, so shouldn't I go to town now?

14. Would you call the vet today, if you don't mind?

15. I don't imagine there'd be any possibility of you loaning me your car.

16. I'll just say he's not easy to get along with.

17. Excuse me, Sir.

18. Don't you want a drink?

19. Will you take notes for me this week, since I took them for you last week?

20. You really should sort of try harder.

21. Pat's a real genius. (After the person has done twenty stupid things in a row.)

22. It would be appreciated if this could be taken care of.

23. Can't you come five miles to come see us?

24. People who live in glass houses...
25. How about loaning me this old heap of junk? (your new Lexus)

26. How absolutely incredible!

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Please fill out the information below as accurately as possible. Do not put your name on the study. All information will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Sex:

Age:

Place of Birth:

Native Language:

Ethnicity:

Longest Amount of Time Involved in a Long-Term, Intimate Relationship:

Major Places You have Lived (please indicate amount of time in each place):

In this questionnaire, please decide whether you think each sentence would be more likely spoken by a male (M) or a Female (F). Circle the appropriate answer. Please DO NOT use check marks.

Please do not base your judgments on the object or favor being mentioned, but on the way the utterance is worded.

Please do not skip ahead in the survey.
1. I know you're really busy, but....

F M

2. The Smiths say they love your house.

F M

3. You look really tired. Why don't you rest for a while?

F M

4. Could you do something for me?

F M

5. Well, if the shoe fits, wear it.

F M

6. (after a period of small talk) By the way, do you have an extra dollar on you?

F M

7. There were a million cars on the road tonight! (to explain being late)

F M

8. I'll come by next week.

F M

9. I think I must be absolutely stupid, but I can't understand this. (as a request for help)

F M

10. Hand me that book over there.

F M

11. Damn! Do you have gas or what! (said jokingly)

F M

12. Mind if I smoke?
13. I know you have an appointment later, so shouldn't I go to town now?

14. Would you call the vet today, if you don't mind?

15. I don't imagine there'd be any possibility of you loaning me your car.

16. I'll just say he's not easy to get along with.

17. Excuse me, Sir.

18. Don't you want a drink?

19. Will you take notes for me this week, since I took them for you last week?

20. You really should sort of try harder.

21. Pat's a real genius. (After the person has done twenty stupid things in a row.)

22. It would be appreciated if this could be taken care of.

23. Can't you come five miles to come see us?
24. People who live in glass houses...
   F  M

25. How about loaning me this old heap of junk? (your new Lexus)
   F  M

26. How absolutely incredible!
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F       M

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F       M

PLEASE TURN TO NEXT PAGE
NOW, IN THE BLANK BESIDE EACH SENTENCE, PLEASE LABEL HOW POLITE YOU THINK THE SENTENCE IS ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 4, WITH 1 BEING THE IMPOLITE END AND 4 BEING THE POLITE END.

Please do not base your judgments on the object or favor being mentioned, but on the way the utterance is worded. (For instance, even if you think it is always rude for someone to tell you something negative about yourself, there are more polite and less polite ways they can do it.)
Please fill out the information below as accurately as possible. Do not put your name on the study. All information will be kept confidential and anonymous.

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In this questionnaire, please decide how polite each sentence is on a scale of 1 to 4, with

1 being the impolite end

and

4 being the polite end.

.CIRCLE the appropriate answer. Please DO NOT use check marks.

Please do not base your judgments on the object or favor being mentioned, but on the way the utterance is worded. (For instance, even if you think it is always rude for someone to tell you something negative about yourself, there are more polite and less polite ways they can do it.)

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REFERENCES


