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Reviewed by Michael Haugh, School of Languages and Linguistics, Griffith University, Nathan QLD 4111. Australia. m.haugh@griffith.edu.au

While there have been literally thousands of publications focusing on politeness, impoliteness and rudeness have been for the most neglected by researchers. It is only in the past few years, with a few exceptions, that politeness researchers have moved beyond conceptualising impoliteness as simply the “opposite” of politeness, to the study of impoliteness in its own right. As the first full-length monograph on this topic, Derek Bousfield’s “*Impoliteness in Interaction*” occupies a unique place in the literature. Apart from the significance that arises from being the first, Bousfield’s volume is also important in that he focuses on analysing impoliteness at the discourse level, rather than identifying isolated strategies in single turns at talk, reflecting the broader turn towards a more interactionally-grounded approach to im/politeness. Yet while being the first volume to address the rapidly growing field of impoliteness research certainly guarantees an interested readership, it also means such a book is liable to be scrutinised more closely and critically than is perhaps often the case.

The book consists of two main parts book-ended by a brief introduction and conclusion. The first half (chapters 2-4) outlines the theoretical grounding for the data analysis that subsequently follows in the second half (chapters 5-8). The analysis itself draws from Grice’s (1975, 1989) theory of conversation and implicature, Goffman’s (1967) notion of face, and a heavily modified version of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory adapted for the analysis of impoliteness strategies. Based on this theoretical foundation, Bousfield defines impoliteness as intentionally unmitigated or exacerbated face threatening acts (p.72). In particular, he argues that a theory of impoliteness should focus on the *communication* of impoliteness, not only the interpretation and perception of it (p.82). A number of issues arise from this move.

First, while in his analysis Bousfield shows that being impolite is not necessarily the same thing as being offended (see, for instance, example 54, pp.178-179), the relationship between impoliteness, rudeness and offence (arguably the key terms in English at least) remains largely untouched. Yet a theory of impoliteness surely cannot ignore offence or rudeness as legitimate areas of research, as Bousfield himself concedes. The question of reconciling the speaker-oriented notions of impoliteness and rudeness with the recipient-oriented notion of offence thus remains an open question for the field.

A second consequence of this definition of impoliteness is that there is little focus in the analysis on examples where interactants’ may have different perceptions of the same behaviour in question, as situations where recipients do not successfully reconstruct the ‘plausible’ intentions of speakers are not regarded as the proper focus of a theory of impoliteness (p.82), even though Bousfield himself admits there are instances where it is difficult to know whether the speaker had the intention to cause offence or not (p.70). While such a move (apparently) draws clear boundaries for impoliteness researchers, it also potentially excludes interesting data that could be useful in developing a more comprehensive theory. Situations where interactants do not necessarily agree about what is impolite or offensive, or where recipients claim to

be offended despite the protestations of speakers that they intended no offence (Haugh 2008b), for instance, could prove useful for such theory building. Such a point has been argued at length by researchers working within the postmodern or discursive turn in politeness research, where the focus is on variability and argumentivity in relation to the evaluations made by recipients of speakers' behaviour as polite, impolite over-polite and so on (Eelen 2001; Locher and Watts 2005; Mills 2003; Watts 2003), and a more in-depth response to such arguments in Bousfield's theoretical chapters would have been welcome.

Third, while this definition rests on the received view in pragmatics that communication involves speakers expressing their intentions through verbal and nonverbal means, and recipients recognizing or attributing those intentions to speakers (Haugh 2008a), such a view "entirely fails to address how the participants themselves could come to know whether the recipient's inference and attribution regarding that intention is to any extent consistent with it [the speaker's intention]" (Arundale 2008: 241). Even if one claims one is talking about 'plausible' rather than the 'actual' intentions of speakers, the circularity inherent to this view cannot be eliminated, as recipients can only know what speakers intend to communicate if they know what others would see those recipients as communicating, yet what others would see the speaker as communicating is no more transparent to the recipient than what the speaker him/herself might have intended to communicate (Bilmes 1986: 110; Haugh 2008c: 51). This is not to say that attributions of particular intentions to speakers (for instance, to offend) by recipients does not occur, but rather that these attributions may themselves become the subject of discursive dispute, and thus an intention-based view arguably cannot account for the dynamic nature and complexity of cognition that underlies communication (Haugh in press b; Potter and te Molder 2005).

Finally, Bousfield offers only a fairly broad definition of face (p.42), drawing largely from Goffman's (1967) notion, but this move towards a less well-defined notion of face seems somewhat counter-productive in light of the vast amount of research into face and facework to date. Moreover, his claim that "this model of impoliteness is an adaptable adjunct to existing and foreseeable models of face" (p.96), seems to be open to challenge in that Arundale's (2006, in press) Face Constituting Theory, for instance, cannot be reconciled with an intention-based view of communication (Arundale 2008).

The data that lies at the core of the theoretical discussion in the first part and the analysis in the second is drawn from "fly-on-the-wall" British documentaries about army and police training, vehicle parking disputes, and Gordon Ramsay's infamous restaurant kitchen, these programmes being selected as they provide a rich source of impoliteness in unscripted discourse. While acknowledging the limitations of data that has been packaged for the purposes of entertaining the general public for making generalisations across other contexts (and presumably other languages), Bousfield argues that such data can nevertheless provide a useful basis for constructing a theory of impoliteness. In focusing on only the responses of the interactants themselves to impolite sequences, however, without considering how the audience for whom the programme is the ultimate target might evaluate such sequences, another rich source of data for the construction of a theory of im/politeness is possibly neglected, although such work might admittedly lie beyond the scope of a single monograph.

Bousfield's analysis of impoliteness in interaction itself starts by outlining various impoliteness strategies building on Culpeper's (1996) earlier work. He rejects Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive versus negative distinction in his analytical framework, opting to retain only the on record versus off record distinction. Impoliteness and mock politeness (sarcasm) are contrasted with mock impoliteness (banter), incidental threats to face, and accidental threats to face, with only the former being the focus of analysis in this volume. While Bousfield understandably does not attempt to deal with all of these phenomena, there are hints in his work that the latter areas will also ultimately prove of great interest to researchers. The sequential development of impoliteness at both the utterance and discourse levels is then carefully analysed. A tri-part sequence, which echoes that found in conversation analysis, is used as the basic unit of analysis. At the utterance level, this involves analysis of pre-impoliteness sequences (utterance beginnings), impoliteness strategies (utterance middles), and post-intensifying interrogatives (utterance ends), while at the discourse level, this involves analysis of events that trigger impoliteness sequences (discourse beginnings), responses to impoliteness (discourse middles), and the resolution or not of the impoliteness sequence (discourse ends). Finally, Bousfield examines the ways in which impoliteness is created through the exploitation of expectations about turn-taking and preference organisation, something which conversation analysis has for the most part eschewed. It is worth noting that his distinction between first-order structural preference and second-order psycho-social preference rests on the assumption that face concerns are "psychologically rooted and driven" (p.237), something which conversation analysts themselves have argued strongly against (Lerner 1996; Schegloff 1988, 1991; see also Haugh in press a). Since Bousfield suggests his work complements more traditional conversation analysis, greater engagement with such debates would also have been welcome. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Bousfield's analysis not only presents a challenge for conversation analysts who eschew all reference to face or im/politeness, but also lends considerable analytical insight for researchers working in the field of politeness research (or should we now say im/politeness research?).

Derek Bousfield's "Impoliteness in Interaction" represents an important step for a rapidly growing field, and as noted previously, occupies a unique place in the literature. Marks of success for such a volume are that it provides a solid foundation upon which subsequent research can build, and stimulates new research questions as well as offering insights into current research agendas. On these counts "Impoliteness in Interaction" is a resounding success. Bousfield has produced a thoughtful and well-balanced foundation for venturing into hitherto unknown territory. While not all will necessarily agree with all the details of the theory of impoliteness that is outlined here, indeed it is likely to generate much spirited debate, there is no doubting that this volume will prove indispensable for impoliteness (and politeness) researchers in the years to come.

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