

# What Do Iranian EFL Learners and Teachers Think of Teaching Impoliteness?

Alireza Ahmadi  
*Shiraz University, Iran*  
ar.ahmadi@yahoo.com

Kamal Heydari Soureshjani  
*MA in TEFL, Shiraz University*  
*Young Researchers Club Member, Islamic Azad University, Shahrekord Branch*  
kamal.heidari@yahoo.com

## Abstract

Every language involves friendly and polite as well as hostile and impolite situations in which language users have to use the context-appropriate language. However, unlike politeness which has generated a great number of studies, few studies have been conducted on impoliteness especially in EFL contexts. The present study aimed to see whether language learners and teachers hold the same idea concerning teaching impoliteness in an Iranian EFL context. One hundred EFL learners and 70 EFL teachers were surveyed through a questionnaire. The results indicated that the language learners and teachers differed significantly in their attitudes towards most of the issues related to impoliteness. However, gender was not a determining factor in this regard, as the only aspect of impoliteness in which gender made a significant difference was the level of proficiency deemed appropriate for teaching impoliteness.

**Keywords:** Impoliteness; Gender; Iranian learners; Iranian teachers

## 1. Introduction

Politeness theory is a branch of pragmatics that has attained a great deal of popularity and, subsequently, has generated a lot of research. It is said that politeness strategies are designed to maintain or promote harmonious social relations (Culpeper, 1998). Culpeper argues that politeness comes about when one is concerned to support a person's face. Brown and Levinson's definition of politeness (1978, 1987) as the rational behavior aimed at the strategic softening or mitigation of face-threatening acts emphasizes the role of speaker in creating a polite situation. Hill, Ikuta, Kawasaki, and Ogino (1986) define politeness as one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider others' feelings, establish levels

of mutual comfort, and promote rapport. Here also politeness is defined as a behavior which promotes such positive interactional qualities as “mutual comfort” and “rapport,” disregarding the possibility that politeness could be used by the speaker to exert power over the addressee and is, therefore, a contestable behavior.

The other aspect of language besides politeness is the rude, offensive, and impolite aspect of language that, undoubtedly, has not been paid due attention. Although some studies have been conducted on impoliteness, it is still an understudied area of research. Eelen (2001) points out, quite rightly, that theories of politeness have focused far more on polite behavior than on impolite behavior. He further asserts that this is all the more surprising because commentators on and participants in verbal interaction are more likely to comment on behavior which they perceive to be “impolite,” “rude,” “discourteous,” “obstreperous,” “bloody-minded,” and so on than on polite behavior, and they tend to agree far more readily in their classification of the negative end of the scale than of the positive end. He, then, asserts that it is not appropriate just to focus on the polite and respectable forms of language. The other side of the coin is the rude and/or impolite forms of language that should also be taken into account.

Pfister (2009, p. 32) defines impoliteness in the way that an utterance is impolite if and only if there is an implicature of the content “I intend to be impolite” or “I’m being impolite here because I’m insensitive to your face needs.” Terkourafi (2001) also maintains that impoliteness occurs when the expression used is not conventionalized relative to the context of occurrence; it threatens the addressee’s face (and, through that, the speaker’s face) but no face-threatening intention is attributed to the speaker by the hearer.

One question which is closely related to the above-mentioned definitions is when somebody is considered to be impolite. In order to answer this question, it is useful to consider the assumptions behind the presence of polite behavior. Brown and Levinson (1987) put it this way:

In general, people cooperate (and assume each other’s cooperation) in maintaining face in interaction, such cooperation being based on the mutual vulnerability of face. That is, normally everyone’s face depends on everyone else’s being maintained, and since people can be expected to defend their faces if threatened, and in defending their own to threaten others faces, it is in general in every participant’s best interest to maintain each other’s face. (p. 61)

Based on this explanation, Culpeper (1996) states that there are circumstances when the vulnerability of face is unequal and so motivation to cooperate is reduced.

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

Culpeper (1996) further states that there are some other factors other than the power imbalance that may cause people to be impolite. For example, there are some circumstances where people’s interests conflict and so it may lead to an impolite situation. To clarify the point, he mentions a sport match where there are many fans with different interests. Therefore, this range of interests can lead to a situation where people don’t tend to maintain others’ faces and so they become impolite.

Concerning impoliteness and power, Locher and Derek (2008, p.8) maintain that impoliteness is “inextricably tied up with the very concept of power because an interlocutor whose face is damaged by an utterance suddenly finds his or her response options to be sharply restricted.” In short, there is agreement in this that power is not static; rather, power is highly dynamic, fluid and negotiable. Even interactants with a hierarchically lower status can and do exercise power through impoliteness. They further explain that impoliteness is an exercise of power as it has arguably always in some way an effect on one’s addressees in that it alters the future action environment of one’s interlocutors. In other words, Lakoff’s (1989) remark that power and politeness are closely related could be rephrased as “power and (im)politeness are often interrelated.”

A point that can be confusing to some people is whether impoliteness and rudeness are similar. Culpeper (2005) maintains that for lay people these two terms seem to be identical and they use them interchangeably. There seems; however, to be some differences between them. The term rudeness could be reserved for cases where the offence is unintentionally caused, whereas the term impoliteness could be used for cases where the offence is intentionally caused. It means that the perception of intention is a crucial factor in an evaluation of the distinction between impoliteness and rudeness. *The Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary* (1990) defines impoliteness as “someone who is impolite is rather rude and offends people”. For rudeness it mentions that “if someone is rude, they are not polite in their behavior towards other people.” These two definitions imply that it is the term impoliteness that better allows for the attribution of intention to a person and not rudeness.

## **2. Purpose of the Study**

It is obvious that real language use incorporates both polite and impolite situations with which language users may encounter; therefore, one of the major objectives in the teaching of L2s is to enable the learners to communicate in the L2 and have efficient interactions in polite as well as impolite situations. Language users need to be taught to be able to cope with these different contexts happening in real life; however, as it was previously noted, despite the ever-achieved research on impoliteness, it is still in need of more studies. The present study was a survey that made an attempt to look at this topic through the EFL learners and teachers' eyes. The role of gender is also taken into account in this regard. As such, the study is after the following questions:

1. Do EFL learners and teachers differ in their attitude toward teaching the impolite aspect of language?
2. Does gender make a difference in EFL learners and teachers' attitude toward teaching the impolite aspect of language?

## **3. Method**

### *3.1 Participants*

Two groups of participants took part in this study: language learners and language teachers. The first included 100 Iranian EFL students—45 males and 55 females—ranging in age from 18 to 27. They were all undergraduate students (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior) majoring in either English Language Translation or English Language Literature. They were selected from four state universities of Shiraz, Isfahan, Shahrekord and Ahwaz. The second group of the participants consisted of 70 Iranian EFL language teachers, 30 of whom were males and 40 were females, ranging in age from 18 to 41. They were all M.A. holders or M.A. students majoring in TEFL and were picked out from the four aforementioned universities. All the participants were selected through convenient sampling, that is, only those who were available and willing took part in the study.

### *3.2 Instrument*

A five-point Likert-format questionnaire on impoliteness was developed to collect the required data (see the Appendix). It consisted of three parts: The first part was related to the demographic information of the participants. The second part incorporated in its first draft more than 40 items. However, after going through the factor analysis and modifying the items, the number of the items reduced to 31 items. The third part included an open-ended question asking the participants to add

any points about the issue if they wished. To check for the construct validity of the questionnaire, factor analysis was run. The problematic items were removed from the questionnaire, so the final version included 31 items. These items were grouped into seven clear-cut categories. The first category, including items 11, 14, 24, and 26, was related to the significance of politeness and impoliteness in everyday use of language. The second category, including items 2, 8, and 19, compared the importance of impoliteness and politeness. The third category was about the basic question of whether there is any need to teach the impolite aspect of language. It involved items 5, 6, 9, 10, 16, 28, and 31. The fourth category, including items 21 and 29, pertained to the way impoliteness should be taught. The fifth category that involved items 1, 3, 4, 7, 12, 15, 18, 25, 27, and 30 was related to the levels at which impoliteness should be taught. The sixth category embracing items 17 and 23 focused on the role of gender. And finally, the seventh category incorporating items 13, 20, and 22 was about the context (i.e., EFL or ESL) in which impoliteness needed to be taught.

As for its content validity, the questionnaire was looked into by a number of experts. Cronbach's Alpha was also used to check the reliability of the questionnaire, which turned out to be 0.68.

### *3.3 Data Collection Procedure*

The prepared questionnaire was distributed among the participants. The participants were allowed to take the questionnaire home and give it back at their convenience. It was thought that doing so would increase the probability of responding to the items thoughtfully, and as such, would increase the validity of the results.

## **4. Data Analysis**

The data collected were subjected to a two-way ANOVA to check for the probable differences between the males and the females and also between the EFL learners and teachers in terms of the above seven categories.

### *4.1 Results*

Table 1 depicts the descriptive statistics for each of the seven factors of the study. As indicated, there exist some noticeable differences between the different groups of the study. However, the table cannot tell us whether the depicted differences are significant or not. Therefore, a two-way ANOVA was utilized to find the significance of the differences:

Table 1 *Descriptive Statistics of the Seven Categories of Impoliteness*

Factors		Male	Female	Learner	Teacher
Factor 1	Mean	1.99	1.95	2.00	1.92
	SD	.27	.29	.22	.35
Factor 2	Mean	2.25	2.28	2.23	2.32
	SD	.27	.30	.28	.29
Factor 3	Mean	2.47	2.46	2.52	2.38
	SD	.35	.34	.29	.40
Factor 4	Mean	1.90	1.96	1.99	1.86
	SD	.28	.25	.20	.32
Factor 5	Mean	2.25	2.19	2.19	2.25
	SD	.16	.18	.16	.19
Factor 6	Mean	2.98	2.95	2.97	2.96
	SD	.09	.24	.12	.26
Factor 7	Mean	2.17	2.16	2.17	2.16
	SD	.42	.39	.38	.42

The results of the two-way ANOVA for the first factor (i.e., the significance of impoliteness in everyday speech) indicated no statistically significant main effect for the variable gender (Table 2). However, there was a significant difference between the language learners and teachers in their attitudes regarding this factor ( $p < .03$ ). This means that the two groups had different views regarding the importance of impoliteness in daily language. This difference lies in the fact that the language teachers held a more positive view toward the importance of impoliteness. Table 2 also indicates that the interaction effect is not significant. It is also conspicuous from Table 2 that the effect size for this factor based on Cohen's (1988) criterion is small (partial eta squared = .03).

Table 2 *ANOVA Results for the Significance of Impoliteness*

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	7.7 <sup>a</sup>	3	2.5	2.0	.11	.03
Intercept	10001.1	1	10001.1	7761.0	.00	.97
Gender	.5	1	.5	.4	.49	.00
Learner/teacher	5.8	1	5.8	4.5	.03	.02
Gender *Code	1.4	1	1.4	1.1	.29	.00

The results of the two-way ANOVA concerning the second factor (i.e., the importance of impoliteness versus politeness) are depicted in Table 3. It is interesting to note that the results are the same as those for factor 1, that is, the only

significant difference is found between the EFL learners and teachers. No significant difference is found as far as gender or the interaction effect of gender and participant type is concerned. In addition, like the previous factor, the effect size is again small (partial eta squared = .03).

Table 3 ANOVA Results for the Importance of Impoliteness vs. Politeness

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3.8 <sup>a</sup>	3	1.2	1.7	.16	.03
Intercept	7577.2	1	7577.2	10187.1	.00	.98
Gender	.3	1	.3	.41	.52	.00
Learner/Teacher	3.4	1	3.4	4.5	.034	.02
Gender *Code	.1	1	.1	.1	.69	.00

The results of the study for the third factor are depicted in Table 4. Like the first and the second factors, here, again the only significant difference is found between the EFL learners and teachers. Table 4 also indicates that the partial eta squared is small:

Table 4 ANOVA Results for the Need of Teaching Impoliteness

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	42.5 <sup>a</sup>	3	14.1	2.4	.06	.04
Intercept	47927.7	1	47927.7	8274.5	.00	.98
Gender	.2	1	.2	.0	.82	.00
Learner/Teacher	36.2	1	36.2	6.2	.01	.03
Gender *Code	2.9	1	2.9	.5	.48	.00

With regard to the fourth factor (i.e., the way impoliteness needs to be taught), Table 5 reveals that like the previous cases the opinions of the EFL learners and teachers differ significantly from each other ( $p < .00$ ). Table 5 also indicates that the effects of gender and interaction of gender and participant type are not significant ( $p < .07$ ,  $p < .08$ , respectively). As to the effect size for this factor, because the partial eta squared is more than .06, the effect size is considered to be high showing the strength of relationship between the variables (Cohen, 1988):

Table 5 ANOVA Results for the Direct vs. Indirect Teaching of Impoliteness

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3.9 <sup>a</sup>	3	1.3	4.9	.00	.08
Intercept	2394.5	1	2394.5	8947.2	.00	.98
Gender	.8	1	.8	3.1	.07	.01
Learner/Teacher	2.9	1	2.9	11.1	.00	.06
Gender *Code	.7	1	.7	2.9	.08	.01

As for the proficiency level at which impoliteness should be taught, Table 6 indicates significant differences in the attitudes of the EFL learners and teachers. It also indicates that the participants differ significantly in their idea in this regard based on their gender:

Table 6 ANOVA Results for the Level of Teaching Impoliteness

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	30.7 <sup>a</sup>	3	10.2	3.3	.02	.05
Intercept	80655.9	1	80655.9	26239.9	.00	.99
Gender	15.7	1	15.7	5.1	.025	.03
Learner/teacher	16.0	1	16.0	5.2	.023	.03
Gender *Code	.6	1	.6	.2	.64	.00

Table 7 depicts the results for the question whether the males and the females should be treated differently in teaching the impolite aspect of the L2. Table 7 indicates that all the participants regardless of being the EFL learners or teachers and regardless of their gender held the idea that males and females should be treated equally in receiving instruction about impoliteness. The partial eta squared also indicates that the effect size is small:



Table 7 ANOVA Results for the Role of Gender in Teaching Impoliteness

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	.4 <sup>a</sup>	3	.1	.9	.42	.01
Intercept	5702.5	1	5702.5	38268.5	.00	.99
Gender	.1	1	.1	1.2	.25	.00
Learner/Teacher	.00	1	.00	.01	.81	.00
Gender *Code	.2	1	.2	1.7	.18	.01

And finally, Table 8 presents the findings pertaining to the context (i.e., EFL/ESL) at which impoliteness should be taught. As Table 8 indicates, like the sixth factor, the participants of the study have the same view regarding this factor. No significant difference is found between the male and female learners and the teachers. Here also the effect size is small:

Table 8 ANOVA Results for the EFL/ESL Context of Teaching Impoliteness

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	4.0 <sup>a</sup>	3	1.3	.9	.43	.01
Intercept	6856.0	1	6856.0	4693.5	.00	.96
Gender	.3	1	.3	.2	.63	.00
Learner/Teacher	.00	1	.00	.00	.96	.00
Gender *Code	3.8	1	3.8	2.6	.10	.01

On the whole, the results of this study indicated that, first, the language teachers and language learners had different attitudes toward all the factors of the study except for factor 6 (i.e., the relationship between gender and teaching impoliteness) and factor 7 (i.e., the context of teaching impoliteness). Second, for all the factors except for factor 5 (i.e., the proficiency levels of teaching impoliteness), the variable of gender showed a nonsignificant effect. And third, the interaction effect of the two independent variables was not significant in any cases.

### 5. Discussion

This study was an attempt to investigate the attitudes of EFL male and female language learners and teachers with regard to the impolite aspect of the English language. In what follows, the results of the study are discussed in details for the seven factors related to impoliteness.

### *5.1 Factor One: The Significance of Impoliteness in Daily Speech*

With regard to this factor, it was inferred that the language learners and teachers were different from each other; however, there was no significant difference on this issue in terms of the variable of gender. The language teachers, irrespective of their gender, cared more for the significance of impoliteness in everyday speech. With regard to this point, Mugford (2008) rightly states that the world of all languages is a mixture of both friendly, sociable, hostile, and impolite situations. Therefore, we cannot ignore the role of impolite expressions in our everyday speech depending on the context. Furthermore, everybody uses these expressions to different degrees.

### *5.2 Factor Two: The Overall Importance of Impoliteness vs. Politeness*

The second factor of the study compared the importance of the two sides of language, that is, politeness and impoliteness. Like the previous factor, although there was a difference in the attitudes of the language learners and teachers concerning this factor, their gender had no effect in this regard. It seemed that the Iranian language teachers had a tendency toward preferring politeness over impoliteness. The analysis of their answers indicated that most of them believed that the dominant context in the Iranian EFL context is politeness, that is, a context in which one is expected to stand on ceremony and observe the formalities. This is, they stated, mostly because in the Iranian EFL context, power relationships are more important than solidarity. L2 learners are expected to be cautious of the politeness principles while talking.

### *5.3 Factor Three: The Need for Instruction*

As far as the need for teaching impoliteness is concerned, the findings are similar to those of factors 1 and 2. It was found that the language learners and teachers differed significantly in their ideas of the need for instruction. However, no difference was found between the males and the females. The point which needs to be stated is that the (lack of) existence of any kind of instruction for the impolite side of a language may depend on a host of factors including the social, political, and especially religious factors. Regarding the context of the present study, it seems that sociocultural factors have their effect on using the polite language almost in all formal contexts. In contrast to some other EFL or ESL contexts, especially in some American and European countries, in which even in formal contexts solidarity aspect is the dominant one, power relationship is downplayed and the language used tends to be the informal and friendly language, which is sometimes full of slangs as well. This rarely occurs in the Iranian formal EFL context, unless somebody intentionally violates the politeness principles to achieve a certain goal. In such a

context, the study indicated that most of the teachers believed that instruction, though desirable, is not possible due to some cultural problems. Some also mentioned the management problems that may emerge because of teaching impoliteness; for example, they mentioned the difficulty in controlling the class if impoliteness were to be taught. The students, however, were less aware of the problems of teaching and, therefore, showed a stronger tendency toward teaching impoliteness.

#### *5.4 Factor Four: Direct vs. Indirect Instruction of Impoliteness*

Concerning the way the impoliteness aspect should be taught, if at all, similar results were found as those of the previous factors, that is, a significant difference was found between the students and teachers, but no significant difference was found between the different genders. As it was pointed out for the third factor, in the context of the current study and due to its unique sociocultural and religious conditions, using a direct and explicit instruction may not be feasible. Therefore, self-study can be a good alternative for language learners to become aware of the impolite aspects of language. In line with the results found for the previous factor, as the teachers were more experienced and well aware of the probable obstacles interwoven with the direct and explicit teaching of the impolite aspect of language, they held a pessimistic view toward direct teaching of impoliteness and preferred indirect teaching. The language learners, however, being mostly ignorant of such problems showed a stronger tendency toward direct teaching.

#### *5.5 Factor Five: The Students' Level of Proficiency and Impoliteness*

As for the role of the EFL learners' level of proficiency in teaching impoliteness, unlike the previous factors, a significant difference was found between both the language learners and teachers and the males and the females. However, the results found in this regard were not indicative of any clear patterns. Different ideas were found in each group as to the appropriate level of teaching impoliteness. But, careful analysis of the answers indicated that most of the learners believed that the higher the level, the more suitable it would be to teach impoliteness. Most of the teachers, however, believed that if it were to be taught then level should not be a deciding factor and like politeness, it can be taught at all levels.

#### *5.6 Factor Six: Teaching Impoliteness to Males or Females*

With regard to the role of gender in teaching impoliteness, no significant difference was found between the males and the females and also between the teachers and the learners, that is, all the participants, regardless of their gender and

regardless of their positions as learners or teachers, held the idea that if we are to teach the impolite aspect of language to our students, making a distinction between male and female students is not reasonable. In other words, they deserve equal treatment in this regard. This seems quite logical as this is what we expect from teaching any other language skills and components to males and females.

#### *5.7 Factor Seven: The Context of Impoliteness Teaching*

With regard to the context in which impoliteness should be taught, like the previous factor, no significant difference was found between the males and the females or the learners and the teachers. That is, all the participants, regardless of their gender and their position as learners or teachers, believed that EFL and ESL contexts can be the same in deciding (not) to teach the impolite language to students. This seems a bit odd, as there could be lots of differences between EFL and ESL contexts; however, it seems that to Iranian EFL learners and teachers, EFL and ESL classes are the same and require similar instruction, though the outside-context of the classes is not the same.

### **6. Conclusion**

The following conclusions could be made based on the findings of the present study. First, impoliteness is an inevitable aspect of every language, and one may face different impolite situations in his or her life. Second, if the impolite aspect of language is to be taught, there should be no difference in teaching it to males or females and also in teaching it in EFL or ESL contexts. Third, because this study was carried out in the Iranian context and because of its sociocultural conditions, it seems that the direct and explicit teaching of impoliteness is not a logical option. Therefore, self-study may be the best possible way for the Iranian EFL learners to become informed of the impolite side of the English language.

It is worth mentioning that these results are only based on the Iranian EFL teachers and learners' attitude and cannot be considered foolproof. As such, more studies of different designs are needed in order to get a better picture of the status and issues related to impoliteness in the Iranian context. This is especially true when contextual factors are to be studied. Hence, the present study can hopefully be considered a first step toward this end.

### **7. Limitation of the Study**

The fact that there was no post hoc test in the present study could be considered as a limitation of the study because it was not clear where exactly the differences lay when they were indicated by the two-way ANOVA. This limitation was, however, inevitable because there were only two independent variables in the

present study each with two levels (gender: male vs. female; type of the participant: learner vs. teacher). Under such a condition, SPSS does not run post hoc test. A possible solution was to use a series of *t* tests after the two-way ANOVA indicated that there was a significant difference. This was, however, avoided in the present study as, first of all, a large number of *t* tests were needed, which was not at all practical (i.e., 42 *t* tests were needed). Second, running multiple *t* tests would increase the likelihood of type I error.

The fact that there were only a few items in collecting information about some of the factors (e.g., the EFL/ESL contexts) adds to the limitation of the study. However, it should be mentioned that the present study was only a survey investigating what EFL learners and teachers think of impoliteness. Hence, in some case, the results could only indicate the general inclination of the participants and should be treated cautiously.

### References

- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1978). Universals in language usage: politeness phenomena. In E. Goody (ed.), *Questions and politeness: Strategies in social interaction*, (pp. 56-310). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, J. W. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Culpeper, J. (1996). Towards an anatomy of impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 25(3), 349-367.
- Culpeper, J. (1998). (Im)politeness in drama. In J. Culpeper, M. Short, & P. Verdonk (Eds.), *Studying drama: From text to context* (pp. 83-95). London: Routledge.
- Culpeper, J. (2005). Impoliteness and entertainment in the television quiz show: The weakest link. *Journal of Politeness Research*, 1(1), 35-72.
- Eelen, G. (2001). *A critique of politeness theories*. Manchester: St Jerome.
- Hill, B., Ikuta, S., Kawasaki, A., & Ogino, T. (1986). Universals of politeness: Quantitative evidence from Japanese and American English. *Journal of Pragmatics* 10, 347-371.
- Lakoff, R. (1989). The limits of politeness: Therapeutic and courtroom discourse. *Multilingua*, 8(2), 101-129.

Locher, M. A., & Derek, B. (2008). Impoliteness and power in language. In M. Heller & R. Watts, (2008). *Language, power and social process* (pp. 1-14). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Mugford, G. (2008). How rude! Teaching impoliteness in the second language classroom. *ELT Journal*, 62(2), 375-379.

Penman, R. (1990). Facework and politeness: Multiple goals in courtroom discourse. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 9, 15-38.

Pfister, J. (2009). Is there a need for a maxim of politeness? *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42(5), 1266-1282.

Sinclair, J. (Ed.). (1990). *The Collins COBUILD English grammar*. London: Harper Collins.

Terkourafi, M. (2001). *Politeness in Cypriot Greek: A frame-based approach*. Unpublished doctoral Dissertation, University of Cambridge, Cambridge.

**Appendix**

**Dear Participant:**

**Please read the following items and then mark the choice which best matches your perspective. Your answers are only used for research purposes and you will remain anonymous. In the end, the authors expresses their heartfelt thanks to you for your honest and sincere cooperation.**

**Gender:** Male  Female

**Education Level:** Freshman  Sophomore  Junior  Senior  M.A.

**Age:** .....

The items have a five-point answering scale. The numbers mean:

**Strongly Agree**   **Agree**   **Neutral**   **Disagree**   **Strongly disagree**  
 (1)                      (2)                      (3)                      (4)                      (5)

1	Impoliteness aspect of language should be taught in all levels.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Impoliteness aspect of language has the same significance as the politeness aspect.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Impoliteness aspect of language should be taught just in high levels.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Impoliteness should be taught just in universities.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Language learners themselves should learn about the impoliteness aspect of language.	1	2	3	4	5

6	Teaching the impoliteness aspect of language or not, makes no difference in learning that language.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Both politeness and impoliteness aspects of language should be taught. But the main focus should be on the politeness aspect.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Politeness aspect of language is more important than the impoliteness aspect.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Teachers should not waste class time by dealing with the impoliteness aspect of language.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Teaching the impoliteness aspect of language will disrupt the order of class.	1	2	3	4	5
11	In being able to communicate in a foreign language just learning the politeness aspect of that language suffice.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Impoliteness aspect of language should be taught just in intermediate levels.	1	2	3	4	5
13	In foreign language contexts, there is no need to teach impoliteness aspect of language, but in second language contexts, it is a necessity.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Impoliteness aspect of language has not much application in communication.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Teachers should be trained to teach and offer strategies to students for dealing with L2 impoliteness.	1	2	3	4	5
16	There is no need to teach impoliteness aspect of language.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Impoliteness aspect of language should be taught Just to the male language learners.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Impoliteness aspect of language should be taught just in beginning levels.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Impoliteness aspect of language is more important than politeness aspect.	1	2	3	4	5
20	In Second language contexts, there is no need to teach impoliteness aspect of language, but in Foreign language contexts, it is a necessity.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Impoliteness aspect of language should be taught directly.	1	2	3	4	5
22	In both foreign and second language contexts, the impoliteness aspect of language should be taught.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Impoliteness aspect of language should be taught Just to the female language learners.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Impoliteness is part of daily language use and language learners need to be prepared to cope with these situations.	1	2	3	4	5

25	Both politeness and impoliteness aspects of language should be taught. But the main focus should be on the impoliteness aspect.	1	2	3	4	5
26	True and real communication in any language involves using both politeness and impoliteness strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Impoliteness aspect of language should be taught just in Secondary schools.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Teaching the impoliteness aspect of language is not in agreement with our cultural norms.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Impoliteness should be taught indirectly.	1	2	3	4	5
30	Impoliteness should be taught since the early stages of language learning in elementary schools.	1	2	3	4	5
31	It depends on teachers' view to teach impoliteness aspect of language or not.	1	2	3	4	5
<p>In the end, if there is any point you need to add, you may use the following space (in Persian or English).</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION!</b></p>						