

Street Remarks

Carol Brooks Gardner. (1980). Passing by: Street remarks, address rights, and the urban female. *Sociological Inquiry* 50:3-4. 328-56

Civil inattention.

Breaches allowed:

Asking aid

Similarity

person or animal in open category.

Marking a woman's passing

jingling change

shuffling feet

spitting

blowing nose

father gives stroller an extra hard push, lets it go, pats thighs and whistles until past.

tapping newspaper

remarks: compliments, criticisms, invitations

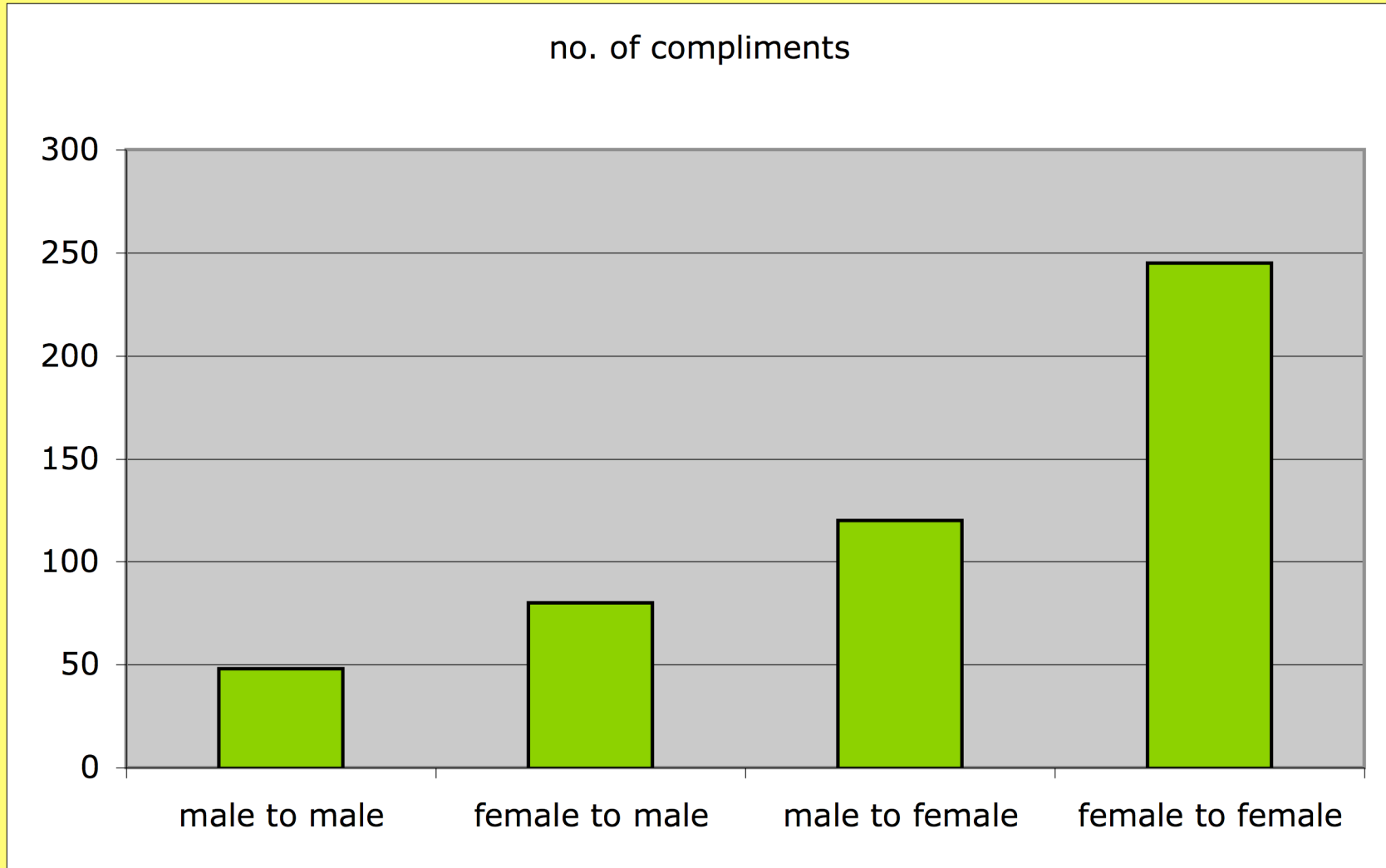
touching

Speech acts and politeness

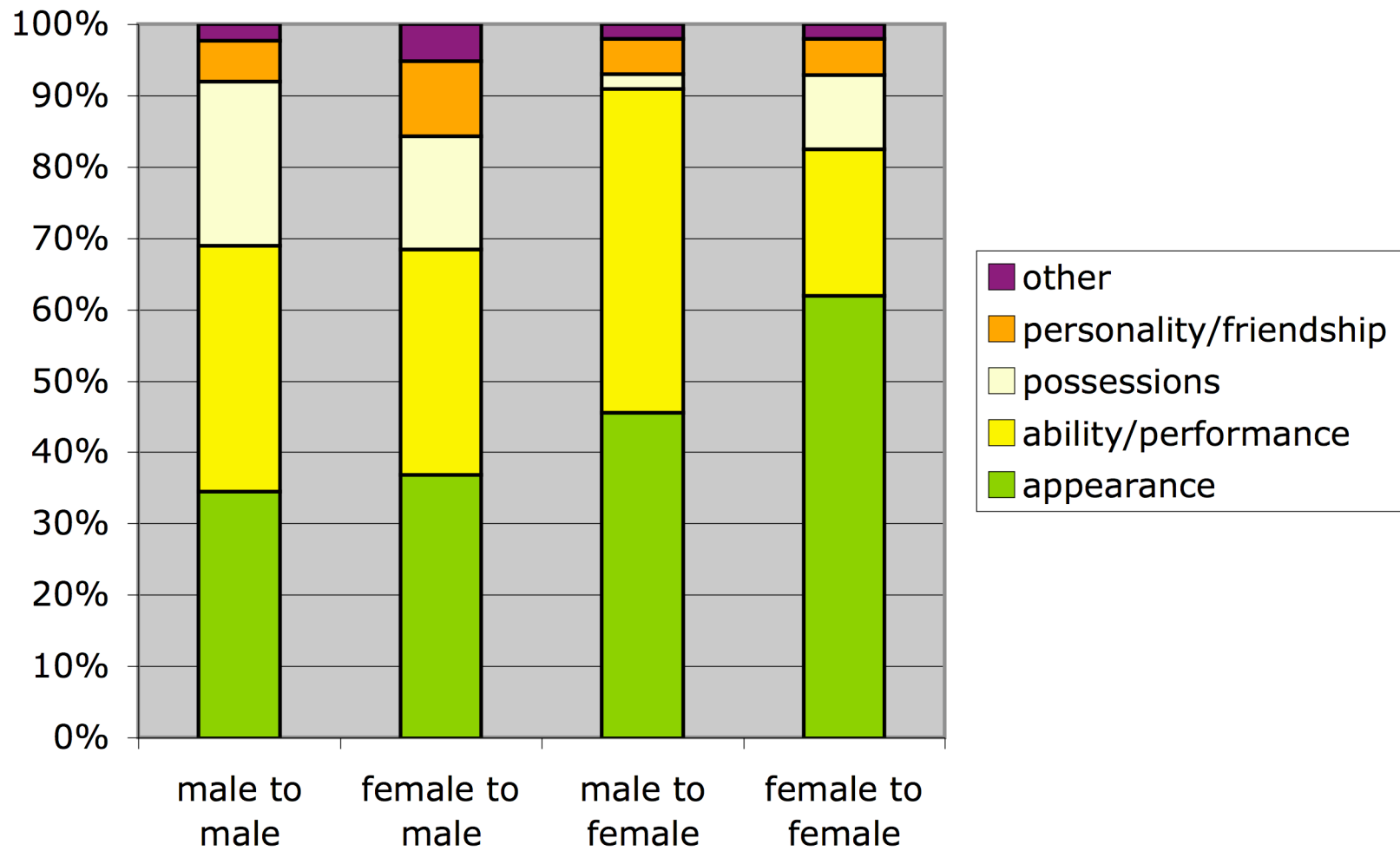
- Compliments and apologies
- New Zealand college students noting down occurrences of speech acts.
- (e.g. the next 20 compliments, apologies you hear)

HOLMES, JANET. 1995. Women, men and politeness: Real Language Series. London and New York: Longman.

Compliments (positive politeness strategy)



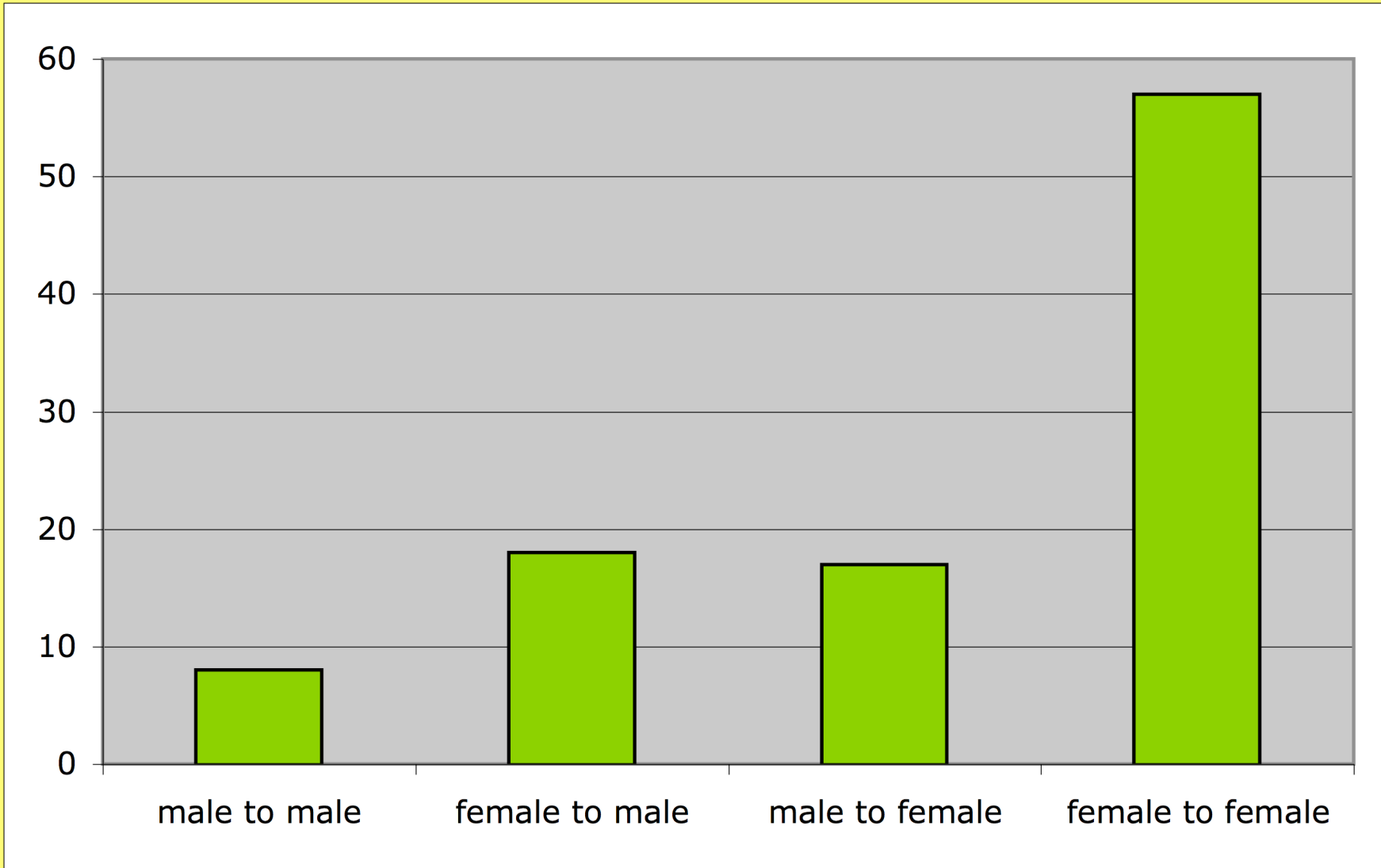
Compliments about...



Apologies

- Negative politeness strategy
- Essential element in a remedial interchange.
- Canonical form: Sorry...
- Better defined by Felicity conditions:
 - An act has occurred
 - A believes the act has offended B; and
 - A takes some responsibility for the act

Apologies



Indirect complaints

- Disapproval exchange in which the addressee is not held responsible for the perceived offense.

Boxer, Diana. 1993. Complaining and commiserating: A speech act view of solidarity in spoken American English. New York: Peter Lang.

- 100 men, 195 women
- Most ages 25-40
- Normal interactions, mostly audio-recorded
 - Home
 - restaurants
 - Student lounges
 - classrooms

Functions of indirect complaints

- positive facework
- way of starting a conversation with a stranger
 - travelling
 - school

introducing elements

- I tell you
 - the thing is
 - you know
 - I swear
- ...

triggers

- collaboration: “Listen to this about her boss’s Christmas lights: 40,000 bulbs”
- greeting: “how are you?”
- question: “How’s the weather out there?”

themes

- self
- other
- situation
 - personal “I feel boxed in, you know?”
 - impersonal “why did they have to raise tuition?”

Responses

- no response or topic switch 10%
- questions 12%
- contradiction 15%
- joke/teasing 6%
- advice/lecture 14%
- agreement/commiseration 44%

Themes

% of column totals

n=513

	friends	strangers	intimates
Self	6	11	3
Other	29	14	37
Situation (personal)	38	33	42
Situation (impersonal)	27	42	18

Themes

% of column totals

n=533

	m-m	m-f	f-m	f-f
Self	5	1	4	10
Other	24	15	34	30
Situation (personal)	32	41	46	36
Situation (impersonal)	39	42	15	24

Responses % of column totals n=530

	m-m	m-f	f-m	f-f
Topic switch	3	11	7	7
question	24	11	4	10
Contradiction	17	15	26	11
Joke/teasing	7	10	10	4
Advice/lecture	16	7	29	10
Contradiction	17	15	26	11
Commiseration	33	47	24	57