

Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Palackého

**Apology strategies: The contrastive study of
apologies in Slovak and English**

(Bakalárska práca)

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Apology strategies: The Contrastive Study of Apologies in Slovak and English
(Bakalárska práca)

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Annotation:

The purpose of this bachelor thesis is to compare apology strategies in Slovak and English in order to show possible deviations in the apology formation or similarities of apology strategies used. The focus will be on the functions, different strategies of apologizing as well as on defining this specific type of speech act in terms of face, politeness etc. The aim of the research is to point out the possible pragmatic transfer of the apology strategies in Slovak and English.

Key words: apology, politeness, apology strategies, face, face-threatening acts, offense,

Abstrakt:

Cieľom tejto bakalárskej práce je porovnať podobnosti a rozdiely formúl ospravedlňovania sa v slovenčine a angličtine. Dôraz sa bude klásť na ich funkcie, na variáciu stratégií aplikovaných pri ospravedlňovaní sa ako aj na definíciu termínov ako sú tvár či zdvorilosť. Cieľom výskumu bude porovnať možné pragmatické zhody formúl ospravedlňovania sa medzi slovenčinou a angličtinou.

Kľúčové termíny: ospravedlnenie, zdvorilosť, formuly ospravedlňovania sa, akty ohrozujúce tvár, urážka

Prehlasujem, že som túto bakalársku prácu vypracovala samostatne a že som uviedla úplný zoznam citovanej a použitej literatúry.

V Olomouci dňa

Ema Straňavová

Chcela by som sa poďakovať mojej vedúcej práce Mgr. Markéte Janebové, Ph.D. za jej profesionalitu, hodnotné rady a ochotu nájsť si na mňa vždy čas.

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Introduction

In the last two decades, the field of cross-cultural pragmatics has been enriched by a great number of contrastive studies concerning different speech acts performances. The aim of these studies is to examine the cross-cultural similarities and differences of the speech act structures in various languages. As Válková emphasises, discovering pragmatic differences can contribute to get the appropriate cross-cultural understanding of cultural norms in different languages (2014, 3). One of the speech acts which is studied in more details is the speech act of apology. Since there have not been done studies regarding pragmatic differences between Slovak and English apology formations, I have decided to dedicate my thesis to the cross-cultural speech act research of the apology strategies in these two languages. Apology could be described as remedial expressive act with the aim to restore balance in a relationship between speaker (S) and hearer (H) (Oishi 2013; Wagner 2000; Válková 2014). As Birner (2013, 188) pointed out, apology serves as a medium to persuade H in changing his attitude after S committed an offence. Since the offence had happened before the moment of speaking, it is a post-event speech act differentiating itself from other illocutionary acts (Haugh and Culpeper 2014; Oishi 2013). Apology, the offence which precedes its realisation and the consequence of offence committed by sS are, however, part of a larger phenomenon which is defined as politeness. All the Ss, no matter what language they speak or to what culture they belong, adhere to some set of politeness rules. According to Fraser, politeness is considered to occur where the utterance is in accordance with the norms of a given society, and that is why it is very important to know what may be considered impolite in other cultures (220, 1990). In my bachelor thesis, I would dedicate the first chapters to this phenomenon and throughout the whole thesis I will interrelate the concepts of politeness with the apology and its strategies to show how dependent they are on each other.

Moving on from politeness, I will also point out the special interest of scholars in the pragmatic concept of the apology strategy structures and its different performances in different languages. In majority of cultures, Ss decide to apologise when they cause an offence or when a violation of social norms has taken place. Since one of the main functions of apology is to “restore balance in relationship between speaker and hearer”, it is important for the interlocutor to follow appropriate cultural patterns when apologising (Wagner 2008, 22). Despite many studies regarding apology formation in languages such as Sudanese Arabic, English or Hungarian, there are only few studies concerning the Slavic languages and none of them is discussing the case of Slovak language. In my thesis, I will dedicate the research part to a contrastive study of Slovak and English and I will compare the differences and similarities in the apology strategies. The first research group will consist of 24 participants whose mother language is Slovak, and the next research group will consist of 23 native speakers of English. The methodology for collecting the data will be the DCT questionnaire and respondents will be asked to respond 6 different situations which require apology. The whole methodology, process of collection of data and finally the results will be in the centre of the second part of my thesis, followed with a conclusion.

1 Speech acts

Communication represents a crucial part of people's everyday life. Despite talking about experiences, gossiping, or just having a small talk in the lift, people often express their needs, wants or they try to fix the situation in case they offend someone. These bits of communication form a conversational unit known as a speech act. According to Birner, speech acts create a connection between H and S by using the sets of expression with the aim of achieving communication goals as needed (2013, 175).

1.1 Speech act theory

Utterances such as request, offer or apology constitute the performance of such acts and the theory dealing with how the goal of a S is achieved is called The Speech Act Theory, whose major contributor is John Austin. Austin divided these acts into 3 main groups. First, he introduces the **illocutionary act**, which is the basic communicative act through which S intends to perform the basic utterances such as asking the question, warning, or inviting (Austin, 1962, 108). The second one is the **locutionary act**, which aims to provide a statement "with certain sense and reference" (Austin, 1962, 108). In other words, this act is aimed to utter a meaningful sentence. The last act is the **perlocutionary act**, where the effect on the H has the main importance, since S wants to influence H to follow his orders, commands, or suggestions. This act is hearer-based, and S also influences H's feelings or thoughts (Austin, 1962, 101-102). Through this division, it can be claimed that every utterance produced contributes to perform a communicative act (Birner, 2013, 184). Despite the influence of the speech act theory is enormous, Culpeper and Haugh had criticised this theory as not taking into consideration the role of context (especially the social context) as much as it should (2014, 175). According to them, the speech act theory should bring necessary information, such as social information regarding S's or H's status, age, or culture (Culpeper and Haugh, 2014, 176).

2 Politeness

To interfere with Hs successfully, there needs to be an instrument which helps Ss to make H willing to accept the speech acts such as offer or apology. S intends to use sets of expressions, manners and language acceptable for the H- in other words, he wants to be polite. The theory which has highly influenced the concept of politeness is called **Politeness theory**, established by Brown and Levinson in 1987. The aim of Brown and Levinson's theory was the identification of social principles and rules that could be universally applicable (Brown and Levinson, 1987). They observed similarities and differences in the politeness performance of S from different cultures. The general notion of politeness as we know today was transferred from Anglo-Saxon community, where politeness meant "a set of social norms consisting of more or less explicit rules that prescribe a certain behaviour, a state of affairs, or a way of thinking in a context." (Fraser, 1990, 220). Politeness is considered to take place where the utterance or

behaviour is in accordance with the norms of a given society, and impoliteness when the behaviour or utterances provided are in contrary with the norms of a given society (Fraser, 1990, 220). Politeness also involves the recognition of minor threats to the self-image publicly shown by the person (Birner, 2013, 201).

2.1 Politeness theories

Fraser in his famous paper from 1990 stated that there are three most prominent tendencies in the field of the linguistic politeness: **the conversational-maxim view** introduced by Paul Grice in 1967, Leech's **Principle of Politeness** from 1983 and the last one, which considered as the most influential is **the Politeness theory**, or as Fraser used "face-saving view" by Brown and Levinson from 1987. Grice in his theory introduced the concept of maxims as guidelines of communication which are essential in maintaining the Conversational principle. According to Grice, we should say only what is needed, when is needed and the importance lays in how we express the utterance (Grice, 1975, 45). The four maxims of manner, quantity, quality, and relation can be simultaneously applied, but also violated at any time (Fraser, 1990, 222). When these maxims are violated, the inference of message is threatened and it may result in breaking down of inference between S and H (Fraser, 1990, 222). Grice's theory was further analysed and elaborated by Geoffrey Leech. He made a clear distinction between the illocutionary goals (what is intended to be communicated directly to H clearly) and social goals (Ss' communicative intentions of being either polite, ironic, or truthful) (Leech, 1983). However, his major contribution to politeness analysis is his Principle of Politeness, where the major importance lays according to him in minimizing the expression of beliefs which are unfavourable to the H and maximizing the expression of beliefs favourable to the H (Leech 1983, 81). As I have already mentioned, one the most influential theories regarding politeness it is the Politeness theory by Brown and Levinson and in the next section, I will introduce some of its crucial concepts.

2.2 Politeness by Brown and Levinson

The success of Politeness theory by Brown and Levinson lays in defining and naming many concepts that are still widely used in the cross-cultural speech acts analysis (Fraser, 1990, 228). Brown and Levinson had accumulated and analysed knowledge of other linguists and according to Alabdali, they applied it in a refreshed and modified form to provide an identification of the universal politeness principles (2015, 73). One of the crucial points of their theory is that by choosing a speech act such as request, offer or refusal, S does not want to implicate only the chosen speech act, but simultaneously, he wants to be polite:

(1) *I would really appreciate if you would shut the door*

They also considered Grice's maxim theory and proposed that politeness is the main reason for violating and flouting one or more of Grice's maxims (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Importance of the researchers who analyse speech acts in cross-linguistic studies is the identification of both, universal and culture-specific aspects of different languages (Iragui, 1996). However, it is the concept of universality proposed by Brown and Levinson, which is in the centre of the significant criticism of various researchers. I would refer to this point in the section Criticism of universality of face-saving strategies.

2.2.1 Face

One of the most important concepts presented in the Politeness theory is the notion of face. This concept was derived by Brown and Levinson from English folk terminology, where face was presented as an aspect of self-image that can be humiliated or embarrassed, eventually leading to its loss (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 311). Face needs to be maintained and the relationship between S and H makes their faces mutually dependent (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 311). Face is always presented publicly and can be either lost or enhanced, and “any threat to face must be continually monitored during an interaction.” (Fraser, 1990, 229). There are two major face aspects that are related, which are positive and negative face (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 311). **The positive face** is solidarity-oriented, used in open and more relaxed communication (very frequent is a usage of dialect, slang, or usage of jokes) (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 311). **The negative face** puts importance on freedom of action and freedom from imposition (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 311). It is individual-oriented face, whose wants need to be respected and very common is a usage of indirect expressions and hedges to emphasize its formality (Biner, 2013, 201). According to the Politeness theory, notion of face differs from culture to culture, but importance of public self-image is universal (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 312).

2.3 Face-threatening acts

Before Brown and Levinson, the general agreement in linguistics was that acts are inherently polite or impolite (Fraser, 1990, 229). However, Brown and Levinson noticed that several speech acts may threaten face, especially if H's wants are in opposition of S's wants. These acts, affecting S, H or both, were then called Face-threatening acts and the weightiness of threat is culturally and context-dependent (Alabdali, 2015, 74). There are two basic notions that define these acts: whose face is being threatened versus which type of face is threatened, regarding either positive or negative face (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

2.4 Threatening of S's and H's face

2.4.1 Acts threatening H's positive and negative face

Brown and Levinson analysed the differences between the threats affecting S' positive and negative face and those affecting H's positive and negative face. Acts threatening H' negative face are those that put pressure on H to accept or reject S' offer or promises, which limits his freedom of choice. The set of such acts consist of orders, suggestion, warnings and advices, where the most restrictive are warnings and threats (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 313; Fraser, 1990, 229). On the other hand, acts threatening H' positive face regard the ignorance of S towards H's feelings and wants (speech acts which include strong criticism, complaints, or disapprovals), or if S does not accept H' wants (Brown and Levinson, 1987 314). These actions show the digression of the general notion of mutually saving H's and S's faces (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 314).

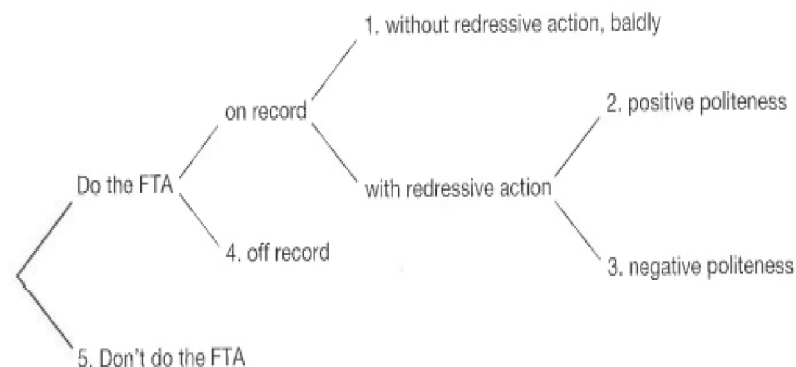
2.4.2 Acts threatening S's positive and negative face

Major threats to S's negative face are expressions of thank or acceptance of H's apology, offer or excuse (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 314). Those that affect his positive face are mostly apologies; when accepting apology, S demonstrates his

awareness of a priori offence caused, which at the same time damages his face (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 314; Holmes 1990.) Other threats to S's positive face are acceptance of a compliment or self-humiliation. This distinction is, however, not that clear since there is an overlap of some FTAs which may threaten either positive or negative face (as in a cases of complaints) (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 314).

2.5 Politeness strategies

According to Birner, the choice of appropriate face-saving strategy among with the concept of face and FTAs are the "heart of Politeness Theory" (2013, 220). The strategies that will be listed here are used to minimize the threat caused by S's or H's speech act choice (Brown and Levinson, 315, 1987). The major strategies used are positive and negative politeness strategies, off-record strategies, bald strategies or Don't do FTAs strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 316).



Brown and Levinson's structure of FTAs strategies, 69, 1987.

When S chooses **on record strategy**, he shows his communicative intention clearly. The advantage of such a strategy is clarity and the absence of manipulation of participants (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 316). Through **off-record strategies**, wants and needs communicated are more indirect, including metaphors, irony or all kinds of hints (316). One of the advantages of such a strategy is when misunderstanding takes place due to indirect speech choice, S can distant from the responsibility of causing such misunderstanding. The exact opposite is then **bald-on record strategy** where the communicative intentions of S are direct and concise (316). With this strategy, Brown and Levinson had referred to Grice and his maxims of cooperation. This type of strategy is very effective since H gets all the necessary information (316). However, the question arises about H and his will to know all the information, since some information may bring sort of discomfort (in case S is too critical or is too offensive).

2.5.1 Positive and Negative politeness

The most well-known strategies are the Positive and Negative politeness strategies. **The positive politeness strategy** is oriented towards the positive face of the H and S shows he has the same wants as H which leads to minimalization of any possible threat and to eventual satisfaction of H's positive face. S and H are treated as being on the same level, having the same rights and this strategy is applied usually between friends or close people (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 317). The defining features of this strategy are attention towards H and more relaxed conversation. S tries to be friendly and avoids disagreements between him and H (322). The **negative politeness strategy** is orientated

towards the H's negative face and H wants to maintain his self-determination. This conversation is more formal which goes together with indirectness (in Brown and Levinson's terminology conversationalist indirectness) and the aspect of H's image is very restricted (317). Typical features of the negative politeness strategy are hedges, deference and distance between S and H, while in positive politeness strategy, relationship is more inclusive (322). According to the assumption of Brown and Levinson, the least polite strategy is bold-on-record, followed by positive politeness, negative politeness, off-record, and the politest is the Do not do the FTA act (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

2.6 Criticism of universality of face-saving strategies

Brown and Levinson claimed that the usage of face-saving strategies is universal, however this claim is one of the most criticised points of their theory, because they lack works which would prove this universality (criticised by Alabdali 2015, Suszczyńska 1999). It would assume that people from different cultural backgrounds who speak different languages would tend to choose similar strategies under similar circumstances (Alabdali, 2015, 74). However, researchers proposed that there are many influencing factors when choosing the strategy, such as different social roles and different behaviour in different cultures and situations (Fraser, 1990, 233). Abdali emphasized that also social class of S, his age, gender, or level of education may affect the self-image (2015, 75). Politeness interacts with different cultural and social norms, and it has to be taken into consideration when examining strategies chosen to save face.

3 Apology

The importance of politeness for apology is undoubtful and these two phenomena are significantly interconnected. The function of apologizing is often explained based on politeness: people apologize because of rules of politeness (Oishi, 2013, 541). Since all the important notions of politeness had been already demonstrated and my thesis is concerned with analysis of apologising in English and Slovak, this chapter is going to introduce the speech act of apology. In the following sections, the speech act of apology will be discussed in relation to the S's and H's face, in the relation to various strategies and their choice in different situations, cultures and languages, with simultaneous application of various perspectives of number of different researchers.

3.1 Features of apology

Apology is a remedial work that occurs in all types of discourses on everyday base (Válková, 2014, 6). Apology takes place when S cannot avoid threatening the H's face and when he believes that s/he has some responsibility in the act offending the H (Oishi, 2013, 541; Qorina, 2012, 94). As a remedial act, apology is hearer-supportive, but causes cost for the S (Wagner, 2008, 22). The S is aware that he violated politeness rules and apology serves as a medium to restore balance in relationship between S and H through a manner appropriate to their culture (Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, 206; Suszczyńska, 1999, 1055; Wagner, 2008, 22). Therefore, apology can be treated as a social act, since restoring the relationship damaged by the offence is one of the primary interests of the S (Holmes, 1990, 156-7; Oishi, 2013, 534; Tanaka et al. 2008). The

secondary interest of apology is making H believe we truly regret the offense committed and that we are sincere in apologising (Birner, 2013, 188; Oishi, 2013, 533). According to Culpeper and Haugh, being sincere is the key condition of apology (2014, 176). Apology applies perlocutionary force on the H with the goal of persuading him to change his attitude towards S (Birner, 2013, 188). H must believe we truly regret the offense committed and that we are sincere in apologising (Birner, 2013, 188; Oishi, 2013, 533). That is why apology is not only important for S, but also for H who has to evaluate the act and accept it (Masaeed et al., 2018, 98). According to the traditional terminology, apologies are expressive speech acts (Olhstain and Cohen, 1981, 115; Qorina, 2012, 93; Searle 1969). Since the offense happened before the moment of speaking, apology is a post-event speech act (Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, 206; Oishi, 2013, 524; Spencer-Oatey 2008; Wagner, 2008, 22). Although many utterances can be used to express apology, the most frequently applied are formulaic expression. According to Holmes, the formulaic expressions are explicit and strong and that is why they have tendency to get repeated in conversation (1990). However, apology set is rich in lexemes and syntax, offering lots of possible options to provide this act with positive results. What can contribute to better definition of apology are felicity conditions, firstly mentioned by Searle and Austin. Some of their conditions can be applied on the process of apology creation and they provide these basic features of apology (Holmes, 1990, 160).

- (2) a) *apology is an act which has occurred (post event)*
 b) *S believes the act has offended H*
 c) *S takes some responsibility for the offense he caused (Holmes, 1990, 161)*

However, the concept of taking on responsibility is according to Meier doubtful. While some researchers take it as a core feature of apology, others assign this admission of responsibility only to specific apology strategies (1998, 221). One subgroup of apologies is called ritualistic apologies, where S apologises despite not feeling he offended the H (Fraser 1981; Oishi, 2013, 540). Apology as an act has different aspects that are activated by different norms (social, pragmatical or ethical) and they depend on the offence and circumstances of the situation (Oishi, 2013, 540). According to Spencer-Oatey, power and distance were proven by significant number of empirical studies to be influential factors in choosing the word and syntax in the speech act of apology (2008, 34). As mentioned in part 2.6, the concept of universality when performing speech acts as was presented by Brown and Levinson is very controversial and thanks to many studies, regarding the comparison of different languages and their pragmatic transfers of apology strategies, the support for Brown and Levinson's claim about universality is on decline (Oishi, 2013, 542). When it comes to apology, S follows the politeness norms of the society that he belongs to and chooses apology utterances that are accepted in his culture (Oishi, 2013, 543). There are cultures where the positive politeness may be prevailing (as in Venezuela,) or cultures, where the negative strategies are chosen in majority of utterances (Wagner, 2008, 24).¹

3.2 Apology in the Speech act theory

Apology is one of the most interesting speech acts and it differs from other acts by its complexity. Speech act of apology consists of series of various utterances including

¹ For more information see Garzia 1989

expression of apology itself, admitting the responsibility and offering the explanation (Olhstain and Cohen, 1981, 34). The most famous proposition about apologies as a speech act were brought by Searle and Austin. According to Austin, the speech act of apology should be judged based on the effect that the apology generates in appropriate circumstances, while Searle studied apologies mainly in the connection with its illocutionary force (Austin 1962; Searle 1969). The illocutionary force can be expressed according to Austin in explicit way when the performatives such as *I apologize* are applied in the speech act (Austin, 93, 107, 1962). According to Oishi, Searle described the illocutionary force of the apology in more detail (Oishi, 2013, 523). He sees the illocutionary force in the preconditions leading to the act of apology, such as the cause of the apology, the intentions of S and the result of the apology.² The recent research had shown that speech act of apology is “a culture-sensitive speech-act set” (Olhstain and Cohen 1981).

3.2.1 Apology as the illocutionary act

The illocutionary force of apology is shown through the expressions, feelings and reactions that are arising due to S's past actions (Austin 1962). S holds responsible for committing the offense and wants to avoid causing the offence in the future. S, who performs illocutionary act of apologising, has to identify himself as the addressee of the apology, which means he expresses regret for the past event and holds himself (at least partially) responsible (Oishi, 2013, 531). However, sometimes S intentionally downgrades his apology by weakening his responsibility:

(3) *I'm really sorry for what happened, but I had no choice....*

What supports the illocutionary force of apology is a usage of explicit forms of performative utterances such as *I do apologize*, *I apologize* or *I am sorry*, but very common are the indirect apologies that can be performed through non-performatives such as: (4) a) *I really regret harming you...*

b) *Sorry that I am interrupting you...*

c) *This may hurt you (said by a doctor)* (Oishi, 2013, 535).

However, apology is perceived as the illocutionary act only if the H perceives the illocutionary force of this speech act (Austin 1962).

3.3 Face and apology

Apology is a speech act concerned with threat of the face and its eventual saving. If the S cannot avoid face-threats, apology serves as a solution for saving his face.

Apologizing is face threatening for the S and face-saving for the H (Suszczyńska, 1999, 1055; Wagner, 2008, 24). Apologies always threaten S's positive face, especially if the apology is at the same time a confession bringing up the unpleasant info, and therefore causes a high cost to S's face (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 68, 248; Holmes, 1990, 162; Qorina, 2012, 100). As Spencer-Oatey pointed out, the expressions through which S performs the apology also influence his face (2008, 19). Since apology is a face threatening act, the relationship between participants and the weight of the offence committed also influence the performance of apology (Holmes, 1990, 176). The general

² More information about the Speech act theory can be found in Searle (1969) and Austin (1962)

notion about the apology as face threatening act is that the more damaging the offense is, the more face-threatening the action would be for the S (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, 20).

3.4 Apologizing

Since apology is threatening S's positive face, S has to carefully think about the way he expresses this speech act. Some researchers claimed that when the level of familiarity or friendliness is higher between S and H, the elaboration of apologies decreases (Meier, 1998, 219). However, Holmes proposed that despite the general tendency to adhere to Brown and Levinson's theory of providing simple, explicit apologies between friends, according to her, the more elaborated apologies occur between intimates when the offence committed is more severe (Holmes, 1990, 190-191). As it was already mentioned in the section 3.3, concept of the offence has significant influence on the number of strategies applied when apologising. Holmes suggested that the formulation of the apology heavily depends on the offence committed and on the situation in which it occurred. She divided the offense into 3 groups:

- a) *light offense (bumping into an old lady)*
- b) *medium offense (keep someone waiting for us)*
- c) *heavy offense (embarrass someone during his first day in a work)* (Holmes, 1990, 183).

While in the light offenses simpler explicit apologies were provided, in the more severe offenses Ss tend to use longer explanations of their behaviour, and simultaneously, they applied various apology strategies and upgraders (Holmes, 1990, 191).

3.5 Apology strategies

As was mentioned in previous sections, the strategy chosen by S to provide an apology shows a lot about the sincerity of his action and severity of the offence caused. The prototypical politeness strategy is the negative politeness strategy since apology is concerned with the respect towards H (Brown and Levinson 1987; Wagner, 2008, 23). When it comes to the apology strategies, one of the most frequently used is a formulaic expression of apology (Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, 215). From all the utterances, an expression containing *sorry* is one of the most frequent (Holmes 1990; Meier 1998), and its predominance was also supported by Blum-Kulka and Olhstain. According to them, the most direct apologies are done through IFIDs (explicit illocutionary force indicating devices) that select formulaic expression using performatives such as *sorry*, *regret* or *excuse* (Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, 206). They are the most routinised, being in the "centre of the speech act category of apologizing" (Suszczyńska, 1999, 1058). After IFIDs the other most common apology strategies are:

- a) *an explanation of the cause which brought about the offence*
- b) *an expression of the S's responsibility of the offence*
- c) *an offer of repair*
- d) *a promise of forbearance*

(Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, 207)

Meier's analysis shows that most likely strategies to occur first are routine formulaic strategies (*sorry*) accompanied with emotives (*Oh no*). Those most likely to occur as last ones are no harm done (*I hope nobody gets hurt*), redress (*let me do it for you*), and forbearance (*this won't happen again*) (1998, 218). When it comes to the apology orientations, these can be according to Fraser hearer-oriented, speaker-oriented, both-

speaker and hearer oriented or event-oriented (Fraser 1990). For Holmes, the prototypical strategy chosen by English Ss is a hearer-oriented negative strategy, containing the formulaic expression (1990, 182). The apology strategies are likely to be combined and there can be various strategies applied simultaneously (Al Masaeed et al., 2018, 102; Meier, 1998, 218). Combination of strategies, usage of Concern for hearer super strategy and the usage of adverbs of intensifications upgrade the apology and therefore apology becomes more likely to be accepted by H (Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, 208.)

3.6 Apologies in different cultures

As it was already mentioned in the previous chapters, the performance of the apology is influenced by culture and mother language of S (Holmes 1990; Qorina 2012; Válková 2014). The aim of the apology is to restore a relationship between H and S, but in a manner appropriate for the culture in which the apology occurs (Qorina, 2012, 93; Suszczyńska, 1999, 1055). Some of the cross-cultural differences may be found in perception of generosity, modesty, or sympathy (Oishi, 2013, 544). Although they do not have to have significant roles in conversation, some instances may cause disrespect and may affect H of the native language in a negative way (Válková, 2014, 3). As a result, the cross-cultural misunderstandings occur (Válková, 2014, 3). Despite the tendency of Ss in majority of cultures to choose the speech act of apology when violation of social norm occurs, the problem arises exactly for the notion of violation itself. What may be treated as a severe offence to be apologised for in one culture does not have to be perceived as same offence in other. This difference in FTAs brings deviations in apology acceptations and as Brown and Levinson noticed, in cultures where pride plays an important role, apology may be eventually treated as the FTA itself (1987, 247). The social context where apology occurs is crucial in comparing apologies in different cultures and according to Culpeper and Haugh, this concept is often underestimated (2014, 175). For example, when comparing Slavic culture with Anglo-Saxon, distance in Anglo-Saxon culture is treated as a sign of respect and superiority, while in Slavic nations, distance is treated as sign of hostility (Suszczyńska, 1999, 1059). As Al Masaeed et al. pinpoints, the knowledge of language is not only about grammar, but also about knowing what to say, when to say and how to say something properly (2018, 98). What is important for H is the politeness expressed by S. Blum-Kulka and Olhstain had referred to several cross-cultural similarities when performing apology (1984). The first common feature is the similar reason for apologizing. Another common feature of cross-cultural apologies is tendency of choosing formulaic strategies for apologising (Holmes 1990; Suszczyńska 1999).

3.7 Apologies in English

The importance of studying apologies in English is mainly to identify apology strategies and factors influencing the relationship between S and H (Meier, 1998, 215). Despite many possible ways of expressing apology in English, there is a preference of providing explicit apologies by English Ss (Holmes, 1990, 15). Explicit strategies are clearer since they apply few lexical items, and they are not over-elaborated and complicated (Holmes, 1990, 171). According to Meier, explicit apology strategies are represented in English by “formulaic expressions” containing expressions such as *apologize*, *sorry*, *forgive* or *excuse* that are mitigating the situation of a face damage (1998, 216-217).

Some of the most frequently used explicit apology utterances by English Ss are *forgive me, I beg your pardon, or I regret that*. Very common choice of the utterance *I'm sorry* provides evidence that contemporary English “displays features of avoidance-based negative politeness” (Suszczyńska, 1999, 1059). This expression is minimally face-threatening for either S or H (Al Maseed et al. 104). In English, apologies tend to be preceded with the emotional expressions such as *Jesus* or *Oh No* (Meier, 1998, 218). There is also tendency in English to use intensifiers that emphasize the explicitness and sincerity of the apology (usage of adjectives such as *terribly, extremely...* (Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, 208):

(4) *I am **terribly** sorry for causing you these troubles....*

(5) *Jane, I **extremely** regret to tell him about you...I didn't think about the consequences...*

Such intensifications upgrade the apology and there is a higher probability H will accept it (Holmes, 1990, 177). Ss should always imply responsibility and regret in apology utterances in English speaking world (Culpeper and Haugh, 2014, 176). Interestingly, minor differences can be identified in apology strategies of different variations of English. American English and its apology strategies tend to be even more explicit than those provided by British Ss (Al Maseed et al., 2018, 99). What British and American apologies share is that Ss of both variations do not hesitate to use more intensifiers, references to H's first name, or adverbials (Iragui, 1996, 58).

3.8 Apologies in Slovak

Following the speech act theory, apologies in Slovak are perceived as acts based on routine formulas (or language stereotypes) that serve as a remedy of a social failure caused by S (Sokolová, 2020, 5- 6). They are characterized by utterances that reflect courtesy and cooperation. Also, the purpose is the same: Ss signal with apologising an effort to restore harmony between S and H (Sokolová, 2020, 6). The semantics of Slovak apology forms indicate that S is feeling guilt and apology frees him from responsibility of an offence he caused before the moment of speaking (Sokolová, 2020 6,7). Utterances such as *je mi to ľúto* (*I am sorry*) or *mrzí ma to* (*I feel sorry*) express the direct interest of S in minimizing the impact of his actions, using the concept of negative politeness. They are used either alone or in combination with other apologies:

(6) *Ospravedlňujem sa. Je mi to ľúto. (I apologize. I regret that.)*

(7) *Prepáčte, mrzí ma to (I feel sorry)*

In Slovak, the major formulaic expression of apology distinguishes between two lexemes - *ospravedlniť (niekoho)* (*to apologise someone*) and *ospravedlniť sa niekomu,* (*to apologise to someone*), which are syntactically and semantically related (Sokolová, 2020, 7). Similar as in English, apologies in Slovak can be modified by using the adverbials or other expressions of intensifications, whose application “corresponds to the postulates of tact and modesty” (Sokolová, 2020, 9).³ In Slovak (and in all Slavic languages in general) is also very common the usage of the emphasising expression, where the prevailing ones are *fakt, ježiš, tak teda, viete no* (*really, Jesus, well, you know*), and they occur at either initial or middle positions (Válková, 2014, 6). The illocutionary effect of apology can be multiplied by using the verb *musieť* (*must/have to*). The modal verb implies the meaning "I have a duty to apologize" and strengthens S's attitude of his dedication to apologize (Sokolová, 2020, 10). Apology strategies of

³ Original text: Ich uplatňovanie korešponduje s postulátmi taktu a skromnosti.

Slavic languages are hearer-oriented, including Slovak language as well. The hearer-oriented strategy in Slovak is realized within the framework of directive and interrogative statements or by using the imperative verb *prepáčiť* (to excuse). S is more authoritative in relation to H compared with the English Ss and Ss often do not deny their mistakes or responsibility (Sokolová 2020).⁴ In the case of such an authoritative utterance, S seems to force the forgiveness through the imperative form of a verb must: (8) *Musíš mi odpustiť ...nie som vo svojej koži. (You must forgive me. I'm not in my shoes ...)*

(9) *Nehnevaj sa na mňa. (Don't be angry with me.)*

The example (10) shows the ability of Slovak apologies to express mental state such as “don't be angry”, which cannot be expressed in English according to Suszczyńska (1990, 1058). In the case of verb *prepáčiť* or expression *pardón* (to forgive), they are treated as ritualized, and their illocutionary force is weakened. Occurrence of offer of help following the apology is another strategy occurring in the Slavic speech act performances (Suszczyńska, 1999, 1062).

4 Research questions

Since my thesis is concerned with the contrastive analysis of the English and Slovak responses, I would like to analyse the differences in the strategy distribution between Slovak and native speakers of English responses. I assume that the IFID, using the routinized verbs and expressions, will be the prevailing strategy in both, Slovak and English responses, however, the choices of other strategies are context and culture dependent and that is why my first research question is worded as follows:

What are the prevalent strategies in Slovak and English responses? Are there any differences between the overall strategy choices of Slovaks and native speakers of English?

Secondly, as is shown in sections 3.7 and 3.8, the contrastive studies concerning English and Slavic languages claim that very common factor influencing the H to the accept the apology is its intensification. Blum-Kulka and Olhstain listed these 3 ways of how the apology can be intensified in order to increase the probability of being accepted by H:

a) by an intensifying expression within the IFID

b) by expressing concern for hearer

c) by using multiple strategies (in their case, IFIDs and any one or more strategy)

Blum Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, 208.

Since both English and Slovak apologies tend to be intensified through adverbials, I would like to analyse the other intensification methods as well and therefore, my second research question is:

What intensification methods do Slovak and native speakers of English use in their apologies?

The last problem I would like to deal with is the structure of apologies between intimates. According to Brown and Levinson and Meier (1987; 1992), more simple and explicit apologies occur between intimates, while more elaborated apologies occur between people with different power-distance relationship. However, Holmes proposed that if the offense is more severe, apologies are more complex even between intimates (Holmes 1990, 190-191). I designed two situations with the heavy offense occurring

⁴ To this phenomenon I have already referred in section 3.7. For more information, read Iragui (1996).

between close people in order to analyse if the strategies were more elaborated. My last research question is worded as follows:

Based on assumption of Holmes, are the apology strategies more elaborated if the offense between intimates is more severe?

5 Methodology

It is claimed that one of the most useful methods for the data collection in the pragmatic research is the Discourse-Completion Test (DCT) questionnaire (Kasper, 2008, 293). Accordingly, in most of the contrastive studies of apology strategies I am referring to (Al Massaeet et al. 2018; Iroqui 1996; Nureddeen 2008; Holmes 1990; Quorina 2013; Suszczyńska 1999), the DCT was chosen as the method to obtain data. This method was firstly conducted by Blum-Kulka in 1982 and become a model for the cross-cultural studies concerning the speech act analysis. According to Kasper, the prototypical DCT is based on situational descriptions and brief dialogues and is usually followed with an open-turn part (2008, 292). Discourse-related questions tend to be preceded with personal questions regarding participants' age, occupation, or gender, which can bring another socio-pragmatic information. Kasper mentioned that the mode in which the researchers present the situations to the respondents may influence their answers, thus making them less authentic (Kasper, 293, 2008). Despite some arguments about authenticity of answers collected by DCTs, Kasper believes that DCTs "elicit intuitional data" (2008, 294) and therefore, in many cases, there is a tendency of participants answering in a way they would do if situations happened in real life.

Example from DCT questionnaire:

A university student borrowed her teacher's book and promises to return it that day. When she arrived at university, she discovered that she forgot the book at home. Now she meets her teacher

The teacher: *Have you brought the book?*

The student: -----

(Nureddeen, 2008, 306)

The most influential study including the DCT as a method of data collection was conducted by Blum-Kulka and Olhstain in 1984 and is known as the CCSARP project (Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Pattern) with was constructed to analyse the cross-linguistical similarities and differences in the speech act realization of requests and apologies in different languages. Their version of the DCT included incomplete discourse sentences introduced with a short description of situations that differed in a social distance or relative status. After obtaining the data, they constructed so called coding manual of apologies, which served as a tool for observing all the different apology strategies. It contained five super-strategies: **IFIDs Taking on responsibility (ToR) Explanation or account of cause, Offer of repair and Promise of forbearance**, and sub-strategies such as **Intensification of Apology**. In my thesis, I will apply the modified version of the CCSRAP by Suszczyńska (1999). She introduced the category **Refusal to acknowledge guilt** (in other words, No taking of responsibility) and referred to number of extralinguistic factors influencing apology such as adverbials, humour or curse words.

- (1) Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs)
 - a. An expression of regret, e.g. *I'm sorry*
 - b. An offer of apology, e.g. *I apologize*
 - c. A request for forgiveness, e.g. *Excuse me/Forgive me/Pardon me*
- (2) Explanation or Account

Any external mitigating circumstances, 'objective' reasons for the violation, e.g. *The traffic was terrible*
- (3) Taking on Responsibility
 - a. Explicit self-blame, e.g. *It is my fault/my mistake*
 - b. Lack of intent, e.g. *I didn't mean it*
 - c. Expression of self-deficiency, e.g. *I was confused/I didn't see you/I forgot*
 - d. Expression of embarrassment, e.g. *I feel awful about it*
 - e. Self-dispraise, e.g. *I'm such a dimwit!*
 - f. Justify hearer, e.g. *You're right to be angry*
 - g. Refusal to acknowledge guilt
 - Denial of responsibility, e.g. *It wasn't my fault*
 - Blame the hearer, e.g. *It's your own fault*
 - Pretend to be offended, e.g. *I'm the one to be offended*
- (4) Concern for the hearer, e.g. *I hope I didn't upset you! Are you all right?*
- (5) Offer of Repair, e.g. *I'll pay for the damage*
- (6) Promise of Forbearance, e.g. *It won't happen again*

Modified version of CCSARP model by Suszczyńska 1999, 1056.

5.1 Questionnaire

Since my study is concerned with the apology formation in Slovak and English, I had to prepare two questionnaires to obtain data from Slovaks and native speakers of English. At first, I prepared the Slovak version and then I translated it into English. The questionnaire is titled *Apology strategies* for native speakers of English and *Formuly ospravedlňovania sa* for Slovaks. In the initial part of the questionnaire, I have presented myself and the aim of my study as well. Both questionnaires had two parts: the first part was regarding basic data about participants such as gender, age, or nationality. Even though many researchers consider gender as an important variable influencing the apology (Iroqui 1996; Meier 1992; Wagner 2008), for my research, the more important factors are the age and nationality. To make data obtained from Slovak and English responses more comparable, I wanted to have the participants of a similar age (ideally ranging from 20-30) and in case of English respondents, I searched for respondents whose mother language is English. The second part, which has been called *How would you react in the following situations/Ako by ste reagovali v týchto situáciach*, included six different situations with different power-distance relations and different levels of severity of offense as is shown in Table 1. The seriousness of offenses was ranked by the proposition of Holmes (1990) and social status and distance were distributed according to model of Quorina (2013,96). Situation 1 was inspired by Suszczyńska (1999) since she claimed its universality in different cultures. Other situations were inspired by Blum-Kulka and Olhstain (1984, cases of Situation 2 and 4) and by Quorina (2013, case of Situation 3).

(10) **Table 1:** Distribution of social status, distance, and seriousness of offense among situations.⁵

⁵ I used gender neutral pronoun they/their in Situations 2 and 3 to avoid possible gender marking of the situations and to make situations adjustable for the respondents of any or no gender

SITUATION	SOCIAL STATUS	SOCIAL DISTANCE	SERIOUSNESS OF OFFENSE
1. You bumped into the older lady in the supermarket. All her groceries tumble to the floor	Equal	Distant	Light
2. You are a mathematics teacher. Your student finds that you accidentally marked the answer as incorrect even though their result was fine.	High-low	Middle	Light
3. Your best friend has job interview and you spilled coffee over their shirt 5 minutes before their leaving	Equal	Close	Heavy
4. You are waiter and you forgot to serve your customer. The customer is waiting for you more than 40 minutes.	Low-high	Distant	Medium
5. Your mobile phone is out of battery, and you ask your brother to lend you his phone. Accidentally, you drop it and the display breaks.	Equal	Close	Heavy
6. You are a staff manager who arranged an interview with a job applicant. However, you fell asleep and arrived to work with 40 minutes delay. The job applicant is already waiting in your office.	High-low	Distant	Medium

Even though I had shown that the prototypical situations in the DCTs have dialogue form followed with open turn part, I have decided to leave the dialogue form in order to give the participants freedom in their answering process. However, I have presented two limiting conditions: the first was that respondents should include apology in their answer and the second condition was that responses should be in the first person. The whole introductory section was presented as following:

*In the following part, your task is to read 6 situations and then to respond to them using any form of apology that you would use if these situations happened in real life. Your responses should be in the first person (I-perspective). Other than this, they are not limited by any means: they can be of any length, of any form and the lexical choice is up to you.*⁶

Despite these directions, few respondents ignored the condition of writing in the I-perspective, and they decided to describe what they would do if such situations happened. I have used the function of random shuffling of situations to avoid tendency of having the most complex answers in the first situations.

⁶ Slovak version of questionnaire introduction: *V nasledujúcej časti bude Vašou úlohou prečítať si 6 situácií a reagovať na ne formou ospravedlnenia sa tak, akoby ste urobili v týchto situáciách aj v reálnom živote. Vaše odpovede by mali byť napísané v prvej osobe (tzv. pohľad respondenta). Okrem tejto podmienky nie sú Vaše odpovede ničím limitované: môžu mať ľubovoľnú dĺžku, formu a výber slovných prostriedkov je len na Vás.*

5.2 Participants

In total, 47 people participated at my research, The Slovak version was completed by 24 participants, mostly by females (19 out of 24) and the version for native speakers of English was completed by 23 respondents, where, on contrary, the male responses were the prevailing ones (15 out of 23). The average age of Slovak respondents was 23 and majority of them (20 respondents) claimed to be university students. The average age of native speakers of English is 24. A half of them claimed to be studying at university, and the rest claimed to be working. When it comes to the nationality distribution of the native speakers of English, 12 respondents claimed to be from UK (without further specifying from which part), four claimed to be from England, two from Ireland and the rest were Americans (also without specifying from which part of the USA they are).

6 Data analysis

6.1 Situation 1: English responses

The first situation is worded as follows:

You bumped into an elderly lady in the supermarket. All her groceries tumble to the floor.

The relationship between participants is distant- they did not know each other before and the level of seriousness is light. The following table shows how many participants responded and how many strategies they used. As is shown in the Table 2, each respondent used more than 1 strategy on average. Such a high number of strategies would be expected if the situation was more severe (if the respondent bumped into the elderly lady on purpose) and further results will show that the proposition of Holmes about this offense as being light might be improper. The general tendency of IFIDs to be the most applied strategies is also shown in the Table 2. The second mostly used strategy in the Situation 1 is the Offer of repair. This strategy has been chosen for showing politeness and “paying” for the damage. Repair was mostly expressed through helping the lady to get her groceries back into basket. The types of offers provided are: picking all the items from the ground (sometimes specified as drinks or foods) by 14 respondents or helping lady to get into car (2 respondents). One respondent offered paying for lady’s groceries, and 4 respondents offered help in general.

(11) **Table 2:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 1

Number of participants	23	
Total number of strategies in Situation 1	53	
1. IFIDs	22	41.5%
IFID sub-strategies: number of responses	Expression of regret	17
	Offer of apology	5
	Request for forgiveness	0

2. Explanation or account	3	5.7%
3. ToR	2	3.8%
ToR sub-strategies	Explicit self-blame	1
	Expressing that hearer is entitled to get apology	1
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	20	37.7%
7. Concern for hearer	6	11.3%

The strategy called Explanation or account has been provided through utterances such as: *I wasn't watching where I was going, I wasn't looking, or I didn't see you there.* When it comes to Concern for hearer strategy, the most common application was through interrogative sentences such as *Are you okay?* (5 respondents) or *all right* (1 respondent). Concerns for hearer intensify the overall apology of the respondent when combined with other strategies (Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984). This means that such strategies upgrade the intensity of apology which leads to higher probability of its acceptance by H. In this situation, Concern for hearer strategy has the highest percentage of occurrence among all the other situations. The mostly applied sub-strategy of IFIDs was expression of regret, where the ritualized structure *I am so sorry* was the most common one. The intensifying adverbial *so* accompanies 14 out of 17 of the IFID sub-strategy responses, High usage of adverbials also supports saving of the H' (in this case lady's) face and intensifies the apology performed. Another adverbial was *terribly*, which accompanied offer of apology sub-strategy:

(12) *Oh my! I am so terribly sorry...*

This adverbial has even stronger effect on the apology presentation and on the face-saving behaviour of the respondent. Another expression was the exclamation starting with *Oh* (2 respondents), followed with *my* (2 respondents), *my goodness* (1 respondent) and *no* (1 respondent). As mentioned in 3.7, these explicit emotional expressions are common in the English-speaking world. With other exclamation such as *Ooops* (used by 1 respondent), these expressions indicate unintentional cause of bumping into lady:

(13) *Ooops! I am so sorry, let me pick it up for you. That was completely my fault, are you okay?*

One respondent addressed the lady as Miss. Explicit self-blame sub-strategy has been shown through phrase *That was completely my fault* followed. The expression that lady has right to get apology has been shown indirectly, when one when respondent admitted that he should have looked where he was going.

(14) *I'm so sorry, I should look where I'm going, let me help you with that.*

The generic structure of the apology performed by English speakers in Situation 1 can be formulated as: *I am so sorry* (intensified IFID). *I wasn't looking where I was going* (Explanation or account), *let me help you* (Offer of repair), *are you okay?* (Concern for hearer)

6.2 Situation 2: English responses

The second situation is worded as follows:

You are a mathematics teacher. Your student finds that you accidentally marked the answer in their test as incorrect even though their result was fine

In this situation, the power-distance relationship between participants is called middle, since there is a level of deference between the student and the teacher, but at the same time, they are acquaintances. When comparing to the first situation, the total number of strategies applied is smaller since (one respondent commented he would only correct the mistake straight away).

(15) **Table 3:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 2

Number of participants	23
Total number of strategies in Situation 2	47

1. IFIDs	17	36.2%
IFID-substrategies	Expression of regret	10
	Offer of apology	7
	Request for forgiveness	0
2. Explanation or account	4	8.5%
3. ToR	7	14.9%
ToR sub-strategy	Explicit self- blame	5
	Lack of intention	1
	Expressing that hearer is entitled to get apology	1
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	19	40.4%
7. Concern for hearer	0	0%

Despite the teacher's superiority over the students, the Offer of repair strategy was applied 19 times, outnumbering the IFID strategy. The repair of damage has been done by correcting the mistake in all responses. The IFID's offer of apology sub-strategy has been used the most, similarly as in Situation 1. However, the number of intensifiers has been dramatically lower compared to Situation 1 and intensifying Concern for hearer super strategy was not applied at all. The intensification through the adverbial *so* has not been used in any response. The only intensification used is *really* (by one respondent). What was used instead on intensification were the clauses showing that student was right in his complaint, such as *You are right*:

(16) "***You're right***, my apologies. I must have just missed that part accidentally!"

(17) "*Oh really? Let's see... Oh yes, **you're right**. Sorry about that. Let me adjust your grade.*"

Some respondents went even further and thanked the student for pointing out his mistake. Similarly, as in the Situation 1, the expressions of regret were accompanied with emotional exclamations such as *Oh* (5 respondents) or *Ah* (1 respondent). In case of *Oh* exclamations, these were followed with expressions such as *dear*, *look*, or *yes* (all three used only once in the responses). In one case, exclamation *oh* has been followed with expression *my bad*, which is regarded as indirect self-blame strategy.

(18) *Oh my bad, let me correct that for you now.*

However, other self-blames were expressed explicitly though admitting that the teacher made a mistake. The expression used to express self-blame were: *My mistake* (3 responses), or *That is completely my fault*. In 3 cases, the expression of self-blame was preceded with IFID, as in this response:

(19) *Ah sorry! my mistake, these things happen.*

The respondents also put emphasis on the fact that the mistake was done by an accident using adverb *accidentally* (accidentally). An indirect downgrading of offence occurred in utterance such as: *Nobody is perfect*. Other utterances of the similar kind were:

Everybody makes mistakes (1 response) or *These things happen* (1 response). Moreover, one respondent applied humour to downgrade the severeness of offense and offered reward for the student in the form of sending letter home:

(20) *"I can't apologise enough. I hold my hands up, that is completely my fault. If I could give you an extra point on the test for sporting that, I would! Let me give you a letter home instead, to tell your parents how you managed to spot your mistake even when I couldn't. Adults aren't always in the right haha*

Humour also indicates that respondent preferred positive politeness rather than deference, which was the second time positive politeness was preferred over negative in this situation. Very interestingly, two respondents requested the student to show them his test to check if they really made the mistake. Such request indicates teacher's superiority and tendency to doubt student's claim that causes face-threat to the teacher.

(21) *Really, show me? Oh look sorry my mistake I'll fix it now.*

(22) *"Oh really? Let's see... Oh yes, you're right. Sorry about that. Let me adjust your grade."*

The generic structure of the apology performed by the English speakers in Situation 2 can be formulated as following: Oh, I am so sorry (IFID), my mistake (ToR), let me correct that for you (Offer of repair).

6.3 Situation 3: English responses

The third situation has this wording:

Your best friend has a job interview and you spilled coffee over their shirt 5 minutes before his leaving for the interview

In this case, the power-distance relationship is different when comparing with the previous situations. The participants are close friends and the relationship between participants is also defined as close. However, the offense committed is regarded as severe since respondent's situational best friend is about to leave for interview and has very small-time reserve. As Holmes mentioned, the offenses such as spilling coffee on someone are regarded as more severe depending on the context- if the offense is caused before the important meeting, the offense is heavy; if the individual is staying at home, the offense is considered as light (Holmes, 1990, 183). The IFIDs and the Offer of repair are the mostly used strategies. Even though it was the respondent who spilled the liquid, there were only 4 strategies of Taking of responsibility applied and only 1 Concern for hearer shown towards the friend. The Explanation has been provided indirectly (*It was a complete accident*), which was chosen by respondent to downgrade the offense. Other respondent used this strategy explicitly:

(23) *I've spilt coffee on your shirt.*

The mostly used IFID is the expression of regret. In majority of cases (15 responses out of 19), expression *I am sorry* was accompanied with intensifying adverbial *so*. The preceding emotional exclamations *Oh* and *Aah* were accompanied with these varieties: *oh my, oh my god, oh no* or *oh my gosh*. Another interesting lexical expression was usage of curse words such as *fuck* or indication of curse words using 4 asterisks and exclamation mark. (*****)

(24) Table 4: Distribution of strategies and sub strategies in Situation 3

Number of participants	23
Total number of strategies in Situation 3	44

IFID	19	43.2%
IFID substrategies	Expression of regret	18
	Offer of apology	1
	Request for forgiveness	0
1. Explanation or account	2	4.5%
2. ToR	4	9%
ToR sub-strategies	Expression of self-dispraise	2
	Lack of intention	2
3. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
4. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
5. Offer of repair	18	41%
6. Concern for hearer	1	2.3%

The Situation 3 is the first where such lexical item was chosen. It is because of the tendency to use more relaxed vocabulary in front of the people we know. Curse words are in-group markers that belong to the solidarity strategy and respondents use such expressions to show their awareness of the offense caused. These emotional expressions also downgrade the offense and are chosen on purpose. Respondents shown the sign of familiarity by referring to their best friends as *man, bro* or *mate*. Humour has been chosen by one respondent to downgrade the offense and save the hearer's face before his interview starts:

(25) *Oh no! I am so sorry! Here, take my shirt or I can lend you another shirt if you'd like, my apartment is 3 minutes from here. No? Just tell the interviewer that you have a clumsy friend.*

(26) *I'm sure they are going to understand and laugh about it.*

2 respondents used the sub-strategy of lack of intention through the routinized expression: *I didn't mean to*. Self-dispraise has been shown through utterances such as, *I'm such a clumsy idiot* or *I am the worst*. Offer of repair has been mostly provided by suggestion of lending the shirt or taking respondent's shirt in general (17 responses). The strategies were also enriched with utterances such as *good luck* or with calming down their friend by saying *everything* will be okay. Such responses refer to the positive politeness (especially as inclusion, attention towards the H or friendliness).

(27) *Oh my god, I am so so so sorry, I'm such a clumsy idiot. Let me find you a spare shirt, everything will be okay.*

The generic structure of the apology performed by English speakers in Situation 3 can be formulated as following: *Oh, I am so sorry (IFID), let me lend you my shirt (Offer of repair).*

6.4 Situation 4: English responses

Situation 4 was worded as follows:

You are a waiter and you forgot to serve your customer. Your customer is waiting for you more than 20 minutes.

The relationship between participants is based on a social distance, since the waiter and the customer did not know each other. Interestingly, the smallest number of apology strategies has been applied in this situation. Two respondents decided not to apologize at all and only thanked the customer for waiting. One of them offered one drink on the house, the other directly asked for customer's order:

(28) *"Hi, thank you for waiting, what can I get you? First drink is on the house.*

(29) *Hello, thank you for your patience! What may I get for you?*

Only 3 out of 7 apology strategies were applied, which indicates that respondents considered the offense as light, not as medium. The most frequent strategy is IFID, followed with Offer of repair and Explanation or account. Explanation was expressed by 3 respondents through claiming that the restaurant is busy that day, other 2 respondents mentioned that cause of delay is that they are understaffed and only one respondent admitted directly that he forgot to serve the customer:

(30) *I apologize for the long wait. I completely forgot. I will do my best to ensure the rest of your dining experience is optimal.*

5 respondents started their discourse with greetings such as *hi, hello* or *good afternoon*. Offer of repair was performed through suggesting food or drink for free or giving a discount on the order (9 respondents). Since the seriousness of offense is medium, (the waiter did not cause any material damage as potential physical harm to anyone as in Situation 1), no Concern for hearer has been expressed.

(31) **Table 5:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 4

Number of participants	23
Total number of strategies in Situation 4	39

1. IFIDs	21	53.8%
IFID sub-strategies	Expression of regret	5
	Offer of apology	15
	Request for forgiveness	1
2. Explanation or account	7	18%
3. ToR	0	0%
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%

5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	11	28.2%
7. Concern for hearer	0	0%

The most frequent sub-strategy is the Offer of apology Performative verb *apologize* was preceded in 3 cases with pronoun *My* (*My apologies*), in 1 case intensified with adjective *sincere*.

(32) *My sincere apologies, we are really understaffed what can I get for you?*

One respondent decided to use adjective *big* for intensification of his apology.

(33) **Big big big** *apologies for making you wait, it's been really busy, is there anything you would like to order now?*

In case of the expression of regret sub-strategy, the performative verb *sorry* was intensified with adverb *so* in 3 cases, in one case with adverb *terribly*. Situation 4 is one of the few situations where also the third sub-strategy, request for forgiveness, was applied by native speakers of English. This strategy suggests formality in this specific situation and points out the deference between waiter and customer, who tries to minimize face-threatening impact on their face:

(34) *Good afternoon, please accept my apologies for not serving you sooner, we are unfortunately short-staffed at the moment. If you wish, I would like to offer you a complimentary coffee on the house, as an apology.*

Interestingly, despite causing offense towards the customer, no respondent applied ToR strategy. The generic structure of apology performed by the English speakers in the Situation 4 can be formulated as following: *My apologies (IFID), we are busy today (Explanation or account), can I offer you a drink on the house (Offer of repair)?*

6.5 Situation 5: English responses

The situation 5 is worded as follows: *Your mobile phone is out of battery, and you ask your brother to lend you his phone. Accidentally, you drop it and the display breaks.*

The power-distance relationship is based on the closeness- the offense has been committed by the respondent (sibling) towards their brother and the seriousness of the offence is high, since the respondent caused material damage of the gadget. As a result of such severity, the prevailing strategy is the Offer of repair followed with the IFID. ToR has been chosen frequently as well. The Offer of Repair was expressed mostly by the respondents' willingness to pay the damaged screen (10 responses), in one case even directly buying a new phone. Other common offer of repair was suggestion of fixing the phone, without further specification of how (6 responses). The least chosen strategy was the Explanation or Account. This strategy was expressed mainly by pointing out that the mobile has been dropped by accident, which intends to downgrade the S's responsibility (3 responses). Other explanation was the slipping of the phone out of the respondent's hand. In one case, respondent chose combination of both accounts:

(35) *I'm so sorry, I accidentally dropped your phone, it slipped out of my hand I didn't mean to break it, I'm willing to pay for the damage.*

(36) **Table 6:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 5

Number of participants	23
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Total number of strategies in Situation 5	50
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1. IFIDs	17	34%
IFID substrategy	Expression of regret	15
	Offer of apology	2
	Request for forgiveness	0
2. Explanation or account	4	8%
3. ToR	9	18
ToR sub-strategy	Explicit self-blame	3
	Lack of intention	6
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	20	40%
7. Concern for hearer	0	0%

The most common sub-strategy of IFIDs used in this situation is the expression of regret, uttered through ritualized expression *I am sorry*. This utterance was frequently accompanied with adverbials of intensification such as: *so* (7 responses), *terribly* (1 response), *really* (1 response), or it was even preceded with the whole phrase as in following example:

(37) **Bro I've had a nightmare**, I'm so sorry man I accidentally dropped your phone and the screen is broken but don't worry I'm going to get it fixed **asap** and sort it out

This respondent also used acronym *asap*, which emphasizes the severity of offense, since the problem with broken phone needs to be solved in short time. Exclamation *Oh* was another common lexical expression preceding the apology, resulting from the unintentional damage. This emotional expression was used as a part of expressions such as: *oh my god*, *oh shit* or *oh no*. Expressions used to refer to the closeness between respondent and his brother were also common, especially *bruh*, *bro*, or *man*.

In-group markers such as curse word *shit* (used by 2 respondents) indicate the familiarity and solidarity orientation between the participant and his/her friend:

(38) **Oh shit** sorry! Let me know how much to repair it if you do

(39) **Shit...** I'm sorry my hand must have slipped. I'll get it fixed or replace it for you.

Explicit self-blame was expressed through utterances such as *my fault*, *my bad*, which were intensified with adverbs such as *completely*.

(40) **Completely my fault** so I would offer to pay for the repair straight away.

(41) I am so sorry, **my bad**, I'll get it fixed tomorrow don't worry

Lack of intention was expressed through prototypical phrase *I didn't mean to* (in 3 responses) or *I was an accident* that indirectly points to unintentionality of the offense *causa*. Other ToR sub- strategies have not been applied.

The generic structure of apology performed by the English speakers in the Situation 5 can be formulated as following: *I am so sorry (IFID), I accidentally broke your phone (Explanation or account), I will pay for the repair (Offer of repair).*

6.6 Situation 6: English responses

Situation 6 is worded as follows: *You are a staff manager who arranged an interview with a job applicant. However, you fell asleep and arrived to work with 40 minutes delay. The job applicant is already waiting in your office.*

In this situation, relationship between participants is again distant and defined as high-low, where it is the staff manager who causes the medium offence. The most common strategy is IFID due to negative politeness, since there is relationship of deference between S and H. Most of the IFIDs were followed with the Expression or account, where respondents stated their reasons for being late.

(42) **Table 7:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 6

Number of participants	23
Total number of strategies in Situation 6	42

1. IFIDs	22	52.4%
IFID substrategy	Expression of regret	11
	Offer of apology	9
	Request for forgiveness	2
2. Explanation or account	11	26.2%
3. ToR	4	9.5%
ToR sub-strategy	Explicit self-blame	4
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	3	7.1%
7. Concern for hearer	2	4.8%

Even though respondents should be in a role of causing this inconvenience and therefore, I presupposed they would apply the ToR strategy frequently, this strategy has been chosen only four times. Several respondents even decided to start the interview right away (5 responses). When it comes to Explanation or account, the most common reasons for being late are being in hurry in the morning (3 responses), oversleeping (3 responses) or non-further specified circumstances. The Concern for hearer strategy has been expressed by 2 respondents through almost the same utterances: they were interested if anybody has welcomed the applicant and asked him if they want something to eat and drink.

(43) "Hello! Welcome to ___. Has anybody welcomed you in yet? I am so sorry to keep you waiting- this would never usually happen. I had a last minute personal issue at home which completely threw everything off. I really do appreciate you waiting. Shall we commence right away? **Can I get you anything to drink?**"

(44) "Hi, good morning, I'm so sorry I'm late. Very unprofessional of me, I know. Has anyone come to check on you? **Can I get you something to drink?**"

Two respondents decided to lie about the real reason for their delay to look professional. Such expressions are used to save S's face and they bring the information that S understands the severity of the offence, which is improper to happen from their position.

(45) Apologise and make an excuse that I was busy in a meeting **to try to keep looking professional.**

(46) Apologise for being late and **tell a white lie about why I was late.**

Other respondent didn't choose any of the strategies and decided to reschedule the interview instead:

(47) *I would feel very bad and attempt to reschedule the interview.*

The offer of apology through performative verb *apologize* was followed by 4 respondents with explanatory constructions as: *for tardiness* (2 responses), *lateness* (1 response) or *for being late* (2 response). Majority of respondents decided to combine this sub-strategy with the expression of regret sub-strategy. Performative verb *sorry* was similarly as in previous situations followed and intensified with the adverb *so* (5 responses) or with other adverbs such as *extremely* (1 response) or *sincerely* (1 response).

(48) *Hello, I am **sincerely** sorry for such a big delay of mine. This is extremely unprofessional of me and has never happened to me before. Please accept my humble apologies. Are you available to do the whole interview despite my delay?*

2 participants have chosen request for forgiveness sub-strategy: one respondent used performative verb *forgive* and addressed the job applicant as Ms/Mrs:

(49) **Forgive my lack of punctuality** Ms/Mr. *As you have been here for some time already, I won't take too much of your time.*

The other respondent used expression *please*, which indicates his interest in H's acceptance of apology:

(50) **Please** accept my humble apologies.

The only applied sub-strategy of ToR is explicit-self-blame sub-strategy. 4 respondents, including example 68, criticised themselves by admitting the unprofessional behaviour:

(51) *I am so sorry that was extremely **unprofessional of me.***

(52) *I'm so sorry I'm late **I realise it's not very professional** of but I had a bit of a nightmare of a morning. I hope this won't reflect badly on the company as it was completely my fault I apologise.*

As can be indicated in these responses, some of them were introduced with greetings (*Hello, Hi*). Similar initiation of discourse happened overall in 5 responses. The usage of the same adjective may indicate that this expression is routinized to use in similar situations as a lexical face-saving tool. The generic structure of apology performed by the English speakers in the Situation 5 can be formulated as following: *Hello, I am so sorry (IFID), I was in hurry in the morning (Explanation or account).*

6.7 Situation 1: Slovak responses

The first situation is the same as was in English. Its Slovak replication is worded as follows: *V supermarkete ste narazili do staršej pani. Celý jej nákup sa vysypal na zem*

Similarly, as in English version, the most common strategy is the IFID followed with Offer of repair. However, Concern for hearer is used less frequently by Slovak respondents compared with the native speakers of English. This strategy was expressed directly, through the interrogative utterance *Ste v poriadku?* (*Are you okay?*). On the other hand, more ToR strategies were chosen by Slovaks than by native speakers of English. The Explanation or account was expressed by 2 respondents through pointing to the fact the S didn't notice the lady (*Nevšimol som si vás. - I didn't notice you*). No respondent addressed the lady as *Miss* as happened in English responses. Several respondents didn't answer in the first person, but they rather described what would they do if they bumped into lady in real life:

(53) *Pani by som sa ospravedlnila a pomohla nákup pozbierať.* (*I would apologize to the lady and help her pick up her groceries*)

(54) **Table 8:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 1 in Slovak version

Number of participants	24
Total number of strategies in Situation 1	58

1. IFIDs	29	50%
IFID sub-strategies	Expression of regret	5
	Offer of apology	12
	Request for forgiveness	12
2. Explanation or account	3	5.2%
3. ToR strategy	5	8.6%
ToR sub-strategy	Explicit self-blame	1
	Lack of intention	4
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	20	34.5%
7. Concern for hearer	1	1.7%

Offer of repair has been demonstrated through offering help to get lady's groceries back into her basket (19 times), sometimes accompanied with paying for the damaged items or accompanying lady to the car. The most frequent sub-strategies of IFID are the offer of apology and the request for forgiveness. In 3 responses, these two sub-strategies were combined together:

(55) *Veľmi sa ospravedlňujem, neviem kde mám oči, asi na chrbte. Prepáčte mi... niekedy som ako taký slon v porceláne!* (*I apologize a lot, I don't where I have my eyes, probably on the back. I am sorry... sometimes I behave as a bull in the china shop*)

(56) *Jáááj, prepáčte. Veľmi sa ospravedlňujem. Pomôžem Vám to pozbierať. (Oh, sorry. I apologize a lot. Let me help you pick the items up.)*

The request for forgiveness was expressed also through routinized expression pardon, which was in 2 responses combined with other IFID sub-strategies:

(57) *Pardón, ospravedlňujem sa (Pardon, my apologies).*

The performative verb *ospravedlniť sa* (apologize) has been accompanied with adverbs of intensification such as *veľmi* (a lot) or *moc* (so much). Few responses were preceded with exclamations such as *Joj* or *Jááj* (as was shown in example (58))

(58) *JÓJ! Prepáčte veľmi. Pozbieram vám to. (OH! I am really sorry. I will pick it up for you.*

In one response, the expression *pardon* was repeated three times:

(59) *pardon, pardon, pardon nechcela som (pardon pardon pardon, I didn't mean to.)*

The ToR was expressed through sub-strategy of explicit self-blame only in one case.

(60) *Ste v poriadku? Veľmi má to mrzí. Celá situácia nastala kvôli mojej nepozornosti. Ukážte, pozbieram to. (Are you okay? I am really sorry. The whole situation happened because of my inattention. Let me pick it up for you.)*

Speaker admitted that it was him who caused the offense and if he was more attentive, nothing would happen. However, the most common sub-strategy of ToR is the lack of intention, which was expressed through speaker's claim that he didn't want to bump into lady: *nechcel/sa som, (I didn't mean to).*

The generic structure of apology performed by the Slovak speakers in the Situation 1 can be formulated as follows: *Prepáčte v/veľmi sa ospravedlňujem (IFID), nechcela som (ToR), ukážte, pomôžem Vám to pozbierať (offer of repair).* (I am really sorry/I apologize a lot, I didn't mean to, let me help you with that.)

6.8 Situation 2: Slovak responses

Situation 2 has its Slovak wording as follows: *Ste učiteľkou/učiteľom matematiky. Váš študent zistí, že ste omylom označili jeho/jej odpoveď v teste za nesprávnu, hoci jeho/jej výsledok bol v poriadku.*

When comparing with the English version, where the most common strategy was the Offer of repair, Slovak respondents decided for the IFID strategy in most of the cases. The Offer of repair has been shown through fixing the grade in 13 responses. The Explanation or Account has been expressed by: not noticing the mistake (*nevšimla/nevšimol som - I didn't notice*) or by directly admitting that the teacher made mistake (*pomýlil/a som sa - I made a mistake*). This type of direct and explicit expression, typical for apologies provided by Slavic Ss was mentioned in the section 3.8 and occurred in majority of Explicit-self blames. Interestingly, two Ss used the same Slovak idiom (*aj majster tesár sa utne - in English, this could be translated as even professionals make mistakes*). This expression was chosen by respondents to minimize face-threatening effect and to downgrade their mistake:

(61) *Och, prepáč, to som si nevšimol. Predsa aj majster tesár sa niekedy utne. (Oh, I am sorry, I didn't notice. You know, everybody makes mistakes).*

(62) *Paľko ospravedlňujem sa ti. Vieš ako sa hovorí, aj majster tesár sa niekedy utne. My ľudia sme omylné stvorenia. Mám pre teba dobrú správu. Tvoje riešenie je správne. (Paul, I apologize. You know, everybody makes mistakes, We, humans, are erroneous creatures. I have good news for you. Your answer is correct.)*

Similar expression was used by other respondent, who, however, did not apply any idiom, but directly pointed to the fact nobody is perfect:

(63) *Tak deti. Ani ja nie som dokonalá ako každá iná ľudská bytosť. Čo je ale viac dôležité je priznať si chybu. Hovorím to všetkým, aby ste si to uvedomili. Týmto sa ti chcem takto ospravedlniť, ale aj tak ti ten bod navyše nezmení známku.*

(Well, students, I am not perfect as well as no other human being is. What is important is to admit we made a mistake. I am telling thus to all of you to realize this fact. I would like to apologize, however, that one point still cannot change your final grade).

Another interesting point is that only one respondent used different T/V distinction and addressed his student in more formal way (in Slovak, such formality is expressed using pronoun in form of second- person pl.), which emphasizes his attitude of deference towards students and negative politeness preference:

(64) *Prepáčte, pomýlila som sa. Moja chyba, váš výsledok je správny. (I am sorry, I made a mistake. My bad, Your result is correct).*⁷

One respondent answered with the expression *Stane sa* (*Accident happens*), which indirectly refers to the awareness of their mistake. Overall, positive politeness strategy was prevailing one (referring to names, usage of idiom). No Slovak respondent doubted the students request of re-evaluating his test as it was sometimes performed by native speakers of English.

(65) **Table 9:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 2 in Slovak version

Number of participants	24
Total number of strategies in Situation 2	45

1. IFIDs	19	42.2%
IFID-substrategies	Expression of regret	1
	Offer of apology	11
	Request for forgiveness	7
2. Explanation or account	8	17.8%
3. ToR	5	11.1%
ToR sub-strategy	Explicit self-blame	5
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	13	28.9%
7. Concern for hearer	0	0%

The most common strategy was the offer of apology, followed with the request for forgiveness. This sub-strategy was usually expressed through verb *prepáčiť* (*sorry*) and was followed with the Explanation or account strategy in 5 responses. Some of them

⁷ Since T/V distinction is not marked with any morphology in English, I decided to capitalize the pronoun *Your* to make a clear distinction from the other responses

were preceded with emotional exclamations such as *jáááj* or *och*:

(66) *Jáááj, prepáč. Máš to správne. Pripisujem ti body.*

(*Yeey, sorry. You have it done correctly. I will give you the points*)

Only one respondent chose the expression of regret sub-strategy, which was followed with offer of repair

(67) *To ma mrzí, hneď to opravím.*

(*I feel sorry, I correct it immediately.*)

In contrast, this sub-strategy was the mostly applied in English version

The offer of apology was expressed through the routinized formula *ospravedlnit' sa* (to apologize) which was enforced with intensification only in one response.

(68) *Veľmi sa ospravedlňujem, ale musela som to prehliadnuť. Hneď to opravím.*

(*I apologize a lot, but I must have overseen the mistake. I will correct it immediately.*)

The only ToR sub-strategy used in the Situation 2 was explicit self-blame. Respondents expressed that it was them who made the mistake and therefore fulfilled the condition of apologising- awareness of committing the offense that happened before the moment of speaking. The variations of explicit self-blame used are: *moja chyba* (*my bad*) or *chyba na mojej strane* (*my fault*). The generic structure of apology performed by the Slovak speakers in the Situation2 can be formulated as followed: *Och prepáč* (IFID), *pomýlila som* (*Explanation or account*), *hneď to opravím* (*Offer of repair*). (*Oh, I am sorry, I made a mistake, let me correct that for you*).

6.9 Situation 3: Slovak responses

Situation 3 was in Slovak version worded as follows: *Váš najlepší priateľ má pracovný pohovor. 5 minút pred jeho/jej odchodom na pohovor ste mu/jej vyliali kávu na košeľu.*

This situation was represented by the social closeness between participants. All respondents applied second-person singular form and used vocabulary which signals familiarity between respondents by addressing the H such as *kamoško* (equivalent to English *bro*). This level of familiarity refers to the positive politeness as it was present in English responses. Another similarity with the English responses was the usage of curse words for the first time (curse word such as *kurva- fuck*). The strategy of IFID was applied more frequently by Slovak respondents comparing with the native speakers of English (29 versus 19). No Explanation or account strategy or the Concern for hearer were applied. After the IFID strategy, Slovaks applied very often the Offer of repair. This strategy was expressed through lending clothes, swapping the shirt with the friend or through buying a new shirt.⁸ Another common form of the offer of repair was suggestion to clean the blot (4 responses). (69) *Ježiš, prepáč, strašne ma to mrzí! Pod'me to skúsiť vyčistiť'. (Jesus, I am sorry, I'm so sorry! Let's try to clean it.)*

(70) **Table 10:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 3 in Slovak version

Number of participants	24
Total number of strategies in Situation 3	50

1. IFIDs	29	58%
IFID substrategy	Expression of regret	12

⁸ When it comes to what type of clothes, Slovaks were more specific in this case than English speakers- they decided to lend either jacket (3 responses), shirt (6 responses), or T-shirt (1 response).

	Offer of apology	5
	Request for forgiveness	12
2. Explanation or account	0	0%
3. ToR	5	10%
ToR sub-strategy	Lack of intention	3
	Expression of self-dispraise	2
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	16	32%
7. Concern for hearer	0	0%

The mostly applied IFID sub-strategies were the request for forgiveness using the only the imperative verb *prepáčit'* (*excuse*) and the expression of regret. This sub-strategy was performed through performative verbs *mrziť* (*to feel sorry*) (in 3 responses) or by expressing *byť ľúto* (*to regret*) (also in 3 responses). In one case, respondent used English form of the *prepáčit'*- *sorry*, which is perceived as a part of slang vocabulary and refers to the familiarity between participants. Some responses were preceded with emotional exclamations such as *ježiš* (*jesus*) (or *preboha* (*oh my God*) that indicate unintentionality of the offence since the S is surprised of what he has done. The offer of apology was expressed with a verb *ospravedlniť sa* (*to apologize*) and in one response, respondent combined this sub-strategy with sub-strategy of expression of regret:

(71) *Ospravedlňujem sa! Je mi to ľúto.* (*I apologize! I regret that.*)

One respondent claimed that no excuse could fix the damage caused, which signals their awareness of the severity of offense:

(72) *Na toto neexistuje ospravedlnenie.* (*There is no excuse for what happened.*)

Same respondent added the expression which evokes humour and downgrades the seriousness of offense.

(73) *Tu máš moju košelu rýchlo sa prezleč a bež. Aj tak vyzeráš sexi.* (*Here, take my shirt and get dressed quickly. But still, you look sexy.*)

Lack of intention was expressed through the routinized utterance *I didn't mean to*, which was in one case preceded with vulgar exclamation *och kurva* (*oh fuck*).

(74) *Och kurva to som nechcel. Prepáč. Nezabíjaj ma. Požičiam ti moju košelu.* (*Oh fuck, I didn't mean to. Sorry. Don't kill me. I lend you mine.*)

Self-dispraise was expressed through routinised utterance such as *I am such an idiot*, which was intensified with exclamation *jesus* (*ježiš*) or by pointing to the clumsiness of speaker: (75) *Ježiš prepáč! Som ale gramb'ový...* (*Jesus, sorry! I am so clumsy...!*)

The generic structure of apology performed by the Slovak speakers in the Situation 3 can be formulated as followed: *Ježiš, prepáč* (IFID) *zober si nejakú košelu odo mňa.* (*Offer of repair*). (*Jesus, I am sorry, take some shirt from me*).

6.10 Situation 4: Slovak responses

Situation number 4 was in Slovak version worded as follows: *Ste čašník/čašníčka a zabudli ste obslúžiť svojho zákazníka. Čaká na vás viac ako 20 minút.*

Same as in the English version, the most common strategy chosen by Slovaks was the IFID followed with Offer of repair. However, Slovaks applied more apology strategies in total compared with the English respondents. They applied more IFIDs, Offers of repair and they also applied ToR (which wasn't applied in English counter-version). The Explanation or account was expressed by admitting directly that the waiter/waitress forget about the customer (5 responses)

(76) *Veľmi sa ospravedlňujem, máme plno zabudla som na Vás. (I apologize a lot, we are full today, I forgot about you.)*

As in the Situation 1, the T/V distinction between customer and waiter/waitress was used to point out their social distance. Moreover, 7 respondents used capitalization when addressing the customer (*Vám, Vás- You, to You*). This capitalization is used to emphasize deference in the Slovak language, especially when used in a written form, and confirms a negative-politeness tendency in situations of a social distance. As in the English DCT version, the Offer of repair was expressed by offering a free order of meal or drink or by giving 50% discount. Interestingly, 3 respondents put into brackets that they would offer free meal or discount only if the restaurant allows such compensation.

(77) **Table 11:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 4 in Slovak version

Number of participants	24
Total number of strategies in Situation 4	47

1. IFIDs	25	53.2%
IFID-substrategies	Expression of regret	5
	Offer of repair	13
	Request for forgiveness	7
2. Explanation or account	8	17%
3. ToR	1	2.1%
ToR sub-strategy	Expressing that hearers is entitled to get apology	1
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	13	27.7%
7. Concern for hearer	0	0%

The most common sub-strategy of IFID was the offer of apology, which is completely opposite situation as in English version, where the expression of regret sub-strategy was the most chosen one. As in other situations, performative verb used to offer an apology was routinised verb *ospravedlniť* (to apologize), which was intensified with adverb *veľmi* (a lot) in 5 cases to upgrade the whole apology. In 2 cases, offer of apology was preceded with greeting *Dobrý deň* (Good afternoon):

(78) **Dobrý deň** ospravedlňujem sa dnes je tu veľa hostí, na bare sa snažia pripravovať objednávky ako najrýchlejšie sa dá, tak to chvíľu trvalo hneď vám donesiem tu vašu. Ďakujem za pochopenie.

(Good afternoon, I apologize, today we have lots of customers, our staff is trying their best to prepare the orders. I will bring you your order in a minute. Thank you for your understanding.)

(79) **Dobrý deň.** Ospravedlňujem sa za svoju nepozornosť. Rada by som vám to vynahradila vo forme dezertu na účet podniku. Ešte raz prepáčte

(Good afternoon. I apologize for overseeing you. I would be glad to compensate your waiting in form of the cake on the house. Once again, I am sorry.)

As we can notice in the example 114, combination of two IFID sub-strategies occurred. Such a combination of two sub-strategies is visible in 3 responses and was chosen to intensify the apologies. The request for forgiveness was expressed through the imperative verb *prepáčit'* (sorry). The expression of regret was expressed only by the verb *mrziť* (to feel sorry). In one response, this verb was preceded with intensification *neskutočne* (equivalent to English *extremely*) to upgrade the apology strategy as well:

(80) **Neskutočne** ma to mrzí, hneď vás obslúžim. (I feel extremely sorry, I will serve you in a minute).

Both sub-strategies were followed with explanation of the reason of their delay in 10 responses. The generic structure of apology performed by the Slovak speakers in the Situation 4 can be formulated as followed: *Veľmi sa ospravedlňujem (IFID) dovoľte mi Vám doniesť kávu na účet podniku (Offer of repair).* (I apologize a lot, let me serve You a cup of coffee on the house.)

6.11 Situation 5: Slovak responses

This situation was in Slovak version worded as follows:

Váš mobilný telefón je vybitý a požiadate brata, aby vám požičal svoj telefón. Omylom vám však spadne a rozbije sa displej.

In this situation, as we know already from the English version, the offense occurred between closely related people. The mostly applied strategy was the IFID followed with the Offer of repair. In English version, it was completely vice versa. Moreover, English speaking respondents did not apply the Concern for hearer strategy, as one Slovak respondent did. However, probably the most interesting fact is that in this situation, No taking of responsibility strategy was applied for the first time. The respondent applied this strategy to save his face, however, they threatened H's face by pointing that it is their sibling to be blamed for. The sub-strategy of No taking of responsibility used in this response is called Blame the hearer.

(81) *Usudzujem že sa to stane v tom danom momente kde bude i brat tak nebude čas tajne displej vymeniť u opravára aby si brat nič nevšimol. Mobil by som bratovi vrátil a navrhol mu že zaplatím za opravu. Popritom by som mu ale dal za vinu že za to môže on že mi ho zle podal, že ma vyrušil alebo niečo podobné aby som zmiernil jeho hnev.*

(I suppose that it would happen in the presence of my brother, so there won't be any time to get the display repaired at the repair shop without his notice. I would return the phone to my brother and suggest paying for the repair. However, I would blame him for passing me the phone improperly, or for disturbing me or something of that sort to alleviate his anger.)

The Explanation or account was expressed by admitting the hearer dropped the phone, in one case responded added that the phone broke.

(82) *Nooo vieš, tvoj telefón mi nejako spadol a rozbil sa. Sorry braček. Hneváš sa?*
(Weell, you know, your phone kinda dropped and broke. Sorry bro. Are you angry?)
 In this case, an indirect Concern for hearer strategy was expressed by asking the H if he/she is angry. Similarly, as in the English version, the Offer of repair has been expressed with offering to pay for the repair (12 responses), to buy a new phone (3 responses) or to swap their phones.

(83) **Table 12:** Distribution of super strategies and sub-strategies in Situation 5 in Slovak version

Number of participants	24
Total number of strategies in Situation 5	54

1. IFIDs	28	51.8%
IFID-substrategy	Expression of regret	15
	Offer of apology	3
	Request for forgiveness	10
2. Explanation or account	3	5.6%
3. ToR	7	12.9%
ToR sub-strategy	Explicit self-blame	1
	Lack of intention	6
4. No taking of responsibility	1	1.9%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	14	25.9%
7. Concern for hearer	1	1.9%

The mostly applied IFID sub-strategy was the expression of regret, which was in the English version used only twice. The prevailing IFID strategy in English version was offer of apology (used by 15 respondents), which was on contrary, used only three times in Slovak version. The expression of regret was expressed through English form of the verb *sorry*, *mrziet'* (*feel sorry*) and *byť ľúto* (*to regret*). In 3 cases, the expression of regret was combined with verb *prepáčiť'* (*sorry*) which is part of the request for forgiveness sub-strategy in order to upgrade the apology:

(84) Erik, **prepáč, strašne ma to mrzí**, ale rozbila som ti nechtiac mobil.

(Erik, I am sorry, I feel really sorry, but accidentally, I broke your phone).

(85) **Prepáč, nechtiac mi spadol tvoj telefón. Naozaj je mi to ľúto. Dám ti ho opraviť.**

(Sorry, I have accidentally dropped your phone. I really regret that. I get it repaired for you)

(86) **Prepáč, ale rozbil som ti displej na mobile. Je mi to veľmi ľúto a zaplatím ti to.**

(Sorry, but I broke the display on your phone. I really regret that, and I will pay for it.)

Since the social status is equal, I expected high occurrence of more familiar language expressions, including slang or curse words. Different exclamations were preceding the IFID sub-strategies, including: *uff*, *kokos* or *boha* (*kokos* and *boha* can be translated as *shut* or *damn*). Respondents referred to their brother using slang word *bráško* (*bro*), diminutive *braček* or even addressing the H with name (Erik). The mostly used ToR

sub-strategy was the Lack of intention, same as it was in the English version. This sub-strategy was expressed through the routinized expression *nechcel/a som* (I didn't mean to) in 5 responses. The routinized expressions were upgraded with adverbs *fakt* (really) and *vážne* (really). Another expression used as a part of Lack of intention sub-strategy is *I didn't do it on purpose*.

(87) *Je mi to veľmi veľmi ľúto, nespravila som to naschvál. Prosím ťa, prepáč mi. Dám to opraviť.* (I really really regret that. I didn't do it on purpose. Please, forgive me. I will get it fixed.)

Explicit self-blame was expressed with respondent's confession to be responsible for the damage:

(88) *Ospravedlnila by som sa a zaplatila mu opravu displeja, keďže je to moja vina.* (I would apologize and pay for the repair of the display, since it was my fault.)

The generic structure of apology performed by the Slovak speakers in the Situation 5 can be formulated as followed: *Prepáč(IFID), nechtiac som ti rozbil/a displej* (Explanation or account+ ToR) *dám ti ho opraviť* (Offer of repair). (Sorry, I accidentally broke the display on your phone, I get it fixed for you).

6.12 Situation 6: Slovak responses

In the Slovak version, this situation was worded as follows: *Ste personálnym manažérom, ktorý má dohodnutý pohovor s uchádzačom o prácu. Nechtiac ste však zaspali a do práce ste prišli so 40-minútovým meškaním. Uchádzač o prácu už čaká vo vašej kancelárii.*

The power distance relationship is marked with a distance between participants and the severeness of the offense committed is considered as medium. However, the number of strategies applied was relatively small (similar situation happened in English version, where number of strategies was even smaller). It may have been caused by the social position of the respondent, whose power is defined as high-low and therefore, respondent's delay is less face threatening due to the level of power he/she disposes. Despite this, IFID, as the most routinized apology strategy, was chosen the most by Slovak respondents. The other strategies were chosen occasionally within this situation. In half of the Explanation or account formulas, the reason for the delay was unspecified (personal issues, unexpected complication or something important got into way). The other reason for the delay was getting stuck in a traffic jam (3 responses); moreover, one respondent used a car accident as a reason for his delay:

(89) *Ospravedlňujem sa za meškanie. Na ceste ma zdržala dopravná nehoda. Hádám to chápete.* (I apologize for the delay. There was a car accident on my way here. I hope you understand).

One strategy of explanation or account was applied indirectly, being preceded with lexical expression *ved'* (you know) which signals features of positive politeness since the feature of inclusion is present:

(90) *Ospravedlňujem sa za meškanie. Ved' to poznáte, tie ranné zápchy.* (I apologize for the delay. You know, the morning traffics.)

Several responses were particularly long, applying 3 different apology strategies (the IFID, Explanation or account and ToR) which shows that respondent considers their delay as a serious offense to apologize for. In general, longer apologies tend to show more features of politeness and put more emphasis on face needs (Suszczyńska, 1999 1061).

(91) *Dobrý deň, želám. Budem k vám úprimná, vzhľadom na to, že si úprimnosť vážim. Zaspala som. Nebudem sa vyhovárať chyba nastala na mojej strane. Koniec koncov aj*

to sa stáva. Je to naprosto ľudské. **Prepáčte**, a ďakujem, že ste boli trpezliví a zostali. Každopádne hádam medzičasom z vás opadol stres a môžeme sa “vrhnúť” na pohovor.

(Good morning. I will be honest with you since I appreciate honesty. I fell asleep. I do not want to tell you run-arounds, it is my fault. After all, things like this happen. I am sorry and thank you for your patience. Anyway, I hope that in meantime, you shook off all the stress and we can jump right into the interview.

Several respondents also thanked the job applicant for waiting and initiated their response with greeting such as *dobrý deň/ dobré rano* (good morning/ good afternoon). Offer of repair was presented in form of offering a drink or snack. The Concern for hearer was expressed with respondent's interest in the applicant's time schedule since staff manager's delay may have caused time pressure on applicant's schedule.

(92) **Taktiež by som sa ho na začiatku opýtal či ho netlačí čas aby som mu zasa ja nespôsobil problémy ak mal napríklad naplánované hneď po pohovore iné veci.**

(At the beginning I would ask him if he were not under time pressure to not cause him more troubles in case he has something else planned after the interview etc.)

(93) **Table 13:** Distribution of super strategies and sub strategies in Situation 6 in Slovak version

Number of participants	24
Total number of strategies in Situation 6	43

1. IFIDs	24	55.8%
IFID sub-strategy	Expression of regret	4
	Offer of apology	18
	Request for forgiveness	2
2. Explanation or account	12	27.9%
3. ToR	1	2.3%
Taking on responsibility sub strategy	Explicit self-blame	1
4. No taking of responsibility	0	0%
5. Promise of forbearance	0	0%
6. Offer of repair	4	9.3%
7. Concern for hearer	2	4.7%

The offer of apology is the prevailing IFID sub-strategy, while in English version, it was the expression of regret. It was expressed through the routinized performative verb *ospravedlniť sa* which was followed in 8 cases with expression *za meškanie* (for the delay). Such high occurrence of this expression suggests its ritualization in situations with power-distance relationship as this. The verb *ospravedlniť sa* was preceded with intensifications such as *veľmi* (very) and *úprimne* (sincerely). 4 respondents referred to the job applicant with pronoun *you* in capital, emphasizing the deference between

interlocutors. The expression of regret sub-strategy was expressed through the utterance *byť ľúto* and *mrziet*.

The only response using ToR sub-strategy is shown in example (91).

The generic structure of apology performed by the Slovak speakers in the Situation 6 can be formulated as followed: *Dobrý deň, veľmi sa Vám ospravedlňujem, (IFID) mal/a som neočakavné komplikácie (Explanation or account).* (Good afternoon, I apologize a lot, I had faced unexpected complications.)

7 Results

The first research question:

What are the prevalent strategies in Slovak and English responses? Are there any differences between the overall strategy choices of Slovaks and native speakers of English?

The total number of strategies applied by native speakers of English is 275 and by Slovak respondents 294. Despite the difference of only one respondent more in Slovak version, Slovak strategies outnumbered the English by 18 strategies.

(94) **Table 14:** Overall distribution of strategies in English and Slovak response

Total number of strategies- English version		Total number of strategies- Slovak version	
IFIDS	118	IFIDS	153
Offer of repair	91	Offer of repair	80
Explanation or account	31	Explanation or account	34
ToR	26	ToR	24
Total	275	Total	294

In both versions, the most applied strategy was the IFID, followed with the Offer of repair, Explanation or account and by ToR. This approves Meier's claim about the routinized sequence of strategies- the most likely to occur as first are routine formulaic strategies with offers of repairs, and those to occur at last place are redressive and taking on responsibility strategies (1998, 216). The biggest contrast between the English and Slovak strategy distribution can be spotted in the number of IFID strategies. The English respondents applied more Offers of repair than Slovaks, which shows the higher interest in so called paying for the offense caused. In both versions, no Promise of forbearance strategy was applied. No taking of responsibility super-strategy was chosen only once, and it was in the Slovak version. When it comes to positive politeness strategies, there were also differences spotted in its usage. In the situations represented by the equal social status (Situation 3- best friend and Situation 5-sibling), the prevalent strategies for both, Slovaks and native speakers of English, were the positive politeness strategies (including features of inclusion, familiar language or humour). Slovaks applied positive politeness strategies also in the Situation 2 (teacher). This points to the equal distribution of positive and negative politeness in the Slovak apologies (3 situations with prevailing positive politeness, 3 situations with prevailing negative politeness) and to the predominance of negative politeness in English version. The tendency of native speakers of English to choose negative politeness strategy in majority of situations (Suszczyńska 1999; Wagner 2008) was also proven by high distribution of expression of regret sub-strategies. This sub-strategy is the most common

representative of negative politeness for English speakers (Suszczyńska 1999) and represents 65% of all the IFIDs in English responses. In Slovak responses, the expression of regret sub-strategy represents only 27% of all IFID sub-strategies. As Suszczyńska emphasized, apologies provided by Slavic speakers are more direct when compared with English. In Slovak, one of the verbs which emphasizes this feature is imperative verb *prepáčit'*, which is part of request for forgiveness sub-strategy. This sub-strategy was used in 50 Slovak response, while native speakers of English used this strategy only three times. When it comes to downgrading of the offenses, more downgrading strategies were used by the English respondents. As Al Masaeed et al. pointed, there can be spotted differences in speech act performances between one variation of English to other. As they noticed, the apology strategies of the American English tend to be even more explicit than those provided by British Ss (Al Masaeed et al., 2018, 99). 5 of my respondents are from America, so I looked at their apology strategies to find some differences. 3 out 5 American respondents didn't follow the condition of responding in the I-perspective, but rather described what they would do in given situations. Out of 15 British respondents', similar descriptive answers were provided only by 3 British respondents. However, to generalize the structures of their apologies a lot more respondents from Britain and America would be needed.

The second research question:

What intensification methods do Slovak and native speakers of English use in apologies?

As mentioned in chapter 4, intensification of apology is done through adverbials, by combination of strategies (especially of the IFID with at least one other super strategy) and by using the Concern for hearer strategy. Starting with the adverbs of intensification, English respondents used 55 adverbs of intensification in total and Slovak respondents used 36 in total. The smaller number of adverbs in Slovak responses may result due to stronger performative verbs in Slavic languages (Suszczyńska 1999) and therefore Slovak apologies do not tend to be combined with as much adverbials as in English case. The mostly used English intensifications were *so* (occurring in 41 responses, thus being the most frequent one), *really*, *terribly*, *extremely* and *sincerely*. Replication of adverb of intensification happened in three responses. In the Slovak case, the most frequent adverb of intensification was *veľmi* (*very*) used in 25 cases, followed with *moc* (*so much*), *strašne* (*very*) *neskutočne* (*extremely*) or *naozaj* (*really*). The replication of adverb happened only in one case by doubling adverb *veľmi* (as *veľmi veľmi*). The English strategies would be regarded as stronger if we considered only the number of intensifiers used. However, due to the stronger performatives in Slovak, analysing only number of adverbs would not provide enough evidence and it is needed to take into consideration other methods of intensification. The next method of intensification is a combination of the IFID with at least one strategy, which I decided to further divide into 2 groups, since many IFIDs were combined only with other IFID. Table 15 shows the differences in the distribution of combinations in Slovak and English version.⁹ After counting both types of strategy combinations, Slovaks provided (95)

Table 15: Combination of strategies in English and Slovak responses.

	English responses	Slovak response
IFID+IFID	8	24
IFID+ one or more strategies	102	94

⁹ IFIDs were usually combined with one other strategy, but in some cases, combinations with even three strategies occurred.

Total combinations	110	118
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more strategy combinations, which suggest their higher level of intensification. However, the difference is minor, and therefore English responses can be comparably considered as being upgraded. As a result, I also analysed the last method of intensification, which is usage of Concern for hearer super strategy. The native speakers of English applied 9 and Slovak respondents applied 4 Concern for hearer strategies. After summing up all the ways of intensification, Slovaks applied more combinations of IFID with other strategies while native speakers of English used more intensifications of apologies and Concern for hearer super-strategy and that is why their apologies are considered as more upgraded and therefore more likely to be accepted by the H. However, the number of combinations of the strategies was comparable with Slovak responses (difference is really minor) and therefore, more data would be needed to generalize the tendency of occurrence of more intensified English responses when comparing with Slovak ones.

The third research question:

Based on assumption of Holmes, are the apology strategies more elaborated if the offense between intimates is more severe?

As I mentioned in chapter 4, Brown and Levinson or Meier claimed that simpler apologies occur between intimates, even if the severity of offense is higher. However, Holmes suggested opposite and said apologies between intimates become more complex if the seriousness of the offense is higher (1990, 190-191). I have decided to find out whether her assumption is correct or if there are different factors influencing how complex the apology is. To have more data to observe the tendency proposed by Holmes, I prepared two situations with the same level of deference, power, and severity of offense. The offenses in Situations 3 (spilling of coffee) and 5 (broken phone) are considered as heavy, the relationship between participants is close and their status is equal. In the situations 3 and 5, native speakers of English applied 44 (Situation 3) and 50 (Situation 5) strategies, while Slovaks applied 50 (Situation 3) and 54 (Situation 5). However, both Slovaks and native speakers of English applied the highest number of strategies in Situation 1 (bumping into lady), where the offense caused is considered as light by Holmes. The number of strategies is, however, not enough to claim the strategies as more elaborated and therefore I decided to analyse the intensification in those 2 specific situations. When it comes to the intensification of apologies in Situation 3, the native speakers of English applied 14 strategies in combination and one Concern for hearer. Slovaks applied 23 strategies in combinations, but no Concern for hearer. The adverbs of intensification were used 13 times by native speakers of English and 3 times by Slovak speakers. In Situation 5, the intensification through combinations of strategies happened in 18 English responses and in Slovak version, 15 combinations of strategies were used. No concern for hearer was used in English responses and in Slovak responses, this strategy was applied only once. In Situation 1, I looked at the intensification patterns to compare it with these 2 situations. The Situation 1 has the highest representation of combinations of strategies from all the situations (in both, Slovak and English version) and the highest number of adverbs of intensification. The conclusion from the analysis is that in situation with light offense, but with significant age difference, more strategies and intensifications are applied by Slovaks and native speakers of English. These findings also suggest that the seriousness of the offense may be medium and not light as Holmes has proposed and therefore, I would recommend the re-elaboration of the level of offense in this situation. The hypothesis of Holmes is therefore not applicable in my research, and it is the assumption of Brown and Levinson

and Meier that was proven. To generalize the pattern of having more elaborated apologies between S and H of low-high relation, more data and research would be needed.

8 Conclusion

As mentioned in the Introduction, there is a significant increase in number of cross-cultural studies, especially of those that are concerned with the speech act analysis. The cross-cultural studies convey lots of significant information about pragmatic similarities and differences of various languages and can be helpful for teaching the target languages (Qorina, 2012: 95). Since there is not enough research done in contrasting the speech act performance of English and Slavic languages, I dedicated my thesis to the contrastive analysis of the speech act of apology in Slovak and English. The aim of my study is to observe similarities and differences of apology strategies of Slovaks and native speakers of English in relation to their intensity or politeness strategies applied. In the first chapters, I present the concept of the speech act and various forces which influence the performance of speech acts (such as locutionary, illocutionary or perlocutionary force). The chapter 2 deals with politeness, which is phenomenon closely related with apology formation. I presented a brief introduction of what politeness represents using various theories, such as Leech's Principle of Politeness or Politeness theory by Brown and Levinson. I explain the terms face, face-threatening acts and politeness strategies since these terms are essential for the apology analysis. Apology as a concept is introduced in chapter 3. I point out all the essential features of the apology, such as being an act that takes place when S cannot avoid threatening the H's face and when he believes that s/he has some responsibility in the act offending the H (Oishi, 2013, 541; Qorina, 2012, 94). Section 3.6 deals with differences of apology performance in various cultures and since my thesis is dedicated with research of apologies in Slovak and English, I conclude my theoretical part with demonstrating the basic features of apologies in Slovak and English. After these sections, the research part of my thesis is presented with listing down my three research questions in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 deals with methodology, which is the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) questionnaire designed to obtain responses from situations requiring apology. The DCT is one of the most common methods used to obtain data in the pragmatic research (Kasper, 2008, 293). My version of DCT consist of two sections; in the first section I ask for the basic information such as participants' age, gender or nationality, and in the second section the participants are asked to respond 6 situations with different levels of power, distance and offense that require apology. The questionnaire was fulfilled by 24 Slovak respondents and 23 native speakers of English respondents. The data analysis is based on a modified version of the CCSARP model by Blum-Kulka and Olshain from 1984. This model shows various apology super strategies and their sub-strategies, according to which the apologies are analysed. The sections 6.1 to 6.6 deal with data analysis of the English responses and sections 6.7 to 6.12 deal with data analysis of Slovak responses. The chapter 7 shows the results of my analysis. The first results show that both, native speakers of English and Slovaks apply mostly the routinized formulaic expression, which falls into the super strategy called IFID (illocutionary force indicating device). This strategy is followed by the Offer of repair, Explanation or account and ToR super strategies. As was expected, English speaker prefer negative politeness strategies over positive, while Slovak used both strategies equally. The second result shows that English responses apply more intensification methods, however the

difference was minor. The third research question is dealing with proposal of Holmes about occurrence of more elaborated apologies when the offense is caused between intimates. This assumption was not proven, since the most elaborated apologies occurred in case of Situation 1 (bumping into lady) with the light offense. However, the Slovak and English Ss considered the offense in Situation 1 as medium and therefore Holmes' evaluation of Situation 1 as being light may not be correct. To make generalized conclusions, more research would be needed. The number of participants is not high enough to make generalized claims for Slovaks and English Ss, but even this pilot study had shown that there are observable differences in the way how the native speakers of English and Slovaks consider seriousness of offense or how they upgrade their apologies. The DCT method has advantage of gathering huge amounts of usable data in a short period of time, but the influence of the researcher or the absence of phonological features such as intonation are considered as disadvantages that impact the authenticity of data and therefore, combination of the DCT with different method, such as recording of the responses, may bring more authentic results.

Resumé

V posledných dvoch dekádach vzrástol záujem lingvistov o medzi-kultúrne štúdie rôznych rečových aktov. Cieľom týchto štúdií je analýza rečových aktov, akými sú napríklad ospravedlnenie či odpustenie. Medzi kultúrne štúdie prinášajú poznatky o pragmatických podobnostiach a rozdieloch medzi rôznymi jazykmi a kultúrami, čo môže pomôcť pri výučbe cieľových jazykov (Quorina, 2012, 95). Keďže štúdia zaoberajúca sa podobnosťami a rozdielmi rečových aktov medzi angličtinou a slovenčinou ešte nebola prevedená, rozhodla som sa venovať svoju bakalársku prácu práve tejto problematike. Ako cieľový rečový akt som si zvolila akt ospravedlňovania sa a rozhodla som sa porovnávať anglické a slovenské stratégie ospravedlňovania sa, ich modifikácie skrz rečové prostriedky ako sú emočné zvolania, či intenzifikáciu pomocou prísloviak ako *so* a *really* či *veľmi* a *naozaj*. V prvých kapitolách sa venujem prezentácii rečového aktu v súvislosti s ilokučnou, lokučnou a perlokučnou silou. Kapitola 2 sa zaoberá konceptom zdvorilosti, ktorý je úzko spätý so stratégiami ospravedlňovania sa. V tejto kapitole predstavujem významné teórie zdvorilosti, ako napríklad Princíp zdvorilosti od Geoffreyho Leecha (1975) či Teóriu zdvorilosti Brown a Levinsona z roku 1987. Práve ich terminológia je veľmi významná a v lingvistike sa používa dodnes (Fraser, 1990, 228). V kapitole 3 predstavujem rečový akt ospravedlnia sa, kde poukazujem na dôležité vlastnosti tohto aktu, ako sú jeho remedialita, post-udalostný výskyt či podmienka úprimnosti zo strany rozprávača (Culpeper and Haugh, 2014, 176). Slovanmi Sokolovej, hovoriaci pomocou formuly ospravedlňovania sa „deklaruje snahu kompenzovať alebo aspoň zmierniť ohrozenie sebaúcty (tváre) adresáta“ (2020,7). Teoretickú časť uzatváram sekciami, ktoré sa priamo zaoberajú slovenskými a anglickými formulami ospravedlňovania sa, ich jazykovým špecifikami a rôznymi spôsobmi ich intenzifikácie. Praktická časť začína Kapitoulou 4, kde predstavujem svoje tri výskumné otázky. Kapitola 5 sa zaoberá metodológiou, ktorá je v mojom prípade dotazník vo forme Discourse Completion Test, kde respondenti odpovedajú na názorné situácie. Podľa Kasperovej (2008, 293) je táto metóda jedna z najpoužívanejších v rámci pragmatických výskumov. Mój dotazník pozostáva z 2 častí: prvá je zameraná na osobné údaje participantov, ako sú vek, pohlavie či aktuálne štúdium a druhá časť je praktická, kde respondenti odpovedajú na 6 rôznych situácií. Tieto situácie sa líšia sociálnou úrovňou a vzťahom medzi hovoriacim a adresátom, ako aj vážnosťou poškodenia či urážky, ktorú hovoriaci spôsobil adresátovi. Keďže skúmam dva rôzne jazyky, musela som si prichystať dve verzie dotazníka, ktoré sú kontextovo

identické, no jeden je podaný v slovenskom a druhý v anglickom jazyku. Slovenský dotazník bol vyplnený 24 respondentmi a anglický 23 respondentmi. Dáta som zanalyzovala na základe CCSARP modelu Blum-Kulky a Olhstainovej, ktorý bol predstavený v roku 1984 a ktorý sa dnes používa v mnohých štúdiách (Quorina 2013; Suszczyńska 1999). Sekcie 6.1 až 6.6 sa venujú rozboru anglických formúl ospravedlnia sa a sekcie 6.7 až 6.12 sa zaoberajú rozborom slovenských formúl ospravedlnia sa. Kapitola 7 sa venuje zhrnutiu výsledkov. Prvý výsledok ukazuje, že anglicky hovoriaci respondenti rovnako ako Slováci používajú najčastejšie rutinnú, explicitnú super stratégiu ktorá sa v angličtine vola IFID. Dokázalo sa, že anglicky hovoriaci respondenti preferujú stratégiu negatívnej zdvorilosti nad pozitívnu, zatiaľ čo slovenskí respondenti používajú tieto stratégie v rovnakom pomere. Druhý výsledok ukázal, že anglicky hovoriaci respondenti používajú viac prostriedkov intenzifikácie, čo robí ich formuly ospravedlnenia silnejšie, avšak rozdiel bol minimálny a na jeho potvrdenie je potrebné vykonať ďalšie výskumy. Posledná výskumná otázka sa zaoberala hypotézou Holmsovej (1990) o výskyte viac prepracovaných stratégií medzi blízkymi osobami v prípade, že priestupok hovoriaceho voči adresátovi bol závažnejší. Všeobecne tvrdenie, podporené Brown a Levinsosnom (1987) či Meierom (1998) hovoria o presnom opaku, t.j. viac prepracované odpovede sa vyskytujú medzi aktérmi, ktorí sa nepoznajú a naopak, jednoduchšie ospravedlňovania sa vyskytuje medzi priateľmi. Holmsovej hypotéza nebola potvrdená, keďže v dvoch situáciách s výskytom závažného priestupu voči blízkej osobe (Situácia 3 a 5) nebol použitý najväčší výskyt ani stratégií, ani ich intenzifikácii. Na všeobecnú aplikáciu výsledkov z tejto štúdie je potrebné väčšie množstvo respondentov a tým pádom aj dát, avšak aj výsledky získané od 47 respondentov potvrdili, že sa medzi slovenčinou a angličtinou nachádzajú pragmatické podobnosti, no i rozdiely. Metóda DCT má svoje limity čo sa týka autenticity, keďže má vplyv na smerovanie odpovedí respondentov a tým pádom tieto odpovede strácajú na autenticite. Kombinácia DCT metódy s inou, napríklad s metódou nahrávania odpovedi by priniesla viacej výsledkov (napríklad aj s fonologickej oblasti) a preto odporúčam viac výskumu v danej oblasti.

List of abbreviations:

DCT- Discourse Completion Test

H-Hearer

IFID-Illocutionary Force Indicating Device

S-Speaker

ToR-Taking on Responsibility

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