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Intonation patterns expressing politeness in English requests and commands and their cross-language perception

(Diplomová práce)

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Basic terminology

The title of the present thesis bears the term *intonation* (specifically *intonation pattern*), which is in the main focus of my study. Different authors, however, who have written about the subject of my paper, use the basic terms (*intonation, prosody* etc.) to refer to slightly different phenomena. The terms *intonation, prosody, tones of voice, speech melody, suprasegmentals (nonsegmental features), pitch, tone* etc. may describe more or less the same phonetic reality. But as I will not be treating most of these terms synonymously (in fact, they cannot be synonyms, or rather absolute synonyms, because all of these terms seem to be necessary), their usage in the present thesis must be clarified.[1]

I will use the term *intonation* (*speech melody*) in the narrow sense of the word, that is as "the variations in the pitch of the voice" (Ladefoged 2006: 23). *Intonation* and *intonation pattern* (*contour* or *tune*) are very closely related, if not synonyms: Ladefoged (2006) on p. 293 gives the following definition of *intonation*: "the pattern of pitch changes that occur during an [intonational] phrase". Different levels of *pitch* and directions of pitch changes are called *tones* (Crystal 2006: 74); some languages (tone languages[2], e.g. Chinese) use *tones* lexically (see the section 2.2). *Prosody* I will treat as a hyperonym to *intonation*; Johns-Lewis (1986), when speaking about concrete measurements, describes the three *prosodic* parameters as "fundamental frequency (perceived as *pitch*), intensity (perceived as loudness) and duration (perceived as length)[3]" (p. xix), also including some non-speech features, such as the duration and distribution of silence etc. (p. xx). *Suprasegmentals,*

[1] For a more detailed description of the overlap (or the difference), especially between prosody and intonation, see the introduction to *Intonation in discourse* by Johns-Lewis, C. (Ed.) (1986).

[2] By a tone language I mean a language, in which *tones* affect the meaning of a word (Ladefoged 2006: 248), and not a language, which uses *tones* for intonation (such as English).

[3] Here, the terms *speed, tempo* and *speech rate* may be included as the inverse to duration (Wells 2006: 3). Pitch, loudness and speed (or tempo) combine to make up the expression of *rhythm* (Wells 2006: 3, Crystal 2006: 75).

nonsegmental features and *tones of voice* (a rather non-technical term) will be used synonymously with *prosody* (Johns-Lewis [1986: xix], Crystal [2006: 73]). And finally, I will save *pitch* for the perception of fundamental frequency (F0).[4]

1.2 The goal and the outline of the thesis

The primary aim of the present thesis is to explore the use of intonation in English as a politeness marker. In other words, I will address the question of how, or to what extent, intonation contributes to the general perception of politeness. First, I will review the literature about linguistic politeness (section 2.1.1), the utilization of intonation for demonstrating politeness in English (section 2.2.1) and in Czech (section 2.2.2) and will try to compare the intonational means of expressing politeness in these two languages (section 2.2.3).

The second major focus of this work is on cross-language perception of intonation (section 2.3). I will attempt to find out if we can predict how learners of English as a foreign language (e.g. Czechs) will perceive the manifestation of politeness in English intonation. I will base my presumptions on the cross-language similarities and differences between the uses of intonation (the universality of intonation, section 2.3.1).

These sections (literature review) basically constitute a revised and supplemented version of my Bachelor thesis, however, the major contribution of the present work is in the empirical testing of my research question (that is how intonation patterns produce different levels of perceived politeness) described in section 3 of this thesis (The listening

[4] Generally, pitch of voice refers to a percept (i.e. a subjective experience) of the fundamental frequency (F0) in a speech signal. F0 is subject to physical objective measurements. Although there is a strong correlation between F0 and intonation, we should never equal a F0 track with an intonation pattern (Volín 2009).

experiment). This chapter gives a detailed description of the experiment which was conducted, including the method (speaker, recording, speech materials, listeners and procedure) and they are followed by results analysis and discussion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Means of expressing politeness

It is generally understood that in order to behave in a socially appropriate way, people make use of both verbal and non-verbal strategies. This goes far beyond being used to say *thank you* and *please* or not talking with your mouth full. Here we can make use of Válková's (2004: 54) example: it may be rather confusing when being introduced to someone new to say the conventionally polite *Nice to meet you!* but at the same time to wear a bored expression and to roll your eyes away. Válková (2004) tries to explain the complexity of communicative strategies when talking about silence as a means of communication (a verbal or non-verbal one?) by remarking that it is dependent on the social context (being silent in the theatre, for instance, vs. being silent when expected to answer a question).[5] This is because, as she points out, politeness in general is a context-sensitive phenomenon.

As the present thesis is predominantly concerned with linguistic behaviour of people, I will not treat the sphere of social etiquette and will focus on the linguistic means of expressing politeness. And since politeness as such has been a subject to different associations (e.g. polite implies formal, indirect, friendly or interested?),[6] it is advisable to provide a "definition" of this phenomenon. According to a widely recognized Lakoff's theory, there are three principles of politeness that ensure the acceptability and pragmatic correctness of an utterance. These are "do not impose", "give options" and "make the addressee feel good – be friendly" (Hirschová 2006: 171).

[5] For a brief remark on cross-cultural appropriateness of silence, see Crystal's (2006) example in section 2.1.1. He observes that in some cultures it is polite to stay silent when enjoying food, while in others it is not (p. 276).

[6] Different authors attribute different labels to politeness. Leech (2004) associates politeness with indirectness, Swan (2005) with friendliness, Bolinger (1986) and Gimson (2001) with the state of being interested etc.

2.1.1 Linguistic politeness and its cross-language (in)consistency

When trying to explain how languages exploit their linguistic means to express politeness, I will consult the study of Geoffrey N. Leech (2004) *Meaning and the English Verb*, David Crystal's (2006) *How Language Works*, Silvie Válková's (2004) *Politeness as a communicative strategy and language manifestation (a cross-cultural perspective)*, and *Practical English Usage* by Michael Swan (1991).

Crystal (2006) deals with the issue of politeness in his chapter on pragmatics (p. 275 – 281). He states that "pragmatic distinctions of politeness ... are spread throughout the grammatical, lexical, and phonological systems, ultimately reflecting matters of social class, status, and role" (p. 275). Leaving aside the phonological part (which will be dealt with separately and in detail in 2.1.2 and 2.2), politeness strategies penetrate both the grammatical level (or, morphological, see below for Leech [2004], Swan [1991] and Válková [2004]) and the lexical level of a language (the correct use of markers of politeness – e.g. saying *pardon?* and not *what?* [Crystal 2006: 478], using words in their proper context, and so on).

Leech (2004) looks into how the choice of correct verbal tense and modal auxiliaries contributes to achieve (among other things) the effect of politeness. The use of the past tense, for instance, to refer to the present makes the request "indirect, and therefore more polite"[7] (p. 15: *Did you want me? – Yes, I hoped you would give me a hand with the painting*); another example of choosing an appropriate verbal tense for a polite interaction is "a special polite use of the Progressive" (which is more tentative: *You are forgetting the moral arguments*, p. 29). Besides the semantic part, modal verbs are believed to have

[7] Leech associates indirectness with politeness. However, Blum-Kulka (1987) examined the link between politeness and indirectness in requests and concluded that in English, politeness is perceived differently from indirectness (p. 136). It may be partially explained by how Blum-Kulka defines politeness – "an interactional balance achieved between two needs: The need for pragmatic clarity and the need to avoid coerciveness" (p. 131). Simplistically put, the former requires directness, while the latter indirectness.

a pragmatic element (p. 72). Some of the polite uses of modals can be summarized as follows: *may* is generally considered more polite than *can* (p. 76), the common usage of the "tag of politeness" *if I may* (p. 92), *could* and *might* being more polite alternatives to *can* and *may* (*Could I see your driving license?* p. 129), a politer substitute *Will you...?* for an imperative (p. 88).

Other ways to mitigate an imperative (that is to soften it and turn more polite) are discussed by Swan (1991), Válková (2004) and Bolinger (1989). Swan (1991) describes the use of question tags after imperatives (*Give me a hand, will you?, Shut up, can't you?* etc.) and explains that "these are not real questions (they mean something like *please*), but they often have a rising intonation" (§515). Válková (2004) mentions a grammatical phenomenon *whimperatives* (indirect questions e.g. *Would you pass me the salt?* vs. *Pass me the salt, please*). *Whimperatives* are not only considered more polite, but also have wider semantic scope (indirect questions leave more space for the other party, that is, they open the possibility for denial or disagreement). *Would you…? Won't you…?* and *Will you please…?* are regarded more polite than a mere *Will you…?* (Leech 2004: 88). Bolinger (1989) suggests the use of a discourse-initial *oh* to blunt the force of a command: *Oh stop bothering me! Oh go away, will you!*, and this strategy works also with directives: *Oh that's too much!* "With *oh*, these reprimands can actually be smiling and playful" (p. 276).

Cross-language similarities and differences in politeness are explicitly discussed in Válková's (2004) chapter on the universality of politeness. She argues that even one "society as a whole is not believed to be uniform in its politeness perception and manifestation" (p. 48) and stresses how complicated it is to be interculturally polite and tactful since politeness is a "universal linguistic variable" (p. 45). Moreover, Válková comes to an interesting conclusion that Czechs tend to be more straightforward and straightforwardness may be perceived (by Czechs) as a possible expression

of politeness in situations, in which the English choose to be polite through indirectness (e.g. *whimperatives*, see above *tentative meanings of modals,* e.g. *could, might,* etc.). "Thus, while *Posaďte se!* – when supported by an inviting gesture and/or supportive intonation, sounds appropriate in Czech, in English, the usage of a mere imperative would be far from appropriate…" (p. 52).

Crystal (2006) also stresses that languages differ greatly in expressions of politeness, in the frequency of the usage of politeness markers and in their meaning. "Many European languages do not use their word for *please* as frequently as English does; and the function and force of *thank you* may also alter. For example, following the question *Would you like some more cake?*, English *thank you* means 'yes', whereas French *merci* would mean 'no'" (pp. 275 – 276). He adds another example of how conventions vary across languages (and cultures): "In some countries it is polite to remark to a host that we are enjoying the food; in others it is polite to stay silent" (p. 276).

Válková's (2004) study has the strong message that politeness is a dynamic socio-linguistic phenomenon that requires, among other things, social awareness and cross-cultural knowledge (if you wish to apply a suitable politeness strategy when interacting with foreigners). Therefore it is important to remember that the present paper, investigating only one aspect of linguistic politeness, i.e. politeness achieved by different intonation patterns, has to resort to relatively gross simplifications of the linguistic reality.

2.1.2 Prosody – its functions and means of expressing politeness

As Crystal (2006) puts it, "*It ain't what you say, but the way that you say it*" (p.73). Prosody cannot be considered a secondary or merely an additional aspect of speech, even though it has not always been given an adequate amount of attention unlike the segmental level of a language (e.g. Volín 2009;

Loveday 1981). Vlčková-Mejvaldová (2006) explains that the semantic contents of lexical units can be enriched, modified or completely changed by the prosodic realization of a particular utterance. She also believes that there are situations where prosody turns into the only conveyor of the meaning of lexical units, especially in acoustically unfavourable conditions, when speaking from a greater distance etc.

Other similar situations include interacting with a foreigner with whom we do not share the knowledge of a language code (and thus, facing the unintelligibility of words, we go for the prosody), or when a mother communicates with her infant (prosody is the "main auditory channel", Bolinger 1989: 11).[8] Consequently, we indeed cannot think of prosody as a mere decoration of what we say.

Prosodic functions is a topic that has been described by numerous linguists and phoneticians; in the present thesis I refer to Crystal (2006), Bolinger (1989), Vlčková-Mejvaldová (2006), further on (when discussing the uses of intonation) to Wells (2006), Ladefoged (2006), Gimson (1970 and 2001) and others. Vlčková-Mejvaldová (2006) divides prosodic functions into two basic ones: linguistic and extralinguistic (phonostylistic) functions. Linguistic uses include for instance, as Crystal (2006) mentions, organizing (structuring) grammar (making pauses that coincide with boundaries of grammatical constituents/phrases, contrasting between questions and statements [p. 76] – specifically, using falling intonation for declarative sentences, imperatives and wh-questions, saving rising intonation for Yes/No questions [Vlčková-Mejvaldová 2006]).

[8] It is also generally known that when training a dog, the animal relies mostly on prosody and accompanying gestures rather than on the exact words of his master.
What is more, there is an English story, called Ladle Rat Rotten Hut, which is supposed to show that intonation "is almost as important to the meaning as the words themselves" ("Ladle Rat Rotten Hut," 2010).

Extralinguistic functions (Crystal 2006: 76 – 78, 282 – 287; Bolinger 1989; Vlčková-Mejvaldová 2006) include identification or indexical use, by which is meant that prosody is used as a marker of the speaker's age, gender, social background, to show personal or group identity (individuals tend to display characteristic prosodic features and also people belonging to different occupations – such as preachers, street vendors, and army sergeants – can be identified through prosodic features among other things) etc. Speakers also use prosody to convey the attributes of their emotion and attitude, such as excitement, boredom, friendliness (Crystal 2006: 76). Other extralinguistic functions of prosody embody characterizing a type of discourse (a distinctive melodic and rhythmical shape is assigned to paragraphs in radio news-reading, for example, Crystal 2006: 77), and discourse management function (for instance, gradual rising melody indicates that the speaker has no intention of giving up his turn to speak [Vlčková-Mejvaldová 2006]). In all cases, the situational context is crucial for the correct identification of a particular prosodic function (Vlčková-Mejvaldová 2006).

Although suprasegmental properties of speech moved from the periphery of linguistic system in the last few decades and have recently become a fairly well studied aspect of the phonetic and phonological components of natural languages, partly due to technical advances in their analysis (Loveday 1981: 71), only relatively little is said in the literature about how specifically prosody assists in communicating features of civility. The following paragraphs attempt to summarize information available about the role of prosody in signalling politeness.

In the first place, Maekawa (1999) comes with a daring statement that "it is widely acknowledged that prosody plays a crucial role in the manifestation of politeness"[9] (p.1). A more conservative observation has been made by

[9] Although it is not explicitly mentioned in Maekawa's (1999) introduction to their study (Contributions of lexical and prosodic factors to the perception of politeness), it can be

LaPlante and Ambady (2003), who examine how nonverbal cues affect politeness and say explicitly that "tone of voice [i.e. prosody as such] is highly informative as a politeness cue" (p. 434). In this empirical study, two actresses were given two sets of sentences, one with a positive message (such as *Would you like to get ice-cream?*) and the other with a negative one (*Would you leave me alone?*), and performed these utterances with a "positive tone" and "negative tone" (by a "tone", LaPlante and Ambady seem to think prosody in general, and not an intonation pattern). Unfortunately, they failed to mention the acoustic representation of their stimuli, which makes the results of their experiment much less interpretable.

LaPlante and Ambady (2003) observed how the "positive tone" or "negative tone" influenced the perception of politeness. They report that for questions, "positive tone" shifted perceptions toward greater politeness and "negative tone" shifted perception toward lesser politeness for both positive and negative messages. Despite these results[10], LaPlante and Ambady (2003) are careful not to assign to prosody too much of an importance: "No matter how hard we try to soften to blow of a negative statement, nonverbal cues may not be able to compensate enough to result in a polite message overall" (p. 438). Nevertheless, because LaPlante and Ambady did not describe their stimuli in a satisfactory way, we can hardly draw any conclusion from their results, except that prosody is a fairly important device for expressing politeness.

I will now give a brief summary of prosodic features that are believed to be important for expressing politeness. Because the special focus of this paper is on intonation, one of the components of prosody, the few explicit findings

inferred that the statement holds true mainly for Japanese, which is the language their study centers on.

[10] The generalization of their findings is still limited, because of the role of gender; only females were taking part in the experiment.

about how politeness manifests itself intonationally will be reviewed in a separate section (2.2) devoted to functions of intonation.

The style of articulation (as a suprasegmental feature) has been found to play a role in signalling politeness. In literature, careful (or precise) articulation is described as a tool speakers actively use for showing politeness and listeners for recognizing it (Válková 2004, Ofuka *et al.* 2000: 203).[11]

Temporal variables (among others) were examined in Ofuka *et al.*'s (2000) study and were concluded to be significant cues for politeness. Ofuka *et al.* carried out an experiment, in which native speakers of Japanese were asked to produce two sentences (a request, and a greeting with addressing) in a polite and casual way, and were given the situational context (both the speakers and then the subjects participating in a listening experiment). When being polite (that is, addressing a respectable gentleman), all speakers adopted slower speech rate, thus resulting in a longer utterance in total (p. 204). Hirose *et al.*'s (1997) experiment "*Analysis of intonation in emotional speech*" also revealed that higher speech rate was typical in speech samples conveying impoliteness and anger. Therefore, slower speech rate may be considered another significant prosodic cue for conveying politeness. What is more, pauses[12] are also likely to contribute to the perception of politeness, again making the utterance longer (Hirose *et al*. 1997).

On the other hand, there are prosodic devices used to manifest impoliteness, such as the "raising of voice" (raised pitch and loudness), mentioned by Culpeper *et al.* (2003), through which the speaker invades the space of the interlocutor (p. 1572), and higher speech rate (Hirose *et al*. 1997, see above).

[11] Even though Ofuka et al.'s (2000) experiment (Prosodic cues for rated politeness in Japanese speech), as well as Maekawa's (1999) and Hirose et al.'s (1997) studies are concerned with Japanese, I am reproducing some of their results in my paper as it directly concerns my research question, even if for a different language.

[12] In Hirose et al.'s (1997) experiment, a long pause was inserted between subject and object phrases in the polite reading of a speaker (p. 187).

2.2 Intonation and its uses

Intonation is only one part of the study of prosody (or phonetics in broader terms; prosodic functions have been summarized in 2.1.2). Bolinger (1989) (in *Intonation and Its Uses*) describes intonation as a "nonarbitrary, sound-symbolic system with intimate ties to facial expression and bodily gesture, and conveying, underneath it all, emotions and attitudes" (p. 1). As Bolinger (1986) in his similar study *Intonation and Its Parts* warns us, we must be aware that although these functions of pitch in a language such as English are the most common ones, there are other languages, tone languages (Chinese, for example), which use changes in pitch to indicate the differences in the meanings of words; the distinctive pitch levels are known as (phonemic) *tones* or *tonemes* (Crystal 2006: 77, Ladefoged 2006: 248).[13] Using intonation for other purposes in tone languages (such as expressing emotion, contrasting declarative, interrogative and imperative sentences etc.) is not excluded, but is considerably complicated.[14]

The present paper, however, looks into one particular use of intonation, and that is intonation as a politeness marker in English (and in Czech). Wichmann (2004)[15] states that intonation "has the power to render a polite utterance both more and less polite" (p. 1522). Ofuka *et al.*'s (2000) experiment on Japanese (described above in 2.1.2) showed that the tone pattern at the end of a sentence[16] had a great impact on politeness judgments in Japanese. For requests, a majority of listeners rated a final rise version as more polite than a final fall version (p. 209). Ofuka *et al.* suggest that the final

[13] Chinese, a tone language, makes use of four tones to change the meaning of words: high-level tone, high-rising tone, low-falling-rising tone and a high-falling tone (Crystal, 2006: 77).
[14] Švarný and Uher (1997) explain what happens in such situations (expressing the speaker's mood, distinguishing between types of sentences etc.), that is "melodická křivka věty [se může] pouze modifikovat … nemůže se však podstatně měnit [the melodic contour of a sentence can be only modified, but not considerably changed]" (p. 59). For details, see Švarný and Uher (1997: 59 – 65).
[15] Wichmann's (2004) study investigated how *please*-utterances are realized intentionally.
[16] The focus on the pitch contour of the last syllable is given by the nature of Japanese language, for details on Japanese see Ofuka *et al.*'s study (2000: 203) and also Maekawa (1999).

rise preference in relation to politeness may be related to the unmarkedness of the sentence intonation contour, because the sentence used was a direct Yes/No question whose universally unmarked intonation is a rising tone (p. 209).

Let us now have a closer look at what meaning intonation carries in both English (section 2.2.1) and Czech (2.2.2) and how it helps speakers to convey politeness.

2.2.1 Intonation in English (and its contribution to perceived politeness)

This section reviews information about politeness marking by intonation found in various textbooks on English phonetics as well as in journal articles.

2.2.1.1 Intonation patterns

First, I will roughly summarize intonation patterns occurring in English and their pragmatic and grammatical utilization relying on Gimson's "classic" *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English* (1970 and 2001)[17] and on Wells' *English intonation: an introduction* (2006). Gimson divides intonation patterns into four groups, which are as follows:

a) *The falling tone/nucleus (high-fall and low-fall)*. To mark it, I will use this symbol [\][18] and will place it before the tonic syllable.[19] This tone pattern in speech marks matter-of-fact statements, wh-questions; it displays an assertive character (the speaker's opinions, intentions,

[17] I will be using two different editions of this textbook, the sixth (2001) edition, and the second (1970) edition, which contains more references to politeness (than the fifth or sixth edition I have consulted). On the other hand, the fact that most of the politeness-related comments were left out in the updated versions slightly undermines their validity.

[18] The notation of intonation is adopted from Wichmann's (2004) study (The intonation of *Please*-requests: a corpus based study).

[19] The tonic syllable is defined as the syllable, (often the last stressed syllable in the intonational phrase) that carries the major pitch change (Ladefoged 2006: 113).

wishes etc. are expressed firmly and confidently through the falling tone), and it implies finality.

b) *The rising tone/nucleus (high-rise and low-rise)*, which is in the main focus of the present study. This intonation is marked with this symbol [/], again put in front of the tonic syllable. Speakers use it for Yes/No questions, to indicate unfinished and continuative utterances, showing overtones of politeness, encouragement, pleading etc.

c) *The fall-rise tone/ falling-rising nucleus*, combination of the dominant effect of the fall with any of the emotional or meaningful attitudes associated with the rise. A fall-rise expresses non-finality, the speaker's tentativeness about what he says, and a speaker also uses the fall-rise when he or she "makes a statement but at the same time implies something more" (Wells 2006: 30). This is called implicational fall-rise. For its tentativeness, a fall-rise is used for polite corrections.[20] This symbol [\/] will be used to mark the fall-rise tone.

d) *The rise-fall tone/ rising reinforcement of a fall*. An infrequent intonation pattern with a limited usage; the speaker using a rise-fall may be impressed, he may disapprove of something that has been said or done etc.

We can also come across *the level tone (mid level tone)*, but it is not usually "used as an independent nuclear tone" (Wells 2006: 224). This tone signals non-finality.

2.2.1.2 Default tones and (un)markedness

A default tone is an unmarked, neutral tone for a particular type of a sentence (Wells 2006: 15). A very rough overview of default tones and their neutral occurrence with examples follows (taken from Wells 2006: 91 and Bolinger 1989: 40).

[20] For example *She's coming on Wednesday. – On \/Thursday*. Using a fall in this situation would make the speaker sound abrupt and rude (Wells 2006: 30 – 31).

1. Rise

Yes/No questions	*Are you /coming?*
Complementary questions	*Your /name? Your place of /birth?*
Reprise (echo) questions[21]	*What was that you just /said?*
	Am I /coming? (all Bolinger: 40)

2. Fall

Statements	*He's from \Spain.*
Commands	*Go a\way!*
Exclamations (interjections)	*\Sure.* (Wells: 64) *Look \out!*
	(OALD 2000: 434)
Wh-questions	*Who \called?* (Bolinger: 40)
Alternative questions	*Is she coming or \going?*
	(Bolinger: 40)

A fall-rise is not usually discussed as a default tone for any particular sentence type, even though Wells (2006) assigns it an implicational statement and demand (p. 91), for example *So you both live in /London? \/I do (but Mary lives in \York)* (p. 31).

The idea of a default tone is, however, often questioned. As Wells (2006) admits, default tones may not be statistically the most frequent ones and it is impossible to say that "there is such a thing as a default tone for any sentence type" (p. 91). Has the concept of default tones got any validity then? It has been suggested that it has, particularly because default tones are considered

[21] According to Wang (2003), there are two types of echo questions – those, that doubt the correctness of what has been said (or the speaker is surprised and requires a confirmation) and those, where the speaker did not hear, understand or he has simply forgotten what has been said. Both cases should receive a rising tone, e.g. *He went to Gallipoli – Where did he /go?* (p. 28).

unmarked. The unmarkedness of an intonation contour, as shown in the next paragraph, is likely to be related to the resulting impression of politeness.

Markedness concerns both lexicon (words can be more or less marked) and grammar: the form following a rule is unmarked, the exception to a rule is marked (Bolinger 1989: 425). In the above-described Ofuka *et al.*'s (2000) experiment it was concluded that the preference to manifest politeness by a final rise in requests (i.e. Yes/No questions) might have been related to the unmarkedness of the rising tone for Yes/No questions (p. 209). Scherer *et al.*'s (1984) experiment (on German) revealed that unmarked intonation (that is, a rise for Yes/No questions and a fall for wh-questions) relatively consistently received high scores (when judged on the polite, friendly, understanding etc. scales), while marked intonation received low scores (sounding reproachful, aggressive etc.) We may therefore tentatively infer that unmarked tones themselves (used in their appropriate sentence type, of course) display some degree of politeness.

2.2.1.3 Intonational meaning and context

It seems it would be a gross oversimplification to assume that intonation patterns on their own have specific and constant meanings. We must keep in mind that intonation co-varies with the types of utterances, situational context etc. (Bolinger 1989: 425). The importance, or rather, interference, of context is also discussed by Pakosz (1983). On page 313, he makes the following point: "Recognition of emotive meaning as expressed by prosodic features is likely to remain inaccurate in so far as part of this meaning is specified by cognitive and contextual factors", and further on, he ties in: "Talking about contour meanings in a principled way would mean to divorce the meaning of intonation patterns from context" (p. 323). The importance of context is even supported by the fact that politeness, which is the attitude this paper holds a focus on, is a context-sensitive phenomenon as Válková (2004) points out.

Likewise, Wennerstrom (1994) judges studies which rely on material extracted from language out of context in a somewhat disapproving way and explains that "since intonation serves to mark relationships in discourse, extended texts which provide a discourse context for the subjects would lead to a more accurate and realistic appraisal of how they perceive and produce intonation patterns" (p. 401). Gimson's (2001) approach is in accord with this attitude – in some example sentences, he gives a bracketed setting to each sentence, because "it should be remembered that the attitudinal meaning of an utterance must always be interpreted within a context, both of the situation and also of the speaker's personality. It may well happen that an intonation which is polite in one set of circumstances might, for instance, be offensive or patronizing when used by another person or in other circumstances" (p. 268).

Pakosz (1983) seems generally pessimistic about identifying correspondences between intonation and attitude ("few categories have unique tonal representation", p. 312) since such generalizations depend on many pragmatic factors (facial expressions, expectations of the hearer etc., p. 323). Culpeper *et al.* (2003) believes that the attitudinal function is "the most elusive function of intonation" (p. 1568). Scherer *et al.* (1984) hold the position that "intonational contours do not have meanings of their own but only through configurational relationships with other variables" (cited in Bolinger 1989, p. 425). Bolinger's (1989) view is slightly different – he believes that intonation patterns have meaning, but on a somewhat primitive level (say a contrast labelled e.g. aroused vs. subdued) and when interacting with other variables, the primitive class can add a secondary dimension ("subdued" can develop into a negative impression – such as "bored", or on the other hand, it can be rather positive – "reserved", for instance; "aroused" can be either "angry" or "enthusiastic", pp. 425 – 426).

Wichmann (2004) demonstrates how the intonation contours of *please*-utterances relate to their situational context on page 1542: private speech favours a final rising contour (it signals "openness" or "non-finality", and is thus open for negotiation or non-compliance, p. 1545), while public speech favours a final falling contour ("the intonation signals a closure of a complete text", and assumes compliance, p. 1545).

Despite the scepticism (expressed by e.g. Pakosz 1983) about the possibility of discovering systematic connections between intonation patterns and intended connotative meaning, everyday experience implies that listeners do derive cues for politeness (or other attitudinal characteristics) from intonation. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to explore strategies for expressing and extracting attitudinal cues. Several findings concerning the manifestation of politeness through intonation patterns have been found in the literature.

2.2.1.4 Negative face threatening acts

The type of utterances that the literature discusses most often in relation to politeness is requests, commands toned down by question tags and imperatives. Such a selection of sentences is reasoned since all these utterances are acts where politeness strategy decidedly comes into play. They can all be classified as members of the group of so-called negative face threatening acts, a model designed by Brown and Levinson (1987). According to their theory, negative face is defined by a claim to "freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (p. 61). Therefore, when we ask something of the listener, it is advisable to exercise so-called negative politeness as we wish to interfere with the hearer's freedom of action as little as possible. There is a multitude of ways to "redress the face threatening acts" (both linguistic and non-linguistic politeness strategies, p. 70), but in the following chapters I will focus only on how the choice of a particular

intonation pattern can act as the softening mechanism that can reduce the imposition on the addressee.

Yes/No questions – requests and offers

This section summarizes findings about how different tones influence the meaning of Yes/No questions and how to achieve the effect of politeness in Yes/No questions, particularly in requests and offers. From the summary of intonation patterns (section 2.2.1.1 above) it is clear that the neutral intonation contour for Yes/No questions is a rising tone. Bolinger (1989) shows that a rising contour is not only neutral but also regarded as more polite. He demonstrates this on question *Is it so sur/prising?*, which Bolinger labels as "more polite"; it expresses "personal involvement" and "courteous elicitation" (p. 47). Gimson (2001) however admits that even a falling tone is possible for Yes/No-interrogative but warns that a falling tone marks it as brusque and demanding (p. 270). Brazil's (1994) perspective is, nevertheless, slightly different. According to him, a rise and a fall-rise are "referring" tones used when we already have some knowledge about what we ask or we think what the answer is going to be, and we only want to make sure; a fall is a "proclaiming" tone, which we use when we want to find out some information, because we do not possess any advance knowledge or we do not imply any predicted answer (unit 4, pp. 41 – 53).

A referring tone (i.e. a rise or a fall-rise) is preferred for social reasons (Brazil 1994: 53), that is, in situations where we intend to behave in a socially appropriate way, hence to be polite. To make it clearer, Brazil gives the following example: a proclaiming tone on *Are you the new \secretary?* suggests you do not know the person and so it is less suitable (i.e. less polite) than a referring tone *Are you the new \/secretary?* which "means something like 'Am I right in thinking you are the new secretary (the person I've heard so much about)?'"(p. 44). In unit 6 (pp. 66 – 75), Brazil explains that a rising tone is believed to be dominant, a fall-rise is less straightforward. To put it in

practice, when we offer help to someone, we can comfortably adopt the dominant role: *Can I /help you?* but when we make requests, such as *Can you help me?*, it is much less advisable to take charge of the situation as we may sound impolite – a fall-rise would be much more appropriate: *Can you \/help me?* (pp. 68 – 69). Swan (2005) also favours a fall-rise for requests: "a fall-rise makes questions sound more interested and friendly. It is common in polite requests and invitations" (§555).

How a rise affects the meaning of a request is discussed by Aijmer (1996; quoted in Culpeper *et al.* 2003), Culpeper *et al.* (2003) and Pell (2007). Aijmer (1996; quoted in Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1572) comments that "a final rise on a request can operate as a mitigating device for more direct requests (*Can you close the door?*) while if the request is very indirectly expressed[22] (i.e. already mitigated), a falling nucleus appears to be acceptable (as in *I wonder if you could possibly close the door*)." Wichmann (2004), Bolinger (1989) and Culpeper *et al.* (2003) relate the choice between a rise and a fall to "openness" and "closure". A request which is prosodically open (realized with a rise) may offer the addressee a chance to reply (i.e. it can be interpreted as polite), but in case it is prosodically closed (using a fall), no further negotiation is expected (i.e. it can be interpreted as impolite; Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1572).

Pell (2007) conducted a listening experiment[23] based on the premise that "in the prosodic channel, politeness is communicated in large part through conventionalized choices in intonational phrasing; utterances with high/rising pitch tend to be perceived as more polite than those with a terminal falling contour" (p. 70, Pell refers to studies by Culpeper *et al*. 2003, Loveday 1981 and Wichmann 2002). The stimuli in Pell's (2007) experiments were commands and requests, produced with two prosodic modes (naturally,

[22] For the correlation between indirectness and politeness, see Leech (2004) and Blum-Kulka (1987) in section 2.1.1. Even though Leech associates indirectness with politeness, Blum-Kulka's experiments showed that politeness is perceived differently from indirectness.
[23] Pell's (2007) experiment focused on individuals with brain damage but included healthy listeners for comparison. Only findings about healthy listeners are considered here.

by two actors): "with a high/rising tone which tends to attenuate the imposition of a request (i.e., be interpreted as polite) and a falling tone which tends to boost the negativity of a request (i.e., less polite)" (p. 70). The pilot task with 8 healthy listeners indicated that rising-tone sentence intended as polite was always perceived as significantly more polite than falling-tone sentence not intended as polite (p. 71).

With offers, a rising tone is socially adequate: *Can I /help you?* (Brazil 1994, see above). Wells (2006: 224) demonstrates that the choice of a low rise for *Would you like some /tea?* signals polite interest, at least in British English (also see 2.2.1.8 herein). Wells indicates that the connection between politeness and the low rise imposed on this offer may be due to its formality (in contrast with the high rise, which sounds casual and airy, and thus conveys informality). If the speaker adopts the wide rise, he expresses a surprise (p. 224).

Question tags

Gimson (2001) comments that both the falling and rising tone in question tags express an expectance of agreement, the fall demanding it, and the rise leaving open the possibility of disagreement (p. 271). That would mean that a rising tone is more polite than a falling tone in question tags. How the meaning of a question tag changes with the intonation is also explained by Swan (1991). "If it is said with a falling intonation, it makes the sentence sound more like a statement. With a rising intonation, the sentence is more like a real question" (p. 515). This applies primarily to the use of a question tag after affirmative and negative statements.

Bolinger (1989) also suggests that there is a connection between a rising contour imposed on a question tag and politeness. He remarks that the rising terminal of a specific contour of a question tag is deferential – "the matter is courteously left open for denial even though confirmation is expected" (p.

117). Again, it is the rising tone that is believed to convey some politeness as opposed to a fall.

Commands/Imperatives

The pragmatic distinction between commands and requests (discussed above) is not very clear. One may argue that *Help me!, Will you help me?, Can you help me?, Could you please help me?* etc. are all effectively (however mitigated and thus polite) commands (or imperatives, Leech 2004). In this section, I discuss how intonation affects direct imperatives and *Will you…?* commands/requests in relation to (im)politeness (*Can you…?* and similar requests have already been dealt with above).

Imperatives with a falling tone, according to Gimson (2001), are abrupt. "Polite imperatives, which are at least suggesting that the listener has a right to refuse, are said with a rising tone (most frequently low rise and sometimes fall-rise) … The use of a rising tone rather than a falling tone softens the imperative" (p. 271). Some of Gimson's examples are *Don't be /angry about* it and *Give me another /chance*. Jones (1956) (cited in Bolinger 1989) distinguishes between a command *Come \on* with a fall, which is a normal way of addressing a dog, and *Come /on*, which is more suitable for a person (p. 32).

Leech (2004) analyzes the function of *Will you…?* He explains: "when spoken with falling intonation, *will you…* can sound positively impolite: *Will you be quiet!*" (p. 88). Leech (2004) does not give the neutral tone for the *Will you…?* command, but we can suggest a fall-rise (or a rise; that is any non-fall with a rising terminal).

A similar point is made by Culpeper *et al.* (2003). On page 1571, they discuss how a command *Will you please leave the room*[24], which gives an overall impolite impression, is realized intonationally. For the first time it is uttered by the speaker (an officer), it carries high onset and a markedly low fall, known as a "downstepped fall"[25] (which means the pitch drops below the speaker's usual range), and this fall increases the sense of finality.[26] However, when the addressee is unwilling to comply and the speaker is forced to repeat his command, the intonation changes – it ends in a very slight rise. In this particular situation, given that the command is repeated for the second time, it can hardly be interpreted as a politeness strategy, though. Culpeper *et al.* propose an explanation, that it is "mock politeness", or even "insincerely veiled threat" (p. 1572). Another possible interpretation is that a rise implies the speaker's intention to continue (Gimson 1970), and therefore the meaning of the officer's second command may be *Will you please leave the room or otherwise…* (p. 1572).

2.2.1.5 Range of voice

Another factor influencing the level of perceived politeness is the range of intonation of a speaker.[27] Uldall (1960), who conducted a listening experiment to measure listeners' attitude to a variety of intonation contours, points out that range is often more important for the meaning conveyed

[24] Culpeper *et al.*'s experiment was based on real sentences (taken from the BBC's documentary television series *The Clampers*).
[25] Besides the "downstepped fall", Culpeper *et al.*, when analyzing a longer utterance (p. 1570), encountered another factor that contributes to impoliteness: the successive repetition of a pitch contour (so-called intonational parallelism).
[26] We can infer that finality is an impoliteness strategy, as it does not give the interlocutor any option to object, react or change the situation; it simply must be accepted. It therefore goes against Lakoff's theory of politeness ("do not impose", "give options" and "be friendly"; Lakoff in Hirschová 2006: 171).
[27] In their experiments on Japanese, both Maekawa (1999) and Hirose *et al.* (1997) observed that wider range resulted in higher politeness. Even though they identically used the term "magnitude" instead of "range", from their descriptions and figures of the intonation contours it can be inferred that "magnitude" in their terminology describes similar if not the same phonetic reality as "range".

rather than a final rise or fall (p. 232).[28] In her study, the narrow-range fall was the most disliked and the most unpleasant (narrow range in general was disliked), and "smooth" contours (proceeding particularly downwards) were less pleasant than the "broken" contours (with a change of direction, p. 230).

Bolinger (1986) also notices the impact of the intervals[29] of a rising intonation contour. On pages 31 – 32, he focuses on short utterances such as *She did?*, *It is?*, *Really?* and *Oh, yeah?*, all of these pronounced with the same tone (rising), but with different intervals. Despite his admitting that using a narrow interval would not cause any offense, he reasons that such expressions "are also open to wider intervals, which suggest more interest, hence more politeness" (p. 31) and recommends an *Oh, yeah?* speaker to restrict the range of his rise if he wants to jeer at someone (that is, to be impolite) and thus demonstrate an ironic pseudo-interest.[30] Bolinger, as well as Gimson, associates politeness with the state of being interested.

Although Bolinger (1986) demonstrated what role range plays in the perception of politeness only in the rising tone, we can speculate that it can hold true even for a falling tone. Gimson (2001), who studied the intonational realization of a greeting *Good morning*, observes that "*Good morning* with a high fall is sincere … while a low fall is brusque" (p. 271). This tendency for adopting a wider range as a politeness strategy is likely to be due to a higher level of involvement of the speaker. According to Vaissière (2005), "the pitch range is proportional to the degree of involvement" (p. 252), that is, an

[28] The method implemented by the author, however, may give rise to some objections (using crude intonation contours etc.)

[29] The term interval is used more in musical terminology, and according to OALD (2000) it means the difference in pitch between two notes (for example, the interval between 100Hz and 200Hz is an octave). In phonetics, we use "range" (i.e. range of fundamental frequencies) to characterize, for example, a speaker's voice (high-pitched voice, low-pitched voice, monotonous voice etc., Hewlett and Beck 2006: 120, 124). In my reading and understanding Bolinger's terminology, the words "interval" and "range" (the term I would prefer to use) are interchangeable.

[30] Bolinger uses terms such as "major third" and "major second", again based on musical terminology, to describe the range of the tone change. For simplicity these were not reproduced here.

attitude of boredom or fear, for example, is realized through small pitch variations (lower degree of the involvement of the speaker); on the other hand activity, pleasantness etc. are accompanied by large pitch variation (higher degree of the speaker involvement).

2.2.1.6 Universal use of high/rising F0 for politeness

Ohala's (1984) paper "*An Ethological Perspective on Common Cross-Language Utilization of F0 of Voice*" is also relevant for the present paper, in which Ohala is looking for universals in the utilization of F0. Ohala argues that universally, "'social' messages as deference, politeness, submission, lack of confidence are signalled by high and/or rising F0" (p. 2). He admits, though, the lack of evidence for this, and warns that "the experimental literature reveals some conflict on this point" (p. 2).[31] In addition, he points out that other factors need to be taken into consideration – namely the steepness of falling/rising tone. Ohala claims that steep rising/falling indicates some degree of dominance (p. 4). This is directly linked to the length of the utterance (the shorter time it takes, the less space for respect or tact to be conveyed; for other temporal variables affecting politeness, see section 2.1.2).

Ohala (1984) proposes a link between high/rising F0 and politeness. He observes that in questions, the speaker is relying on the receiver for information and his cooperation and therefore politeness and respect is highly advisable. Ohala also makes an interesting note about the sound-symbolic use of tone: high F0 being used for words expressing something small, diminutive and low F0 to be associated with the notion of large etc (p. 4). Pell (2007) on page 73 makes a similar point, namely that a rising tone may be recognized as the speaker's attempt to appear small or less dominant than the listener, and therefore this prosodic category is more polite. Culpeper *et al.* (2003) similarly suggest that the fact that "overall high or low

[31] Since the conflict concerns the discrepancy in perceiving confidence in particular, I decided not to discuss it in greater detail.

pitch are physiologically associated with small vs. large … may account for some contextually determined effects of high and low pitch, such as associating high pitch with deference (behaving in a 'small' way), and low pitch with assertiveness (behaving in a 'big' way)" (p. 1569). Likewise, Bolinger (1989: 3) says that "a bigger thing produces a bigger feeling."

To sum up, appearing 'small' and using high F0 is therefore a behaviour one may adopt to show subordination, hence deference and even politeness (in the animal world, a dog submissively lowers its head, ears and tail, whines or yelps; Ohala 1984: 4). Appearing 'large' and using low F0 gives the impression of dominance and aggressiveness (an example may be a dog's intimidating growl and raising its ears and hair, birds erecting their wings and feathers, or there is even a permanent sign of size and dominance – the mane of the male lion etc.; Ohala 1984: 4 – 5).

2.2.1.7 Gender role

The universal use of high/rising F0 for politeness is directly linked to another phenomenon – gender role. The deferential implication of the use of high pitch typical for children and, by extension, women, has been suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987): "high pitch has natural association with the voice quality of children: for an adult to use such a feature to another adult may implicate self-humbling and thus deference" (p. 268). It has been argued that the proposed tentative tendency of children and women to show more courtesy is likely to result from their traditional social inferiority to their male counterparts as well as from their physical dispositions. Even though on average the physical stature of women is smaller than of men, these physical differences are acoustically exaggerated – women tend to speak as if they were smaller (thus using higher F0) even though their physical appearance is not so strikingly different from men (Loveday 1981: 84-86).[32]

[32] Loveday (1981) conducted a research into the role of gender in conveying politeness through the pitch in English and Japanese. The results revealed that while in Japanese there was a marked difference between males and females (females used much higher pitch in their politeness formulae), the differences in English were insignificant. Loveday explains

LaPlante and Ambady (2003) also strongly advise not to ignore the role of gender: "women are more likely to actually engage in politeness strategies and have repeatedly been found to be superior encoders of nonverbal cues" (p.439). There is, nevertheless, lack of perceptual evidence for this claim and therefore it is difficult to predict if women will be more ready to decode politeness strategies in a perceptual test than men.

2.2.1.8 Intonational differences between varieties of English

The distinctions between British and American English far exceed the differences in vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation of vowels and consonants. Gimson (2001) admits that variations in the use of intonation occur even between the dialects of English (p. 255). The question of differences in intonation between British and American speakers has been addressed by Bolinger (1989: 28 – 32).[33] After analyzing a set of different sentences (Yes/No questions, declaratives etc.), Bolinger concludes that British pronunciation gives the American the impression of "greater involvement (higher initial pitches, wider intervals [i.e. range]) and deference (more rising terminals), to the point of exaggeration and affectation" (p. 32). Another example of the distinction between British and American choice of intonation follows on page 46, where Bolinger describes "the British tendency to maintain high pitches with abrupt falls, where American English uses a more or less gradual descent" (*I can't be\lieve it!*).

We can also repeat Wells's (2006) example *Would you like some / tea?* realized with a low rise, which gives a British speaker the impression of "polite

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this by noting that the social inferiority of Japanese women is traditionally more embedded in Japanese culture (including language). With respect to the conducted experiment described in section 3, it is important to emphasize the fact that Loveday's research was based on production and not perception.

[33] Besides the comparison between British and American English, Bolinger (1989) analyzes the intonational variations even in other English dialects – Scottish, Anglo-Irish and Southern American English.

interest", while an American "may perceive it as patronizing" (p. 224). In Uldall's (1960) experiment only Americans took place, and at the end of her paper she predicts that RP speakers might be expected to respond differently (p. 232). Therefore, the differences between the uses of intonation in British and American English is another factor that cannot be overlooked when evaluating a particular choice of intonation pattern, when we conduct a listening experiment, etc.

2.2.1.9 Summary

On the basis of reviewing relevant textbooks and empirical studies about how intonation in English helps speakers convey (and listeners perceive) politeness, several conclusions can be drawn. As for prosody in general, careful articulation, slower speech rate and inserting pauses are considered cues for signalling politeness (2.1.2). First and foremost, it is necessary to keep in mind that intonation only in relation to context, facial expression, sentence type, and other variables (e.g. loudness, speech rate, etc.) can enable us to produce some kind of evaluation of an attitudinal meaning of a particular intonation pattern (2.2.1.3). Nevertheless, in a simplified way, it is possible to summarize intonation patterns which are believed to function as politeness markers as follows:

a) unmarked intonation contours (particularly a rise for Yes/No question and a fall for wh-question; 2.2.1.2), as opposed to marked intonation contours
b) a rising tone for offers, a rise and a fall-rise for requests, as opposed to a fall (both discussed in 2.2.1.4)
c) a fall-rise for corrections, as opposed to a fall (2.2.1.1)
d) a rising terminal for question tags, as opposed to a falling terminal (2.2.1.4)
e) a rising tone for an imperative/command, as opposed to a falling tone (2.2.1.4)

f) universally, high/rising F0 of voice (due to its association with appearing 'small'), as opposed to low/falling F0 of voice (2.2.1.6)

On the other hand, impoliteness is prosodically realized through the "raising of voice" (i.e. raised loudness; 2.1.2), by using a "downstepped" fall in commands (2.2.1.4), sustaining "smooth" intonation contours (2.2.1.5) and with a longer utterance, by intonational parallelism, i.e. the successive repetition of a pitch contour (2.2.1.4). From this summary, it can be inferred that rise and fall-rise are most often used for signalling politeness.

Besides the overall tone pattern, we have found out that the perception of politeness is also affected by the range in a rise (the "wider" range the more interested, thus more polite, section 2.2.1.5) and the steepness of a fall/rise – the "sharper" the tone is, the less polite. Another issue that has arisen from reviewing the literature is the role of gender in engaging in politeness strategies. The existing evidence for the claim that females engage more in politeness strategies then men, nevertheless, remains unconvincing. The last thing to include in this summary is that differences between the uses of intonation as politeness markers in different varieties of English should be taken into consideration (2.2.1.8)

2.2.1 Intonation in Czech (and its contribution to perceived politeness)

Comparatively very little is known about the effects of intonation on perceived politeness (or other attitudinal characteristics in general) in Czech. Intonation patterns occurring in the Czech language have been discussed by Palková (1997) who describes three basic patterns (plus their variants):

a) *The falling tone*, typical for declarative sentences, imperatives and wh-questions. It is the most frequent intonation pattern.

b) *The rising tone*. Czech uses this pattern in Yes/No questions to distinguish these from declarative sentences whose grammatical

structure is identical.[34] It is characterised by a relatively steep rise of F0.

c) *The continuation tone*, implying a continuation of the utterance (used either at the end of sentences or independent sentence members). Acoustically, this tone is, according to Palková (1997), the most indefinite from all the intonation patterns (p. 308); the intonation pattern of the continuation tone can be both rising and falling (pp. 313 – 314).

Only very little can, however, be found in the literature about particular uses of these tones for expressing a speaker's attitude. Palková (1997) merely mentions that the marked variants of the three basic intonation patterns are used to convey a speaker's emotions and attitudes (p. 317). Palková (1997) also stresses the importance of context. A rising tone, for example, imposed on a wh-question can imply a repeated question, a rhetorical question, or it signals that the speaker expresses his personal attitude towards what he says (e.g. irony, astonishment; p. 315). The little what is known about the connection between intonation and politeness is summarized in the following paragraph.

Some analysis of Czech intonation relevant for the present topic was done by Jančák (1957; discussed in Vlčková-Mejvaldová 2006). Jančák, as well as Gimson, analyzes the diversity of intonation patterns occurring in greetings. He says that the variability of prosodical realizations of greetings is mainly caused by the speaker's effort to update the meaning of the greeting since its lexical form is unchangeable. A similar point is made by Hirschová (2006). In Hirschová's chapter on politeness in greetings (p. 176 – 177), she states that "protože běžné neutrální pozdravy jsou sémanticky téměř vyprázdněné, mají

[34] The word order in Czech is freer than in English: the subject-verb inversion can take place in declarative sentences and what is more, the subject can be omitted. Thus, a declarative *Byl \tady* [*He was \here*] has an identical structure to the Yes/No question *Byl /tady?* [*Was he /here?*]. The rising tone is therefore phonologically functional, because it is the only means to distinguish Yes/No questions from declaratives (Palková 1997: 308).

u nich důležitou roli zvukové charakteristiky – hlasitost, zabarvení hlasu, intonace, a (rovněž standardizovaná) gesta [since the common neutral greetings are semantically almost empty, an important role is played by speech characteristics – loudness, timbre of voice, intonation, and gestures (including standardized gestures)]". On page 86, Vlčková-Mejvaldová (2006) refers to Jančák's theory of Czech greeting, who defines the intonation pattern that shows maximum politeness strategy as that with a distinctive melodic emphasis on the first syllable followed by falling intonation (and slight reduction of tempo). Negative expressivity (that is, the speaker expressing a negative attitude – indifference, boredom, tiredness and anger), on the other hand, is "best achieved" by a low, level intonation with a small melodic range and casual articulation (p. 86).

2.2.3 Differences between English and Czech intonation (in assisting the production of politeness)

As it has been pointed out, Gimson defines four basic intonation patterns whereas Palková only three (Czech being short of the fall-rise and the rise-fall tone, but adding the continuation tone). However, this, in my opinion, is more a question of taxonomy since the rise-fall is present in Czech too, but it is grouped with the rising tone (Palková 1997: 312). The continuation tone, on the other hand, is evidently used in English as well (e.g. Ladefoged 2006: 117). More importantly, Gimson admits the possibility of using a rising intonation for wh-questions as well as using a falling intonation for Yes/No questions whereas Palková mentions only the first case.

The great imbalance between what is known about the uses of intonation as a politeness marker in English and in Czech does not really allow us to make a comparison between these two languages in this respect. The summary of how the choice of a particular intonation pattern affects perceived politeness in English was given in 2.2.1.9. In Czech, however, we have merely found out that a speaker's attitude is expressed through marked variants of the three

basic intonation contours (Palková 1997). The only connection between intonation and politeness has been observed on a Czech greeting (the most polite intonation pattern is described as a tone with distinctive melodic emphasis on the first syllable followed by falling intonation).

2.3 Intonation and politeness: a cross-language perspective

Another major focus of the present paper is on cross (or second) language perception[35] of intonation, particularly its attitudinal function. The aim of this section is to try to find out if it is possible to predict how learners of English as a foreign language (EFL learners, e.g. Czechs[36]) will perceive the intonational expressions of politeness in English. These predictions will be based on cross-language similarities and differences in the uses of intonation.

Since this thesis is centred on foreign language listening, the fundamental question is: Do listeners succeed in extracting the correct information from heard speech when they transfer the L1 (first language, e.g. Czech) perceptual strategy into L2 (foreign language, e.g. English)? The communication is successful providing the meaning conveyed by intonation is uniformly expressed in both languages (L1 and L2, i.e. the speaker enjoys the advantage of "positive transfer", see e.g. Wells 2006), but the speaker's message may as well be misinterpreted ("negative transfer", i.e. where the L1 and L2 intonation strategies differ, see e.g. Wells 2006).

[35] Sebastián-Gallés (2005) describes cross-language speech perception as the "field that studies what happens when listeners of a particular language perceive another language differing in some aspects from their own and the perceptual consequences of the mismatch between the properties of the maternal language and the foreign one" (p. 547).

[36] I will discuss mainly foreign language learning (FLL), because the participants of the present study (see section 3.1.2) are Czech learners of English, whose majority of knowledge of English is mainly based on institutional (classroom) learning and who may have some limited "natural settings" experience from an English-speaking country.

2.3.1 Universality of intonation

2.3.1.1 Positive transfer

First, I will have a look at the positive transfer strategy – I will explore how universal intonation is believed to be, that is to what extent speakers of different languages (or even within one single language) consistently use acoustic properties to communicate their inner states.

Intonation, or prosody in general, conveys the speaker's emotions and attitudes, as has been said in section 2.2. Such expressions must be conventionalized to an extent, because clearly, people do not communicate feelings in the same way everywhere (Bolinger 1989: 1). On the other hand, as Bolinger (1989: 1) explains, the "interlanguage resemblances of sound and meaning are so far-reaching and so persistent" that there must be a common fund for the expressions of intonation shared by all languages (Bolinger 1989: 1). Wells (2006: 3) supports this supposition by giving examples and situations where prosodic features are probably used uniformly by all languages – we tend to speed up our speech when we are impatient or excited, we slow down when we are "thoughtful or weighty" (p. 3), we lower our voice (we reduce the intensity of voice) in order to avoid being overheard etc.

Even though Bolinger (1989) admits that cross-language comparisons of intonation are insufficient to allow making universal generalizations (pp. 38 – 39), there has been an attempt to create a universal code of intonation – an idea represented by Ohala's "universal frequency code".[37] It seems to be generally accepted that intonation is fairly universal in expressing linguistic information[38] (e.g. Vlčková-Mejvaldová 2006, Ladefoged 2006). On the basis of experiments involving 269 languages Bolinger (1989) concluded that "the

[37] The term "universal frequency code", designed by Ohala, was quoted in Bolinger (1989:1).
[38] By "linguistic information" I mean using intonation for organizing (structuring) grammar (for the functions of prosody, see section 2.1.1 above).

average pitch in questions is higher than in non-questions" (though admittedly, this conclusion is rather vague, p. 39). Likewise, Ohala (1984) observes the universal "tendency for languages to use high and/or rising F0 to mark questions – especially yes-no questions – and low and/or falling F0 to mark statements" (p. 2).[39]

Besides the linguistic part, Ohala's theory of "universal frequency code" involves even communicating non-linguistic information. High (and/or rising) pitch is associated with smallness, defenselessness, submission, politeness etc., while low (and/or falling) pitch signals such attitudes as dominance, confidence, aggression and finality (section 2.2.1.6; Bolinger 1989: 1, Vaissière 2005: 252). Vaissière points out the general tendency to accept this theory, despite the fact that there is "no firm evidence for it" (p. 252). Brown and Levinson (1987) predict that "sustained high pitch … will be a feature of negative politeness[40] usage… in any culture" (p. 268). Ohala (1984) concludes that intonation is an aspect of speech which shows cross-language consistency. Ladefoged (2006) is more careful about the idea of universality of intonation in terms of conveying non-linguistic information, however he says that "it is apparent that speakers of many different languages have similar inflections[41] when conveying similar emotional information" (p. 247).

2.3.1.2 Negative transfer[42]

Nevertheless, it is also believed that intonation (or prosody) as a device of expressing attitudes and emotions is not universally (or even intraculturally) reliable. Ladefoged (2006) presumes that nobody knows if the non-linguistic information (e.g. the speaker's emotional state) conveyed by intonation is

[39] Both Bolinger (1989) and Ohala (1984) refer to a series of studies conducted by Hermann (1942), Ultan (1969) and Bolinger (1964, 1978).
[40] This means a strategy to mitigate the imposition on the addressee in the negative face threatening acts (requests, commands etc.). For more details, see 2.2.1.4.
[41] By "inflection" changes in the pitch of voice are meant.
[42] Can also be called "interference", a term from behaviourist psychology (Loveday 1981:74)

universal (p. 247).[43] Cosmides (1983) warns that "there is no a priori theoretical reason why the acoustic expression of emotion must manifest cross-culturally universal or even culturally shared patterns" (p. 864). Vlčková-Mejvaldová (2006) claims that prosodic expressions of specific attitudes and emotions are not universally shared (p. 30).

It has been implied that simply transferring the intonation strategy from L1 to L2 does not guarantee the speaker at all a correct interpretation of his ideas (negative transfer). This failure – misunderstanding or foreign-accentedness – may be partly due to a fact suggested by Wells (2006), that "English makes more elaborate use of intonation to signal meaning than other languages" (p. 11). Gimson (2001) similarly states that "while the variation in intonation between languages [and between dialects of English, see 2.2.1.8 herein] is not as great as that involved in segments[44], it is nonetheless sufficient to cause a strong foreign accent and in some cases lead to misunderstanding" (p. 255). Wennerstrom's (1994) study "*Intonational Meaning in English Discourse: A Study of Non-Native Speakers*" revealed that non-native speakers did not succeed in using pitch to convey meaning as opposed to native speakers. She speculates that "L2 speakers, not being sensitive to … intonational cues, might miss important aspects of the discourse structure of native speakers" (p. 417). Brown and Levinson (1987) in their chapter on Second language learning warn that "even minor differences in interpretive strategies carried over from a first to a second language (e.g. whether an upgliding or downgliding intonation pattern conveys a polite offer) can lead to misunderstandings..." (p. 36).

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[43] Considering that expressing emotions, attitudes etc. is at least partly culture-related (e.g. Bolinger 1989), we can hardly expect absolute universality of intonation in terms of conveying non-linguistic information.

[44] Podlipský (2009), referring to e.g. Pennington and Richards (1986), nevertheless implies that prosodic inaccuracies may be more likely to give the foreign impression than segmental errors (p. 11). Similar implication has been made by Munro and Derwing (1999), who tried to determine what aspects of pronunciation are the most essential for the intelligibility of L2 speech. Referring to researches done by Anderson-Hsieh *et al*. 1992, Johansson 1978 and Palmer 1976, Munro and Derwing speculate that evidence has been found "that prosodic errors are more serious than segmental errors"(p. 289)

Vlčková-Mejvaldová (2006) believes that the filter preventing the correct cross-language interpretation of expressive prosody is of a cultural and social nature and reminds us not to neglect prosodical habits of individual speakers (p. 90). LaPlante and Ambady (2003) also stress the role of culture: "Culture has been found to play an enormous role in the use of verbal and non-verbal politeness strategies" (p. 439). This reminds us of some of the conclusions about the universality of politeness (from section 2.1.1 above), that even politeness as such is a "universal linguistic variable" (Válková 2004: 45) and "society as a whole is not believed to be uniform in its politeness perception and manifestation" (Válková 2004: 48).

2.3.2 Foreign language learning (FLL) of intonation and politeness

The previous section suggests that in order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation caused by implementing an incorrect intonation strategy (negative transfer from L1), it is advisable to pay attention to learning the intonation of our target language (i.e. English).

First language acquisition (FLA) of intonation is relatively well described in the literature – unlike the FLL of intonation (see the next paragraph). "Infants are sensitive to rhythmic properties of language, and they learn to recognize the prosodic properties of their L1 before 5 months of age. Thus, the perception of the rhythmic[45] features of speech is attuned to L1 earlier than that of sound segments" (Ylinen *et al.* 2006: 181). Bolinger (1989) makes a similar point: "infants are programmed to interact with their mothers in a communicative scheme that precedes language … intonation is the main auditory channel at this stage … the contours are magnified, sharply delineated, repeated…" (p. 11). Vlčková-Mejvaldová (2006: 13 – 14) similarly

[45] Nazzi and Ramus's paper (2003), to which Ylinen *et al.* refer to, is focused mostly on metrical properties of language, with few mentions of intonation. Thus, I will not elaborate on their study.

explains that when a child learns her mother tongue, she imitates the melody and rhythm before she actually begins to produce the first words. Meanings associated with different prosodic patterns may thus be among the first meanings the child understands. In other words, prosody of maternal speech is prelexical and pregrammatical (p. 14).

Information available about FLL of intonation is, however, insufficient to make any reasonable predictions about cross-language perception of intonation and its expression of politeness.[46] Wells (2006) admits that teaching (and therefore learning) intonation is mostly neglected (p. 2), even though it is true that intonation can be erroneous and therefore cannot be overlooked. In many EFL textbooks, teaching intonation is "either completely missing, or is dealt with in a rather haphazard way" (Thompson 1995 quoted in Wang 2003: 20). LaPlante and Ambady (2003) believe that EFL learners are somewhat limited in mastering prosodic functions: "because nonverbal dominance has been found to be extremely attenuated among non-native speakers for the English language, this effect is likely to be enhanced for individuals speaking a second language" (p. 439); LaPlante and Ambady add that "the role of culture in the perceptions of verbal and non-verbal [i.e. prosodic, for instance] politeness strategies was not explored" (p. 439).

Wennerstrom's (1994) study is, however, more optimistic. She gives examples of intonational cues (e.g. negotiating a turn, topic management) which are not necessarily "syntactically or lexically distinguishable" (p. 400) and thus stresses the importance of learning intonation by FL students: intonation is "a powerful and as yet untapped discourse tool which should be developed as part of the communicative competence of the foreign language student" (Chun 1988 quoted in Wennerstrom 1994: 400). She suggests that intonational meanings are introduced to foreign language

[46] Vaissière (2005) stresses how difficult the study of the perception of intonation is, partially because of the limited generalization of results obtained in one prosodic context.

learners in the early stages of their studies which could "facilitate the development of their discourse competence" (p. 418). Fortunately, Wennerstrom observes that many "ESL spoken language textbooks"[47] have reflected a trend towards the redirection of focus on the suprasegmental features of speech and promisingly states that "research in second language acquisition generally supports the conclusion that intonation is complex and difficult for adult learners, but that certain aspects of it can eventually be acquired"(p. 400).

The question of FLL of intonation as a politeness marker was explored by Hong (1992, cited in Ofuka *et al*. 2000). Hong conducted an experiment which revealed that learners of Japanese were fairly unsuccessful in communicating politeness through intonation (polite sentences spoken by the learners were perceived as polite in less than 50% of cases by native listeners, while polite utterances produced by native speakers were appropriately identified by more than 80% of native listeners), such results were "probably due to the incorrect prosody imposed on the utterances by the learners" (p. 200).

Válková (2004) briefly addresses the issue of second language acquisition[48] of politeness. She describes some of the methods for teaching politeness strategies at school, which are to be found in textbooks currently used for teaching English in the Czech Republic and observes that some textbooks display a "lack of socio-cultural awareness" (p. 154). Válková makes no mention of intonation as a topic[49], and even though the chapter *Politeness in*

[47] Wennerstrom's terminology can appear slightly confusing in places, it is not clear whether she distinguishes between the terms FLL and SLA. On the other hand, it may be wrong to assume that FLL and SLA can be clearly separated in practice.

[48] Since Válková deals with classroom English teaching in this chapter (*Politeness in second language acquisition*), I suppose she means foreign language learning (FLL). (She may treat the terms SLA and FLL as synonyms.)

[49] Even though intonation as such is not explicitly discussed, Válková analyzes an exercise where the students are supposed to listen to a conversation, where the speakers make complaints and apologize. Some of the speakers were meant to sound aggressive and the students are encouraged to say why and propose how the aggressive speaker may be more polite (p. 155). Intonation in this particular exercise is likely to play a role, even if subconsciously.

second language acquisition is labelled "an outline" (and thus does not go into details), intonation should not be overlooked as it has been found to be a fairly important politeness marker (see e.g. sections 2.1.2 and 2.2.1 herein).

2.3.2 Summary

Owing to the great imbalance between the amount of relevant findings related to intonation and politeness in English (2.2.1) and Czech (2.2.2) and also due to the lack of evidence on foreign language perception of the attitudinal functions of intonation[50], the goal of the section 2.3 (Intonation and politeness: a cross-language perspective) was to review existing literature on the cross-language similarities and differences in the uses of intonation and politeness so that it would be possible to make predictions how Czech learners of English perceive politeness strategies in intonation in their target language.

Some authors (e.g. Ohala 1984, Brown and Levinson 1987, see 2.3.1.1) claim that there is a universal tendency to use high/rising pitch to express attitudes (including politeness), which leads us to believe that the politeness realized intonationally is expressed identically in both languages and FL learners will be successful in decoding this attitude perceptually (positive transfer).

There is, however, also a second group of phoneticians (e.g. Wennerstrom 1994, Ladefoged 2006, see 2.3.1.2) who are sceptical about Ohala's idea of "universal frequency code"; most of them hold the position that there is no evidence to suppose that politeness (and attitudes in general) is expressed in the same way across cultures and languages by whatever means (including intonation). In this case, attitudinal cues in intonation could be unnoticed or misinterpreted by FL learners (negative transfer) and it is therefore of

[50] The closest paper to this issue is Wennerstrom's (1994) study of intonational meaning in non-native speakers, which is concentrated on production and not perception.

uppermost importance not to neglect the uses of intonation in foreign language teaching.

Due to contrasting views on the cross-language perception of expressing attitudes (e.g. politeness) by the means of intonation, there is no clear basis which would allow us to anticipate the perceptual reaction of FL learners (i.e. Czech learners of English) to politeness strategies expressed intonationally in English. The research presented in this thesis could therefore serve as one of the few pieces of evidence on the foreign language perception of politeness strategies realized through intonation patterns.

2.4 The research questions and hypotheses

The fundamental research question of the present thesis is whether or not intonation itself (imposed on a specific sentence type) produces different levels of perceived politeness. As this work centres on cross-language perception, the question is narrowed down to FL learners of English (i.e. Czechs). The analysis of relevant literature available on this subject (for the summaries, see sections 2.2.1.9 and 2.3.2) enables us to articulate several sub questions.

1) Does a rising intonation contour in relevant sentence types result in a higher amount of perceived politeness than falling intonation (imposed on the same sentence) in Czech learners of English?
2) Does the range of an intonation pattern influence the percept of politeness? That is, does a high-rise in relevant sentence types produce a higher degree of politeness than a low-rise? And likewise, does a high fall lead to a bigger amount of perceived politeness than a low-fall?
3) Does the concept of a default tone affect perceived politeness? In other words, do different types of utterances favour different intonation contour in terms of politeness due to their (un)markedness? That is, does a falling intonation on an imperative receive more politeness judgements than falling tones on other types of utterances (e.g. requests) because a fall is a default tone for an imperative and not for the other types (e.g. requests)?
4) Do females succeed in recognizing politeness strategies expressed by intonation more than males?

On the basis of previous work and existing pieces of information, I hypothesize that firstly, a rising intonation in appropriate sentence types (requests, *whimperatives*,[51] question tags, imperatives) will be perceived as more polite than its falling counterpart due to its openness to the addressee

[51] A term used by Válková 2004, e.g. *Would you pass me the salt?* For more details, see 2.1.1

(the hearer gets a chance to react, i.e. not to comply with the request etc., e.g. Wichmann 2004, Culpeper *et al*. 2003, Bolinger 1989). In case the results of the listening experiment confirm this hypothesis, then it will support the theory of a universal frequency code proposed by Ohala (1984). If rising intonation does not trigger a higher politeness score, then the results will be consistent with the view that the intonational manifestation of politeness is not universally shared across languages.

Secondly, a wider range should serve as a politeness marker owing to a larger involvement of the speaker (Vaissière 2005), that is a high rise will be judged as more polite than a low rise (see e.g. Bolinger 1986, Uldall 1960), and a high-fall is likely to be perceived as more polite than a low-fall, though this assumption is inferred from the general notion that a wider range is more polite as such, but there is no empirical evidence that would favour a high-fall over a low-fall. Thirdly, we can assume that default tones come into play in politeness judgements, that is a falling tone on an imperative could be preferred more in terms of politeness than falling tones on other types of sentences, which have a rising intonation as their default tone (requests and question tags, see e.g. Ofuka *et al*. 2000, Scherer *et al*. 1984). And lastly, we can only speculate if women have a better chance than men to decode politeness strategy in intonation since the evidence on this matter is insufficient to make any predictions (e.g. Loveday 1981).

3. THE LISTENING EXPERIMENT

In order to answer the research questions of the present paper, a perceptual experiment was conducted. The following chapters give a detailed description of the methodology which was used, the analysis of the results and their interpretation.

3.1 Method

The most challenging task of the thesis was to decide which method would lead us to clarify the research questions in the most satisfactory way. The methodology presented in this paper is partly designed on the methodology used in the preliminary pilot experiment of my Bachelor thesis and partly on Uldall's (1960) listening experiment. Maekawa's (1999) study also provided inspiration for the experimental procedure (a paired-comparison procedure) as well as for the visual description of the stimuli.

3.1.1 Preliminary pilot experiment

The comparatively unsuccessful pilot study of my Bachelor thesis and its and disturbingly uneven results made me reconsider the preparation of the stimuli (both the sentence selection and recording) as well as the listening procedure.

Sentence selection. 20 sentences were selected after a preliminary review of the relevant literature; these included Yes/No questions (e.g. *Do you mind if I smoke?*), requests (e.g. *Can you open the door for me?*, *Will you come to see us off?*), imperatives (e.g. *Don't forget your wallet!*), imperatives with question tags (e.g. *Pass me the salt, will you?*) and social formulae (a greeting *Good morning*). Such a selection was quite adequate, some of them were reused in the present experiment, but it was necessary to filter them out so that the selected sentences would form a neater, more homogenous group from the pragmatic point of view (therefore a group of negative face threatening acts were used in the improved experiment). It was also desirable to reduce the total amount

of the sentences to a more reasonable number for the purposes of listening task.

Recording. The stimuli of this preliminary small-scale study were obtained from the recording of three native speakers of English (two British and one American), who were instructed to read a list of selected sentences with fillers presented in the form of a slideshow firstly with a rising intonation and then with a falling intonation. It is highly probable that such forced instructions elicited unnatural production of the speakers which then affected the responses in the judgement task (listening). The necessity for gaining utterances with different intonation contours made me use manipulated speech in the present experiment (see 3.1.2). Also, because it has been found that varieties of English do differ even in their uses of intonation, only a British speaker was chosen for the recording part of the present empirical study.

Listening task. A listening experiment created in the Praat speech analysis programme (Boersma and Weenink 2008) was presented to twelve native speakers of British English and eleven Czech EFL students, who were instructed to evaluate every sentence they heard on a 1-7 politeness scale. The subjects were, however, frequently tempted to divert their attention to the lexical means of expressing politeness (e.g. they commented on the absence of *please* in imperatives) and due to an unreasonable length of the experiment they tended to judge the stimuli towards the end of the experiment in a rather haphazard way. Therefore, the number of stimuli was considerably reduced and instead of a 1-7 scale, pairs of stimuli for politeness judgement were used (see 3.1.2 and 3.1.3). Comparing pairs of sentences identical in grammar and lexicon but with different intonational realization guarantees that the politeness score is based on the variations in intonation patterns and nothing else (the listeners are forced to pay attention to what makes the pair different, that is the intonational rendition).

3.1.2 Speech materials

Speaker. The speech samples which were used in this listening experiment were obtained from a male native speaker of British English, aged 28, a student of English Philology at the Department of English and American Studies at Palacký University in Olomouc. He speaks with a Midlands accent, which has however changed during his stay in the Czech Republic where he has been living for five years. The speaker had some previous experience with being recorded for the purpose of a perceptual experiment.

Text. Ten sentences were used as the text. These were three *can*-requests (*Can you come another day?*, *Can you possibly give me a lift?*, *Can you tell me the time?*), two imperatives (*Don't be angry about it*,[52] *Hurry up*), three imperatives with a question tag (*Don't be late, will you?*, *Shut the door, will you?*, *Pass me the salt, will you?*) and two *whimperatives*, i.e. indirect questions (*Will you please be quiet?*, *Will you please leave the room?*[53]). The reason for selecting these particular sentence types – requests and imperatives – as the material was that we naturally pay attention to politeness strategy when we rely on the listener for information or cooperation because we threaten his negative face (Brown and Levinson 1987, see 2.2.1.4).

Recording. The recording session took place in a sound-proof recording booth with high fidelity audio equipment. The speaker was instructed on how to speak to the microphone so that no interfering noise would appear on the recording. Then the speaker was provided with a list of ten sentences which he at first rehearsed and only then, unaware of the purpose of the experiment for which the recording served, he was recorded reading the sentences aloud, encouraged to aim at the most accent-free production (RP). The reading was repeated four times in order to obtain abundant speech

[52] This command is a reproduced example used by Gimson 2001 (p. 271)
[53] This request is a reproduced example analyzed by Culpeper *et al*. 2003 (p. 1571).

material to work with. Given the circumstances (recording in an isolated room, with a microphone in front of the speaker, reading sentences aloud out of context), objections could be raised with respect to the naturalness of such a production. These concerns could be partly discarded due to the resynthesis technique imposed on the speech material later on.

Resynthesis. As stated earlier, manipulated speech was used in this experiment. Uldall (1960) explains that the resynthesis of stimuli is absolutely necessary to make sure that all the variables except intonation pattern remain constant while intonation is manipulated freely. "A human speaker making such an array of intonations on the same sentence would at the same time make changes in length, stress, and tempo" (Uldall 1960: 224), because "pitch [i.e. intonation] does not occur in isolation but is accompanied by many other interrelated features"(Loveday 1981: 73). Because it has been found that apart from the intonation pattern itself, there are other features that affect the perception of politeness (articulation, speech rate, the steepness of an intonation contour and pauses between individual phrases in a sentence), it was essential to exclude variations in these variables to allow making stronger conclusions.

There are, however, some dangers of manipulated speech. Ofuka *et al*. (2000) warn that listeners seem to be sensitive to unnaturalness (p. 215) and it is hard to say to what extent resynthesized speech remains natural and realistic, since it would be "rare that only one or two variables are changed while the others are kept constant in real speech" (p. 206). In order to get around this handicap, the manipulated sentences were pretested for their (un)naturalness by a trained phonetician and the wide range of voice, which was originally adopted, was reduced to a 3 semitones (st) difference between respective rising and falling tones (see Fig. 1 and 2).

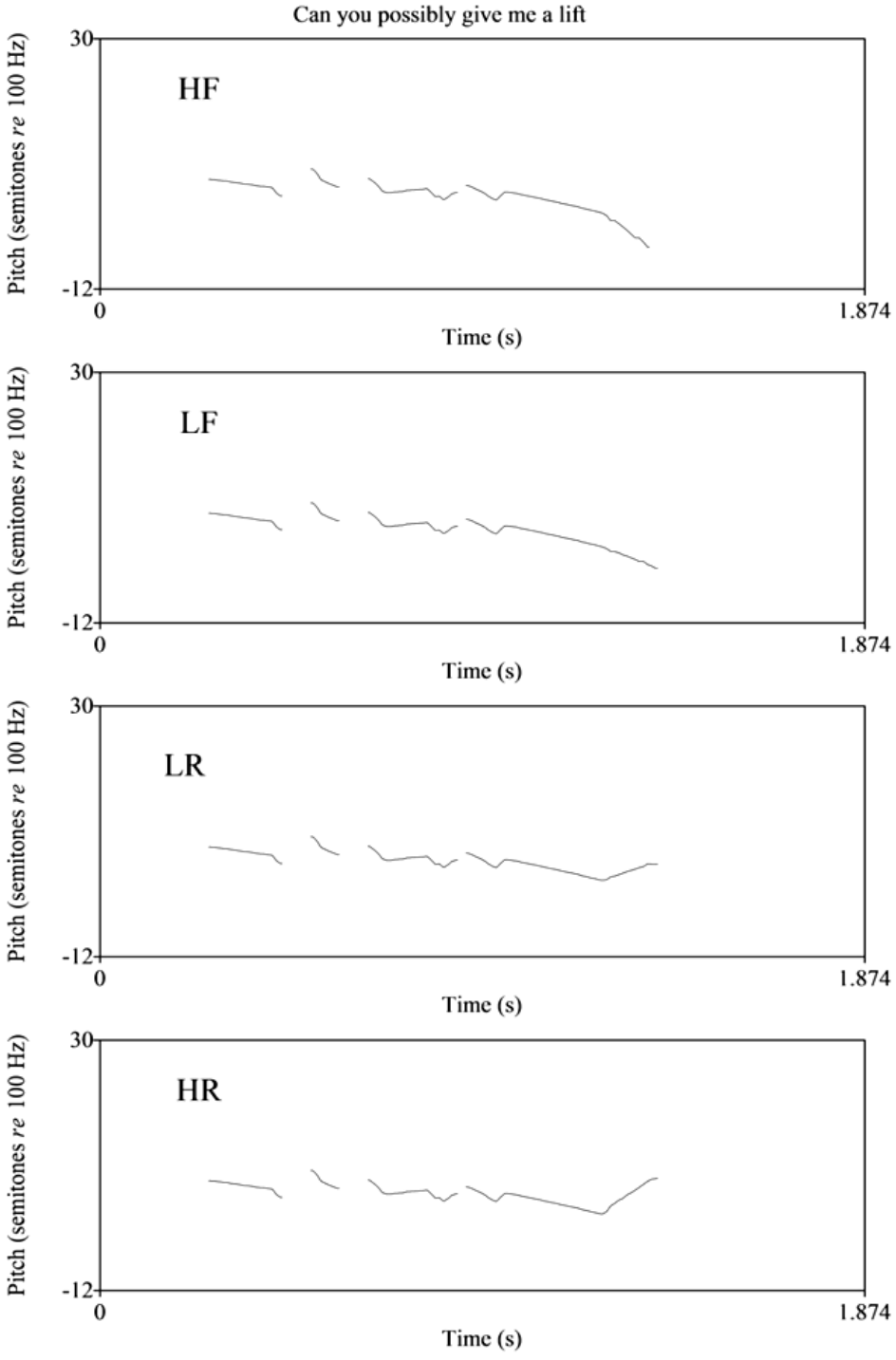

Figure 1: Example of F0 contours of the four intonation patterns used in the experiment for a sentence *Can you possibly give me a lift?*

Another drawback of the resynthesis method is the absence of context, which is crucial for the correct interpretation of politeness strategy (Válková 2004), because most of our real utterances are said within a context (Hawkins 2003: 379). Despite these dangers of manipulated speech, resynthesis is the only method that enabled us to factor out variations in other suprasegmental features that influence the perception of politeness.

Stimuli.[54] Four different intonation patterns shown in Figure 1 were used as the levels of the intonational factor contributing to perceived politeness. These were a high-rise (will be abbreviated as HR), a low-rise (LR), a high-fall (HF) and a low-fall (LF). These four contours were imposed synthetically on every recorded sentence [55] using the PSOLA technique ("Pitch-Synchronous-Overlap-and-Add" method) in Praat speech analysis programme (Boersma and Weenink 2013). The onset for placing a different intonation contour was always on the tonic syllable, because it carries the major pitch change in the intonational phrase (Ladefoged 2006). The differences between high-rise and low-rise and between high-fall and low-fall were kept in all sentences at a constant value of 3 st (semitones, see Fig. 1 and 2).

After the resythesis was completed, the actual perceptual experiment was prepared in Praat. It consisted of pairs of identical sentences with a different intonation pattern imposed on them (e.g. *Can you possibly give me a lift* with a HR and *Can you possibly give me a lift* with a HF), with approximately 0.85 second pause between the two utterances within one pair and two successive pairs were separated by a 0.5 seconds interval.

[54] The recordings are available on the enclosed CD.
[55] Resynthesis was applied on a sentence spoken with a rising intonation of a moderate to high range.

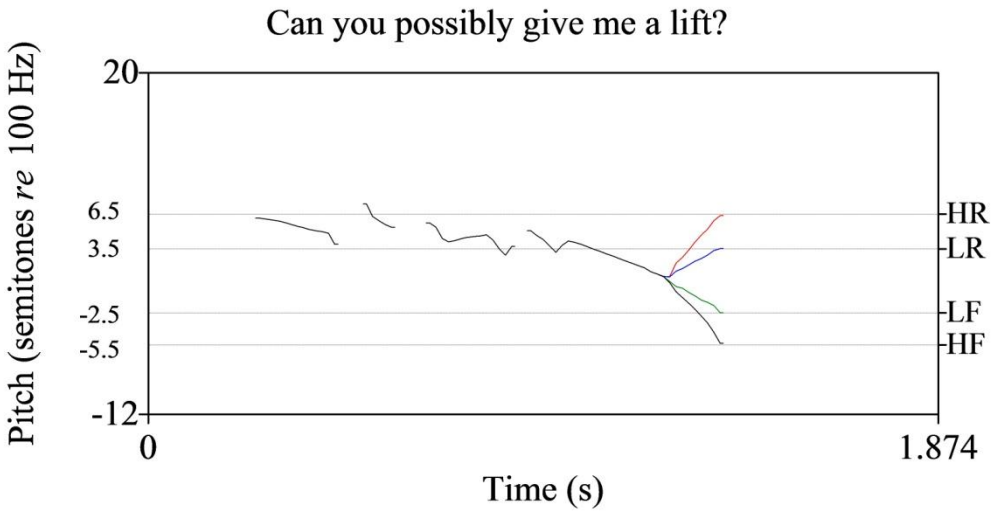

Figure 2: *F0 contours of the four intonation patterns used in the experiment*

Because it was calculated that each sentence would produce 12 such pairs (6 different combinations HR-HF, HR-LF, HR-LR, HF-LF, HF-LR, LR-LF and the same set in reverse order), the total number of sentences used was reduced from ten to four (one representative for each sentence type) in order to keep a reasonable length of the experiment. The sentences which remained in the experiment were:

1. *Can you possibly give me a lift?* (request)
2. *Will you please leave the room?* (whimperative)
3. *Shut the door, will you?* (question tag)
4. *Hurry up!* (imperative)

In total, the experiment consisted of 48 pairs of sentences with varying intonation contours (4 different sentences, each with 12 combinations).

Listeners. The listeners were 22 native speakers of Czech (18 females and 4 males), aged 21 – 28, all of them students of English Philology (either in the Bachelor or Master degree programme at the Department of English and American Studies at Palacký University in Olomouc). They were enrolled at

least in one of these two optional phonetics courses – Practical Acoustic Phonetics and Second Language Acquisition. They were all competent users of English (they rank the level corresponding to B2 and higher on the Common European Framework of Reference), whose majority of knowledge was mainly based on a classroom learning (FLL) and most of them had some natural settings experience from an English-speaking country. None of them reported any hearing problems and all of them had minimally a basic knowledge of English phonetics.

3.1.3 Experimental procedure

Two listening sessions with an identical process were held (one in each phonetics seminar). Before beginning the experiment, students were instructed about the structure and course of the task, but had no prior training trial. As stated earlier, the perceived politeness was measured by a paired comparison procedure. The subjects listened to 48 pairs of sentences in a randomized order and were supposed to decide which version of the same sentence with a different intonation contour imposed on them sounded more polite to them. They were deciding between these options: "first more polite", "second more polite", and "I can't tell". There was also a possibility to replay each pair of sentences, but only once. After rating a heard pair of sentences, there was a 0.5 seconds interval before the next pair was played. In the middle of the task (after 24 heard pairs), the listeners could have a short break if they wanted to. A quiet classroom equipped with computers for each student was used; the experiment was run in the Praat speech analysis programme and was distributed to all computers so that every listener was completing the perceptual task separately, using headphones and at their own pace. The total time required for each session was approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

3.2 Results

The results obtained in this experiment are divided into two basic categories – those that clarify the role of intonation patterns in perceived politeness and those that clarify the role of range as a politeness strategy. Every listener produced 48 judgements, out of these, 32 were relevant for distinguishing between intonation patterns (4 pairs of 4 different sentences: HR-HF, HR-LF, HF-LR, LF-LR and the same set in reverse order) and 16 responses dealt with the role of range (2 pairs of 4 different sentences: HR-LR and HF-LF in two possible orders). The whole experiment generated 1056 responses; however, one response had to be excluded because it was assigned negative reaction time (the listener must have accidentally judged the pair even before the actual recording was played), therefore, 1055 responses were analyzed in total.

The results concerning different intonation patterns and their absolute and relative frequencies in politeness judgments are summarized in table 1. Data collected on distinguishing between a wide and narrow range is presented in table 2. A test of homogeneity of binomial distributions was applied to verify the statistical significance of the results; for the evaluation of all the results significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ was adopted. The statistical analysis is shown in table 3.

Table 1: *Absolute and relative frequencies of individual intonation patterns*

Intonation pattern	Absolute frequency (number of responses)	Relative frequency
High-rise (HR)	279	39,69%
High-fall (HF)	37	5,26%
Low-rise (LR)	255	36,27%
Low-fall (LF)	45	6,40%
No difference (X)	87	12,38%

The figures reveal that the relative frequency of high-rise responses is statistically higher than the relative frequency of high-fall responses (T = *25,502*, p<.001), the same observation is valid for the preference of low-rise to low-fall (T = 20,037, p<.001). As for the range of voice, a wider range in rising intonation contours was preferred over a narrow range of voice (T = 2,33, p<.05), but with falling intonation patterns, a low-fall received more politeness responses than a high-fall, though this difference is not statistically significant (T = 0,951, p>.05). Generally, a wide range was perceived as more polite than narrow range (T = 2,33, p<.05), but more importantly, most often the listeners found no difference between a wide and narrow range at all (T = 2,721, p<.05).

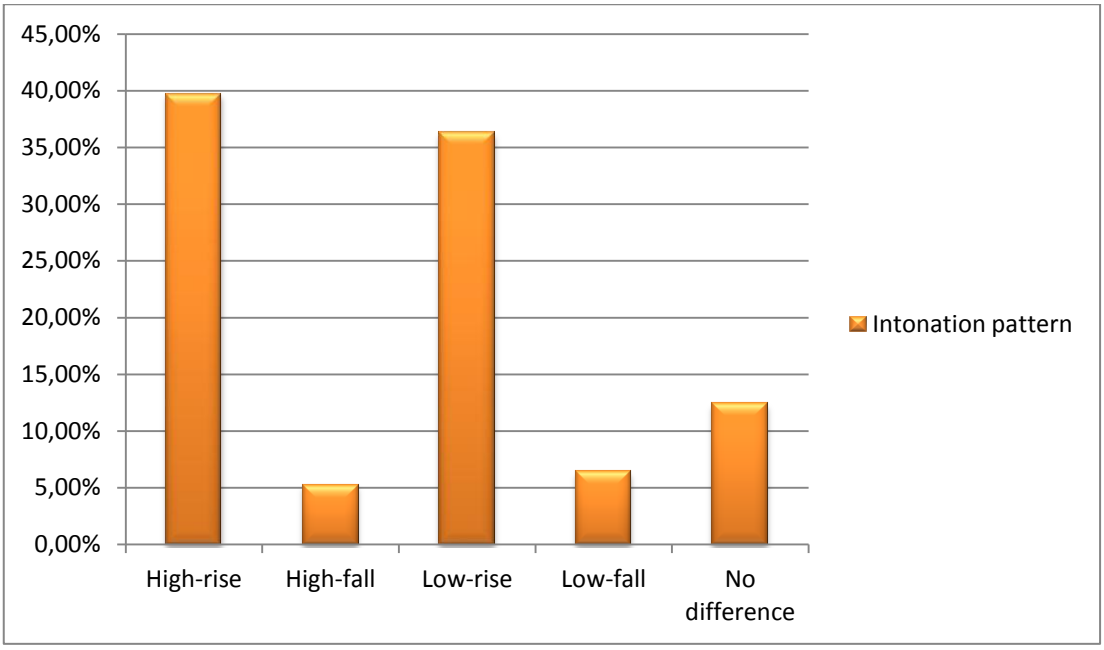

Figure 3: *Relative frequencies of individual intonation patterns contributing to perceived politeness*

Table 2: *Absolute and relative frequencies of wide and narrow range of voice*

Range	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Wide range (W)	92	26,14%
Narrow range (N)	66	18,75%
No difference (XX)	194	55,11%

Table 3: *Comparisons of relative representations of the groups observed*

Groups compared	*T* (test statistic)	*p*-value
HR > HF	25,502	.000*
LR > LF	20,037	.000*
R > X	31,259	.000*
HR > LR	2,21	.014*
LF > HF	0,951	.171
W > N	2,33	.01*
XX > (W+N)	2,721	.003*

*p<.05

The results which compare responses by females and males (see table 4 and figure 4) show that the distributions of responses are more or less even. None of the differences between genders were found to be statistically significant for the required significance level α (p>.05).

Table 4: *The role of gender*

Intonation pattern	Relative frequency: F	Relative frequency: M
High-rise (HR)	38,6%	44,53%
Low-rise (LR)	37,4%	31,25%
High-fall (HF)	5,04%	6,25%
Low-fall (LF)	7,13%	3,16%
No difference (X)	11,83%	14,84%

Range	Relative frequency: F	Relative frequency: M
Wide range (W)	27,43%	20,31%
Narrow range (N)	18,4%	20,31%
No difference (XX)	54,17%	59,38%

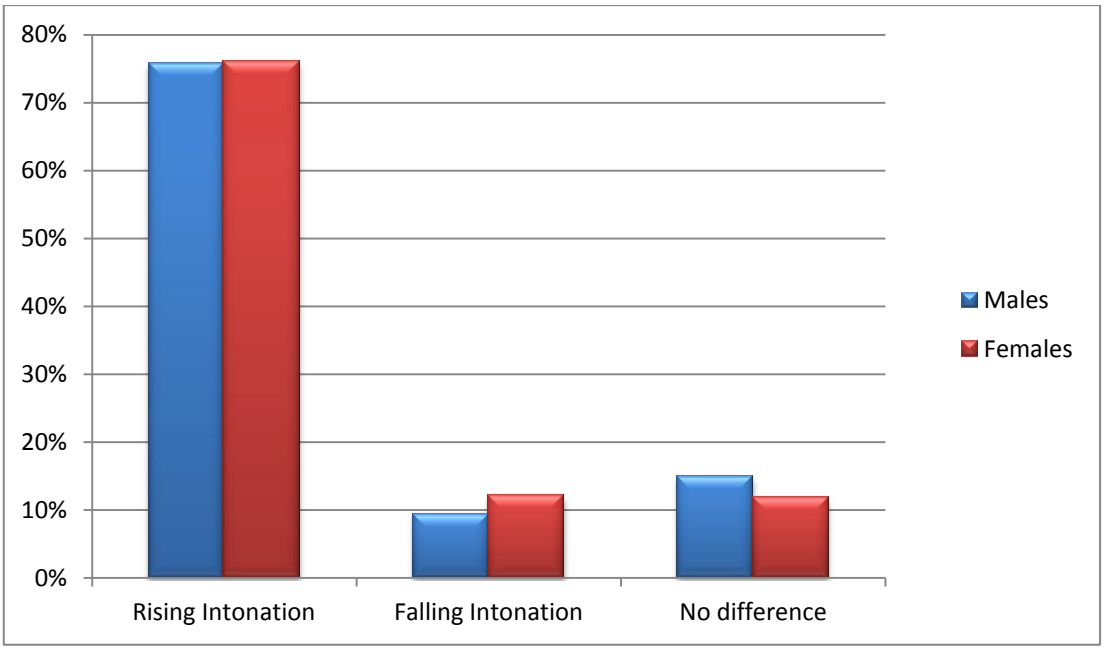

Figure 4: *The role of gender in perceiving politeness expressed through intonation*

Table 5 demonstrates listeners' responses in relation to a specific sentence type. The distributions of responses among a request (*Can you possibly give me a lift?*), a whimperative (or indirect question *Will you please leave the room?*) and a question tag (*Shut the door, will you?*) are comparatively even. A close examination of the figures reveal that the responses for an imperative (*Hurry up!*) differ significantly from the other groups. The relative frequency of responses favouring a falling intonation is statistically significantly higher in this imperative than in the three other types of utterances (T = 3,38, p<.001).

Table 5: *Relative frequencies of responses with respect to individual sentence types*

Sentence type	Rising intonation	Falling intonation	No difference response
Request	82,38%	7,96%	9,66%
Whimperative	75,57%	12,5%	11,93%
Imperative	61,71%	20,00%	18,29%
Question tag	84,09%	6,25%	9,66%

3.3 Discussion

Rising vs. falling intonation. The results reported on in the previous section revealed an overwhelming preference of rising tones to falling tones. A high-rise was perceived as significantly more polite than a high-fall and also a low-rise received a convincingly higher politeness score than a low-fall. These results are consistent with the first hypothesis of this thesis that a rising intonation is considered more polite than a falling intonation because it is "prosodically open" (e.g. Wichmann 2004, Culpeper *et* al. 2003, Bolinger 1989, see 2.4). The above described experiment was based on testing the perception of foreign language learners, the results therefore also correspond to Ohala's (1984) theory of the universal use of high/rising pitch for signalling politeness. Nevertheless, there are two other possible explanations for favouring a rising intonation over a falling intonation. As has been described in 3.1.2 (speech materials), the initial intonation pattern which was used for resynthesis for all four sentences was a rising tone of a moderate to high range. Despite the efforts to sustain the naturalness of the other manipulated intonation contours, it is possible that falling intonations were less preferred because they simply diverted from the original (i.e. the most natural) intonation pattern. The second possible clarification for these results arises from the phonological system of the listeners' mother tongue. Czech language does not usually allow using a falling intonation for Yes/No questions (that is for requests, and by extension question tags, see Palková 1997) and thus the listeners judged a rising contour as more polite because they are used to hearing a rising intonation in these utterances in their native language (Czech) and they transferred this perceptual strategy into their target language (English). This speculation may be downgraded by the fact that the subjects perceived a rising intonation as more polite than a falling tone even in an imperative (*Hurry up!*), which in Czech should be realized with a falling tone.

Wide range vs. narrow range. A weaker (but still statistically significant) difference was found between a wide and narrow range. A wide range was perceived as more polite only in rising intonation contours (a high-rise was judged as more polite than a low-rise), but not in the falling tones (a low-rise was perceived on the same politeness level as a high-fall). Therefore, the rank order of politeness as perceived by foreign language learners elicited from this experiment is HR>LR>LF=HF. These results are consistent with the second hypothesis of this thesis because a wider range implies a higher degree of involvement of the speaker, hence more interest and politeness (Vaissière 2005, see 2.4). The fact that a wider range did not result in a higher politeness score in falling tones was not entirely unexpected. Relevant literature (Bolinger 1986, Uldall 1960) explicitly favours a wider range as more polite over a narrow range only in rising tones. What is more important though is the finding that very often the listeners did not perceive any difference between a wide and narrow range at all (and if they did, they favoured a wide range over a narrow range but only in rising tones). Here, I do not think it would be appropriate to conclude that a range of voice does not play any role in politeness judgement. Rather, I suspect that the range was hardly perceptible for the listeners in the perceptual task. As it has been explained before in 3.1.2, in order to preserve as much naturalness in the manipulated intonation contours as possible and to keep the distances between rising tones and falling tones at the same value, but at the same time to differentiate between high tones and low tones, the only solution was to set the difference at a comparatively small range of 3 st (see Fig. 1 and 2).

Marked vs. unmarked intonation patterns. The results presented in this thesis also confirm that the concept of a default tone is a factor that contributes to the perception of politeness. The third hypothesis predicted that an unmarked intonation pattern would receive more politeness responses than a marked intonation pattern (e.g. Ofuka *et al*. 2000, Scherer *et al*. 1984). This trend was followed in the three types of utterances (Yes/No

question-like sentences – a request, a whimperative, but in fact a question in its form, and also a question tag), which have a rising tone as their default tone. A default tone served as a source of politeness even in the imperative, which has a falling intonation pattern as its unmarked tone. Even though the command *Hurry up!* generated a higher politeness score for a rising tone than a falling tone, it still received significantly more responses in favour of a falling tone than the other three types of sentences. This interesting observation leads to a conclusion that generally a rising intonation pattern in various kinds of utterances serves as a stronger politeness marker than an unmarked intonation pattern as such.

Males vs. females. The last hypothesis which was tested in the conducted experiment was the role of gender. The results did not reveal any significant difference in the politeness judgements made by males and females and consequently are in line with the current thinking that there is no substantial evidence to believe that females engage more in perceptual politeness strategies than men do (or vice versa). We should nevertheless take into consideration the fact that both groups of listeners were not represented in this experiment in a balanced proportion (18 females and 4 males) and what is more, only a man featured as the speaker in the recordings that were used for the perceptual task. Both factors could have influenced the final outcome.

3.4 Further directions

This thesis as well as the conducted experiment is clearly imperfect in many ways. The following are suggestions to improve the methodology in order to solidify the relationship between the use of intonation and politeness strategy. As for the perceptual experiment, it is needed to include other groups of listeners besides non-native speakers of English (i.e. Czechs), most importantly native speakers of English who would serve as the control group to verify the results and to allow making even stronger conclusions. Another group worth testing is bilingual English speakers (native speakers of English

who speak Czech as their second language). Furthermore, it is advisable to test the contribution of intonation contours to politeness strategies not only in a perceptual task but also in production. An experiment on production (and subsequently on perception) would be especially appropriate for examining the role of gender (see Loveday 1981).

One of the possible methods to test politeness strategies in production is a role-played method used by Ofuka *et al*. (2000, see pp. 200 – 201). This method involves embedding target sentences in such contexts that elicit different overtones of politeness without informing speakers about the purpose of the recording. Asking subjects to be polite or impolite is not considered a reliable method since such instructions "often induce theatrical exaggeration" (Ofuka *et al*. 2000: 200 referring to Cosmides 1983). In a role-played method, the subjects are given a scenario (a specific situation and a type of addressee, e.g. a dignified, respectable gentleman vs. a drunkard or a homeless) and every variation of such a scenario predicts a different level of politeness strategy.

4. CONCLUSION

To recapitulate, the present thesis had fundamentally two objectives. The first goal was to explore relevant literature and see how the use of intonation affects perceived politeness in English and in Czech and to predict how Czech learners of English perceive politeness strategies expressed through intonation in English requests and commands. The second objective was to carry out a listening experiment that would clarify the research questions of this thesis.

Prosody in general is believed to play an important role in manifesting politeness (e.g. Maekawa 1999, LaPlante and Ambady 2003). Some of the prosodic features which affect perceived politeness are careful articulation (Válková 2004, Ofuka *et al*. 2000), and slower speech rate (Ofuka *et al*. 2000, Hirose *et al*. 1997). As for English, many studies have concluded that intonation patterns are able to render a particular utterance more or less polite (e.g. Wichmann 2004). The type of sentences which are discussed most often in relation to politeness are requests and imperatives because we naturally pay attention to politeness strategy when we ask something of the addressee (negative face threatening acts, see Brown and Levinson 1987).

In summary, utterances realized with a rising intonation contour are perceived as more polite than utterances with a falling intonation contour imposed on them (for requests, see e.g. Culpeper *et al*. 2003, Pell 2007; for question tags, see e.g. Gimson 2001, Bolinger 1989; for imperatives, see e.g. Leech 2004, Gimson 2001). A rising tone is generally preferred because it is prosodically "open", i.e. it offers the listener a chance to react (Wichmann 2004, Culpeper *et al*. 2003, Bolinger 1989). Other variables that are believed to affect perceived politeness are the range and steepness of the tone – the wider the range (of a rise), the more polite (e.g. Bolinger 1986, Uldall 1960) and the steeper the tone, the less polite (Ohala 1984).

Another thing that should be taken into account when we judge the level of politeness expressed by a particular intonation pattern is context, because for one thing we can hardly separate the meaning of a sentence from its context (Pakosz 1983) and for another, politeness itself is context-sensitive (Válková 2004).

The question how intonation in Czech affects politeness, or any attitudinal or emotional characteristics in fact, has not been apparently well explored. Therefore, in order to make predictions about how foreign language learners of English (i.e. Czechs) perceive the contribution of intonation patterns to perceived politeness in their target language, the issue of the universality of the uses of intonation was addressed. The question was to what extent speakers of different languages use intonation consistently to express politeness, or attitudes in general. Despite the generally accepted fact that intonation is moderately uniform in expressing linguistic information (e.g. Bolinger 1989), the question of how consistent intonation is in manifesting attitudes has not yet been agreed upon (e.g. Ohala 1984 vs. Cosmides 1983). To shed some light upon this subject, an empirical study was conducted.

The aim of the study reported on in this thesis was to find out whether or not intonation patterns generate different levels of perceived politeness. The results obtained from the perceptual experiment on non-native listening confirmed the effect of intonation and its range on perceived politeness. Rising terminals were overwhelmingly favoured over falling terminals and a wider range of a rise triggered more politeness score than a narrow range. The results are consistent with Ohala's (1984) theory of universal frequency code. Moreover, unmarked intonation patterns also contributed to the general percept of politeness, the role of gender nevertheless remained insignificant. The rank order of politeness as perceived by foreign language learners elicited from this experiment is high-rise > low-rise > low-fall = high-fall.

5. SHRNUTÍ

Předložená diplomová práce se zabývá použitím intonačních prostředků k vyjádření zdvořilostního postoje především v angličtině, ale na základě dostupných zdrojů také v češtině. Druhou studovanou oblastí je otázka univerzality intonace, konkrétně do jaké míry je intonace řeči systematicky užívána k projevům postojů či emocí napříč jazyky a různými kulturami. Tyto poznatky slouží k předpovědění toho, jak nerodilí uživatelé angličtiny (např. Češi) vnímají zdvořilostní postoje vyjádřené pomocí intonačních křivek v angličtině. K ověření této hlavní výzkumné otázky, ale také dílčích výzkumných otázek, které vyplynuly z rozboru literatury, byla provedena experimentální studie, kterou tato práce detailně popisuje.

V první části práce (sekce 2.1.1) jsem souhrnně uvedla jazykové prostředky, které mluvčí využívají ve zdvořilé promluvě v angličtině; k tomu mi posloužily práce D. Crystala (2006), S. Válkové (2004), G. N. Leeche (2004) a M. Swana (1991). Zdvořilostní strategii může zajistit jak gramatika (užití modálních sloves, nepřímé otázky apod.), tak i lexikon (např. výběr vhodných slov pro konkrétní situaci). Rozbor literatury v této sekci vedl k závěru, že prostředky k vyjádření zdvořilosti nejsou v zásadě společné pro různé jazyky, kultury či společnosti. Při interpretování zdvořilostních strategií je dále třeba mít na paměti roli kontextu (Válková 2004).

Další část práce (2.1.2) se věnuje prosodii, jejím funkcím a tomu, jak přispívá k vnímání zdvořilosti. Z provedených studií lze vyvodit, že prosodie je faktor, který aktivně ovlivňuje percepci zdvořilosti (např. LaPlante a Ambady 2003, Maekawa 1999). Další prozodické jevy, které hrají úlohu ve zdvořilostních strategiích, jsou pečlivá artikulace (Válková 2004, Ofuka *et al*. 2000), relativně pomalejší tempo řeči (Ofuka *et al*.) a zařazení odmlky (Hirose *et al*. 1997).

Stěžejní část práce (sekce 2.2) se zabývá intonací a jejím užitím k vyjádření zdvořilostního postoje mluvčího. Relevantní literatura, která popisuje tento jev v angličtině, je mnohem rozsáhlejší než obdobné studie zaměřené na češtinu. Kapitoly popisující projevy zdvořilosti v anglické intonaci (2.2.1) začínají popisem čtyř základních intonačních vzorců (klesavý, stoupavý, klesavo-stoupavý a stoupavo-klesavý); k tomuto přehledu sloužily práce A. C. Gimsona (1970 a 2001) a J. C. Wellse (2006). Pro informace ohledně užití intonace k projevům zdvořilostní strategie v angličtině jsem konzultovala odborné články či učebnice intonace. Kromě již zmíněných publikací odkazuji ke studiím např. D. Bolingera (1986 a 1989), J. J. Ohaly (1984), D. Brazila (1994), A. Wichmann (2004), M. D. Pella (2007), J. Culpepera *et al*. (2003), E. Uldall (1960) a dalších.

Nejčastěji diskutované typy vět ve vztahu ke zdvořilosti jsou žádosti a rozkazy. Tento výběr se jeví logicky, jelikož v obou typech vět spoléháme na spolupráci od adresáta. Ze shrnutí vyplývá, že stoupavý intonační vzorec – na rozdíl od klesavého tónu – je nejčastěji využíván pro vyjádření zdvořilosti (např. Pell 2007, Culpeper *et al*. 2003, Gimson 2001). Tento jev se dá vysvětlit tím, že žádost nebo rozkaz zakončen stoupavou intonací je prosodicky otevřen (adresát má možnost reagovat) na rozdíl od prosodicky zavřené klesavé intonace (Wichmann 2004, Culpeper *et al*. 2003, Bolinger 1989). Pakosz (1983) nicméně poukazuje na to, že by bylo chybné hodnotit významy intonačních vzorců bez znalosti kontextu.

Jak již bylo zmíněno, literatura zabývající se intonací v češtině (sekce 2.2.2) v zásadě nepopisuje užití intonace k vyjádření konkrétních postojů a pocitů mluvčího. Podle učebnice Z. Palkové (1997) jsem popsala hlavní tři melodémy, které se v češtině vyskytují: melodém ukončující klesavý, melodém ukončující stoupavý a melodém neukončující. Jedinou souvislost mezi intonací a zdvořilostní strategií jsem vypátrala v práci J. Vlčkové-Mejvaldové (2006), která zmiňuje Jančákovu (1957) teorii českého pozdravu.

Podle této teorie je positivní expresivita (kam Jančák řadí zdvořilost) nejlépe dosažena užitím intonačního vzorce s distinktivním melodickým důrazem na první slabice, následován klesavou intonací a mírným zpomalením tempa.

Dalším hlavním tématem této diplomové práce byly univerzální podobnosti a odlišnosti v užití a percepci intonace, na základě kterých by se dalo předvídat, jak významy anglické intonace vnímají cizinci, kteří se učí angličtinu jako cizí jazyk (např. Češi). Otázka „univerzality intonace" ale není jasně zodpovězena. Zatímco na tom, zda se lingvistické funkce intonace univerzálně projevují alespoň na základní úrovni (vysoká/stoupavá intonace pro otázky a nízká/klesavá intonace pro oznamovací věty), se mnozí lingvisté shodují (např. Bolinger 1989, Ohala 1984, Ladefoged 2006), univerzální intonační projevy postojů a emocí zůstávají předmětem debaty.

Ohala (1984) vypracoval teorii „univerzálního frekvenčního kódu" ("universal frequency code"), která říká, že intonace prokazuje vysokou univerzální shodu i v oblasti nejazykové (vysoký/stoupavý tón nasadíme tehdy, když chceme vypadat „malí", a vyjadřujeme postoje jako podřízenost, zdvořilost apod., naopak nízký/klesavý tón je výrazem např. dominance a agresivity, když chceme vzbudit dojem „velikosti"; tuto tendenci lze pozorovat i na chování zvířat). Naopak např. Cosmides (1983) upozorňuje, že neexistuje důvod se domnívat, proč by prozodické projevy emocí měly následovat – jak v rámci jedné kultury, tak i mezikulturně – nějaký univerzální model.

Hlavní výzkumná otázka této práce zněla, jestli samotný intonační vzorec dokáže u nerodilých mluvčích angličtiny vyvolat různou míru vnímané zdvořilosti. Dílčí výzkumné otázky se týkaly rozsahu použitého intonačního vzorce, defaultního tónu a roli pohlaví při percepci zdvořilosti. Pro zodpovězení těchto otázek byl proveden percepční test, jehož výsledky potvrdily úlohu intonace, rozsahu i defaultního tónu při dekódování

zdvořilostních strategií. Rozdílné pohlaví nehrálo při vnímání zdvořilosti skrz intonaci žádnou roli. Výsledky této percepční studie naznačují, že vysoký stoupavý tón je vnímán jako zdvořilejší než nízký stoupavý tón, přičemž oba intonační vzorce jsou zdvořilejší než klesavé melodémy. Nízký a vysoký klesavý tón byl vnímán na stejné hladině zdvořilosti.

6. ANNOTATION

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Title: Intonation patterns expressing politeness in English requests and commands and their cross-language perception

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Number of appendices: 1

Number of references: 45

Keywords: intonation, politeness, universality of intonation, foreign language perception, range of voice, resynthesis

Description: The present thesis deals with the use of intonation in English as a politeness marker. The first goal was to explore relevant literature and find out how the use of intonation affects perceived politeness in English and in Czech. The second objective was to predict how Czech learners of English perceive politeness strategies expressed through intonation in English requests and commands. Such a prediction was based on universal similarities and differences in the uses of intonation for conveying attitudes. Finally, I conducted a listening experiment to clarify the research questions. The results confirmed the effect of intonation patterns and their range upon the perception of politeness in non-native speakers of English.

Anotace v češtině

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Název práce: Intonační vzorce vyjadřující zdvořilost v anglických žádostech a rozkazech a jejich vnímání cizinci

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Václav Jonáš Podlipský, Ph.D.

Počet znaků: 130 202

Počet příloh: 1

Počet titulů použité literatury: 45

Klíčová slova: intonace, zdvořilost, percepce cizí řeči, univerzalita intonace, hlasový rozsah, resyntéza

Charakteristika: Tato magisterská diplomová práce se zabývá použitím intonace v angličtině k vyjádření zdvořilostního postoje. První část práce shrnuje poznatky o tom, jak intonační vzorce přispívají k vnímání zdvořilostní strategie především v angličtině, ale i v češtině. V další části se práce zaměřuje na univerzální podobnosti a odlišnosti v užití intonace k vyjádření (zdvořilostního) postoje mluvčího, aby bylo možné předvídat, jak významy anglické intonace vnímají cizinci, kteří se učí angličtinu jako cizí jazyk (např. Češi). Nakonec byl proveden percepční experiment, který měl za úkol objasnit výzkumné otázky této práce. Výsledky této studie potvrzují vliv intonačních vzorců a jejich rozsahu na vnímanou zdvořilost u nerodilých mluvčích angličtiny.

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