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PRAGMATICS IN PRACTICE

EMPIRICAL STUDIES IN THE HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE

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THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. On the Empirical Study of Speech Acts

Katalin Szili

1. Speech acts and pragmatics – questions and answers within theoretical research

It is no coincidence that the topic of speech acts provides a firm basis for linguistic studies conducted in the field of pragmatics. A new area of linguistic research culminating in the 1980's, one plausible inspiration for pragmatics' beginnings can be traced to the lectures on speech acts held by J. I. Austin between 1952 and 1954 at Oxford, later followed by his lectures at Harvard in 1955 (Austin, 1962). Austin's basic tenet – in which word usage is heralded as being equal to deeds – was a direct challenge to the concept of language's role as a tool for generating either positive or negative statements (utterances) about the world, a dichotomy that determined linguistic philosophy for centuries. Among his many other accomplishments, Austin must also be credited for outlining the basic concepts needed to define speech acts as performatives, felicity conditions, etc., while also enabling researchers to judge them according to his triple system of locution, illocution, or perlocution. Austin not only established the first means for classifying speech acts, he also drew attention to several issues that determined the research of speech acts for many decades to come. The most significant of these issues will be briefly examined in the following summary.

a) Mention must first be made of the problem surrounding the dearth of more exact definitions since Austin's time, a circumstance that has engendered a wealth of literature lacking any consensus on how certain aspects should be defined. One such question would be that of whether kinds of verbal activities bearing various, separate markings should be categorized or not. A good example of this can be seen in the very loose description offered by Dictionary.com Unabridged, which states that a speech act: "Can be any of the acts that may be performed by a speaker in making an utterance, as stating, asking, requesting, advising, warning, or persuading, considered in terms of the content of the message, the intention of the speaker, and the effect on the listener (Dictionary.com Unabridged)."

b) Another issue demanding a more exact, yet broader definition surrounds the murky question of Austin's main approach to performatives, a step requiring the

revision of several weak points found in his Performative Hypothesis. Austin is known for emphasizing the following features: performatives are “verbs in the first-person singular, present indicative active” (Austin, 1962, p. 56); they are utterances which do not ‘describe’, ‘report’ or constate anything and which cannot undergo a ‘true or false’ categorization; they carry out the act it names.” Thomas established the following three points to summarize his criticism of the previous categories: (i) There is no formal (grammatical) way of distinguishing performative verbs from other sorts of verbs. (ii) The presence of a performative verb does not guarantee that the specified action is performed. (iii) There are ways of ‘doing things with words’ which do not involve using performative verbs (Thomas, 1995, p. 44).

To contradict the first two points in Thomas’s criticism, it must be said that Austin himself did not hold either the first-person singular or the indicative simple present tense as markings exclusive to performatives. While ample proof of this opinion can be found throughout his lectures, *Lecture V* provides the most persuasive example of Austin’s doubts, as expressed in the following question: “Well, is the use of the first-person singular and of the present indicative active, so called, essential to a performative utterance?” (Austin, 1962, p. 57). He then proceeds to refute the exclusive nature of each criteria. The observation made in Thomas’s third point is also contradicted by the fact that – following the performative-constative opposition made in his first lecture – Austin gradually realized how unnecessary and hopeless it is to differentiate the two: “the *same* sentence is used on different occasions of utterance in *both* ways, performative and constative,” (Austin, 1962, p. 67). He later concludes that every utterance can be linked to illocutionary force; by the end of his lecture series, Austin classifies constatives and performatives as different classes in the manifestation of illocutionary force (Lecture X–XI).

In order to reach this point, Austin first had to ascertain that the criteria used by him to separate these categories do not always apply. The next step was therefore to establish the categories of explicit-implicit performatives (Lecture VI), followed by the triple system for classifying the structure of speech acts (locution, illocution, perlocution) mentioned previously. While Gazdar places Austin’s Performative Hypothesis in a much broader context, it must also be observed that his basic concepts are still left intact: 1. Every sentence has a performative clause in deep or underlying structure; 2. The subject of this clause is first-person singular, the indirect object second-person singular, and the verb is drawn from a delimited set of performative verbs and is conjugated in the indicative active, simple present tense (or is associated with the underlying representation thereof); 3. This clause is always the highest clause in underlying structure, or at the very least always occurs in a determinable position in that structure; 4. There is only one such clause per sentence; 5. The performative clause is deletable, such deletion not changing the meaning of the sentence; 6. Illocutionary force is semantic (in the truth-conditional sense) and is fully specified by the meaning of the performative clause itself (Gazdar, 1979, p. 18).

The dilemmas surrounding Austin’s estimation of constative-performative utterances, as well as his classification of speech acts, can be linked to the speech act verbs used to describe speech acts and the connection among various performatives. The family formed by speech act verbs is largely composed of those lexical units used to describe a variety of verbal actions. When in the right context, the following verbs can provide information concerning various actions: *to state, to*

say, to beg, to urge, to ask, as shown in the example of "John states he didn't do it." At the same time, it is also possible to use these verbs to act: "I state he was the one." In this case the utterance fulfills the act of stating, however not every speech act verb is performative as well: **"I urge you to come."*; *"I humiliate you."* A variety of attempts have been made to separate these overlapping groups and determine those verbs which only function as speech act verbs (Verschueren, 1980.; Bach & Harnish, 1979).

c) Another issue remaining to be solved is that of placing nonfinite verbal acts into homogenous groups and the need to refine the criteria used for this purpose. The diversity of concepts and variety of systems evident in taxonomies that have arisen since Austin are not only a source of debate and doubts, but also generate renewed efforts and experimentation. To mention just a few, Ballmer and Brennenstuhl (1981) and Wierzbicka (1987) apply the approach of subjective semantics, Vendler (1972), Fraser (1974) focus on the unique grammatical properties of performatives possessing illocutionary force as a classifying principle, Searle (1976) navigates within the parameters offered by pragmatics, Dirven and Verspoor (2004), Croft (1994) turn to cognitive characteristics, while Sadock (1994) combines cognitive with grammatical aspects in their classifications. Within the realm of Hungarian linguistics, Ágnes Hámori established the goal of creating a taxonomy based on cognitive-social aspects in her PhD dissertation (Hámori, 2010).

d) Due to the fact that speech acts possess the unique characteristic of sometimes expressing their intent directly (*Help!*), while other times indirectly (*Do you have a minute = Help!*), the need to clarify what relationship may exist between literal and pragmatic meanings has also been raised, thereby engendering a method for possible interpretations of pragmatic meaning (Grice, 1969, 1975; Searle 1979). According to J. R. Searle's definition, intent is expressed indirectly when the illocutionary act is not realized using an illocutionary force-indicating performative verb, but rather some other, disparate proposition, such as a different illocutionary act. This is actually how one speech act can be expressed utilizing a different act's meaning, as in "one performed by means of another" (Searle, 1975, p. 60). The reason why this study by Searle plays a pivotal role in this volume is because it utilizes the act of making requests in order to provide a means of differentiating and designating the pragmatic aspects of linguistic forms demonstrating illocutionary force in speech acts, examples of which can be found in every empirical study.

2. The empirical research of speech acts in Hungarian

Since the 1980's, the speech act theories developed in the classic studies mentioned above have undergone considerable refinement, a process owing quite a bit to the dynamically evolving field of empirical research methods. In the 1980's, the means and methods for collecting and processing data were outlined as a part of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) project, which laid the groundwork for the first empirical study while simultaneously processing the mechanisms involved in making verbal requests or amends (Blum-Kulka, House &

Kasper, 1989). According to its original goals, CCSARP was to encompass both intralingual and interlingual research. While intralingual analyses aid the categorization and determination of speech acts conducted within a given community, interlingual approaches utilize data gathered from two or more languages in order to reveal those aspects which are unique – or even universal – to a certain culture. (Naturally, the two aspects cannot be clearly separated from one another.)

In the case of Hungarian, the intralingual analyses of speech acts were first conducted by Katalin Szili and her team members, Judit Bándli and Orsolya Maróti, from 1998 to 2002. Szili established the basis for providing a pragmatic description in the areas of making requests, giving refusals, asking for forgiveness and accepting compliments (Szili, 2002 a,b; 2003; 2004). Revised versions of the studies discussing requests, asking for forgiveness and replying to compliments are contained in this volume of studies. For the purpose of gathering data, Szili utilized the CCSARP's discourse completion test (DCT), a test which was relatively well-developed at the time, yet still required some adjustment in order to ameliorate a few of its shortcomings. First of all, Szili altered the socially homogenous background of data providers (the Blum-Kulka team worked only with university students) by adding adult data providers to her research which also included students from both secondary schools and universities. In contrast to the situations found on the CCSARP questionnaires—whose language usage mirrored the egalitarian/individualistic nature of Anglo-Saxon cultures – Szili's research added greater nuance to the horizontal social distinctions (i.e., the extent to which participants' knew one another) present in each situation's context external factors. These distinctions were drawn according to the following three degrees: friend, acquaintance, stranger. This step was deemed essential due to the fact that the vocabulary employed by any Hungarian speech community very precisely reflects the horizontal distance existing between speech partners, thereby creating distinct markings for each and every degree of distance or closeness. To list these degrees from the level of stranger to that of friend: *vadidegen* ('total stranger'), ***idegen/ismeretlen*** ('stranger/unknown') – *látásból ismert* (known by sight), *futólag ismert* (briefly/slightly known individual), *távoli ismerős* (**distant acquaintance**), *közeli ismerős* (close acquaintance) – *haver/span* (buddy/mate), ***barát*** (**friend**), *jó barát* (good friend), *testi- lelki jó barát/társ* (friend in both body and soul/mate). (This brief summary does not even extend to the numerous combinations related to the word *társ* (mate). Depending on the situation, usages of this word can be placed anywhere along the spectrum, from *acquaintance* to *friend*: *utastárs* (travelling companion), *katonatárs* (army mate), *munkatárs* (workmate), *sporttárs* (teammate), *osztálytárs* (classmate), *csoporttárs* (groupmate), etc.) In the end Szili's research justified her decision to adapt the original parameters: speech acts conducted within the Hungarian speech community are far more likely to be influenced by the level of closeness and quality of feelings connecting partners rather than any type of hierarchical power play. (See Szili, 2002a).

Katalin Szili's lead has fortunately been taken up by other researchers: it can safely be said that a rather wide array of speech acts have been examined within the field of Hungarian linguistics. Indeed, many speech acts have not only been analyzed, but also explored from a variety of aspects (making amends: interlingual study conducted as a comparison of Hungarian, Polish and English, Suszczyńska

1999; interlingual, Hungarian–Turkish study by Óvári, 2007; requests and refusals: interlingual analysis by Bándli & Maróti, 2003; expressing thanks: intralingual, Erdősi, 2006; refusal: intralingual, Maróti, 2005, Maróti, 2013; surface agreement: Bándli, 2011; congratulations: partially interlingual, partly intralingual, Gróf, 2012; disagreement: Bándli, 2013).

From the first studies to the latest developments, each analysis reflects a variety of research techniques and methods for gathering data. While Szili employed the written DCT (Discourse Completion Test), Bándli based her approach on both the written DCT and oral interviews. By analyzing the recorded telephone conversations conducted between a company and its customers, Orsolya Maróti turned to authentic material gathered in natural circumstances in her latest research. Whether or not the chosen approach is sociological, pragmatic or sociopragmatic in nature, when conducting the empirical study of language usage researchers must always face the question of which methods should be employed to attain a body of data that accurately reflects how language is actually used. Labov expressed his desired aims in the following words: "Our goal is to observe the way that people use language when they are not being observed" (Labov, 1972, p. 209).

As far as the field of applied techniques is concerned, two main types of "artificial" data collection exist. A given phenomenon can be examined orally, with the aid of a linguistic corpus gathered through role play. In this instance the questioners create the situation or outline its general characteristics while the responders solve the problem within the given parameters. (Recording is accomplished via tape recorder as well as video.) The advantage of this method is that participants speak as much as they desire, meaning that their oral performance most likely parallels what would be said in a naturally occurring situation. It is, however, doubtful that participants are actually willing to play their assigned roles; when played, it is also impossible to know whether the role is being played or not.

The discourse completion tests used in CCSARP are advantageous in that they can be quickly processed as well as applied to a variety of situations. The main disadvantage of these tests lies in their written format: reactions by data providers are not always spontaneous, if using a foreign language utterances are far shorter, etc. The questionnaires not only allow for the quick processing of data, they also enable researchers to increase the number of participants at will. Orsolya Maróti's article provides a discussion of methods and techniques in data gathering, including their advantages and disadvantages as supported by facts. (Chapter Pragmatics in Practice 1.).

3. The Significance of Empirical Speech Act Research

Following its inception in the 1980's, the research being conducted today forms one of the most dynamic areas of pragmatics, while also touching upon other, related fields (see the close relationship recently formed with translation studies, or the discussion of its role in language education as found in this volume). At the same time, based as they are on an increasingly broad linguistic corpus, the results garnered by speech act research can provide inspiring solutions to issues raised while strengthening or disproving statements found in theory.

3.1 The Reciprocal Relationship between Speech Act Research and Politeness Theory

Most empirical speech act research – including that featured in this volume – interprets obtained behavior patterns based on some type of politeness theory, such as that of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). It must be emphasized that these authors – in whose interpretation the degree of indirectness provides the universal expression of linguistic politeness – used the speech act of a request made in the imperative mode to prove that direct forms are less polite.

Quite paradoxically, it was precisely the concept of universal indicators and empirical research based on degrees of indirectness that eventually came to question theories expounding the universal nature of politeness while also drawing attention to the significant role played by cultural components. The latter could not have been proven any better than by a paper written in 1992 by the director of the CCSARP project, Blum-Kulka, in which the author outlines her cultural constructivist theory of politeness. While her train of thought follows the perception of politeness as a universal phenomenon, Blum-Kulka expresses methods for realizing politeness – such as via face-threat mitigation – as an object of cultural filtering. To quote her interpretation in her own words, politeness is the “culturally filtered interpretation of the interaction between four essential parameters: social motivation, expressive modes, social differentials and social meanings...” (Blum-Kulka, 1992, p. 270).

The four factors labeled reveal how Blum-Kulka differentiated between Politeness₁ and Politeness₂ when examining politeness. (For a discussion on politeness and the two types of politeness, see Szili’s study in Chapter Theoretical Background 2.). For our current purposes, her definition of the final parameter is included as the following: social meaning is the “degree to which any linguistic expression is deemed polite by members of a given culture in a specific situation” (i. m. 75). Culture’s determining role in this issue can be proven with a number of examples: in any interaction occurring between two Hungarians who are strangers to one another, the formula representing the most direct degree, *Legyen szíves megmondani* (*Please be willing to say*), is completely acceptable in Hungarian. In other languages, however, this phrase could be deemed impolite. After committing a serious infringement, Hungarians are likely to employ strategies resulting in a severe loss of face, something that would be far too embarrassing for members of different cultures (Szili, 2003). When taken literally, the phrase used by Dutch shop assistants, *Segt u maar* (*Just say it*) would be considered rude by a Hungarian customer used to hearing the question, *Mivel szolgálhatok?* (*How may I serve you?*).

Throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s, researchers whose work paid particular attention to communal cultures understandably emphasized the special role played by culture in defining linguistic mannerisms (Wierzbicka, 1991; Gu, 1990; Matsumoto, 1988; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The true shift in attitudes was felt later on, more toward the end of the century, when theories either based entirely on culture (Eelen, 2001) or mainly constructed out of this type of approach (Spencer-Oatey, 2003) finally appeared (See Szili’s study in Chapter Theoretical Background 2.).

Regarding the debate on linguistic universals versus culturally-oriented concepts, the interpretations featured in this volume emphasize the importance of carefully weighing and combining aspects taken from each approach. When adapting

this theoretical material, the fact cannot be denied that researchers were able to draw upon (some to a greater extent than others) strategy types found in the mainly English based corpus. This circumstance indicates that the actions under examination can indeed be placed into universal categories. At the same time, ample evidence exists pointing to the influence exerted by cultural training, as manifested in how a certain strategy type can possess a dominant presence, be relegated to the background, or even totally lacking. Hungarians tend not to use *Why don't you?*, a form of directive conventionalized in English; instead, we express our wishes in the imperative mode. Depending on the speaker and listener's relationship, expressing personal shame (*rettenetesen szégyellem magam – I'm so terribly ashamed of myself; a pofámról sül le a bőr – I won't be able to look at myself in the mirror*) as a means of apologizing for forgiveness is avoided by members of the more individualistic Anglo-Saxon culture, due to the loss of face entailed.

3.2 Speech Acts in Intercultural Pragmatics Research

Intercultural pragmatics is the area of pragmatics which focuses on cultural differences. To put it more precisely, this independent research field compares the means and methods used to realize certain speech acts. Also known as cross-cultural pragmatics, the basis for this research approach was established by the volume written by Wierzbicka (Wierzbicka, 1991) as well as the compiled volume publishing the results from the CCSARP Project. The following are a selection of more recent works offering a broad overlook of the field: Kecskes, 2011; 2013; Kecskes and Romero-Trillo, 2013; Trosborg, 2010.

Quite uniformly, the main conclusion garnered by empirical studies states that universal markers are present in speaking patterns employed by speech communities, yet these patterns also reflect characteristics unique to their own culture and utilized in ways developed by the community itself. The following offers an example of ways in which culture modifies behavior: members of dissimilar communities may judge the same situation differently and thereby reach an alternate assessment of the social distance between partners. Members of societies founded on social equality will not feel a significant difference in relationship whether speaking to the waitress at their favorite pizzeria, a teacher or to a superior. As a result, their speech acts are far more homogenous and show fewer deviations. In similar situations it is also possible for one culture to demand either a stronger or milder version of the strategy employed in creating a speech act compared to a different culture. Americans, for example, judge lateness harshly; this type of breach demands a more serious form of apology. The Japanese culture, on the other hand, is widely known for viewing refusal as a disrespectful act of impoliteness. This is why the Japanese have developed a rich system for refusing another person's offer in indirect ways. As well, expectations can naturally change intralingually, within smaller communities.

Alternate interpretations originating from language usage within a given culture can sometimes lead to misunderstandings between those who have come from different backgrounds. In some cases, it can even give rise to serious grievances. Gumperz discusses how ruptures in communication can occur between different ethnicities (Gumperz, 1982a,b). In an examination of American boxing

customs, Wolfson (1981) points out that the boxers praised their opponents even in cases that would be considered inappropriate or even embarrassing in another culture. Not surprisingly, issues of indirectness or directness can also possess a range of significance in certain communities. Tannen (1981) emphasizes the example of American Greeks, who – following the cultural dictates of their background – are far more indirect than non-Greek Americans are.

When behavioral patterns are placed within an intercultural context, interesting parallels can be made even between languages that are typologically distant from one another. In this volume, Szili's examination of replies given to compliments is a prime example of this technique (Chapter II. 2). Answering a compliment in a denigrating, depreciatory way that works to undermine a compliment's value (*Oh, it's not all that good; That old rag!*, etc.) is behavior commonly found among members of Asian cultures. Chen determined this strategy to occur 26.1 % of the time among Chinese data providers (Chen, 1993). On average, Hungarians use it 19.53% of the time; yet when achievements are praised data providers decreased this to an extent far below that experienced among Asians. For women it was 66%, while it registered at 74.28% among men (Szili, 2004). The similarity between Hungarian and Chinese behavior patterns can be explained by certain analogies in how the self is envisioned in both cultures: for the collectively-minded Chinese, the norm is to practice modesty before others (Gu, 1990), just as it most likely is in Hungarian culture.

3.3 Speech Act Research and Foreign Language Education: interlanguage pragmatics

The relationship between empirical speech act research and language education is an undeniably close one: it must not be forgotten that the main inspiration, as well as driving force behind CCSARP was language education, the field that also benefitted the most from this project's results. Why exactly is this? Since its appearance, the aim of furthering communicative competency has brought about numerous changes in how languages are taught. In relation to my own topic, the results gleaned from tests weighing students' pragmatic ability emphatically deserve mention. Interlanguage pragmatics, the research field founded by the authors Canale and Swain (1980), has come to bear some of the richest material available to language education methodology. The works listed here are based on the realization (which became widespread in the 1970's) that students make mistakes that are not merely due to errors of conjugation, syntactics or lexical usage. In interactions with native speakers, it is just as likely for grammatically correct sentences to cause confusion or even rejection when not expressed in the right place, or if feelings, opinions, thoughts or decisions are not voiced in an appropriate manner. Should a foreign student inquire after a professor's health by using the question *Hogy ityeg a fityeg (How's it hanging?)*, his or her friendly gesture will either be greeted with laughter, shock, or – at worst – taken as offensive.

Just as grammatical errors can be committed out of deficiencies in linguistic competence, it is also true that so-called "pragmatic errors" can result in the violation of the rules governing language usage. (This topic is discussed by Thomas (1983), while the concept is examined in the present work by Judit Bándli and Orsolya

Maróti, who concentrate on mistakes made by students when learning Hungarian (Chapter Interlanguage Pragmatics 4.). Whether grammatical or pragmatic in nature, these errors carry the same weight; as Rintell and Mitchell have observed, there are times when grammatical errors cast a better light on seemingly incompetent speakers than in cases when a foreign speaker does not understand or ignores the rules of language usage: "No 'error' of grammar can make a speaker seem so incompetent, so inappropriate, so *foreign* as the kind of trouble a learner gets into when he or she doesn't understand or otherwise disregards a language's rules of use" (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989, p. 248).

In this collection of studies Judit Bándli provides a detailed introduction of interlanguage pragmatics (Chapter Interlanguage Pragmatics 1.).

3.4 Empirical Speech Act Research and Further Possibilities in Speech Act Theory

By describing speech acts we not only glean useful information concerning language usage, we also receive excellent examples of how theory and practice can have quite a fruitful influence upon one another. While Szili analyzed material gathered in micro situations, she was still able to conclude that most speech acts are not comprised of isolated units (one request, one expression of thanks, etc.), but rather consist of various strategy combinations. Negation can be expressed as a combination of rejection + thanks acts (*Nem tudok elmenni, de köszönöm. I can't go, but thanks anyway*), an expression of regret + reason (*Sajnálom, de rengeteg dolgom van/ Sorry, but I have tons of things to do*). An apology can be made with an expression of regret and either accompanied by an explanation, or not: *Sajnálom, késett a busz/ Sorry, the bus was late*. On the other hand, a variety of strategies can be employed when making an apology: *Bocsi, megfeledeztem róla. Még egyszer ne haragudj, nagyon szégyellem magam ('Sorry, I forgot about it. Don't be mad at me, I can't say how ashamed of myself I am')*. How multifunctional speech acts prove to be is a result characteristically found in empirical works: *Köszönöm ('Thank you')* can either be a reply to a compliment (*Köszönöm, nagyon kedves vagy – Thank you, that's very nice of you.*), or an aspect of rejection (*Köszönöm, nem kérek – Thank you, I don't want any*). The latter phenomenon signals the complex relationship speech acts have with their placement within a context, as well as the events leading up to and following a particular discourse. It therefore comes as no surprise that Kasper, one of the researchers actively involved in the CCSARP Project, recommends discourse be included in descriptions of speech at functions (Kasper, 2006), a suggestion made in more theoretical approaches as well: (Tsui, 1994; Stenström, 1994; Hámori, 2009).

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2. Principles of Politeness and Empirical Speech Act Studies

Katalin Szili

1. Pragmatics and linguistic politeness

First of all, I would like to highlight the reason why the title of my paper suggests a close relationship between empirical speech act studies - in a wider sense pragmatics - and linguistic politeness.

Uniting pragmatics and politeness, moreover, identifying the two concepts with each other, was justified in the 80s for many reasons. Firstly, their joint nature was indicated by politeness theories that were established at that time period and have been influential up to this day, such as the volume *Principles of Pragmatics* by Leech (1983) and two publications by the authors Brown and Levinson: *Universals in language use: Politeness phenomena* (1978) and *Politeness. Some universals in language use* (1987).

Nevertheless, the discipline of pragmatics had to face the fact that the linguistic formulas that are considered polite contain linguistic coding which exceeds itself, or literal meaning. The main purpose of pragmatics is to describe 'meaning in use', according to one of the most widely accepted definitions.

In this regard, the work by Robin Lakoff: *The logic of politeness: Or minding your p's and q's* (Lakoff, 1973) can be considered emblematic. This study was among the first ones to draw the attention to politeness as having pragmatic implications. What else would be happening in the majority of utterances considered polite than one saying *p* yet implying *q*. When one turns to his fellow passenger with the utterance, *Could you put my bag up?*, he is not inquiring whether the person is strong enough to lift the bag, but is implying the command *Put up my bag!* Literal meaning is thus replaced by a different meaning created by social conventions.

The two basic questions that arise when studying this phenomenon are: a) what non-linguistic content is built into certain *q's*: *q₁*, *q₂*, *q₃*, etc. and b) what can be inferred about the given language use based on the meaning of certain *q's* or lack thereof.

In addition, the attention of pragmatics was turned towards politeness by the word 'use' in its definition. Pragmatics, especially after social changes in the 80s, replaced Chomsky's humans uttering correct sentences while floating in a vacuum with speakers who use the linguistic code system in a given sociocultural context, with specific communication intent, all the while being in a certain psychological state.

It is therefore not surprising that some definitions of politeness inspired by pragmatics fit this observation. The following summary of quotes is partly based on Watts (2003, pp. 50–52): "politeness is developed by societies in order to reduce **friction** in **personal** interaction" (Lakoff, 1975, p. 64); "... a complex system for

softening face threats" (Brown & Levinson, 1978); "strategic **conflict avoidance**" which "can be measured in terms of the degree of effort put into the avoidance of a conflict situation and the establishment and maintenance of comity" (Leech, 1980, p. 19); "communication is seen as fundamentally **dangerous and antagonistic** endeavour". Politeness is therefore a term to refer to the strategies available to interactants to refuse the **danger** and minimalise the **antagonism**" (Kasper, 1990, p. 194); "one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider others' feelings, establish levels of mutual comfort and promote rapport" (Hill et al, 1986, p. 349); "language associated with smooth communication" (Ide, 1989, p.22); "the set of social values which instructs interactants to consider each other by satisfying shared expectations" (Sifianou, 1992, p. 86). Spencer-Oatey identifies politeness as rapport management, and this concept is understandably identified as the management of interpersonal relations. Her definition is: "the use of language to promote, maintain or threaten harmonious interaction" (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, p. 3). Watts (2003), who emphasizes social rules, coins a new construct *politic behaviour*, which is "that behaviour, linguistic and non-linguistic, which the participants construct as being appropriate to the ongoing social interaction. So politic behaviour is behaviour which is consistent with the dispositions of the habitus in accordance with the social features of the situational context" (p. 144). As for Hungarian authors, Fülei-Szántó (1994) uses a nice metaphor *verbal touch*, while Nemesi (2000) places the construct in a wider context, that is, making impressions. The latter view can be considered acceptable if we distinguish between the general communicative goals of making impressions (aiming to appear educated, eloquent, expressive, witty, following the social conventions, etc.) and those that ensure the flawlessness of communication between the speakers and satisfy the expectations, feelings and thoughts of the listener.

The main principles of the above mentioned definitions display a picture that is both rather colorful and somewhat contradictory. Here are a few dilemmas: politeness is a means for the individuals in their personal interaction (?), members of society in different sociocultural contexts (?), taking their own interests into consideration (?), in order to manage and minimize the friction between them (?) and meet each other's expectations? It has to be noted that the most frequently occurring element in the definitions is identifying interactions as fights and sources of danger, which is signified by the words I highlighted (friction in personal interaction, face threats, conflict avoidance, danger and antagonism).

Before providing an overview of politeness theories, it is necessary to note that my paper includes both types of politeness that have appeared in the literature in the past few decades: P1 (first-order politeness) and P2 (second-order politeness). This distinction has become prevalent in politeness research since the study by Eelen (2001). In short, while P2 politeness is identified as a scientific and theoretical approach to politeness, P1 is politeness as perceived by various sociocultural groups, as behavior lived out in everyday life and as assessed by a community. The two types are interdependent, which explains why they are often treated unanimously. The principle by Brown and Levinson largely focuses on P2, while the CCSARP project investigates the everyday presentation of politeness, even though it actually derives its analytical framework from theoretical approaches (for further discussion on the topic, see Watts, 2003, pp. 9–12).

2. From politeness to the determining role of culture and society

Examining the first two well-known politeness theories, Leech (1983) builds onto maxims, while Brown and Levinson use the concept of *face* and treat interactions as *face-threatening*. The shared feature of the theories is that they describe the universal features of language use. It has to be added, however, that Brown and Levinson did not deny the existence of cultural differences in various communities, since numerous times they referred to the fact that Eastern and Mediterranean nations prefer positive politeness strategies, while Western societies rather select negative ones. Moreover, distinguishing between different communication styles they claim: "Every observer in a foreign land knows that societies, or sub-cultures within societies, differ in terms of what might be called 'ethos', the affective quality of interaction characteristic of members of a society.... In some [positive- politeness] societies interactional ethos is generally warm, easy-going, friendly; in others [negative-politeness societies] it is stiff, formal, deferential" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 243). Leech also links the various principles to different nations.

The concept of universals and the universal principles and attitudes assumed in the theories understandably evoked the (sometimes quite strong) opposition of non-Anglo-Saxon researchers (Ide 1989; Hill et al. 1986; Matsumoto, 1988, 1989; Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994; Lim, 1994, Gao, 1996, Lee-Wong, 1999, Wierzbicka, 1985, 1991; Ji, 2000). Opposing arguments, as well as the the ever-growing number of empirical studies, eventually exposed deeper layers of relationships between polite/impolite linguistic behavior and culture as well as society. In further discussions I will highlight the elements of this process that bear relevance to speech act studies. It needs to be emphasized that I analyze the role of culture and society in producing linguistic behavior only for the sake of clarity, since based on Hofstede (1991), I regard social structure as a pillar of culture.

2.1. Culture, cultural values and politeness

As culture is a complex construct, it is rather difficult to clearly define which components (beliefs, attitudes, emotions, etc.) exert the greatest influence on our linguistic behavior. Studies on the subject argue that values certainly play a significant role in this regard. Werkhofner (1992), for instance, compares it to money, claiming it to be a symbolic and historically evolved medium, whose functions may derive from values: "(ii) Again like money, it is a symbolic medium in the sense that its functions originally derive from an association with something else, namely with values. (iii) Like money, too, politeness is historically constituted and reconstituted; its functions and the values it is associated with are essentially changeable ones" (p. 190). It needs to be noted that Leech aims to construct a universal theory, yet his maxims (tact, generosity, modesty, sympathy) are based on values and therefore allow for a cultural interpretation as well. Janus Bańczerowski (2000) also underlines the ethical dimensions of politeness. In the present volume, Katalin Szili analyzes answers given for compliments in light of enforcing the principle of modesty (Chapter Pragmatics in Practice 2.).

Values are defining elements of Eelen's system (2001) as well. He argues that *evaluativity* is a fundamental characteristic of politeness and impoliteness. Evaluating what is polite and what is not takes place on the level of society, according to social values. The fact that values reflect community characteristics explains why one speech act assessed as proper in one language may be judged disrespectful or rude in another, while a different speech act is accepted because it meets the community's expectations.

Spencer-Oatey (2000) also claims that cultural differences may have an effect on what people consider appropriate language use; consequently, they also influence the view on rapport management, which she equates with politeness (p. 43). She lists five reasons for the cultural differences of rapport management (*ibid.* pp. 43–44). The first one is contextual assessment norms, which entails that various cultural groups define the social distance between conversation partners differently and assign various rights and duties to the particular roles. For instance, conversations between teacher and student or boss and employee are carried out in an entirely different manner in hierarchical societies than in egalitarian ones.

Spencer-Oatey mentions sociopragmatic principles as the second reason for cultural variation. Empirical research as well as everyday life offer numerous examples of the fact that different cultures stress different principles when handling various situations. Hungarian society accepts that certain situations demand stronger face-losing behavior. In the case of greater offences it expects from the "offender" an apology that entails a greater loss of face: '*my skin is burning on my face/on my cheek*', '*I'm awfully ashamed*', '*I feel so embarrassed*'. These forms are understandably missing in cultures that prefer saving the values of face (Szili, 2004, pp. 143–155). Similarly, actions are noticeably regulated by the principle of modesty (Chapter Pragmatics in Practice2.). In the case of praise, as of now, we often employ the strategy of downgrading, with which we decrease the value attributed to us: '*It didn't turn out quite like the way I hoped*' or '*Oh, it's just an old rag.*' The reason is that similarly to Chinese culture, modesty in our society is also a norm to be followed in community and a desired role to be played. In instances of refusals we, Hungarians, follow an unwritten rule claiming that it is impolite to say no to people of equal or higher social standing; we save open denials for people on lower levels of the hierarchy (Chapter Pragmatics in Practice 4.).

According to Spencer-Oatey, the third reason for the cultural variation in rapport management is the different pragmalinguistic conventions of communities. We need to agree with her in that there are different conventions that assist members of a certain culture in the selection as well as in the interpretation of strategies. In English the question *Why don't you* is frequently used in situations of imposition, which is most probably interpreted as a question by a Hungarian speaker, as it is not a conventionalized form in our language. However, we have phrases that provide a framework to meals ('*Good appetite!*', '*To our health!*', '*May it be to our health!*') and a closure to purchases: '*Wear it with health!*', '*Good appetite for it!*' Two cultures may agree on the necessity to apologize in certain situations; nevertheless, performing this speech act relies on different conventions. We, Hungarians, possess a wider selection of face-losing forms (see above) including the shortened diminutive forms of the performative '*I apologize*' (*bocsi*, *bocsesz*, *bocsika*). However, we seldom use admitting mistakes as forms of apology, while in English the phrase *it's my fault* is frequently applied (Szili, 2004, pp. 137–155).

Under the fourth point, Spencer-Oatey mentions cultural values, which have been researched to a small degree to date; she does not devote attention to their detailed analysis.

The fifth point of Spencer-Oatey's classification is inventory of rapport management strategies, which includes the linguistic tools of addressing, as well as formal and informal forms. The quality and quantity of these is not accidental in a given language: they reflect the structure of society and the psychological characteristics of the interrelationship among different groups. Take for instance the complexity of society and the refined system of respectful phrases in Japanese culture or the large number and frequent usage of diminutives in Slavic cultures that cherish intimacy. (On the phatic elements of the Hungarian language see Balázs, 1993).

Addressing forms and phatic elements serving rapport management do not constitute the main focus of empirical research, which is understandable. Nonetheless, their role in strengthening or weakening the illocutionary force of the main act does not escape the attention of researchers, as studies of the present volume confirm. Here are two convincing examples from the same act: *Leave me alone, buster! I've got better things to do!* and *Ya know, baby, you're sweet, but I have no time.*

2.2. Politeness as communication activity governed by norms and conventions

The idea that culture determines linguistic activity necessarily leads to the conclusion that language use is regulated by conventions and norms derived from rules. In an attempt to reach their communicative goals, speakers need to follow the behavior accepted in their smaller or wider circle, in other words, they need to be conforming to norms. (Without adapting to any norms it would be difficult to gain even 2 cents.)

Following the principles and norms is a recurring element of politeness explanations as well. Take for instance Leech's theory based on maxims or Sifianou's interpretation (1992, p. 86), which proposes that we are polite when we tailor our intentional strategies and expressions to the prescribed norms. Correspondingly, Spencer-Oatey refers to contextual assessment norms and pragmalinguistic conventions (see above). According to Gino Eelen, "politeness is the result of social norms, which allow us to label politeness as "appropriate" (2001, p. 128). As he explains, social-cultural rules are formed as a result of human interaction. And if I may add, the rules formed this way then begin governing the interactions up to the point when new needs create change and new roles. Norms defining contextual appropriacy are not the norms of the individual but those of society, which the speaker is aware of and follows for his own sake: "communicative success depends on the right amount and kind of politeness applied at the right time to the right speech act, as determined by social norms that stipulate what is appropriate for a specific interactional situation" (Eelen, 2001, p. 128).

The importance of normative behavior is underlined by the fact that it is common to categorize communities by the way they follow normative politeness: societies with a strong hierarchical system are dominated by normative politeness

(Japan, Mexico, Zulu), while normative and strategic politeness are both present in communities based on face and status (China, Korea). In less hierarchical societies (Northern Europe, North America) status is not markedly present in verbal and non-verbal interactions; therefore, strategic politeness is dominant. According to my investigations, we, Hungarians belong to speech communities that use both normative and strategic politeness. It is also observable that women follow norms more than men do (Szili, 2004, pp. 103–174).

3. On the role of society in polite behavior

When researchers critiqued Brown and Levinson's concept of *face*, they underlined the absence of context and situation, as well as the wider social relational system. In other words, instead of facework between the two individuals according to their own demands (approximately this is the gist of Brown and Levinson's theory), they placed the emphasis on modes of behavior dictated by social constraints. According to Lim (1994), the Chinese concept of face is more communal and positive, based on three fundamental principles: solidarity, reinforcement and tact. Lee-Wong (1999) claims that face is: "... the perception of self in relation to other" (p. 24). Even Y. Matsumoto (1988), who accepts the principle of universality in general, stresses that in Japanese culture saving face is in close connection with recognizing the contextual position of the person and maintaining social hierarchy: "preservation of face in Japanese culture is intimately bound up with showing recognition of one's relative position in the communicative context and with the maintenance of the social ranking order" (p. 415).

Moreover, Werkhofer (1992) considers social factors to be so important that he proposes that politeness be defined within the social processes which lead to its creation (p. 159). He also interprets the function of politeness on a social level. "Politeness, like money, is one of the means by which we are able to adapt our behaviour to that which is appropriate to the social interaction type in which we are involved" (Werkhofer, 1992, p. 190 as quoted in Watts, 2003, p. 143). According to this interesting argument, "During its history, the functions of politeness turn into a power of the medium in the sense that it may, rather than being only a means to the ends of an individual user, itself motivate and structure courses of action. (v) Correspondingly – and due to other forces, too – the chances of the user mastering the medium completely (which would mean being able to use it to his/her wishes) will be diminished" (Werkhofer, 1992, p. 190).

Fraser and Nolen (1981) imagine polite/impolite behavior as a type of conversational contract. As they explain, "On entering into a given conversation, each party brings an understanding of some initial set of rights and obligations that will determine, at least for the preliminary stages, the limits of the interaction" (Fraser & Nolen, 1981, pp. 93–94). Although conversational agreement is based on the expectations of the participants, these expectations are shaped by conventions, social institutions and historical terms. Conventions are linked to the situation, entailing aspects like turn-taking, desired volume, etc. Social institutions represent requirements dictated by society, for instance the obligation to whisper in a library, addressing the president, the prestige of establishments, the language use shaped

by power relations, etc. The authors describe historical terms as the process in which the speaker's expectations are based on previous, similar situations; that is, his experiences help him interpret the power relations and roles (including his own and others') in new situations.

Arndt and Janney (1985) distinguish between social and interpersonal politeness. They define the former as follows: "Social politeness is considered to consist of rules regulating appropriate and inappropriate ways of speaking' and the 'locus of these rules is society, not language itself' " (1985, pp. 283–284).

To put it simply, if Arndt és Janney combine the idea of society with that of Brown and Levinson's on interpersonal facework, then Spencer-Oatey's rapport management theory can be understood as reintroducing Goffman's many-faceted concept of face combined with the ideas that interactions are determined by society and that personal intentions need to be taken into account. According to Spencer-Oatey, rapport management comprises three activities. Firstly, the management of various types of face. She distinguishes three kinds of face: a) self-image constituting our view of ourselves as individual identities, i.e., possessing individual identity; b) our view of ourselves as a group member or having collective identity; c) our view in relation to others, that is, the existence of relational identity. Sensitivity to certain attributes to face depends on the context and can vary from one context to the other. Personality traits may be linked to more types of face at the same time: someone might be regarded *gifted* (individual identity), or this characteristic can be linked to group identity (*a gifted pianist* = 'belonging to the group of gifted pianists'), and yet again, the person may be assessed based on social relations: *a gifted leader*.

In the rapport management model, besides defending the sensitivity of face types, the second element is managing social rights and duties. These rights and duties pertain to perceptions about social expectations, that is, what people consider fair or appropriate behavior. Spencer-Oatey claims that the individual is not independent of other members of the community and the function of politeness is to buffer the changes in harmony and lack therein. In other words, participants of the conversation mutually maintain the balance of the social relationship according to the sociocultural expectations of the given culture and the speakers' presuppositions.

Watts underlines social determinism to such a large extent that instead of politeness, he writes about *politic behaviour* in his book. He claims politic behaviour to be both a social and a cognitive concept, which is created through our social interactions and is manifested through our cognitive processes: " Politic behaviour can then be understood as the sum of individual perceptions of what is appropriate in accordance with the habitus of the participants. It is always open in social practice to renegotiation" (Watts, 2003, p. 76).

4. Why Brown and Levinson? The idea of universals and empirical research

I agree with the opinion of the critics who argue that Brown and Levinson's theory, defining politeness as the decrease of mutual face-threatening, builds on the characteristics of individualistic societies; however, its significance is indisputable for several reasons. On the one hand, their theory – due to the intentional separation

from the sociocultural aspects of linguistic behavior – inspired the creation of opposing arguments. On the other hand, it has had a determining role in empirical speech act studies. I need to add that Spencer-Oatey (2000, pp. 19–20) critiqued the theory more because of the concept of *face threat* and the vagueness of it, rather than due to the two types of face. We can all but agree, for instance, that not every request is necessarily a face threat (one can receive a request which is a privilege to fulfill) and there may be significant discrepancies between the face threatening nature of apologies. As an example, while stepping on someone's foot triggers an almost automatic linguistic reaction, giving a public apology may entail a great deal of face loss. Compliments are not unanimously face threats either, as the authors claim; whether they are or not depends largely on the social relationship between the partners.

4.1 The paradox of the Brown and Levinson theory: universals as the benchmark and proof of dependency on sociocultural factors

Examining the wonderfully long list of empirical speech act studies, we come to the conclusion that the majority of them still use the Brown and Levinson theory as an analytical framework. Researchers in the Hungarian context (Szili, Bándli, Maróti, Gróf, Erdős) follow a similar pattern. Why has this universal theory maintained its dominant position in speech act studies for decades and particularly, how has it emerged to be the method and evidence for the sociocultural definition of politeness? These are the questions at hand.

In my estimation, the answer lies in the theory's bare bones concept of face, as well as in the divestment of social and cultural characteristics from all the behavior modifying factors the authors enumerated. As is well known and also noted in the first version of their writing, they managed to reduce the key concept of their theory, face, to a polarity by significantly reconstructing Goffman's concept of face and replacing its characteristics with those of the western (English) egocentric *persona*: "our notion of face is derived from that of Goffman and from the English folk term" (1978, p. 61). Therefore, Goffman's concept of face, derived from society and interchangeable depending on the situation (Goffman, 1967, pp. 5–12), was narrowed down to *negative* and *positive face*. Negative face and the politeness strategies associated with it are recognized by the avoidance of others' influence, persuasion, force, coercion, as well as the freedom of imposition; whereas positive face and positive politeness issue from the pursuit of unity and agreement with the conversational partner.

The authors themselves illustrate their theoretical claims with examples from speech acts, and as a result, highlight the relationship between negative strategies and indirect linguistic forms, and positive strategies and directness, respectively. The "trial" of the theory on a larger linguistic corpus occurred in the 80s through the CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns) project, which aimed to explore the pragmatic errors committed in the target language by language learners from different first language and culture backgrounds. The reason this element is of such significance is because the baseline idea of the project itself opposed the premise of the universal rules for language usage. It was based on the simple observation of foreign language teachers stating that their students from

different first language backgrounds treat the target language differently (concerning requests, refusals, congratulations, etc.) if they use their first language rules when speaking the target language and therefore do not meet the requirements of the target language culture. The inter- and intralingual study exploring the request and apology customs of eight language communities derived the linguistic corpus for data analysis by employing a discourse-completion test. (For further information on this data collection method see Szili 2004, pp. 97–100, and the Chapter Pragmatics in Practice 1. of the present volume). The construction of the test was based on the three aspects that according to Brown and Levinson's theory affect the severity of face threats: power relations and social distance between partners, and the rate of imposition. The paradox is that in various speech communities (German, Argentinian Spanish, Hebrew, Canadian French, etc.) the three universal categories were filled with sociocultural content. Among other observations it became apparent that the language behavior of partners in various cultures is determined by different power relations and similarly, social distance is conceptualized in different ways. We, Hungarians, for instance, use an elaborate classification of the distance between not knowing someone and having a close relationship with a person (complete stranger, stranger, familiar face, distant acquaintance, close/good acquaintance, pal, friend). This phenomenon bears relevance since in a conversation behavior is more significantly dependent on the degree of familiarity than power (Chapter Pragmatics in Practice 3.). Moreover, the degree of imposition is not necessarily identical either: one community has less tolerance for tardiness than the other; consequently, in the former society the tardy person needs to make more serious linguistic ramifications to placate his partner than in the latter one.

I need to stress that the empirical studies did not question the validity of the three aspects, they merely placed them in a cultural and social realm.

4.1.1 Indirectness – directness and politeness

Brown and Levinson's theory seemed to be an appropriate framework for empirical studies since linguistic directness and indirectness and the directness scales established in performing certain speech acts were connected to negative and positive politeness strategies and in most cases served as a sure foundation for deciphering the degree of politeness in certain strategies.

First, let us cite the evident examples. If we are indirect, we use indirect speech acts, by which we express our primary intention with another locution: *Our stores have been equipped with an electronic security system. = Don't steal.* Conversely, we are evaluated as impolite if we produce a direct utterance, like the waiter who asks us *What do you want?* instead of the conventionalized forms *What would you like to have?* or *What can I bring you?*

Nevertheless, the other answer from pragmatics can be negative as well, that is, there is not always the aforementioned relationship between directness and politeness. The importance of contextual factors is underlined by, among others, the ironic usage of indirectness, when the speaker performs his intention on a level that is not expected in the given situation: *Please excuse me for disturbing you. I would be very grateful if you could answer my question* signifies a way to remind the chattering shop assistants of their duty in a store.

Another observation about this relationship is one that escaped the attention of the researchers of the CCSARP project, who concentrated on requests: the parallel they pointed out regarding requests does not work concerning the other speech act in question. That is to say, in the case of apologies, utterances that express intentions more directly are the ones that rather meet the expectations of politeness (*I am sorry, My apologies, Sorry about that, etc.*) and indirect ones (excuses: *The bus didn't come, handling responsibility: I overslept. I forgot.*) seem more impolite. We can observe a similar phenomenon in the case of other speech acts, namely expressing gratitude and good wishes, and congratulating. Of course I hereby have to correct myself, as the appropriacy of the degree of directness is largely dependent upon contextual factors and the sociocultural expectations of the given community. Producing the utterance *I overslept* will not result in any problems among friends, but entering the classroom fifteen minutes late with this sentence may cause disapproving glances. And again, the emphasis is on the modal verb *may*.

However, cultural communities have different attitudes towards directness: some are reluctant to use it, for instance Anglo-Saxons, and others are less so. Gu (1990) warns that in Chinese culture directness is less offensive than in individualistic societies, which he explains with the Chinese concept of face. Chinese people identify themselves within a group, that is, as a member of a community. As for their behavior in the community, it is motivated by striving for group harmony, as well as other forces like respect and position in a hierarchy. In other words, they do not perceive any offence if an older, well-respected member of the group plainly expresses his opinion.

Familiarity, intimacy in the relationships among group members as well as the culturally relative value of emotions oppose the directness – impoliteness and indirectness – politeness parallels. There are communities that esteem closeness and emotions, such as Slavic, Greek, Israeli nations (and I would include Hungarians in this list as well), where these concepts receive higher priority on the scale of values. Closeness, then, is associated with more direct language use. Hungarian data supports the claim that it would be a simplification to put an equation sign between directness and impoliteness: in a sociocultural comparison, we produce more direct orders in the instances of requests (Chapter Pragmatics in Practice 3.), but we also take off the edge by the multitude of softening phrases such as *please, will you, Sir, Maria or Professor*.

5. Summary

In my paper I summarised the significant phases of the social-cultural shift in politeness theories. I sought for an explanation as to why Brown and Levinson's theory is to this date definitive. I seemed to find it in the objectivity and measurability of the universal categories. However, it was also apparent that these virtues can be obstacles when describing the different intercultural characteristics of various speech acts. Therefore, the empirical studies of the volume are based on the theoretical supposition that the key for accurately describing language use is to unite the methods identifying both universal and sociocultural characteristics and to

consider the cognitive and psychological processes taking place in the speaker and the hearer.

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PRAGMATICS IN PRACTICE

1. Research Methods in Speech Act Studies

Orsolya Maróti

1. Empirical pragmatical studies

The literature of speech act studies have had a history of more than three decades. During this period there have been significant changes concerning the selected data analysis methods, research questions and aspects of investigation. Initially, basic studies researched how certain speech acts occur in a language. The analysis of speech acts provides insight into how a certain act (for instance, complaining or requesting) is implemented among native speakers (Wolfson & Judd, 1983; Blum-Kulka & Ohlstein, 1984). In addition to word usage and the selection of grammatical forms, research also provides information concerning the situations where speakers use the given speech act and whether the interaction is influenced by the conversational partner's social standing, age or gender. Intralingual studies can reveal data regarding the frequency of a phenomenon or language behavior form; therefore, they are suitable means to explore the characteristics of a speech community's language usage. This way research in pragmatics provides findings that may be utilized by social studies as well.

Language teaching and methodology perspectives and the demands for practical application generated research into comparisons between language learners' target language knowledge, interlanguage and native speakers' language use, and interlanguage studies (Dechert & Raupach, 1980; Ventola, 1983; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1988). These research projects provided many indispensable foundational principles concerning interlanguage, the state between the mother tongue and the language being learnt, which greatly aided the understanding of the concept and importance of pragmatic competence (Németh T., 2006, p. 426). Communicative language teaching proposed to develop oral and written communication skills in the foreign language and the formation of communicative competence, which will aid the language learner in conveying his thoughts, feelings and intentions in the appropriate linguistic form. In addition, learners realize that when forming their utterance, the conversational partner's reactions need to be taken into account as well. The student is only able to do this if he possesses pragmatic competence, since only a message that meets the hearer's expectations will produce the effect desired by the speaker. Therefore, in order to ensure that his intention is successfully understood, the sender of the message has to acquire the rules of the given language.

Contrastive discourse analysis and interlanguage pragmatics studies have underlined the role of culture in influencing linguistic behavior, that is, the coding and decoding of messages (Fraser, Rintell & Walters 1980; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 72). Among other issues, these research projects examine the linguistic elements various speech communities employ in order to produce a selected speech act. For instance, comparative studies have been conducted with American and Israeli participants on the production of requests and apologies (Blum-Kulka & Ohlstein, 1984), while American and Egyptian respondents provided data on the linguistic manifestation of refusals (Edmondson, House, Kasper & Stemmer, 1984). The yielded data lead the researchers to the conclusion that language behavior is not universal, and the diverse prioritizing of values among cultures is manifested in the formation of utterances as well (Manes, 1983, p. 96, as quoted in Szili, 2004.).

2. An overview on data collection methods

In order to reach the aforementioned goals, researchers need to undertake the challenge of describing the linguistic forms appropriate for the speaker's intentions, exploring the hearer's interpretation processes and introducing the cultural environment that exerts influence on the entire context.

Ideally, studies on spoken language behavior are to be conducted in the real world. However, in order to make the various language phenomena recordable and tangible, researchers need to compromise. Authors in the Hungarian context have the insights of foreign studies at their disposal, which provides a firm background in methodology when designing and conducting research projects.

It may seem like a play on words to declare that in order to observe real-life speech situations the most comprehensive way, one needs real-life speech situations. Bearing in mind the observer's paradox, Wolfson proposes the method of **ethnographic fieldwork** (Wolfson, 1989), when a researcher lives among the observed community and participates in the everyday lives of its members; so that his presence becomes familiar after a while. In Wolfson's view, notes taken with adequate care may shed light on the types of interpersonal relationships as well. The disadvantage of the method is that the utterances to be collected are produced in various contexts, the speech situation is not recorded, and taking accurate notes of the spoken texts from memory is difficult (if not impossible).

In sociolinguistics research it is not impossible to record utterances in relatively spontaneous conversations even if participants need to be informed that their speech is being recorded, since they often forget about the recording after a certain time. However, the length of the necessary "warm-up time" may vary, and ascertaining the exact moment from which the given conversation can be considered unaffected and authentic is also problematic for the researcher. Another concern is the collection time for the spontaneously produced speech acts: recording a speech act that comprises from one single to at the most three adjacency pairs may require 30-60 minutes. Linguistic research conditions are rarely so advantageous to provide the researcher with this amount of time for one piece of collected data.

Walters (1979) and Zimin (1981) narrowed down the method of ethnographic fieldwork: they defined the situations and gathered data with **role-plays**.

Participants were requested to imagine themselves in a situation and behave (ask, respond, order, etc.) according to the designated role. In the ideal scenario they were asked to play themselves. The advantage of this method is that it collects actual, spoken language data that was produced in the given situation and which, according to the assumptions of the authors utilizing this method, represents natural speech well. A disadvantage is that participants probably do not feel the "weight of the situation"; they may not be able to perform their role and act "naturally". Another danger is that they may feel the pressure of scrutiny, having external expectations to fulfill, as if they were taking an examination. Nevertheless, it is a verified observation that longer responses can be collected in situations resembling reality (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1988; Wolfson, 1989; Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Beebe & Cummings, 1996; Turnbull, 2001); therefore, despite difficulties, researchers should not give up on discovering the method that most closely resembles real-life situations.

Another data collection method in speech act studies is the **discourse completion test**¹ (**DCT**). In this case the situations are clear and recorded; respondents do not feel scrutinized, which enables non-native speakers to be more courageous when responding with forms that they know, but for fear of making a mistake deem dangerous. Under the description of the situations there is a blank space for the participants' written utterances. This method has been utilized not only for investigating intercultural variation in language use (Blum-Kulka & Ohlstein, 1984), but also for studying the differences between the competences of native speakers and language learners (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1988). The advantages of the method are that a great amount of data can be collected in a short time, and that the controlled situations ensure the identity of the *setting and scene* ('abstract psychological framework or the cultural definition of the event' – the first component of Hymes's SPEAKING Model (as quoted in Wardhaugh, 1995, p. 221)). This approach raises concerns about whether the data yields forms used in spontaneous communication, in other words, if oral linguistic reactions can be represented in writing; also, whether the validity of data is dangerously influenced by the fact that respondents need to write their answers in a limited space. (Are participants limited, or on the contrary, encouraged by the 3-4 lines of space given to write utterances longer than real-life ones in order to come up to the perceived expectations, if only sub-consciously?) Some further concerns are whether the participants' selection of vocabulary is lead by caution as to use items with no spelling difficulty, and whether the more controlled nature of the written genre manifests itself in more formal expressions.

The history of comparative studies is intertwined with the collection of research methods and investigations on issues of their application. Although Kasper and Dahl noted in 1991 that there had been few works comparing research methods, a number of papers have been published since then that investigate this specific area (e.g., Beebe & Cummings, 1996; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008).

In their 1989 study, Rintell and Michell examined the differences between spoken interactions and data obtained through DCTs. The authors were in search of

¹ In a short, introductory part researchers describe a situation for the respondent, who is then requested to complete a dialogue with possible responses containing the investigated speech act. This method most resembles filling out a questionnaire.

the most appropriate method, and in the meanwhile they explored the advantages and disadvantages of the various techniques. They concluded that the most valid picture of language use may be received by conducting complex investigations, exploring the same aspect with the use of several methods simultaneously (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989). Rose, for instance, tested the reliability of data gathered by the DCT using a **multiple choice questionnaire**. He found significantly fewer hesitations and comments in the written responses than in spoken discourse; however, despite this observation he did not discredit the validity of the written data concerning speech acts (Rose, 1992, as quoted in Beebe & Cummings, 1996, p. 66).

Eisenstein and Bodman (1988) employed **open role-plays** and **fieldwork**. They concluded that applying fieldwork yields more lengthy and complex data than using role-plays. In the case of "natural data", however, it is difficult to precisely define and record every minor detail. Therefore, if researchers would like to gather data from other respondents later, the former situation is almost impossible to reproduce. Beebe, Takahashi and Ullis-Weltz (1990) used **fieldwork** data to complement written responses. They investigated situations that were threatening to the interlocutors' social identity (face); more precisely, they gathered data from uncomfortable speech acts, namely refusals.

Research projects on the characteristics and usage of Hungarian speech acts were launched in 1999 at the ELTE Department of Hungarian as a Foreign Language with the leadership of Katalin Szili. To date the intralingual pragmatic analyses of requests, refusals, apologies, responses to compliments and disagreements have been completed (Szili, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2004a; Bándli, 2011), but the number of papers employing the traditional methods of textual or discourse analysis complemented with this perspective has been increasing by the year (e.g., Suszczyńska, 2010). These studies are accompanied by interlingual investigations (Bándli & Maróti, 2003; Maróti, 2003). In order to ensure the comparability of data, in the Hungarian research context authors, among the feasible methods, have opted for the DCT, that is, the open-ended questionnaire designed for the CCSARP project (Szili, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c; Bándli & Maróti, 2003; Suszczyńska, 2003; Pap, 2011). Gathering spoken data occurs less frequently due to the difficulty of the method; however, there are some examples in the Hungarian research literature for role-plays (Maróti, 2004a, 2004b; Mászlainé, 2008; Bándli, 2013) and the recording of authentic speech (Koczogh, 2012).

3. Intralingual pragmatical studies in Hungarian

This chapter presents some areas of Hungarian native speakers' language use. Studies analyze the linguistic tools selected for producing requests (see Article 3 in this chapter), reactions to compliments (see Article 2 in this chapter), refusals of offers (see Article 4 in this chapter), and expressions of disagreement (see Article 5 in this chapter).

Paying and receiving compliments are activities that are important for maintaining and strengthening social relationships. Summing up the findings of 170 participants' imaginary utterances in the DCT, an interesting portrait is drawn of Hungarian society: modesty is still a defining element of responses to compliments,

but predominantly only in reactions to praise of individual performance. Concerning possessions and outward appearance, agreement and reinforcement are more prevalent (see Article 2 in this chapter).

Forming requests requires the utmost care, since this speech act may pose a burden on the conversational partners' relationship. Hence the findings were surprising for language learners: in Hungarian the usage of imperative structures is significantly more dominant than in other languages (see Article 3 in this chapter). At the same time, the 199 respondents taking part in the study demonstrated that the usage of the appropriate politeness elements, the form-dependent directness and command characteristics can successfully be balanced.

Concerning refusals, in the majority of cases speakers avoid expressing their intent clearly, since that would unequivocally offend their conversational partner. The author in this chapter analyzes utterances gained by natural data collection from the campaign of a telemarketing company (involving 91 participants' 164 conversational turns that include refusals). Although one might suppose that when the offer is of no interest for the customer, he will strive to reject it as promptly and directly as possible; the analysis concluded that this communication strategy is not generally used (see Article 4 in this chapter).

The closing study of the chapter presents the findings on Hungarian refusals based on the analysis of 101 dialogue segments (see Article 5 in this chapter): we attempt to delay and postpone the answers that are unpleasant for our partner; however, in conversations with friends, we strive to express our intentions clearly and in a rather direct way.

Investigating how speakers of the same mother tongue perform speech acts also serves comparison and comparability. Being knowledgeable about typical language usage behavior is especially important for language teaching materials writers, but for researchers of the communication processes as well. As an example, Ueda (1974), who published one of the first intralingual studies, claimed that even though in many cases foreigners fail to notice, Japanese speakers – despite their strategies avoiding directness – refuse certain requests and invitations the same way as speakers of other languages. One of the purposes of the paper was to enable foreigners to decode the real content of messages in their conversations with Japanese people.

Intralingual research into language behavior may aim to explore and introduce the diverse language usage of groups within a speech community, as well as to conduct empirical studies in order to analyze and interpret communicative failure among native speakers.

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2. The Linguistic Forms of Modesty in the Hungarian Language

The Pragmatics of Compliment Response

Katalin Szili

1. Introduction

Responses given to commendations and compliments belong to the expressive-class of speech acts. Along with expressions of thanks, congratulations, and apology, their general characteristic is that they display the speaker's attitude toward a given situation: "Expressives express S's attitude to a certain state of affairs specified (if at all) in the propositional content..." (Searle, 1975, p. 357). Their special characteristic is that they cannot be separated from the prior expression of compliment praising the speaker, compliment and response form one unit: A: '*Tetszik a ruhád.*' → B: '*Igazán? Nagyon kedves vagy.*' (A: '*I like your dress.*' → B: '*Really? You're very kind.*')

I need to touch on the question of terminology: for the sake of simplicity, I shall use the expression "compliment response" and its abbreviation ("CR"), but it is to be noted that in Hungarian compliments given from men to women (*bók*: an endearing, gallant expression) clearly differ from general compliments (*dicshét*: 'praising someone').

My two main reasons for choosing to examine the linguistic phenomena of compliment responses without first dealing with compliments themselves are very simple. Firstly, in light of the studies published on this subject it appears that in Hungarian culture the usage of compliments in order to praise the communicational partner and to make a favourable impression is less typical than for example in Anglo-Saxon cultures, and especially than in America, where – according to the unanimous opinion of the field's experts – they use it to an extent that often baffles foreigners (Holmes & Brown, 1987, p. 525; Wolfson, 1981, p. 123). Secondly and more importantly: compliment responses seem a much more promising topic from the point of view of pragmatics. In conducting my investigations I had three main objectives:

- To define the typical CR strategies of Hungarian speakers through empirical data.
- To place my findings into a broader, theoretical framework in order to identify the norms that govern our behaviour when responding to compliments.
- To shed light on the special nature of CR strategies in Hungarian culture and compare these – to the extent to which it is possible – to strategies in other languages.

2. Method of data-processing and classifying the strategies

The necessary linguistic corpus was obtained with the so-called discourse completion test, used in pragmatics since the 80s. Most of the 170 informants were university students (110), but the group also included people from various workplaces (60). 100 of the informants were female and 70 male.

The situations were designed in view of my objectives and following the footsteps of studies conducted in other languages. The latter was important not just because it made my work easier but also because it allowed for comparable results, though in the end and for reasons discussed later on, I was unable to present fully comparable findings. On examination of the appendix it may emerge that the person complimenting and the person receiving the compliment are for the most part friends or acquaintances, and are generally on the same social level. Using such situations was the result of a conscious and deliberate strategy applied in light of several other studies. For example, according to data provided by Holmes (1988a, p. 497) 79.1 % of compliments occur between speakers of the same social status. Wolfson reached the same conclusion: "By far the greatest number of appearance/possession compliments are given and received by acquaintances, colleagues, and casual friends (Wolfson, 1989, p. 114).

On the other hand, the sex of the person giving or receiving the compliment has a significant effect on the speech strategies followed and even on the frequency with which compliments are used. Women tend to use compliment as a way of expressing solidarity toward each other. Also, in the case of women compliments play a more significant role in initiating new relationships and in making contact with new people. Most CR-studies pay prominent attention to gender differences, in fact several of them are devoted solely to this one aspect: Holmes, 1988b; Herbert, 1990; Miles, 1994. In the present study I opted for the separate analysis of the data provided by men and women. Situations 1, 2 and 3 were adapted for male informants. Differences between strategies pursued by male and female informants will also be discussed in the conclusion.

The most significant aspect of picking the situations to be used in any study lies in choosing the pragmatical components, which determine the kind of compliment to which the informants will react. Based on compliments taken from various situations found in everyday life, Wolfson and Manes concluded that in most cases the object of a compliment is associated with appearance, possessions, ability, good performance, and some aspects of personality (Wolfson & Manes, 1980). Holmes came to the same conclusion. In his project 92.5 % of responses were preceded by compliments on appearance, ability, and possession (Holmes, 1988a, p. 496).

The eight situations (see the appendix) used in the present investigation were selected with the above in mind. In situation 1, informants responded to a compliment on their appearance, in 2, they were complimented on a physical characteristic (their eyes), in 2 and 8, the object of the compliment was an ability (their dancing- and acting skills), while in situations 6 and 7, the compliment was made on a possession (a coat or a car). Finally, in situations 4 and 5, informants were praised for a good performance.

2.1 The classification of CR-strategies in the Hungarian language

The most difficult part of analyzing the collected data was the segmentation and classification of strategies, as informants reacted to the compliments in a rather complex manner, often resulting in downright contradicting statements. Some examples: Situation 1: *'Köszí. Szerintem te nézel ki a legjobban, és a fülbevalód is gyönyörű.'* ('Thanks. In my opinion you're the best looking person in here, and your earrings are also gorgeous.');

'Köszí. Tényleg igyekeztem. Kedves vagy.' ('Thanks, I really tried to look my best. You're very kind.');

'Viccelsz? De azért köszönöm.' ('Are you kidding? But thanks, anyway.');

Situation 4: *'Tök jó. Pedig összezsáptam. Tényleg jó volt? Örülök, hogy tetszett.'* ('Thanks a bunch. I didn't spend much time on it, I just threw something together. You really thought it was good? I'm glad you liked it.');

'Szerintem pocskék volt, mert nem volt elég időm összeállítani.' ('I thought it was absolutely lousy, I just didn't have enough time to put it together.');

Situation 8: *'Zavarba hozol. Nekem inkább X Y előadása tetszett, mert sokkal inkább meg tudta fogni a problémát.'* ('You're making me feel embarrassed, I liked XY's piece better, as he did a much better job of grasping the problem.');

'Köszönöm, de szerintem te egy kicsit elfogult vagy.' ('Thanks, but I think you're a little biased.');

'Nem hiszem, hogy én voltam az est fénypontja. De azért nagyon aranyos vagy.' ('I don't think I was the highlight of the evening, but you're very kind anyway.')

During the last couple of decades, compliments and compliment responses have become very popular with scholars conducting examinations in the field of pragmatics, consequently this area can be deemed to be well-researched and documented. Therefore I was able to choose the one that most suited the Hungarian linguistic corpus amongst various sets of classifications (Pomerantz, 1978; Miles, 1994; Kenneth R. Rose & Connie Ng Kwai-fun, 2001).

In my present work, I finally opted to use the taxonomy of J. Holmes (Holmes, 1988a). Based on the corpus at his disposal (New Zealand English) she developed a set of classification complete with several sub-categories. The fact that most studies in the anything but homogeneous field of CR are based on his classification also seemed to offer a considerable advantage. However, when I attempted to place my Hungarian responses into his 12-piece system I encountered the problem shared by many before me. Of all the speech acts, compliment responses are perhaps the most resistant to unification: different speech communities prefer or ignore different strategies and strategy-types.

The fact that my expanded, 14-piece classification differs from Holmes' can be attributed to two main factors. One: the Hungarian corpus made it necessary to include new strategy-types, two: at times I disagreed with the names and inner structure of the categories. Tables 1.a, 1.b, and 1.c display the main differences (Differences are written in bold, cases where only the names are different are not indicated.)

2.1.1 The ACCEPT main-strategy

As table 1a shows, I conceived a different grouping for Holmes' first two strategies (appreciation or agreement token, agreeing utterance). First of all, in my classification **thanking** is an independent strategy (strategy 2). Beside its dominance

– out of eight situations this is the most frequently used strategy in five (1, 2, 3, 7, 8) – the fact that in my view thanking allows for a slightly more indirect form of acceptance than agreeing also called for its isolation. Based on their meaning agreement ('*Ja.*' – '*Yeah.*'; '*Igen.*' – '*Yes.*') and confirmation ('*Nekem is tetszik.*' – '*I like it, too.*') seemed to belong together, therefore I decided to put these into strategy 1, **expressing agreement, confirmation**. Contrary to Holmes, I did not include non-verbal signs (smiling, coughing, etc.) in strategy 1, as I think that to categorically state that these always signal agreement or appreciation would be a "bias" typical of Western cultures. As pointed out by many works on intercultural communication, the role of laughter and smiling is different in the two main cultures: in contrast to the West, for members of the oriental culture smiling usually denotes embarrassment instead of happiness or satisfaction (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 143).

Strategy 3 (**expressing gladness**) is more indirect than the previous two and was created especially with the Hungarian data in mind. This category contains utterances that are mainly used to inform the partner of the emotional effect a certain compliment had on us: '*Örülök, hogy tetszett.*' ('*I'm glad you liked it.*'); '*Jól esik, hogy ezt mondod.*' ('*It feels good to hear that.*'). The emotional quality of this strategy was evidenced by the fact that it was used most frequently in the more intimate situation of a dinner party. Utterances in strategy 4 (return compliment, offering object of compliment) are probably inspired by the social requirement to behave politely and in a way that is beneficial to both parties: if a kindness is received we feel obliged to return it. It is used universally and was the second most popular strategy with Hungarian informants, appearing in 21.7 % of the cases, a rather high percentage when compared to other languages. To support the above statement with facts let us compare the data from situation 1 in table 2 (women: 27 %, men: 52.85 %) with foreign data recorded in similar situations. Holmes' New Zealanders returned the compliment in only 8.3 % of the cases (Holmes, 1988a: 495). The same data for Chen's American informants is 18.5 %, but the strategy was not present at all with people speaking Mandarin. (Chen, 1993, p. 54, 56). Of the works I have examined only the interviews conducted by Farghal – Al-Khabib among Jordanian university students featured a higher usage (35.52 %) of this strategy (Farghal & Al-Khabib, 2001, p. 1493).

Based on formal and semantic characteristics, the "return compliment" version of strategy 4 can be divided into two sub-categories. '*Kedves vagy.*' ('*You're kind.*'), '*Ez kedves tőled.*' ('*That's nice of you.*'), and '*Aranyos vagy.*' ('*You're sweet*') which is only used between women or to women can be identified as the general return of the compliment, as opposed to forms that somehow repeat the compliment with regard to the conversational partner: '*Jól nézel ki. → Te is.*' ('*You're looking good. → Thanks, you too.*'); '*Szép a kabátod. → Nekem meg a tied tetszik.*' ('*That's a nice coat you have on. → I like yours a lot.*') In certain situations this seems like a typical "male" strategy. (This shall be discussed in more detail later on, when the individual situations are described.)

Main strategy	Strategy	Holmes	Szili
A.	1.	Appreciation or agreement token: 'Thanks.'; 'Yes.' (or smile)	Expressing agreement, confirmation: 'Igen, szép.' ('Yes, it's nice.');
	2.	Agreeing utterance: 'I think it's lovely, too.'	Thanking: 'Köszönöm.' ('Thank you.')
	3.	Downgrading or qualifying utterance: 'It's not too bad, is it.'	Expressing gladness: 'Nagyon örülök, hogy tetszik.' ('I'm very glad you like it.')
	4.	Return compliment: 'You're looking good, too.'	Return compliment, offering object of compliment: 'Kedves vagy.' ('You're kind.');
	5.	—	Joking: 'Én sajnós nem érzékelttem a zsenialitásomat, mert el voltam foglalva vele.' ('Unfortunately I was too busy being a genius to feel it')

Table 1a. ACCEPT main strategy

2.1.2 The DISAGREEMENT/REJECTION main-strategy

Due to the fact that Hungarian informants used different, more diverse utterances than their New Zealand counterparts I had to rewrite this section almost completely. Unlike Holmes, I listed the four Hungarian strategy types so that they represent increasingly direct levels of rejection. The first two essentially still aim to strike a balance between agreeing with the partner and avoiding self-praise.

Strategy 1 (**Downgrading/disparaging comments or explanations**) involves making derogatory comments about the complimented thing or performance in order to devalue the compliment. The grammatical instruments of this devaluing can be certain modifiers, adverbs of degree or quantity ('**Á**, nem is **annyira** jó.' – '**Ah**, it's not **that** good at all.'). but derogatory comments on the history of the object of the compliment are also often used to achieve the same effect: 'Kiárusításon vettem.' ('I bought it at a clearance sale.');

'Nem volt elég időm, összecsaptam.' ('I didn't have enough time, I just threw something together.')

Studies show this strategy to be especially typical of members of oriental cultures. In Chen's above mentioned survey 26.1 % of Chinese informants used it together with rejection ('Nem igaz, nem is olyan szép.' 'That's not true, it's not that beautiful at all.'). as opposed to only 12.7 % of Americans. 3.41 % of Chinese informants used it together with thanking ('Köszönöm, de eléggé viseletes.' – 'Thank you, but it's rather worn-out.'). while Americans did not use this combination at all (Chen, 1993, p. 54, 56). From an intercultural viewpoint it is noteworthy that using downgrading/disparaging comments or explanations are the third most popular strategy among Hungarians (averaging 19.53 %) and is used especially to devalue a complimented performance

(situation 4: women: 66 %, men: 74.28 %; situation 5: women: 24 %, men: 34.28 %). In percentage terms, it is even higher than in Oriental cultures.

main-strategy	Strategy	Holmes	Szili
B.	1.	Disagreeing utterance: ' <i>I'm afraid I don't like it much.</i> '	Downgrading/disparaging comments or explanations: ' <i>Á, ezer éves cucc.</i> ' (' <i>Oh, no, this stuff's ancient.</i> ')
	2.	Question accuracy: ' <i>Is beautiful the right word?</i> '	Expressing feelings of embarrassment or unpleasantness: ' <i>Ó, zavarba hozol.</i> ' (' <i>Oh, you're embarrassing me.</i> ')
	3.	Challenging complimenter's sincerity: ' <i>You don't really mean that.</i> '	Qualifying the compliment (insincerity exaggeration, bias): ' <i>Szerintem elfogult vagy egy kicsit.</i> ' (' <i>I think you're a little biased.</i> '); ' <i>Ezt komolyan gondolod?</i> ' (' <i>Are you serious?</i> ')
	4.	—	Disagreement: ' <i>Ez nem igaz.</i> ' (' <i>That's not true.</i> ')

Table 1b. DISAGREEMENT/REJECTION main strategy

As it is shown in strategy 2, (**expressing feelings of embarrassment or unpleasantness**) embarrassment typically signals face threatening if the complimented person informs his partner that the compliment embarrasses him, he, in an indirect way, also expresses aversion to the compliment. Understandably, we encounter this strategy in high percentages in situations with compliments made with reference to physical attributes (situation 3). It is also not surprising that women use it in almost three times as many cases as men (women: 11 %, men: 4.2 %). Americans do not use this form to respond to a compliment, as opposed to a rather large percentage of Chinese (26.1 %). I would also like to highlight that this strategy includes remarks referring to non-verbal signs: '*Elpirulok.*' ('*I'm blushing.*'); '*Zavartan mosolygok.*' ('*I'm smiling embarrassedly.*'); '*Elnézek valahova.*' ('*I'm looking someplace else.*') This underscores my earlier hypothesis, namely that smiling and laughing cannot always be taken as signs of agreement/acceptance.

Utterances in strategy 3 (**qualifying the compliment**) are similar to their counterparts in strategy 1 in that by qualifying the compliment both devalue it, however strategy 3 contains expressions that can also be taken as mild forms of disagreement or rejection: '*Ez azért már túlzás!*' ('*That is going too far!*'); '*Nem vagy te egy kicsit elfogult?*' ('*Aren't you a little biased?*'); '*Ez vicc!*' ('*That's a joke!*'). It is not one of the most frequently used strategies. Highest percentages are found in situation 8 (women: 27 %, men: 27.1 %), which suggests that it is used in close relationships. Uniting strategies 1 and 3 would result in downgrading responses given in percentage terms as almost completely identical to the Chinese data.

Informants used strategy 4 to express clear disagreement or rejection (the strategy was not used often failing to go beyond the 10 % mark in any of the situations). Two main forms were used. Either they called upon their partner to stop complimenting, as it was unpleasant for them: *'Na ne csináld!'* ('Oh, stop that!'); *'Ezt most miért csinálod velem?'* ('Why are you doing this to me?'). In situation 3, when informants felt their private sphere had been offended, they supplemented the utterance with strategy 2: *'Na ne! Zavarba hozol.'* ('Oh, stop that! You're embarrassing me!'). The other main form was flat-out disagreement: *'Ez nem igaz.'* ('That's not true.');

'Á, dehogy!' ('Oh, no way!'); *'Persze...'* ('Yeah, right...'). *Persze...* brings up the important role of intonation in creating and decoding pragmatical meaning.

2.1.3 The DEFLECTION/EVASION main-strategy

This group of compliment responses is perhaps the most interesting of all. Its sub-types have a common characteristic: they all aid the person receiving the compliment in somehow avoiding direct acceptance of the compliment, they allow for the informant to exit the situation without having to agree with the commendation. Strategy 1 (identical with Holmes' strategy 1) deflects (shifts) the compliment onto a third person: *'A papámtól örököltem.'* ('I inherited it from my dad.');

'A mamám segített.' ('My mom helped me'). I found Holmes' strategy 2 called "informative comment" a bit too heterogeneous, therefore I decided to split it up into three different groups. In Holmes' defence we do have to point out that in the New Zealand data this strategy was used to such a small extent (8.8 %) that breaking it up into further sub-strategies probably seemed unnecessary.

main-strategy	Strategy	Holmes	Szili
C.	1.	Shifting the credit: <i>'My mother knit it.'</i>	Shifting (deflecting) the credit: <i>'A mamám kötötte.'</i> ('My mother knit it.')
	2.	Informative comment: <i>'I bought it at that Vibrant Knite place.'</i>	Deflecting explanation: <i>'Én a Váci utcában vettem.'</i> ('I bought it in Váci St.')
	3.	Ignoring the compliment: <i>'It's time we were leaving, isn't it?'</i>	Expressing effort, emphasizing the fact that the compliment is well-deserved: <i>'Rengeteget dolgoztam érte.'</i> ('I worked a lot for it.')
	4.	Legitimate evasion	Ignoring the compliment: <i>'Mikor vizsgázol?'</i> ('When is your exam?')
	5.	Requesting reassurance, repetition: <i>'Do you really think so?'</i>	Doubting, requesting reassurance: <i>'Igazán?'</i> ('Really?'); <i>'Valóban?'</i> ('Really?')

Table 1c. DEFLECTION/EVASION main strategy

My strategy 2 (**deflective explanation**) contains only those utterances that convey the fact that the informant has ignored the compliment and instead of responding to it he offers some neutral information with regard to the history of the complimented object or performance: *'Én Budapesten vettem.'* (*'I bought it in Budapest.'*); *'Hát, hajnalban elküldtem a feleségem a piacra, addig kitoltam a grillsütőt a garázs elé...'* (*'Well, early in the morning I had my wife go to the market while I set up the grill in front of the garage...'*); *'Most vettem.'* (*'I just bought it.'*) etc. Strategy 1 of the disagreement/rejection main-strategy (downgrading/disparaging comments or explanations - discussed earlier) was also taken out and separated from the Holmes' informative comment strategy (Chen essentially opted for the same separation, except he called his new strategy "denigrating"). I was also able to separate strategy 3 (**expressing effort, emphasizing the fact that the compliment is well-deserved**): a group containing compliment responses that are probably the result of the informants' wish to conform to our society's ethical expectations. Utterances belonging in this strategy inform the communicational partner that the informant has worked very hard for the object of the compliment, in other words, the informant points out that the complimented thing or performance did not just suddenly materialize and land into his lap: *'Nagyon igyekeztem.'* (*'I tried very hard.'*); *'Sok munka van mögötte, elég fárasztó volt utánajárni.'* (*'It was a lot of work, it was quite tiresome getting to the bottom of it.'*); *'Rengeteget hajtottam érte.'* (*'I slaved away to get it.'*). This strategy proved to be the fifth most popular with Hungarian informants and – not surprisingly – is most likely to be used in connection with a complimented performance.

An even more obvious deflecting manoeuvre can be discovered in strategy 4 (ignoring the compliment), which sees the complimented person suddenly changing the topic of the conversation and starting to talk about something entirely different. This is the strategy used by the girl who responds to a compliment received from a boy while studying for an exam with: *'Neked még hány tételeled van vissza?'* (*'How many questions do you still have to look over?'*). The strategy was only used on two occasions and is therefore not included in Table 2.

In Holmes' opinion, strategy 5 (doubting, requesting reassurance) is used when there is something ambiguous, uncertain, or perhaps even unpleasant about the contents of the compliment or the way it is said. Its main message: I do not want to praise myself, so I cannot agree with you, nor do I want to reject the compliment outright, therefore I just voice my doubts.

3. Hungarian compliment responses

Now that we have a classification harmonizing with the Hungarian corpus and we possess some general knowledge about the different strategies, it is time to turn our attention to how our speech community actually uses these. My conclusions were drawn bearing in mind the pragmatic factors of each situation, as it quickly became apparent even after a superficial look at the data that the object of the compliment has a strong effect on which strategy the informant chooses. To put it differently: informants respond differently to a compliment on a performance and to a compliment on physical appearance. (It is rather unfortunate that most works fail to

notice this and thus we seldom have a situation by situation breakdown of the strategies used. With regard to the current work this also meant that I was able to compare my findings with only a limited number of other studies.)

When complimented on our **outward appearance** (situation 1) we are, for the most part, aware of the fact that the truth content of such utterances tends to be low. The function of such compliments is often just to help along the conversation, to facilitate interaction and to establish good relations between the parties. Accordingly, our reactions are also routine ones: we simply thank the compliment (women: 82 %, men: 87.1 %). We can also increase the level of harmony and return the praise: *'Te is.'* (*'You too.'*); *'Nagyon kedves vagy.'* (*'You're very kind'*). It is worth pointing out that young men – conforming to society's gender expectations – use this latter strategy much more often than women informants (w: 27 %, m: 62.85 %).

An opinion about our **physical attributes** (situation 3) – whether it is flattering or negative – touches on our most intimate sphere, it is therefore our basic interest to get out of the delicate situation quickly and without confronting our partner. Such a situation can be especially uncomfortable if a positive opinion is voiced by a member of the opposite sex. For my part I was a little bit uneasy about having male informants respond to the sentence *'Most látom, milyen szép a szemed'* (*'I just realized how nice your eyes are'*), but for the purposes of comparing it to foreign data it seemed useful to go ahead with it. The typical response to this compliment was a mixture of different strategies: half of the informants thanked the partner for the compliment (w: 49 %, m: 40 %), which women supplemented with agreement (15 %), a return compliment (12 %) or an expression of embarrassment (11 %). Men – once again proving that the legendary gallantry of the Hungarian male is not without any basis – “requited” the compliment of their female partner in a much higher percentage (42.85 %) than women and with beautiful compliments of their own: *'Lehet, de most, hogy megpillantották "szép szemeim" a földkerekség legszebb teremtését, egészen elgyengültem.'* (*'Maybe, but now that my "beautiful eyes" have caught a glimpse of the most beautiful creature in the whole wide world I can hardly stay on my feet.'*); *'Egy angyalt látsz benne.'* (*'You see an angel in them.'*); *'Nem mérhetők a te szemed szépségéhez.'* (*'They cannot even compare to the beauty of your eyes.'*); *'Te tükröződsz benne.'* (*'Your image is reflected in them.'*); *'Megkockázatom, hogy a tied a legigézőbb szempár, amit valaha láttam.'* (*'I'll venture to say that you have the most mesmerizing pair of eyes I have ever seen'*). Not to mention the even more direct forms of courting.

With regard to their features **skills and abilities** (situations 2 and 8) would have to be placed somewhere between physical attributes and performances. They are similar to the former in that they are inborn, they are similar to the latter in that with work they can be improved and often result in an outstanding performance. This double nature is well demonstrated by CR-strategies: some of the responses used remind us of situations involving physical attributes, while others bring into mind situations with a performance being complimented (situations 4 and 5). When complimented on their dancing skills, the ratio of informants thanking the partner for the compliment (w: 67 %, m: 40 %) is almost identical to the numbers in situation 4. Besides thanking, the following three strategies were also quite popular (and used roughly to the same extent): return of the compliment (w: 11 %, m: 30 % - not surprisingly men in this situation also felt obliged to return the compliment in a much higher percentage than women), disparaging remark (w: 14 %, m: 17.1 %),

expressing effort (w: 16 %, m: 12.8 %). The typical responses to the statement '*Jól táncolsz*' ('*You're a good dancer*') are as follows: '*Köszí, de ilyen partnerrel nem nehéz.*' ('*Thanks, it's easy with such a good partner.*'); '*Szerintem kicsit béna vagyok, de azért köszönöm.*' ('*I think I'm a little lame but thanks anyway.*'); '*Köszönöm, két éve táncolok.*' ('*Thanks, I've been dancing for two years*').

When complimented on their artistic ability (situation 8), women tended to mention the fact that others were involved as well: they deflected the compliment onto the others, that is onto their companions (w: 23 %, m: 10 %). The forms they used: '*Azért a többiek is jók voltak.*' ('*The others were good, too.*'); '*Ez csoportmunka volt.*' ('*This was a team effort.*'); '*A többiek is nagyon jók voltak, ez csoportmunka, egyedül nem mennék semmire.*' ('*The others were very good, too. This was a team effort, I couldn't do anything on my own*'). The 23 % for strategy C.1 (shifting/deflecting the compliment) is the highest value for this strategy in all the situations. Situation 8 also brought the highest values (w: 27 %, m: 27.1 %) for strategy B.3 (qualifying the compliment): '*Elfogult vagy.*' ('*You're biased.*'); '*Nem vagy te egy kicsit elfogult?*' ('*Aren't you a little biased?*'); '*Nem túlzol egy kicsit?*' ('*Aren't you exaggerating a little?*').

Perhaps most interesting of all is our behaviour when complimented on a **performance**. Expressing gladness ('*Örülök, hogy tetszett*' – '*I'm glad you liked it*'; '*Jól esik, hogy ezt mondod*' – '*Feels good to hear that*') received higher percentages in situations 4 and 5 than in any of the others (women used it more often than men). Even more surprising: the percentages for strategy B.1 (downgrading/disparaging comments or explanations) exceed those of thanking (strategy A.2) in both situations. Instead of not saying anything, more than half (66 %) of female and about three quarters (74.28 %) of male informants opted to mention negative conditions in connection with the given situation, which conditions hindered their efforts to perform well. In other words, the informants felt obliged to somehow decrease the value of the compliment: '*Sajnos kevés időm maradt rá, néhány dolgot kihagytam belőle.*' ('*Unfortunately I didn't have enough time so I left some things out.*'); '*Nem volt az igazi. Nem volt elég időm, hogy úgy megírjam, ahogy szerettem volna.*' ('*It wasn't the real thing. I didn't have enough time to write it the way I would have liked to.*'); '*Lehetett volna jobb is.*' ('*It could've been better*'). Stressing the work, effort and energy that went into the performance (strategy C.3) appears to be a more masculine characteristic (24.3 %).

Based on the above we may conclude – and this did not surprise us – that Hungarians are not at all likely to agree with a compliment on a performance, they will not say '*Igen, szerintem is jól sikerült.*' ('*Yes, I agree, I also think it was good.*'). Though I do not have corresponding American data, it is highly probable that it would show just the opposite: Americans would accept the compliment without further ado and even strengthen the commendation.

It is important to say a few words about the slightly different data seen in connection with situation 5, in which situation informants (playing the hostess/host) were responding to a compliment from their guests after a dinner party. Strategy A.4 (returning the compliment) was used much more frequently (w: 45 %, m: 38.5 %) than in the other situations. The content of the return compliment was also special: in addition to the scarce use of the general formula ('*egy ilyen kedves vendégnek örömmel*' – '*it's a pleasure to have such a kind guest*') informants emphasized their respect and sympathy for the guest by offering another invitation ('*Máskor is*

szívesen látlak. – ‘I’d be delighted to have you again.’; ‘*Remélem, máskor is eljössz.*’ – ‘I hope you’ll come again.’; ‘*Gyere máskor is, szívesen látlak.*’ – ‘Come again sometime, I’d be delighted to have you’). Employing a different pragmatics terminology we may call these gestures displays of cordiality.

My original assumption that informants would just elegantly gloss over any compliment on their efforts with an ‘*Á, csak összedobtam valamit*’ (‘Oh, I just threw something together’) type of remark was only partially reinforced by the results. In all 24 % of women and 34.28 % of men employed strategy B.1, which would probably still be considered rather high percentages when compared to other languages. A few examples: ‘*Egyáltalán nem volt megerőltető.*’ (‘It was not demanding at all.’); ‘*Igazán semmiség.*’ (‘It’s nothing, really.’); ‘*Csak pár apróság volt, nem is tartott sokáig.*’ (‘It was just a few small things, they didn’t even take long.’); ‘*Ó, igazán nem volt nagy fáradság.*’ (‘Oh, it wasn’t any bother at all’)

Responses to compliments on a **possession** are displayed in situations 6 and 7. I consciously chose objects that are by no means worthless (an expensive leather coat and a car) as I was curious to find out how my informants would react when the most evident response (downgrading: ‘*Csak egy ócska rongy*’ – ‘It’s just an old rag’) would obviously be in striking contrast to the truth. Well, the agreement strategy (A.1) received its highest percentages in these two situations. Compared to the other situations a singularly high number of my informants reinforced the compliment by admitting that the coat was indeed expensive and – especially the men – enumerating the positive attributes of their car.

It should also be mentioned that the registered values differ significantly from Holmes’ data only in the case of the coat (situation 6: w: 69 %, m: 64.2 %), while in the case of the car, Hungarian informants agreed with the compliment in almost identical numbers (situation 7: w: 45 %, m: 32.85 %) as their New Zealander counterparts (32.8 %). In addition to the exceptionally high percentages of strategy A.1 women in situation 6 also had a predilection for strategy C.3 (expressing effort, emphasizing the fact that the compliment is well-deserved, 47 %), while men opted for strategy C.2 (deflecting explanation, 30 %). These two strategies, in my opinion, clearly demonstrate the basic difference between female and male behavior. Almost half of women informants felt obliged to come up with an excuse for their “flagrant” spending spree by attempting to project the impression to their peers that they truly deserved the coat. They stressed the fact that they worked a lot for it and at the same time also bringing up their human frailty and trying to appeal to their partners’ emotional side: ‘*Az utóbbi időben rengeteget dolgoztam, egy kis kényeztetés nekem is jár.*’ (‘I’ve worked a lot lately, even I deserve some pampering.’); ‘*Már régen szerettem volna ilyet.*’ (‘I’ve been wanting something like this for a long time.’); ‘*Nem tudtam ellenállni, annyira megtetszett... ennyit talán én is megérdemlek, nem?*’ (‘I liked it so much I couldn’t resist... even I deserve this much, don’t you think?’); ‘*Egyszerűen beleszerettem. Muszáj volt megvennem, inkább nem eszem egy hónapig.*’ (‘I simply fell in love with it. I just had to buy it, I would rather not eat for a month’).

On the other hand, by employing deflective strategy C.2, men were more objective in both situations, placing the emphasis on the conditions of the purchase: ‘*Én Budapesten vettem.*’ (‘I bought it in Budapest.’); ‘*Az apósoméktól kaptuk. Eladta az egyik házáat, annak az árán vettük.*’ (‘We got it from my father-in-law. He sold one of his houses, we bought it from the money he gave us’).

Situation	sex	A. ACCEPT					C. DEFLECTION				B. DISAGREEMENT			
		agreement A	thank- ing A	glad- -ness A	jok- ing A	return compliment Appro b./Tact	shift- ing credit M	ex- plana- tion M	effort M	doubtir M	down- grad- ing M	em- bar- rassment M	quail- fy-ing M	dis- ag- reement M
Sit. 1. appear- ance	W	4	82	10	-	27	2	5	18	3	11	3	2	1
	M	5.7	87.1	-	2.8	*52.85	-	10	7.1	2.8	2.8	-	-	4.2
Sit. 2. skill (dance)	W	11	<i>67</i>	1	-	11	2	9	16	7	14	1	9	9
	M	15.7	<i>*40</i>	-	7.1	*30	7.1	7.1	12.8	7.1	17.1	-	7.1	10
Sit. 3. physical attribute (eyes)	W	15	<i>49</i>	3	1	12	9	1	-	6	2	11	7	6
	M	11.4	40	7.1	2.8	<i>*42.85</i>	11.4	1.4	-	10	2.8	4.2	-	10
Sit. 4. perform. (test)	W	8	56	28	-	5	-	3	14	12	<i>66</i>	-	5	6
	M	10	58.57	17.1	1.4	2.8	1.4	-	24.3	8.57	74.3	-	2.8	2.8
Sit. 5. perform. (*guest)	W	2	19	38	1	<i>45</i>	6	10	21	4	24	-	2	-
	M	2.8	10	31.4	5.7	<i>38.5</i>	7.1		8.57	-	34.28	-	2.8	-
Sit. 6. possess. (coat)	W	69	11	5	2	6	-	14	*47	3	8	-	-	2
	M	64.2	8.57	1.4	5.7	2.8	-	*30	17.1	4.2	15.7	-	-	4.2
Sit. 7. possess. (car)	W	*45	<i>*66</i>	12	-	9	6	10	9	3	11	-	2	2
	M	32.85	<i>54.3</i>	4.2	2.8	18.58	8.57	20	11.4	2.8	8.57	1.8	-	4.2
Sit. 8. ability (artistic perf.)	W	6	<i>67</i>	17	2	17	23	6	5	5	11	-	27	10
	M	8.58	<i>47.1</i>	18.5	10	10	10	8.57	17.1	7.1	10	-	27.1	4.2
total occur- rence. (1360n)	W	19.45	47.6	12.1	2.76	21.7	5.84	8.44	14.27	5.34	19.5	1.31	6.44	4.74
	M		6								3			

Table 2. Percentages of compliment responses used by Hungarian informants (100 female informants, 70 male informants) (Demonstrating the line from agreement to disagreement DEFLECTION was placed in the middle of the table.)

(Numbers in *italics* designate the highest values within a situation. Numbers in bold designate the highest values for a strategy with regard to all situations. * designates significant differences between female and male informants.)

4. Principles of courtesy directing the usage of CR-strategies

In interpreting the results of empirical studies, most CR-works tend to fall into one of two groups. One group of authors – recognizing that these speech acts are especially suited to demonstrate cultural differences – chooses to employ a comparative method. In analysing data derived from English or from other languages

these colleagues focus their attention on cultural divergences. Members of the other group centre their approach around courtesy-principles. (Of course, there are many works – such as the present one – that attempt to combine both these methods.)

The aim of a compliment is “to increase or consolidate the solidarity between speaker and addressee” (Holmes, 1988a, 486). To put it differently: compliments are “social lubricants” that help to “create and maintain rapport” (Wolfson, 1983, p. 86). Ignoring or leaving such a positive gesture unanswered would therefore be a flagrant violation of the most basic social rules. To sum it up: compliments and compliment responses are integral parts of interactive communication and courteous linguistic behaviour.

If courtesy is referred to as the general principle directing the usage of CR-strategies, we first have to decide which of the two relevant main theories we should apply, the Brown - Levinson theory or the Leech theory.

4.1 The politeness models and CR-strategies

As we know in Brown and Levinson’s theory, courtesy is actually a manifestation of how and with what kind of strategies we attempt to threaten or maintain our partner’s face while protecting our own. We have two basic faces: a negative face we use to defend our independence, and a positive face we employ when seeking to establish a bond with the listener. The latter involves strategies of so-called positive politeness. These strategies lay stress upon conversational instruments that emphasize the common (agreeable) elements between the two parties. Negative politeness, on the other hand, involves expressions that are favourable to the listener’s negative face. Based on empirical studies conducted in other areas as well, we may conclude that Eastern and Mediterranean peoples tend to prefer strategies of positive, while Western societies seem to favour strategies of negative politeness (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 224–53).

With regard to the topic of the present work, compliment responses, the phenomena described above seem to function in an inverse manner. People living in societies where negative politeness dominates prefer to agree with the person giving the compliment, thanking him and reinforcing the positive opinion (Chen, 1993, p. 57; Dus, 2001, p. 110), conforming to the requirements of their partners’ positive face. On the other hand, people of Oriental cultures – cultures where positive politeness is chosen over negative politeness – do not necessarily feel that disagreement is inappropriate and do not shrink away from occasionally offending the positive face of the person giving the compliment.

In my view, the main deficiency of the studies employing Brown and Levinson’s theory of courtesy is precisely this: they are unable to provide an explanation for such atypical behavior. The fact that the theory’s two main categories (positive- and negative courtesy) can only be used to describe the first two CR main-strategies and are quite useless with regard to the third main-strategy (DEFLECTION/EVASION) can also be deemed problematic (as pointed out by Chen in his above mentioned work). To demonstrate the nature of the problem: is the speaker strengthening the positive or the negative face of his partner when he reacts with a question ‘Do I really look good?’, or gives information about the complimented thing or phenomenon ‘I was at the hairdresser’s, or when he shifts the compliment

onto a third person 'My mother knit it'? Ignoring the compliment perhaps strengthens the negative face.

Because of the above it seems expedient to return to the conversational requirement established by Pomerantz: the need to agree with the partner while at the same time avoiding self-appraisal. These two contrasting aims almost automatically place CR-strategies in the framework set up by Leech: agreeing responses are centred around the Agreement Maxim, while responses seeking to avoid self-praise are driven by the Modesty Maxim (Leech, 1983, p. 80). We should mention that Holmes also refers to these obvious coincidences but fails to expound her views (1988a, p. 491).

As we may conclude from their identical names, agreement, the first element of the ACCEPT main-strategy, is a manifestation of the Agreement Maxim. For the third strategy, expressing gladness and agreement is also a prerequisite: the speaker would not express gladness over the fact that her partner likes x if she did not agree with the contents of the compliment. By expressing her sense of happiness she signals to the person giving the compliment that she trusts his value judgement, opinion and feelings: he likes the coat and she is happy about that. Joking is also an indication of agreement, familiarity and friendship. Its message: the reason I'm not afraid to joke with you is that we are friends, we have something in common, and I know you won't feel hurt. Returning the compliment is, in my view, most motivated by the Approbation Principle, as by telling my partner that his coat is also very nice I behave in accordance with the second part of the maxim (maximize praise for others). The other version of the strategy, offering the object of the compliment 'Do you want it?', 'Would you like to take it for a ride?' can also mean a fulfilment of the Tact Maxim (maximize the benefit of others).

The different strategies of the DISAGREEMENT/REJECTION main-strategy are clearly connected to the Modesty maxim. The basic theme behind the various DEFLECTION/EVASION strategies is also about being modest and somehow deflecting the compliment away from us, either by shifting the credit onto a third party or by not reacting to it at all (strategy C.4). Characteristic elements of the modesty principle can also be discovered in strategy C.5 (doubting, requesting reassurance): when I ask my partner if she indeed thought my paper was good I am not directly rejecting her opinion, but I am expressing my doubts and uncertainty with regard to my performance. (Though behind the mask of modesty we are often just waiting for our partner to repeat the compliment once again.)

4.2 Leech's principles with regard to Hungarian CR-strategies

Let us now examine how Leech's above mentioned two principles of courtesy (Agreement, Modesty) influence Hungarian compliment responses. In my search for the answer I decided to classify the different strategies for each situation based on the principle they reflect. Since most of my informants used chains of strategies my task was in fact to determine the nature of the relation between agreement and modesty, in other words I had to decide which principle exerted more influence on a given strategy-chain. For example, in the sentence '*Elég pocsekul nézek ki, de azért köszönöm*' ('I look quite terrible, but thank you anyway') the two maxims supplement each other: in the first half of the sentence the speaker evidences modesty, only to

agree with her partner in the second part. Strategy A.4 (return compliment, offering object of compliment) balances other principles as well (Approbation, Tact) and was therefore discussed separately. Due to size limitations in the present work I shall only analyze the data provided by female informants (Table 3).

The gap between the two courtesy maxims was widest in situation 7 (compliment on the car). Due to the lack of appropriate control-data I was unable to determine whether such perceptible decrease in the Modesty maxim and such conscious and open acceptance of a valuable possession is a permanent characteristic of our behaviour. I am convinced that the social trends we have seen in the last couple of decades, namely that we ever-increasingly prize and reward the possession of material goods, play a significant role in the above phenomenon. In situation 6 (compliment on the coat), my informants behaved in a more “traditional” way: they agreed with the compliment but also strove to avoid appearing immodest in almost equal percentages, emphasizing – as was already discussed – the long period of desire, basic human frailties, and the “just this one time” nature of the purchase.

In situation 1 we also see a dominance of the Agreement Maxim: the person receiving the compliment – ignoring the Modesty Maxim – does not disagree with her partner but instead proceeds to reinforce the praise. This kind of behaviour is well-suited for establishing new contacts and networking in our everyday interactions. By expressing the compliment the initiating party makes her conversational partner feel good. By voicing her agreement the complimented person in return signals that the noble aim of the praise was achieved. Thanks to strategy A.4 – often included in the CR – the person giving the original compliment may even receive similar commendations herself: *‘Szervusz. De jól nézel ki! → Köszönöm, **te is!**’* (*Hi. You’re looking great! → Thanks, **you too!***).

In situations 2 and 8 (compliments on a skill or an ability), the two main maxims determine the nature of the response in almost identical percentages: in the strategy combinations used we see only a slight difference in favour of the agreement maxim (11 %, 2%), conscious and proud agreement with the compliment is not overwhelming at all. The only instances where the Modesty Maxim actually received higher percentages than the Agreement Maxim were in situations 4 and 5, both of which involved compliments on a performance. Based on the data we arrive at a baffling conclusion: the only time informants felt obliged to efface themselves was when the object of the compliment was truly the result of their hard work, diligence and persistence.

	Agreement	Modesty	Approbation	Modesty maxim in relation to Agreement maxim
Sit. 1 Appearance	96	45	27	-51
Sit. 2 skill (dance)	79	68	11	-11
Sit. 3. physical attribute	67	43	12	-24
Sit. 4 perform. (test)	89	106	5	+17
Sit. 5 perform. (guest)	59	68	45	+9
Sit. 6 possess. (coat)	85	74	6	-11
Sit. 7 possess. (car)	123	43	9	-80
Sit. 8 ability (artistic perf.)	89	87	17	-2

Table 3.
Relation of the Agreement and Modesty Maxims with female informants (%)

5. The role of self-image in light of its intercultural connections

I strongly feel that Leech's two maxims allow for a more precise picture of the essential features of Hungarian CR-strategies and provide clearer answers to why informants use these strategies the way they do. However, it is also beyond doubt that courtesy – whether defined according to principles of Leech or Brown – Levinson is at this point irrelevant – is not the only factor in determining the linguistic behavior of a speaker. Linguistic behavior is deeply embedded in the complex web of culture. How members of a community behave in certain situations depends on their common cultural values and historically developed norms. That is exactly why our linguistic acts can become – using Manes' apt metaphor – a "mirror of cultural values" (Manes, 1983, p. 96).

According to Gu, self-image – the way individuals of a given culture think of themselves – is one of the components of culture (Gu, 1990). Positive self image is widespread in American culture to an extent that people from other nations often find displeasing, if not offending. In this context it is less surprising that Americans are not especially likely to revert to a self-deprecatory remark, to decrease the value

of a compliment, or to deploy the Modesty Maxim in any other form, as for them this would most definitely mean a loss of face. Chen's previously mentioned data clearly supports the above. The three CR-strategies preferred by Americans (expressing agreement, thanking and return compliment) are all tied to the agreement principle, while strategies that reject or deflect the compliment make up for only 12.7 % of the responses (*ibidem* 54). According to the prevailing norm in Anglo-Saxon culture, the addressee of the compliment should accept and gracefully thank his conversational partner for the appraisal (Sacks, 1973). This is the behavior called for by etiquette, instilled into children, and suggested by the dialogues in language textbooks (Herbert, 1990, p. 207).

In cultures representing the other pole, such as Chinese culture, individuals are raised to conduct themselves in a modest and humble manner. This of course does not mean that they ignore all compliments or never think of themselves in a positive light: humility is only a social expectation, a role to be played, that in no way damages the individual's self-image. The above is also reflected by compliment responses. According to Chen's data, Chinese informants preferred CR-strategies imbued with the Modesty Maxim: they rejected the compliment in 95.73 % and decreased its value in 3.41 % of the cases.

Now that we have seen two communities with entirely different linguistic behaviour the question arises: on the scale stretching from Americans to Chinese where are Hungarians placed? A short answer would be that they are somewhere in between the two. Table 2 and especially Table 3 attest that we have managed to strike a rather fine balance between the principles of agreement and modesty. This balance is greatly enhanced by the use of strategies B.1 (downgrading/disparaging comments or explanations; which is less direct than an open rejection) and A.4 (return compliment, offering object of compliment; which draws equally on both principles). In the eight situations, the average occurrence of strategies motivated by the Modesty maxim is 66.75 %, while the same number for the Agreement strategy is 85.87 %. In other words, our self-image demands a certain amount of Modesty Maxim, but does not require an exaggerated level of self-abasement. The rule called for goes a bit like this: be aware of your values and confident, but only to a certain extent. The above is supported by the fact that in situations where compliments are routine social acts (situation 1) or where rejecting the compliment on the grounds of Modesty Maxim would obviously be a hypocritical denial of facts (compliments on skills or physical attributes) responses were dominated by the Agreement main-strategy. However, when agreeing with the compliment would make us appear overtly confident and possibly affronting to others ("performance" situations 4 and 5) we see "Modest strategies" taking over the lead role.

Social changes, cultural patterns displayed in movies and TV, and our ever-increasing experiences of dealing with individuals from different cultures will of course have a bearing on this segment of our linguistic behavior as well. To what extent will depend on how the Hungarian community relates to its own norms and cultural values.

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APPENDIX

- 1)** You are in a party. You have worked all day and it took a lot of effort to get yourself together for the evening. The effort was worth it: you get complimented by an acquaintance: *Tudod, hogy te nézel ki a legjobban? Gyönyörű ez a ruha, a sminked is jó.* 'You're the best looking woman here, you know that? That dress is beautiful and your make-up is great too.'
- 2)** You get the following compliment: *Nagyon jól táncolsz.* 'You're a great dancer.'
- 3)** You are having coffee with a colleague who suddenly turns to you with the following: *Most látom, milyen gyönyörű a szemed.* 'I just realized how beautiful your eyes are.'

- 4) You are reading out aloud a seminar paper you have written within a short period but with an all-out effort. You know that it contains some inaccuracies, you didn't have time to read all the articles you originally intended, you even had to leave certain parts out. After the class one of your classmates turns to you with the following: *Gratulálok. Nagyon érdekes volt, amit írtál. Tetszett.* 'Congratulations. What you've written was very interesting. I liked it.'
- 5) You are receiving a foreign guest, who is treated to a fabulous dinner. You have shopped and cooked all day long but the result was worth it: the guest leaves with a full stomach and in a state of great satisfaction. Guest: *Nagyon köszönöm a vendéglátást. Fantasztikusak voltak az ételek. Nem is tudom, hogy tudtál ennyi mindent csinálni.* 'Thank you very much for having me. The food you made was fantastic. I really don't know how you've managed to cook so many things.'
- 6) Yesterday you purchased a very expensive leather coat in a shop not known for its cheap prices. Your (girl)friend notices the new "piece" immediately: *De jól néz ki! Egy bécsi boltban láttam hasonlót méregdrágán.* 'It looks great! I saw a similar one in a shop in Vienna, they were asking a fortune for it.'
- 7) You are giving one of your colleagues a ride home. When (s)he sees your new car (s)he says the following: *De klassz autó! Szeretem ezt a márkát. A színe is különleges. Jó ízlésed van.* 'What a cool car. I like this make. It's also got a great colour. You've got good taste.'
- 8) You are featured in a theatrical performance. An acquaintance you have invited compliments you: *Nekem te tetszettél a legjobban. Szerintem a te mozgásod volt a legjobb, a hangod is jól érvényesült. Szinte "kiragyogtál" a csoportból.* ('I liked you the most. I think you moved the best and your voice was also very effective. You rather outshined the others.')

Version for male informants:

- 1) You are at a party. When you arrive an acquaintance turns to you with the following: *Jól nézel ki. A szerelésed is jó.* ('You look great. Your gear is also very nice.')
- 2) You get the following compliment from your female partner: *Nagyon jól táncolsz.* ('You're a very good dancer.')
- 3) You are having coffee with a female acquaintance who suddenly turns to you with the following: *Most látom, milyen szép szemed van.* ('I just realized how nice your eyes are.')

3. The Pragmatics of Request in the Hungarian Language*

Katalin Szili

1. About the dual nature of speech acts

The subject of my current study is request. Request belongs to the group of speech acts, which is the most heavily examined and discussed area of language usage. As it is well known, the systematic introduction of speech acts is connected to J. L. Austin. (Austin 1962) Summarizing the congruous elements of the various definitions, we can state that speech acts are the smallest units of human interaction that still have a function. What the speaker is doing, that is, the kind of speech act (s)he is executing (making a statement, denying something or apologizing) by enunciating a sentence or a sequence of sentences is determined by the illocutionary force of the utterance. (The illocutionary force is the acting power of the utterance, it is the way the locution is used.) Request, for example, represents the speaker's intention to have his partner do something. The speaker has several ways to express his or her wishes. (S)he can do so directly, when his/her utterance represents what (s)he thinks or what (s)he wants to attain. For example, the imperative sentence *Nyisd ki az ablakot!* ('*Open the window*') refers unambiguously to the speaker's intention, namely that (s)he wants the window opened. A similarly direct representation of the speaker's wish can be achieved with the performative verb *kér* (to ask for): **Kérlek**, *nyisd ki az ablakot* ('*I ask you to open the window*'). In the case of indirect speech acts, there is more to the speaker's thoughts than what (s)he voices; (s)he often wants more or even something different than what (s)he says. The utterances *Ki tudnád nyitni az ablakot?* ('*Could you open the window?*'); *Hű, de meleg van itt!* ('*Oh, it's so hot in here!*') have at least two illocutionary forces. With the first sentence, in addition to the fact that we are asking something, we can also inquire about whether or not our partner is capable of carrying out the action at issue. With the second sentence we are simply stating that it is warm in the room. According to Searle, one of the peculiarities of indirect forms is that some of them have conventionalized, that is, they gradually became capable of customarily effecting certain speech acts. (Searle, 1997, p. 63) (Among my examples, the question in the conditional mood is such a conventionalized form.)

The question as to whether the ratio of direct and indirect speech act types is similar and whether conventionalisation has involved the same forms in the various languages, leads on to a complex, to this day unresolved argument. The argument crystallized around whether there are universal speech act principles or whether they are culture specific. One pole of the opposing views is perhaps best represented by Fraser. In his opinion, the strategies, the forms of politeness, etc, one employs during speech acts are essentially the same; they are universal in the different

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languages and cultures. (Fraser, 1985) On the other hand, Wierzbicka is a rather outspoken supporter of the culture specific idea. In her view, the notion of universal speech act characteristics stems from ethnocentric Anglo-Saxon claims (Wierzbicka, 1985). In my opinion most of the pertaining theoretical works seem to side with Fraser. According to the politeness theory of co-authors Brown and Levinson, speech acts and the forms of politeness appearing in them are mostly based on universal elements. (Brown-Levinson, 1978, p. 56–310) The six maxims of politeness (tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, sympathy) that Leech designated are also, in his opinion, universally acknowledged norms that regulate our linguistic behavior (Leech, 1983). However, if we also take into consideration the more detailed analytical studies and the results from the increasing number of empirical research, the picture becomes more complex. For example, when discussing conventionalized indirect speech acts, Searle points out that some of them do not have the same function in different languages; they can lose their illocutionary force when translated. The *would you* type structures (*Adnál nekem egy tollat? – 'Would you give me a pen?'*), for example, do not possess an imperative function in Spanish, Hebrew and Japanese. (Searle, 1997) The investigations of how Leech's maxims prevail in the politeness strategies of different languages also provided proof that, contrary to his theory, different cultures emphasize or ignore different maxims. For example, in Hungary, it is generally expected to act modestly and in a diminishable manner when being praised (Szili, 2000, p. 261–84), while for Americans the proper behavior in the same situation would be to accept and say thanks for the compliment.

The opinions emphasizing cultural differences are also strengthened by the studies dealing with speech ethnography. This area of research – which has been gaining significance ever since the 70s – is perhaps best represented by Hymes (Hymes, 1972, 1974). From our viewpoint his most important conclusion is that each speech community has its own well-established and characteristic speech patterns and norms. Consequently, the different interaction styles, the different emotional contents, and the often improperly executed (e.g. too directly/indirectly or at the wrong time) speech acts can frequently cause problems and even breakdown in the communication of people coming from different cultures and languages (Gumperz, 1982).

Since the primary aim of my current work was to describe how requests are made in the Hungarian language I could not allow for a complete and complex discussion of the question outlined above. However, it is my hope that the mentioned indirect sources and their conclusions will provide convincing proof that a synthesis of the two opposing views is desired. In other words, I hope they will show that our speech activities are guided and influenced both by universal principles and by culture/language specific factors as well.

2. The antecedents and the current work

In order to give exact information on a certain phenomenon of our language use, to define characteristics typical only for us within an intercultural communication, or to find identities and similarities, we first have to carry out

intralinguistic analyses. To this end, and partly because of the growing demands experienced in connection with teaching Hungarian as a foreign language, the ELTE Central Hungarian Language Lectorate has undertaken the empirical research and evaluation of basic speech acts such as request, refuse, compliment response, and apology.

The first major foreign enterprise in the subject that paved the way for all later investigations was CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Study of Speech-Act Realization Patterns) started in 1982. (The summary of this research can be found in S. Blum-Kulka & J. Kasper, 1989.) Since the purpose of the whole research was to answer the serious challenges emerging in language teaching and intercultural communication, the research method was to compare the request and apology strategies used by 200 native speakers with those used by 200 non-natives. I relied on the same methods in my research: in compiling the discourse completion tests I considered CCSARP, but of course, some points had to be altered to fit our own goals. I used a discourse completion test with an exact description of the situation, and of the speaker's partner. The subject then had to ask his/her partner of the desired favor. Drawing the necessary conclusions from Brown and Fraser's fundamental work (Brown & Fraser, 1979, p. 33–63), I tried to put every such factor in the five situations that could most greatly influence the expected speech acts. Thus, I deliberately shaped context external and context internal factors. The former included social distance, power relation, the latter involved the degree of difficulty in performing of request and the right of the requester to make the request. The different grades of social distance were represented on the questionnaire by an assumed good friend, acquaintance, or close colleague on the one side (data in a.), and a totally unknown person on the other side (data in b.). Likewise, power was represented by a teacher and a boss as speech partners (data in c.). This method is different from the one used in CCSARP because my subjects were confronted with the three hearers impersonating the various social relations within one situation. (In CCSARP, individual situations were used for only one social relation: the subjects had to talk to their fellow students, their neighbor, or had to assume the position of a policeman in different situations.)

My assumption was that the applied 3-way method would give a more detailed picture of the speech acts in request. Moreover, it could even serve as a basis for drawing sociolinguistic or psycholinguistic conclusions. Among others, it provides an answer to how social distance can affect the linguistic utterances of a person who is requesting (comparison of data a. and b.). The effect of hierarchy (superiority or inferiority) on the speaker's speech activity can also be examined (analysis of data c.). Finally, the data allows us to determine, which of the previous two factors (social distance, power) has a stronger effect. My informants were placed into the following situations: 1. asking for a pen, 2. borrowing a mobile phone on a train because of an urgent meeting, 3. getting change for a shopping cart, 4. asking for a ride in a car during heavy snowfall, 5. asking someone to refrain from smoking, 6. asking that a roommate clean up the bathroom (he or she has left in a mess). (With students, the last situation (6) had been changed to requesting that the conversational partner return a borrowed set of notes, as in their case it seemed like a more realistic situation) Due to lack of space, I can only offer the instructions for situations 2 and 5:

2. You are sitting on a train, which for some reason is running quite behind schedule. You already know that because of the delay you will be late for an important meeting already arranged.
 - a. You are traveling with a friend who has a mobile phone. Ask him for the phone!
 - b. A middle aged man is also traveling in the compartment. He is also late and has just finished calling his office on his phone. Ask him for the phone!
 - c. You have also seen your boss on the train and you know he has a phone. Find him and ask him for the phone!

5. You are in a conference at your office. The air in the room is heavy with cigarette smoke, which you find very annoying.
 - a. Your colleague is chain-smoking. Ask him to refrain from smoking!
 - b. The smoke is coming from the unknown person sitting next to you. Ask him to refrain from smoking!
 - c. Your boss has been smoking since the beginning of the conference. Ask him to refrain from smoking!

I tried to choose the informants in such a way that would later allow for the examination of individual differences (females, males, younger and older age groups) as well. The findings of my current work are based on the analysis of the questionnaires completed by 148 students (aged 14–20) and 51 working adults. While processing the data it rather quickly became clear that there are significant differences between the request forms of adults and students. For this reason, I proceeded to separate the data of the two groups.

Conforming to the general aims of our project, my examinations sought to accomplish the following closely connected tasks: 1. provide a description of linguistic behavior during requests with special regard to the social and "context internal" factors of the situations; 2. compare the collected data to the results of the CCSARP analyses, that is, describe the request-related special characteristics of our linguistic behavior. Due to lack of space, in the current work I can relate the procedures and the more important results from the first work phase only. Naturally, I will include some of the more interesting conclusions derived from the comparison of the data to the CCSARP results, but a detailed discussion of the second work phase will be the subject of a subsequent study. The appended tables contain summative data. Thus, they do not only serve to support my conclusions; it is my hope that they will also shed light on the various findings that – at this point – I am unable to discuss.

3. Request strategies, procession of the data

With regard to the subject of the examinations as well as the available ways of approach, the CCSARP project offered a wide range of possibilities, methods (that had already proven their effectiveness), and tested solutions for problems. For this reason, it seemed practical to follow it in the data processing work as well. Thus, when analyzing the request structures and how they were constructed by the speakers, I followed the already existing models.

In a typical utterance, such as *Ne haragudjon, de tudna adni egy tollat, az enyémet otthon felejtettem* ('Excuse me, but could you give me a pen, I left mine at home'), it is clearly perceptible that not all clauses are of equal significance or have identical functions. Therefore the sentence above can be divided into the following smaller units: 1. address term, in which the speaker seeks to draw attention (*ne haragudjon*, 'excuse me'); 2. head act, in which the actual request is expressed (*tudna adni egy tollat?* – 'could you give me a pen?'); 3. adjuncts or supporting moves, which support and justify the request (*az enyémet otthon felejtettem* – 'I left mine at home'). Needless to say, taking the sentences apart was not always so easily done. For example, in the sentences *Ki kellene a fürdőszobát takarítani.* – 'The bathroom needs to be cleaned.'; *Nagyon piszkosan hagytad.* – 'You left it in a mess' the last sentence can be interpreted both as an adjunct or as part of the head act. Understandably, the researchers primarily concentrated on the head act; therefore, that area is the most elaborated. Among other things the operational aspects used by the speaker were also examined. Based on these, a request can be: 1. hearer-oriented (*adnál egy tollat?* – 'would you give me a pen?'); 2. speaker-oriented (*elkérhetném...?* – 'could I have your...?'); 3. speaker- and hearer-oriented (*elmehetnénk,* 'we could go'); 4. impersonal (*jó lenne...* – 'it would be good if...').

The syntactic and lexical downgraders/upgraders have also been described. With these, the speaker can decrease or increase the impositive, enforcing power of his request. Syntactic downgraders are determined by the special characteristics of the given language. The ones used in Hungarian are in harmony with the similar tools of other languages, as the most frequently utilized forms are all available to us as well: 1. with an interrogative sentence (*Adsz egy tollat?* – 'Will you give me a pen?'); 2. with a negative form (**Nem tudna** *kisegíteni?* – '**Couldn't** you help me out?'); 3. with the conditional mood (*Segítene?* – '**Would** you help?'); 4. with a conditional subordinate clause (*Jó lenne, ha kitakarítanál* – 'It **would** be so nice if you **would** clean the room'); 5. with a combination of the above. Lexical downgraders include: 1. expressions of politeness aiming to achieve cooperation (*Ne dohányozzon, kérem/legyen szíves* – 'Please don't smoke or **Be so kind and don't smoke**'); 2. adverbs (mostly of degree, quantity, and mood) that have a softening/decreasing effect (*Odaadnád egy pillanatra?* – 'Could you give it to me **for a moment?**'; *Megfognád egy kicsit?* – 'Could you hold it **for a little while?**'); 3. so called hedge elements, which – by avoiding precise wording – allow for an "unrushed", calm request: *Tudnál valahogyan segíteni?* – 'Could you help me **somehow?**'.

Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper distinguished first eight, then – with the inclusion of "want" statements – nine strategy types of head acts. (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989, p. 278–80) These are the following (proceeding from the most direct to the most indirect way of voicing the request):

1. **Mood derivable:** the most direct strategy. The illocutionary force of the request is determined by the grammatical mood (mostly the imperative) used in the utterance. The illocutionary force can also be conveyed by the imperative mood's functional equivalents, such as the infinitive or an elliptical sentence structure: *Jegyeket, bérleteket!* ('Tickets and passes. '); *Ne tessék dohányozni!* ('No smoking, please!').

2. **Explicit performative:** the speaker's intent is expressed explicitly through a verb embodying the illocution. In case of request, *kér* (to ask for) is the

appropriate performative verb: *Kérlek, segíts* ('I ask you to help'); *Kérem a tollat* ('I'm asking for the pen'). Surprisingly, we do not use it very often; its occurrence rarely exceeds 10 %.

3. **Hedged performative:** the verb representing the intent of the request appears in a modified form with a modal verb or with various auxiliary verbs *kell* (to have to), *akar* (to want to): *El kell hogy kérjem a tollad* ('I have to ask you for your pen'); *Elkérhetem/elkérhetném?* ('Can I/ Could I ask you for it?'); *El szeretném kérni/el akartam volna kérni* ('I would like to/ I would've wanted to ask you for it'). In terms of occurrence the category is third behind the two dominant strategies: it is over 20 % for adults in situations 1.c, 4.b, 5.b, c, and 6.b., and also for students in situations 1.b, 2.b, c, and 5.b, c.

4. **Locution derivable:** the illocutionary intent can be unfolded from the meaning of the locution: *Engem is elvisz?/El tetszik vinni?* ('Are you taking me as well?'). Informants worded their requests this way in a small percentage.

5. **Want statement:** this type of utterance expresses the speaker's intent that the event in the proposition be realized: *Fel szeretném váltani ezt a százast* ('I would like to get change for this hundred note'); *Szeretnék telefonálni a mobiloddal* ('I would like to make a call with your phone'). I came across this form very rarely also.

6. **Suggestory formula:** *Mi lenne, ha kitakarítanánk?* ('How about we clean the room?'); *Mi a véleményed egy kis pihenőről?* ('What do you think about taking a little rest?'). This is a diplomatic, hearer-oriented formula. It appeared in the truly delicate situations (situations 5 and 6), and even there in only a small percent.

7. **Preparatory strategy:** this is the group of conventionalized forms. In a way, these forms evidence our fear of being rejected. According to the pertaining English literature, the requestor can "prepare" his partner with three conventional forms. (S)he can check the partner's ability; more precisely, if the partner is able to carry out the given request: *El tudna vinni?* ('**Could** you (are you **able to**) take me along?'); *Fel tudná váltani?* ('**Could** you (are you **able to**) give me change?'). (S)he can test the partner's willingness: *Elvinne?* ('**Would** you take me?'); *Nem vinne el?* ('**Wouldn't** you take me?'). With Hungarian informants, the third form – which involves inquiring about the possibility of realization (*lehetséges lenne, hogy...*, 'would it be possible to...') – took a backseat to the previous two. However, the new subcategory of asking for permission emerged as a result of our findings. This subcategory – entirely missing from the Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper system – occurred in relatively large numbers in our project. (In her paper Mónika Majzer also establishes the subcategory: Majzer, 1999, p. 45) (In the following I will refer to the category as conventional strategy.)

8. **Strong hint:** the illocutionary force in this case cannot be deduced directly from the locution which, however, still contains the essential elements of the intended act. Generally, the strategy is used to inquire about the prerequisites of the act, but – as opposed to the previous strategy – in a nonconventional way: *Van apród?* ('Do you have change?'); *Őn is az iskolába megy?* ('Are you also going to the school?'). (When trying to get a ride.) It appears in considerable numbers with adults in the last two situations.

9. **Mild hint:** the locution does not contain essential elements about the act that is to be carried out. Understanding it requires a considerable amount of effort from the partner, as (s)he has to fathom the sometimes deeply hidden contextual

meaning of the utterance: *Jó sokan fürödhettek itt* ('It looks like lots of people bathed here.')(→ The bathroom is dirty. Clean it out!) Thus, it is no coincidence that this is the least frequent type of strategy.

4. Request in the Hungarian language – results

As it is shown by the data of tables 1 and 2 below, out of the nine strategies – though each occur – only three: 1, 7, and 3 play important roles in the request activities of Hungarians. Strategies 2 and 8 for the most part stay under 10 %. Usage of the rest of the strategies (4, 5, 6, and 9) is insignificant. (The previous sentences more or less stand in case of other languages as well, with the exception that in those languages, strategy 3 is used less frequently) For both groups of informants, most situations were characterized by the complementary and inverse relation of strategies 1 and 7: one strategy's high percentages pushed the other into the background and the other way around. Strategy 3 balanced between the previous two but in some situations yielded significant percentages (situation 1.c for adults, situations 1.c, 2.b, c, 5.b and c for students). Forms belonging to strategy 1 exceed 50 % mostly in a. situations: situations 1 and 5 for adults (1.a: 66.66%, 5.a: 50.98%) and the last two situations for students (5.a: 65.83%, 6.a: 61.2%). It is important to note that these numbers are higher than what is experienced in other languages. For example, let's take a look at the percentage values of strategy 1 (the most direct strategy) in situations 4 and 6. These situations are completely identical with the ones used in the CCSARP project. (In the CCSARP project informants were making their requests to fellow students. To allow for comparisons, at this point I am also only discussing the a. situations from our Hungarian project. The first number is for adults, the second is for students.) With direct utterances accounting for **23.52 – 11.52** percent, Hungarians surpassed all other linguistic communities in the "asking for a ride" situation (situation 4) (Hebrew: 0.6 %, Canadian French: 3.1 %, Argentine Spanish: **0** %, Australian English: 4 %, German: 1 %). Only Argentineans were able to "outdo" Hungarians in situation 6 (cleaning the bathroom). Hebrew speaking people came in third. (Hungarian: **49** % – **61.2** %, Hebrew: 49.1 %, Canadian French: 33.6 %, Argentine Spanish 74.4 %, Australian English: 11.6 %, German: 25.8 %)

The conventional strategy (strategy 7) is dominant in more situations than the previously discussed mood derivable strategy (strategy 1). Still, Hungarians tend not to use it as frequently as it is observed in the other countries: its usage exceeds 70 % only in one instance for adults (situation 3.b) and in two instances for students (situations 3.b, 4.a). In situation 4 (asking for a ride) Hungarian adults and student used a conventional form in **52.9** % and **81.47** % of the cases respectively. The same CCSARP numbers are for the most part higher: Hebrew: 85.8 %, Canadian French: 78 %, Argentine Spanish: **100** %, Australian English: 91.9 %, German: 97 %.

Strategy type		1. mood derivable	2. performative	3. hedged performative	4. locution deriv.	5. want stat.	6. sugg. form.	7. preparat. (convent.)	8. strong hint	9. mild hint	mixed	n/a
1. borrow-ing a pen	a.	66.66	3.92	3.9	1.96	-	-	21.56	1.96		-	
	b.	33.33	11.76	13.72	1.96	-	-	39.2	-	-	-	
	c.	33.33	5.8	31.37	-	-	-	29.4	-	-	-	
2. cellular phone	a.	27.45	5.88	1.96	5.88	-	-	56.86	-	-	-	1.96
	b.	5.88	7.84	17.6	3.92	-	-	47.05	1.96	-	-	15.68!
	c.	19.66	7.84	19.6	-	-	-	41.23	-	-	3.9	7.84
3. change	a.	35.29	5.88	1.96	5.88	-	-	41.17	7.84	-	-	1.9
	b.	17.64	1.96	3.92	-	-	-	74.5	-	-	-	1.96
	c.	15.68	9.8	-	3.92	-	-	51.04	11.76	-	-	7.84
4. car	a.	23.52	5.88	5.88	3.92	-	-	52.9	5.88	-	-	3.92
	b.	7.78	5.88	21.56!	1.96	-	-	49	1.96	-	-	11.76!
	c.	17.6	1.96	13.72	3.92	-	-	54.9	3.92	-	-	3.92
5. smokin g	a.	50.98	11.76	3.92	7.84	-	1.96	15.68	7.84	-	-	-
	b.	35.2	13.7	27.45!	-	-	-	9.8	11.76!	-	-	1.96
	c.	23.5	7.84	21.56!	1.96	-	3.92	9.8	15.7!	1.96	-	13.72!
6. cleanin g	a.	49	3.92	5.88	3.92	1.96	3.92	7.8	19.6!	-	-	3.92
	b.	25.4	7.8	21.56!	5.88	3.92	5.88	7.8	17.6!	-	-	3.92
	c.	15.68	5.88	9.8	3.92	1.96	3.92	3.92!	35.29	-	-	19.6!

(Bold numbers indicate strategies with highest percentage within a situation.)

Table 1. Request strategies for adults (%)

Strategy type		1. mood derivable	2. performative	3. hedged performative	4. locution deriv.	5. want stat.	6. sugg. form.	7. preparat. (convent.)	8. strong hint	9. mild hint	mixed	n/a
1. pen	a.	27.33	0.6	4.6	6.5	-	-	56.2	4		-	-
	b.	18.6	5.9	14.6	1.8	-	-	52.6	6.6	-	-	-
	c.	19.2	0.6	40.4	3.8	-	-	35	1.2	-	-	-
2. cellular phone	a.	30.6	-	17.6	4.2	0.6	-	46.2	0.6	-	-	-
	b.	5.2	-	47.2!	0.6	-	-	38.8	0.6	0.6	-	4.6
	c.	9.4	-	47.8!	3.4	-	-	32	1.88	-	-	5.3
3. change	a.	27.52	-	1.2	4	0.6	-	59.6	7.3	-	-	-
	b.	7.7	0.6	4.6	1.2	-	-	82.6	1.2	-	-	1.88
	c.	15.3	-	7.1	3.2	-	-	67	3.3	-	-	4
4. car	a.	11.52	0.6	1.2	4.6	-	-	81.47	-	-	0.6	1.2
	b.	6.26	0.6	12.6	8.4	-	-	62.4	-	-	-	8
	c.	9.3	-	10.6	13.2	-	2.6	60.09	0.6	-	-	3.3

5. smoking	a.	65.83	3.3	7.3	1.88	-	1.88	17.3	1.88	-	0.6	-
	b.	29.9	5.17	26.6!	3.8	0.6	1.88	26.6	4.6	-	-	0.6
	c.	35.4	3.8	27.8!	3.8	0.6	-	18	7.3	-	-	3.3
6. notes	a.	61.2	4.6	-	10.1	0.6	-	18.2	4.6	-	-	0.6
	b.	43.17	7.7	6.6	10.1	1.2	-	23.7	3.3	-	-	3.8
	c.	30.7	3.12	12.6	5.2	1.2	-	29.3	7.8!	3.3	0.6	6

(Bold numbers indicate strategies with highest percentage within a situation.)

Table 2. Request strategies for students (%)

4.1 Request strategies with regard to context external factors

The behavior-changing effect of social distance can be examined by comparing data from a. situations (requests addressed to friends) to data from b. situations (requests addressed to strangers). Our assumption was that increasing social distance almost inevitably results in indirect request forms becoming more frequent and direct forms losing significance. The data in table 3 proves that our notion holds for both groups of informants: in both cases, usage of strategy 1 (the most direct strategy) showed a definite decrease when the requests were aimed at strangers.

Naturally, smaller differences between the two groups of informants were encountered. The direct requests of adults – who tend to use direct forms in higher percentages than students – did not always showed significant decrease when there was a significant decrease for students. The values of the decrease for the two groups are also different. The strikingly large percentage (66.66 %) of direct request forms for adults in situation 1.a (asking a friend for a pen) is cut back considerably when the request is made to a stranger. This shows them conforming to society's expectations. The unambiguous influence of social distance on request forms is perhaps most clearly evidenced by the behavior of students in situation 5.b (asking a stranger to refrain from smoking), where the percentage of imperative forms decreased by almost 36 percent. The decrease is even more striking, when taken into account that the situation's inner characteristics (discussed in more detail in subchapter 5.2) would allow and even entitle the requestor to project a more determined manner. (This is shown by the large percentage of strategy 1 requests remaining even after the drastic decrease.)

	Adults Situation b. compared situation a.	to	Students Situation b. compared situation a.	to
1.	-33.33		-8.73	
2.	-21.57		-25.4	
3.	-17.65		-19.82	
4.	-15.74		-5.26	
5.	-15.78		-35.93	
6.	-23.6		-18.03	

Table 3.

Usage of strategy 1 with a friend and with a stranger
(percentage differences between a. and b. situations)

Besides social distance, the hierarchical relation between two persons is also an important determining factor in the directness of the request used. The question arises: which is the more influential factor? Table 4 below provides information essential for an answer.

	Adults Situation c. compared to situation b.	Students Situation c. compared to situation b.
1.	0	+0.6
2.	+13.78	+4.2
3.	-1.96	+7.6
4.	+9.82	+3.04
5.	-11.7	+5.5
6.	-9.72	-12.47

Table 4.

Usage of strategy 1 with a stranger and with a representative of power
(percentage differences between b. and c. situations)

The unfolding picture is more colorful than the previous one. The alternating plus and minus signs signal that, in this area, there is some disharmony between the behaviors of the two groups of informants. Even when addressing someone in a position of power, students did not – with the exception of situation 6 – feel compelled to go with a more reserved utterance. In fact, situations 1-5 brought about an increase in the number of direct forms used. Adults, on the other hand were rather sensitive in their reactions to the power-factor being introduced to the situations: the decrease in imperative (direct) forms is small in situation 3 but quite noticeable in the last two situations. A lengthy discussion of why there was an increased number of direct forms in situations 2 and 4 would – in my opinion – take us outside of the otherwise rather flexible borders of pragmatics. Situations 2 and 4 involved social "pressure": adults were trying to fulfil their social duties by getting to their workplace on time or signaling that they would be late. Presumably, in these situations adults were inclined to use direct requests because they are harder to reject.

Summarizing our findings we can conclude that social closeness results in strategy 1 (representing the most direct form of request in our language) being used in rather large numbers. On the other hand, increasing social distance generates an obligatory reduction in directness. The behavior-changing effect of the partner's position of power is – generally speaking – similar, but is less significant than the friend/stranger relation. The strength of the power factor is determined by the requestor's imaginary and real position in the social hierarchies: thus, according to our data, by age and, almost certainly, by sex as well.

4.2 Request strategies with regard to context internal factors

As we have seen, the relationships between context external factors and strategy types shed light primarily on the reasons for different behavior in a, b, and c

situations. However, they can not help us to grasp the typical characteristics of the situations nor the differences between them. We do not know, for example, why strategy 7 is so dominant in situations 3 and 4, or why the relative balance of the two main strategies disappears in the last two situations (Tables 1 and 2). Why are speakers reserved in some situations and more open in others?

Assertions from related publications and previous research data suggest that the speaker's language use can be influenced by context internal factors more than by context external ones. Such internal factors include: the degree of difficulty involved in making request (in short: the weight of request) and the speaker's rights to pose the request (in short: the degree of the speaker's impositive role). In this aspect, our situations represent three different types. The first one is an everyday request directed on an object. If the threat of refusal is small, the request is likely to fulfilled. To give change for a hundred forint note is not a big deal: it only requires one extra movement on the partner's side. Situations 2, 4, and 6 could be counted as weighty requests, since these involve the lending – if only for a short time – of expensive and personal items, which are meant for private use. The cleaning of the bathroom can also be considered a great burden because it is usually a time-consuming and not too pleasant activity. Situation 5 carries medium weight in theory: it can be very annoying for a smoker to suspend smoking for a while, but (s)he does have the option of going elsewhere for a smoke.

Knowing the characteristics of request strategies, one could expect that, in the less important situations 1 and 3, the more direct forms that express the intention of the request clearly (strategies 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) would prevail. Alike, in situations 2, 4, and 6 the more indirect, conventional forms would be overrepresented. However, our results do not always live up to previous expectations; in fact, the tables sometimes show just the opposite of what we assumed. The high values of strategy 7 in connection with the borrowing of a cellular phone and getting into someone else's car are fully comprehensible, just as well as is the strong decline in the number of strategy 1 forms in the b. and c. versions of these same situations. However, the weight of request does not justify the overwhelming presence of strategy 1 in situation 3 (changing money) nor its frequent appearance in situation 1. But evidence from our data – even the partial results from tables 4 and 5 – still prove that we borrow a pen from someone almost the same way we borrow a car: *Tudnál adni egy tollat?*, 'Could you give me a pen?'; *Ide tudnád adni az autódát?* ('Could you give me your car?').

I must note quickly that this is true only for the main action, because if we consider other structural units of the speech act – in our example: the supporting steps involved – other aspects become visible as well. In weightier requests, this explanative utterance unit becomes an indispensable predecessor or follower of the main act. In some cases, it completely rules the utterance. Typical examples are: *Sajnos, kellemetlen helyzetbe kerültem, mert kimaradt a busz, és nagyon fontos lenne, hogy időben beérjek a munkahelyemre. Ha ön is arra tart, szépen kérem, vigyen el.* ('Unfortunately, I got into a very unpleasant situation. There is no bus and it is highly important that I get to work on time. If you are also going the same way, could I ask you to give me a ride?'); *Úgy tűnik, a busz elakadt valahol. Mivel egy utcában dolgozunk, megkérhetném, hogy vigyen el az autójával?* ('It seems that the bus got stuck somewhere. Since we work in the same street, could I ask you to give me a ride?') (I will not go into details about my research on this topic, but I would like

to stress that the use of supporting steps always follows the configuration of context external and context internal factors. Thus, they play a much lesser role in situation a. than in the last two situations or in any less weighty request.) The more frequent appearance of strategy 7 (which is hardly ever connected with supporting steps) in situations 1 and 3 could be explained with the major attributes of conventional forms: these straightforward, idiomatic expressions are easy to use in routine situations that do not involve anything unexpected but still require basic politeness. Weightier or unexpected requests, however, call for improvisation and emphasis, which can very easily be substantiated by supporting steps.

But why is it that our speakers made a rather direct request to tidy up the bathroom or to have their notes back? The weight of this request would justify a strategy 7 instead. The fact is that one has a fully justified impositive role in these situations: cigarette smoke can be very unpleasant and unhealthy, and we may not be forced to suffer because of our roommate's carelessness. And as for the reclaiming of notes: not having them back before an important exam can lead to serious consequences. These circumstances rewrite the behavioral norms defined by social distance in these situations. Our speakers used more imperative verbs, even when talking to strangers. However, the unexpected strategy changes in the various versions of the three situations point to a more complex rule. Namely, the conflict of "context external" and "context internal" factors. Adults and students, given their impositive role, are very much alike in being rather harsh on their friends by using utterances of the most direct form 1 (49% of adults, 61.2% of students): *Hagyd már abba!* ('Quit it. '); *Nyomd már el azt a bűdös bagót!* ('Put out that stinky cigarette!') etc. The declining but still relatively frequent strategy 1 in situation b. indicates an attempt to reconcile the conflict between the legitimacy of a request and the growing social distance between the speakers. The most interesting cases are undoubtedly the utterances towards a representative of power. Adults tend to be more cautious with their bosses. They ask less direct questions, while changing behavior as well. They provide multiple solutions to the serious problem of accomplishing a goal that is clearly against the boss' interest in a way that the boss can still save face. This effort results in a very wide variety of utterances, with forms not used previously, e.g. strategy 6 (proposal): *Ajánlom, hogy osszuk fel, ki mikor takarít.* ('I recommend we set up a schedule for cleaning up. '); *Takarítsunk ki együtt, jó?* ('Should we clean up together'), increasing use of hedged performative types: *Megkérhetem, hogy hagyja abba/takarítson ki?* ('Could I ask you to stop smoking/clean up?'). But the most striking phenomenon is the abundance of the otherwise rare hint strategies. Some examples are: *Főnök! A fürdőszobában felejtette a dolgait.* ('Boss! You left your stuff in the bathroom. '); *Nem tudja, kinek kell szólni, hogy tisztaság legyen?* ('Do you know who's the person in charge of cleaning up?'); *Kár, hogy nekünk kell takarítanunk.* ('It's a pity we have to clean up. '); *Olyan szép tiszta volt a fürdőszoba. Lehetne, hogy mindig ilyen legyen? Ön szerint kinek kellene szólni?* ('The bathroom was so nice and clean. Couldn't it be always like that? Who do you think we should call for the clean-up?'); *Örülök, hogy önnel vagyok közös szobában, mert köztudottan kényes a fürdőszoba tisztaságára.* ('I'm so happy I'm sharing this room with you since you're well known to always keep the bathroom clean. ') Adults often use irony to ease the situation: *Főnök! Ugye bejárónőt is kellett volna csomagolni, hogy rendet rakjon?* ('Boss! Think we should've packed a charwoman too, to do the clean-up. '); *Főnök! Nem kellene ennyire kitakarítani.* ('Boss, you shouldn't be making such a fuss

about cleaning up.); *Főnök! Otthon bejárónője van? (‘Boss, do you have a charwoman at home?’)* There were some (19.6%!) who got rid of the dilemma by simply avoiding the speech act: *Nem szólnék, csak feltakarítanék (‘I’m not going to mention it, I’ll just tidy up myself.’)*; *Nem kockáztatnám. (‘I’m not going to risk it.’)* – they said.

Students, on the other hand, seemed not to care about the consequences. They used the most direct forms quite often (35.4% in situation 5 and 30.7% in situation 6). The small variety of strategies applied (and especially the rare use of strategy 8) can be a sign of unfinished social learning: students can simply not behave in the more complex way that the life situation would necessitate. However, we can not exclude the option that students deliberately distance themselves from the rules governing adult society, and that is the reason for expressing themselves more unambiguously and candidly.

5. The Subcategories of Strategy 1

As I mentioned earlier, the behavior of single language communities is determined not only by the social rules and expectations stemming from tradition, but also by the unique features of the language itself. (That is: a system of tools that the speaker can draw upon while communicating.) The description of the request speech act would not be complete without introducing the other options open to the speaker in selecting a strategy. So let us take the subcategories of the two most recurrent strategies and examine their grammatical characteristics.

Strategy 1 provides the most colorful picture. It is used more often in Hungarian when compared with the CCSARP data, and has four distinct subtypes. I use the following names for each of them: 1. direct request could best be illustrated with the imperative: *Adj egy tollat! (‘Give me a pen’)*. 2. Polite direct request occurs when the imperative verb is either preceded or followed by a polite expression such as ***légy szíves/légyszí/legyen szíves*** (*informal/abbreviated/formal* imperative form of the verb *be+ so kind*). 3. Hearer-oriented impersonal request is a true double-faced creature, that consist of the formal version of the previous polite expression (*legyen szíves*) and the infinitive of the verb marking the action to be performed. Thus, the personal character of the first part mingles with the impersonality and impositive force of the infinitive. 4. Formally addressed impersonal request, which is used only in formal addresses. Its components are: *tessék (‘please’)* and the infinitive of the verb. Both lack any conjugation: *tessék abbahagyni (‘please stop’)*.

	plain imperative <i>add ide/ adja ide</i>	<i>légy/legyen szíves +imperative</i>	<i>légy/legyen szíves + infinitive</i>	<i>tessék + infinitive</i>	<i>.....hatnál/hatna</i>	<i>lenne olyan kedves+ imperative</i>
1.a	23.52	73.51	0	0	0	3
1.b	5.88	76.46	12	5.88	0	0
1.c	17.65	29.4	47	0	0	5.88
2.a	35.7	57.1	7.1	0	0	0
2.b	0	33.33	66.66	0	0	0
2.c.	20	40	30	0	0	10
3.a	27.77	55.55	11.11	0	5.55	0
3.b	12.5	0	87.5	0	0	0
3.c	12.5	62.5	25	0	0	0
4.a	33.33	66.66	0	0	0	0
4.b	66.66	0	33.33	0	0	0
4.c	11.11	88.88	0	0	0	0
5.a	50	46.15	0	0	3.84	0
5.b	8.3	41.66	41.66	0	8.3	0
5.c	25	25	41.66	0	8.3	0
6.a	41.66	16.66	29.16	0	0	0
6.b	7.7	46.15	46.15	0	0	0
6.c	25	37.5	37.5	0	0	0

(Bold numbers indicate strategies with highest percentage within a situation.)

Table 5. Distribution of strategy 1 subcategories (adults)

The horizontal rows give an overview of the percentage distribution of subcategories within a single situation. The vertical columns show occurrences of the subcategories in the various situations. The separation of students and adults seems fully justified in this case, too. According to the first columns, informants used direct requests mostly with close friends. (This tends to appear with students more often as a dominant subcategory.) Adults had polite request as the most frequent form. Together with the first subcategory, it accounted for the bigger part in every situation.

	plain imperative <i>add ide/ adja ide</i>	<i>légy/legyen szíves</i> -imperative	<i>légy/legyen szíves</i> + infinitive	<i>tessék</i> + infinitive	<i>.....hatnál/.....hatna</i>	other
1.a	27.9	64.43	0	0	2.32	2.32
1.b	29.62	70.36	0	0	0	0
1.c	3.57	7.14	89.28	0	0	0
2.a	48.33	48.83	0	0	0	2.3
2.b	0	16.66	83.33	0	0	0
2.c	0	12.5	75	6.25	0	6.25
3.a	64.1	35.89	0	0	0	0
3.b	20	0	70	10	0	4.54
3.c	4.54	0	72.72	18.18	0	0
4.a	37.5	62.5	0	0	0	0
4.b	0	11.11	66.66	22.22	0	0
4.c	7.69	15.38	61.5	15.38	0	0
5.a	52.12	46.79	1.06	0	0	0
5.b	22.72	40	31.81	0	0	4.54
5.c	11.53	9.61	50	25	0	3.8
6.a	70	29.67	0	0	0	0
6.b	49.2	41.23	3	0	0	4.3
6.c	13.04	23.91	34.78	23.9	0	4.3

(Bold numbers indicate strategies with highest percentage within a situation.)

Table 6. Distribution of strategy 1 subcategories (students)

Forms belonging to next subtype (hearer-oriented impersonal request) such as *legyen szíves felváltani* ('be so kind to give change for...'); (*legyen szíves abbahagyni a dohányzást* (be so kind as to quit smoking)); *legyen szíves kitakarítani* ('be so kind as to tidy up') became more frequent in situations b. and c. as a consequence of a greater social distance between the speakers. This is the most popular subtype among students except for 1b., 5b., and 6b. (In 5b. it was only neglected because **legyen szíves nem dohányozni* ('be so kind as not to smoke' would sound strange). In the light of all this, it would seem to be a plausible conclusion that this form is chosen predominantly when the speaker is in a difficult situation from a context external or context internal viewpoint. (That is: situations involving a huge social distance, subordination stemming from age, gender or social position, or when these circumstances are coupled by a weighty request or an impositive role.) This is even more true for subtype 4 (*tessék* – 'please + infinitive') which can clearly be defined as a distanced and respectful way of making a request. Its occurrence in my research is mainly age-related: only students used this form when speaking to their teachers or to strangers older than them.

The first three subcategories containing conjugated and polite forms account for a greater part of the lead strategies of both adults and students. I would doubt that this fact could be seen as proof of Hungarians' excessive directness in making requests, which is very often perceived as offensive or mean by members of other speech communities. The reason for that is that the imperative verb in Hungarian carries a wider range of information than in the Indo-European languages. It indicates the person of the partner(s) and the relation between them (formal or informal address). Moreover, the use of definite and indefinite conjugation not only

shows the quality of the object, but also shortens the sentence since the personal suffix makes the mentioning of the object unnecessary: *add ide* ('give me'+ definite object); *adjál* ('give me'+ indefinite object). And since the form appears mostly in connection with polite expressions, it even sounds somewhat less direct. (I must note here that Blum-Kulka and House did not consider lead strategy 1 worthy of thorough examination – probably due to its alleged irrelevance.)

6. Subcategories of conventional strategy 7

This strategy is used by Hungarians more evenly, and – just like in CCSARP data – has 2 dominant subtypes. Request for permission posed a new subtype, while forms inquiring about the possibility of granting the request were rare.

	Ability		Willingness <i>adna? elvinne?</i>	Permission		
	<i>tud+conditional tudna adni?</i>	<i>tud+ infinitive tudsz adni?</i>		<i>..hatnék?</i>	<i>...hatok?</i>	<i>meg- engedi, hog y</i>
1.a	9	9	63.63	0	18.18	0
1.b	40	5	45	0	10	0
1.c	33.3	6.6	20	20	13.33	6.6
2.a	3.4	0	37.9	17,1	10.3	31.3
2.b	13.04	0	47.8	13.04	0	26.8
2.c	14.01	0	19.04	19.04	0	47.3
3.a	52.38	33.33	14.28	0	0	0
3.b	75.67	2.7	21.62	0	0	0
3.c	66.66	10	23.3	0	0	0
4.a	29.62	11.11	59.25	0	0	0
4.b	28	0	64	4	0	4
4.c	17.85	3	60.71	10.7	7.1	0
5.a	16.66	0	83.33	0	0	0
5.b	0	0	100	0	0	0
5.c	0	0	100	0	0	0
6.a	0	0	100	0	0	0
6.b	0	0	100	0	0	0
6.c	0	0	100	0	0	0

Table 7. Distribution of strategy 7 subcategories (adults)

According to tables 7 and 8, two forms are dominant in Hungarian. The structures consisting of the conditional (and sometimes the declarative) form of the modal verb *tud* (*can*) + infinitive are aimed at mapping out the partner's ability to perform the request: *tudnál adni?* ('could you give me?'); *fel tudnád váltani?* ('could you give change for...?'). This is a very fortunate way of uniting the ability and request interpretations. At first sight, the speaker only wants to know if the partner is able to, or has the adequate means to fulfill a possible request. The negative answer then could be interpreted as lack of ability on the side of an otherwise willing partner: *Sajnos nem tudom, mert...* ('Unfortunately, I can't because...'). So the high occurrence rate of this structure is due to its face-saving capacity: it protects the

maker of the request from direct rejection, but it also eases the partner's burden of having to say a straight no.

	Ability		Willingness <i>adna? elvinne?</i>	Permission			possib. <i>lehet-séges</i>
	<i>tud+conditional tudna adni?</i>	<i>tud+ infinitive tudsz adni?</i>		<i>..hatnék?</i>	<i>...hatok ?</i>	<i>meg- engedi, hogy</i>	
1.a	43.22	26.3	26.11	3	1.52	0	0
1.b	50.33	26.5	16.01	3.72	3	0	0
1.c	51.5	21	7.5	20	0	0	0
2.a	23.2	12.15	29	15.75	8.25	11.4	0
2.b	44.27	1.38	15.22	24.83	0	13.77	0
2.c.	42.25	2	15	29.2	0	11.15	0
3.a	60.93	22.3	16.02	0	0	0	0
3.b	85.4	3.25	11.4	0	0	0	0
3.c	62.1	23.65	12.5	1.5	0	0	0
4.a	64.6	3.5	28.35	2.8	0	0.7	0
4.b	58.8	8.4	32	0	0	0	0.6
4.c	58.5	14.25	24.2	3.2	0	0	0
5.a	31.65	0	68.3	0	0	0	0
5.b	21.87	0	75	0	0	0	3.1
5.c	23.6	0	58.33	0	0	0	18.5
6.a	61.12	6.2	32.5	0	0	0	0
6.b	74.16	4.16	21.66	0	0	0	0
6.c	66.66	17.49	11.66	4.16	0	0	0

Table 8. Distribution of strategy 7 subcategories (students)

The forms of the subtype testing the partner's ability were popular with both groups, although they played a somewhat more dominant role in the students' group. With the exception of the weightless 3rd situation, adults would almost always inquire about the willingness of their partners (without exception in the last situations!). Students only used this form in situation 5, which means their young age forced them into a more cautious and defensive form within the conventional strategy that was more allowing towards the partner as well. (CCSARP data shows the same tendency.)

Requests put forth as inquiries about the partner's willingness, which use the conditional form of the verb (*adnál egy tollat? – 'would you give me a pen?'; elvinnél? – 'would you give me a ride?'*) do not hide the true goal of request so much as the previous subtype. They do not offer such a polite way rejection, either. It can be inferred from the characteristics of the two subtypes that the first one is used more in situations involving social distance or any kind of subordination between the partners (situations b. and c.) or if the request is perceived as a weighty one. On the other hand, the second (willingness testing) subtype, implying a more straightforward asking behavior, is used if a possible rejection will not cause a break in the relationship with the partner, or if the person making the request assumes a rightfully impositive role.

In this paper, I have made an attempt at summarizing the most important results of the first work phase of a large-scale project. I deliberately omitted the evaluation of less relevant table data. The following conclusions can be drawn: the

speech acts of Hungarian speakers exactly reflect the quality of the social relationship between the speakers. (For example: their age, whether they are friends or strangers, subordinated or equal.) However, their behavior can be greatly influenced by the examined internal factors as well.

Apart from the well-demonstrated universal features, applied strategies, and linguistic tools, some characteristics arising from the peculiarity and grammatical norms of the Hungarian language can also be shown. The use of the derivative strategy 1 is more widespread than in other languages, whereas the use of conventional strategy is less frequent and more balanced. The directness of the imperative structure belonging to the first one is very successfully counter-balanced by the richness of its meaning (indicating person, number and object) and the wide variety of attachable polite forms. Therefore, one can not draw a sharp dividing line between the two strategies in Hungarian: we can consider *legyen olyan kedves és adja kölcsön* ('be so kind and lend me') just as polite as the conventional form, *kölcsönadná?* ('would you lend me?').

I hope that the followed pragmatic approach will also direct attention to problems that should be subject to sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic research.

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4. The Refusal of Offers: a Pragmatic Analysis Based on Data Gathered According to Natural Methods

Orsolya Maróti

1. Selection of Topic

What rules govern the practice of polite refusal in Hungary? How can a request be refused without offending a partner?

While linguistic politeness is an important aspect of our social self-image and cultural traditions, it is rarely something of which we are aware. In the course of our daily lives, the way certain rules govern language usage generally remains unnoticed. When communication flows smoothly between partners, cooperation is almost unconscious; our own system of norms only becomes apparent when communication patterns deviate from what is considered to be appropriate. Our ideas concerning appropriate and/or successful linguistic contact are determined by the culture to which we belong.

Any research of linguistic politeness therefore demands an examination of those social aspects which are present even if not being utilized in a conscious manner (Szili, 2000). Familiarizing ourselves with the theoretical framework that underlies the various theories on politeness will allow us to understand more about our own language usage, thereby enabling us to communicate in a more effective and deliberate manner.

When choosing an appropriate method for expressing refusal, the issue of social standing – the distance according to rank or relationship that exists between given speech partners – plays an important role in determining our selection. The accepted rules concerning what a given community finds polite or impolite are additional factors influencing this decision. Understanding the research findings connected to this topic thereby results in knowledge bearing a series of very practical applications. Not only can teachers of Hungarian as a Second Language – or Hungarian as a Heritage Language – develop their students' level of pragmatic competence through instruction of these typical strategies, but native Hungarian students can also be encouraged to use politeness as a tool for more effective communication.

When employing language in order to realize personal ends, the knowledge of how to form and structure our utterances is never enough. More is required than grammatical competence: selecting the kind of linguistic elements most capable of serving our personal aims depends upon a speaker's ability to coordinate his or her language ability with various other knowledge-based systems (such as those related to social interaction) and those mechanisms related to perception and intentional factors. Pragmatic competence is therefore a necessity (Németh T., 2006, p. 426).

While committing speech acts, we enact intentions that are clear to our partners as well. Expression of such utterances is an act in itself. If, for example, we make a request, express our thanks, refuse something, or make an invitation, this event cannot occur without some kind of linguistic representation, i.e., the words actually used. In addition, our verbal expression forces our partner to perform some kind of action, usually in the form of a response. In the case of speech act usage, language is quickly revealed as a tool not only for describing the reality we live in, but also a means of altering this reality.

Empirical pragmatics provides the theoretical framework for this study, thereby paving the way for any arising rules to be implemented in language instruction, the terrain where interlanguage pragmatics research is conducted and also the area most in need of systematic knowledge. For most students this type of knowledge is either lacking or the victim of various misconceptions – the root of their sociopragmatic or pragmlinguistic errors often lies in their neglect of those rules that determine language usage.

This study will first analyze speech acts of refusal in order to determine the primary aspects to be considered in the course of empirical research. In the course of my investigation into the nature of refusal, my main concern was the utilization of a corpus collected according to the most appropriate methods. To this end, I conducted a great deal of research and will introduce a method for data collection proven by experience to be the most effective in revealing the underlying rules of speech acts. Analysis of the resulting data will result in a more detailed image of how Hungarians make refusals, while also offering an alternate interpretation of linguistic politeness and the role this plays in our own system of pragmatic techniques.

2. Politeness: normative behavior or strategic method?

Politeness can be interpreted in many ways: as a social indicator, a kind of behavior pattern or means of communication, a normative category (e.g. Bańcerowski, 1998; Kertész, 1931; Mártonfi, 1972; Martin, 1975) or strategic system (e.g. Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Kasper, 1998; Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Gass & Houck, 1999). In addition, politeness can be seen as either a universal (Leech, 1983; Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987) or a cultural phenomenon (Matsumoto, 1988, Ide, 1989, Janney & Arndt, 1993, Wierzbicka, 2003).

In some of the most significant studies on this subject, Watts, Ide and Ehlich attempted to separate the traditional, widely known definition of politeness from the concept used in linguistic theory (Watts, Ide & Ehlich, 2005). This resulted in the designation of this concept as either first-order politeness – i.e. politeness 1 (P1) – or second-order politeness, also known as politeness 2 (P2).

By definition, the second type, P2, is an object of linguistic study and therefore devoid of all characteristics associated to the first type, P1 (Watts, Ide & Ehlich, 2005). In addition, P2 examines phenomenon completely unrelated to those attached to P1. One question pertinent to P2 concerns the reason why speakers – instead of simply expressing information – frequently add seemingly unnecessary elements to their speech. Another example addresses why speakers often express their intentions in roundabout methods. The following analysis of the data gleaned

from the corpus is based on this definition system and represents an attempt to supplement previous research of refusal speech acts.

Ervin Goffman's concept surrounding face – including its complementary expression, facework – emphasizes the importance of preserving our self-image on a social standing (Goffman 1955). Through their description of positive and negative politeness forms, Brown and Levinson have aided the interpretation of certain behavioral mechanisms employed in unpleasant, possibly threatening situations (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). Positive politeness refers to the kind of behavior mechanisms used to maintain a positive image of ourselves; negative politeness is behavior that ensures our conversation partner's continued independence.

The act of penetrating into another person's private sphere is judged differently by different cultures. In some communities, respect of negative face is held to be more important, while other communities place higher value on positive face. If each partner wants to maintain good relations, then attempts will be made to preserve some state of balance.

On the other hand, a theory such as the Conversational Contract Theory (Fraser, 1980), or the concept of tactical, political behavior (Meier, 1995, Watts, 2003) expands face beyond the preservation of self-image in order to place greater emphasis on the successful realization of personal goals (Janney & Arndt, 2005).

3. The Speech Act of Refusal

According to custom, invitations are to be accepted and requests are to be met: refusing either of these can be a remarkably unpleasant task. According to the frequently quoted definition established by Chen-Ye-Zang, refusal is "a speech act in which the speaker denies the action recommended or desired by his or her listener" (Chen, Ye & Zang, 1995, p. 121). In other words: if we refuse something, we disagree with our partner's idea. This places our partner in an uncomfortable situation, which negatively affects – or threatens, as the literature describes it – his or her social self-image, also referred to as "face," the term introduced through the work of Erving Goffman (Goffman, 1955).

This explains why offers, suggestions, or invitations are accepted relatively quickly and directly, without any tendency to explain or soften the statement's meaning. Refusal, on the other hand, is done indirectly and employs one or more than one stages, or turns, thereby delaying the act. When refusing, either an explanation is included, or some other type of technique is utilized in order to lessen the negative impact of our statement's content. By doing so, we convey the fact that we have a good reason to refuse; if this were not the case, we would accept the offer or suggestion. In other words, we attempt to restore a sense of harmony to the interaction in order to preserve our own face as well as that of our partner (Brown & Levinson, 1978).

Refusal speech acts fall into the category of undesirable answers; as such, they are a relatively uncomfortable form of reactive speech acts. In this case, the very nature of reactive speech acts makes it impossible for the one answering to have any kind of formulated strategy at the ready when accepting the refusal of his or her request. When combined with the situation's already unpleasant nature, this

inability to plan ahead results in a very wide range of possible answers, a circumstance adding to the complexity of refusal. Not only must the statement's planner consider the conversation's context, the social distance and/or lower or higher social rank between the speaker and listener, he or she also faces the fact that the nature (as well as content) of the "standard" request affects the method of refusal. The partner making a request is put into an uncomfortable position by our refusal; the fact that his or her will could not be successfully carried out damages his or her social self-image, or positive face. At the same time, refusing allows us to preserve our negative face, thereby demonstrating our ability to act freely and not as objects of someone else's will.

The variety and elaborate nature of refusal strategies underlines the idea of refusal as a "dangerous" (as in threatening to face) speech act. Participants in this type of interaction invest serious effort into the formation of their statements. Techniques related to positive (approaching in Szili, 2000) politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1978) are commonly used, such as in the expression of sorrow: *"Sorry, but I just don't think it's a good idea."* In other cases we assure our partner of the offer's worth: *"I think it's a great offer, but..."* If the strategy of future acceptance is employed (*"Maybe some other time."*), then the rules of negative (abstaining in Szili, 2000) politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1978) – the type of politeness that preserves a partner's right to act – are maintained while also providing an escape route to the discussion's initiator. In this instance the initiator has the opportunity to either reword the request or withdraw entirely by interpreting this apparent acceptance as an answer.

At the same time, researchers have always indicated that the reactive speech acts do not necessarily follow the initiative act; in other words, the request or offer is not followed by immediate rejection (Shigeta, 1974; Ueda, 1974; Labov & Fanshel, 1977). With the inclusion of conversation analysis (King-Silver, 1993), attention fell instead to the number of turns used to realize these speech acts.

When refusal is examined according to the level of interaction, the fact that the speaker's initial intention to refuse can change under the influence of the initiator's reply. A difference must therefore be made between refusal as a statement as opposed to refusal occurring within the context of discourse. Any interpretation must decide whether each turn is to be examined independently, or if the interaction is to be studied as a whole.

3.1 The structure of refusals

In the initial research projects concerning refusals (Shigeta, 1974; Ueda, 1974; Smith, 1975; Labov & Fanshel, 1977; Wootton, 1981; Kinjo, 1987), a variety of – albeit somewhat desultory – data collection methods were used until 1987 when Takahashi and Beebe constructed the discourse completion test (DCT), which became the predominant research method for a long period of time.

Early research examined utterances that demonstrated the speaker's intention in the most tangible way, since this enabled researchers to utilize a controllable environment, and employ relatively precise and replicable data collection situations.

The investigation of utterance-level speech acts comprised primarily the description and categorization of alerters, supportive moves and the head act,

highlighting the differences deriving from the nature of the various speech acts (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989; Gass & Houck, 1999). The head act is the actual speech act, which conveys the illocutionary force and can carry out the speaker's intention even in the absence of the other two elements. In the case of initiating speech acts (request, invitation, compliment, etc.), the role of the first element of the three-fold structure is justified, while in reactive speech acts (disagreement, refusal, response to a compliment) certain elements may have an introductory function as well, therefore it is worth keeping the three-fold structure when introducing speech acts.

The structural analysis of utterance-level refusals has included the sequence and the relative position of the three elements, although the main area of investigation has been the relationship between the main element and its adjuncts. Studies have examined the presence of alerters and lack thereof primarily in the case of initiating acts (e.g., Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989).

In order to analyze refusals in the Hungarian language, Katalin Szili has established and used the category of *adjunct speech acts*. "I needed to establish the category of the so-called adjunct speech acts, which typically precede or sometimes follow Hungarians' refusals and include expressing thanks, apologizing and complimenting" (Szili, 2002, p. 215). It is worth reflecting on whether this group – due to its typical location and function as well – may be considered similar to alerters, a counterpart occurring in response speech acts, and which may as well be called the introductory/preparatory element.

3.1.1 The head act

Based on research to date, we are the most knowledgeable about the head act, since basically it conveys the illocutionary force. Research usually categorizes it according to strategies or semantic formulas, frequently examining both the internal and external modifiers.

The expressions and activities appropriate for refusal were first classified by Ueda and Joan Rubin (Ueda, 1974; Rubin, 1983).

3.1.2 Classification of Refusals

The authors Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz were the first to categorize refusals into a system based on empirical research (Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990). They grouped forms of refusal based on their semantic characteristics, then ordered them according to the degree of directness, an aspect determined by how apparent the speaker's intent was in the propositional content.

I. Direct

1. **Performative** (using performative verbs) (e.g., "I refuse."),
2. **Non-performative statement**
 - 2.a. "No.",
 - 2.b. **Negative willingness or ability** ("I can't."; "I won't."; "I don't think so."),

II. Indirect

3. **Statement of regret** (e.g., "I'm sorry." "I feel terrible..."),
4. **Wish** (e.g., "I wish I could help you..."),
5. **Excuse, reason, explanation** (e.g., "My children will be home that night."; "I have a headache..."),
6. **Statement of alternative**
 - 6.a. – **I can do X instead of Y** (e.g., "I'd rather..." ; "I'd prefer ..."),
 - 6.b. – **Why don't you do X instead of Y?** (e.g., "Why don't you ask someone else?"),
7. **Set condition for future or past acceptance** (e.g., "If you had asked me earlier, I would have..."),
8. **Promise of future acceptance** (e.g., "I'll do it next time."; "I promise I'll..." or "Next time I'll..." – using "will" of promise or "promise"),
9. **Statement of principle** (e.g., "I never do business with friends."),
10. **Statement of philosophy** (e.g., "One can't be too careful."),
11. **Attempt to dissuade interlocutor**
 - 11.a. **Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester** (e.g., "I won't be any fun tonight" to refuse an invitation),
 - 11.b. **Guilt trip** (e.g., waitress to customers: "I can't make a living off people who just order coffee."),
 - 11.c. **Criticize the request/requester; insult/attack** (e.g., "Who do you think you are?"; "That's a terrible idea."),
 - 11.d. **Let interlocutor off the hook** (e.g., "Don't worry about it."),
 - 11.e. **Self-defense** (e.g., "I'm trying my best."),
 - 11.f. **Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request,**
 - 11.g. **Question validity of request,**
12. **Acceptance that functions as a refusal**
 - 12.a. **Unspecific or indefinite reply,**
 - 12.b. **Lack of enthusiasm,**
13. **Avoidance,**
 - × **nonverbal**
 - 13.a. **silence,**
 - 13.b. **hesitation,**
 - 13.c. **do nothing,**
 - 13.d. **physical departure,**
 - × **verbal**
 - 13.e. **topic switch,**
 - 13.f. **joke,**
 - 13.g. **repetition of part of request** (e.g., "Monday?"),
 - 13.h. **indefinite postponement** (e.g., "I'll think about it."),
 - 13.i. **hedging** (e.g., "Gee, I don't know."; "I'm not sure."),
 - 13.j. **request information** (e.g., "I'll think about it").

Chen, Ye and Zhang suggest that the multiple-turn ritual refusal be classified among the refusal strategies (Chen, Ye & Zhang, 1995). However, in my opinion, even though this utterance is identical to refusal types in form, it signifies an entirely different intent of the speaker: following a strict form, it delays acceptance.

3.2 Adjuncts to refusals

Adjuncts are associated with the utterances conveying the illocutionary force and they themselves are not suitable for demonstrating the speaker's intent, yet they frequently precede or follow the actual refusal. These elements were classified into the subsequent four groups according to Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz.

- statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement: *That would be fantastic... I'd love to see it..*
- statement of empathy *It must be hard for you now.*
- pause fillers *hmm, aha*
- gratitude/appreciation *I am very grateful to you, but...*

Surveying Hungarian language usage, Katalin Szili constructed the fifth category of **adjunct speech acts**, since during the analysis of the data gathered in writing, she often encountered the speech acts of expressing gratitude, apology and compliments that occurred simultaneously with the element conveying the illocutionary force of the refusal (Szili, 2002).

3.3 Other mitigation devices to soften face threat

The indirectness of refusal strategies and the above-mentioned external modification elements both serve the purpose of alleviating the inconvenience resulting from the refusal and of re-establishing harmony between the partners. In their 1981 study, Juliane House and Gabriele Kasper examined the speech acts of requests and complaints and extensively analyzed the groups of external and internal downgraders and intensifiers (House & Kasper 1981).

4. Speech act sets

In the initial phase of empirical research, data collection based on observation and questionnaires primarily involved recording brief, one or two-sentence response acts (Shigeta, 1974; Ueda, 1974; Smith, 1975; Wootton, 1981; Kinjo, 1987; Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Moriyama, 1990; Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990; Ramos, 1991; Tickle, 1991; García, 1992; Robinson, 1992; Lyuh, 1992; Ikoma & Shimura, 1993; Margalef-Boada, 1993). It was observed that when speakers constructed their refusals, they did not apply only one of the previously investigated strategies. In the following example, the categories of (1) **explanation**, the (2) **negation of the opportunity**, the (3) **attempt to dissuade the partner**, and

the (4) **explanation** need an important addition in the case of (4), since it can only be interpreted as a refusal in the position directly subsequent to the initial step: (1) *We won't be in town*, (2) *so I can't go*, (3) *but I wouldn't be good company anyway*, (4) *because for sure I'd fall asleep during the movie*. The explanation of the fourth clause – strictly deriving from its position – is not an explanation given for the refusal of the invitation any more, but the complementary element of strategy (3), expounding and enhancing it in more detail. The function of the various elements, therefore, is also influenced by their position within the turn.

In assessing the results of research to date we can state that it is a frequent phenomenon for a speaker to apply more than one speech act in order to achieve his intention. Murphy and Neu coined the phrase *speech act set* for the chain including several independent speech acts, accomplishing the speaker's intention collectively (Murphy & Neu, 1996). Correspondingly, Szili uses the name *collective strategies* (2002, pp. 208, 209).

Ohlstain and Cohen also stated when analyzing apologies that this speech act may be carried out as a sequence of several speech acts: *I'm sorry* (1) – an apology, *it's my fault* (2) – an acknowledgement of responsibility, *I'll replace it* (3) – a promise of forbearance, *it will never happen again* (4) – a promise, or *it was an accident* (5) – an explanation (Ohlstai & Cohen, 1983).

Susan M. Gass and Noël Houck were among the first ones to implement this approach in a practical way when they conducted an empirical study on the refusals Japanese students of English produced. In their data analysis they took into account not only the individual refusal strategies, but also explored the characteristics of the so-called refusal sequences (Gass & Houck, 1999).

Similarly to Murphy and Neu's argumentation, the authors emphasize that it is not only the individual elements but the whole sequence that can demonstrate the speaker's intention in conversation.

5. Refusals as multiple-turn responsive acts

The ever-widening spectrum of speech act research methods has redefined the boundaries of the individual speech acts as well. While the discovery of speech act sets did not question the independence of utterance-level speech acts (that is to say, empirical studies did not spread the view stating that a speech act set conveys a unanimous expression of the speaker's intent), researchers employing sound- and video-recording technologies consider a given utterance – carrying the illocutionary force – as part of a speech act expressed in context.

This approach has been known from communication research, since Labov and Fanshel already went beyond the framework of isolated utterances, claiming that a conversation is not a chain of utterances, rather a matrix of utterances and actions connected to a web of interpretations and reactions (Labov & Fanshel, 1977).

Levinson interprets certain activity types as so-called social episodes (Levinson, 1993), along with van Dijk, whose semantic macrostructure draws attention to investigating meaning unfolding in larger units. His episode is well-defined: "coherent sequences of sentences of a discourse, linguistically marked for beginning and/or end, and further defined in terms of some kind of 'thematic

unity'..." (van Dijk, 1983, p. 177). Its characteristics are the following: (1) it can be treated as a unit, (2) in its entirety and in part it contains chains of events and actions, and (3) it is to be treated as a unit and it also has relative independence.

In their analysis, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford named the sequence of turns during which the speech act of suggestion is carried out, episode. (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, p. 481). They concentrated on the speech act immediately preceding the suggestion, as well as on the response act, but they also examined the connected turns. Although the authors collected data using a situation of well-known structure, that is, the academic advising session held at universities at the beginning of a semester, they still considered it necessary to discover the preliminary events rooted in the initial parts of the conversation and to interpret the received data in a wider framework. The episode is built up in several turns through the cooperation of the participants. One episode contains the creation of one discourse function. Since these episodes are organized around a certain speech act, it is difficult to describe them in general. Various speech act episodes demonstrating different speaker's intentions can be described with varied characteristics. Here the name Amy B. M. Tsui needs to be mentioned, since as early as the 90s she devoted a monograph to the topic of discourse acts (Tsui, 1994).

In sum, refusal is a speech act that not only demands cooperation and the construction of long negotiation sequences, but also multiple-step "face-saving maneuvers to accommodate the noncompliant nature of the act" (Gass & Houck, 1999, p. 2). Gass and Houck regard the refusal response given to a request, invitation, offer or suggestion in the first turn of an interaction simply as the beginning of a negotiation process: "The model that we are proposing goes into considerable detail, viewing the rejection of a Nonaccept to an Initiating Act such as a request, invitation, offer, or suggestion as setting up the possibility of negotiation. This negotiation may consist of a long chain of recyclings of the Initiating Act but may also involve more complex interaction" (Gass & Houck, 1999, p. 7).

Therefore, we need to distinguish utterance-level and discourse-level refusals depending on whether we examine the individual response steps or the interaction as a whole.

6. Analysis of Data Gathered According to Natural Methods

Which of the strategies listed above are used by Hungarians? Do Hungarians tell someone immediately and bluntly that they do not want to do something? How many attempts are made to evade the issue? How long does the process of refusal take?

Initial research pointed to the need to locate a method for collecting verbal data that would allow me to analyze refusal in a natural (or as close to natural as possible) setting. The ability to record these verbal conversations was another important factor. Similarly, a situation needed to be found in which refusal would be common. These requirements led me to the world of telemarketing, the advantages of which are:

- I am able to collect a great number of refusals
- conversations are recorded

- participants are aware that their conversations are recorded; however, because of the everyday situation they do not feel self-conscious, which means I am able to collect data not in an “almost natural” setting, but in a truly natural setting

The fundamental question of the study was whether the data collection method alters the picture that has been painted concerning Hungarian refusal production. According to my hypothesis, the refusals produced in longer dialogues and recorded on a data storage device will present systematic characteristics that have not yet been explored in previous research.

A total of 91 conversations were studied in which clients were offered – via telephone – a contract for a credit card. In 68 instances the offer of additional credit was immediately rejected. In 23 cases the offer was rejected in a much lengthier format, sometimes involving 23-30 turns. In the case of these 23 conversations, there were instances of a client refusing the offer eleven times before his or her partner abandoned the attempt. Some turns displayed a total of six strategies at once. In this case not only did the client employ four different reasons for refusing, possible acceptance was also hesitantly mentioned, in a way rather removed from the topic itself: *“Well, to tell the truth I could accept it, but I’ll never use it. I have a bank card to my bank account that I can use anywhere, even abroad, so I could accept it, but I don’t see the point.”*

7. Modification of refusal methods based on corpus analysis results

Following a thorough analysis of the results garnered by the experiment described above, modification of the list of strategies possessing illocutionary force was clearly necessary. In the system developed by Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz, **statements of regret** occupy the semantic category of those statements enacting refusal (Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990); experience, however, reveals that adjunct speech acts such as expressions of apology or sympathy can also be realized in this particular form. In this instance, when refusing a partner’s kind offer, we can assure him of our continued sympathy if the reason for our refusal is due to external reasons beyond our control and our response therefore contains the phrase *I’m sorry*. Due to the fact that the corpus under investigation only contained the phrases *forgive me*, *pardon me*, or *forgive me for saying this*, my study can only examine speech acts expressed through this type of statement of regret. If, however, a **statement of regret** is incapable of independently bringing about refusal, then it cannot be considered a form of refusal strategy. I therefore suggest that it be considered an accessory element (adjunct speech act) that is closely related to refusal and serves the purpose of lessening threat to face, yet is not a strategy for effectuating refusal.

Following the reclassification of statements of regret as adjunct speech acts, the study’s focus shifted toward the clarification of other types of speech acts also found in the corpus. These speech acts included compliments, agreement, disagreement, leave-taking and expressions of thanks. Expressions of agreement or

compliments appeared in conversations held by the TL group, in speech turns primarily used to delay answering or to clarify the issue (agreement: 11/19. *That is good!* 11/13. *That's true.*; compliment: 11/21. *But it's kind of you to tell me about this.*). In a few cases speech acts indicating disagreement, agreement, leave-taking of the expression of thanks were unequivocally intended to express refusal. The partial repetition of the caller's statements – displayed in one conversation conducted by the TL group – was done for a similar reason. It was far more common for adjunct speech acts to be blended into systems related to intensifying or mitigating.

8. Reconsidering speech units displaying illocutionary force

In addition to clarifying the role of adjunct speech acts, other analytical aspects were also brought into consideration in the course of this study. In their interpretation, the researchers Labov and Fanshel placed the performance of certain speech acts within a network of interpretations and reactions connected to a matrix of utterances and actions (Labov & Fanshel, 1977). Prompted by the realization that verbalizing suggestion entails multiple speech turns occurring within interaction between partners, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford analyzed statements of suggestion within episodes, i.e., series of speech turns, in their later, empirical studies (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990).

It is also possible to refuse an offer "in stages." If, for example, our partner does not react in an immediate and definite manner (due to deliberate or non-deliberate incomprehension), multiple steps will be required since the expected, answering reaction was not received: the acceptance of refusal. In the first instance, we repeat our request in order to clarify our speech intent. In the second case, repetition is a means of "sticking to our guns," i.e., launching new offences in the interest of attaining our goal. A repetition of requests and offers is common in both cases, thereby resulting in a repetition of refusal, even if the speech partners view this conversation as one, complete speech act: I asked him for something and he refused and/or agreed.

9. Research Findings in a Nutshell

In most cases, data providers used the indirect technique of simply explaining the reason for their refusal. Rather interestingly, conversations involving more turns (TL group) generally contained a higher number of direct refusals – these speakers obviously had to make their intent more explicit in order to end the conversation. The second most common approach to single-turn refusals (EL group) was the attempt to dissuade the partner. Both groups used evasion tactics to almost the same extent, while statement of reason also played a significant role.

First of all, I examined the occurrence of impolite – defined according to P1 – refusals made by speakers in either group who rejected the caller's offer without making any attempt to lessen the blow (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Following this, I analyzed whether or not there was a difference in strategy combinations utilized by

the EL or TL group. What was characteristic of both groups from the point of view of utilizing delay tactics? Did the strategies employed by both groups differ according to their degree of directness?

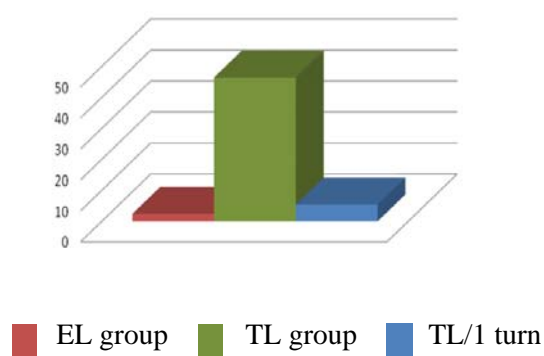
Instances of behavior defined as impolite according to P1 did occur in the first group of those declining the offer being made (EL). To use a kind of metaphor for this phenomenon, those customers who had made no attempt to “package” their refusal in some sort of verbal “wrappings” were described in interviews made with telemarketing assistants as being rude “louts” who simply hung up on them.

9.1 The Role of Delay in the Corpus

When analyzing the telemarketing phone conversations gathered for this study, the most striking difference was in refusals made with single-turn (EL), as opposed to multiple-turn (TL) techniques. In the world of commercial offers, the study’s results – supported by personal experience as well – verified that refusal made with one, short, effective turn (EL) was more common (in fact, with a figure of 68 almost three times more common) than the lengthier phone conversations displaying TL (23). It must, however, be emphasized that this conclusion can only be drawn in reference to commercial offers; it is quite plausible to assume that speakers invest far more time and energy into rejecting offers related to a different type of speech act, such as an invitation, etc.

The fact that refusals made in multiple turns generally took far longer comes as no surprise: this was the main difference between utterances made by the EL or TL groups. At the same time, it is important to point out that this difference was already apparent in the very first speech turn made (TL/1).

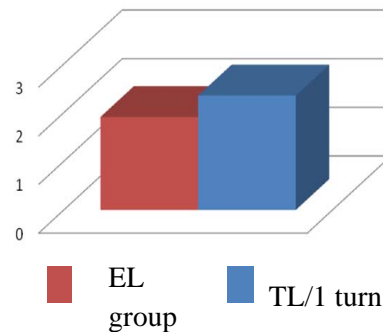
Length of Refusals in EL and TL group



The two groups displayed different behavior not only in the length of their utterances, but also in the complexity of answers and number of strategies employed. Members of the TL group created their lengthier reply by stringing together a variety of strategies, a practice already evident in the very first speech turn (EL 1,91; TL/1 2,35). According to the results, combining more than two strategies at once increased chances that the conversation would continue, as opposed to what happened when a shorter combination of strategies was brought

into play (Group EL: utilized 1+2 strategies: 80%; Group TL: utilized 1+2 strategies: 61%).

EL and TL/1: Average for Combined Strategies



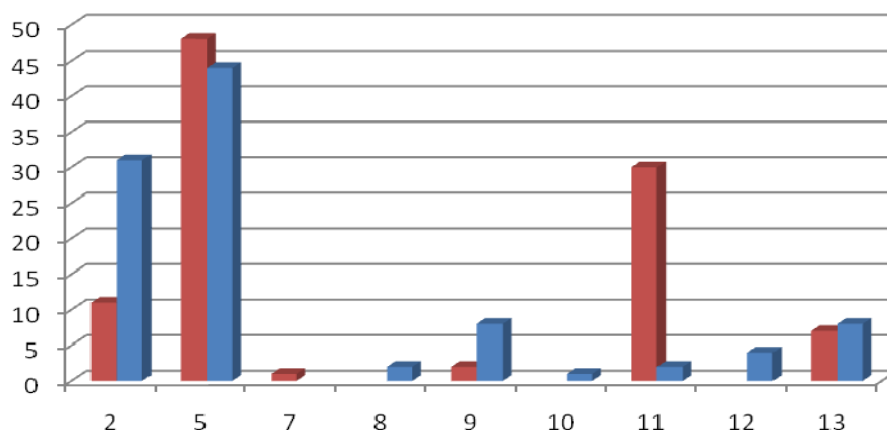
As a result of the selection process they undergo and the training they receive, the communicational behavior displayed by those working for telemarketing companies does not allow much room for individual divergence; it can therefore be stated that those members of the TL group (65%) who combined two strategies at once – a less common method – wanted to delay committing an act that would lead to a threat of face. In other words, they were attempting to provide themselves and their partner with the opportunity to understand their response's implied meaning and step away from the offer, rather than wait for refusal to be made. Results verified that members belonging to group TL not only delayed revealing their intent far longer than those in the EL group, they also followed a completely different communication model while doing so.

As a technique, delay can – in many instances – be almost as effective as those strategies related to indirect refusal. Utterances mainly serve the purpose of preserving a speech partner's face, thereby lessening the negative impact a face-threatening speech act may have, while simultaneously protecting the positive image of both speaker and listener. In lengthier units or dialogues, however, delay can also contain a hidden message used to influence the speaker, thereby leading to the accomplishment of the strategic goal, i.e., the successful refusal of an offer.

9.2 The Extent of Indirectness Based on Frequency of Strategy Types

For the most part, participants from both groups tended to employ the indirect method of by simply explaining the reason for their refusal. Interestingly enough, direct refusal was used most frequently by those who employed multiple turns – it is possible they needed to make their intent extremely explicit in order to draw the conversation to a close. The second most frequent strategy utilized by single-turn speakers was the attempt to dissuade their partner. Evasion strategies were used to almost exactly the same extent by both groups while statement of principles also played a significant role.

Strategies Used by Groups EL and TL, According to Percent



On the basis of the study's results, (see also Szili, 2002, pp. 208, 209) Hungarians typically use the one, indirect strategy of **explanation**, the effectiveness of which is increased by repetition. When explaining something repeatedly, the reasons behind our explanation must not only support one another, they also need to point in one direction. An example of this can be found in the following example: 6/2. *Look, we've never had a credit card, so we don't need one now, either. This at least is what I think.*; 4/3. *I know, I know it's like having an emergency fund. Of course I understand. I'm just saying that I don't think I'd ever use it, so I'd probably just return it in a year or so because I don't need it. I'm sure I'd never use it. In fact, I'm positive I wouldn't.*; 22. *But you are bothering me. I'm trying to work. I don't care. Good bye.*; 17. *No, now is not a good time and there won't ever be a good time. Good bye.*

9.3 Macrostrategies? Tactics?

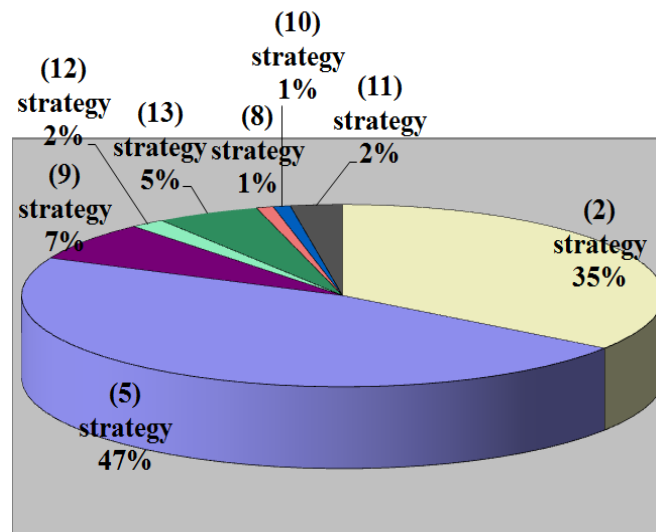
According to my observations, certain deviations in how conversations were conducted were also evident in the lengthier conversations held by Group TL. The most obvious difference – one which also presents further questions – between the two groups was the following: while certain customers actively participated in the conversation (TLA = the group displaying active participation, expression of personal opinion and/or negative opinion), others allowed the telemarketing assistant to direct the conversation. These customers passively listened to the conversation, rarely offered an opinion or – in many cases – feigned interest before finally refusing the offer. (Group TLP = passive speech partners.) The figures found in the table below are an attempt to describe this particular phenomenon in the hope that the questions leading to further research will therefore be raised.

	TLA	TLP
n=	15	8
average number of turns	12	19
average length (number of words)	218	361
turns with refusal/the whole dialogue	23%	12%
utterances without refusal/the client's all utterances (number of words)	16%	40%
utterances without refusal/the client's all utterances (turns)	12%	28%
proportion of the utterances (telemarketing agent/client)	64%/36%	80%/20%
the last refusal of the dialogue	5.	3.
number of strategies used	115 (7,66 average)	52 (6,5 average)
most common strategies used for the last refusal	excuse (47%) non performative statement (35%)	excuse (41%) non performative statement (23%)

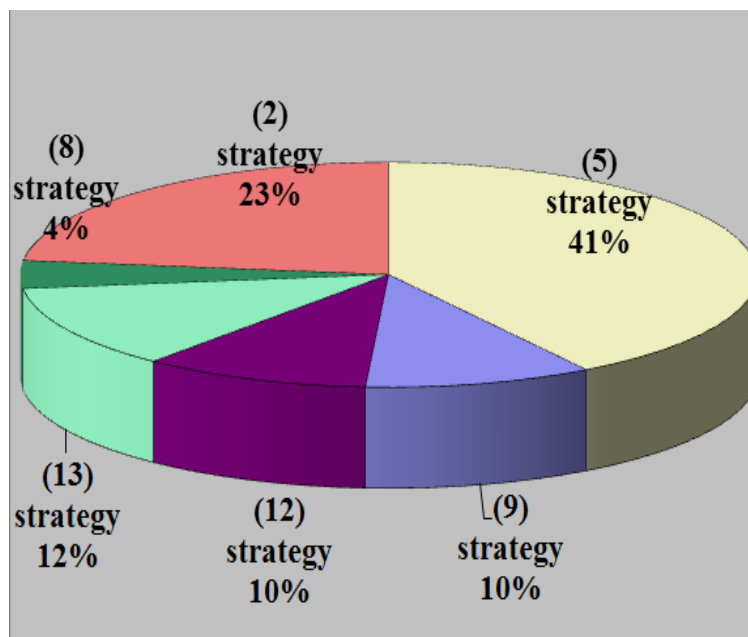
From the point of view of strategy usage, it can be stated that – in comparison to the passive group – those belonging to the active group not only made many attempts to clarify their intent through a variety of methods, they were also more inclined to use direct strategies (non-performative rejection). This supports their placement in a separate category, for they were far more capable of expressing their intent than those data participants who employed different tactics.

While the significant role played by explanation has already been discussed, it must also be mentioned that – other than the two most often applied strategies – members of the TLA group attempted to use an additional six strategies. Group TLP, on the other hand, only tried four different ways to free themselves from the unwanted conversation, other than also using the aforementioned, two most TLA group; if placed according to a scale of directness, their chosen types of strategy were far lower common tactics. Over all, their conversations were far more indirect than those held by speakers in the down (36%) in comparison to those used by speakers in the TLA group (18%).

Types of Strategies Used by Group TLA



Types of Strategies Used by Group TLP



In the course of my study of refusal, a face-threatening speech act, I introduced a method for the gathering of natural data that offers quite a few solutions to those methodological doubts that hindered previous experiments. Through my method, a large amount of data – available in high-quality recordings created in ethical circumstances – can be accessed for the purpose of analyzing natural speech situations displaying a high occurrence of refusal speech acts. This therefore means that the way in which offers are refused can be surveyed within the relative safety and parameters demanded by quantitative analysis. After conducting a

close analysis of these conversations, I was able to draw attention to new dimensions, thereby modifying previous interpretations of speech usage that were generally based on data gathered on the level of statements, as opposed to complete conversations.

The next question deserving the focus of further research surrounds the collection and categorization of macrostrategies (or tactics) found in dialogues concerning refusal. This particular level of strategical politeness – the effective manifestation of personal intent – not only contains a number of interesting discoveries in the field of speech act research, it also provides new contributions to our definitions of what polite behavior entails. Last but not least, the research results gained through this study emphasize the importance of expanding the refusal strategies (explanation, repeated explanation or non-performative rejection) typically featured in textbooks in order to provide language with those macrostrategies (tactics) related to refusal occurring in lengthier, multiple-turn conversations. This practical application of empirical research not only leads to a deeper understanding of our native language, it also enables non-native speakers to communicate in Hungarian with far greater ease.

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5. Disagreement in Hungarian

Judit Bándli

1. The concept of disagreement

Studies concerning the kind of speech used to express contradiction generally analyze certain, closely-related concepts that are similar in meaning, yet still refer to dissimilar situations. Several terms can be found in the technical literature concerned with this subject, such as *disagreement*, *dispute*, *oppositional talk*, *conflict talk*, *argument* and *oppositional argument*.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the nature of disagreement, a concept that must first be defined in relation to the other terms mentioned above. According to Sacks (1973), the desire to establish agreement forms the basis of conversation; disagreement inherently opposes this basic goal. Pomerantz (1984) later utilizes the techniques of conversation analysis in order to describe the standard formulas surrounding the implementation of disagreement in cooperative conversations. In Kothoff (1993), the term *dispute* refers to a context disparate from the kind of situations examined by Pomerantz. Kothoff's context then provides an examination of the verbal characteristics surrounding disagreement. Salsbury and Bardovi-Harlig (2000) define *oppositional argument* as a comprehensive concept fundamentally characterized by the expression of an opposite opinion. They list *disagreement*, *verbal challenge*, *denial*, *accusation*, *intimidation* and *insult* as illocutionary acts belonging in this category. (p. 58)

The concept of *argument* or *argumentation* can be approached from several points of view. Its meaning can be essentially defined as "the type of justification directed toward changing a thought or action while serving the purpose of confirming a viewpoint." An argument's wording therefore formulates some kind of viewpoint that it simultaneously attempts to prove. Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984), however, broadened the traditional perception of speech acts. According to their interpretation, argument is a complex illocutionary act resulting from different kinds of illocutionary content and combinations of interconnecting sentences. Jackson and Jacobs (1981) place conversational argument into two, separate categories. In their opinion, conversational argument is structurally an extension of the the speech act of disagreement, while functionally it represents the "management" of disagreement. The approaches mentioned above indicate that argument occurs on a far more complicated level, despite the fact that argument originates in disagreement and essentially contains acts of disagreement.

This study chooses to examine a more restricted definition of disagreement that interprets acts of disagreement as a phenomenon of oppositional talk. Furthermore, disagreement will be discussed as a kind of phenomenon closely linked to argument, yet still incapable of fulfilling all of argument's criteria. In addition,

disagreement will also be examined within the context of speech acts, the actualization of which are closely associated to certain tenets of politeness.

Studies related to the subject of disagreement debate their subject according to various theories. Sornig (1977) bases his characterization of disagreement on the theory of speech acts, while Sacks (1973), Pomerantz (1984) and Kothoff (1993) use methods of conversation analysis in order to define the influence of preference relations on the actualization of disagreement. Holtgraves (1997) and Rees-Miller (2000), on the other hand, chose Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (1978, 1987) as the initial starting point for their studies.

2. Disagreement as a speech act

Many researchers have classified speech acts according to many kinds of categories. Szili (2004), for example, mentions two basic classifying systems of categories based on the principles of semantics and illocutionary force. The classifying system established by Austin (1962) and Wierzbicka belongs to the former school of classification. The fact that the verbs *agree* and *disagree* – labeled accordingly as commissives and expositives – are placed in separate categories attests to the plasticity of Austin's system. As the name suggests, when using a commissive the speaker expresses a commitment toward either an action's completion, or to his intent or opinion. It is through the use of expositives that we express our viewpoint, debate or explain certain matters.

Wierzbicka (1987) views reaction and difference of opinion to be the two, main criteria for disagreement. The individual expressing disagreement reacts to another individual's opinion. The partner's previously expressed opinion can be interpreted as an implicit invitation for the other person to say that he, too, agrees with his partner's opinion. However, the individual who *disagrees* rejects this implicit invitation, then goes on to state that he does not see things the same way. Similarly, this process implies that the speaker thinks his conversation partner is either wrong, or misguided. (p. 128) The purpose of disagreement is therefore twofold: the expression of the individual's thoughts and the declaration that the individual does not agree with his conversation partner.

Searle (1975), on the other hand, groups speech acts according to illocutionary force. In this system, disagreement has been placed within the category of assertives. When using assertives, the speaker commits himself to the propositional content of his statement. In the case of disagreement, the speaker's commitment differs from the propositional content of his conversation partner's previously made statement. To illustrate this concept using Rees-Miller's (2000) definition, the speaker does not consider his conversation partner's stated or implied proposition (p) to be true. As a result, the speaker's answer has a propositional content or implication that becomes *not p*. (p. 1088) Rees-Miller then expands this to include the idea that disagreement can still be realized even if the speaker only *thinks* his listener has said or supported proposition p , even if in reality the listener never said or thought such a thing.

3. Pragmatic politeness and disagreement

For the most part, analyses examining the relationship between disagreement and pragmatic politeness base their research on Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) theory of politeness. At the same time, it is important to mention Leech's (1983) fundamental principle of politeness, in which the maxim of agreement is characterized in the following manner:

- Minimize the expression of disagreement between self and other.
- Maximize the expression of agreement between self and other. (p. 132.)

When acts of disagreement – in which an opposing opinion is being expressed – occur, the speaker finds himself in the tense position of having to contradict this maxim.

Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) concept of face addresses not only the speaker's desire to interact socially, but also his need for independence. The speaker is capable of achieving positive politeness when using the tools at his disposal to express or emphasize his sense of connection with the conversation partner. In contrast, instances of negative politeness are conducted in ways that will offend the conversation partner's sense of freedom as little as possible. In this interpretation, politeness is achieved when the speaker has taken the listener's positive face wants into account. Disagreement possesses a high probability of producing a face-threatening act in relation to the listener's positive face wants. This is due to the fact that the speaker has effectively questioned his conversation partner's competence or credibility, resulting in a threat against the conversation partner's self-image.

Brown and Levinson (1987) outline three main types of politeness strategies: 1. claiming common ground, 2. conveying that speaker and hearer are cooperators, 3. fulfillment of hearer's want. In conversation, cooperation is expressed through promises, offers, or utterances of reciprocity made toward the conversation partner. The listener's face requirements can be satisfied through verbal endowment, for example. A common basis of understanding can be reached by utilizing marks of group identity, confirmation of interest, or through emphasizing a shared point of view, attitude or opinion. The following instructions summarize this latter approach:

- Seek agreement.
- Avoid disagreement.
- Presuppose common ground.
- Joke.

Two of the politeness strategies listed above expressly deal with the issue of agreement versus disagreement, while obviously preferring agreement over disagreement. The same conclusion can therefore be reached as was seen in the case of Leech's maxim of agreement: the speech act of disagreement fundamentally contradicts Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness.

The attempt to establish agreement forms one of the most essential provisions for politeness approaches. Actualizing this condition initially appears problematic from the point of view of disagreement speech acts, nevertheless disagreement studies provide a wide range of examples concerning the interrelation between agreement and disagreement (Sacks, 1973; Pomerantz, 1984; Pearson, 1986; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Kothoff, 1993; Holtgraves, 1997; Bardovi-Harlig & Salsbury, 2004).

4. The characteristics of disagreement

According to Goffman's analysis (1967), adult interaction is commonly characterized by attempts of conversation partners to show sufficient respect toward one another. This means that avoidance of potential dissonance is far more important than direct expression. Kothoff's findings (1993) support this conclusion by showing that in cases of controversial situations arising in friendly discussions, the attempt to reach consensus quickly becomes the main organizing force.

Conversation analysis of adjacency pairs mentions preferred and dispreferred answer sequences (Schegloff, et al., 1977). In reference to the kinds of answers given to the question, Sacks (1973) speaks of "preferences for agreement." At the same time, disagreement is usually placed amongst dispreferred speech acts. Sacks then states – in accordance to the Rule of Contiguity – that the answer must directly follow the question. Since answers expressing agreement are the preferred action (i.e., the Rule of Agreement), disagreeing responses often arrive later and are found either in the inner answer sequence, or at the end. In comparison, the expected, agreeing response arrives at once and within the given answer sequence.

Pomerantz (1984) applies the tools of conversation analysis in a way that garners different conclusions. In fact, her study shows that if the speaker's assessment is followed by another, agreement is the expected response in most situations. Preferred acts are structurally simple, while dispreferred acts are marked by structural complexity. Tactics such as a longer pause, a hesitant lead-in, repetition of questions and attempts at elucidation typify a dispreferred act's structural complexity. This naturally leads to an increase in volume, especially in comparison to preferred acts. The reason behind this more complicated structure lies in the fact that dispreferred responses endanger the conversation partner's goal of attaining interpersonal consensus, therefore the speaker generally attempts to delay making a dispreferred response.

Levinson (1983) draws attention to the phenomenon that everyday speech also contains preferred and dispreferred speech acts. For example, conversants relate to acceptance far more positively than they do to rejection. At the same time, utterance of an apology is noticed before neglecting to apologize is. According to Wierzbicka (1987), uttering an opinion can be viewed as an implicit invitation to agree; this invitation is ignored in cases of disagreement. (p. 128)

Disagreement is not always a dispreferred act in every situation. In certain contexts disagreement can be taken as a preferred expression, such as when a conversation partner makes a negative comment about himself or herself. As Pomerantz (1984) describes it, "If criticizing a conversation partner is viewed as impolite, hurtful, or wrong (as a dispreferred action), a conversant may hesitate, hedge, or even minimally disagree rather than agree with the criticism." (p. 81) Kothoff (1993) proved that – when removed from the context of everyday, friendly discussion – preference relations change in actual cases of controversial situations, resulting in disagreement as the expected answer sequence. In such instances the context will shape preference structure (p. 205).

While the phenomenon of a preferred answer sequence is universal, its actualization is culture specific, meaning that each culture decides what consists of a preferred or dispreferred action in any given situation (Mey, 2001, pp. 166–167). In one study Schiffrin (1984) discusses how verbal confrontation can be an expected

and socially acceptable lingual mannerism in certain cultures. In the course of her analysis, Schiffrin examined Jewish-American subjects from the lower-middle class. Experience showed that statements made by participants contained a strikingly high occurrence of rejection, negative evaluation and contradiction. An increase in loudness, fast speaking speed and exaggerated intonation also characterized their manner of speech. Yet this emphatically confrontational style was usually not backed by reasons serious enough to threaten the conversants' interpersonal relationship. Indeed, this ritual kind of debate was no more than a "routine" part of behavior found in this community, and was judged positively by study participants. Schiffrin interpreted this behavior as a sign of informal relationship.

In a study conducted under similar circumstances among Greeks, Kakava (2002) reached the conclusion that contradiction is an expected and permissible (i.e., preferred) social practice in conversations taking place between intimates. While Georgakopolou (2001) does argue that this conclusion cannot be generally applied to Greek culture as a whole, she also agrees that "ritualized or sociable acts of conflict" are characteristic of close relationships and interaction between conversants of equal standing, such as groups of teenage friends. (p. 1882) These results obviously mean the level of intimacy significantly affects how contradiction is viewed, just as a high level of intimacy can turn disagreement from a dispreferred action, into a dispreferred one.

5. Research design

In summary, a wide variety of factors determine how disagreement is actualized. This study will examine the following factors in greater detail: distance between conversants caused by social differences and the severity of disagreement.

In light of the influences mentioned above, my empirical research intends to answer these questions:

- What kinds of strategies do participants use in order to employ face-threatening acts of disagreement?
- How do participants mitigate their contradictory statements, especially as concerns delay tactics used in face-threatening cases?
- When and how do conversants enhance their disagreement during friendly, supportive conversations?
- What influence does the degree of disagreement have on actualization of disagreeing speech acts?
- What role does social distance between conversants play in realizing disagreeing speech acts?

The discussions examined in this study occurred spontaneously, in natural surroundings and as normal speech. Every discussion was friendly and supportive (Pomerantz, 1984; Kothoff, 1993). To a certain extent, I also manipulated these conversations, for each discussion was started with a precisely defined statement that I – as well as the colleagues helping me – chose beforehand. This was done in order to catalyze a disagreeing reaction from the conversation partner. The participants' reactions were noted and added to the examination's data collection.

In my analysis three different situations were isolated for the purpose of determining disagreement severity:

Situation 1

The speaker expresses disagreement concerning the conversation partner's opinion about himself or herself. For instance, the conversation partner states that he has just purchased an obviously poor-quality and ineffective medicinal aid or product (such as a non-prescription pair of reading glasses or a new diet pill) and expresses his satisfaction over its wonderful quality and effectiveness.

Situation 2a

The speaker expresses his disagreement over the fact that the conversation partner has not appreciated the full worth of an object the speaker finds valuable.

Situation 2b

The speaker disagrees that the conversation partner has fulfilled some obligation that should have already been done and (in actuality) has already been accomplished by the conversation partner.

In Situation 1, the conversation partner makes a statement that did not affect the speaker directly. As a result, the speaker's expression of disagreement can be interpreted as an attack on the conversation partner, for the speaker's comment threatens the conversation partner by expressing doubts concerning his opinion and competence.

In Situations 2a and 2b the conversation partner launches an "attack" on the speaker, thereby forcing the speaker to defend himself through disagreement. The main difference between Situation 2a and 2b is that the first situation is an attack against something belonging to the speaker – forming an indirect comment on the speaker's taste or selection – while the second situation criticizes the conversation partner's performance. Analyses of the Hungarian language justify the need to establish this kind of a difference (Szili, 2004).

In order to study the effect of social distance, I separated participants into two groups classified as either close friends or distant acquaintances. *Close friends* (heretofore *friends*) referred to participants who meet regularly and frequently discussed personal or confidential matters amongst one another. *Distant acquaintances* (i.e., *acquaintances*) were participants who do not plan free-time programs together, yet still meet once in a while and discuss everyday subjects that are never personal in nature. All data collectors and participants were young adults possessing upper-level educations and ranging from 20 to 40 in age.

A total of 120 conversations were recorded during the course of the data collection. Situation 1 and 2 led to 30 conversations between *friends* and 30 conversations between *acquaintances*. Out of these, disagreement was accomplished in 101 cases.

5.1 Strategies accomplishing disagreement

In the following section I analyze those strategies in the corpus that carry out disagreement in themselves. Participants employed the following conversational strategies in these three situations.

Strategies	Examples
1. judgement/labeling	<i>That's not a good idea. What a lot of nonsense. Are you nuts?</i>
2. explanations/enlisting reasons	<i>Those'll ruin your eyes. But it hasn't got one of those thingamajigs.</i>
3. alternative suggestions	<i>Myself, I went and got a prescription. You should have gone to the doctor. Why don't you rest your eyes more often?</i>
4. expressing doubt/making partner uncertain	<i>I wouldn't take something like that. And you actually believe that? Are you sure it's all right?</i>
5. partial acceptance	<i>So long as it's just for now. Well, just don't croak on me so I can see how it turns out!</i>

Table 1.
Disagreement Strategies Applied in Situation 1.

The definition and classification of some categories require a more detailed explanation. When applying the strategy judgement/labeling, the speaker makes an explicit qualifying comment about the following:

- a. the propositional content of the partner's opinion (*These are not good glasses*);
- b. the opinion of the partner (*What a lot of nonsense*);
- c. the partner himself (*Are you nuts?*)

In the case of the strategy expressing doubt/making the partner uncertain, the critique pertains to the credibility and validity of the partner's point of view, which may connect the given utterance to the strategy of judgement/labeling. I consider the separation of the two strategies important because the former one uses qualifiers in a much more direct way, while the essence of the strategy expressing doubt/making the partner uncertain is seen in questioning the seriousness of the opposing argument (*Are you serious about that?*)

I also classify the statements into this category where the speaker's utterance does not directly pertain to the partner's opinion, instead, the interlocutors mention the lack of their own willingness (*I wouldn't buy something like that*).

Partial acceptance is the least direct strategy. When applying it, the speaker practically does not disagree; by emphasizing the partiality and temporality of their agreement, they are merely hinting that their opinion is different from the speech partner's.

Strategies	Examples
1. judgement/labeling	<i>I think it's good.</i>
2. explanation/enlisting reasons	<i>I bought it at a reliable place.</i>
3. expressing doubt/making partner uncertain	<i>You're just saying that.</i>
4. partial acceptance	<i>It's too late now, I've bought it and that's that.</i>

Table 2.
Disagreement Strategies Applied in Situation 2a

Strategies	Examples
1. statement of completed action	<i>I wrote it all down and handed it in. But I'm positive I handed it in. I put it right there!</i>
2. judgement/labeling	<i>Oh, stop thinking you're so smart!</i>
3. explanation/enlisting reasons	<i>Could it have been mislaid?</i>

Table 3.
Disagreement Strategies Applied in Situation 2b

First and foremost, my examination revealed that the strategies serving to actualize disagreement are almost always dependent on the type of situation taking place. Similarly, the kind of language used to make disagreeing statements plays a very definite role in defining what kind of disagreement strategies will be used. In each situation, the speakers employed a specifically individual set of strategies, many of which reappeared in different situations. A few, however, were used in close connection to the given situation; examples of this were seen when offering alternative suggestions.

5.2 Accomplishing disagreement in light of social distance

I analyzed the relationship between utilization of disagreement strategies and social distance, an issue which appeared in each of the three situations outlined above.

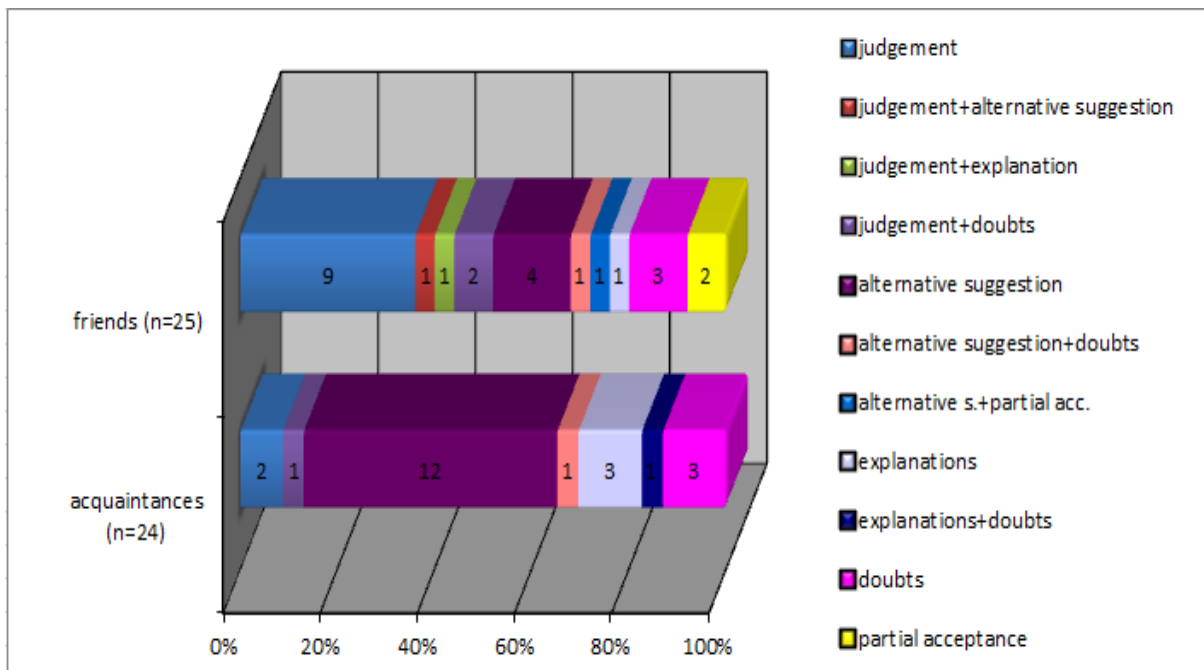


Figure 1.
Situation 1. The occurrence of strategies in light of social distance

In Situation 1 (a confrontation), *friends* predominantly opted for the direct strategy of judgement/labeling. In fact, amongst all the possible strategy combinations common to judgement/labeling, isolated statements were frequently the most preferred mechanism. This means that *friends* rarely felt the need to explain, suggest alternatives or use any other speech mechanisms in order to soften judgement's face-threatening nature. *Acquaintances*, however, overwhelmingly chose to make alternative suggestions in the form of isolated statements not dependent on other strategies. This difference in speech mannerisms shows that an increase in social distance leads to less tolerance toward blunt qualifications; social distance thereby forces conversation partners to apply more indirect ways of formulating disagreement. It is important to emphasize that *acquaintances* usually outlined *alternatives* in order to direct their conversation partners toward a (in their opinion) more appropriate decision. Comparisons of statements made between *friends* and *acquaintances* in the course of group testing verified these results, for the two participant groups showed a significant preference for these two strategies (i.e., either judgement/labeling or alternative suggestions).

The differences between situations demanded that the two defensive situations (2a and 2b) be analyzed from the point of view of strategy selection.

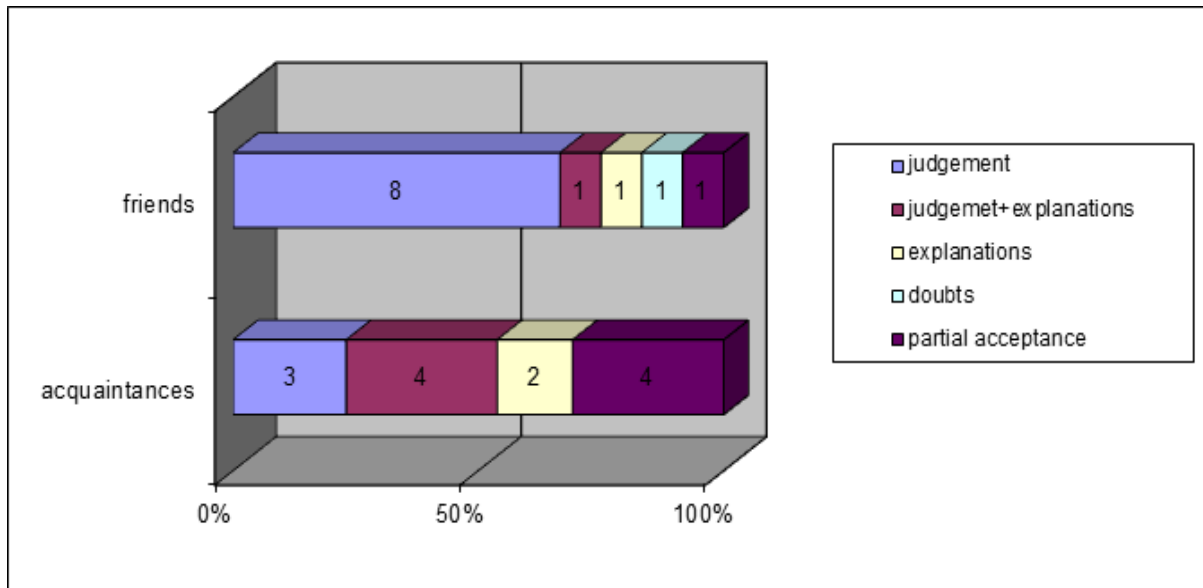


Figure 2.
 Situation 2a. The occurrence of strategies in light of social distance

Similar to Situation 1, Situation 2a also revealed that isolated statements of judgement/labeling were the preferred strategy in cases of closer social standing. This means that *friends* were rather inclined to criticize their conversation partners' opinion concerning their valued objects. Even though acquaintances more often combined judgment/labeling with explanation, we cannot find any meaningful divergence between the strategies used by the two groups.

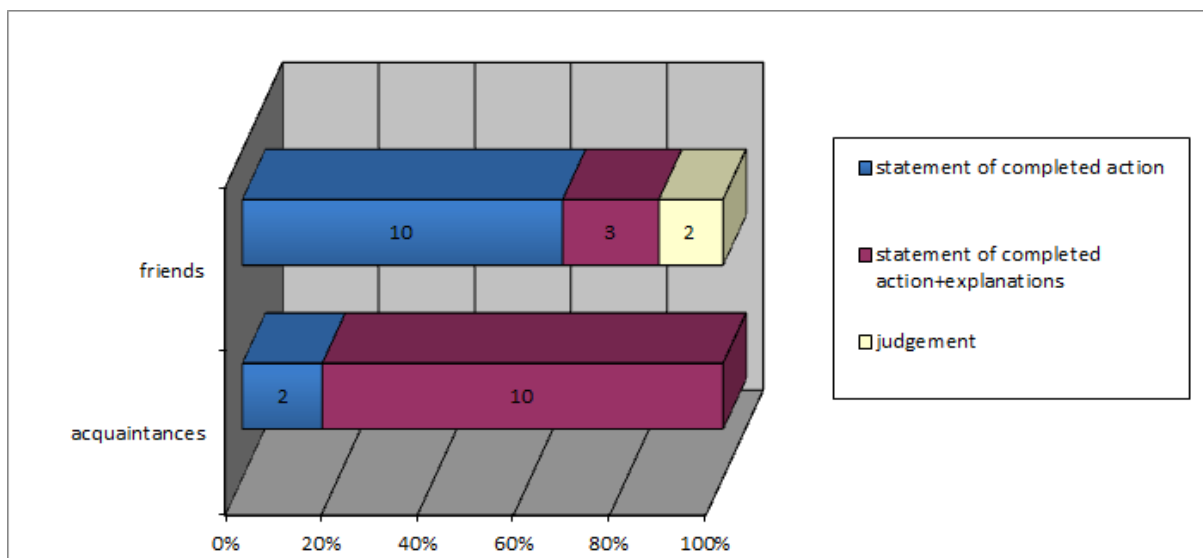


Figure 3.
 Situation 2b. The occurrence of strategies in light of social distance

In Situation 2b assertions of completed action appear as the most direct strategy for expressing disagreement. Naturally, this strategy was the most common amongst *friends*. Given the situation's nature, *acquaintances* also had to make use of this strategy, yet characteristically included statements of explanation or enlisting reasons as well. While *friends* used the most direct strategy mechanism to disagree with their conversation partner's statement, *acquaintances* found this insufficient and utilized explanation in order to support their position.

To summarize the data surrounding strategy selection, this study finds that a close relationship led to tolerance of the most direct, isolated strategy in all three situations. More superficial relationships, however, result in much more indirect strategies (such as was seen in Situation 1) or a combination of direct strategies with indirect ones.

5.3 Delaying disagreement

As was noted earlier, in instances of supportive conversations the phenomenon of delay tactics is closely related to the expression of disagreement. I met with seven separate means of delay in the corpus analyzed. These are all methods and procedures which in and of themselves did not produce disagreement; speakers merely used them to lessen the effect of the disagreement itself:

- a. clarifying question (*What kind of medication is it exactly?*)
- b. delaying question (*What?*)
- c. hesitating preface (*Well...*)
- d. hedge phrase (*I'm not sure, I think...*)
- e. token agreement (*Yes, but...*)
- f. safe subject
- g. story

Using clarifying questions (a.), the speaker asks for new information in order to clarify the situation before forming or maintaining his opinion. One of the important differences between clarifying and delaying questions (b.) is that when formulating a clarifying question the speaker requires the partner's answer, while in the case of delaying questions he does not, as the aim of these questions is only to introduce disagreement.

Hesitating prefaces mentioned under c (Holtgraves, 1997, p. 233) serve the purpose of displacing disagreement within one's turn. Hedge phrases in point d (Brown és Levinson, 1987, p. 116) are softening linguistic elements used to express the speaker's uncertainty and usually appear directly preceding or following the opinion. This way they can have both a softening and a delaying purpose.

Token agreements (e.) need to be distinguished from the strategy of partial acceptance. A token agreement is both a softening and a delaying method, which the speaker can utilize in order to briefly express his apparent agreement before voicing his disagreement: Yes, but it's dangerous. In the instances of partial acceptance, however, we formulate our acceptance and simultaneously express our displeasure, or we express our negative opinion yet embrace some aspect of our partner's point of view: That's only a last resort. An important distinction is that while partial acceptance carries out the act of disagreement, token agreement only delays it.

Safe subjects listed under f (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 112.) enable the partners to reach a real agreement (cf. token agreement), even though they will voice their disagreement shortly. In the next example, a safe subject appears in step 4 (the straining effect reading has on one's eyesight).

1. A: *I bought a pair of glasses at X. I'm just thrilled with them because I really couldn't see too well and they're a great pair of glasses.*

2. B: *What exactly was the problem?*

3. A: *Everything's blurry when I read and I can't make the words out.*

4. B: *But that's only normal when you read a lot. Everybody's eyes hurt when they read too much, mine included. Listen, why don't you just try resting your eyes a bit instead of using those glasses?*

Telling stories (g) in itself can be sufficient to produce disagreement because of the morale they entail. In the data analyzed, however, I only identified stories that do not contain a morale for the given topic and their sole purpose was to introduce, that is, to delay disagreement.

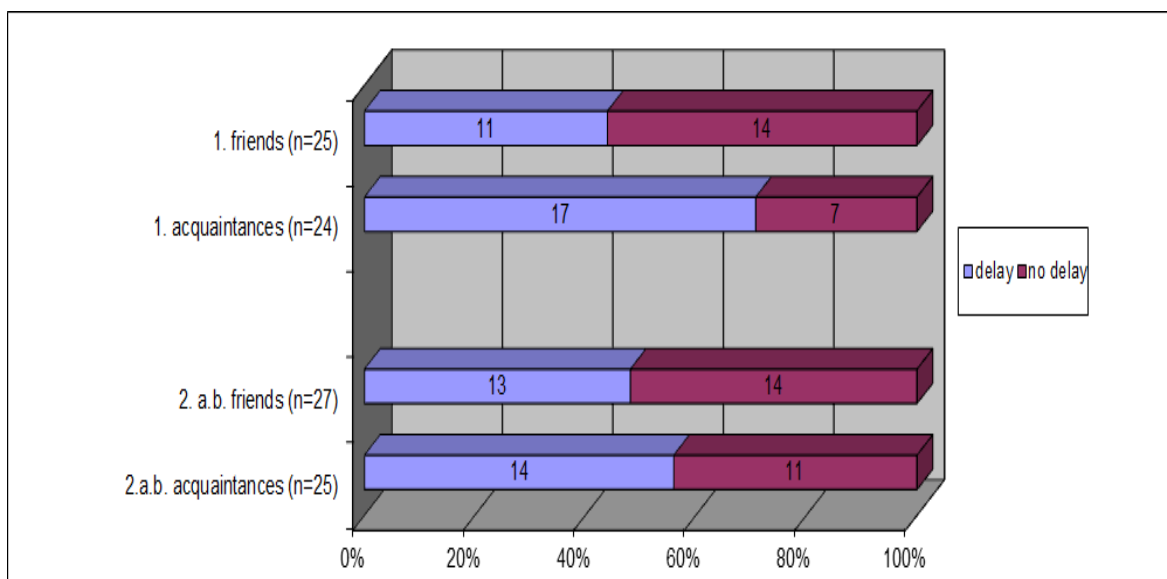


Figure 4.

The ratio of delay in the corpus pertaining to the weight of the disagreement and social distance

According to my original hypothesis, the appearance and application of delay tactics could be influenced by social distance. This hypothesis did not prove to be true: delaying the expression of disagreement turned out to be a universal phenomenon characteristic of both friendly and more distant speech mannerisms.

My examination concerning the severity of disagreement also revealed that increased social distance in confrontational situations does not result in higher instances of delay tactics as compared to the two defensive situations. The only

difference was found when comparing Situation 2a and 2b. While it is true that in these circumstances the *friends'* speech behavior was not very far from the *acquaintances'*, the fact remains that only the *acquaintances'* speech exhibited any significant differences. This, for example, was the only group that unequivocally displayed a distinct need to defend themselves against criticism, even at the cost of their conversation partner's face. As a result, far fewer examples of delay or hesitation took place, especially in comparison to the situation concerning an object of value. If we take into consideration the fact that Situation 2b threatens the speakers' reliability, then it is immediately apparent why *acquaintances'* found it so important to disagree immediately. Their quick expression of disagreement – an underlying declaration of their reliability – can be interpreted as a reinforcement and guarantee of their far more superficial, yet still more flexible relationship as acquaintances (Wolfson, 1990). The fact that *acquaintances'* utilized delay tactics far more often when discussing their conversation partners' property can also reflect this same goal, for the speaker proves his modesty by not rushing to defend his choice of property. In light of these results, my hypothesis that participants would delay more in Situation 2b than in 2a was only partially true in relation to *friends'*, while it proved to be entirely true in the case of *acquaintances'*.

5.4 Intensifying disagreement

The various intensifying tools have an opposite effect than delay. In the corpus examined, I distinguished three main types of intensifiers:

A. critical phrases

- a. critical comments referring to the propositional content of the speech partner's utterance (*These glasses are totally lame.*)
- b. negative labeling of the speech partner's opinion or goal (*Stupid thing.*)
- c. negative labeling of the speech partner (*You're nuts.*)

B. emphasizing phrases (*For sure it's...*)

C. repetition

Critical phrases – as shown by the three sub-categories – obviously belong to the judgement/labeling strategy, which in itself produces disagreement. I categorize under intensifiers the sub-category when the speaker formulates a marked negative judgement about the conversational partner's goal or opinion, or even the speech partner himself. This way the utterance implies disagreement while it also intensifies the face-threatening nature of the speech act. On the contrary, statements belonging to *B* and *C* only possess an intensifying role; they do not accomplish the act of disagreement by themselves.

The category of emphasizing phrases comprises expressions such as *surely, of course, definitely, for sure*, etc. Repetition refers to the instances when the speaker repeats the same statement several times in order to emphasize his intent. In the following conversation excerpt the participant repeats the same sentence three times one after the other with slight modifications:

A: Sorry, but you promised me yesterday to put together the list and bring it.

B: I put it together yesterday. Of course I did. For sure I did it yesterday.

I categorized these intensifiers into two classes, according to whether their appearance was distinct and separate, or moderated by accompanying strategies. The most I could predict beforehand was that examples of aggravated disagreement would be more prevalent in friendly discussions than amongst acquaintances.

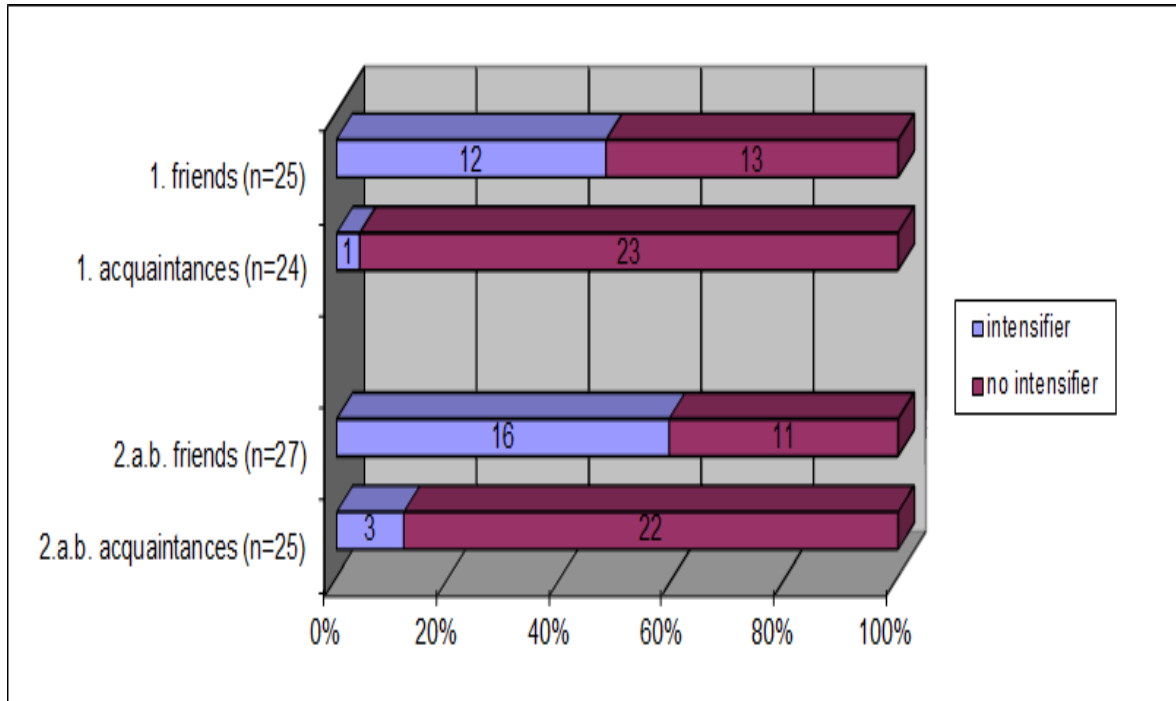


Figure 5.
The ratio of applying intensifiers pertaining to the weight of the disagreement and social distance, all responses considered

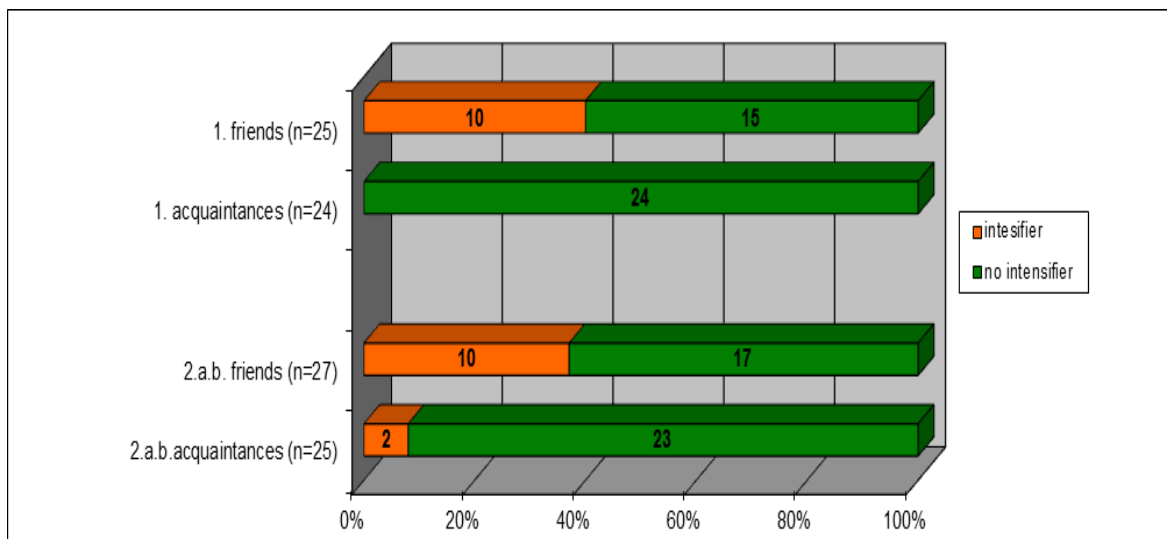


Figure 6.
The ratio of intensifiers not combined with downgraders pertaining to the weight of the disagreement and social distance, all data considered

The statistics did indeed demonstrate that social distance played a larger role than even severity of disagreement did. *Friends* not only used intensifiers much more often than *acquaintances* did, they also tended to choose blunt intensifying more often than a softening, combined version. These results also prove that a close relationship is more forgiving of speakers' intensifying the degree of their disagreement. As Wolfson described it, the less stable nature of superficial relationships allows for more freedom, but far less security (Wolfson, 1990, p. 74).

Comparisons of offensive and defensive situations did not demonstrate any serious connection between severity of disagreement and intensifying. Differences only appeared in the case of the two defensive situations. Displays of emotion, for example, were more common when performance was criticized (especially amongst *friends*), as opposed to when personal property was being judged. Once again, I must stress how Situation 2b forced the speaker to defend his reliability through disagreement, a circumstance that naturally made the speaker choose to protect his own face rather than spare his conversation partner.

6. Summary

The goal of my investigation was to define the concept, characteristics and approaches of disagreements. In my empirical research I defined and established the features of the strategies surrounding this speech act. Summing up the results of the investigation we can conclude that friends typically used the most direct disagreement strategies and employed intensifiers significantly more than interlocutors who were acquaintances. On the other hand, acquaintances selected disagreement strategies "more carefully" and exploited the opportunity for intensifying significantly less frequently. The shared characteristic of the two groups is that in supportive conversations they unanimously aimed to delay their disagreement.

This topic offers further avenues for research. Analysis on the various features of situations could explore other valuable characteristics. Studies published abroad, for instance, place a great emphasis on the issue of power. Furthermore, there have been numerous interlanguage studies exploring the realization of disagreement in the target language. Utilizing the results of these research projects, Hungarian publications in this area have a sure foundation.

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INTERLANGUAGE PRAGMATICS

1. Overview of the Concepts in Interlanguage Pragmatics

Judit Bándli

1. Introduction

Interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) is a relatively young, interdisciplinary area of study, which is in close connection with pragmatics and second language acquisition (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; Kasper & Rose, 2002). Interlanguage is a unique linguistic system that the language learner creates during the course of study, and which defines behavior in the target language, including instances that diverge from the language use in the mother tongue (errors, mistakes). Language learners' interlanguage can and should be analyzed from various aspects. ILP places the emphasis on the pragmatic aspect, more specifically learners' pragmatic competence and the possibility of its development.

In my study I will enumerate the most important concepts regarding the field of interlanguage pragmatics. First I define interlanguage, then I describe pragmatic competence based on the most well-known models of communicative competence in language teaching-learning. I enlist its components and highlight some cases resulting from insufficient pragmatic competence. Last, I summarize the areas of research and the points of analysis in ILP.

1.2 The creation and concept of interlanguage

It is an everyday experience for language teachers that learners produce sentences and utterances in a given situation that differ from the sentences and utterances created by native speakers in equivalent situations.

Research has endeavored to explore factors that determine language learners' target language usage in order to utilize this knowledge in the process of language teaching and learning. The theoretical bases of past decades' research have given rise to newer and newer theories, all of which have contributed in one way or another to the characterization of these features.

In the 50s and 60s, contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) emphasized the effect of the mother tongue and centered its theory around the concept of transfer (Wardhaugh, 1970). According to CAH, language learners' target language usage is

largely influenced by the characteristics of the mother tongue, and therefore may result in errors of transfer. The assumption of the theory was that by the thorough and systematic comparison between the target language and the mother tongue and by enlisting the differences between the two, researchers would be able to predict the expected difficulties learners will have to face during their language learning career. However, this assumption was not based on the accurate observation of learners' language usage, and later it was proven that real data frequently contradicted the theory.

The purpose of Error Analysis (EA) originally was to validate the assumptions and statements of the contrastive analysis hypothesis by collecting and analysing the oral and written language production of language learners. The results proved that even though the effect of transfer is significant, it is not possible to explain and predict all the errors with this approach, as CAH had stated. This theory, therefore, in itself did not provide an adequate answer to the question concerning what factors influence learners' language production. Research identified other sources of errors besides transfer; consequently, in addition to interlingual errors stemming from mother tongue transfer, intralingual errors from the target language and those caused by teaching also received emphasis (Corder, 1967, 1981).

Corder assumed that during language study, learners build a unique internal linguistic system with the help of available language materials and develop their *transitional competence* (Corder, 1967). The author also calls this system *idiosyncratic dialect*, which is different from both the systems of the mother tongue and the target language. At any given stage, an analysis of the errors language learners commit reveals valuable information concerning the state and character of the system.

The framework assumed by Corder was accepted and investigated by several researchers. Nemser (1971) used the concept of the *approximative system*, and Selinker (1972) introduced *interlanguage*, which later became the accepted terminology in applied linguistics literature. Interlanguage, that is, the language with a uniquely structured system established by the language learner, possesses several characteristics.

It is important to state that interlanguage is a system in continuous transformation during foreign language development. It is under constant change, and the learner's linguistic systems that exist and are valid at a given stage are built upon each other in layers. This constant transformation characterizes all levels of interlanguage (phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, pragmatic and discourse). Even though the forms different from mother tongue usage show systematicity, interlanguage is not defined by permanence, but variability. This argument is verified by the inconsistent error types as well as the simultaneously occurring incorrect and correct forms, which are being used interchangeably before they more or less solidify (Tarone, 1979).

Selinker (1972) assumes that after puberty, the language learner develops a latent psychological structure, which is characterized by five psycholinguistic processes:

- (a) native language transfer
- (b) overgeneralization of target language rules
- (c) transfer of training
- (d) strategies of communication

(e) strategies of learning

These processes demonstrate that transfer, emphasized in CAH, still receives a significant role; however, this theory draws attention to the relevance of other features as well.

Fossilization is a principal concept of the interlanguage hypothesis (Selinker, 1972), which refers to instances when the development of the system comes to a halt, because the language learner is unable to overcome elements that are different from first language usage. Even when there seems to be success in this process, after a certain period the learner may experience backsliding to the “original state”.

1.3 Competence – communicative competence – pragmatic competence

Language learners’ interlanguage production is in close connection with their communicative competence, a part of which is pragmatic competence. In this section I elaborate on some issues regarding the content of these notions and the relationship between them.

Chomsky (1965) introduced the idea of competence into linguistics, and the term has gained a significant role in language teaching as well. He defines competence as a system of rules generating sentences, which the ideal speaker and hearer possess. Hymes (1972) found this interpretation narrow, since it does not take the social dimensions of language into account. That is, in order to reach their goals, not only do language learners have to form grammatically correct sentences, but their utterances must be appropriate for the given social norms and situations as well. Hymes named this ability communicative competence, thus expanding the scope that the notion of competence entails.

Hymes’ theory had a direct effect on language pedagogy and the practice of foreign language teaching, which made communicative competence become the basic term of communicative language teaching emerging in the 70s. Beginning in the second half of the decade, applied linguistic research refined the description of the concept and developed various models of communicative competence, which aimed at providing a more comprehensive definition to this complex target idea of language teaching. In the next section I enumerate the most well-known models from the perspective of language teaching and examine their relationship to pragmatic competence.

The most well-known models of classical communicative language teaching were created by Canale and Swain. The authors described communicative competence comprising these sub-components: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic (Canale & Swain, 1980), as well as discourse competence (Canale, 1983). As the models demonstrate, communicative competence includes the formation of grammatically correct sentences (grammatical competence) and situationally appropriate linguistic behavior (sociolinguistic competence).

In Bachman’s (1990) model, pragmatic competence is conceptualized as part of communicative competence and comprises sociolinguistic and illocutionary competence. Sociolinguistic competence entails the speaker’s ability to form utterances appropriate for the given context, while illocutionary competence signifies

the effective usage of language in order to accomplish various communicative aims, in other words, to ensure that the utterances reflect the interlocutors' real intentions.

In their 1996 model, Bachman and Palmer use the term *knowledge* in place of *competence*. Similarly to Bachman's categorization, linguistic knowledge is classified into two segments: organizational and pragmatic knowledge, which includes sociolinguistic and functional knowledge. Functional knowledge is essentially identical with Bachman's illocutionary competence.

The conceptualization of pragmatic competence in the models established by Bachman, as well as Bachman and Palmer parallels Leech's (1983) approach, which distinguishes the concepts of sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics within the framework of pragmatics. Sociopragmatics concerns the sociocultural aspects of language use, while pragmalinguistics involves the relationship between the linguistic tools used for an utterance and the illocution they convey.

As these models demonstrate, pragmatic competence is interpreted as an organic part of communicative linguistic ability. Pragmatic competence is not present in the models of Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983); their frameworks only include sociolinguistic competence, which constitutes a component of pragmatic competence in Bachman's (1990), as well as Bachman and Palmer's (1996/2010) theories. This observation demonstrates that even though the concept of pragmatic competence is not included in Canale and Swain's models, its sub-competence is already present.

Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell (1995) developed the pedagogical model of communicative competence. Their framework does not contain the concept of pragmatic competence either; however, actional and sociocultural competence are present among the components of communicative competence. Actional competence refers to the ability to transmit and understand communicative intent, whereas sociocultural competence denotes the speaker's capability to produce utterances appropriate for the sociocultural context. It is noticeable, therefore, that these ideas are also in close connection with the concept of pragmatic competence in the aforementioned models.

1.3.1 Pragmatic failure

Participants of the language teaching – language learning process quite frequently encounter instances that derive from insufficient pragmatic competence. Jenny Thomas (1983) named these occurrences pragmatic failure. Similar to the models of Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996/2010), Thomas' (1983) theory of pragmatics also reflects Leech's (1983) approach. Observing intercultural communication situations Thomas distinguishes sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic failure. Speakers commit sociopragmatic errors in the target language when they are not aware of the sociocultural principles and social expectations that govern the language usage of a speech community. Such failure occurs when somebody poses a question to his partner about a topic which is considered taboo in the given community, when one addresses a stranger on the street with a form not customary in the target language environment, or when someone greets the elderly neighbor lady saying *hey*. Pragmalinguistic failure happens when the language user employs inappropriate linguistic tools to convey his speech intent, which results in the

pragmatic force of his utterance being different from the pragmatic force attributed to it by the speaker. When one of the Hungarian as a foreign language learners in my study told his fellow passenger on the train, *Nem jó itt dohányozni (It's not good to smoke here)*, his conversational partner might easily have interpreted the utterance as advice, even though it was originally intended to be a request or polite remark (See Chapter Interlanguage Pragmatics 2.).

One of the possible causes of pragmatic failure is transfer. According to Kasper (1992, 1998), two types of transfer are distinguished. In the case of positive transfer the pragmatic forms, norms and strategies are identical in the first language and the target language; therefore, their transmission poses no difficulty. On the contrary, in the instances of negative transfer, these features are different; consequently, transmitting them may result in strange utterances and situations.

1.4 Interlanguage pragmatics research

ILP investigates the pragmatic aspects of learners' target language use, the development of their pragmatic competence and its possible improvement. It devotes much attention to pragmatic failure, which results from inadequate knowledge of the target language culture or incorrect coding of the pragmatic force (Thomas 1983). Most studies are comparative in nature, that is, they contrast the utterances and behavior of native and non-native speakers in various situations. Other investigations present the findings of longitudinal studies on the development and improvement of pragmatic competence.

ILP studies analyze non-native speakers' linguistic behavior from different perspectives. A significant number of studies focused on how language learners sense and interpret the illocutionary force and the degree of politeness in utterances – typically from the perspective of English as a Second Language (Carrell, 1979, Rintell, 1981; Tanaka & Kawade, 1982; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985; Bouton, 1988; Kitao, 1990). Several investigations explore and compare the strategy choice of native and non-native speakers (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1991; Nakajima, 1997; Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, 2001; Kreutel, 2007). Research on transfer generally focuses on negative transfer, since it poses a threat to successful communication (Olshtain, 1983; Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990; Takahashi & Beebe, 1993).

Various studies prove that developing pragmatic competence in the classroom has a positive effect on learners' performance. The fundamental condition for these studies is to be aware of the linguistic behavior of native speakers, which provides a basis for comparison with language learners' target language production. Therefore, ILP research not only builds upon pragmatic theories (speech act theory, politeness theories), but also on the findings of intralingual studies.

The following three studies investigate the linguistic behavior of foreigners studying Hungarian. In the first one, the author enumerates the types of pragmatic failure and illustrates them with examples from non-native speakers of Hungarian. The second paper explores the relationship of target language directness, indirectness and politeness from the perspective of the speech act of disagreement. The third study analyzes the request and refusal strategies of Japanese learners of Hungarian.

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2. Pragmatic Errors in Foreigners' Language Usage of Hungarian

Orsolya Maróti

1. Language usage and failure in communication

Investigating *pragmatic errors* (or *pragmatic failures* (Thomas, 1983) as many others would refer to as) in communication is an important undertaking in Hungarian research since it can aid the work of both descriptive linguists and language teachers.

Pragmatic failure occurs a) when language users unwittingly follow the grammatical rules of the given language, yet do not say what they intend to say; b) when language users – even though they follow the grammatical rules of the given language – do not say what they intended to communicate and they are not aware of this. In this case miscommunication happens, because the type of coding that was selected actually expresses a different meaning for the receiver than the sender of the message. (I will only refer to the issue whether these instances should be called errors or failure. Jenny Thomas, who among others researched and categorized the concept, supports the term *failure* (Thomas, 1983, p. 94); however, the terminology *error* used in my paper can also be found in the literature (e.g. Riley, 1989) and can be justified when it pertains to a certain communicative situation and is defined as the hindrance of the original message.

Pragmatic failure occurs in conversations between people who, although they speak the same language, have a different cultural background. In addition, a different cultural knowledge base does not only cause confusion in interactions with strangers from another country, interlocutors of the same mother tongue may follow different conversational patterns depending on their regional, religious or social group identity.

In my paper I investigate a sampling of pragmatic errors committed by foreigners speaking Hungarian, and offer reasons for their origin as well. It is important to emphasize that while exploring this phenomenon aids the work of descriptive linguists and the presently conducted pragmatic investigations from a theoretical perspective due to its awareness-raising effect, it does present problems yet to be solved for language learners and teachers.

1.1 Foreigners' language blunders in Hungarian

When we hear a foreigner say, *Nekem szüleim vannak nagyon idősek* ('*My parents is very old.*'), then – even though we are not linguists – we immediately

know that his grammatical error is the consequence of his imperfect language knowledge. It may “hurt our ears”, but we understand and accept the utterance.

However, we respond differently when we encounter an error in language use that is not manifested on the surface. If the utterance is well-formed grammatically, yet breaks an important rule, we feel that it threatens our face (Goffman, 1955) shown to the outside world. This happens when a Chinese restaurant employee makes an offer to us using the informal form (*Egyetek szecsuaní csirkét, az nagyon finom! – Folks, eat the Sechuan chicken. It is very good.*), as we know that we are neither long-term friends nor co-workers, which would enable him to use the familiar voice. At the same time, we are justified in assuming that he did not break the rules of informal-formal forms intentionally; he merely committed a sociopragmatic error due to not knowing the rule.

In the case of the example above we will probably have a negative opinion not about the speaker’s language knowledge, but about his personality, since we would feel insulted by a Hungarian restaurant employee in the same situation using these words. Misunderstandings created like this may strengthen our stereotypes, in worse cases prejudices, about certain groups or nations.

2. Pragmatic errors from the perspective of the language learner

Pragmatic errors occur when the speaker’s intention is uncomprehended or misunderstood. There are two types of pragmatic errors to be distinguished: pragmlinguistic and sociopragmatic errors (Leech, 1983, pp. 10–11; Thomas, 1983, p. 99). There is no delineated boundary between the two: it may be difficult to interpret which one occurs in a given situation. These instances definitely need to be explored from a practical and language pedagogical perspective: the miscommunication should be remedied and language learners have to be prepared for successful communication.

Pragmlinguistic error is when the pragmatic force of an utterance intended by the speaker is different from the pragmatic force native speakers attribute to it, or when a learner simply translates a communication strategy from the mother tongue into the target language (Thomas, 1983, p. 99). This presents a linguistic problem: the pragmatic force is incorrectly coded. The issue can easily be overcome – for the time being by relying only on our own language usage – by teaching the rules for forms as a part of grammar.

Nevertheless, hindering the occurrence of sociopragmatic errors requires a more cautious approach. These errors stem from language learners’ inadequate knowledge about the target language culture and social expectations. If the value system of their own culture differs from that of the target culture, it is difficult to address these issues without also discussing the moral questions. The language behavior rules to be followed are in close connection with the language users’ beliefs and worldview about the language, thus they respond sensitively when these are questioned.

2.1 L1–L2 transfer in the language learning process

The incorrect linguistic coding of pragmatic force may be the language learner's individual activity, but it may result from the language learning situation as well. Flynn (in: Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 105) pointed out that what might occur is that language teachers focus on grammatical accuracy and overlook shortcomings in language use.

One type of pragmalinguistic error is when language learners rely on their own inventiveness and translate a form used in their own language into the target language, where this form is unfitting for the speech situation. When an American student wishes us *Jó szerencsét!* (instead of *Sok szerencsét! – Many luck!*), we know that he transferred the wish *Good luck!* from English to Hungarian and had no intention of using the traditional greeting of miners. Similar to this is the simple address, *Tanár!* (instead of *Tanár úr! Tanárnő! 'Mr. Teacher! Ms. Teacher'*), which students from beginner groups have a difficult time giving up.

The issue of false friends usually only emerges when teaching homogeneous groups sharing the same first language. Nevertheless, it would also be relevant to intentionally consider English–Hungarian false friends in teaching Hungarian as a foreign language in the target language environment to heterogeneous national groups, since the English language has such a significant presence in international communication. Because *szolid* in Hungarian means shy, it would be good if our students wanted not "only" a *szolid* grade, but a real, strong grade.

Transferring sentence intonation may also cause problems: the questions asked by Chinese people living in our country sound more like statements for the Hungarian ear, which can lead to misunderstandings. When a shoe store assistant – according to our belief – tells us, *Jó lesz a 37-es cipő.* (*'Size 6 shoe fits your foot.'*), we may feel indignant that she wants to make the decision for us, whereas she probably intended her utterance to be a simple question.

Pragmalinguistic errors also occur in situations where a form widely used in the mother tongue only applies to a specific situation in the target language; this phenomenon is called overgeneralization. Such is the case with *persze* ('evidently'), which is often used by speakers of Russian as a first language. The Hungarian *persze* only partially overlaps with the Russian *konecno* ('of course'). In Russian this word can be an answer for example to the question *Jó film volt?* ('Did you like the movie?'), expressing enthusiasm, while in a similar situation a Hungarian hearer senses the answer to be sarcastic, as if he had asked formerly something trivial. Among German students of Hungarian, an error of this type is overusing the conjunction *pedig* ('although') instead of *de* ('but'), unwillingly suggesting more by it than was intended. Or in reported speech, where foreigners frequently apply the introductory part, *Péter mondta, hogy* instead of *Péter azt mondta, hogy*. In this case most of the teachers miss telling their students that while the latter form has no added meaning, the former one is a marked utterance in Hungarian: the speaker's intention is to emphasize the person of the agent, hence the appropriacy of the form is context-dependent and it cannot be used in every situation.

2.2 Classroom and reality

Using classroom language in the course of everyday conversations may also be a disturbing factor, even though nowadays students have much easier access to the “target language environment” through the internet for instance; therefore, when forming their utterances they are more courageous to choose elliptical sentences, and similar to native speakers, avoid the clarity of propositional content.

Nevertheless, selecting the appropriate language behavior is much more difficult to teach, as it differs cross-culturally, and quite often even the level of language teachers’ sociopragmatic awareness varies. Yates (2010) underlines the importance of developing teachers’ competence, without which the desired aim cannot be reached. For this reason, teacher training in Hungarian as a foreign language devotes attention to this area. However, much depends on the teacher trainees’ emotional intelligence and their ability to develop.

This is a sensitive issue for the reason that while a speaker of a foreign language easily accepts the fact that he is corrected in grammatical problems, he may be sensitive to having his linguistic utterances questioned concerning social behavior.

Several researchers name the issues of social distance and views on power relations, as well as free and non-free goods in everyday life as reference points among the different cultural systems. Thomas also considers taboos, world view and the different ranking of values among the aspects to be taken into account. Taboos can undoubtedly be classified in the category of non-free information; worldview and the different ranking of values – even though they are very relevant aspects – are difficult to define as they show significant individual variation. For this reason these points are troublesome to use as reference points amid teaching Hungarian as a foreign language.

2.3 Politeness? A system of rights and duties?

Free goods are defined as objects, services, information that are available to a person in their own circle, such as the salt in a restaurant or access to the bathroom in one’s own family. Speakers use completely different strategies when they feel the right to something; they form much more direct utterances than when they do not take the fulfillment of the request to be guaranteed. For instance, if as outsiders we behave as if we were “in the circle”, we may appear impolite and demanding; however, the opposite case can also put the speaker in an uncomfortable situation. Also, the concept of free goods can be extended to information: while in Hungary anyone speaks freely to even distant acquaintances about their family or health problems, several of our American students noted that this is rather uncomfortable for them as they are invited into private matters, even though they did not wish to establish a close relationship with their co-workers.

2.4 The signs of power and the variations of social distance

Social distance between teachers and students may vary cross-culturally (for example Hungarian–American or Hungarian–Japanese relationships are totally different). This raises the question whether *Szia, professzor úr!* ('Hey, Professor!') is a sociopragmatic or pragmalinguistic error.

Many times native speakers seem to have an asymmetrical power relationship with non-native speakers. Unfortunately, linguistic dominance is frequently coupled with ethnocentrism, creating a rather unique communication power status, for instance, between a Chinese employee and a Hungarian customer in a Chinese restaurant, which is often manifested when the customer "qualifies" the employee "as a child" by using the informal form with them.

3. Conventions of language use

The system of polite excuses, the mental map in us about the world around us, or the definition of ratios are all culture-dependent. For example, if a foreigner is not familiar with the illocutionary force of the utterance *Az igazgató úr házon kívül van.* and runs into the director in the hallway, they may easily regard the assistant to be a liar. These conventions of language use are the most difficult, or in embarrassing situations are the most painful to discover on one's own.

Such discrepancies may occur in the interpretation of complimenting as well, since this communicative situation is a more widely used tool in one society, and a narrowly used one in another. Our Canadian male students have gotten into embarrassing situations more than once because of their compliments, which were meant to be simple acts of kindness; since in Hungary this speech act is used much less frequently – and with much more "hidden agenda" – in male-female relations.

In the course of language use, not only do the given speech community's members form a favorable or unfavorable opinion about foreigners, but during various conversations, their opinion is also being shaped about the dwellers of the host country. It is relevant, therefore, whether they are prepared for communicative situations governed by different rules than the ones in their own culture.

Ranking values also varies cross-culturally. A Hungarian speaker, for instance, is equipped with refusal strategies even after the third offer of food at an extended family dinner; however, many foreigners feel that Hungarians are impolitely stuffing them to death. In this case, generosity has victory over the rule of quantity. It is important to know whether the target language community ranks tact or honesty higher; in addition, whether the principle of politeness or clear communication should be in the foreground.

4. The teacher's role in establishing pragmatic competence

The pragmatic errors committed by foreigners speaking Hungarian signify that Hungarian rules of language use do need to be taught. What we should strive for is

to enable foreign language learners to say in Hungarian what they intend to say. In order to reach this goal, the first step is to explore language usage rules in Hungary by empirical pragmatic research, since language learners' aim is not the knowledge of grammatical rules but successful language behavior.

The language teacher also has the task of developing students' metapragmatic ability by intentionally analyzing certain instances in language use, as well as by including tasks with situations demonstrating and practicing rules of language usage. Until Hungarian as a foreign language coursebooks are published that systematically give attention to this issue, this is the only way to achieve results.

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3. (Too) Direct Strategies in Target Language Communication

Judit Bándli

1. Directness and indirectness

As language teachers we often encounter instances where our language learners' target language utterances seem impolite, since they differ from the linguistic behavior of native speakers. In certain cases this occurs because we sense their utterances to be overly direct. It may not necessarily be obvious why language learners in various situations express themselves too directly for native speakers. The observation is frequently attributed to cultural differences and transfer; however, the explanation is not always this straightforward. Data from interlanguage studies on various speech acts revealed additional causes. In my paper I explore these causes based on the literature as well as my own research, in which I investigate the disagreement strategies of Polish learners of Hungarian and compare them with those of Hungarian native speakers.

The utterance produced by the speaker is considered indirect when there is a discrepancy between the surface meaning and the implied one; therefore, the hearer has to make a cognitive effort to decode the message. Theoretically, the more indirect an utterance is, the more effort it takes to comprehend the implied meaning, and the longer the inferential process becomes. Accordingly, the more the locution reflects the speaker's intention, the more direct the applied strategy is considered.

Several different theories have emerged with respect to decoding the meaning of indirect speech acts (Gordon & Lakoff, 1971; Searle, 1975; Grice, 1975; Bach & Harnish, 1979). In sum, this is considered a multiple-step process, generally involving the following stages: understanding the literal meaning, rejecting the literal meaning in light of the context, then processing the indirect meaning. Nevertheless, certain studies (Gibbs, 1985) substantiate that conventionally indirect forms ease the interpretation of utterances. If a form is characteristic of a certain situation, its frequent usage becomes routinized in the given context. This shortens the time of the decoding process, that is, it is no longer necessary to go through the stages. One cannot claim with complete certainty, therefore, that conventionally indirect speech acts require a longer inferential process than direct ones. This statement does not apply to non-conventional indirect forms, since those are not so closely connected to the given situation. In these instances, the inferential process is indeed longer than in the case of direct forms.

The authors of the CCSARP research project (Blum-Kulka, 1987; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989) place the investigated speech act strategies on directness scales, which raises certain questions. Blum-Kulka (1987) had Hebrew and American first language respondents rank request strategies. The rank orders were identical from the

perspective of the most direct, medium direct and most indirect strategies; however, there were minor discrepancies within these groups concerning the perception of the relative directness of strategies, which points to cultural differences and the various individual characteristics of languages.

2. The relationship of directness, indirectness and politeness

In Blum-Kulka's study (1987), not only did respondents rank strategies according to directness, but politeness as well. Undoubtedly, we need to assume that there is a defining relationship between indirectness and politeness. Most likely we all agree that the utterance, *Could you please give me my bag?* is more polite than saying, *Give me my bag!* However, this does not necessarily mean that there is an equation sign between the indirect style of expression and politeness, since various cultures assess indirectness differently. When ranking strategies for producing the speech act of requests, Hebrew respondents regarded the most indirect strategy, hints (*It's cold. → Close the window.*) less polite than performatives (*I'm asking you to close the window.*), hedged performatives (*Could I ask you to close the window?*) and query preparatory strategies containing conventional forms (*Could you close the window? Would you be able to close the window?*), which are all strategies ranked higher on the directness scale.

It is interesting, though, that native English speaker respondents ranked hints directly after query preparatory strategies, meaning that they considered them the second most polite choice. The explanation for the Hebrew native speakers' assessment may be that very indirect requests can signify lack of clarity (and possibly lack of honesty as well), and the interpretation places a larger burden on the hearer, who is required to implement a longer inferential process. What causes difficulty in evaluating politeness, therefore, is that there is a tension between the demand for pragmatic clarity and apparent concocoerciveness. Brown and Levinson (1987) view conventional indirectness as a compromised solution (*Could you pass the salt?*), as it can satisfy both demands.

In harmony with the aforementioned observations, Gu (1990) points out that assessing directness/indirectness is strongly dependent on culture. For instance, concerning requests in the Chinese language, the rather direct want statement strategy (*I would like/I want...*) is regarded polite in situations where it would not be applied by members of other cultures (Chang-Hsu, 1998). In addition, it has to be noted that the speech act itself influences the assessment of indirectness. In the case of certain speech acts direct expression is expected, for instance when promising, congratulating or apologizing.

Naturally, target language utterances are defined by several other features besides the aspects of directness, which are in interaction with each other. The following utterance from a Japanese learner of Hungarian would not be deemed impolite by many, despite the fact that it contains a direct request strategy (*Legyen*

szíves felváltani! 'Please change it.}') that is hardly characteristic of native speakers in the given situation (asking a stranger for a favor)²:

Bocsánat, elnézést, szeretnék megvenni túrórudit, de nekem csak 2000 Ft papírpénzem. Ha lehet, legyen szíves felváltani.
(*Sorry, excuse me, I like to buy túrórudi, but I only have 2000 forints in bank notes. If possible, could you please give me change?*)

(Bándli & Maróti, 2003)

In the following sections of this paper I investigate a speech act that by nature threatens the conversational partner's positive and negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987); therefore in its production the aspects of directness–indirectness have to be taken into account.

3. Producing disagreement in the target language

It is assumed that in supportive conversations, similarly to mother tongue interactions, speakers would like to communicate politely in the target language as well, which is why they strive to protect their partners' (and their own) face (Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987). Despite this, at times the utterances do not accomplish the desired effect and come across as impolite in the given situation. These occurrences are frequently attributed to the fact that the interlocutors' strategy usage is different from that of native speakers. With the help of the speech act of disagreement I will now investigate the possible causes of this observation. The main motivating factors for supportive communication are to avoid disagreement and to strive for agreement. However, in certain instances speakers necessarily have to voice their opposing opinion. Since the assumption is that speakers mutually have a stake in protecting each other's face, they strive to downgrade and soften the face-threat of disagreement. One method for accomplishing this is the usage of more indirect strategies.

According to a widely-held stereotype, Japanese people avoid expressing disagreement directly. However, as Beebe and Takahashi (1989) claim, this is an overly simplified cliché. Though Japanese speakers usually avoid disagreements with their superiors (or as a last resort they significantly downgrade their disagreement), they indeed voice their disagreement directly to people of lower status than themselves, even using negative qualifiers. In many cases they transfer this practice into the target language as well.

Nakajima (1997) elaborates on an interesting form of linguistic stereotypes in her paper, in which she investigated and compared the language behavior of American and Japanese businessmen. In some cases Japanese participants worded their utterances in English according to Japanese sociocultural rules. On the other hand, the author observed that in certain situations approximately half of the Japanese businessmen voiced their disagreement too directly compared to

² All the utterances of the non-native participants are included without modification. The English translation of the sentences can not fully communicate the meaning and form of the original utterances.

Americans. Nakajima points out that the directness of Japanese respondents in English is due to the fact that they have encountered the cliché concerning American culture and the English language claiming that in English one must communicate directly.

Behind interlanguage utterances, therefore, lie speakers' knowledge and assumptions about social reality, which in part stem from their home culture and in part from ideas about and experiences (not necessarily their own) with the target culture.

Interlanguage studies on disagreements – most of which investigate English as a Second Language learners – point out numerous other observations. When composing their disagreement, native speakers mainly use complex strategies, while non-native speakers' utterances are characterized by structural simplicity, shortness and minimalism (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989; Garcia, 1989; Nakajima, 1997). Non-native speakers often express their opinion explicitly, using a performative verb (*I disagree*) even in situations in which this is considered unnatural for native speakers (Pearson, 1986). In addition, compared to native speakers, non-native speakers frequently employ the negating word *no* to express sharp disagreement (Bell, 1998). This is probably because language learners do not possess an adequate range of linguistic tools to express their disagreement or they do not venture to activate them. They are often aware of the face-threatening nature of disagreements and sense the need to soften them, yet they often do not utilize the entire "tool kit" of the target language at their disposal (Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2000). Walkinshaw (2007) elaborates on the issue by including contextual factors. His study concluded that participants were more courageous to experiment with interlocutors of similar status, that is, they applied more complex strategies than in communication with teachers who had a higher hierarchical status and possessed relative power. In the latter case, when participants felt the significance of their behavior, they preferred more intrinsic and "safe" strategies.

3.1 The disagreement strategies of Polish university students learning Hungarian

In a previous study (Bándli, 2013a) I investigated the disagreement strategies of university students studying Hungarian as a Second Language. The present corpus only comprises the utterances of the Polish respondents, who constituted the majority of the sample. Compared to the 2013 data, this modification meant a change in the ratio of the various strategies, but not in the strategy types.

In this paper I provide an overview of Polish learners' disagreement strategies in Hungarian and compare them to the language behavior of Hungarian native speaker university students. Data for the study was collected and recorded during university seminars and conversational classes for foreign students. The non-native speakers spoke Hungarian on the B2–C1 (upper intermediate–advanced) levels. For the sake of comparability, the corpus only includes disagreements that voice an opposing view regarding an opinion, belief or idea. The corpus included data from 101 Hungarian native speakers and 92 Polish native speakers in total. Analyzing student–teacher interactions would amplify the investigation to include power and social distance (cf. Walkinshaw, 2007), which could be the topic of further research.

In the present study I investigate the linguistic behavior of interlocutors of equal status and as for the findings, I concentrate on data that is relevant to the aspect of directness–indirectness.

Based on the literature my hypothesis was that non-native speakers of Hungarian will use less complex strategies than Hungarian native speakers and that in striving for clarity they will apply direct strategies more frequently than Hungarians.

3.1.1 Strategies accomplishing disagreement

The literature is not unified as to what it calls disagreement strategies. Beyond accomplishing disagreement, tools for softening the face-threat and in certain cases for intensifying it also have a great role. A softening tool is for instance a hesitating preface (*Well...*), a token agreement (*Yes, but...*) or a hedge phrase (*I'm not sure...*). In the category of intensifiers there are the different emphasizing phrases (*For sure it's...*) or the repetition of the message (Bándli, 2013b). These are important from the perspective of the whole utterance, yet the disagreement is accomplished even in their absence. In the following section I analyze those strategies in the corpus that carry out disagreement in themselves. I organized them in a table according to directness. Some strategies were characteristic for both groups of respondents; however, there were responses that only occurred in one of the groups. Table 1 summarizes the strategies of Hungarian native speakers.

STRATEGIES	EXAMPLES
emphasizing the opposition in the opinion	'Ezt a feladatot kezdő csoportban is jól lehet használni.' 'Nem értek ezzel egyet.' 'This exercise can be used well in a beginner class.' 'I don't agree with this.'
opposing statement/correction	'Budapesten született.' 'Nem Budapesten, hanem Debrecenben.' 'He was born in Budapest.' 'Not in Budapest, but Debrecen.'

<p>explanation/enlisting reasons</p>	<p>'Nem jó, ha húsz percnél többet foglalkoznak ezzel.' 'Sokkal jobban megértik, ha több időt szánnak rá.'</p> <p>'It's not good if they spend more than twenty minutes on this.' 'They understand it much better if they spend more time on it.'</p>
<p>expressing doubt/making partner uncertain</p>	<p>'1990-ben volt.' 'Biztos vagy benne?'</p> <p>'It was in 1990.' 'Are you sure?'</p>
<p>partial acceptance</p>	<p>'Sikerült, működik.' 'Most még jó.'</p> <p>'I did it, it works.' 'It's good so far.'</p>

Table 1.

Hungarian native speaker respondents' strategies accomplishing disagreement

The question may arise as to what extent partial acceptance is regarded a disagreement strategy, since by applying it, the speaker essentially does not disagree. Nevertheless, through emphasizing the partiality and temporality of the agreement, the speaker still suggests that his opinion is different from his partner's. This is why this strategy was included among the other ones on the directness scale, albeit at the end.

In the majority of cases strategies did not occur individually but constituted strategy combinations. For instance, the strategy opposing statement/correction was rarely present by itself; generally it was combined with an explanation:

'Ez a legjobb.'

'Hát, nem, ez a lehető legrosszabb választás, mert semmit sem fognak érteni belőle, még nem is találkoztak vele.'

'This is the best.'

'Well, no, this is the worst choice, because they won't understand any of it, they are completely unfamiliar with it.'

The strategies used by Polish native speakers are summarized in Table 2. The examples are recorded in their original form, without modification.

STRATEGIES	EXAMPLES
emphasizing the opposition in the opinion	<p><i>'Csak zsíros és tejfölös ételt esznek.'</i> <i>'Nem értek egyet neked.'</i></p> <p><i>'They only eat dishes with fat and sour cream.'</i> <i>'I don't agree you.'</i></p>
opposing statement/correction	<p><i>'Jövő hét szünet lesz.'</i> <i>'Nem jövő hét.'</i></p> <p><i>'Next week is going to be a holiday.'</i> <i>'Not the next week.'</i></p>
judgement/labeling	<p><i>'Lengyelországnak szüksége van erre.'</i> <i>'Ez butaság.'</i></p> <p><i>'Poland needs it.'</i> <i>'It's dumb.'</i></p>
explanation/enlisting reasons	<p><i>'Peter igaza van, jó film.'</i> <i>'Beteg volt múlt héten, nem látta a filmet.'</i></p> <p><i>'Peter's right, it was a good film.'</i> <i>'He was ill last week, he didn't see the film.'</i></p>

Table 2.
Polish native speaker respondents' strategies accomplishing disagreement

Concerning the proportion of the strategies occurring in the sample, the linguistic behavior of the two groups was rather similar. In both groups, the aforementioned combination opposing statement+explanation was significantly the most frequent response. This is presumably due to the characteristics of the educational situation, since at university seminars students are constantly required to give account of their knowledge and views, and they are supposed to provide a rationale for their position.

It is interesting, though, that both Hungarian and Polish respondents applied strategies that were not characteristic of the other group. Although the occurrence of these was not significant in either case, they still provide interesting information for us. Data from Hungarian native speakers contains two indirect strategies that the Polish interlocutors did not use at all. One of them is expressing doubt/making partner uncertain (*Biztos vagy benne? 'Are you sure?'*), the other one is partial acceptance (*Most még jó. 'It's good so far.'*).

Presumably non-native speakers avoided indirect strategies because they were trying to eliminate the risk of their utterance being misunderstood due to the enlistment of inappropriate linguistic tools. Even if only subconsciously, they sense that the execution of their speech intent will be more sure when their communication is clear and unambiguous. Therefore, they rather stick to forms that are simpler and well-practiced – even if they are direct. This observation is verified by the fact that Polish speakers emphasized the opposition in their view significantly more often than Hungarians by applying the phrase, *Nem értek egyet. ('I don't agree with you.')*

When expressing judgement/labeling (*Ez butaság. 'It's dumb.'*), the speaker attaches value laden statements to the partner's view, or even the partner himself, intensifying the face-threat of the act. This strategy occurred in a small percentage of the Polish participants' data, but not at all in the Hungarian sample.

In sum we can conclude that Polish respondents' language usage was identical with Hungarians regarding the most frequently chosen strategy combination, which is probably due to the educational environment and the proficiency level of participants. Significant discrepancy was only found in the choice of the most direct strategy, emphasizing the opposition of the opinion, which was much more popular with the Poles. This was accompanied by the avoidance of indirect strategies, indicating that in accordance with my hypothesis, directness and clear expression mean safety for language learners, in light of achieving the speaker's intent.

4. Summary

In my study I purposed to collect the factors that might play a role in language learners' strategy choice and speech production from the viewpoint of directness–indirectness. Based on the comparison of the findings, we can conclude that non-native speakers' linguistic behavior in this regard is defined by several various factors. Among others, the data of the study highlighted the following ones:

1. the effect of the mother tongue and the target culture
2. the cross-cultural differences in the interpretation of the relationship among directness, indirectness and politeness

3. beliefs and ideas about the target language and culture
4. inadequate linguistic tool kit
5. "striving for safety" in light of achieving the speaker's intent

In my study I investigated an issue we constantly encounter when teaching or communicating with non-native speakers of Hungarian. Language learners' target language usage is certainly much too complex to be described from one perspective; nevertheless, these analyses can provide a basis for increasing pragmatic competence intentionally in class.

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4. Culture and Language Behaviour

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1. Introduction

In order to attain successful communication, apart from grammatical rules, the issues of language usage need to receive significant emphasis in language teaching. Language learners have to be made aware of principles governing the communication of the given speech community. They also have to be prepared for most speech situations as much as it is possible. Nevertheless, the intentional development of pragmatic competence in the classroom is a complex task, which requires constant attention. Even when that is achieved, however, the expected outcome may not be fulfilled. It is often observed that language learners behave according to the value system of their first language culture or misunderstand the sociocultural norms of the target culture. They usually do not even notice these differences until we raise their awareness to these issues. Language teachers also have a role in enabling their students to sense differences in language usage due to cultural variation (pragmatic competence).

The purposeful analysis of language learners' speech production may shed light on the systematic linguistic failures, which can be prevented or remedied if we devote sufficient attention to this issue in the educational process. This is the reason why we aimed to explore how successful Japanese students are in executing their requests and refusals in the second language.

2. The present research

Our paper is aimed to be the preliminary study of a large-scale project. This justifies the relatively low number of research participants and situations. The 17 respondents form a homogeneous group in regards to their age, education and cultural background. They are all Japanese students between the ages 19 and 23, presently majoring in humanities at a university in Budapest. Their Hungarian language level is on the B2, i.e., intermediate level. They all started learning Hungarian in Japan but have been residing in Hungary for at least six months.

The research design comprised selecting six situations we regarded typical (three in connection with requests and three with refusals), which were slightly modified versions of the situations in the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989) and the ELTE research projects (Szili, 2002a; 2002b; 2004). The rationale was to ensure the comparability of our results with data from Hungarian and foreign research. The oral discourse completion task (DCT) contained artificially created situations in which students had to take the role of the communication partner who performs the speech acts of request and refusal. The performed dialogues were

recorded.

Regarding our analytical decisions, it is important to state that the pragmatic failures in the utterances of our participants were always interpreted from the perspective of the hearer, since in interactions between native and non-native speakers native speaker hearers decipher the non-native speaker's utterance in their own interpretational system and may not necessarily understand the original communicational intent of the speaker. This explains why in certain instances the hearer decodes a grammatical mistake the speaker commits as simply impoliteness or a strange, inappropriate element. Therefore, we do not investigate the intent that created the utterance, rather the communication role and effect of the produced form.

3. Investigating the speech act of requests

Respondents encountered the following situations in connection with requests: asking for change, requesting to stop smoking in a building, appealing for the return of a book indispensable for studying.

Similarly to previous research in the Hungarian and foreign context, in each case the problem of different social distance was introduced: our respondents entered interactions with a) a close friend, b) a stranger, c) a distant acquaintance, and d) a person of authority at work (in this case, the participants, all students, met with the head of department at university).

3.1 Request strategies

Several studies have categorized the existing request strategies. The most detailed classification was produced as a result of the CCSARP research project, which created a certain directness scale and distinguished nine types of requests (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984): (1) mood derivable, (2) explicit performative, (3) hedged performative, (4) locution derivable, (5) want statement, (6) suggestory formula, (7) query preparatory, (8) strong hint, (9) mild hint (See Chapter Pragmatics in Practice 3.).

In the Hungarian language, the following request strategies play the most significant role (Szili, 2002a): mood derivable (*Üljön le!* – 'Sit down!'), hedged performative (*Elkérhetem?* – 'May I ask for it?') and query preparatory strategy (*El tudna vinni?* – 'Could you give me a ride?')

Besides the aforementioned three strategies – which are the most significant in Hungarian – the following ones are of frequent usage as well:

explicit performative: (*Kérek egy kávét.* – 'I would like a coffee.') and strong hint (*Te is a városba mész?* – 'Are you going to the city as well?')

Comparing the findings of our investigation with the request strategies of native speakers it can be stated that in addition to the aforementioned strategies, Japanese students employed one more, and that quite frequently. This is the so-called want statement strategy, which expresses the speaker's intention that the event included in the proposition come to pass. E.g. *Szeretném használni a*

mobilodat. – 'I would like to use your cell phone.'

According to Szili (2002a, pp. 19–20), in the language use of native speakers this type of strategy occurs only sporadically compared to the previously mentioned ones. In contrast, the analysis of our respondents' utterances revealed numerous examples for this strategy use.³

*Mi történt a könyvemmel? Szeretném visszakapni.
(What happened to my book? I'd like to get it back.)
(to a classmate)*

*Akarok aprópénzeket. Tudsz felváltani?
(I want changes. Can you change them?)
(to a friend)*

*Akarok telefonálni, de most nincs apró.
(I want to use the phone, but now there is no change.)
(to a stranger)*

*Szeretnék oltani ezt a cigarettát.
(I would want to put out this cigarette.)
(to a stranger)*

Request strategies applied in Hungarian are identical to the ones registered in other languages, hence they are universal in this regard. One typically uses direct performatives when speaking to friends or close colleagues about a justified request of less gravity. Speakers save conventional strategies for situations including greater social distance and requests of medium or greater gravity. However, it has to be noted that compared to other languages, the usage of mood derivable is much more significant in Hungarian (Szili, 2002a); in other words, we frequently make use of the imperative mood.

3.2 Situation-based request strategies

Concerning the money changing situation, Hungarian respondents preferred to use conventional request forms. In contrast, the behavior of the Japanese participants was significantly different from the Hungarians'. In situations comprising all the degrees of social distance they applied a much greater number of imperative forms than conventional strategies; moreover, the less direct, conventional form surprisingly did not appear at all when speaking to a person of authority. It is important to add, however, that participants softened their direct requests using politeness formulas in 90 percent of the cases, as well as frequently supporting them with explanations we regard exaggerated.

Bocsánat, elnézést, szeretnék megvenni túrórudit, de nekem csak 2000 forint papírpénzem. Ha lehet, legyen szíves felváltani.

³ Since the topic of our study is pragmatic and not grammatical competence, we do not analyze or correct grammatical mistakes. All the utterances of the non-native participants are included without modification. The English translation of the sentences can not fully communicate the meaning and form of the original utterances.

('Sorry, excuse me, I like to buy túrórudj, but I only have 2000 forints in bank notes. If possible, could you please give me change?')

Esetleg van önnél aprópénze? Most nálam van csak papírpénz, és ilyen kicsi büfében nem tudok pénzt visszakapni tőle.

('Do you happen to have your change on you? I only have banknotes and I can't get change from it in such a small cafeteria.')

Elnézést, hogy zavarok Nekem nincs az aprópénzem. Most szükségem van. Legyen szíves felváltani.

('Sorry for disturbing you. I don't have the change. Now I need it. Please can you change it?')

In addition to utterances of this character, there are others – albeit in a much smaller proportion – that are quite direct, to-the-point, not surrounded by politeness formulas, and thus appear rude: *Van önnek szásas? Váltson fel!* ('Do you have quarter? Change it.')

As was mentioned before, compared to conventional forms, the usage of mood derivable occurs in a greater proportion in Hungarian than in other languages. Nevertheless, the Hungarian language contains a broad array of contrivances with which we can soften our utterances and make them polite. The examples from the Japanese students enumerated the most frequently used ones: the formulas *légy szíves, legyen szíves* (please, will you please).

Therefore, it can be stated that when changing money, Japanese respondents – as opposed to Hungarian speakers – clearly preferred using the imperative mood combined with politeness formulas to applying conventional forms.

In contrast with the first situation, when asking someone to stop smoking and appealing for the return of an important book, the proportion of utterances containing a mood derivable request increases, moreover, becomes dominant compared to conventional ones. This is true for Hungarian speakers as well. The justification is that in these situations the respondents formulate a legitimate request and being aware of their role of imposition, they are more courageous to apply the direct forms. In the majority of cases the Japanese students also applied verbs in the imperative mood, but since they did so in the money changing situation as well, we cannot consider this significant from a pragmatic perspective.

Respondents were also aware of the differences between the two roles the speakers had to play in the situations: one asking for a favor (changing money), the other voicing a legitimate request (smoking, book). What verifies this claim most convincingly is that politeness formulas became scarce, especially when instructing someone to stop smoking: *Ne dohányozz, nem szeretem. Itt a nemdohányzó kocsi, ne dohányozzon.* ('Don't smoke, I don't like it. This is a non-smoking car, don't smoke.')

Participants applied the strategy of strong hint quite frequently in different contexts in order to voice their individual needs and opinions. Although with regard to directness strong hint and mood derivable are located at almost opposite ends on the directness scale, the verb in the imperative mood combined with politeness formulas (*Elnézést, legyenszíves abba hagyni!* – 'Excuse me, please would you stop it.')

appears to be more polite than a sarcastic hint. (*Nem zavarja, hogy nem szeretem a dohányfüstöt?* – 'Don't you mind that I don't like cigarette smoke?').

Our data comprised a relatively large number of warnings such as "*Itt tilos dohányozni.*" (*'It is forbidden to smoke here.'*) that were categorized as hint. It is a relevant observation that even though the description of the situation did not contain the prohibition of smoking, our rule-abiding respondents readily referred to this circumstance.

It needs to be noted that in our participants' utterances hints were combined with other strategies in the majority of cases, for instance with mood derivable as in the following example: *Már elolvasott a könyvet, amit kölcsönadtam? Ha elolvasott, legyen szíves visszaadni.* (*'You had read the book I lent you? If you had, will you please give it back.'*)

4. Investigating the speech act of refusals

The other aspect of our research was a speech act that is rather essential from a practical standpoint, yet delicate as well: refusals.

In order to ensure comparability with intralingual research, the situations introduced here are in part identical with those in Katalin Szili's investigation (2002b). Providing for variation in both the internal circumstances (social distance between partners and the weight of the request) and the external ones, the following situations were created:

- the participant is hosting a party where his friend, a school mate or his professor – also among the guests – sees a CD of his and wants to borrow it. He does not want to lend it out.
- the participant is offered some food: herbal tea by a friend, dinner by a friend's mother and "túrórudi" (a Hungarian delicacy made with cottage cheese and chocolate, rather disgusting in the eyes of many Japanese) by his professor.
- speakers have to refuse an invitation: a friend or schoolmate asks them to go to see a movie; and their neighbor, who is an opera singer, offers them complimentary tickets

Concerning the variables of social distance and authority, our participants encountered the following conversational partners in these situations: a) the participant's close friend, b) a more distant acquaintance of equal status (a school mate, a friend's mother), c) an authority figure, such as their professor or a well-known opera singer next door with high social recognition.

4.1 Refusal strategies

Data analysis was based on the categories of the Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz research (1990), which takes into consideration the semantic aspects of refusal formulas: (1) performative statement, (2) non-performative statement, (3) statement of regret, (4) wish, (5) excuse, reason, explanation, (6) statement of alternative, (7) set condition for future or past acceptance, (8) promise of future acceptance, (9) statement of principle, (10) statement of philosophy, (11) attempt to dissuade

interlocutor, (12) acceptance that functions as a refusal, (13) avoidance (See Chapter Pragmatics in Practice 4).

Comparing the results with the data of the interlingual research conducted in 1998 (Maróti, 1999, p. 24), we can conclude that in general Japanese students were much more indirect than speakers of other nationalities, who evaluated direct refusals as much less offensive; they employed mostly non-performative refusal strategies and in contrast with Hungarians (Szili, 2002b), seldom disclosed their reasons.

Some of this behavior may be explained by the speakers' foreigner-strategy (thinking, 'this is not my culture, as a foreigner I cannot yet be expected to have an extensive knowledge of local customs), and some may be interpreted as cultural transfer (in their own culture expressing one's individual will is permitted or even expected). In some instances, however, selecting an impolite linguistic form occurs due to the inadequate knowledge base of Hungarian linguistic strategies and the limited amount of active forms in their mental lexicon (Gósy, 2001). Japanese people – following the politeness requirements of their own culture – are known for avoiding open refusals, which explains why their behavior is often misinterpreted by western communication partners.

Comparing the results of the present study with the data of the ELTE research project we can conclude that explaining oneself is a tool that is at least as frequently used among Japanese students as it is among Hungarians. However, Hungarians use explanations in themselves without other refusal formulas in order to express the illocution of refusals, for instance *Eljössz moziba? Takarítanom kell.* ('Are you coming to see a movie? I need to clean.') (Szili, 2002b, p. 208). In the case of Japanese participants, explanations occur combined with direct refusal formulas (*Sajnos, de nem tudok, mert megyek a szüleimhez. Bocsánat, nem lehet menni, ma nincs időm.– 'Unfortunately, but I can't, because I'm going to my parents Sorry, can't go, today I have no time.*'). Expressing regret and apologies appear in a similar degree among Japanese and Hungarian speakers. Nevertheless, there is a remarkable difference regarding the strategy acceptance that functions as a refusal, which is relatively rarely used by Hungarians. Japanese students continuously ensure their partners that their intention is to fulfill their request even if external circumstances make it impossible:

Nagyon köszönöm, nagyon akarom nézni az operádat, de ...nagyon sajnós, ma este mennem kell szüleimhez!
(*'Thank you very much, I really want to see your opera, but ... very unfortunately, tonight I have to go see my parents!'*)

Bocs, ma este sok dolgom van. Nagyon akarok, de nem tudok. Máskor megint hívj meg, jó?
(*'Sorry, I am very busy tonight. I really want to, but I can't. Invite me again some other time, okay?'*)

Majd kölcsönadom! Most hallgatom ezt a zenét.
(*'I will lend it to you sometime! I'm listening to this music now.'*)

Bocsánat, most hallgatom ezt a zenét, majd tudok kölcsönadni.
(*'I'm sorry, I'm listening to this music now, I will be able to lend it later.'*)

Sajnálom, most szükségem van. Majd később, jó?
 ('I'm sorry, I need it now. Later, okay?')

Moreover, one of the participants ventured so far that despite the clear directions (You refuse the request) he lent his CD to his partner: *Igen, persze! De nagyon tetszik nekem ez a CD-t, akkor add vissza jövő hétfőn.* ('Yes, of course! But I really like this CD, so give it back next Monday.')

Refusals are speech situations which are the most threatening for both the hearer's and the speaker's social identity – or in Goffman's terminology (1967), face. The rules of politeness and generosity are both subjected to violation and a negative change may occur in the relationship of the partners depending on the communicational behavior they choose. The relationship between the conversational partners, and the circumstance, weight and type of the request define – in a complicated and implicit way – what we can say and to whom in various situations.

4.2 Situation-based strategy choice

The results of the study indicate that Japanese students employed direct refusals to a much lesser extent and were more hesitant to say no than the Hungarian native speakers (and even then they did so emphasizing their regret or enumerating their reasons). Among the subtypes of non-performative negating forms they negate ability, showing their position in communication as independent of their will. As a contrast, only 6.8 % of Hungarians employ this type of form (*Bocsánat, ez nem enyém. Nem tudom odaadni. Bocsánat! Nemlehet adni a lemezt.* – 'Sorry, this is not mine. I can't give it to you. Sorry! Can't give CD.').

Mere excuses, the most preferred strategy in the case of native speakers, was utilized in a very small degree by our participants; however, in different combinations it was the most frequent strategy. We can generally claim that the data yielded many more answers that comprised the combination of various refusal types, that is, participants employed several strategies in an attempt to soften the delicate situation threatening both the requester's and the refuser's social face. (*Sajnos, de te tudod, hogy ezt a CD-t nagyon szeretem. Fénymásolják neked?* – 'Unfortunately, but you know that I love this CD very much. Shall I photocopy it for you?')

In the instances of speaking with friends, Hungarian respondents are more open to refuse lending the requested CD. They prefer clear communication with a friend, possibly because openness is a value in a friendship. In contrast, Japanese respondents are polite in a way that – although they offer excuses and express their regret – they prefer strategies that they consider more polite and are further down on the scale of directness to clear communication. Proposing acceptance may be a real intention, but it very well may be that they simply want to avoid saying *no*.

Sajnálom, most szükségem van. Majdkésőbb, jó?
 ('Sorry, I need now. Later, okay?')

Majd kölcsönadom! Most hallgatom ezt a zenét.
 ('I will lend it later! I'm listening to this music now.')

*Bocsánat, most hallgatom ezt a zenét, majd tudok kölcsönadni.
(‘Sorry, I’m listening to it now, I will be able to lend it later.’)*

Nevertheless, it has to be noted that in the present research several of the otherwise cooperative participants lent their CD to their partner despite the clear situational instructions (*Igen, persze! De nagyon tetszik nekem ez a CD-t, akkor add vissza jövő hétfőn!* – ‘Yes, of course! But I really like this CD, so give it back next Monday.’), they ate the not-so-delicious meal the friend’s mom prepared (*Köszönöm, kérek szépen. Most nem vagyok éhes. Kis adagot kérem.* – ‘Thank you, I would like some. Now I’m not very hungry. Small portion please.’), and also accepted the invitation to see a movie.

The knowledge of the refusal strategy system and the ability to adequately use it as a skill especially become decidedly significant when the non-native speaker is faced with a request that is in opposition with his intentions – accepting or refusing such a request is what is at stake for the speaker. In instances like that, in order to maintain politeness, the language learner may be forced to fulfill a request against his intentions, since the appropriate forms of rejection were not at his disposal. It also needs to be considered that the other side, that is, decoding the refusal the language learner received for his request is as an essential element of communication as acquiring the selection and production of the situationally appropriate illocutionary act.

Refusing the meal prepared by the friend’s mother was more difficult since even though the respondent is not in a subordinate relationship to her, there is a greater social distance present compared to the situation when the friend himself was the conversational partner. Refusing food entails much greater impoliteness in an eastern culture than in Europe. This may be the reason why the majority of the “guests” utilized the semantic form of giving explanation; they looked for excuses appropriate in the context of Hungarian customs.

*Köszönöm a meghívást. Biztos finom, de sajnos tegnap óta fáj a hasam, ezért nem nagyon tudok megenni.
(‘Thank you for the invitation. I’m sure it’s good, but unfortunately, I’ve had a stomach ache since yesterday, so I can’t really eat it.’)*

*Köszönöm szépen, de most jó raktam.
(‘Thank you very much, but now I’m full.’)*

*Nagyon ízlik, de sokat ettem, és tele vagyok.
(‘I like it very much, but I ate a lot and I’m full.’)*

*Köszönöm, de most tele van a pocikám.
(‘Thank you, but now my little tummy is full.’)*

On the contrary, Hungarian native speaker respondents – although they softened their refusals referring to their ability or eating capacity – in the majority of cases selected non-performative rejections without connecting them to other strategies.

Only one of the Japanese students used direct rejection, the rest of the

participants utilized more indirect forms than the native speakers, which in many cases created peculiar utterances. Offering future acceptance or a different alternative seems odd in this situation, since the invitation refers to the soup steaming in the mother's hands. However, the intention is clear here as well: avoiding the criticism of the mother's cooking talent and selecting the reasons for starvation only in external circumstances. What is more, in several instances refusal strategies are paired with compliments about meals not tasted – and based on past experience, not even desired to be tasted:

Azt hiszem, nagyon jóízű lesz, de én most nem vagyok éhes. Talán máskor.
 ('I think it will be delicious, but I'm not hungry now. Maybe some other time.')

Köszönöm a meghívást. Biztos finom. De sajnos tegnap óta fáj a hasam, ezért nem nagyon tudok megenni.
 ('Thank you for the invitation. I'm sure it's good. But unfortunately I've had a stomach ache since yesterday, so I can't really eat it.')

It can be generally stated that the data of the present study yielded several more responses that were the combination of various refusal types than the ELTE research project. This means that the respondents employed numerous strategies in order to soften the delicate situation which was threatening the face of both the requester and the refuser. The participants created much longer forms than native speakers, at times in combinations that weakened the force of certain strategies:

Sajnálom, nekem is most kell. Tudok adni, de most nem tudok. Bocsánat.
 ('I am sorry, but I need it now too. I can give it, but not now. Sorry.')

Nem bírom zsíros ételt. Kicsit kérek.
 ('I can't eat fatty food. A little bit, please.')

Sajnos, de tulajdonképpen nem akarok kölcsönadni a CD-t.
 ('Unfortunately, but really, I don't want to lend out this CD.')

Expressing regret may even be decoded as sarcasm if followed by a non-performative negative form containing a statement of intent. In turn, the concern about fatty foods is then overridden by the subsequent (outward) acceptance. Is the person perhaps hoping that his hostess will take the hint? (He will most probably be served some dinner, as it is not a coincidence that Hungarians' decisiveness was expressed in the strongest and most direct form in the case of food (Szili, 2002, p. 210): we already know that those who hesitate must eat.)

Stockpiling in itself may be a weakening factor: violating the maxim of quantity causes the content of communication to be modified:

Köszönöm szépen, nem kéremsz jegyeket. Hát, sajnos, hmmm...nem tetszik az opera. Nincs időm.
 ('Thank you very much, I don't want the tickets. Well, unfortunately, hmmm... I don't like opera. I don't have time.')

Engem nem érdekel. Nincs kedvem. Foglalt vagyok.
 ('It doesn't interest me. I don't feel like it. I'm busy.')

In both instances each reason is effective in itself; however, if someone does not like opera (and admits this to an opera singer), he will not simultaneously excuse himself by referring to lack of time.

Japanese students refused the opera singer's invitation using similar tools as Hungarians: they also excused themselves and came up with explanations. The almost identical linguistic behavior in this situation signifies that Hungarian respondents also regard society as hierarchical and they express this through the mechanism of politeness.

Research to date has not provided data concerning the relationship between refusals and other speech acts. In the present study compliments have been mentioned when participants had to praise (and gently refuse) the mother's cooking, yet expressing thanks is another speech act worth discussing. Japanese students indicated their gratitude in the cases of offers and invitations received from almost all their partners (friend, school mate, friend's mother, opera singer). Hungarian speakers are likely to act similarly in the instances of offers, yet most would probably not say thank you for an invitation to the movies but would rather pay a compliment (*Jó ötlet!* ('Good idea!'), *Már én is akartam...* ('I also wanted to...')). Further research could certainly shed light on this issue.

5. Pragmatic failures

When a foreign language learner possesses the knowledge of certain linguistic forms and the rules governing them, he starts to produce his individual utterances in various situations. At this stage the learner is not always able to express his intentions in a way that his conversational partner can interpret and fully comprehend them. It is in this sometimes lifelong phase that the so-called pragmatic failures (pragmatic errors) are produced. Two types of failures are distinguished: sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic ones, which may occur interdependently, yet are generally difficult to separate (Thomas, 1983).

The aforementioned examples show that inappropriate strategy choice may lead to the violation of a politeness rule, which threatens the hearer's social self-image. Not following the rules of the formal-informal forms – which may be the most problematic linguistic issue for students of Hungarian as a second language – creates a similar effect. The utterances produced by the participants of the present study also revealed numerous sociopragmatic failures of this nature.

The language learner commits a sociopragmatic error when for some reason his utterance in the given speech situation is not appropriate for the target language customs, traditions or social expectations. These errors are generally due to the differences in cultural background, yet the problems in the formal-informal forms (frequently occurring because of the complicated inflection system!), for instance, clearly indicate that in several cases it is the language learner's inadequate grammatical knowledge that leads to such errors. Violating the rules of the formal-informal forms surfaced in two ways with our respondents. In the majority of cases they committed errors in the inflection of verbs. The other type of error occurred when inappropriately using the politeness formulas *légy szíves*, *legyen szíves* (*could*

you, would you please). One participant turned to his close friend with the sentence: *Legyen szíves kölcsönadni a könyvemet!* ('*Would you please lend me my book!*')

The next utterance is a remarkable example of an inappropriate salutation and also entails the debated problem of the form *tetszik*. One participant turns to an unknown woman saying: *Asszony! Tetszik kölcsönadni százast?* ('*Woman! Will you lend me a quarter?*'). Without the possessive form, we as native speakers feel the word *Asszony!* ('*Woman!*') impolite, since in this form it cannot be used as a salutation, yet the foreigner is not aware of the confusion caused by this minor error.

There are errors that can be classified as typical because of their frequency, which occurred among students who chose to offer an alternative as a refusal strategy. In such an instance – since the student was probably not perfectly aware of invitations as social situations – he made the invitor repeat the invitation: *Nagyon köszönöm, de nem lehet menni. Úgyhogy újramondd, jó?* ('*Thank you very much, but cannot be going. So say it again, okay?*'). He probably intended to stress that the meeting would certainly come about in the future (he did not want to refuse it); however, his Hungarian partner may not have interpreted this aspect as the most prominent. Similarly, it is impolite to justify the refusal of a complimentary ticket offered by an opera singer saying, *Köszönöm, de engem nem nagyon érdekel az opera.* ('*Thank you, but I'm not really interested in opera.*').

Violations are considered pragmalinguistic failures if the pragmatic force of the utterance is not identical to the pragmatic force the speaker attributes to it. Among others, incorrect linguistic transfer is a reason for its occurrence. In the present study we also encountered such errors, for instance in the following utterance: *Elnézést, hogy zavarok, de szerintem nem jó itt dohányozni.* ('*Sorry for disturbing you, but I don't think it's good to smoke here.*'). The native speaker may easily interpret this sentence as advice instead of a request, even though – as was confirmed by a fellow professor of Japanese – what happened was that the student transferred a Japanese expression into Hungarian, which has a different connotation in our language.

Politeness gained victory over the maxim demanding the clear expression of ideas, thus evoking a turmoil in logic. In this case we are dealing with a linguistic problem, that is, the incorrect coding of pragmatic force.

6. The conclusions of the research

The linguistic behavior of the Japanese students taking part in our investigation was characterized by taking the receiver's perspective into consideration to a much greater degree than what was observed in the linguistic behavior of Hungarian respondents. Concerning both requests and refusals they utilized various linguistic means in order to protect the communication partner's social face and to maintain the partner's positive image of himself and the other speech participant despite the awkward situations. Japanese communication is categorized as high-context: they do not give straight answers (according to our framework), do not ask questions directly but do so with statements that can be placed in the mutually possessed cultural system. The receiver interprets the given utterance in light of the detailed knowledge about the situation, not merely based on its propositional content (Hidasi, 2002). Therefore, we need to pay special attention

to the instruction of our Japanese students; giving them a thorough description of the situation in a communication activity and drawing their attention to the discrepancies in the other speaker's method of interpretation.

We accept the role of the guest, the stranger, the foreigner striving to succeed in a different culture: we help them and excuse many shortcomings. However, we need to bear in mind the importance of first impressions and the emotions evoked in the hearer while interpreting the utterances. Speakers of Hungarian as a foreign language can appreciate a more advantageous communicational situation if they participate in a conversation possessing not only rules concerning form but language use as well. It is our opportunity as language teachers of foreigners to aid them in this process, making their pragmatic competence more intentional.

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