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**HEDGING AND POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED BY
NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING
FEMALES IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS**

MA THESIS

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Vilnius, 2017

**LIETUVOS EDUKOLOGIJOS UNIVERSITETAS
HUMANITARINIO UGDYMO FAKULTETAS
ANGLŲ FILOLOGIJOS KATEDRA**

**PASAKYMĄ ŠVELNINANČIOS PRIEMONĖS IR
MANDAGUMO STRATEGIJOS VARTOJAMOS MOTERŲ
KALBANČIŲ GIMTAJĄ IR NEGIMTAJĄ ANGLŲ KALBA
AKADEMINĖJE APLINKOJE**

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naudojant tik darbe nurodytus šaltinius

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the research is to comparatively investigate the politeness strategies and hedges used by native and non-native English speaking females in academic setting. To achieve the aim, three objectives were set: to analyse patterns of female speech in academic setting; conduct qualitative and quantitative analyses of the hedges and politeness strategies; determine the reasoning behind the politeness strategies and hedging used. It was concluded, that native speakers in academic setting use politeness more frequently than hedges, and non-native speakers vice-versa – prefer to use hedges instead of politeness strategies. Native speakers favoured positive politeness, while non-native used on-record strategy. Although overall number of the hedges was higher in the non-native speakers' interactions, the number of different strategies was higher in the native speaker's conversations – 4 and 5 different strategies were found accordingly. The context and the triggers which made the speakers choose strategies were mostly similar, however the overall differences allow to assume that the use of politeness and hedges are indeed dependent on the culture and the first language of the speaker.

INTRODUCTION

Many scientists proved (Lakoff, 1975; Austin 2014) that there are some features which constitute ‘women’s language’. According to them, women tend to use more intensifying words and special vocabulary, for example, specific colours or adverbs such as ‘very’ or ‘really’. But more importantly, some of those features include more frequent use of hedges and polite style of conversations, which are the main points of this research. Although many studies have been carried out about gender specific language, which involved such factors as social class’s influence on male and female speech, this particular study will take another course of investigation – it will study native and non-native English speaking females’ conversations in academic setting. This type of setting was chosen for the reason, that it has a strict set of rules, which all speakers have to follow, and it is least influenced by the speaker’s social class or background.

All speeches constitute from linguistic means. One of those means that play a particular importance in this research are hedges, which are mitigating words, sounds or constructions used to lessen the impact of an utterance. This research will use Heng & Tan’s (2002) classification of hedges, which the researchers divide into hypothetical constructions, adverbials, epistemic verbs, modal verbs, anticipatory clauses and cognitive verbs, as well as where in the sentence the hedges can be found (beginning, middle, after particular words or following them).

Politeness, on the other hand is a culturally defined phenomena, which is the practical application of good manners or etiquette, which protects the speaker’s or (and) the addressees’ ‘face’. Brown and Levinson (1987) distinguished the five main politeness strategies, which are grouped according to the level of ‘threat to the face’, the first being the most threatening and the last – the least:

- Act on-record: baldly, without redress;
 - with positive politeness redress;
 - with negative politeness redress;
- Act off-record;
- No act.

Since native and non-native English speakers are the object of this study, an insight about whether non-native speakers have the same patterns of using these strategies in English language as native speakers can be gained.

The research question

Politeness strategies being inherent for each culture, and hedging being particular for each language, it is relevant to see whether the acquisition of another language influences the use of these particular linguistic means. Therefore, the **research question** is - to what extent hedging patterns and politeness strategies differ or are similar in native and non-native English females' speeches in academic setting.

The aim and objectives

This research **aims** to comparatively investigate the politeness strategies and hedges used by native and non-native English speaking females in academic setting. To answer the research question and achieve the aim, the following **objectives** were set:

1. To analyse comparatively patterns of the semantic and formal characteristics of female speech in academic setting;
2. Conduct qualitative and quantitative analysis of the hedges and politeness strategies used by females and present the results;
3. Determine the reasoning behind the politeness strategies and hedging used by native and non-native English speaking females.

Scope of the research and research methods

For the research 8 speakers for native and 8 for a non-native conversation analysis were chosen from the highly or mostly interactive section of the MiCASE corpus. In total were analysed 18,211 words of non-native English speaking females' interactions and 21,773 words of native speaking females'. The corpus was chosen for the availability of full transcripts of the conversations, including interruptions from the audience, and other valuable transcription units, which helped to understand the full setting of the conversations. All the hedges and politeness strategies were then identified and grouped quantitatively. Comparative analysis was used in order to identify what made the speaker respond in a particular strategy and whether the context was similar or different. After the comparison, results are summed up in order to draw a conclusion about the setting of the responses, hedging and politeness strategies used by native and non-native speakers.

Novelty and significance of the research

There are numerous researches already about politeness strategies and hedging, however, there are no studies which involve native and non-native speakers on such topic. Since the politeness strategies and hedges are dependent on the culture of the first language of the speaker, it might be found out, whether acquisition of the second language affects the use of the politeness strategies and hedges. This study might become a cornerstone for a deeper study for comparing male native and non-native strategies, which could later be compared to this female oriented research.

1. POLITENESS

In modern society, politeness is related to behaviour. The term itself began to be used starting the Enlightenment Era, when the social classes deepened their differences by the use of manners and a particular taste of art, apart from other factors. In the early 18th century, Lord Shaftesbury released a series of essays, in which he defined politeness as intentional management of the words and actions (Klein, 1994, 187). Comparing one of the earliest terms of politeness (Shaftesbury) and the entry in a modern dictionary, it can be observed, that over the course of years, linguistic politeness is differentiated from general politeness only by linguists and other researchers, but not the general public. Goffman, one of the pioneers of the research about politeness, stated “<...> politeness, deference and tact have a sociological significance altogether beyond the level of table manners and etiquette books” (1971, 90). Thus, the researchers began the journey of discovering the use of politeness from linguistic point of view – how it functions in everyday language. This chapter will overview the notion of politeness, introduce four main theories of politeness and provide the politeness strategies that will be used in the thesis.

1.1 What is politeness?

Politeness is a phenomenon which by Yule (1996) was defined as a particular system, which minimizes the possibility of conflict between people in interactions, and the threat to the person's 'face' – public persona – either speaker's, hearer's, or both. In other words, the use of polite expressions, and having manners should be treated as the strategies of avoiding face-threatening situations (1996, 106). A few years later, Yule (1998, 60) redefined the notion of politeness as a polite way of social behaviour, which differs from culture to culture. However, recent study by Cameron (2007, 134) showed that nowadays the frequent use of the polite expressions such as *'Hi, how are you today?'* or *'Have a nice day'*, especially by shop assistants, or other unfamiliar people, no longer serves as an indication of politeness or having manners, but is treated more frequently as annoying, rude and over-familiar, since people do not believe in the sincerity of the phrases. Therefore, being familiar with strategies that can be used when the face-threatening situations occur in order to preserve the self-image which is showed to the society is an advantage to all kinds of speakers, especially when a wide public is involved.

Keeping in mind the public image, Goffman (2005, 10) claimed that in order to be polite, one must be familiar with two aspects - considerateness and self-respect. This way, by thinking about oneself and others, politeness strategies will be used and understood correctly,

instead of being interpreted as sarcastic or ironic. Politeness as well as impoliteness can be expressed by intonation however it varies from culture to culture, depending on the language's phonetic characteristics. Culpeper (2005) analysed British television quiz shows and described, how the hosts used the pitch, intensity and pauses to suggest a sign of impoliteness. On the contrary, by using different pitch, and avoiding pauses would create a polite manner of speaking.

Spencer-Oatey (2000, 3) stated that all the definitions of politeness have one particular feature behind them - human interaction which maintains or promotes interpersonal relationship. Nevertheless, it is still difficult for linguists to come to the conclusion from which point of view – hearer's or the speaker's – politeness strategies should be focused on. Some scholars (Eelen, 2001; Terkourafi, 2001; Mills, 2003) argued that politeness should be studied from the hearer's perspective. "<...> to be polite is 'to act appropriately' <...> according to the hearer's expectations" (Eelen, 2001, 128). Watts (2003, 119) as well claimed that whether or not the politeness was used by the speaker depends on the hearer's evaluation of it. Even if the speakers had intentions to apply politeness strategies and in their opinion the behaviour was appropriate, from the hearer's perspective the intention and behaviour of the speaker might not be seen correspondingly.

In a more recent studies, politeness was defined as a "sociocultural phenomenon, roughly to be defined as showing consideration for others" (Wang, 2014, 271). However, showing consideration for others not always can be seen as a strategy of politeness, but rather be interpreted as a simple gesture of manners or a trait of humans - worrying about your friend, and other similar situations.

Liu and Allen (2014, 652) observed that "defining politeness is a challenging task and an ongoing debate". From the definitions of politeness provided above, it can be concluded that politeness, being an abstract notion, is so complicated, that in order to come to a final and universal definition of it, there is a demand for more researches to be carried out. Politeness is present in every culture and is applied to various situations differently, and therefore, it is such a difficult task to find one particular depiction which could be applied to every situation.

Notion of politeness from early times until more recent ones constantly changed starting from the attempts to provide a more detailed explanation of the phenomenon to more generalised ones, and the changing perspectives of hearer and speaker. Thus, it can be assumed, that politeness, being an ambiguous phenomenon of language, will have a lot more investigations into it in the future. For this research, politeness will be viewed as a means to avoid conflict and have a smooth communication, following Yule's definition of politeness (1996). This definition was chosen due to the fact that only the speaker and hearer themselves

can comment on what he or she interpreted from the communication and what motives they had: what the speaker's intention was, what kind of common knowledge was shared between them (student and a professor at a university, guest speaker for a particular topic that students studied for, etc.) and since the data for the analysis is the transcripts taken from the 'Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English' (MiCASE) the focus lies on linguistic manifestations of politeness strategies that were determined by various researchers.

1.2 Politeness theories

Politeness has been widely studied by various researchers in attempts to define it, as well as provide the theories of how to employ it in one's speech. However, due to the fact that even the definitions of politeness are very diverse, it is expected, that theories will also vary depending on the author's approach.

Since there is still much debate about politeness, every theory, especially earlier ones, have received many critiques. Nonetheless, many of the more recent studies are based on one of the four main and influential theories that were provided by Lakoff (1975), Leech (1983), Brown & Levinson (1987) and Fraser (1990). This sub-chapter will overview these four main theories.

As have been mentioned above, one of the first politeness theories was developed by Lakoff. The researcher's work is even more significant because in order to create the theory, she studied people from different cultural backgrounds, rather than focusing on one particular culture. Lakoff referred to politeness as a phenomenon which was "developed by societies in order to reduce friction in personal communication" (1975, 64). The linguist highlighted the three rules, which distinguish the communication as being polite (ibid., 87):

1. **Do not impose.** This first rule relates to the psychological state of imposition, rather than physical one. Lakoff states, that while communicating with people, a regard to the social distance must always be kept in mind between hearers and speakers. As an illustration of this rule, one must think about different contexts and places, where the conversations are held – in some settings might be present certain rules how the other people are addressed or a particular vocabulary such as slang is applied.
2. **Give options.** If the speaker does not provide options, the statement might sound more like an order or an absolute truth, without any room for denial. In some cases, especially in the unexpected conversations or questions, it is difficult to come up with

the options right at that moment and therefore, hedging strategies can be applied, in order to reduce the imposition of the utterance.

3. **Show sympathy.** This last rule, serves as a technique to establish bonds between people, which can reduce the risk of the speaker's ideas being rejected or negatively rated.

LoCastro (2012, 51) pointed out that the study of people from diverse cultural backgrounds must lead to conflicting results, and generalised collected data might not be applicable to one particular culture in all of the aspects. Lakoff's approach is centered on the speaker and, as Sperber and Wilson (1986, 5) state, from this perspective it is not clear, how the listener perceives the information. Overall, being one of the first politeness theories, it became a good starting point for other researches.

Leech (1983) defined politeness similarly to Lakoff but with a few more specifications – “strategic conflict avoidance which can be measured in terms of the degree of effort put into the avoidance of a conflict situation” (1983, 19). Leech began from the analysis of illocutionary acts, and by dividing them into 4 categories – *competitive*, *convivial*, *collaborative* and *conflictive* (ibid., 104) was able to create his own two maxims of politeness.

1. Tact Maxim (ibid., 138-9). The maxim is used to minimise the cost and maximise the benefit to the hearer. Leech created tact maxim from competitive illocutionary goal – a goal which competes with the social goal (begging, demanding, asking, ordering) by imposing something on the hearer. This maxim is closely related to the negative politeness.

‘Could I clarify this quickly then?’ – in this example, the minimisation of the cost is that the explanation will be provided *quickly*, which means that much time will not be wasted, and the maximisation of the benefit is the fact that the person, who is asked will not have to give the explanation himself.

2. Generosity Maxim. This maxim maximizes the cost and minimizes the benefit to oneself. In the example *‘You go and have fun while I prepare the dinner’* (ibid., 140) the minimum benefit can be distinguished – one will not be having fun; and the cost of not being able to have fun is the preparation of a dinner.

Leech's notion of degree in the politeness, at that time was quite innovative, but nonetheless, it was later seen as too narrow, since it was based only on the English language and did not take into account how other cultures could interpret the maxims (Thomas, 1995, 168). Another vital point which was criticised is the limitation of the illocutionary acts. If

Leech ignored collaborative and conflictive acts, stating that they are irrelevant for the politeness, some researchers proved that depending on the context, the two illocutionary acts can be applied in politeness strategies, such as negative politeness (Al-Hindawi & Alkhazaali, 2016, 1541).

Another influential theory was created by Brown and Levinson. As the basis for their theory the scholars took one of the earliest works on politeness by Goffman (1967). What made their theory so successful is that the researchers, firstly, revised the notion of ‘face’ provided by Goffman (*ibid.*) and introduced a definition more acceptable for the new century “a public self-image” (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 61-2). Secondly, they divided the ‘face’ into two types – positive and negative, where positive refers to the desire to be understood and accepted, and negative is the need to have free will to express oneself (*ibid.*, 22). Thus, politeness is employed when the ‘face’ is threatened and needs to be preserved. Based on this, the researchers provided 5 politeness strategies with different impacts on the ‘face’ of hearer or the speaker:

- Bald on-record – no attempt of lessening the impact on the face;
- Positive politeness – minimizes the threat to the hearer’s positive face;
- Negative politeness – minimizes the threat to the hearer’s negative face;
- Off-record (indirect) – takes the pressure off the speaker;
- No act – no action is taken.

Vilki (2004) and some other scholars refer to Brown and Levinson’s theory as a “face-saving view” (*ibid.*, 323), and it is the only theory, out of the four, that correlates the best with the chosen definition of politeness from the previous sub-chapter.

The scholars asserted that their theory is universal, which was refuted by Fukada and Asato (2004, 1992) who claimed that since the theory is based on particular principles which strictly relate to English culture, the assertion leaves no place for altering the theory in other cultures. Another aspect which received criticism was the lack of differentiation between linguistic politeness, general politeness and other similar aspects related to the manners (Fraser, 1990, 234).

Similarly to Brown & Levinson, Fraser’s (1990) theory was also based on the idea, that politeness is employed when face-saving is needed. The main aspect of the theory is that in interaction, each of the participants has an idea about their own and others’ rights and positions in the conversation, and those rights and positions can be changed during the overall

course of the speech event (ibid., 232). Fraser viewed the conversation as an unspoken contract, and the contract would work if the following conditions are met (ibid., 232-233):

1. Conditions that are set by the culture. They are static throughout the whole conversation.
2. Conditions that are set by the nature of a particular kind of interaction.
3. Conditions that react to the changing nature of a conversation.

These conditions take into account such notions as turn-taking, ground-standing, power, and some others, making the theory flexible and adaptable to the development of the conversation (ibid., 233). However, this theory does not take into consideration the context, which, as stated by Culpeper (2011, 404), in politeness plays the key importance.

This research is carried out within the framework of Brown & Levinson's theory. The reason behind the choice was the aspect that their theory explains the benefits and drawbacks of applying their strategies for the people that are involved in a conversation, and has various defined and simple strategies, by which politeness can be categorized. The politeness strategies are discussed in the next sub-chapter.

1.3 Brown & Levinson's politeness strategies

For the preservation of the faces, Brown & Levinson (1987) devised 5 main politeness strategies:

- Bald on-record;
- Positive politeness;
- Negative politeness;
- Off-record (indirect);
- No act.

No act means that no action is taken and therefore, the fifth strategy will not be discussed any further in this research.

According to the authors (ibid., 74-84), before the speaker chooses which strategy to use, first he or she considers three aspects:

- a) What is the social distance between the hearer and the speaker?
- b) What is the power difference between the hearer and the speaker?

c) What is the ranking of the face-threatening act in a particular situation?

Based on these three points, the speaker will choose the strategy, which in his or her opinion will minimise the threat to the hearer. The tables with the strategies were based on the Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies with the examples created by the author.

1.3.1 Bald on-record

The first strategy is called bald on-record, and it does not include any kind of aspect of lessening the impact of words. This strategy is usually used between people who know each other and feel very comfortable such as friends and relatives, or in a matter of urgency:

Table 1. *Situations of use of bald on-record strategy*

Situations of use		Examples
1.	Urgency or desperation	<i>Watch out!</i>
2.	When efficiency is necessary	<i>Hear me out.</i>
3.	Task-oriented	<i>Pass me the paint.</i>
4.	Little or no desire to maintain someone's face	<i>Don't forget to wash the dishes!</i>
5.	Doing the face-threatening act is in the interest of the hearer	<i>Your stove is on!</i>
6.	Welcomes	<i>Come on in.</i>
7.	Offers	<i>Leave it, I'll read it later.</i>

This kind of strategy disregards any kind of differences between the speaker and the hearer - their social status, age difference, and other factors, because in a matter of urgency, for example if there is some kind of a threat, like something is falling, or the car approaches at a high speed, there is no time to use a longer politeness phrases like *'Dear sir/madam, please look up, there is an object falling down, and I suggest that you would step away out of the harm's way.'* This illustrates, that sometimes there is just no time to be polite and formal, as by the end of the sentence, the hearer might already see why the speaker started the conversation. Although these strategies disregard the factors that require politeness, they are not seen as rude or disrespectful if used in an appropriate situation.

1.3.2 Positive politeness

Positive politeness strategy revolves mainly around the listener. It is employed to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face (Bousfield, 2008, 57), and aimed to make the

hearer feel good, or make the listener take interest in the conversation (H - Hearer, S - Speaker):

Table 2. *Situations of use of positive politeness strategy*

Situations of use		Examples
1.	Attend to H's interests, wants, needs	<i>You look sad. Can I do anything?</i>
2.	Exaggerate interest	<i>How wonderful!</i>
3.	Intensify interest	<i>I come into my flat, and what do I see? - A huge mess all over the place, like a tornado passed through and..</i>
4.	Use in-group identity markers	<i>Honey - wife, sweetheart - daughter</i>
5.	Seek agreement	<i>The team played horribly last night, right?</i>
6.	Avoid disagreement	<i>Yes, it's rather long; not short certainly.</i>
7.	Presuppose/raise/assert common ground	<i>I had a really hard time learning to drive, didn't I?</i>
8.	Jokes	<i>Nice weather we are having. It is spring already and we still have the temperature of -20 degrees.</i>
9.	Assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern for H's wants	<i>I understand you can do it yourself, but this time, do what I suggested you.</i>
10.	Offer / promise	<i>I'll be there.</i>
11.	Be optimistic	<i>You'll tell your father that you did it, I hope.</i>
12.	Include both S and H in the activity	<i>Bring us the book. (me)</i>
13.	Give (or ask for) reasons	<i>Why not lend me your car for the weekend?</i>
14.	Assume or assert reciprocity	<i>I'll tell you what it looks like if you tell me where she is now.</i>
15.	Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)	<i>I'm sorry to hear that.</i>

All of these positive politeness strategies allows the speaker to get on good terms with the hearer by showing concern, asserting some common ground between them, making arrangements (*I'll do that, if you do this*), and finding out the reasoning behind the actions, so that the problem can be resolved. Nonetheless, the over usage of these strategies may be seen as being insincere. The in-group identity markers include the slang words, jargon or 'nicknames' that are used in particular situations or between groups of people. In the example provided in the table, it can be seen that a husband can call his wife 'honey', whereas his daughter or daughters 'sweethearts'. Although if a stranger uses the same words to address an unfamiliar woman or a child, the usage of the politeness strategy will not make the expression polite as would be seen by the reaction of the addressee. In some cultures or groups, jargon words like 'mate' and others can be freely used to address each other, whereas if used by an outsider will be viewed as something offensive. Inclusive pronouns such as *we*, *us*, and others in some cases can be seen as the involving factor for some kind of an activity for hearer and

speaker, however in other cases it may act as way of avoiding responsibility by removing it from oneself, but rather providing generalised entity, for example, the whole institution or a group.

1.3.3 Negative politeness

Negative politeness, similarly to positive, takes into account the face, however if positive politeness deals with the positive face, then negative politeness deals with the negative face. This means that the speaker wants to have absolute freedom but at the same time soften the imposition on the hearer and redress the negative face threat (Bousfield, 2008, 57).

Table 3. *Situations of use of negative politeness strategy*

Situations of use		Examples
1.	Be indirect	<i>Would you know where Oxford Street is?</i>
2.	Asking questions using hedges	<i>I wonder whether you could pass the rice please?</i>
3.	Be pessimistic	<i>So I suppose some help is out of the question, then?</i>
4.	Minimize the imposition	<i>Could I talk to you for just a minute?</i>
5.	Giving deference	<i>Excuse me, officer. I think I might have parked in the wrong place.</i>
6.	Apologizing	<i>Sorry to bother you, but..</i>
7.	Impersonalizing S and H: performatives, imperatives, impersonal verbs, passive and circumstantial voices, replacing the pronouns 'I' and 'you' by indefinites, pluralizing the 'I' and 'you' pronouns, using point-of-view distancing	<i>A: That car's parked in a no-parking area. B: It's mine, officer. A: Well, it'll have to have a parking ticket.</i>
8.	Stating the FTA as a general rule	<i>Parking on the double yellow lines is illegal, so I'm going to have to give you a fine.</i>
9.	Nominalising	<i>Participation in an illegal demonstration is punishable by law. Could I have your name and address, madam?</i>
10.	Going on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebteding H	<i>If you could just sort out a problem I've got with my formatting, I'll buy you a beer at lunchtime.</i>

Table 3 illustrates the capacity of negative politeness strategy to soften the impact of the words by making generalisations, instead of pointing out facts directly. As can be seen in the Example 9 of Table 3, the generalisation of the unwelcome act, instead of pointing at one particular person, lessens the stress on the addressee, however allows the speaker to prepare for a negative response, also lessening the impact of the negative answer, because the speaker prepared for it in advance. In general, if by using positive politeness, people expect to get a

positive answer or results, then by using negative politeness, they prepare to deal with negative people's responses.

1.3.4 Off-record (Indirect)

The last strategy that will be discussed is off-record or indirect. It is oriented to the speaker, rather than hearer, as it takes some of the pressure off from the speaker's utterance. This strategy is the most ambiguous in terms of the meaning behind the words of the speaker, since the utterances can be interpreted in different ways by various hearers. On the other hand, it is the safest strategy to the speaker, since even if the face threatening act occurs or only the hearer will interpret it as the face threatening act, the speaker can refute the statement by claiming otherwise.

Table 4. *Situations of use of off-record (indirect) strategy*

Situations of use		Examples
1.	Giving hints	It is cold here.
2.	Giving association rules	I've got a headache again.
3.	Presupposing	<i>I cleaned the home again today.</i>
4.	Understating	<i>The green hat is quite nice for you. (quite means not so good)</i>
5.	Overstating	<i>I asked for a hundred times, but you never give me the answer</i>
6.	Using tautologies	War is a war.
7.	Using contradictions	A: <i>Are you okay with him?</i> B: <i>Well, between yes and no.</i>
8.	Being ironic	Yeah, Jim is a real genius. (He'd just done many stupid things)
9.	Using metaphors	Harry is a real fish. (He swims like a fish)
10.	Using rhetorical questions	How many times I should tell you?
11.	Being ambiguous	John is pretty sharp.
12.	Being vague	I'm going down the road for a bit. (To the mini-market)
13.	Over-generalizing	Mature people sometimes help do the dishes.
14.	Displacing H	A: Someone has to be responsible for this mess. B: <i>You know who was having time with his friends tonight here.</i>
15.	Being incomplete, using ellipsis	Well, I'll just...

In the Example 1 of Table 4, only the speaker knows what exactly he / she means. On the one hand, the speaker might say that it is cold, and according to the indirect strategy, the hearer should understand that he or she should do something to warm up the room. However, it also can be a simple statement, because it is not known whether the speaker likes cold or not. The statement might be interpreted correctly by other factors such as, for example shivering, or intonation and the comment or evaluation of the hearer's next actions – if the

hearer closes the window and the speaker reacts in a positive way, or if the hearer attempts to close the window and the speaker stops him. However, these are non-linguistic features, which cannot be analysed from the transcripts, although the fact that the strategy was used, is what is important and relevant for this research. In the Example 14 of Table 4 speaker A addresses speaker B with the face threatening act, however, as can be seen from the B's response, A knew who is responsible for the mess, therefore by being indirect, A has hopes that C, if he is present, will realize that the face-threatening act was addressed to him or her, or that A will realise who is really to blame for the situation.

Contrary to Brown & Levinson, Eelen (2001, 4) argued that for the everyday communication, only 3 strategies are sufficient – positive politeness, negative politeness and off-record politeness, whereas other strategies are used not so often and especially not everyday.

In sum, each of the four main politeness strategies has particular situations of usage. If other kind of politeness is applied in a situation where it should not be used, the meaning of the phrases changes completely. Watts (2003, 9) claimed that politeness is a phenomenon that is learned, rather than born with the people. That is why by learning languages, people also learn politeness strategies that are common for that particular language and culture. Since the research focuses on the English language and how the politeness strategies and hedges are used by native and non-native English speaking females, it might reveal, if non-native English speaking females use politeness strategies differently, and Brown & Levinson's detailed strategies are the best tools to observe the changes.

2. HEDGES

The term *hedge* originated from the work of Zadeh (1965) about fuzzy logic. The researcher explored the objects that at that time could not be related to any linguistic category which is used to describe the world around us. However, only in 1972 George Lakoff, who is now considered to be the pioneer of this phenomenon, referred to the hedge as a device that made expressions more or less fuzzy (1972, 271), thus beginning to examine hedges from linguistic point of view. At that time, since the hedges were not widely researched, only a few words and phrases were referred to as hedges, and those were the words that had the ability to modify the degree of belonging which included phrases *sort of*, *rather*, *kind of*, and others. In the example of 'whales are more or less mammals' on the one hand, there exists a claim that whales are mammals, but at the same time it is implied that they are not fully mammals, or that they can belong to the group of mammals more likely than any other groups or vice versa.

This kind of view on the hedges was purely semantic and excluded other factors, such as lexical, grammatical or pragmatic.

2.1 Hedges and Grice's maxims

Mauranen (2004, 173) referred to hedges or hedging as a pragmatic phenomenon and connected it to politeness. However, whether the hedge is treated as a hedge or as a part of politeness strategy depends on the context and researcher's point of view. Although various definitions about what the hedge is can be found in the works of the linguists, it is still hard to distinguish only one of them, since not every researcher approves of the term *hedge*, and prefers to use other terms, such as *stance marker* (Atkinson, 1999), *evidentiality* (Chafe, 1986), *mitigation* (Stubbs, 1983) or *vagueness* (Myers, 1996), to name just a few. In the Oxford's Dictionary the noun *hedge* has the common definition of 'a way of protecting yourself' (2010, 723) which on the one hand might be related to the hedge as a physical object or the linguistic hedge, which is analyzed in the research. However, such definition is quite vague. In the English Oxford Living Dictionary, on the other hand, in the definition of a hedge there is already included the pragmatic meaning of the device - 'a word or phrase used to avoid overprecise commitment', whereas in many textbooks, definition such as "a mitigating word, sound or construction used to lessen the impact of an utterance due to constraints on the interaction between speaker and addressee" (Grundy, 2000) is more preferable.

In his research, Yang (2013, 23) states that hedging is "one of the most prominent strategies of mitigating knowledge claims by allowing the writer to express tentativeness and possibility." Although Yang (2013) refers to writing, the same statement is applicable to the spoken communications. Hyland (2005, 49) views hedges as mitigating devices that allow the conversations to remain active, without judging other people's opinions, but rather putting them up for discussion. Whereas Holmes (1990) claims that hedging is used to "mitigate the force of an utterance 'for the sake of politeness'" (ibid., 185). In the previous chapter about politeness, hedging was mentioned as part of the negative politeness strategy. However, Holmes (1990) and Mauranen (2004) as an example, are only a few of the researchers who claim that hedging should be treated as part of politeness. House & Kasper also compare the functions of hedges to the functions of politeness "<...> one defensive and ego-oriented, the other protective or alter-oriented are fulfilled by politeness" (1981, 157).

In this research, however, since the politeness strategy which serves as the basis is taken from Brown & Levinson, and it has clear situations of use, hedging will be treated as a

different notion, with the exception of hedging used as part of negative politeness, which will be based on the context of interactions.

Any kind of interaction is based on cooperation (Grice 1989, 26) where speakers and hearers try to comprehend what is said and accordingly reply to the speaker. Therefore, hedging is usually seen as the way of flouting the Grice's maxims (ibid.) of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. The maxim of Quantity is the information that needs to be conveyed in order to meet the needs of the hearer or speaker – provide as much information as is necessary. The maxim of Quality requires the person to be truthful – not to provide information which one believes is false or lacks the evidence to prove it to be correct. The maxim of Relation requires a person to be relevant – any kind of response, must be connected to the discussed topic. And, finally the last maxim is the maxim of Manner which demands to avoid ambiguity. However, since people do not hold the infinite knowledge, situations arise in which the rules of the maxims must be mended, in order for the conversation to continue.

This is where the hedging of the maxims takes place. For every maxim there exists the corresponding hedge. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), particular hedges are used to flout a particular maxim. Quality hedges allow the speaker to either fully commit the speaker to the truthfulness of his/her statement or on the opposite – indicate that the speaker does not take full responsibility for the provided statements by using the hedges such as *I think, I believe, it seems*, etc. Quantity hedges include words that provide the hint about the amount of the information which is true or false, for example, *more or less, approximately, to some extent, in short, basically* and others. Relevance hedges might be treated as the shift in the topic, in order to lessen the impositions on the hearer's or speaker's face, by using the words such as *by the way, anyway, while I remember, this may not seem relevant, but..* and similar utterances followed by the change of the topic either completely, or only slightly. Finally, Manner hedges are used to clear misunderstandings if it seems that someone could have taken the statement in the wrong way – *what I meant was, you see, OK? Is that clear? To put it more simply*, etc. This kind of grouping the hedges according to the maxims that they flout is comfortable and clear, however, without being in direct communication with the speaker, it is not always possible to know completely whether the hedge, that was used, was integrated in order to flout maxim, or the speaker had other reasons behind the action.

2.2 Categorization of hedges

Namasaraev (1997, 67) provided a characterization of the hedging strategies, which could be used in a research without connecting hedges to the maxims, but rather the context or situation overall:

- Indetermination. Adds a degree of uncertainty or fuzziness to an utterance (longer utterance or a single word);
- Depersonalisation. Avoidance of direct reference by the use of inclusive *we* or impersonal words such as the researchers/authors, etc.;
- Subjectivisation. The use of personal pronoun I + verbs of thinking (*think, suppose, assume*, etc.). Serves as a signal of the subjectivity of the term, stating that it is only an opinion, rather than absolute truth;
- Limitation. Removal of the vagueness or fuzziness by a limitation.

Although such categorization can be used in the research, it involves certain risks. And one of the major risks is the fact that this research deals with the native and non-native English speakers, and therefore, some of the hedges as well as politeness strategies might be transferred from one language and culture (native language) to another (English). For this reason, lexical and grammatical patterns are better suited for achieving validity of the results.

Zuck and Zuck (1986) proposed a list of items that are usually used as hedges, and have a difference in their degree of probability or certainty. The categories were:

- Auxiliaries (*may, might, could*);
- Semi-auxiliaries (*seem, appear*);
- Full verbs (*suggest*);
- Passive voice;
- Adverbs and adverbials (*probably, relatively, almost*);
- Adjectives;
- Indefinite nouns and pronouns.

Two years later, Markannen and Schroder (1987) produced a similar list of items, however added a few specifications of their own. They claimed that, apart from the provided list, the usage of a particular word (pronoun, noun, verb) and avoidance of another, as well as a specific choice of a vocabulary can also be treated as the manifestation of hedges.

In a more recent study, Bloomer & Bloomer (2007, 103) proposed that hedges can be put into three large categories:

- a) approximators (roughly, approximately, sort of, more or less, about);
- b) modality (may, might, could, should, possibly, probably);
- c) perceptive verbs (think, believe, suppose).

However, it is presumed that there might arise the examples of the utterances that would be difficult to categorize therefore, a wider and more detailed categorisation should be applied.

Heng & Tan (2002) devised the categorisation that was similar to the Zuck and Zuck's (1985) list, but included a description of where the hedges are usually found:

1. Adverbials

The researchers stated that if adverbial functions as a hedge, then usually (but not always) the adverbial will either modify an adjective, or will be following the verb. Less frequently, adverbials such as *generally* modify the complete idea or a sentence.

2. Epistemic verbs

Epistemic verbs are such verbs which do not perform a physical action (*throw, catch, drink*) and have a following obligatory clausal structure 'that' or infinitive.

3. Modal verbs

Modal verbs are used to express probability, suggestion or possibility. The researchers provide the gradation of the 'strength' of the modals (from strongest to the weakest): *had better, should have, could, might*. They also note, that can and could although express the probability, however, the denotative meaning of the 'can' is stronger than the modal's 'could'.

4. Cognition verbs

Cognition verbs are used in order to display one's stance in the conversation. Although it might not be the display of opinion that cannot be changed, it does demonstrate that the opinion is formed, and some reasoning might be provided behind the proposition. Typical construction of the cognition verbs used as hedges are the personal pronouns that precede the verbs and the following the verb 'that' clause.

5. Hypothetical Constructions

Typically, hypothetical constructions can be identified by the 'if' clause, or similar utterances that provide conditions – even, whether, unless, wish.

6. Anticipatory it-clause

It-clause constructions can frequently be found at the beginning of the sentences, which also is called the ‘dummy’ subject. The substitution of ‘it’ for ‘there’ is also a common practice among the English speakers, and because of that, for this research, the anticipatory it-clause will be addressed as a general ‘anticipatory clause’.

By applying this categorisation an insight will be gained about whether non-native speakers use the same hedging patterns as native speakers or not. Although Brown and Levinson claimed that hedging in conversations is not limited to certain lists but can have an infinite other forms of realisations (1987, 146), some kind of a categorisation and reference point is needed in order to conduct a research.

Treating hedges as a way to flout Grice’s Maxims and using this view to select hedges from the corpus, has a risk of being interpreted incorrectly. Just as in the case with the politeness, if the hedge is used which is found under the category of Quality, and it states that it is used because it is not known whether the statement is correct or incorrect, it is not known whether the hedge was used for this reason, especially by a non-native speaker. Therefore, it is assumed that the categorization of hedges by Heng & Tan (2002) would provide the most accurate results and will be employed in this research.

3. WOMEN’S LANGUAGE AND ACADEMIC SETTING

As has already been stated, there are as many different definitions of hedges as there are of politeness. Since both of the phenomena are culturally predetermined, different usage occurs not only in different cultures, but also it is dependent on the gender of the speaker and the genre / setting it is used in.

Researchers that studied the use of hedges by non-native speakers (De Cock et al. 1998; Metsä-Ketelä, 2006) although used to refer to hedges as ‘vagueness expression’ (De Cock et al. 1998), or ‘lexical vagueness’ (Metsä-Ketelä, 2006) concluded that indeed, non-native speakers do use the hedges differently than native speakers. However, that was not always the case. Considerable quantitative differences were found by analysing speakers whose native language was French (ibid. 1998) and Finnish (Nikula 1997). Whereas Cheng and Warren (2001) claimed that in studying English speakers, whose first language was Cantonese, they did not find a considerable difference in usage of hedges.

Šeškauskienė (2008) carried out a research about the usage of hedges by Lithuanian undergraduate students who majored in English. The results showed that “hedging in L2 of proficient users of English has not been less frequent than the average frequency of hedging in

the papers of competent users of English and acknowledged researchers in both hard and soft sciences” (ibid., 75).

It is clear from the previous chapters that context is important for both – politeness and hedging. In order for the results of the research to be valid, the context or the setting must be the same or at least similar. Varttala (2001) investigated the use of hedges in academic discourse and discovered that the function of hedging devices and the meaning of the hedges themselves is the reason behind their frequent usage (2001, 67). In the earlier study, Hübler (1983) explained that with time, researches might be expanded, proven wrong or right, as well as harshly criticised, especially if the ideas are new or revolutionary. Therefore, the use of hedges allows the researchers to gain sympathy from the audience and lessen the impact of expected negative responses, making them frequently appear in the academic discourse.

Hyland (1998) reasons that the facts that are presented to the audience must be presented in a way which will be “as acceptable as possible” (ibid., ix). Meyer (as cited in Markkanen and Schröder, 1997) called this phrasing of facts ‘strengthening the argument by weakening the claim’. It can be argued, that the statement by Meyer relates hedging to some aspect of politeness, if, for example, Goffman’s (2005) definition of politeness is taken into account which involves considerateness and self-respect. Considerateness is expressed by weakening the claim, which shows the audience that their opinion on the matter is welcomed and that the claim which the speaker provides might be up for changes. However, when self-respect comes into account, strengthening of the argument takes place – the researcher spent his time by compiling the facts and therefore, the results that one presents will not be easily cast away, because someone has other opinions: opinions are welcome, but some emphasis of the stronger facts will be made, because self-respect demands the person to be acknowledged. Finally, the research conducted by Jensen (2008) proved that apart from the use of hedges provided above, these devices can even increase the credibility of the research results. Therefore, although some might believe that in the academic language researchers and speakers should avoid hedges and politeness strategies and use more of a straight-forward language and statements which do not leave any space for speculation, linguists proved that in reality, hedges and politeness are the main strategies that the researchers like to employ in academic setting.

Various researchers (Goddard & Patterson, 2000; Jespersen, 1922) investigated language differences between females’ and males’ conversations and provided evidences that the differences truly exist. Weiss (2015) analysed one speech of a woman in the ‘Most Powerful Women Summit interviews’ and noted the frequently used word *think*. Although the word has a meaning of having a particular idea or a belief (Oxford, 2010, 1608), in the

analysed interview, the point was made that because of the fact that it was used by women, it was considered to signal submissiveness and have been labelled as ‘tentative speech’ – hedging or a cautious language (Austin, 2014). Lakoff (1973 distinguished the following ten features, which constitute ‘Women’s Language’:

1. Lexical hedges or fillers (*you know, sort of, well, you see*);
2. Tag questions (*She’s very nice, isn’t she?*);
3. Rising intonation on declaratives (*It’s really good?*);
4. “Empty” adjectives (*divine, charming, cute*);
5. Precise colour terms (*magenta, aquamarine*);
6. Intensifiers (*I like him so much*);
7. ‘Hypercorrect’ grammar (*consistent use of standard verb forms*);
8. ‘Superpolite’ forms (*indirect requests, euphemisms*);
9. Avoidance of strong swear words (*fudge, my goodness*);
10. Emphatic stress (*It was a BRILLIANT performance*).

Both hedges and politeness are a typical manifestation of female language, as stated by the Lakoff (1973). However, hedges, especially in academic setting can be used more or less equally by both males and females, and some researchers (Holmes, 2013) believe that patterns of linguistic politeness primarily are shaped by women, because of the common believe that men exercise power through language more obviously than women, who tend to use a gentler way of expressing ideas. From Goroshko’s (1999, 18) research was taken and translated into English some features of male speech strategies:

1. Initiating and receiving more verbal and non-verbal interaction than women;
2. Introducing more topics while talking with other people;
3. Interrupting and disputing more frequently;
4. Giving monosyllabic responses;
5. Ignoring another person’s remarks;
6. Making one’s point directly, explicitly, and rationally;
7. Being dogmatic;
8. Being reserved.

As can be seen, if this research aims at investigating hedges and politeness strategies, the best choice would be female speakers, since otherwise, from the interruptions, ignoring

remarks and giving monosyllabic responses there will not be enough relevant data from which to make an analysis

Also, in the article (*ibid.*) were found vocabulary and syntactic structures which are used by men and women. As the author states, men frequently use:

- a) slang,
- b) obscene words,
- c) terms,
- d) simple, sometimes incorrect sentences.

Whereas women use:

- a) effect and emotively charged words,
- b) exclamations,
- c) intensifiers (*so, such, etc.*),
- d) diminutive forms and terms of endearment,
- e) deferential forms,
- f) socially prestigious lexical and syntactic forms,
- g) forms of politeness,
- h) tag questions,
- i) coordinate and subordinate syntactic structure.

This list is not complete, as there exist far more peculiarities of the male and female's language. However, this is enough to see and understand, that if someone wants to study language, one must take into consideration many factors, and if for, example the aim of this study was to investigate slang, then the focus of this research would have been conversations of the males. However, since this research paper studies politeness and hedges, strictly female speakers were chosen for the main analysis. The people with whom the speakers interact does not necessarily had to be females as well.

Although some researches provide evidence that politeness is not dependent on the gender alone, but the social status and how much 'power' one person has over another also plays an important role. Hobbs (2003) investigates voice mail messages that were left by the people with the same status as her (men and women), and stated that there was only a slight difference between males' and females' use of politeness.

This research has many constituents. First constituents are hedges and politeness strategies. They were explained in the Chapters 1 and 2. Another constituent is English speaking females. As was described above, females have more favourable conditions of the language peculiarities for the investigation of hedges and politeness. Finally, in order to exclude the variations of different language use – formal and informal language, dialects (which might become problematic if the unknown or not understandable word is found) and other factors, academic setting was chosen to set the research into frames and provide to everyone equal ground: in the academic setting everyone is equal (there is no social status, such as being poor or rich differentiation, discrimination, etc.) and a certain language frame is set – in the academic setting everyone must use formal language, thus putting everyone into more or less equal footing of using full sentences and being polite and respectful.

4. THE ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES AND HEDGES IN ACADEMIC SETTING

4.1 Methodology

For the analysis were chosen highly interactive, mostly interactive or mixed types of recorded conversations from the 'Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English'. In total, were analysed 18,211 words of non-native English speaking females' interactions and 21,773 of native English speaking females from different transcripts. In the corpus were provided many conversations for the study of native speakers' politeness strategies and hedges, since mainly in the transcripts dominated students with English as their native language. Thus, firstly, the transcripts containing non-native English speakers were gathered, which in total, resulted in 7 transcripts and 8 non-native speakers. The speakers' age varied from 17 to 50. The same amount of native speakers was chosen from 5 transcripts, since their overall recording time was usually longer and although in the same transcript could have been found ten or more female native speakers, many of them were not taken into the analysis, since the total length of their speeches did not reach to the minimum amount set by the author of this research of at least 300 words, or consisted mainly of one word replies, like *okay*, *yes*, *I'm confused* and *mmhmm*.

In this chapter of the research are presented only the most frequent, or most peculiar examples of the strategies and hedges which were found in the corpus, however the full list (with repetitions) of the found strategies and mitigating words can be found in the Appendices section (see Appendices 1 & 2).

The research was carries out as follows:

- 1) In the 'MiCASE' corpus was set the criteria of the transcripts: gender of the speaker (female), status of the English language (native or non-native) and interactivity rating (highly / mostly interactive / mixed);
- 2) From the transcripts were gathered speeches of the native and non-native English speaking females;
- 3) The corpus was then read and politeness strategies and hedges were identified and picked out;
- 4) If there was a need, the transcript was accessed on the website to see what was the response which triggered the use of the strategy or hedge;
- 5) The results were described and compared.

Native speakers will be numbered from one to eight (*S1*, *S2*, *etc.*) while non-native speakers will be assigned alphabetic letters (*SA*, *SB*, *etc.*).

This chapter consists of three parts: the first part is about the use of politeness strategies and hedges by native speakers, the second – non-native speakers' politeness strategies and hedges and the last one compares the research findings.

4.2 Politeness strategies and hedges in native English speaking females' conversations

In this sub-chapter are presented the analysis of the politeness strategies and hedges of native English speakers.

The youngest females were both senior undergraduate students. Their conversations were analysed from the lecture "Principles in Sociology". In total, fifty students were present in the lecture and the interaction was recorded only between sixteen speakers. The instructor started the lecture and after the introduction of the main topic and having some discussions asked students to form groups of four or five people, and discuss some questions.

In the interactions of the first female (Speaker 1 or S1) were found 18 politeness strategy examples and 4 hedges, resulting in 22 examples in total. The speaker mainly used bald on-record and positive politeness strategies. Since their discussion time was limited, in the speech of the female prevailed bald on-record efficiency strategy, which in some cases was followed by additional gestures like pointing to something: *right here it says, just listen to me, you're going off topic.*

Positive politeness strategy was employed to seek an agreement: *bourgeoi- is that how you say it? They didn't realize that they had to keep their workers happy, right?* It is of note, that in the four people group, Speaker 1 was the only female, and whenever two different opinions clashed, she inserted her argument, why one or another opinion was better than the other and other participants of the group complied with the decision of the speaker. The female had to repeat herself a few times, since she was interrupted by her group mates, however the repetitive use of politeness strategy or the hedge was counted twice but only as one unit, because the idea that she wanted to convey was not fully expressed.

From the hedges the female used anticipatory clauses most frequently: *it takes forming classes; it was the minority that...; it's the most revolutionary part.* On the other hand, when speaking with the Instructor, the female used only one hedge which also was an anticipatory clause: *it was just the owners of major factories since...* The female was not sure whether her answer was right or wrong, therefore she used hedge instead of stating that only the owners of the factories did something, as her further speech ended with a sentence that admits that her claims were only a speculation and asked the teacher to reveal whether her opinion was right or wrong. Overall, speaker 1 used politeness and hedges while communicating with group

mates, while in the conversation with the Instructor she used simple statements and one hedge to conclude her idea.

Speaker 2 was in a five people group with one other female. For her group, she was the main speaker, and in her conversations, compared to Speaker 1 results, were found more examples of politeness strategies and hedges. From positive politeness strategy she used jokes while speaking to the Instructor: *hey I don't know what they're doing but I'm not a part of any of it*, giving and asking for reasons: *why not do it now? Because no one wants that*; and two metaphors were found: *It is not what it was yesterday; they are getting crumbs*. This off-record strategy was used to draw a conclusion about the topic that the speaker discussed and presented with a group. During the lecture they compared and discussed how the world changed over the previous years, from having typewriters to the invention of the internet and from the strong division between bourgeoisie and the worker-class people. So, although it could have been treated like a simple statement the context that preceded and followed the expression, stated otherwise.

When Instructor dismissed students, the speaker, while continuing the last topic that they discussed as a group, started to speak about her life and began to use many rhetorical questions, which she did not use while the lecture was in progress. Nonetheless, the Instructor was still present in the room, and other students could also participate in the conversation between S2 and her male classmate:

“Right? What’s all the fuss for? Isn’t he happy with what he got? Then what’s the point of you? I’m struggling for what? Or do they say that the world gonna blow up in two thousand so everybody can tear it up again?” Indirect strategy is used to take some of the pressure off the speaker and can make one’s speech ambiguous. In this case, there is no need to take the stress off from the speaker, since she only provides her opinion, thus it is assumed that this particular strategy was used to make the speech ambiguous without providing some particular answers to the questions and making a better connection with the listener as he or she might relate better by choosing answers relevant to them.

From the hedging patterns, in the speech of Speaker 2 were found epistemic verbs (*I think that, I didn’t realize that*), hypothetical constructions (*If you wanna make...; If you don’t come*) and anticipatory clauses (*It’s better than being at home selling drugs or being in jail somewhere*). Epistemic verbs and hypothetical constructions were used in the group discussion, while anticipatory clauses were found in the interaction after the dismissal of the class. As can be seen from the quotations with hedges, epistemic verbs and hypothetical constructions expressed the thought and opinions of the speaker without imposing them as an absolute truth. Anticipatory clauses, on the other hand, express statements which have hints

that the speaker has experienced the situations herself or know this from common knowledge. Unfortunately, in the later conversations the truth was not revealed, as although the listener tried to ask how the speaker knows that, there was no response – only a laugh. In total, in the speaker's 2 interactions were found 31 examples – 18 politeness strategies and 15 hedges.

The second age group (24-30) also has two people. The conversations of the two speakers were taken from the transcript about anthropology of American cities. Speaker 3 was a senior graduate student, who had the role of the Instructor. Another female was a senior undergraduate student. In the transcript were recorded the conversations between seven people, five of which were students.

This particular transcript has the longest recording duration. If the whole transcript was taken up for analysis, it would grant a big number of examples for the native speakers' use of politeness strategies and hedges. In order to even the amount of analysed data, only two fragments of the transcript were picked out. The conversations were fragmented, with a pause after each student, which allowed to have complete conversations, instead of having to cut them somewhere in the middle.

Speaker 3 had a role of an Instructor, and she taught the students the subject of Anthropology. Each one of them was meeting her to discuss their research paper, and she acted as an advisor, discussing strong and weak points of their research paper as well as asking and answering some of the questions. The first conversation the speaker had was with a male student.

The most numerous group in the interaction of Speaker 3 was exaggeration of the interest from positive politeness strategy: *excellent, interesting, wow, good, great, fantastic, amazing*. Since the speaker interacts with each student individually, there was not found a variety of different strategies or hedging patterns, but rather the repetition of them while communicating with different students.

When standing alone, exaggeration words could express genuine interest, however, taking into account the phrases and statements that precede these words, these expressions were counted as exaggeration. For example, the student was telling about how he managed to get the results of the research, and stated that someone talked his ear off, and the speaker commented on it "*fantastic*". Exaggerations were inserted into the middle of the students' speeches, or overlapping with the ending of their replies. Since positive politeness is used to lessen the threat and impact to the hearer's positive face, the speaker while reading the paper which the student submitted, used this linguistic mean to show that she is listening and at the same time encouraged the student to keep talking.

In the conversation with another student who was a female, since the place that they were discussing, was familiar to the Speaker 3, dominating strategy was presupposing or raising common ground referring to the fact, that the speaker was there, and saw what the listener saw, and there is no need to explain the issue in details. Some notable examples are: *That does sounds confusing; yes, that's a good start; That's not so complicated, as you think; no, it doesn't change your argument; etc.* Speaker 3 always found a way to avoid being straightforward, although there were some statements or ideas that she was not agreeing with and instead of saying, that this part here is not appropriate, or that the student should rethink his choices, chose to give sympathy to the hearer: *I worry, whether you are capturing by interviewing your grandmother, what people do in Howell, or whether you're capturing an older form of socializing.* This choice of strategy allows the students not to lose confidence in their work, and the speaker lessens the negative impact of her following statements. It makes them not sound as something which is necessarily required to do, but rather suggests to look at work from a different angle.

A few cases of rhetorical questions for students to think, offers and promises (*I will be on that email forever*), tautologies (*and ever and ever*) and giving hints (*was there anything of interest?*) were found in the conversation with another female but not the male. These strategies usually occurred near the end of the conversation, where main questions and suggestions have been exhausted, and some lighter mood takes place.

Similarly like exaggeration, many uses of adverbials were found throughout the transcript: *Necessarily, basically, clearly, directly, mostly, perfectly, visually, obviously.* These hedges were used to modify the sentence in order to weaken the claim (*basically, not necessarily, differently*) or to give strength to it (*it was done perfectly, it is appealing visually, etc.*).

The speaker used epistemic verbs and modal verbs, however modal verbs were found by two instances more. She always left room for the listener to decide whether he or she wants to do something that the Speaker suggested: *I think that, you see that, why you described that.., or you might wanna, you should think more.., it might work, you could go, you should do that.*

It is interesting to see how the listeners react to the suggestions of the Instructor, since she will be the one assessing this work when it would have been completed, therefore all her suggestions should be considered. Of course, there is always the fact of possibility – whether or not the listener would be able to do what the Speaker suggested, however, quite often after the suggestions of the speaker, the students would either ask about other aspect which they could replace the one proposed by the speaker, or simply state that they would think about it. This last response the speaker seems to take as a sign that the student does not clearly

understand what was offered to him, since the instructor then comments in a few sentences about her last proposal using hedges and after changes the topic by asking something or continuing to comment on the rest of the work, or asking the student to comment on it.

Speaker 4, who had an interaction with Speaker 3, used mostly hedging patterns consisting of modal verbs. When she was being asked a question, or suggested something she answered without being fully sure, or rather not wanting to comment on something: *I'll have to think about it, you might be right, I could've asked, I should've noted..* On the other hand, when asked to comment about specific parts of her thesis, emerged constructions with anticipatory clauses: *it's the little Japanese toy, It's just a really vague.., it was a great class, it was good, there was a lot of racial pride.* Adverbials were also seen in the speech of speaker 4, however, they were not that many. The student, even if she did not agree with the instructor's ideas, did not show it, deciding to agree with her on everything. The student was avoiding disagreement, by using such positive politeness constructions: *yes, they did have that distinct colour on their merchandise; yes, the weather was lovely; no there really was only one shop.* Again, the student did not even once disagree or say that, for example, she did not remember something that happened at the place which the instructor and the speaker were discussing. Nonetheless, at the end of the conversation when they stopped discussing the research and had a small conversation about speaker's 4 future plans, she felt more at ease and stopped using hedges or politeness strategies.

The remaining four speakers were all in an age group 3 (31-50). Conversations for the analysis were taken from three transcripts: two speakers from the "Career Planning and Placement Workshop", one from "Graduate Student Research Interview" and one more from "Forum for International Educator's Meeting". Speaker five from career planning workshop was a staff member and one of the facilitators of the workshop. In total, the workshop had 12 speakers. Speaker five had more of a monitoring role in the transcript. She had conversations with other presenters and her colleagues, from time to time commented on something and asked questions. When asking questions she used negative politeness strategy of minimizing the imposition. One particular example needs to be analysed: *Could I ask a question before we get started?* In the theoretical part, negative politeness was said to be used when a negative response is anticipated instead of a positive one. The use of this politeness strategy also implies that the question itself is not that urgent and might be postponed. However, as an observation, it can be noted, that the question that followed was addressed to the audience, and was meant to find out how many students were participating in order to decide whether they want to pursue academic or non-academic career. Thus, although the question was not asked repeatedly at the end of the workshop, even if it was primarily asked only at the end,

the results of the students that raised their hands could be different. The speaker had a good reason to choose this particular time to ask this question and although this strategy could be substituted with a bald on-record and the female could just claim that she needs to ask the question and ask it without waiting for a response, it is assumed that since the speaker had a particular role (being a monitor) she did not want to impose on others and chose to be considerate.

Later, after one of the speaker's speech, Speaker 5 used negative politeness' indirect strategy, by revealing some of the information that she knows about the presenter's past and then asking to comment some aspects: *I know that you, taught at Spelman before coming to University of Michigan I was wondering if you could, comment on the differences of teaching in Spelman and Michigan?* Again, the speaker was ready to get negative response because the presenter might have some personal or other reasons behind not wanting to talk about her previous workplace while maintaining both of their faces.

In Speaker's 5 interactions only modal verbs and hypothetical constructions were used as hedges. They were employed mainly to suggest something: *you might be interested, you could do that, or..., maybe you could; if you could elaborate.* The speaker used modal verbs to leave the final decision to the addressee while she just suggested some variants, depending on the topic of conversations. Hypothetical constructions, on the other hand directly asked the listener to do something, however, not in the same bold way as would be achieved by the use of bold on-record strategy.

Speaker 6 was a senior faculty member and a panellist. The aim of her speech was to inspire listeners to pursue their dreams and also give some advice and guidance. So, in her speeches were found bald on-record strategies such as offers: *who wants to tell me what they think that is?* and task-oriented expressions: *tell me some of your interests? Somebody who's familiar with James Baldwin tell me who that is.* The reasons behind the choice of strategies can be the following: a) while asking about particular person, or an opinion about the discussed teaching method, the speaker did not want to pick a student and get make him / her feel uncomfortable or b) instead of wasting time by picking students and seeing that they might not know what to say, it is easier and less time consuming to just allow listeners to gather their courage and share their knowledge about the subject. In the speech of speaker 6 were found some rhetorical questions, which might have helped her to understand from the reaction of the students, how many of them understand what is being said, and then ask questions which would make the points of her speech understandable for the audience. Some of the frequent rhetorical questions that were found, were: *you know? Right? Yes? No?* and the reason for the use of strategy was to help the speaker to convey the main points of her

speech: *It's the same thing, isn't it? How many days a week I have to teach? How many hours do I have to spend? Who wants to be on the spot?* Rhetorical questions allowed the speaker to show to the students that she knows what they want to know, and answered their questions before they could ask them.

Following rhetorical questions, many cases of tautologies were discovered: *you keep plumbing and plumbing and plumbing, when it happens it happens, it is this and this and this.* Speaker was using off-record strategy to put emphasis on some particular aspects of her speech, allowing the audience to understand the difficulty of the process of career planning and at the same time stating, that sometimes things happen which are out of their control and that should not discourage them from moving forward.

One case of negative politeness (being pessimistic) was found: *I bet you wouldn't pick it up you wouldn't you know it wouldn't be of any interest to you and you'd never think, that something that said Colored Contradictions would have an impact on your life.* Since as Bousfield (2008, 57) said that the negative politeness is used when the speaker wants to have his freedom to speak and at the same time lessen the imposition on the hearer, Speaker 1 did not want to offend the students or imply something which they might have interpreted differently than she intended, and negative politeness also saved the Speaker's face in case if the book which she referred to or the speaker herself would have been criticized.

The speaker's second most preferred politeness strategy was positive politeness, which involved attending to hearer's interests, jokes and being optimistic. While speaking to other presenters and the audience the speaker tried to be considerate of other people's needs: *would you like to start? Did you have your hand up? Does everybody know who Amiri Baraka is?*

Quite often speaker insert one or two jokes into their speech. The reasons behind that vary from person to person. What concerns the reason behind the jokes of the speaker 6 – they allowed to lift the mood, as well as emphasize that some problems that they might face in the future can be solved with the right attitude: *all I can say is that you have to just navigate your way through like you are walking through a landmine; you never couch it in terms of oh I have to go see you know the premier of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, I have the tickets.*

Graduating can be a scary experience for some, therefore an optimistic approach or even an encouragement can give the students the confidence which they need: *you can have the academic life that you want. I know that you can; so whatever you decide to do, with your, with your fine minds and this wonderful education that you, have been given, here in this institution, i hope that, you will consider, utilizing part of your energy, to teach. to give back, to pass on.* Not every student will become or even consider to become a teacher in the future, and the speaker understands that. So, instead of pressuring them that they must give back and

decide to pursue only academic future, she gives them the freedom to decide on their own, with hints that though they are free to decide, it would be great if the students would become teachers.

In the conversations of Speaker 6, the hedges that were found, could be said to be complementary to the use of the off-record politeness strategy, especially in the case of rhetorical questions. For example, in the speech of Speaker 6 prevailed modal verbs (*I could, you may have heard, you would think, I hope we can have some questions*, etc.), and a few hypothetical constructions: *how many of you, if any of you.., if you become a teacher*. Hypothetical constructions allowed the speaker to make students imagine future situations without the need of them having fully decided which career to pursue after graduation. Otherwise, some students might get into negative mood and refuse to cooperate while having questions like why do they need to think about teaching, if they are not going to teach and other similar questions. Thus, by the alternation between hedges and rhetorical questions, the speaker could have the students' attention and at the same time making the students less opposed to her propositions, since the speaker only suggested to do that, and if they want to try something us completely up to them.

Speaker 7 was a junior faculty teacher who in the "Graduate Student Research Interview" was in a role of an interviewer. She had an interview with a male student about his research, and while they discussed it, they also got to know each other where the teacher asked the male how he picked Michigan's University, the speaker's comments on the teacher-student relationship, the reasons behind the behaviours of the people in power and asking questions. The most frequently used politeness strategy was positive politeness and it was used in the situations to give gifts to the hearer (sympathy and understanding). The listener mainly spoke about how he got into the University of Michigan and told about the experiences with other universities, which were not pleasant. Speaker 7 on the one hand supported the students, however at the same time, provided some reasoning behind the behaviour of other universities' staff behaviour: *I think that's a cultural thing; I like that sense of equality in the classroom, but we aren't equal; you know how crucial they are* – instead of taking someone's side, the speaker tried to reason with the Hearer, by minimising the threat of her words. When the Hearer said that he was in a conflict with one of the professors, she did not claim that the student or the professor was right, but rather provided logical arguments of inequality.

Not many hedges were found in the speech of Speaker 7 – a few adverbials (*perfectly, actually, practically, certainly*) and one hypothetical construction *If there's anything like that*.

Speaker 8 took participation in “Forum for International Educators Meeting”. The Speaker was a staff member and a participant. In her conversations were found jokes: *we've got your name and number; Martha is, leaving us which is why she's going to remain silent; she's getting out just at the right time*. There was an important issue that the group discussed, and to lighten the mood and to insert something which was not related to the topic of the discussion, speaker commented about her colleague Martha's leave. Throughout the transcript the speaker also tried to be optimistic: *they said they were looking into the matter, so I hope it will be resolved soon; I hoped I would get an answer here, but that's great; he will finally do something; I'm looking forward to doing that*. The main topic for the discussion was about financing the foreign students who come to study at the university. There were some students who had to drop off from the university, or go abroad (home) to try to gather some money and then return to their studies again, so the overall mood of the transcript was not very positive. It could have been seen, that the speaker was worried about the students and sought some hopeful information from her colleagues, while trying to be optimistic herself.

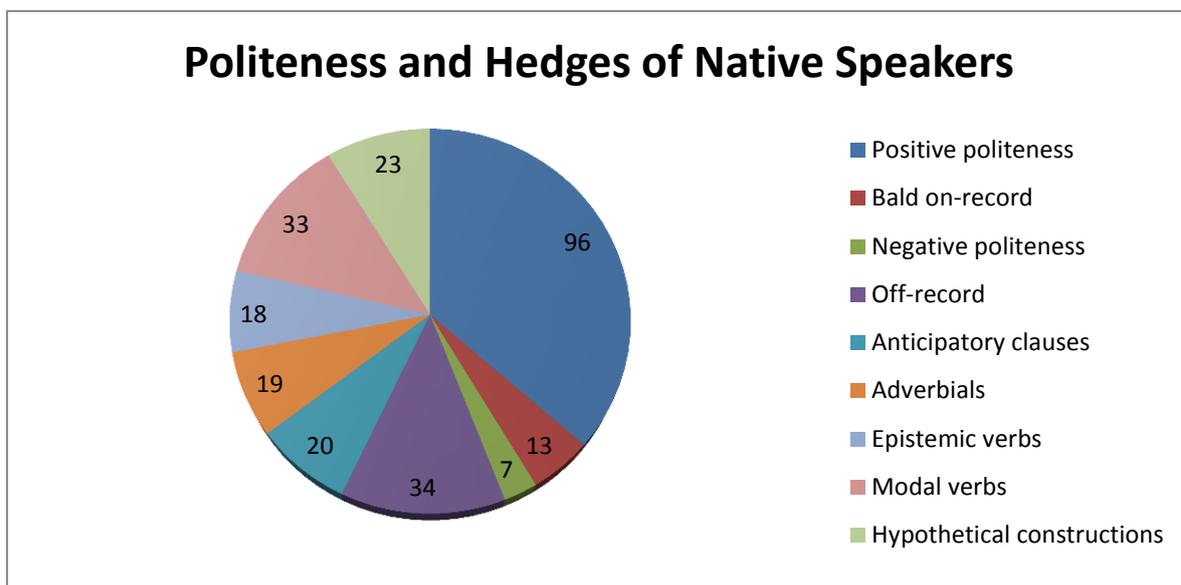
Off-record strategy was used only once and was expressed through metaphor: *I knew you were swamped with work*. The metaphor was used to explain why the speaker went off topic, and as it was revealed later, the work, which the addressee was ‘swamped with’ was just an excuse to cover the speaker's friend which was asked by the one of the member why she was not present last time. Although everyone else in the room thought that the addressee was really working, it was not really the case.

Hedges consisted of three groups – epistemic verbs: *I think that, I believe that, you know that, I agree that, I admit that, I did not think that, I remember that*; anticipatory clauses: *It was right after, it happened last autumn, there was an incident, it was decided, it is settled then, It's all up in the air*; and hypothetical constructions: *If we get inquiries, if they've done, if you want information*. The speaker used epistemic and hypothetical constructions whenever she was not completely sure about the truthfulness of her answer. This conclusion was made from the fact, that overall, her speech was quite confident while presenting facts about one or another issue, however, when she was asked a question, speaker did not claim that she was told, or she read something, but chose to use hedges to signal to the hearers that what she says might not be fully true or simply directed the hearers with their questions to the people who could answer them properly. Anticipatory clauses were used to state the facts without the need to repeat something unpleasant in most of the cases.

In total, 263 occurrences of politeness strategies and hedges were collected from the eight speakers' transcripts. Politeness was used in 150 sentences while hedges were used in

113. In the diagram below (see: Figure 1) are presented the overall results of the used linguistic means by all 8 native English speakers.

Figure 1. Politeness and hedges of native English speaking females



As can be seen, in the conversations of 8 native English speaking females, politeness strategies were used more often than the hedges. From the politeness strategies, the positive politeness was employed by the speakers in 96 sentences, making it the most numerous group, following it was off-record strategy with 34 instances in the sentences, then bald on-record with 13 and finally negative politeness with only 7. Politeness strategies mostly were used in situations when the speaker wanted to avoid disagreement, asked rhetorical questions in order to not threaten the listener if he or she would not be able to answer the question and jokes.

From the hedges, most frequently used were modal verbs with 33 instances, hypothetical constructions with 23, anticipatory clauses 20, and adverbials and epistemic verbs following closely behind with 19 and 18 accordingly. No instances of cognition verbs as hedges were found.

4.3 Hedges and politeness strategies in non-native English speaking females' conversations

For the analysis of non-native English speakers' use of politeness and hedges were selected eight speakers which will be named in the alphabetical order beginning with Speaker A to Speaker H. The speakers had the following first languages: Korean, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, Thai and Hindi.

The females in the age group 1 were both senior undergraduate students. Speaker A, whose native language was Korean, participated in the "Second Language Acquisition"

lecture, where students had their presentations. The Korean student Mirsoo, or Speaker A, had a presentation about refusals. In her explanation of the work that was done for the presentation, Speaker A used negative politeness strategy of apologizing: *sorry about that* and *excuse me*. They were used when the Speaker went silent for a moment, and resumed her speech or when she thought that she made an incorrect statement.

From the hedges, 13 cases of epistemic verbs were found, which were used to describe their research and the conclusions that were made: *clarify that, let you know that, I feel that*, etc. as well as anticipatory clauses: *it was done, it was based, it would make*. Speaker A used anticipatory clauses alongside negative politeness strategy while discussing research findings and clarifying the steps of the research. It was assumed that the choice of the strategies was determined by the critiques from the teacher to the previous presenters and negative comments from the students, so the whole original transcript was looked through to see if that really was the case, and no criticism to other students was discovered. This means that the speaker simply was ready for negative comments while she was preparing for the presentation due to the previous experiences.

Speaker B was a participant of “Student Government Meeting” and was a president as well as a facilitator. Her native language was Hindi. The most favoured politeness strategy of the Speaker B was bald on-record strategy – offer. Some of the offers were formulated as a kind of a question (*why don't you take a second to look over*) it had the implication of it being a statement, because the speaker had no intentions to ask whether the hearers wanted to do as she told them or not, but rather politely said what they must do, since they gathered to the meeting. Other examples of this politeness strategy would include: *let's discuss it first, before moving on to the next topic; anyone would like to start? Go ahead, how about this*. One example of rhetorical question that the speaker addressed to herself was found in the transcript *do we have any constituents that wanna raise a concern* and the use of metaphors as an off-record strategy: *I can split it up and add commas however you would like* (talking about main points of conversation), *it's just a straw vote of support* and some other.

Hypothetical constructions were encountered 9 times throughout the transcript and modal verbs 11 times: *unless it's gonna, if we're gonna, if you fix, if you're in support* and others. Having in mind, that it was an important meeting, Speaker B as a president had to create an atmosphere which would not impose her own opinions on to other members, or not to pressure them to vote in favour or against something, just because most of the other people vote like that. Speaker B was practical, and when the questions needed to be solved she used linguistic means (hedges) which did not express what the speaker thought of the matter. And

since the speaker is the president her ideas might have had a big influence on the decisions of others due to the respect and trust that the speaker has.

It is worth mentioning that as was guessed from the overall conversation, the main assistant, who was a male, and presumably a close friend of the Speaker B, had a more direct orders from the Speaker, and if to other council members she used bald on-record strategy of offer, then while communicating with her assistant she used bald on-record task-oriented strategy: *bring me the paper, show me, send a request.*

Speaker C's native language is Thai. She is a student graduate and had a role of the instructor in the "Economics Discussion". Since the speaker was explaining some formulas and the topic of the lecture, there was not much direct interaction between students and the Speaker, however politeness and hedges were still found. The main politeness strategy that was used was bald on-record task oriented: *look at the pervious result; mark this here; decrease the value; this time you need to save more, etc.* Since the students were going through a new topic, there was no need for the speaker to try to maintain anyone's face and also by using this strategy no time will be wasted for the unnecessary use of words that are not related to the subject.

Off-record strategies (rhetorical questions) were employed when the students were going in the wrong direction: *but if you were our policy maker, what would you do? see that? Down, because you're gonna increase consumption forever, right?*

From the use of hedges were found some hypothetical constructions and modal verbs: *If you can do that; unless you are told..; even if it is going up..; even though labour falls; you might change it.* All the hedges were used with the aim to tell the students that although what they were doing was a general rule, there could be some exceptions *even if it is going up* implies that 'it' can fall later, *you might change it* – you might not change it as well, and so on. No matter what the gender of the student was who asked questions or interrupted the speaker's explanation, the same politeness and hedging strategies were used.

Speaker D was a Chinese student in a computer class and in total there was 11 people in the room and all of the eleven people's speeches were recorded. From the eleven people only 3 of them were females, while others were males. Speaker D was Junior Graduate student and throughout the transcript asked questions and otherwise communicated with the teacher. Since this was the shortest transcript from the non-native female's category not a lot of the linguistic means were found – 6 politeness strategies and 10 hedges. All six instances were of positive politeness, asking for reasons – *why not put them..? how about this node? Why not? Can you explain?* Unfortunately there was no conversation recorded of the Speaker D interacting with

anyone other than the teacher, therefore no comments on whether the speaker uses the same form of politeness while speaking with her classmates or not.

From the hedges were found hypothetical constructions: *if you say..; if you know, if I know, if I should*. Although the speaker used a lot 'you' in her anticipatory constructions and keeping in mind that she was talking to the teacher, it can be claimed that when saying 'you' she meant herself and other students.

The following four females (E-H) belong to the 31-50 years old people. Speaker E was a Korean Junior Faculty group member and her transcript was taken from "Immunology Lab Meeting". Only 9 cases of politeness were found and 15 hedges. From the politeness strategies were used bold on-record task-oriented: *ask John, pick it up, use this for the research, etc.* and positive attending to the hearer's wants/needs: *Can I help with anything? I can do that for you*, and exaggeration – *wow*. From the previous speakers' transcripts as well as in this one, the hedges already become the leading devices which are used by the non-native speakers while politeness strategies are not so frequent.

The most numerous were the hypothetical constructions: *if it could be; if you take out; if you use..* and some modal and epistemic verbs: *you might, you could've gone with them; you think that was a good idea; that's why it was confusing*. The speaker did not give any presentation, however she was engaged in a conversations with everyone – with the teacher, colleagues and even the researchers. Her conversation patterns did not change whether she was talking to student or to the older MiCASE researcher.

Speaker F was a Chinese senior graduate student In a Physics Lecture. In the lecture were present 6 students and 7 speakers. The speaker used bald on-record strategy which was task-oriented: *give an example, explain? Show on the blackboard*. The speaker was communicating with the teacher quite straightforwardly, as if giving the commands – there were no additional words like *could you* or *do you mind, etc.* on the one hand it is disrespectful by some standards, however on the other hand it can be assumed that the speaker chose not to lose any time and simply told what she needed to the teacher.

The Speaker used negative politeness strategy only once and it was apologising – *excuse me*. Still, the apology was not aimed to the teacher, but to another student. The female asked a question and the teacher explained it, and the female had another question to elaborate the teacher's answer, however the Speaker E decided to ask another question and saying excuse to the female asked her question. The teacher politely dismissed the question of the speaker and returned to answering the previous one.

Hedges were found twice as many in the speech of speaker F - 9 modal verbs. *I should take this; so then I could just skip it and..; I might get..* – these are the examples of how the

speaker speaks about herself and as can be seen there exists quite a difference. As if the Speaker places absolute trust in the teacher, that he can explain or give an example, but the Speaker herself is not sure if she can solve a problem or get relevant results.

Spanish language was Speaker's G native language. She was a senior graduate and a third presenter in the bilingualism lecture. The speaker volunteered to be the last presenter as she allowed the other presenters to say and do everything they wanted to, as she could make her presentation short or long. The speaker needed the students to do some exercises to help them understand the point of her presentation, therefore she employed bold on-record strategy which was task-oriented: *now write this down; imagine a box; now mix it together; write the phrase down*. Because of the limited time that the speaker had it was important to make the best use of it, therefore it was decided to omit unnecessary words. This strategy served two purposes: one purpose – efficient time management, another – the students could not fear to lose their face since the teacher was there to explain everything, and by 'commanding' them to do something allowed them to try and understand the meaning of the presentation themselves, or they could always ask the Speaker, since she was with them in the classroom.

Off record strategy was also found, in particular rhetoric questions: *can you imagine? Is it really contradictory? And remember the other one?* and being ambiguous: *it's not exactly that children start with function words, but it's a tendency*. The author spoke about bilingualism and compared various findings about it, mentioned researches of various languages and foreign authors. Thus, because languages have different systems, in order not to over-generalize everything and mislead the students, the speaker used these strategies to avoid commitments and lessen the threat to her face, if someone from the audience could prove that her statements are wrong.

Positive politeness was found 4 times and it was used to avoid disagreement: *yes, you are absolutely right; it is definitely a longitudinal study; it's true, it does sound like Spanish; yes, it is amazing*. Although positive politeness has other purposes, in the Speaker's G conversations positive politeness was not only used to avoid disagreement, but also served to encourage students. This conclusion was made due to the observation that one and the same student commented on the idea of another presenter, but was briefly dismissed over another student, and when the presenter asked the student to repeat himself, he refused to speak, however after he got a positive response from Speaker G, he remained active for the rest of the presentation.

Anticipatory constructions were favoured by the speaker as no other hedges were found in the transcript: *it came from..; It would be more convenient; it would be more logical*.

Anticipatory constructions were used while answering the students questions in order to not discourage them and politely show their mistakes.

The last speaker, Speaker H was chosen from the “Brazilian Studies”. She was a Portuguese and a Junior Faculty Instructor. She used three types of politeness strategies: positive, negative and bald on-record.

Bald on-record strategy was used while organising the work and space in the room: she said when to turn on and off the lights, etc. – *dim the lights; ask questions; put that there; settle down*. However, these little commands were only directed to the students, while communicating with the presenters the Speaker asked more politely – *could you..; do you want to..; etc*.

Positive politeness was employed while seeking the agreement in the conversations with the teachers and students: *wonderful presentation, isn't it? You thoroughly prepared, didn't you? You read my letter, right?* Since the speaker had the role of the Instructor, in between the presentations she talked to both – presenters and the students, while when the presentation was given, just like students she directed her questions only towards the presenter.

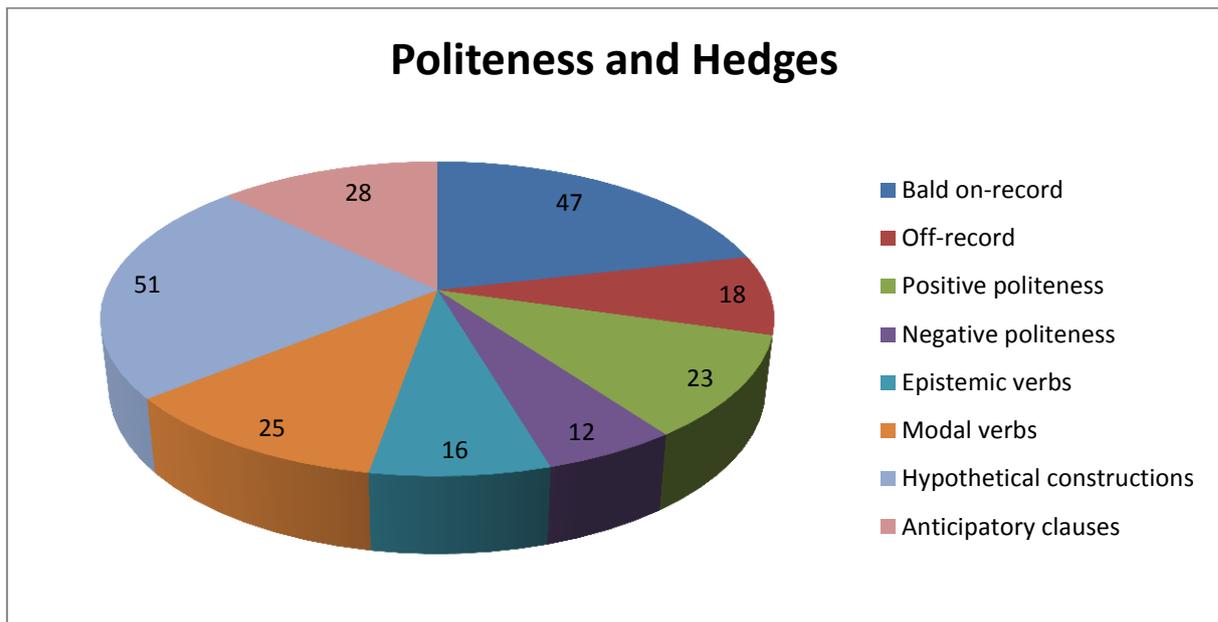
Finally, negative politeness was used 7 times, and it was asking questions using hedges: *I was wondering whether.; that's not exactly right, isn't it?* This strategy was used only in the conversations with the presenters, but no instances were found of this strategy with the interactions with students.

The most numerous category in hedges was hypothetical constructions: *unless you study more; if that was the largest magazine; if there are no more questions*. By using hedges the speaker did not impose her opinion on the students, allowing them to disagree or add something to the conversation.

Two modal verbs and anticipatory constructions were used as hedges as well: *we should have had it later then; they might have misunderstood and there was nothing more to add; it was a lovely speech*.

Hypothetical constructions were found in the interaction between speakers and the students, while modal verbs and anticipatory constructions were used in conversations with the teachers and students.

Figure 2. Politeness and hedges of non-native English speaking females

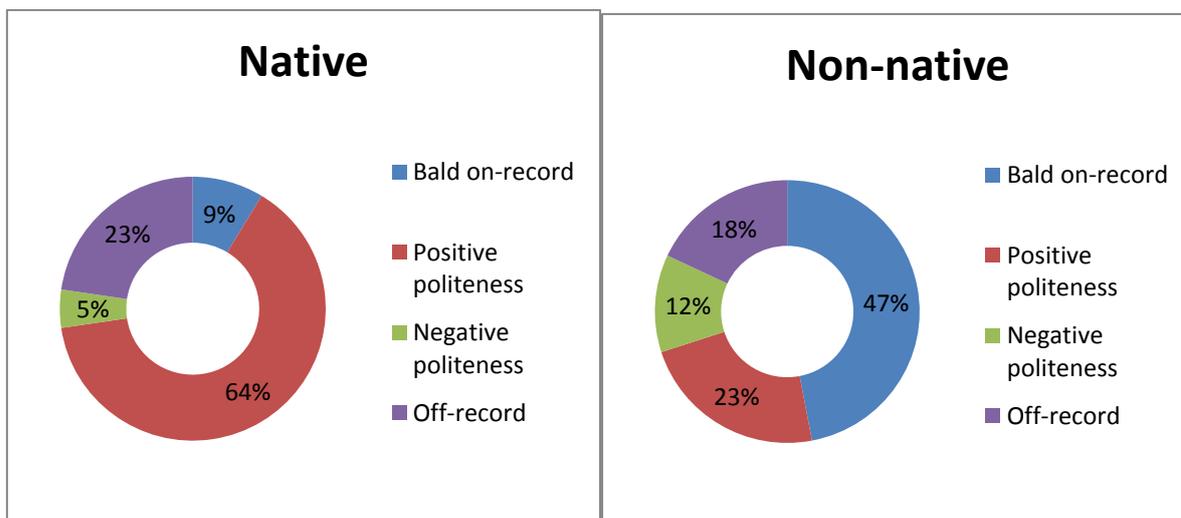


In total, in 8 of the non-native speakers' conversations were found 220 instances of the use of politeness strategies (100) and hedges (120). Since the difference between the two numbers is not that big, it is assumed that these results were achieved since these linguistic means are culture-dependent, and all of the native speakers had different first language. If all of the non-native females would have had the same first language, or only two groups of language were investigated, the results might have been different with more obvious difference between the use of politeness and hedges. According to the data (see: Figure 2) from the politeness strategies most frequently was employed bald on-record with 47 instances, in the second place is positive politeness with 23 instances, then off-record with 18 and negative with 12. From the hedges the most numerous category was hypothetical constructions with 51 instances, anticipatory clauses with 28, modal verbs with 25, and epistemic 16. Hedges are used more frequently by these 8 non-native speakers than politeness strategies, and in the category of politeness, the bald off-record strategy was used to make the students and the colleagues do something without delay - task-oriented uses.

4.4 Comparison of politeness and hedges in native and non-native English speaking females' conversations

Although the number of the found instances of the politeness strategies and hedges in the native and non-native English speaking females differs, the relevant frequency can still be calculated.

Figures 3 - 4. Native and non-native speaker's politeness strategy comparison



As can be seen from the figures above (see: Figure 3 & 4) according to the relevant frequency, bald on-record strategies were used by 8 non-native speakers almost 5 times more frequently than by the 8 native speakers. Whereas native speakers used bald on-record strategy mainly in the situations where efficiency was needed (strayed off topic, were not doing what was requested and the time was limited) non-native speakers used this strategy only as task-oriented (to issue commands).

Positive politeness strategies, on the other hand were used by the native speakers approximately 3 times more than by the non-native females. Native speakers used more jokes, while in the conversations of non-native speakers jokes were not encountered. Otherwise, both native and non-native speakers from the research used positive politeness in situations where they wanted to seek agreement and attend to the hearer's needs.

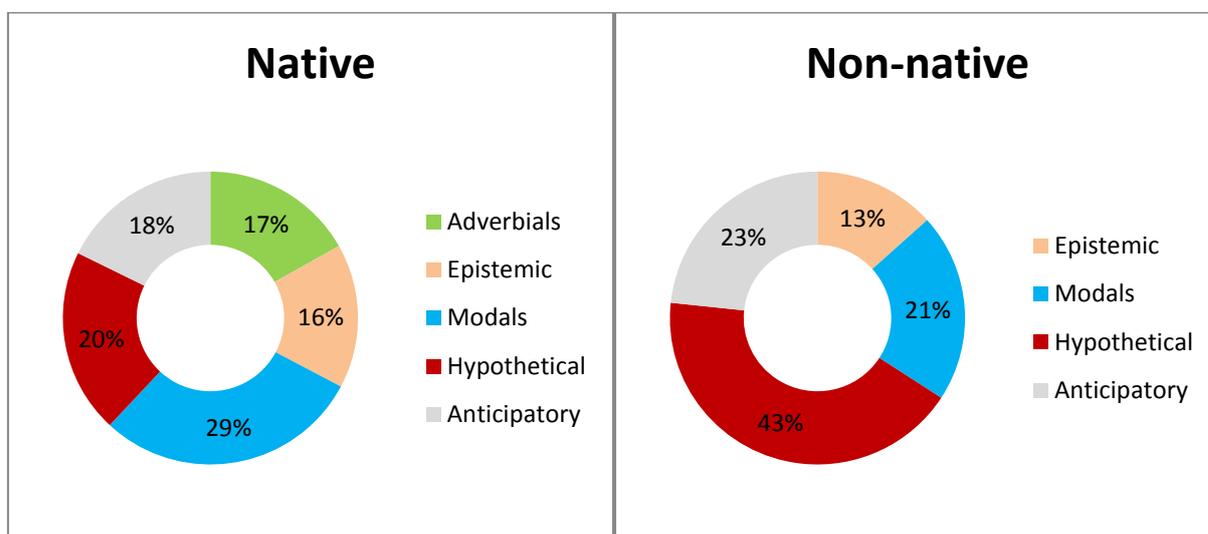
Negative politeness was scarcely used by both native and non-native females. Native speakers used negative politeness to show pessimistic views (reflecting something unpleasant, but nonetheless true without blaming someone and being ready for a negative response) and to minimise the imposition, while non-native speakers used this strategy to apologise or asked questions using hedges.

Lastly, rhetorical questions were used as an off-record strategy by both native and non-native English speaking females approximately with a similar frequency, as well as some metaphors were found in addition to the native speakers' tautologies and non-native speakers' want to be ambiguous. While tautology was used as part of the off-record strategy, it allowed the native speakers to connect with the students by being ambiguous. The speaker stressed the

main point by using tautology (*this and this and this*) but at the same time the speaker did not name anything particular, making the listeners create their own images and understanding of the subject.

So, according to the results, native and non-native speakers use negative and off-record strategies in a similar amount and for similar reasons whereas overall, native speaker prefer to use positive politeness seeking agreement and non-native – bald on-record to be more efficient.

Figures 5-6. Native and non-native speaker’s hedging comparison



From the six groups of hedges: adverbials, epistemic verbs, modal verbs, cognition verbs, hypothetical constructions and anticipatory clauses - cognition verbs were not encountered in the 16 native and non-native females’ conversations. However, native speakers used adverbials as hedges, whereas in the interactions of non-native speakers adverbials were not found. Epistemic, modal verbs and anticipatory clauses do not have much difference in the frequency of use, according to the figures above (see Figures 5-6), however, non-native speakers used in total more hedges even than the native speakers (120 - 113). Since the adverbials in native speakers’ conversations were used to emphasize something from the speech or to state that the listener’s opinion, idea or the action was correct, non-native speakers expressed the same ideas with statements like – *you are correct, right you are, I agree, etc.* So, either the non-native speakers were more confident in their words, or native ones decided to leave room for improvement.

According to the data analysis the non-native speakers used more anticipatory clauses and hypothetical constructions while native English speaking females used more adverbials, epistemic verbs and modals. Both female groups used these kinds of hedges usually while

seeing that the students have problems in understanding the topic of the lecture, the main point of the Speaker's speech or to illustrate something as an example by lessening the imposition of the fact that student did not understand something – without directly asking the student what one did not understand, or by just getting the hints that the student is confused the speaker with the help of the edges was able to quickly rephrase the statement or turn it into a question. Also, eight non-native speakers used hedges twice as often as the native speakers according.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were made after the analysis of the research findings:

1. Analysed 8 native English speaking females in their speech used positive politeness more frequently compared to other types of the politeness strategies.
2. 8 non-native English speaking females from the politeness strategies used bald on-record most often compared to other types of politeness.
3. From the comparison of the found mitigating words in the analysed 8 native and 8 non-native English speaking females' speech, was drawn a conclusion that non-native English speaking females use more hedges than the native English speaking females.
4. Although more of the instances of hedges were identified in non-native English speaking females' conversations, they used only four out of the six categories of words that can function as a hedge (epistemic verbs, anticipatory clauses, hypothetical constructions, modals verbs), while native speakers in addition to the above mentioned four categories also used adverbials as hedges.
5. Both native and non-native English speaking females used epistemic verbs as hedges when faced with an unexpected question.
6. Both native and non-native English speaking females used rhetorical questions as an off-record (indirect) politeness strategy in the middle of their speeches or as an answer to some of the listener's questions.
7. The differences between the use of hedges and politeness strategies in native and non-native English speaking females' conversations allow us to assume that they are culture dependent and the acquisition of the language does not mean that the politeness strategies and hedges will be used the same way by non-native speakers as by native speakers.

SANTRAUKA

Mandagumo strategijos yra neatskiriama kiekvienos kultūros dalis. Mandagumas turi tam tikras raiškos priemones, kurios yra unikalios, todėl yra svarbu išsiaiškinti, ar kitos kalbos išmokimas įtakoja šių konkrečių kalbinių priemonių vartojimą. Šis tyrimas remiasi Brown ir Levinson (1987) mandagumo strategijomis ir Heng ir Tan (2002) pasakymų švelninančių priemonių klasifikacija.

Tikslas ir uždaviniai

Šiuo tyrimu siekiama palyginti ir ištirti mandagumo strategijų ir pasakymų švelninančių priemonių vartojimą moterų kalbančių gimtąja ir užsienio anglų kalba akademinėje aplinkoje. Kad atsakyti į tyrimo klausimą ir pasiekti tikslą, buvo iškelti šie uždaviniai:

1. Išanalizuoti moterų kalbos semantines ir formaliąsias savybes akademinėje aplinkoje;
2. Atlikti moterų pasakymų švelninančių priemonių ir mandagumo strategijų kokybinę ir kiekybinę analizę ir pateikti rezultatus;
3. Nustatyti moterų kalbančių anglų gimtąja ir užsienio kalba pasakymų švelninančių priemonių ir mandagumo strategijų naudojimo priežastis.

Tyrimo metodai

Iš Mičigano korpuso buvo pasirinktos 8 moterys, kurių anglų kalba buvo gimtoji ir 8 moterys, kurioms anglų kalba buvo užsienio kalba. Tekstinę sudarė 18,211 žodžiai moterų kalbančių anglų užsienio kalba ir 21,773 žodžių anglų gimtosios kalbos moterų. Visos pasakymus švelninančios priemonės ir mandagumo strategijos buvo sugrupuotos. Lyginamoji analizė buvo naudojama, siekiant nustatyti, kas paskatino kalbėtoją panaudoti konkrečią strategiją. Buvo išsiaiškinta, kad anglų gimtosios kalbos moterys naudoja daugiau mandagumo strategijų, o ne gimtosios – sąšvelnius.

Tyrimo naujumas ir reikšmingumas

Pati mandagumo strategijas ir pasakymų švelninančių priemonių tema nėra nauja, tačiau būtent tyrimų, lyginančių pasakymų švelninančių priemonių ir mandagumo strategijų naudojimą moterų kalbančių anglų gimtąja ir užsienio kalba akademinėje aplinkoje dar nebuvo. Kadangi mandagumo strategijų ir pasakymų švelninančių priemonių naudojimas yra priklausomas nuo kultūros, šio tyrimo dėka gali būti nustatyta, ar antrosios kalbos išmokimas paveikia mandagumo strategijų ir pasakymų švelninančių priemonių vartojimą. Šis tyrimas gali tapti pagrindu gilesniems tyrimams, kurie palygintų moterų ir vyrų kalbos ypatumus.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Politeness strategies and hedges found in native speakers' conversations.

Table 1.1. Bald on-record strategy

Situations of use	Examples
Urgency or desperation; When efficiency is necessary; Task-oriented; Offers.	<i>-Just listen to me!</i> <i>-We need to hurry!</i> <i>-Right here it says..</i> <i>-You're going off topic.</i> <i>-Don't write it down, you won't need it.</i> <i>-You start first, then I will continue.</i> <i>-Read from here, while I finish this part.</i> <i>-Write that down.</i> <i>-Repeat the last part?</i> <i>-Tell me some of your interests?</i> <i>-Who wants to tell me what they think that is?</i> <i>-Somebody who's familiar with James Baldwin tell me who that is.</i> <i>-Could you repeat what you just said?</i> <i>-Can you tell me three facts about yourself?</i>

Table 1.2. Positive politeness strategy

Situations of use	Examples
Attend to H's interests, wants, needs; Exaggerate interest; Seek agreement; Avoid disagreement; Presuppose/raise/assert common ground; Jokes; Offer / promise; Be optimistic; Give (or ask for) reasons; Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation).	<i>-bourgeoi- is that how you say it?</i> <i>-They didn't realize that they had to keep their workers happy, right?</i> <i>-hey I don't know what they're doing but I'm not a part of any of it.</i> <i>-why not do it now? X2</i> <i>-Because no one wants that.</i> <i>-Excellent. X10</i> <i>-Uh-huh, interesting. X6</i> <i>-Wow, really? X5</i> <i>-Good. X4</i> <i>-Great. X20</i> <i>-Fantastic. X3</i> <i>-Amazing. X5</i> <i>-That does sounds confusing. X5</i> <i>- yes, that's a good start X7</i> <i>-That's not so complicated as you think. X2</i> <i>-No, it doesn't change your argument.</i> <i>- I will be on that email forever;</i> <i>- yes, they did have that distinct colour on their merchandise;</i> <i>-yes, the weather was lovely;</i> <i>- no there really was only one shop.</i> <i>- would you like to start?</i> <i>-Did you have your hand up?</i> <i>-Does everybody know who Amiri Baraka is?</i> <i>-all I can say is that you have to just navigate your way through like you are walking through a landmine.</i> <i>- you never couch it in terms of oh I have to go see you know</i>

	<p><i>the premier of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, I have the tickets.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>you can have the academic life that you want. I know that you can.</i> - <i>so whatever you decide to do, with your, with your fine minds and this wonderful education that you have been given, here in this institution, i hope that, you will consider, utilizing part of your energy, to teach.</i> - <i>I think that's a cultural thing.</i> - <i>I like that sense of equality in the classroom, but we aren't equal</i> - <i>you know how crucial they are;</i> - <i>we've got your name and number.</i> - <i>Martha is, leaving us which is why she's going to remain silent;</i> - <i>she's getting out just at the right time</i> - <i>they said they were looking into the matter, so I hope it will be resolved soon;</i> - <i>I hoped I would get an answer here.</i> - <i>that's great;</i> - <i>he will finally do something after this.</i> - <i>I'm looking forward to doing that.</i>
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Table 1.3. Negative politeness strategy

Situations of use	Examples
Be indirect Asking questions using hedges Be pessimistic Minimize the imposition	<p><i>-I worry, whether you are capturing by interviewing your grandmother, what people do in Howell, or whether you're capturing an older form of socializing.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Could I ask a question before we get started?</i> - <i>I bet you wouldn't pick it up you wouldn't you know it wouldn't be of any interest to you and you'd never think, that something that said Colored Contradictions would have an impact on your life.</i> - <i>You wouldn't be able to explain this part, would you?</i> - <i>For just a second, could you stop and repeat?</i> - <i>I know that you, taught at Spelman before coming to University of Michigan I was wondering if you could, comment on the differences of teaching in Spelman and Michigan?</i> - <i>I overheard the talk of my roommate, and was wondering if you really was attending the <...> college?</i>

Table 1.4. Off-record strategy

Situations of use	Examples
<p>Giving hints Using tautologies Using metaphors Using rhetorical questions</p>	<p><i>-It is not what it was yesterday;</i> <i>-they are getting crumbs;</i> <i>-Right? x10</i> <i>-What's all the fuss for?</i> <i>-Isn't he happy with what he got?</i> <i>-Then what's the point of you?</i> <i>-I'm struggling for what?</i> <i>-Or do they say that the world gonna blow up in two thousand so everybody can tear it up again?</i> <i>- and ever and ever;</i> <i>-was there anything of interest?;</i> <i>- you know?</i> <i>-Yes? X4</i> <i>- No? x2</i> <i>-It's the same thing, isn't it?</i> <i>-How many days a week I have to teach? How many hours do I have to spend?</i> <i>-Who wants to be on the spot?</i> <i>- you keep plumbing and plumbing and plumbing,</i> <i>-when it happens it happens,</i> <i>- it is this and this and this.</i> <i>-I knew you were swamped with work.</i></p>

Table 1.5 Hedges

	Examples
Anticipatory clauses	<p><i>it takes forming classes; it was the minority that..; it's the most revolutionary part; it was just the owners of major factories; It's better than being at home selling drugs or being in jail somewhere; it's the little Japanese toy, It's just a really vague, it was a great class, it was good (x5), there was a lot of racial pride; It was right after.., it happened last autumn.., there was an incident, it was decided, it is settled then, It's all up in the air.</i></p>
Epistemic verbs	<p><i>I think that (x9); I didn't realize that; you see that, You described that..; I believe that, You know that, I agree that, I admit that, I did not think that, I remember that.</i></p>
Hypothetical constructions	<p><i>If you wanna make..; If you don't come; if you could elaborate (x10); if any of you.., if you become a teacher; If there's anything like that; If we get inquiries, if they've done.., if you want information (x3). If you could become.. (x2).</i></p>
Modal verbs	<p><i>you might wanna, you should think more.., it might work, you could go, you should do that, I'll have to think about it (x15), you might be right, I could've asked, I should've noted. you might be interested, you could do that, or.., maybe you could (x6); I could, you may have heard, you would think, I hope we can have some questions.</i></p>
Adverbials	<p><i>Necessarily, basically, clearly, directly, mostly, perfectly, visually, obviously, perfectly, actually (x4), practically, certainly (x5).</i></p>

Appendices 2. Politeness strategies and hedges found in non-native speakers' conversations.

Table 2.1. Bald on-record strategy

Situations of use	Examples
<p>Urgency or desperation; When efficiency is necessary; Task-oriented; Offers.</p>	<p>-why don't you take a second to look over; - let's discuss it first, before moving on to the next topic; - anyone would like to start?(X6) -Go ahead (x4), -how about this? (x4) -bring me the paper, -show me, -send a request; -look at the pervious result; -mark this here; -decrease the value; -this time you need to save more; -ask John, -pick it up, -use this for the research; -give an example (x7); -explain?(x3) -Show on the blackboard; - now write this down; -imagine a box; -now mix it together; -write the phrase down. -dim the lights (x3); -ask questions; -put that there; -settle down.</p>

Table 2.2. Positive politeness strategy

Situations of use	Examples
<p>Attend to H's interests, wants, needs; Exaggerate interest; Seek agreement; Avoid disagreement; Presuppose/raise/assert common ground; Offer / promise; Be optimistic; Give (or ask for) reasons; Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation).</p>	<p>-why not put them..? -how about this node? -Why not? (x4) -Can you explain? -Can I help with anything? -I can do that for you, -wow (X7); - yes, you are absolutely right; -it is definitely a longitudinal study; -it's true, it does sound like Spanish; -yes, it is amazing, -wonderful presentation, isn't it? -You thoroughly prepared, didn't you? -You read my letter, right?</p>

Table 2.3. Negative politeness strategy

Situations of use	Examples
Be indirect Be pessimistic Ask questions using hedges Minimize the imposition Apologizing Being ambiguous	-sorry about that, -excuse me, (x2) -I was wondering whether; (x3) -that's not exactly right, isn't it? -I heard about it yesterday, you don't happen to know something too? -then that is out of the question; -I don't expect her to agree; -Do you have a moment after meeting? -I don't expect they will answer that soon.

Table 2.4. Off-record strategy

Situations of use	Examples
Giving hints Using tautologies Using metaphors Using rhetorical questions Ellipsis	-do we have any constituents that wanna raise a concern, -I can split it up and add commas however you would like; - it's just a straw vote of support; -but if you were our policy maker, what would you do? -see that? X7 -Down, because you're gonna increase consumption forever, right? -can you imagine?(x3) -Is it really contradictory? -And remember the other one? -it's not exactly that children start with function words, but it's a tendency. -well, you know..

Table 2.5 Hedges

	Examples
Anticipatory clauses	<i>It was done, it was based (x5), it would make, it came from..; It would be more convenient; it would be more logical; we should have had it later then; they might have misunderstood, there was nothing more to add; it was a lovely speech, it was fine (x7), there were some mistakes, but.. (x3), there should have been a notification, there was some inconsistency with the slides; it cannot be the same results; it was different.</i>
Epistemic verbs	<i>clarify that (x5), let you know that, I said that, I will repeat that (x4), I am saying that.. (x5),</i>
Hypothetical constructions	<i>If you can do that; unless you are told..; even if it is going up..; even though labour falls; if you say.(x4).; if you know (x12), if I know, if I should, if it could be; if you take out; if you use it like that.. (x7); unless it's gonna, if we're gonna set that as our goal.. (x8), if you fix, if you're in support; unless you study more; if that was the largest magazine; if there are no more questions (x7).</i>
Modal verbs	<i>you might change it, you might (x6), you could've gone with them; you think that was a good idea, but..; that's why it was confusing; I should take this; so then I could just skip it and..; I just might ..(x6), I could've done better.. (x3), I might consider (x4).</i>