MASTERARBEIT / MASTER'S THESIS

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„Is 'Thank you!' all there is to responding to compliments?"

A contrastive study of compliment responses among British English and Serbian speakers

verfasst von / submitted by
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To her

„Ти воздигни твоју царску главу горе,
Да те опет позна и земља и море.
Покажи Европи твоје красно лице,
Светло и весело, како вид Данице.“

Доситеј Обрадовић, Востани Сербије (1804)

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Abstract

Cultural background plays a vital role in how compliments are perceived (Holmes, 1988; Watts, 1992; Yuan, 2001; Yu, 2003). According to Brown and Levinson (1978: 75), they can serve functions of positive speech acts and face-threatening acts. Additionally, gender and status are significant factors that are argued to affect both topics of compliments and compliment responses (CRs) (Wolfson, 1983; Holmes, 1988). This thesis aims at discerning cross-cultural variations and probability-based patterns of CRs among speakers of British English and Serbian. Two sets of data were collected with the help of a discourse completion test (DCT) illustrating twelve situational settings in which compliments on appearance, possession, ability and personality occurred. Statistical analysis provides descriptive statistics results in terms of CR strategies on macro- and micro-level, i.e. these findings demonstrate the CR strategies of *acceptance, rejection,* and *deflection/evasion* and eventually, show if the maxim of acceptance is more adhered to than the maxim of modesty. Furthermore, inferential statistics has revealed if there is a global standard in the use of CRs between Serbian and British English speakers. Other hypotheses include testing significance of the variables of gender, status and topic of compliments. This thesis adds a new vista on the study of complimenting behavior and the results indicate if a universal model of CR between British and Serbian cultures is possible to be drawn.

Keywords: compliment, compliment response, politeness, cross-cultural, gender, status, Serbian, British English

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1. Introduction

"The fate of the Earth depends on cross-cultural communication."

Deborah Tannen

(1986: 30; cited in Wierzbicka 2006: 20)

Communication is an inherent aspect of every individual and represents a daily need and routine for every one of us. However, it does not necessarily mean that if communication is a mutual and defining characteristic of all human beings that all human beings, we, communicate in the same way. Cross-cultural communication proposes an idea that communication is relative and it varies according to the cultural settings in which it occurs. Perhaps one of the best linguistic sources to see that cultures do have an influence on the course of interaction is the ways how certain speech acts are performed.

This thesis is a cross-cultural study that attempts to examine the speech act of responding to compliments in the cultures of British English and Serbian native speakers. Compliments are usually believed to express one's positive opinion on something that is owned by or ascribed to another person (Holmes, 1988). Therefore, they serve a positively valued linguistic function and are often resorted to and exploited when linguistic politeness is to be shown (Holmes, 1986, 1988). However, as argued by the proponents of cross-cultural pragmatics, different cultures perceive and interpret language differently (Tannen, 1984a, 1984b, 1985; Wierzbicka, 2003). So, it may be assumed that speakers who identify themselves as belonging to Serbian culture might experience compliments in a different way than British English native speakers.

Apart from the factor of one's cultural identity, the factors of gender, status and social distance as well as topic of compliments are possible to discuss in terms of a probable influence they exert on compliment response strategies. By the means of statistical analysis, this empirical study will also try to examine the impact of these factors onto compliment response strategies employed by British English and Serbian respondents.

The second chapter of the thesis deals with cross-cultural communication. It pinpoints the significance of language as a tool of human interaction and of communication as an inherent aspect of individual, his/her need and routine. The chapter then introduces the concept of culture which

is firstly defined and then the etymology of the term and its changing connotation are explained. The effect that one's cultural background has on one's linguistic behaviour is later paid attention to and succinctly elaborated on. Namely, the concept of cultural schema/schemata is taken into consideration and relevant theoretical views on the concept are provided for the thesis adopts the approach of culture-specificity in language use, the approach whose main and constructive ideas are as well outlined in the chapter and contrasted with the ideas of the universality in language use in the section on cross-cultural pragmatics. The chapter closes down with the introduction of an aspect of one's linguistic behaviour greatly dependent on one's cultural background and the value system s/he belongs to – politeness. This aspect becomes the principal focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 3 is a review of the main and most renowned politeness theories in linguistics. Before introducing the politeness models by Lakoff (1973), Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), and Leech (1983), the chapter defines the phenomenon of politeness and linguistic politeness in particular. Additionally, most valuable and influential works on linguistic politeness are included. Furthermore, Gricean Cooperative Principle is outlined and the maxims are briefly explained in order to set ground for the review of the politeness theories - the main focus of the chapter. First, Robin Lakoff's work on politeness and a set of rules that should govern interaction are dealt with. The most influential and comprehensive politeness model follows - the one by Brown and Levinson – whose ideas are put emphasis on in the chapter as they are incorporated both in the research design and analysis of the present thesis. Last but not least, Leech's politeness theory is presented as certain concepts of his Politeness Principle are as well considered and included as points for analysis.

The following chapter, Chapter 4 approaches to the focus of this thesis from the theoretical perspective of speech acts. As stated in the chapter, compliment responses represent a speech act by which not only do we communicate and maintain the rhythm of conversation by turn-taking, but also by which we perform an action. The chapter introduces the famous names in the fields of philosophy of language and linguistics. First and foremost, the chapter presents John L. Austin and elaborates on his Speech Act Theory. The second part of the chapter deals with Searle's Theory of Speech Acts. The final sections of the chapter relate compliment responses to the taxonomies of speech acts according to Austin and Searle.

Chapter 5 deals with complimenting behaviour and it consists of two parts relating to paying compliments and responding to compliments. Both parts are composed of pertinent theoretical backgrounds and reviews of the most significant and relevant research works in pragmatics. The reviews nicely set ground for this study's findings to be compared and contrasted with the findings on compliment responses presented in the reviews.

Chapter 6 represents the empirical study of the thesis. It first describes the methodology and research design. The data collection technique is discussed as well as the reasons for utilizing the adopted research instrument. Secondly, the research process is thoroughly depicted giving insights into the obtained data and numerous strategies for recruitment of informants. In the sequel, the research questions this thesis tries to answer are formulated and they are followed by the section on analysis that suggests how the data are analyzed. Finally, the findings of the analyses of British English and Serbian compliment responses are presented, interpreted and eventually contrasted and discussed. The discussion section relates the findings of the thesis to the theoretical frameworks previously referred to in the Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5. Lastly, implications for further research are included directing at potential research desiderata.

Finally, Chapter 7 states the conclusions this thesis has drawn and represents them from a separate perspective (British and Serbian) and a contrastive and comparative one.

2. On Cross-cultural Communication

> "Which was first: the language patterns
> or the cultural norms?"
>
> *Benjamin L. Whorf* (1956: 156)

2.1 Communication and language

Communication is one of the inherent aspects of all living beings. It is a tool that enables them to have a more convenient and more fulfilled life. Interaction with others is a process without which one cannot imagine their life and being most advanced, it comes as no surprise that human race has developed the most comprehensive and complex way of interaction – language. The importance of language and its impact on social reality was acknowledged by Sapir (1949: 162):

> Human beings do not live in the essential world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an essential means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group.

Whorf, Sapir's student, also dwelled on the significance and influence of language on an individual as a member of society. He contends (Whorf 1956 [1940]: 212) that "the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which have to be organized in our minds. This means, largely, by the linguistic system in our minds".

Sapir's and Whorf's considerations on language and its effect on one's development as an individual are of utmost importance in the fields of anthroplogy and linguistics and their hypotheses have been frequently debated (Kluckhohn, 1961; Kay and Kempton, 1984). Brown (1976) is one of numerous attempts to summarize and reinterpret the hypotheses by Sapir and Whorf and with regard to the Whorfian one, he suggests (1976: 128) a twofold summary whose the second postulate indicates the relation between one's viewpoint and one's native language and which says: "The structure of anyone's native language strongly influences or fully determines the world-view he will acquire as he learns the language" (Brown 1976: 128). Therefore, communication is one of the most essential personality processes that is, indubitably, greatly concerned with one's social development.

However, socialization aspirations do not make a sole reason why people globally use their communicative abilities; they resort to interaction in order to accomplish certain tasks or objectives such as doing business or making friends. Speech, as a communication medium, plays a key role in interaction since it allows for intelligible, efficient, explicit and prompt delivery of the most complex and abstract ideas.

However, communication is not a simple and straightforward process. Unsuccessful communication frequently involves misunderstandings triggered by erroneous or simply different modes of interpretation, evaluation and perception (Adler 1991: 65). Culture has been found to be a vital variable that affects not only the level of communication success, but the language use as well (Tannen 1985: 203-204; Zhang and Zhou 2008: 103). As Kluckhohn notes along the lines of Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, (1961: 906) "people brought up in different cultures will view the world differently quite apart from and beyond language factors as such". Apart from anthropological perspective, this assumption is also maintained by proponents of cross-cultural pragmatics, an area which emerged as opposition to universalistic approach to language use adopted and promoted by Austin (1962), Searle (1969, 1979), Grice (1975), and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987).

2.2 Culture

2.2.1 Defining culture

Before moving to discussing cross-cultural communication and a closely related issue of universals versus culture-specifics in language use, it would be useful to define the term *culture* and present its semantic and pragmatic considerations, for the term "indeed exhibits a complicated network of interlocking polysemic meanings" (Goddard 2005: 52).

Culture is a term that has been immensely changing its meaning and application throughout history. Furthermore, Bauman (1996: 9) pinpoints the importance and areas where the term is applicable nowadays: "No idea is as fundamental to an anthropological understanding of social life as the concept of culture. At the same time, no anthropological term has spread into public parlance and political discourse as this word has done over the past 20 years.". Similarly, Goddard (2005: 52) claims that *culture* is a key word in academic discourse of anthropology.

In his article *The lexical semantics of culture*, Goddard (2005: 53-54) provides a detailed account of this term employing the so called Natural Semantic Metalanguage analytical method[1]. Namely, the earliest uses of the term *culture* represent the meaning embodied in words and expressions such as *agriculture, horticulture, yoghurt culture, tissue culture* i. e. denoting the processes of taking care of animals and crops (Goddard 2005: 53). In the 16th century, *culture* shifted the meaning of tending from animals to a human body. At first, taking care involved physical embellishment through training and afterwards, it encompassed mental aspects of a person as well (Goddard 2005: 53-54). The 19th century brought further changes of the meaning and term application. At the time, the term began to gain the meaning that has remained till today and it is the one that relates to "a general state of human intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic" advancement (Goddard 2005: 54). Goddard (2005: 54) pinpoints that more recently, the artistic works of "music, literature, painting, theater and film" have influenced the development of the term which eventually Tylor defined in his 1871 book *Primitive Culture* as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor 1871: 1).

Some of the most influential and comprehensive considerations on culture were given by Hofstede (1991), who differentiates between 'culture one', as 'refinement of the mind' through literature, art and education, and 'culture two', a phenomenon that Hofstede calls mental programming and defines it as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (1991: 5). It is further suggested (1991: 5) that culture is not something that is inborn, but it is learned throughout life and it is a direct product of one's social environment. As such, culture is relative and no cultural sustem is superior to another (Hofstede 1991: 7). This relativism and cultural differences are reported to manifest in various ways which boil down to four concepts – symbols, heroes, rituals, and values (Hofstede 1991: 7). Hofstede claims (1991: 10) that there are several layers of mental programming i.e. culture, as every one of us belongs to a a certain number of groups, organzations, systems at the same time and hence we carry the same number of mental programs:

> • a national level according to one's country (or countries for people who migrated during their lifetime);

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[1] More about this model, see Wierzbicka, 1996; Goddard, 1998; Goddard and Wierzbicka, 2004

• a regional and/or ethnic and/or religious and/or linguistic affiliation level, as most nations are composed of culturally different regions and/or ethnic and/or religious and/or language groups;

• a gender level, according to whether a person was born as a girl or as a boy;

• a generation level, which separates grandparents from parents from children;

• a social class level, associated with educational opportunities and with a person's occupation or profession;

• for those who are employed, an organizational or corporate level according to the way employees have been socialized by their work organization

2.2.2 Cross-cultural communication (Deborah Tannen)

Language and culture are two aspects of an individual that are interrelated and together they shape one's cultural identity. Feilin and Gaofeng explain that language is a manifestation of culture in a threefold manner (2005: 69):

> Generally speaking, language is an initial part of culture, which plays an important role in culture. First, language expresses culture through using words, sentences. People express facts, ideas or events by using language, which is the way to spreading their culture. Second, language embodies culture. When people communicate with others, his tone of voice, accent, conversational style, gestures and facial expression will show his own culture. Third, language symbolizes culture. Language is also a signal system of its own cultural values, so people view language as a symbol of their social identity.

Cultural background along with its customs and tradition form one's cultural expectations. Not only do those expectations influence our language production but also our interpretation of someone else's utterances (Bowe & Martin 2007: 5). According to Bowe and Martin (2007: 3), different shapes of interpretation are most visible in intercultural communication where interlocutors with different mother tongues and coming from diverse cultural backgrounds engage in a conversation. Another term that is more relevant for this thesis, is cross-cultural communication, which "typically compares communication practices of one language/cultural group with another" (Bowe & Martin 2007: 3). Stadler (2013: 1) further expounds that "the term "cross-cultural" refers to exploring how natives speak and act in their native language and within their own cultural context and comparing how native behaviour in one culture compares with that in another culture".

Deborah Tannen appears to have provided rather profound and elaborate analyses on the notion of cross-cultural communication. Tannen (1984a, 1984b, 1985) states that communication

among people is culturally relative and plays a vital role on a worldwide level "given the heterogeneity of societies affected by global migrations and the increasingly cross-cultural nature of commerce, diplomacy, and personal relationships throughout the world" (1984a: 189). Having observed the use of language in communication and comparing it with other systems of communication (Tannen, 1981; 1982) as well as drawing back on other linguists' works (Erickson & Shultz, 1982; Gumperz, 1982; Scollon, 1982), Tannen (1984a, 1984b) lists eight levels of communication where differences of cross-cultural communication may occur. The list includes the following levels (Tannen, 1984a, 1984b):

- When to talk
- What to say
- Pacing and pausing
- Listenership
- Intonation
- Formulaicity
- Indirectness
- Cohesion and coherence[2]

The level *what to say* seems relevant when it comes to the objectives of the present thesis i.e. compliment response strategies, as the level reflects cultural conventions in complimenting behaviour (Tannen 1984a: 190). From her personal experience in Greece, Tannen deduced (1984a: 191) that American and Greek strategies of compliment responses "differed not about whether compliments should be accepted or deflected, but rather which compliments should be accepted and which deflected – and how. What was [I had] interpreted as a personality characteristic was a cultural convention".

The importance and influence of cultural background is also acknowledged in O'Driscoll (2011: 35):

> It is well known that cultural background involves certain values and norms of behaviour in interaction which induce certain habits and expectations among interactants. It is divergences between those of one culture and those of another, of

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[2] For in-depth elaborations on the levels of cross-cultural differences, see Tannen 1984a and 1984b

course, which have been appealed to in innumerable studies of interaction across cultures and cross-cultural comparisons.

One of possible inferences of the quote above is that what is appropriate in one culture does not necessarily mean that the same practice is present and desirable in another. The explication for such a state of affairs could be found in the concept of *cultural schemas* or *schemata*, the term that has been pondered on in different areas of science i.e. philosophy, psychology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics and which will be briefly elaborated upon in the following section.

2.2.3 *Cultural schemas (schemata)*

Cultural schemas or schemata are deeply rooted structures of values, knowledge and beliefs in our consciousness (Goffman, 1986; Agar, 1994; Nishida, 1999; Sharifian, 2003, 2004, 2005). With regard to communicative interaction, a cultural schema denotes (Díaz 2013: 36) a cognitive framework "maintained and sanctioned largely through the very use of language, which is arguably the most observable and available expression of culture in communication (Brown, 1980)".

Additionally, according to Yule (1996: 87), cultural schemata are built upon our basic and earliest experiences and as such, can provoke misunderstandings and different conceptualizations in an interaction engaging speakers of distinct and sometimes opposing cultural norms, expectations, attitudes, collective identity and set of beliefs.

Studying Persian language and culture, Sharifian (2003, 2004, 2005) enriches the literature on cultural schemata. Sharifian (2004) discusses that those schemas are cognitive, fundamental structures that are shared among members of a certain cultural group and represent the essence of social interactions among those members. Additionally, it is argued (Sharifian, 2004) that cultural schemas are constructions, concepts that develop on a sociocultural level of a cultural group and not on a psychological level of an individual, stating that with the development of an individual and a group on numerous aspects, cultural schemas are also subject to inevitable amendments across generations of the group, yet retaining traditional and key elements of the group's cultural tendencies and values (Sharifian, 2004).

In order to shed some more light on the importance and influence of one's culture, Wierzbicka (1985, 1994) introduced the concept of *cultural scripts*. Cultural scripts are said to be based on metalanguage representing simple words and grammatical patterns that are assigned to all languages and they are developed through Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) approach

(Wierzbicka, 1996). The ultimate aim of this approach is "to understand speech practices, norms and values from the perspective of the speakers themselves" (Wierzbicka 2010: 47). Wierzbicka promoted NSM to study cross-cultural semantics and pragmatics and enunciate the variety of cultural norms and sets of values through semantic and pragmatic considerations of a small number of lexemes that are believed to be semantically universal.

2.3 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a linguistic discipline that investigates language use, the very utterances people make in a certain context (Levinson 1983: 9). It studies the meaning of the uttered words not only from the speaker's point of view, but also from the hearer's (Yule 1996: 3; Stadler 2013: 2). One can further deduce that pragmatics aims at disclosing the meaning of an utterance on three levels i.e speaker's intentions behind what s/he has said, what s/he has actually said and a hearer's interpretation of what s/he has heard.

As opposed to linguistic competence that supposes one's knowledge of a language in terms of its grammar rules and vocabulary at a native speaker's level (Chomsky, 1965), Hymes (1972) introduced the concept of communicative competence that covers both a speaker's grammatical competence and his/her competence of contextual communication. Being pragmatically competent means to be able "to communicate your intended message with all its nuances in any socio-cultural context and to interpret the message of your interlocutor as it was intended" (Fraser 2010: 15; Stadler 2013: 2).

2.3.1 Cross-cultural pragmatics

Cross-cultural pragmatics is an area of pragmatics that focuses on those culture-based differences in communication (Wierzbicka 2003: 69). Furthermore, Stadler (2013: 1) explains the area focusing on its comparative and contrastive aspect:

> Cross-cultural pragmatics adopts a comparative methodological approach which contrasts the findings of the characteristics of intracultural communication in two different cultures by identifying similarities and differences in their (speech) behavior. Findings of this investigative framework add to our knowledge base on a cognitive level by highlighting cultural differences, their underlying causes (e.g., values and norms), and their manifestations as they emerge through speech.

According to Yule (1996: 88), the study of these differences can be termed contrastive pragmatics as well. He pinpoints the importance of comparing communication patterns across two

or more different cultural language communities and thus, revealing the existence of diversity and specificities of cultures on a worldwide scale.

Wierzbicka (2003: 69) reports on four main ideas that paved the way for cross-cultural pragmatics in the study of language:

- In different societies, and different communities, people speak differently.
- These differences in ways of speaking are profound and systematic.
- These differences reflect different cultural values, or at least different hierarchies of values.
- Different ways of speaking, different communicative styles, can be explained and made sense of, in terms of independently established different cultural values and cultural priorities.

In a nutshell, the areas of cross-cultural pragmatics and/or contrastive pragmatics maintain that speakers of different languages, coming from different cultural backgrounds produce and interpret speech acts differently and those differences are direct consequences of the different cultural norms and values incorporated as cultural schemas in the mind of any speaker (Moalla, 2013).

This area in the field of linguistics has become significant in terms of scientific aspirations and has borne a steady growing body of research focusing on the influence that one's cultural background has on his/her linguistic behaviour. Therefore, one of the main issues dealt within cross-cultural pragmatics is the issue of universality versus culture-specificity with regard to speech acts (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984: 196).

2.3.1.1 Universality approach

The main proponents of universal pragmatic principles across cultures are Austin (1962), Searle (1969, 1975, 1979) and Brown and Levinson (1987). Austin and Searle believe that, when conversing, people are governed by the rudimental principles that are identical across the globe regardless of the language in which they communicate and culture in which they have been brought up. The idea finds support in the Cooperative Principle (Grice 1975) and Politeness Principle (Brown & Levinson 1978, 1987).

With regard to politeness as an aspect of communication, Brown and Levinson (1987: 2) state that principles of politeness, whether on motivational, functional or rational level, are

universal and globally present and can be complied with in a great number of languages and diverse cultural settings. This statement of Brown and Levinson is a direct inference of their yet another claim that politeness is based on rational principles, which are assumed to be shared by all speakers and which are presumed to direct polite speech in all languages and cultures (Brown & Levinson 1987: 58).

A similar viewpoint on the universal conceptualization and realization of speech acts patterns is adopted by Fraser, Rintell and Walters (1980: 78), who argue that despite the fact that languages may differ in the manner and timing of the speech acts performance, "every language makes available the same set of strategies – semantic formulas – for performing a given speech act".

2.3.1.2 Culture-specificity approach

Contrary to this universalistic approach to language use, linguists, advancing the idea of culture-specificity and non-identical language patterns across cultures, include Bargiela-Chiappini and Kádár, Blum-Kulka, Bowe and Martin, Cameron, Goddard, Tannen, Wierzbicka.

Wierzbicka could be assumed to be the loudest voice against universals of language use, having labelled the theory of speech acts (Searle 1969, 1979) and the theory of conversational logic (Grice 1975) "an ethnocentric illusion" (Wierzbicka 2003: 67) and having stated that those scholars oriented toward the universalistic approach seem to "take it for granted that what seems to hold for the speakers of English must hold for people generally" (Wierzbicka 1985: 145).

Wierzbicka (2003: 2) starts her book *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* with a premise that modes of interaction depend on cultural values and norms, and interlocutors, both as individuals and members of different social and ethnic groups:

> For example, if you and I are Japanese our interaction will be different than it would be if we were both Americans or Russians. And if we were both American, the prevailing modes of our interaction would probably depend on whether we were white or black, Jewish or non-Jewish, and so on.

To illustrate culture-based linguistic differences between various nations, Wierzbicka describes a great number of interactions and interlocutors' expectations and eventual linguistic behaviour taking into considerations hypothetical interlocutors' cultural background. For the purpose of this thesis, which investigates the speech act of compliment response among British

English and Serbian speakers, the following sections will illustrate Wierzbicka's considerations on some differences between English and Polish (Polish and Serbian belong to the Slavic language group of Indo-European languages, and hence, share some cultural values and linguistic patterns).

2.3.1.2.1 Cross-cultural differences between English and Polish/Slavic

Culture-based differences between English and Slavic people are numerous and one simply cannot elaborate on the issue completely. According to Wierzbicka (2003), the opposition of English autonomy and Polish/Slavic cordiality and affection towards others seems to be the most conspicuous one when the two cultures and value systems are compared and will be depicted only to exemplify one aspect of discrepancies between Anglo-Saxon/English and Slavic/Polish cultures. Furthermore, I have chosen to include this particular value discrepancy, having identified myself, as a native speaker of Serbian, with the following values shared by Polish people.

In order to discuss English and Polish cultural values through speech acts, Wierzbicka (2003), firstly mentions lexical evidence epitomizing cultural differences between the two value systems. The first word is an English word *privacy*, which has no equivalent in Polish (Wierzbicka 2003: 47). It is further assumed that the word *privacy* is Anglo-centric and quite frequently used in everyday speech, which makes the word one of the pillars of Anglo-Saxon culture. Wierzbicka (2003: 47) illustrates the cultural influence onto a phrase *to have privacy*:

> To have privacy means, roughly, 'to be able to do certain things unobserved by other people, as everyone would want to and need to'. The cultural assumption embodied in this concept is very characteristic; it is assumed that every individual would want, so to speak, to have a little wall around him/her, at least part of the time, and that this is perfectly natural, and very important.

This example assumes autonomy, independence and self-assertiveness as some of the English core cultural values. This assumption is strengthened when the English *you* is analyzed. Even though the pronoun may be considered to be democratic and informal, Wierzbicka (2003: 47) states that "the English *you* keeps everyone at distance", because the absence of T-form of address in English means that it is impossible to convey meaning of closeness and intimacy in English using *you*, as it is the case with cultures, where T-V contrast exist e.g. Slavic and Mediterranean cultures.

Distance and privacy as Anglo-Saxon values are not only displayed in one's linguistic behaviour, but also in one's gestures or better said lack of it. As Wierzbicka explains (2003:47):

In Anglo-Saxon culture non-sexual body contact is heavily restricted, as compared, for example, with Slavic and Mediterranean cultures: people seldom touch one another, hug one another, kiss one another, or seldom even shake hands (see Triandis-Triandis 1960). They also physically keep at a considerable distance from one another, as compared, for example, with Slavs (cf. for example Monahan 1983). The absence of an intimate T-form reflects and fosters the culturally expected psychological distance between individuals, the general need for psychological and physical 'privacy'.

To reflect on the quintessential values of Polish culture, and Slavic in general, Wierzbicka (2003: 50) suggests cordiality, as an opposing value to lack of warmth and spontaneity, which could be ascribed to English culture, from a Polish/Slavic speaker's point of view. According to Wierzbicka (2003: 50-51), in Slavic cultures, affection and warmth are easily and frequently displayed through the usage of the rich system of expressive derivation and particularly, through the employment of plentiful diminutives, including those of nouns, adjectives and adverbs. In contrast, this linguistic richness appears to be rather absent in English, apart from few baby diminutives e.g. *handies, doggie or birdie.*

It is further stated (Wierzbicka 2003: 51) that cordiality and fervour are evidenced in the expressive derivation of personal names, which can show "a slightly different emotional attitude, and 'emotional mood'. For example:"

(1) Anna: Ania, Anka, Aneczka, Anusia, Anuśka, Anusieńka, Anulka, Anuchna, Anusiątko

To show the similarity of Serbian and Polish, as Slavic languages, in terms of expressive derivation of personal nouns, and hence to account for the presence of cordiality in the Serbian culture to some extent, the author's name will serve as an example:

(2) Olivera: Oliverka, Olja, Oljka, Oljkić, Oljičak, Oli, Oki, Orko, Orkić

Bearing in mind gender and attitudes towards women, Wierzbicka (2003: 56-57) addresses the value of courtesy shared within Slavic cultures and connects it to cordiality previously elaborated. Courtesy is said to be reflected in somewhat ceremonial rituals and gestures e.g. "one kiss on a lady's hand signals both cordiality and ceremonial courtesy" (Wierzbicka 2003: 56).

Differences in linguistic behavior across cultures are manifold and "these differences may result in communication difficulties that range from the humourous to the serious" (Gass & Neu

1996: 1). An aspect of language use that has attracted great attention in cross-cultural pragmatics is politeness and following section will introduce the issue briefly.

2.4   Politeness in cross-cultural communication

Politeness has been greatly researched in order to challenge Brown and Levinson's universal principles of politeness (Ide, 1989b; Watts, 1992; Kádár & Mills, 2011), having caused cross-cultural comparative studies to become prominent in politeness research (Stadler 2013: 4). Watts argues (1992: 49) that cultural background has a significant bearing on one's understanding and showing politeness, suggesting that "we cannot be at all certain that an English native speaker today understands 'politeness' in exactly the same way as the German native speaker understands "Höflichkeit' or the French native speaker 'politesse'".

Bowe and Martin (2007: 46) report that the major research study challenging the universal principles of politeness is the CCSARP project (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns) conducted by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989). They examined realization patterns of requests and apologies in eight different languages using the data collected with the help of discourse completion tests from native speakers of each language. Yu (2005: 93) informs that not only do the findings suggest that certain strategies of requesting and apologizing differ across the eight languages, but also that those strategies have different social interpretations and connotations across the cultures involved (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989). However, it is further indicated (Yu 2005: 93-94) that the study cannot address the differences on a global level, because of its most probable Western bias[3]. Nonetheless, the CCSARP project and a great number of other contrastive studies (Matsumoto, 1988; Lorenzo-Dus, 2001; Yu, 2003; Tang & Zhang, 2009) have shown that politeness is a culturally affected phenomenon and that there is no global standard of expressing and interpreting politeness across cultures.

This thesis is a cross-cultural study od speech acts that compares and contrasts the strategies of compliment responses from the perspectives of British English and Serbian speakers. My analysis tries to detect differences and similarities in the ways of responding to compliments in the two cultures and eventually, make a contribution to the research on lingusic politeness.

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[3] Yu (2005: 93) suggests that all eight languages either fall into the Western group of languages or there is a significant influence of the Western languages onto them

3. On Politeness and Major Politeness Theories

> "The more descriptions we acquire about [...] politeness, the more we realize
> how little we in fact know about the range of possible expressions of
> politeness in different cultures and languages."
>
> *Sachiko Ide* (1989a: 97)

The use of language in diverse cultures all over the world reveals an aspect of communication that is closely related with a culture and whose patterns are versatile as the culture itself. It is politeness, an area that has been greatly researched since its birth in the 1970s in a great number of fields such as politics, communication, linguistics, gender studies, etc.

3.1 Linguistic politeness

Politeness is a social phenomenon of human interaction that is closely related to one's good manners and principles of etiquette, which should be complied with so that the interaction is smooth and socially appropriate. In relation to linguistics, Ide (1993: 7) argues that politeness encompasses strategies and forms of language use needed for achieving effective and pleasant communication. Furthermore, it is indicated (Ide 1993: 7) that the scholars' awareness of and attending to the issue have borne seminal works starting from Grice, Austin and Searle, which were a solid basis for the introduction of the politeness theories by Lakoff (1973), Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987).

3.1.1 *Defining linguistic politeness*

When it comes to defining politeness, it is important to bear in mind two aspects of the phenomenon. Fraser (1990: 220) argues about the "social-norm view" and the "conversational-contract view" of politeness (Fraser 1990: 232), embodying the everyday concept of etiquette, conventions and courtesy. This type of politeness is termed "first-order politeness" by Ide (1993: 8) and is considered (Ide 1993: 8) to be neglected by the politeness theories in favour of the second type of politeness, termed "second-order politeness" by Ide (1993: 8). This type of politeness refers to the "conversational-maxim view" and the "face-saving view" by Fraser (1990: 222-228) and is regarded to be of avid interest in pragmatics and academic domain (Ide 1993: 8).

Maintaining that none of the definitions of politeness provided by Lakoff (1975: 64), Leech (1983: 104) or Brown and Levinson (1987: 1) offers a specific and comprehensive definition of the concept of linguistic politeness, Ide (1989b: 225) feels impelled to clarify the notion:

> I define linguistic politeness as the language usage associated with smooth communication, realized 1) through the speaker's use of intentional strategies to allow his or her message to be received favourably by the addressee, and 2) through the speaker's choice of expressions to conform to the expected and/or prescribed norms of speech appropriate to the contextual situation in individual speech communities.

3.1.2   Researching linguistic politeness

Robin T. Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place* (1973b) has been considered to mark the birth of politeness research with a special emphasis to gender differences. Despite the criticism of its methodological techniques, this pioneering work has acted as an incentive for future scholars and further research (Cameron, 2007; Newman et al., 2008; Talbot, 2010). One of the explanations why this aspect of communication is so intriguing that has triggered such a rich and growing body of research is provided by Bargiela –Chiappini and Kádár (2011: 2):

> A possible explanation for this state of affairs is that politeness – along with humour, impoliteness and a few other unique aspects of human interaction designated as interactional 'principles' by Geoffrey Leech (1983) – is among the most abstract aspects of communication. As ethologists argue, animals can convey complex messages such as the location of a tree in the case of bees (Endler, 1993). The phenomenon of politeness however, is uniquely human: animals can communicate aggression, submission or friendliness, but they cannot communicate politeness, simply because it is an abstract message related to the other or the alter, and not to the ego (Bax, 2010; 2011). And, because politeness is part of the common behavioural heritage of humanity, it is culturally as diverse as the human race is: since its earliest studies, politeness has been discussed as a 'culture-specific phenomenon'.

The notions on politeness, culture and language have been vastly researched in order to reveal universal patterns and explanations of differences and similarities of linguistic practices all over the world (Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987; Watts, 1992. The academia has been putting great effort to detect cross-cultural tendencies with respect to what is considered polite and what would be qualified as impolite in various cultural communities (Tannen, 1984a; Cheng, 2003; Bousfield & Locher, 2008; Bargiela-Chiappini & Kádár, 2011). Having grouped characteristics of the politeness strategies with the aim of structuring universal rules, scholars from the field of pragmatics i.e. Blum-Kulka, Brown and Levinson, Gu, Ide, Lakoff, Leech, Watts, have established politeness theories that not only have been strengthened by a plethora of research studies, but also

weakened, questioned and criticized for certain shortcomings (Eelen, 2001) . The importance of having a theoretical background that could be called upon while researching is evident and signalled by Terkourafi (2005: 240), who argues that "although extensively criticized, traditional theories retained their appeal for the last twenty five years. They have provided the terminology for talking and even thinking about politeness phenomena..."

3.2   Gricean Cooperative principle

Before reflecting on the major politeness theories, Grice's theory of conversation should be introduced first as "Grice's work on the CP initiated the current interest in pragmatics, and led to its development as a separate discipline within linguistics, and as such it is discussed by most textbooks in the area, and often cited in academic papers within pragmatics and associated disciplines" (Davies 2000: 3).

Fasold (1990) also argues that the underpinning of pragmatics as a separate linguistic discipline could be found in the Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975), for the principle strives to discover and explain "the ways in which communicators recognize each other's communicative intentions" (Blum-Kulka 1997: 42). Furthermore, Felix-Brasdefer, (2008) credits the principle for being the basis of the later emergence of politeness theories and whose importance and key influence are also acclaimed in Lakoff (1989, 1973a) and Leech (1983).

As reported in Fraser (1990: 222), Grice (1975) presupposes that "conversationalists are rational individuals who are, all the other things being equal, primarily interested in the efficient conveying of message" and suggests that the Cooperative Principle is to "make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purposes or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1975: 158).

The Cooperative Principle is based on four maxims and its sub-maxims. The term maxim is preferred over rules as they are "meant to suggest neither moral imperative nor legal requirement, but rather a recipe-like rational mode of conduct to achieve one's conversational goals" (Levinson 1999: 144). Table 1 below illustrates the Cooperative Principle with its maxims and sub-maxims, some of which are classified as *supermaxims*.

Table 1 Maxims of the Cooperative Principle by Grice (1975)

MAXIMS	SUBMAXIMS
Maxim of Quality	Try to make your contribution one that is true. - *supermaxim* Do not say what you believe to be false. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
Maxim of Quantity	Make your contribution as informative as is required Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
Maxim of Relevance	Be relevant.
Maxim of Manner	Be perspicuous. - *supermaxim* Avoid obscurity of expression. Avoid ambiguity. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity). Be orderly.

In spite of the fact that Gricean conversational-maxim view has encountered some critique[4], the theoretical foundation for further theoretical considerations i.e. politeness models is what Grice and the Cooperative Principle are mostly respected for, hence their validity and authority cannot be repudiated.

3.3 Overview of the major politeness theories

Having outlined the basic theoretical concepts of Gricean Cooperative Principle, what follows is a survey of the politeness theories by Lakoff (1973, 1975), Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), some of which are greatly influenced by Grice (1975) and which have been widely acknowledged (Fraser, 1990; Eelen, 2001; Pikor-Niedzialek, 2005; Mazid, 2008; Dynel, 2009; Gilks, 2009-2010; Locher, 2013; Shahrokhi & Bidabadi, 2013; Maha, 2014). Their contribution to academia has been marked as pioneering, most comprehensive and most influential to the extent that the theories have represented an impetus for many scholars and researchers (Ide, 1989, 1993; Janney and Arndt, 1993).

3.3.1 *Lakoff's politeness theory*

Robin Lakoff's theorizing on politeness as a pragmatic construct has been argued to be the cornerstone of politeness research. In her book *A Critique of Politeness Theories*, Eelen (2001: 2)

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[4] Gricean Cooperative Principle was criticized on the grounds that it cannot explain why people are sometimes indirect in conveying their message (see Leech, 1983). Also, the principle was questioned regarding its universal applicability (see Keenan, 1976)

expresses that Lakoff (1973a) was a pioneer of modern politeness theory. Lakoff (1973a: 296) believes that certain pragmatic rules should be identified according to which a linguistic utterance could be assessed i. e. is the utterance well-formed or not. In her opinion, these rules for a pragmatically suitable utterance are as essential to the study of language as syntax rules or semantics principles. Having based her politeness theory on Gricean Cooperative Principle, she proposes a set of three politeness rules and provides guidelines and settings description which are most appropriate for each of the rules (Lakoff 1973a: 298). The first rule says "Don't impose." meaning that imposing on another party in interaction would be considered impolite; a certain distance between interlocutors must exist and should be maintained. This rule is said to be especially applicable in formal and impersonal settings in which interlocutors show a certain level of social power or any other difference (Maha 2014: 57). The second rule is "Give options." illustrating the need to give the hearer possibility to have options and to choose. Lakoff (1977: 89) suggests that that addressee be permitted to decide on his own, proposing that a friendly relationship between the addresser and the addressee, which is characterized by informal speech and politeness strategies, may account for a suitable setting for this rule application (Maha 2014: 57). Finally, the third rule, "Make [alter] feel good – be friendly" is a politeness rule that implies that one needs to make an interaction as much comfortable as it is possible, implying that intimate relationships require informal politeness and a high level of feeling comfortable (Maha 2014: 57).

3.3.2 *Leech's politeness theory*

The most transparent influence of the Gricean Cooperative Principle could be seen in Leech's theory on politeness (Leech, 1983). Like Grice, Leech (1983) makes use of principles and maxims to theorize on interaction taking into consideration both the language produced - the content of an utterance - and conversational factors such as relationships between interlocutors that might have an impact on how an utterance may be formed. Leech (1983: 15) employs the term *rhetoric* to represent those two sets of conversational principles, emphasizing that he makes use of the term in a different sense from the one present in traditional understanding i.e. the well-versed language use that can have versatile goals – to persuade, to literary express or to eloquently express oneself in front of a public. Furthermore, he explains (Leech 1980: 10) that, *rhetoric* stands for a good linguistic behavior and one may make a distinction between *Textual Rhetoric* and *Interpersonal Rhetoric* (see Figure 1 below). The two *Rhetorics* are further divided into sets of principles and they are classified into maxims. At this point, it is possible to see the similarity with

Gricean maxims, but it is worth mentioning that Leech's and Gricean maxims are proposed not to reflect the same level (Leech 1983: 15). The discrepancy in the hierarchies of maxims within Gricean Cooperative Principle and Leech's *Rhetorics* is exemplified in Leech's positioning Grice's maxims as sub-maxims in his system of principles and thereby, creating a new level of the hierarchy (1983: 15). However, Leech agrees (1983: 15-16) that the insistence upon this four-level hierarchy should not be extremely strict as:

> It is not always clear to what level a given precept belongs. For example, of Grice's two Maxims of Quality (which I call sub-maxims), the second seems to be a predictable extension of the first:
> Maxim 1: Do not say what you believe to be false.
> Maxim 2: Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
> If we say something for which we lack adequate evidence, we do not know whether what we say is true or false. Therefore Maxim 2 simply says 'Do not put yourself in a position where you risk breaking Maxim 1'; and both can be summarized in the precept 'Avoid telling untruths'.

Figure 1 Interpersonal rhetoric and textual rhetoric (Leech, 1983)

[Explanation] As can be seen from Figure 1, the phenomenon of politeness is defined within the framework of Interpersonal Rhetoric, for politeness strives to create and maintain socially appropriate interaction between interlocutors (Leech, 1983).

Leech (1983) suggests that Interpersonal Rhetoric includes the Conversational Principle (CP), the Politeness Principle (PP) and the Irony Principle (IP), some of which show a certain level of similarity and interdependency (CP and PP) and of importance (IP is secondary to the first two).

PP subsumes six maxims and a set of sub-maxims for each of the maxims (see Table 2). Leech (1983) argues that maxims are not equally significant, proclaiming the Maxims of Tact and Approbation maxims of central and cardinal importance.

Table 2 Politeness Principle and its maxims (Leech, 1983)

Maxim	Aims	Example
Tact	minimize cost to other; maximize other's benefit	(3) Could I interrupt you for a second? If I could, just clarify this then.
Generosity	minimize self-benefit; maximize cost to self	(4) You relax and let me do the dishes.
Approbation	minimize dispraise to other; maximize praise to other	(5) I know you're a genius - would you know how to solve this math problem here?
Modesty	minimize self-praise; maximize self-dispraise	(6) Oh! I'm stupid - I didn't make a note of our lecture! Did you?
Agreement	minimize disagreement between self and other; maximize agreement between self and other	(7) Yes - yes, but if you do that - you - your tea towel's soaking and at the end of the night, nothing's getting dried.
Sympathy	minimize antipathy between self and other; maximize sympathy between self and other	(8) I was sorry to hear about your father.

Leech (1983: 80) indubitably recognizes Gricean contribution of the CP, but he is of the opinion that whereas CP is greatly needed in order to interpret messages, it is insufficient in terms of explaining the sense and force of pragmatic utterances. He explains that CP fails to be useful when it comes to the interpretation of why people are indirect in their interaction or what the relation between sense and force with regard to non-declarative sentences is. (Leech 1983: 79-80). In order to illuminate these issues, Leech takes a socially and psychologically oriented approach to pragmatic principles and that is where PP comes handy and where it becomes as essential as CP.

Namely, it is proposed (Leech 1983: 80-81) that PP should be seen as an important complement to CP in conversational settings which cannot be explained using CP. Moreover, PP

is claimed to act as a savior that provides account for what CP has been criticized. For an instance, Larkin and O'Malley (1973) state that CP fails to be useful when it comes to declarative sentences, for the majority of them are non-information-sentences. The second type of criticism concerns the suggestion that CP maxims cannot be qualified as linguistically universal i. e. Keenan (1976) argues that the maxims proposed by Grice are unable to find their application in all language communities. However, Leech (1983: 80) defends the CP saying that no claim about the universality of the maxims has been made and it is actually the goal of socio- pragmatics to uncover how and to what level conversational maxims are adhered to in different language societies. Leech (1983: 80) gives two examples where politeness is given precedence over cooperation and it may be the reason why CP and PP should interact on par:

(9) A: We'll all miss Bill and Agatha, won't we?

B: Well, we'll all miss BILL.

(10)   P: Someone's eaten the icing off the cake.

C: It wasn't ME.

The rationale for the deliberate flouting of the CP maxims and the CP's rescue by PP is as follows (Leech 1983: 80-81):

> In [1][5], *B* apparently fails to observe the Maxim of Quantity […] From this we derive an implicature: '*S* is of the opinion that we will not all miss Agatha,' But on what grounds is this implicature arrived at? Not solely on the basis of CP, for *B* could have added '…but not Agatha' without being untruthful, irrelevant, or unclear. Our conclusion is that *B could* have been more informative, but only at the cost of being more impolite to a third party: that *B* therefore suppressed the desired information in order to uphold the PP.
>
> In [2][6], typically an exchange between parent *P* and child *C*, there is an apparent irrelevance in *C's* reply […] Suppose *P* is not sure who is the culprit, but suspects that it is *C*. Then a small step of politeness of *P*'s part would be to withhold a direct accusation, and instead to make a less informative, but undoubtedly true assertion, substituting an impersonal pronoun *someone* for the second-person pronoun *you*. Thus *P*'s remark in [2] is interpreted as an indirect accusation […] and the apparent irrelevance of *C*'s reply is […] motivated by politeness.

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[5] This relates to Example (9)
[6] This relates to Example (10)

One of the significant points of Leech's theory is his distinction between 'absolute politeness' and 'relative politeness', where an increased emphasis is placed on 'absolute politeness' as it appears to be of a greater concern to pragmatics in general (Leech 2005: 7). According to Leech (1983), 'absolute politeness' is characterized by minimizing the degree of impoliteness of inherently impolite speech acts and maximizing the degree of politeness of speech acts that are polite a priori, e.g. orders and offers respectively. This type of politeness accounts for any language community or culture, unlike 'relative politeness' which is "relative to norms in a given society, for a given group, or for a given situation" (Leech 2005: 7). In a nutshell, 'relative politeness' is the politeness that is related to a particular language community or cultural context. Thus, 'relative politeness' is prone to variations as different cultures treat politeness in a different manner. Leech (2005: 7) notes that an utterance can be evaluated to show opposite values of the two types of politeness i.e.:

> […] it is possible that the form considered more polite on the absolute politeness scale is judged less polite relative to the norms for the situation. E.g. *Could I possibly interrupt?* could be understood as 'too polite', say, if spoken to family members monopolising the conversation: it could be interpreted as coldly sarcastic. The relative politeness scale registers 'overpoliteness' and 'underpoliteness', as well as 'politeness appropriate to the situation'."

Leech completes his model identifying a set of pragmatic scales that are used in order to determine the degree of a certain maxim e.g. tact or generosity. The scales suggested in Leech (1983, 123-126) include:

- Cost – benefit scale (the degree of the cost/benefit of an act to the speaker and the hearer)
- Optionality scale (the degree of the speaker's optionality to perform a certain act)
- Indirectness scale (the degree of the inference of a performed act)
- Authority scale (the degree of relative power that the speaker has over the hearer)
- Social distance scale (the degree of solidarity/social distance between the speaker and the hearer)

3.3.3 Brown and Levinson's politeness theory

One of the main theoretical approaches to politeness is Brown and Levinson's' theory (1978, 1987), which has been most frequently utilized and thus, has become one of the most influential and valid politeness theories. In their book *Politeness across cultures*, Bargiela-Chappini and Kádár (2011: 3) aggrandize the authority and influence of the theory, arguing that Brown and Levinson's politeness model has become a classic and that their theoretical

considerations have shaped the development and direction of the politeness research. Similarly to Lakoff's theory of politeness as conflict-avoidance process, Brown and Levinson base their theory on the assumption that politeness means non-imposing and non-intruding on other people, their needs and their feelings (Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987).

3.3.3.1 The concept of face

The central concept of their theory represents the notion of *face*, the term that they derived from Goffman (1967) and based upon an English folk term that relates to notions of humiliation and embarrassment – "losing face". In their model, they employed the term *face* to illustrate one's needs and attitudes that will eventually prevent his/her face from being endangered. It is elaborated (Brown & Levinson 1978: 66) that what is exposed in an interaction is our face and it "is something that is emotionally invested, can be lost, maintained or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to an interaction". Therefore, one can draw a conclusion that in order to preserve one's own face and assures his/her face needs, people, engaged in any interaction need to show back concern for other people's face needs and fundamental wants. This means that interaction should be based on cooperative communication that reflects both "maintaining each other's face, and partially satisfying each other's face needs" (Holmes 1995: 5).

Furthermore, the authors make a distinction between two particular face needs - positive and negative face wants (Brown & Levinson 1987: 61-62). The two types of face wants are defined as the desire to be appreciated and positively valued and the desire not to be intruded, the desire not to have any obstacles and impediments in their further action (Brown & Levinson 1987: 13). Even though their model is meant to represent universal application (Brown & Levinson 1987: 56), the authors are of the opinion that this highly abstract concept of face may depend on a social environment and be culturally shaped and elaborated (Brown & Levinson 1987: 13):

> On the one hand, this core concept is subject to cultural specification of many sorts – what kinds of acts threaten face, what sorts of persons have special rights to face-protection, and what kinds of personal style (in terms of things like graciousness, ease of social relations, etc.) are especially appreciated […]. On the other hand notions of face naturally link up to some of the most fundamental cultural ideas about the nature of the social persona, honour and virtue, shame and redemption and thus to religious concepts.

Being aware that their politeness model may be criticized on the grounds that it represents "inexcusable cultural denudation, or worse, ethnocentric projection", Brown and Levinson point

out that the core ideas of diverse and intricate cultural settings show a striking resemblance (Brown & Levinson 1987: 13).

3.3.3.2 The concept of FTA

The second central notion in Brown and Levinson's theory (1978, 1987) are the so-called face-threatening acts (FTAs). A face-threatening act is an utterance that could be interpreted as an insult directed to the hearer or imposing and intruding on his/her autonomy (Brown & Levinson 1987: 65). It is worth mentioning that speech acts such as suggestions and advice can constitute FTAs, for they are also able to impede people and question their freedom of action (Brown & Levinson 1987: 65-66). However, due to the anthropological fact that humans are able not only to be ego-oriented, but also alter-oriented (Bax, 2012), in such cases of interaction where FTAs are possible and the speaker is aware of a face threat, s/he resorts to the softening of the utterance which constitutes negative politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson 1987: 24). Brown and Levinson (1987: 24) explain these instances as acts that are intrinsically threatening to the face and thus, require developing strategies that aim to eventually safeguard and maintain the faces involved.

Taking into consideration the concepts of the positive and negative face wants, FTA and the fact the speaker and hearer are participants of an interaction, Brown and Levinson have developed a classification of FTAs (Brown & Levinson 1987:65-68). The four types of FTAs are as follows:

Table 3 Classification of face-threatening acts according to Brown and Levinson (1987)

Acts threatening to the Hearer's Negative Face (freedom of action)	e.g. order, advise, threaten, warn
Acts threatening to the Hearer's Positive Face (self image)	e.g. complain, criticize, disagree, raise taboo topics
Acts threatening to the Speaker's Negative Face (freedom of action)	e.g. accept an offer, accept thanks
Acts threatening to the Speaker's Positive Face (self-image)	e.g. apologize, accept a compliment, confess

3.3.3.3 Strategies for doing FTAs

Brown and Levinson (1987: 76) contend that the risk to both S's and H's face are rudimental factors that influence the seriousness or weightiness of an FTA[7]. Bearing in mind the fact that interactants or Model Persons (MPs), the term used by the authors to represent a "willful fluent speaker of a natural language", are "endowed with two special properties – face and rationality" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 58), it comes as no surprise to have a speaker and a hearer who would make an effort to have a pleasant and friendly communication during which they would make numerous attempts to minimize imposing and avoid FTAs. Namely, Brown and Levinson (1987: 68) suggest that there are at least three wants that an MP would have to bear in mind. These are:

a) The want to communicate the content of the FTA x
b) The want to be efficient or urgent, and
c) The want to maintain H's face to any degree

It can be seen that compliance with the want b) or c) will determine whether the MP will perform an FTA or not.
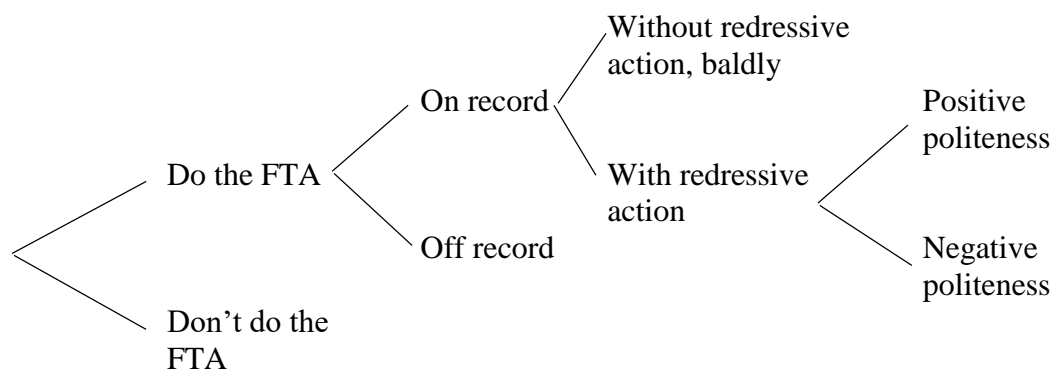
Figure 2 Possible strategies for doing FTAs (Brown & Levinson 1987: 69)

[Explanation] Figure 2 shows the possible directions which the MP may go. The authors have employed some of the terms that require an additional explanation and contextualization. The terms that would be in the next paragraphs elaborated on are *'on record', 'off record',*

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[7] More information on the seriousness of an FTA, see the section Sociological factors of this thesis

'baldly/without redress', 'reddressive action', 'positive politeness' and 'negative politeness' (Brown & Levinson 1987: 68-71).[8]

When an act in an interaction is done *on record*, it means that the participants engaged in the interaction are knowledgeable about the communicative intention of the act committed.

(11)　　　I (hereby) promise to come tomorrow.

Example (11) shows unambiguously the communicative purpose of the utterance and interactants are familiar with a future act of the S.

Unlike *on record* utterance, an *off record* utterance bears more than one communicative intention and thus can be interpreted as ambiguously attributed utterance with which the S has not committed himself/herself to a certain intention.

(12)　　　Damn, I'm out of cash, I forgot to go to the bank today.

A possible implication of the utterance in the Example (12) is that the S indirectly asks the H to lend him/her some money. This indirectness protects the S from committing himself/herself to the act of borrowing money. Brown and Levinson (1987: 69) add that typical instances of *off record* strategy acts are metaphor, irony, tautology, rhetorical questions and all sorts of hints that a speaker uses to indirectly have his/her communicative intentions conveyed.

If the S decides to commit an FTA *on record*, s/he is able to opt to do it *baldly*, *without redress* or *with redressive action*. An FTA done *baldly* or *without redress* stands for the act committed in the most direct, transparent, unambiguous and concise manner. Brown and Levinson specify that the S would commit an FTA in this manner provided that the S does not fear any kind or vengeance or retaliation from the H's side and list three different scenarios where this kind of an FTA is acceptable (Brown & Levinson (1987: 69):

> (a) S and H both tacitly agree that the relevance of face demands may be suspended in the interests of urgency or efficiency; (b) where the danger to H's face is very small, as in offers, requests, suggestions that are clearly in H's interest and do not require great sacrifices of S (e.g., 'Come in' or 'Do sit down'); (c) where S is vastly superior in power to H, or can enlist audience support to destroy H's face without losing his own.

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[8] The detailed and thorough account of the terms is provided in Brown and Levinson, 1987: 68-71

The other option of an *on record* FTA is to be done *with redressive action*. This kind of an FTA from the S's perspective recognizes H's face and makes it clear that the face threat is not S's intention, granting the possibility to counteract the potential face damage of the committed FTA. Such *on record* and *redressive actions* can be expressed through two distinct politeness strategies – *positive politeness* and *negative politeness strategies*.

3.3.3.4 Politeness strategies

Logically, one can recognize the relationship between two kinds of face, one of the crucial notions of the Brown and Levinson's theory and the two types of politeness strategies. Both face and politeness strategy have been classified and qualified into the positive face/strategy and the negative face/strategy and the relationship between the two is certainly not coincidental. The elaboration on the positive and negative politeness strategies would reveal how the two concepts are linked and what contribution is made when these two supplement each other.

3.3.3.4.1 Positive politeness strategies

Positive politeness strategies tend to satisfy the positive face wants of an addressee. It means that the speaker's communicative intention is not only to express his/her wants, but also to show a certain degree of agreement to and similarity with the addressee's face wants (Brown *&* Levinson 1987: 70). For an instance, treating the addressee as an in-group member or showing the equal respect and importance for him/her and for himself/herself would indicate that the speaker intends to decrease the chance of face-threatening. It is further illustrated (Brown & Levinson 1987: 101):

> […] the linguistic realizations of positive politeness are in many respects simply representative of the normal linguistic behaviour between intimates, where interest and approval of each other's personality, presuppositions indicating shared wants and shared knowledge, implicit claims to reciprocity of obligations or to reflexivity of wants, etc. are routinely exchanged.

However, exaggeration is found to be a facet that differentiates the positive politeness language use from the everyday one. Brown and Levinson (1987: 103) explain that a possible reason for employing expressions containing an exaggerative touch within may be the assumption that: "positive-politeness utterances are used as a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy, to imply common ground or sharing of wants to a limited extent even between strangers who perceive themselves, for the purposes of the interaction, as somehow similar." Taking all this into consideration, Brown and Levinson (1987: 103) conclude that positive politeness strategies are

suitable when used in order to "lubricate" our social relationship as well as to augment and better the intimacy or "come closer" to someone.

3.3.3.4.2 Negative politeness strategies

On the other hand, negative politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987: 70) encompasses strategies that a speaker resorts to in order to satisfy the addressee's negative face wants. Making use of this type of redressive actions aims at non-imposing and non-impeding the addressee's freedom of action. Eventually, it is assumed (Brown & Levinson 1987: 129) that negative politeness utterances are the essence of respectful linguistic behaviour, just like positive politeness utterances describe the familiar and joking humorous behaviour in the most convenient and prominent manner. Unlike positive politeness that can be characterized with commodious and broad-ranging possibilities of strategy realization, negative politeness shows a somewhat restrained and narrowed down strategy realization in terms of serving the function of curtailment of the imposing on the addressee (Brown & Levinson 1987: 70). Brown and Levinson (1987: 129-130) stress that negative politeness is prevalent in Western cultures, for it appears to subsume culturally-specific standardized linguistic strategies for expressing and respecting essential values of a particular culture and eventually minimize the effect of an FTA. Linguistic realization of negative politeness is manifold and some of the most frequent and literature-familiar are conventional indirectness, hedges on illocutionary force, polite pessimism and the emphasis on H's relative power (Brown & Levinson 1987: 130).

Positive politeness
Do FTA on record plus redress to:
H wants [S wants H's wants]

5.3.1 Claim 'common ground'
(S & H ∈ {A} who want {X})

Convey 'X is admirable, interesting'

1. Notice, attend to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods)
2. Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H)
3. Intensify interest to H

Claim in-group membership with H

4. Use in-group identity markers

Claim common { point of view / opinions / attitudes / knowledge / empathy }

5. Seek agreement
6. Avoid disagreement
7. Presuppose/raise/assert common ground
8. Joke

5.3.2 Convey that S and H are cooperators

Indicate S knows H's wants and is taking them into account

9. Assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern for H's wants

Claim reflexivity { If H wants ⟨H has X⟩ then S wants ⟨H has X⟩ / If S wants ⟨S has X⟩ then H wants ⟨S has X⟩ }

10. Offer, promise
11. Be optimistic
12. Include both S and H in the activity
13. Give (or ask for) reasons

Claim reciprocity

14. Assume or assert reciprocity

5.3.3 Fulfil H's want (for some X)

15. Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)

Figure 3 Chart of strategies: Positive politeness (originally retrieved from Brown and Levinson, 1987: 102)

5.4.1 Be direct ——————————————→ Be direct

clash

1. Be conventionally indirect

5.4.2 Don't presume/assume ——→ Make minimal assumptions about H's wants, what is relevant to H ——————→ 2. Question, hedge

5.4.3 Don't coerce H (where *x* involves H doing A) ——→ Give H option not to do act

Be indirect

Don't assume H is able/willing to do A

Assume H is not likely to do A ——→ 3. Be pessimistic

Minimize threat ——————→ Make explicit R, P, D values

4. Minimize the imposition, R$_x$
5. Give deference

Negative politeness

Do FTA *x*
(a) on record
(b) plus redress to H's want to be unimpinged upon

5.4.4 Communicate S's want to not impinge on H ——————————→ 6. Apologize

Dissociate S, H from the particular infringement

7. Impersonalize S and H: Avoid the pronouns 'I' and 'you'
8. State the FTA as a general rule
9. Nominalize

5.4.5 Redress other wants of H's, derivative from negative face ——————————→ 10. Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H

Figure 4 Chart of strategies: Negative politeness (originally retrieved from Brown and Levinson, 1987: 131)

[Explanation] Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the options for strategies within positive and negative politeness respectively. Further elaboration of steps and sub-steps within these two politeness strategies could be found in Brown and Levinson (1987).

3.3.3.5 Sociological factors: Power, Distance and Ranking of imposition

The third element of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1978, 1987) is concerned with sociological factors that according to the authors are able to determine the seriousness and weightiness of an FTA and, generally speaking, the level of politeness. These are the social distance (D) between a speaker (S) and a hearer (H), the relative power (P) of S and H and the ranking of imposition (R). It is argued (Brown & Levinson 1987: 74-76) that these factors are present in most of, if not all world cultures, stressing that the factors are understood only to the extent where they could be qualified as mutual knowledge between S and H and they certainly do not represent sociological concepts and ratings of the actual power or distance. The existence of these factors and their importance in an interaction are emphasized to a more or a less equal extent in works by a great number of prominent scholars as well (Bates, 1976, Lakoff & Tannen, 1979, Grimshaw, 1980a and b; Leech, 1980, 1983).

Before presenting and analyzing the formula for computing the gravity of an FTA, it is vital that some clarifications and descriptions of the three sociological factors be provided. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 76-77), social distance (D) represents a symmetric social relation between S and H that is related to the existence of similarity or difference which S and H show in their interaction. In most cases, this relation relies on the evaluation of the interaction regularity and recurrence and the nature of the interaction which includes face exchanges (Brown & Levinson 1987: 77). In a nutshell, what is correlative with social closeness is satisfying and having positive face wants satisfied (Brown & Levinson 1987: 77). The second factor of power (P) depicts the relative power that H has over S i.e. to what degree H is able to impose on S's face needs (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 77). At this point Brown and Levinson (1987: 77) consider worth mentioning two sources of P i.e. authorized and unauthorized. Indicating that deference appears to be the most quintessential sign of the P factor, the elaboration (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 77) on these two power sources is that there are:

> […] material control (over economic distribution and physical force) and metaphysical control (over the actions of others, by virtue of metaphysical forces subscribed to by

those others). In most cases an individual's power is reported to be drawn from both these sources, or is thought to overlap them.

Last but not least, the factor of ranking of imposition (R) is culture-specifically determined by the point to which the impositions are estimated to interfere with an interactant's negative and positive needs (Brown & Levinson 1987: 77). In particular, Brown and Levinson (1987: 77) argue about the ranking of imposition with regards to both negative face FTAs and FTAs against positive face. When it comes to negative-face FTAs, it is assumed that there are two different ranks that are emically discernable. These include a rank order of impositions requiring services such as the provision of time, and a rank order of impositions requiring goods that may encompass non-material goods such as information or some face payments such as expression of regard (Brown & Levinson 1987: 77). The ranking of imposition concerning FTAs against positive face presupposes the evaluation of affliction caused to "H's face, based on the discrepancy between H's own desired self-image and that presented (blatantly or tacitly) in the FTA" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 78). The authors (1987: 77) rest and exemplify R concerning positive-face FTAs:

> There will be cultural rankings of aspects of positive face (for example, 'success', 'niceness', 'beauty', 'generosity'), which can be reranked in particular circumstances, just as can negative-face rankings. And there are personal (idiosyncratic) functions on these rankings; some people object to certain kinds of FTAs more than others. A person who is skilled at assessing such rankings, and the circumstances in which they vary, is considered to be graced with 'tact', 'charm', or 'poise'.

Notwithstanding, some of these sociological factors have faced criticism on different grounds indicating that one needs to be aware, when arriving at conclusions, of the possibility that these factors can show dissimilar degrees due to cultural diversity and different language communities' different treatments of the factors. For an instance, some research studies indicate that the factor D should not be considered in a straightforward manner and that there are other elements besides the factor D that have a greater influence on the degree of politeness such as having affection or not towards someone (Holtgraves, 1984; Baxter, 1984). Holtgraves (1984) finds a positive correlation between politeness and liking between S and H. Baxter (1984) shares the opinion and explains that the higher degree of politeness is directly related to the higher degree of closeness and friendliness whereas, Slugoski (1985) adds that it would be advisable to consider the D variable as consisting of sub-elements that are to be analyzed in particular i.e. familiarity and the distinction between social distance and affection should be especially taken into consideration when it comes to interpretation of the ironic language use which is able to convey

insults or compliments. Brown and Levinson (1987: 16) concede that certain statements by Baxter or Slugoski could be true and thus, make a further comment that research of the impact of friendship on the employment of politeness strategies would reveal significant evidence about the cultural influence on the linguistic behaviour. It is further suggested (Brown & Levinson 1987: 16) that especially interesting would be to conduct this kind of research in cultural contexts where a strong sense for companionship is displayed and friendly relations exist between people coming from different and hierarchically unequal casts. Eventually, Brown and Levinson (1987: 16) stress that their aim is to present as universal model as it is possible which hopefully would be able to account for the majority of the world cultures, even though there might be some factors that are not captured within the P, D and R variables.

Having elaborated on the three sociological factors that may make crucial impact on the degree of politeness, it is now easy to grasp the way how weightiness of an FTA is computed. The formula is (Brown & Levinson 1987: 76):

$$W_x = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_x$$

According to the authors (Brown & Levinson 1987: 76), all the values of the function can have any value on the scale between 1 and n, with n being some small number. Once again, Brown and Levinson (1987) are not definite with the number of factors, but they rather assume that the P, D and R make a considerable contribution to the gravity of an FTA and consequently determine the level of politeness between interactants.

3.4   A critique of the politeness theories

Politeness is a social phenomenon and as such cannot be endorsed by final axioms, exact definitions and conclusions. What areas such as pragmatics, socio-linguistics, anthropology and many others try to do is to construct and structure theories that could be considered universal to certain extent, but they definitely do not try to be the final word on the phenomenon. The theories elaborated in the previous sections are the ones that are ranked as the most influential, comprehensive and major-league theoretical frameworks (one of them is even proclaimed a classic in the field literature). However, every one of them has been critically examined, discussed and those shortcomings have been publically disclosed not with the aim of diminishing the significance of a theory in question, but in order to raise awareness in the research circles of possible issues and essential facts and factors that might not have been reflected upon in the theory, but which may be

of the utmost importance to a certain context and culture in which the research is conducted. The following sections will provide some of the criticism available in the literature.

The three politeness theories have been abundantly criticized not only by fellow scholars, but also by each other (Leech 1983; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Matsumoto 1988: Ide, 1989a, 1989b). However, the most in-depth and elaborative critique appears to have been provided by Eelen (2001), who examines nine politeness theories. Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2013) identified in Eelen's critique three main areas that were under the scrutiny and found to be problematic within the theoretical frameworks on politeness. The three issues are: "(i) they are conceptually biased toward the polite end of the polite/impolite distinction, (ii) they conceptualize politeness and impoliteness as opposites, and (iii) their conceptualizations of impoliteness are speaker biased, focusing almost entirely on production." (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich 2013: 2).

3.4.1 *Criticism of Lakoff's theory*

Lakoff (1973a) has been considered to mark the birth of politeness theory in that she has been the first who took a "decidedly pragmatic" approach to politeness, although focusing on the differences between women and men in their treatment of language as well as linguistic treatment of the gender (Eelen 2001: 2). In spite of the fact that her theoretical model on politeness has not been cited as frequently as the ones of Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), her considerations and vistas on the issue are labelled as ground-breaking and revolutionary in the field of pragmatics (West et al. 1997: 128). However, her deeply-appreciated theoretical framework has been widely reviewed and some shortcomings are displayed in numerous academic works and papers worldwide (Eelen, 2001; Mazid, 2008; Dynel, 2009; Shahrokhi & Bidabadi, 2013).

The major remark that is ascribed to Lakoff's work in general that concerns the politeness theory as well is the one relating to Lakoff's lack of sufficient empirical evidence. She has been criticized for making generalizations based solely on her intuition and subjective data collection model. Furthermore, according to Felix-Brasdefer (2008), Lakoff (1973) is assumed not to have clear-cut and well-defined judgments on the difference between polite behaviour and socially appropriate behaviour. Due to introspection as a type of data collection that Lakoff employed, her stance on the importance of being polite over being clear in interaction is unfounded and hard to scientifically be accepted. Namely, Lakoff (1975: 64) is of the opinion that rules of politeness are

"to reduce friction in personal interaction", for, what is a matter of the uttermost importance in social discourse is to affirm relationships and bolster them up. Therefore, her giving precedence to being polite over being clear is absolutely groundless, because whether a speaker will opt for a communicative strategy by which s/he wants to convey meaning or by which s/he wants to maintain a harmonious and friendly interaction is only dependent on a certain interaction context and purpose (Dynel 2009: 26). Other remarks targeted at Lakoff's politeness theory (1973a) include her failure to provide guidelines or modi that would help the engaged in an interaction to evaluate the level of politeness of an utterance and an instructions set for choosing a rule or a sub-rule of politeness that is desirable in a certain interaction (Pikor-Niedzialek 2005: 107).

3.4.2   *Criticism of Leech's theory*

Although Leech's work on politeness has been stimulating for a great number of researchers who have conducted many studies in order to discern cross-cultural tendencies and patterns (Chen, 1993), his theory has not been deprived of criticism.

The point of Leech's theory (1983) that attracts the greatest amount of criticism is the one concerned with the methodology. PP and the maxims are deemed indefinite and hence problematic to be regarded as a theoretical framework, because a new maxim can be introduced anytime for the sake of language use regularity and politeness consideration. This critique reverberates in the literature of the politeness theory critique (Dillon et al., 1985; Lavandera, 1988; Fraser, 1990; Thomas, 1995; Turner, 1996; Eelen, 2001; Watts, 2003; Locher, 2004). Brown and Levinson (1987: 4) also comment on the proliferation of the maxims: "If we are permitted to invent a maxim for every regularity in language use, not only will we have an infinite number of maxims, but pragmatic theory will be too unconstrained to permit the recognition of any counterexamples".

Secondly, Leech's equation of politeness with indirectness has spawned an avalanche of criticism that suggests that indirectness does not necessarily positively correlate with politeness (Blum-Kulka, 1987, 1990, 1992; Fraser, 1990; Locher, 2004). Locher (2004: 65) seems to criticize this Leech's questionable assumption in a quite outspoken manner, arguing that: "a direct utterance can be the appropriate polite form in a specific context, while indirectness could even be impolite". To illustrate this Locher's statement, Dynel (2009: 28) analyzes Leech's example (Leech, 1983: 171) "Haven't you something to declare?" and argues, referring to Culpeper, 1996, 2005, Bousfield, 2008, Bousfield and Locher, 2008, that this question that might be posed by a customs'

officer "emerges as being indicative of decreasing politeness, rather than impoliteness, since it is not an intentional attack on the hearer […], but still a relatively polite question". Another Leech's example (Leech 1983: 133) "You must come and have dinner with us" again contradicts the Leech's assumption in that that this utterance shows the highest level of directness, yet complies to a great extent with the Generosity Maxim and hence is considered rather polite.

Leech (1983) claims that his Politeness Principle is a complementary and indispensable partner of Gricean Cooperative Principle, arguing even that PP is able to account for certain situations which cannot be explained using Gricean CP. In this way, Leech (1983) seems to put the PP and the CP on the identical pragmatic level, assigning them the same first-order principles status. Dynel (2009: 29) disagrees with the idea that these two principles are of the equal importance to and function in pragmatics indicating that:

> Contrary to what Leech suggests, interlocutors need not always be "friendly" or even benevolently cooperative but still abide by the CP. Additionally, the CP is an unchangeable presumption, which is argues to be operative in all interpersonal encounters, while politeness is socially controlled and can be violated. It is thus simply wrong to assume that politeness regulates and is superior to conversational rationality, which is a broader concept. The speaker may be rational, and therefore cooperative in the Gricean sense, without necessarily being polite. A salient counterexample is an utterance displaying impoliteness. Also, an emergent question is if all encounters and utterance can actually be assessed for the politeness value (e.g. a teacher delivering a lecture).

Lastly to mention is a remark by Karafoti (2007). In her review of the theoretical considerations on politeness, Karafoti (2007: 121) indicates that Leech's theory emphasizes heuristic strategies of interpretation and when interpreting politeness, gives priority to addressee's perspective, neglecting speaker's intention to some degree.

3.4.3 *Criticism of Brown and Levinson's theory*

Brown and Levinson's face-saving model (1978, 1987) as a politeness theory has been assumed to be the most significant and encompassing theory to emerge in the areas of sociolinguistics and sociopragmatics in particular (Eelen, 2001). Their theory has acted as a theoretical basis for many research studies in which various speech acts in different cultural and cross-cultural settings and language communities are analyzed with the aim of detecting similarities and differences when it comes to patterns of expressing linguistic politeness (Holmes, 1990; Lane, 1990). In spite of the remarkably positive evaluation and its immense application in

the research, the theory has received a lot of criticism and disapproval (Matsumoto, 1988; Ide, 1989; Gu, 1990; Kasper, 1990; Fraser, 1990; 2005; Werkhofer, 1992; Nwoye, 1992; Mao, 1994; Eelen, 2001; Kádár and Mills, 2011).

The issue that attracted most of the criticism concerns the epithet that Brown and Levinson ascribe to their theory i.e. universality of the model. Even though the authors based their theory and considerations relaying on the data from three different languages (English, Tamil and Tzeltal), many scholars brand the theory Eurocentric and Anglo-Saxon based, alluding that the theory is difficult to apply to non-Western cultures (Matsumoto, 1988; Ide, 1989b; Gu, 1990; Nwoye, 1992; Kádár & Mills, 2011). These scholars claim that Brown and Levinson's model (1987) proposes the individualistic approach to linguistically polite behaviour. They disagree with the model's proposition that a speaker, MP in Brown and Levinson's terms, selects a politeness strategy taking into consideration only three factors that influence the weightiness of a potential FTA. When combined with the trait of rationality that is attributed to an MP, Werkhofer (1992: 156) concludes that the MP is "during the initial phase of generating an utterance at least, unconstrained by social considerations and thus free to choose egocentric, asocial, and assertive interaction." According to Ide (1989b), Gu (1990), Nwoye (1992) and Mao (1994) such linguistic behaviour would be considered at least impolite in non-Western societies e.g. Japanese and Chinese. To put it bluntly, the disagreement with Brown and Levinson revolves around the fact that some cultures cannot deploy the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. Kiyama, Tamaoka and Takiura (2012: 1) explain this disagreement referring to Ide's *wakimae* (Ide, 1989b, 2006) :

> […] people in Japanese culture emphasize fixed social relationships based on hierarchical power structures (i.e., seniority systems). Ide (1989, 2006) called the system "discernment" or "wakimae" in which Japanese people are obliged, in every utterance, to use addressee honorifics, such as "-desu,"-masu," and "gozaimasu" so that they can keep appropriate relations with seniors and/or strangers. According to Ide's interpretation, honorific usages represent facework or politeness behaviors in the Japanese language, and hence Japanese people are scarcely able to select spontaneous facework (politeness) strategies, which Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) formula predicts on the basis of estimation of an FTA to the interlocutor.

In particular, Matsumoto (1988) was one of the first researchers who tested the applicability of Brown and Levinson's theory in a Japanese cultural setting. His position is that there are vital differences between Japanese culture and Western cultures, which are not accounted

for by Brown and Levinson, and thus make their theory inapplicable to East-Asian environments. Matsumoto (1988: 405) elucidates the differences:

> What is of paramount concern to a Japanese is not his/her own territory, but the position in relation to the others in the group and his/her acceptance by those others. Loss of face is associated with the perception by others that one has not comprehended and acknowledged the structure and hierarchy of the group. The Japanese concepts of face, thus, are qualitatively different from those defined as universals by Brown and Levinson.

Moreover, Kádár and Mills in their *Politeness in East Asia* question the rationality, individuality and sense of logic, which according to Brown and Levinson's model would help the speaker to choose an appropriate polite strategy. It is argued that (Kádár & Mills, 2011: 6) these traits of an MP seem "to be in contrast with the "vertical" East Asian societies (cf. Nakane, 1972: 23-4) where communal values are more important than individual ones and speakers do not necessarily determine the style of speech they use solely according to the rules of logic".

Secondly, the sociological variables of P, D and R have been under scrutiny as well. The formula for calculating the seriousness of an FTA designed by Brown and Levinson has been labelled as over-simplified, because the variables are assigned a value of constancy (Fraser, 1990; Werkhofer, 1992; Locher, 2004). Fraser (1990: 231) believes that the variables are constantly changing which is a result of the context of the interaction which greatly differs when other factors are taken into consideration, e.g. "the factors such as habit and routine or factors emerging from the dynamics of the interaction" (Werkhofer 1992:168).

Furthermore, the face-saving model has been greatly criticized on the grounds that it neglects impoliteness which is an argument that may question the comprehensiveness of the model (Eelen, 2001). He is rather direct when discussing that the phenomena of politeness and impoliteness are too closely related and dependent on each other or as Culpeper (1996: 350) would metaphorically describe the position of impoliteness as "very much the parasite of politeness", that it would be ill-advised to disconnect them (Eelen 2001: 92): "The phenomena are merely two sides of the same coin, and therefore any theory that pretends to say something valuable about one side, automatically needs to deal with the other side as well."

Another aspect that has found an important place in Eelen's (2001) extensive critique of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (1987) concerns the application of the difference between emic and etic aspects of linguistics onto the model. Eelen (2001) refers to Pike's (1967)

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concepts of emic and etic and describes the terms with regard to politeness and Brown and Levinson's model (1987). According to Eelen (2001: 76-77), emic knowledge is a speaker's own experience and his/her subjective evaluation of being polite, whereas etic knowledge would represent scientific conceptualization of what is considered to be polite with the aim of explanation ad predicting im/polite occurrences. As Gilks illustrates (2009-2010: 96), the terms of an MP and an FTA would be classified as etic concepts; any fluent speaker of his/her native language would be qualified as an etic concept as well as any real-life situation when an FTA happens. Nonetheless, it is debated (Eelen, 2001: 82) that the process of transfer from etic to emic is not that plain and straightforward in the case of Brown and Levinson's model and it necessitates further considerations.

Even though the model has been widely criticized and some of its assumptions have been strongly questioned, the fact that a substantial body of research has relied on this particular model over more than thirty years, speaks volumes about its significance and impact on sociolinguistics. As regards this thesis, this model has provided some of the guidelines when constructing the discourse completion test (DCT) that has been utilized as a research method for the data collection. In particular, the notion of social distance between the addresser and addressee has been taken into consideration when designing the twelve scenarios of the DCT. Also, the compliment responses will be analyzed in terms of FTA occurrences.

4. On Speech Acts

One of the most important and relevant concepts in the philosophy of language and linguistics, especially in pragmatics is the concept of a speech act, the concept introduced by Austin (1962, 1970, 1996) and later elaborated by a number of linguists and philosophers of language (Searle, 1969, 1976, 1979; Bach & Harnish, 1979).

4.1 Defining speech acts

The proposition behind speech acts is that a language is not purely a tool for communication in the sense of the mere making statements, but language can also serve other functions. The first one who sheds some light upon what constitutes a speech act is John L. Austin who proposes the idea that there is much more to language uses than just sheer expressing ourselves, stating that "It was for too long the assumption of philosophers that the business of a 'statement' can only be to 'describe' some state of affairs, or to 'state some fact', which it must do either truly or falsely" (1962: 1).

According to Searle (1969: 16), when we linguistically communicate, we perform linguistic acts which represent "the production or issuance of the symbol or word or sentence" and which "are in general made possible and are performed in accordance with certain rules for the use of linguistic elements" (1969: 16).

Furthermore, the entry *Speech acts* in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2000: 856) provides Kent Bach's definition that suggests that a speech act is an act of communication, explaining that:

> To communicate is to express a certain attitude, and the type of speech act being performed corresponds to the type of attitude being expressed. For example, a statement expresses a belief, a request expresses a desire, and an apology expresses a regret. As an act of communication, a speech act succeeds if the audience identifies, in accordance with the speaker's intention, the attitude being expressed.

Another encyclopedic entry by Baicchi (2009: 212) proposes that a speech act could be defined as "an act that a speaker performs when pronouncing an utterance, which thus serves a function in communication".

4.2   Speech acts and culture

Speech acts have been discussed to be culturally specific and to vary from one culture to another on various grounds (Baicchi, 2000; Huang, 2010). Baicchi suggests (2000: 212) that speech acts vary in the degree of appropriateness they express in versatile cultures and language communities.

Furthermore, Huang reports (2010: 212) that cultural specificity with regard to speech acts could be observed on four different levels. Firstly, speech acts are not universally present in all cultures as it is stated by Searle (1969). Rosaldo (1982) argues that the speech act of promising is not present in the cultural community of Ilongots – a tribe of hunters and horticulturalists in the Philippines. In addition to the cultures that lack certain speech acts and which yet account for the majority of world cultures is a cultural community of Yolngu speakers i.e. an Australian aboriginal language, whose linguistic behaviour does not include the speech act of thanking (Harris, 1984). Furthermore, Hudson (1985) reports on Walmajari – another Australian aboriginal language – whose speakers are unique in that that the speech act of requesting based on kinship rights and obligations is the speech act performed solely in their language. Secondly, Huang (2010: 712) reports that different speech acts are employed in the same situation depending on the cultural context:

> While in English, thanks and compliments are usually offered to the hosts when leaving a dinner party, in Japanese society, apologies such as o-jama itashimashita 'I have intruded on you' are more likely to be offered by the guests. A similar speech act of apologizing is performed in Japanese upon receiving a present, when a Japanese speaker is likely to say something sumimasen- the most common Japanese 'apology' formula or one of its variants.

Thirdly, it is pointed out (Huang 2010: 712) that in different cultural settings, the same speech act could encounter different speech acts as responses. For instance, while in English, a compliment usually provokes responses of acceptance or thanking, the same speech act of complimenting would induce compliment responses of self-deprecation in some non-Western cultures such as Chinese and Japanese and even some European languages i.e. Polish (Huang 2010: 712).

Lastly, Huang emphasizes (2010: 712) that the great body of research in pragmatics has been directed to examining the degree of indirectness/directness of the same speech act in various cultural environments.

What follows is the coverage of the theoretical frameworks on speech acts provided by Austin and Searle and their taxonomies of illocutionary acts. In addition, Searle's critique of Austin's classification will be regarded upon.

4.3   Speech Act Theory by John L. Austin

John Langshaw Austin was a British philosopher of language, world-renowned for his theory of speech acts. Prior to the theory, that would be later worked upon by Searle, Austin had debated on the prevailing philosophical position at that time which proposed that language use was limited to asserting, stating, making claims and facts (Austin 1962: 1). This led Austin to take an opposite stand from the existent and domineering philosophy that supported the idea of truth-values that could be assigned to any utterance (1962: 3). Namely, the ruling philosophical perspective was the one of logical positivists, out of which, Russell and Tarski were the most influential and outspoken ones (Oishi 2006: 1-2). Russell (1905) and Tarski (1944) propose a reductionist approach to the explanation of meaning. Oishi (2006: 1) reports that by using logical/mathematical model, Russell reduces meaning to a *fact* that corresponds to a sentence, whereas Tarski terms a *state of affairs* the reduced meaning of a sentence. Furthermore, logical positivist philosophers suggest the verifiability criterion of explaining the meaning (Thomas 1995: 30):

> Logical positivism is a philosophical system which maintains that the only meaningful statements are those that are analytic or can be tested empirically. Logical positivist philosophers of language, therefore, were principally concerned with the properties of sentences which could be evaluated in terms of truth or falsity. Within linguistics, this approach was adopted within an area known as truth conditional semantics.

4.3.1   *Performative and constative dichotomy*

However, this very idea of sentences being either true or false from the previous section appears to have become a starting point for Austin's development of his own theory (Austin 1962, 1970, 1996). As an argument against truth conditional semantics, he proposes the notion of a *performative utterance* or just a *performative* (1962: 6). Examples of such an utterance are (13)-(16) (Austin 1962: 5):

(13)   'I do (sc. take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife) – as uttered in the course of the marriage ceremony.

(14)   'I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth' - as uttered when smashing the bottle against the stem.

(15)   'I give and bequeath my watch to my brother' - as occurring in a will.

(16)   'I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow.'

(17)   My daughter is called Elizabeth.

(18)   A freshly baked loaf doesn't cut easily.

(19)   Maurice Garin won the first Tour de France in 1903.[9]

By introducing *performatives* as a type of utterances opposing to utterances that are employed to make statements, which are called *constatives* by Austin (Examples (17)-(19) (Huang 2010: 705-706)), Austin (1970) reacts against "the extreme claims of logical positivists, who argued that the meaning of a sentence is reducible to its verifiability, that is to an analysis which verifies if utterances are true or false" and suggests "that most of our utterances do more than simply making statements: questions and orders are not used to state something, and many declarative sentences do not lend themselves to being analyzed in terms of their falsifiability" (Baicchi 2009: 213).

Austin claims (1996: 121) that what differs Examples (13) – (16) as *performative* utterances in general from *constatives,* as in Examples (17) – (19), is that by saying them, one is doing something. Another argument for the distinction between *constatives* and *performatives* is that whereas the former may be examined on a true-false scale, the latter could only be deemed felicitous or infelicitous (Austin 1996: 122-123). At this point of clarifying speech acts, Austin concludes (1962: 138) that "once we realize that what we have to study is not the sentence but the issuing of an utterance in a speech situation, there can hardly be any longer a possibility of not seeing that stating is performing an act".

4.3.2   *Felicity conditions*

When it comes to performative utterances, it has already been mentioned earlier that they do not qualify as statements whose truth-value can be estimated (Austin 1962: 12; Huang 2010:

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[9] The examples (17) – (19) are quoted from Huang (2010: 705-706)

706). For them, Austin (1962: 14-15) developed a set of three felicity conditions that need to be met so that a certain speech act is considered successful or in Austin's words 'felicitious':

> (A. I) There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances, and further,
> (A. 2) the particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked.
> (B. I) The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and
> (B. 2) completely.
> (Γ. I) Where, as often, the procedure is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must in fact have those thoughts or feelings, and the participants must intend so to conduct themselves, and further
> (Γ. 2) must actually so conduct themselves subsequently.

However, Austin (1962: 14) accounts for possible situations in which one or more of these conditions will not be fulfilled i. e cases "in which something goes wrong" and which eventually result in speech acts that cannot be deemed false, but unsuccessful. Those unsuccessful speech acts are termed "infelicities" by Austin (1962: 14).

4.3.3 Speech act facets: locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act

Further theorizing on speech acts spurred Austin to debate on three acts of an utterance. These, Austin (1962: 102-103) terms *locutionary act, illocutionary act* and *perlocutionary act*, arguing that the essence of the language use i.e. speech acts lies in the illocutionary acts.

Locutionary act is reported (Austin 1962: 94) to be equivalent to sheer uttering sounds, meaningful words and sentences in accordance to grammar rules of the language which they belong to. Austin (1962: 108) further explains locutionary acts as "roughly equivalent to 'meaning' in the traditional sense". When it comes to these acts, Austin (1962: 95) distinguishes three acts within one locutionary act:

> The phonetic act is merely the act of uttering certain noises. The phatic act is the uttering of certain vocables or words, i.e. noises of certain types, belonging to and as belonging to, a certain vocabulary, conforming to and as conforming to a certain grammar. The rhetic act is the performance of an act of using those vocables with a certain more-or-less definite sense and reference. Thus 'He said "The cat is on the mat" ', reports a phatic act, whereas "He said that the cat was on the mat" reports a rhetic act.

Illocutionary acts involve force of the uttered words or intention that a speaker has when makes a certain utterance (Austin 1962: 149). Illocutionary acts are what is meant by the concept of a speech act or as Austin dubs "the total speech act in the total speech situation" (1962: 147).

Lastly, *a perlocutionary act* refers to an effect of the uttered words (Austin 1962: 101-102). Austin argues (1962: 101) that "saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them".

For better understanding of these three concepts, Example (20) quoted from Austin (1962: 101-102) will be interpreted in terms of locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act.

(20)   Act (A) or Locution
        He said to me 'Shoot her!' meaning by 'shoot' shoot and referring by 'her' to her.
        Act (B) or Illocution
        He urged (or advised, ordered, &c.) me to shoot her.
        Act (C. a) or Perlocution
        He persuaded me to shoot her.
        Act (C. b)
        He got me to (or made me, &c.) shoot her.

When compared among each other, illocutionary acts are given priority since "unlike locutionary acts, illocutionary acts have a force, and, unlike perlocutionary acts, illocutionary acts are valid and complete without being reduced to the effect of it" (Oishi 2006: 4).

4.3.4   Taxonomy of illocutionary acts

Towards the end of Austin's lectures i. e. Chapter XII of *How to do things with words,* Austin moves from the *performatives/constatives* distinction to making a classification of illocutionary acts, having taken into consideration their illocutinary force (Austin 1962: 150).

Table 4 Classification of illocutionary acts with examples by Austin (1962)

Types of illocutionary acts	Examples
Verdictives	acquit, convict, estimate, find (as a matter of fact), understand, rank, value, analyze, grade, interpret as, assess, diagnose, describe
Exercitives	appoint, name, dismiss, degrade, excommunicate, demote, order, proclaim, urge, pray, mark, recommend, beg, vote for, bequeath, command
Commissives	promise, covenant, contract, embrace, bet, intend, agree, vow, adopt, guarantee, contemplate, envisage, plan, give my word, favour, swear

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Behabitives	apologize, thank, compliment, congratulate, welcome, toast, curse, criticize, deplore, sympathize, resent, complain, dare, defy, bless, felicitate
Expositives	affirm, state, remark, inform, concede, deny answer, mention, repudiate, testify, revise, recognize

[Explanation] Table 4 lists the types of illocutionary acts along with corresponding verb examples provided in Austin (1962). The more in-depth descriptions of what these five types of illocutionary acts constitute and what they relate to are extracted from Austin (1962) and the descriptions excerpts are as follows:

Verdictives "consist in the delivering of a finding, official or unofficial, upon evidence or reasons as to value or fact, so far as these are distinguishable" (Austin 1962: 152).

Exercitives convey "the giving of a decision in favour of or against a certain course of action, or advocacy of it. It is a decision that something is to be so, as distinct from a judgement that it is so: it is advocacy that it should be so, as opposed to an estimate that it is so; it is an award as opposed to an assessment; it is a sentence as opposed to a verdict" (Austin 1962: 154).

Commisives are speech acts that "commit the speaker to a certain course of action" (Austin 1962: 156).

Behabitives "include the notion of reaction to other people's behaviour and fortunes and of attitudes and expressions of attitudes to someone else's past conduct or imminent conduct" (Austin 1962: 159).

Expositives "are used in acts of exposition involving the expounding of views, the conducting of arguments, and the clarifying of usages and of references" (Austin 1962: 160).

However, it should be noted that this classification of Austin is not meant to be a definite and only right one. Austin himself argues (Austin 1962: 151) that he is not "putting any of this forward as in the very least definitive" and affirms that he is "far from equally happy about all of them" (Austin 1962: 150). But, the fact that Austin set extraordinary foundations and provided an incentive for further discussion and revision of the classification remains and cannot be refuted (Searle 1976: 7).

4.4   A Theory of Speech Acts by John Searle

John Searle was an American philosopher of language and Austin's student from Oxford who is claimed (Huang 2010: 705) to have most profoundly and most significantly elaborated, advanced and systematized Austin's work on Speech Act Theory (1962).

Searle believes (1969: 16; 1976: 1) that the reason behind studying speech acts is that language use is based on the issuance of speech acts i.e. all the linguistic communication we engage in consists of speech acts as its "basic and minimal units".

4.4.1   Searle's criticism of Austin's taxonomy of speech acts

Searle discusses (1976: 7) that even though Austin's classification of illocutionary acts builds a firm foundation for debating on speech acts, the classification itself has several drawbacks. Having paid a special attention to those weak points of Austin's classification, Searle seems to have upgraded the theory of speech acts in a more detailed and scientific manner, and eventually proposed one of his own (1979: 12-20).

Searle identified (1976: 8-10) six points of criticism of Austin's classification.

a) Not all the verbs that Austin lists are illocutionary verbs e.g. sympathize, intend, mean to
b) There is no a clear-cut principle or a set of principles according to which Austin constructs the classification
c) There is a huge overlap of verbs from one category and another
d) There is a great heterogeneity within some categories
e) There are different kinds of verbs within a single category e.g. verbs such as 'dare', 'defy' and 'challenge' are listed as behabitives along with verbs such as 'thank, 'apologize' and 'welcome'
f) Not all the verbs within the categories comply with the given definitions

It is stated (Searle 1976: 8) that b) is the most important remark, because the absence of the well-defined principle causes further shortcomings of the classification i.e. c), d) and e). It is further suggested (Searle 1976: 8-9):

> The problem is not that there are borderline cases – any taxonomy that deals with the real world is likely to come up with borderline cases – nor is it merely that a few unusual cases will have the defining characteristics of more than one category; rather, a very large number of verbs find themselves smack in the middle of two competing categories because the principles of classification are unsystematic.

Having identified the drawbacks of the taxonomy, Searle (1969, 1976, 1979) set himself on finding an alternative taxonomy that will try to solve the problems listed above. The following

sections will deal with Searle's theorizing on speech acts, what they constitute and how many of them there are.

4.4.2 The structure of speech acts

Searle (1969) starts his theory on speech acts arguing that within one speech act, a speaker commits three different kinds of acts and those include (Searle 1969: 23):

- Utterance act (uttering certain words, sentences)
- Propositional act (reference and predication)
- Illocutionary act (e.g. promising, stating, questioning)

He adds (1969: 24-25) that while utterance acts consist in merely uttering certain strings of words, propositional and illocutionary acts reflect utterances "in certain context and under certain conditions with certain intentions".

In addition to these three acts, Searle agrees (1969: 25) with Austin on the notion of perlocutionary act and force and adds it to these three acts as the notion of a consequence or an effect correlates with the notion of illocutionary act.

When it comes to the structure of illocutionary acts solely, Searle and Vanderveken suggest (2005: 109) that illocutionary speech acts, by and large consist of illocutionary force F and propositional content P. Furthermore, they stress (Searle & Vanderveken 2005: 109) that utterances may have the same propositional content and different illocutionary forces as well as vice versa – the same illocutionary force and different propositional contents:

> For example, the two utterances "You will leave the room" and "Leave the room!" have the same propositional content, namely that you will leave the room; but characteristically the first of these has the illocutionary force of a prediction and the second has the illocutionary force of an order. Similarly, the two utterances "Are you going to the movies?" and "When will you see John?" both characteristically have the illocutionary force of questions but have different propositional contents.

4.4.3 Constitutive rules

In order to have scientifically accepted and well-defined principles of classification of illocutionary acts, Searle, similarly to Austin (1969) devised a set of conditions or in Searle's term *constitutive rules*, under which any speech act could be successfully and reasonably performed. Searle uses the speech act of promising to account for the four conditions governing the success of speech acts (1969: 57-60). Those conditions are:

- Propositional content condition
- Preparatory condition

- Sincerity condition
- Essential condition[10]

Table 5 Constitutive rules and some speech acts in Searle (1969)[11]

Types of rule	Request	Assert (state that)	Question	Thank (for)	Advise	Warn	Greet	Congratulate
Propositional content	Future act A of H	Any proposition P	Any proposition or propositional function	Past act A done by H	Future act A of H	Future event or state, etc., E	None	Some event, act, etc., E related to H
Preparatory	1.H is able to do A. S believes H is able to do A. 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H will do A in the normal course of events of his own accord.	1.S has evidence (reasons, etc.) for the truth of P. 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H knows (does not need to be reminded of, etc.) P.	1.S does not know 'the answer', i.e. does not know if the proposition is true, or, in the case of the propositional function, does not know the information needed to complete the proposition truly (but see comment below). 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H will provide the information at that time	A benefits S and S believes A benefits S.	1.S has some reason to believe A will benefit H. 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H will do A in the normal course of events.	1.S has reason to believe E will occur and is not in H's interest. 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that E will occur.	S has just encountered (or been introduced to, etc.) H.	E is in H's interest and S believes E is in H's interest.

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[11] Table 5 is retrieved from Bowe and Martin, 2007: 17-18 (originally from Searle 1969: 66-67)

			without being asked.					
Sincerity	S wants H to do A.	S believes P.	S wants this information.	S feels grateful or appreciative for A.	S believes A will benefit H.	S believes E is not in H's best interest.	None.	S is pleased at E.
Essential	Counts as an attempt to get H to do A.	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that P represents an actual state of affairs.	Counts as an attempt to elicit this information from H.	Counts as an expression of gratitude or appreciation.	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that A is in H's best interest.	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that E is not in H's best interest.	Counts as courteous recognition of H by S.	Counts as an expression of pleasure at E.
Comment	Order and command have the additional preparatory rule that S must be in a position of authority over H. Command probably does not have the 'pragmatic' condition requiring non-obviousness. Furthermore in both, the authority relationship affects the essential condition because the utterance counts as an attempt to get H to do A in virtue of the authority of S over H.	Unlike argue, these do not seem to be essentially tied to attempting to convince. Thus 'I am simply stating that P and not attempting to convince you' is acceptable, but 'I am arguing that P and not attempting to convince you' sounds inconsistent.	There are two kinds of questions, (a) real questions, (b) exam questions. In real questions S wants to know (find out) the answer; in exam questions, S wants to know if H knows.	Sincerity and essential rules overlap. Thanking is just expressing gratitude in a way that, e.g., promising is not just expressing an intention.	Contrary to what one might suppose advice is not a species of requesting. It is interesting to compare 'advise' with 'urge', 'advocate' and 'recommend'. Advising you is not trying to get you to do something in the sense that requesting is. Advising is more like telling you what is best for you.	Warning is like advising, rather than requesting. It is not, I think, necessarily an attempt to get you to take evasive action. Notice that the above account is of categorical not hypothetical warnings. Most warnings are probably hypothetical: 'If you do not do X then Y will occur.'		'Congratulate' is similar to 'thank' in that it is an expression of its sincerity condition.

[Explanation] Table 5 illustrates the four constitutive rules or conditions in terms of different speech acts (requesting, asserting, questioning, thanking for, advising, warning, greeting, congratulating).

4.4.4 Taxonomy of illocutionary acts

Finally, Searle proposes (1979: 1) his own taxonomy of illocutionary acts comprised of five basic categories, trying to answer the question of how many speech acts there are and how many ways of language use exist. Searle (1976, 1979) classifies illocutionary acts into *assertives*, *directives*, *commisives*, *expressives* and *declarations*.

Table 6 Classification of illocutionary acts with examples by Searle (1979: 12-27)[12]

Types of illocutionary acts	Examples
Assertives	state, predict, describe, call, classify, identify, diagnose
Directives	ask, order, command, request, beg, plead, pray, entreat, invite, permit, advise, dare, defy, challenge
Commisives	promise, pledge, vow
Expressives	thank, congratulate, apologize, condole, deplore, welcome
Declarations	resign, excommunicate, christen, appoint, nominate, declare, marry, find, pronounce

[Explanation] Table 6 exhibits Searle's taxonomy of speech acts and verb examples for each of the categories.

4.5 Compliments and compliment responses as speech acts

4.5.1 Austin's approach

With regard to Austin's Speech Act Theory (1962), compliments appear as speech acts within the category of *behavitives* (1962: 159). Austin explains (1962: 159) that:

> Behabitives include the notion of reaction to other people's behaviour and fortunes and of attitudes and expressions of attitudes to someone else's past conduct or imminent conduct. There are obvious connexions with both stating or describing what our feelings are and expressing, in the sense of venting our feelings.

Furthermore, compliments are placed as speech acts used for expressing sympathy along with *congratulate, felicitate, condole, commiserate* (Austin 1962: 159).

To the best of my knowledge, compliment responses have not been specifically elaborated as speech acts. Therefore, they would be presumably identified as behabitives just

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[12] Examples in Table 6 are retrieved from Searle, 1979: 12-27

like compliments, since one possibility of responding to a compliment represents thanking, which appears as a behabitive in Austin's classification of illocutionary acts.

4.5.2 Searle's approach

Theory of Speech Acts (1969, 1976, 1979) by Searle does not list and account for the speech act of complimenting. However, if descriptions and paradigms of the categories within Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts are taken into consideration, one can easily place compliments within the category of *expressives*, as other members of this category include *congratulate, deplore, condole, apologize*. Additionally, Searle (1976: 13) uses the verb 'congratulate' in order to clarify the propositional content of such speech acts in the very context that is clearly applicable to a complimenting situation:

> I can congratulate you not only on your winning the race, but also on your good looks. The property specified in the propositional content of an expressive must however, be related to S or H. I cannot without some very special assumptions congratulate you on Newton's first law of motion.

When it comes to compliment responses, Searle (1979: 15) names 'thank' within *expressives* and the logic behind classifying any compliment response as an expressive (one does not necessarily respond to a compliment with thanking) is the same as in the case with Austin's taxonomy above.

A compliment and a corresponding compliment response concoct a complex speech situation, a binary speech act that has attracted a great deal of attention in pragmatics, especially from the perspective of cross-cultural communication. This thesis is also an attempt to make a contribution to the area of linguistic politeness, focused on the research of the particular speech act of compliment responses in two different linguistic and cultural background – British English and Serbian.

5. On Complimenting Behaviour

"When you are complimented, the only response necessary is "Thank you". Don't disparage yourself. If someone admires your dress, don't say, "This old thing. I got it at a bargain basement sale." A simple thank you is sufficient."

Dorothea Johnson, *Entertaining and Etiquette for Today*

(1979: 43-44)

Communication is a tool that provides necessary means and strategies that enable people to socialize and build harmonious and pleasant relationships. Pragmatics, focused on linguistic politeness, features numerous linguistic patterns and practices that help us establish and maintain friendly, enjoyable and above all socially appropriate interactions. One of those linguistic behavior is complimenting behaviour, which has been one of the research foci of linguistic politeness in general and cross-linguistically for almost four decades (Pomerantz, 1978; Wolfson & Manes, 1980; Wolfson, 1983; Holmes, 1986; 1988; Herbert, 1989; 1990; 1991; Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 1989; Wieland, 1995, Yuan, 1996; Lorenzo-Dus, 2001; Golato, 2002; Yu, 2003; Ruhi, 2006; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Rees-Miller, 2011). A complimenting speech act usually involves at least two speech actions – paying a compliment and responding to a compliment. These two actions are termed 'an action chain' by Pomerantz (1978), 'an adjacency pair operation' by Schegloff and Sacks (1973), 'interchanges' by Herbert (1990) or 'sequences' by Wolfson (1989).

The pioneer in theorizing on complimenting behaviour is considered to be Pomerantz (1978). Pomerantz (1978: 82) distinguishes two statuses of compliments depending on the compliment response provided as an $Action_2$. She argues that (1978: 82) compliment responses evoking acceptance or rejection qualify the preceding compliments as having a supportive status, whereas compliment responses performing agreement or disagreement determine the assessment status of the compliments they follow.

The following sections will deal with these two interrelated actions separately, focusing on their pragmatic and theoretical descriptions and most significant empirically-based considerations given by a great body of research in different languages and cultural settings. Additionally, the sections will set ground for comparing and contrasting the findings of the present research study with the already available empirical evidence of the research phenomenon – compliment response strategies.

5.1 Paying compliments

People engage in an interaction with various goals and purposes. Bearing in mind the need for this social activity and the positive and negative face wants (Brown & Levinson, 1983), people tend to have a pleasant, comfortable and socially appropriate atmosphere while communicating. Being a positive politeness strategy (Holmes, 1988), paying compliments is a speech act that is quite often resorted to and made use of in order to build and maintain cordial and relaxed relationships in which positive needs of both interactants would be worked upon and satisfied. Wolfson (1983: 89) terms compliments "social lubricants" whose purpose is to "grease the social wheels". As such, compliments have attracted so much attention in the field of socio-linguistics and a definition that is quite frequently used in the literature is the one by Holmes (1988: 446):

> A compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristic, skill etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer.

Jaworski (1995: 64) defines compliments in a similar manner as:

> Both direct and indirect utterances expressing the speaker's positive opinion about the addressee's outward appearance, work, personality traits, possessions, and about third parties closely related to the addressee (e.g. children).

(21)   *Context*: R's old schoolfriend is visiting and comments on one of the children's manners (Holmes 1988: 447)

> C(omplimenter) What a polite child!
> R(ecipient) Thank you. We do our best

Both Holmes' (1988: 446) and Jaworski's (1995: 64) definitions stress that there are two types of utterances accounting for compliments (explicit or direct and implicit or indirect). Herbert (1991: 383) states that explicit compliments correspond to direct speech acts and "are recognized as compliments outside of context, being realized by a small set of conventional formulae", for instance:

(22)   Terrific presentation this morning!

(23)   I like your hair short like that.

Also, Herbert (1991: 383) argues that "implicit compliments are those in which the value judgment is presupposed and/or implicated by Gricean maxims", for example:

(24)   I wish I could manage my work like you do.

(25)   Your husband is a very lucky man.[13]

5.1.1 Functions of compliments

Morales (2012: 47) reports on Goffman's assumption (1967, cited in Bruti 2006: 185) that "compliments are primarily aimed at maintaining, enhancing, or supporting the addressee's face" and "are used for a variety of reasons, the most significant of which is perhaps to express admiration or approval of someone's work/appearance/taste." This assumption seems to incontrovertibly classify compliments as a positive politeness strategy (Holmes, 1988; Wolfson, 1983; Herbert, 1989).

Additional social functions compliments may perform include establishing and cultivating "the solidarity between the speaker and the addressee" (Holmes 1988: 447) and "creating a mutual atmosphere of kindness and good will" (Lubecka 2000: 67) by making "the addressee feel good by saying something nice to him/her" (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 1989: 75). Furthermore, Wolfson (1983) indicates that compliments can serve as 'conversation openers', speech acts that are able to promptly eliminate discomfort and awkwardness of commencing a conversation. Cordella et al. (1995: 250) are of the same opinion and state that "it is not uncommon to use a compliment while simultaneously greeting". (26) is an example that nicely illustrates the above mentioned functions of a compliment (Holmes 1988: 447).

(26)   *Context*: two women, good friends, meeting in the lift at their work-place.

C. Hi how are you. You're looking just terrific.
R. Thanks. I'm pretty good

However, compliments are also reported to act as impositions and hence, can be interpreted and felt by the addressee as face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Spencer-Oatey (2004: 18) argues that 'too much intimacy' can evoke uncomfortable feelings and distress in the addressee. Contextually, negative interpretations of compliments concern goals and envy expressed by the speaker (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Herbert, 1989; Bhatti & Žegarac, 2012). Bhatti and Žegarac (2012: 284) point out that paying a compliment in certain cultures might be interpreted as a threat to the addressee's negative face:

> In some cultures (e.g. some East African societies), a compliment about the hearer's personal possessions is standardly interpreted as an expression of the speaker's desire to have the object complimented on and puts the hearer under a social obligation to offer it to the speaker as a gift.

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[13] Examples (22) – (25) are quoted from Herbert, 1991: 383

(27)   *Context*: Pakeha (i.e. New Zealander of European origin) to Samoan friend whom she is visiting (Holmes 1988: 449).

> C. What an unusual necklace. It's beautiful.
> R. Please take it

Holmes' rationale for such a compliment response lies in the addressee's cultural norms where "an expression of admiration for an object imposes an obligation on the addressee to offer it to the complimenter" (Holmes 1988: 448). Brown and Levinson (1978: 252) suggest that in such circumstances, the addressee's response reveals his/her perception and belief that s/he is in complimenter's debt.

5.1.2 *Topics of compliments*

Compliments are utterances directed at something[14] owned by or ascribed to a complimentee. Manes and Wolfson were pioneers in researching complimenting behaviour in America (Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Wolfson, 1983). They used an ethnographic model of data collection and built a corpus containing 686 compliments during 1977 and 1978. It was discovered that the majority of compliments related to appearance and ability/skill and to possessions in third place (Wolfson, 1983: 99). The distribution of the topics by gender was analyzed as well and it was found that women were more prone to receive compliments, especially those referred to their attire and appearance (Wolfson, 1983: 92).

Using the same methodology as Manes and Wolfson (1981) for the research conducted in New Zealand, Holmes (1986: 496) suggests a classification of topics into compliments referred to possessions, appearance, ability and personal characteristics. She points out that the huge preponderance of compliments collected in her data (81.3%) are compliments on appearance and ability or good performance.

In spite of the time span of nearly 30 years, Rees-Miller study (2011) reveals similar results as Holmes (1986, 1988) and Manes and Wolfson (1981). She analyzed two corpora from 2008 and 2010 and discovered that the most frequent topics of compliments were appearance and performance, with the 2010 data showing a greater number of performance compliments.

5.1.2.1 Factor of culture

It is worth mentioning that the distribution of compliments according to topics such as of Manes and Wolfson (1981), Holmes (1986, 1988) and Rees-Miller (2011) is not the last

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[14] "something" refers to both alienable and inalienable possessions

word in the literature and universally applicable. A great factor that essentially influences the predominance of one topic over another is cultural background that shows the core values of a cultural community and hence, which areas/topics are adequate to compliment on (Herbert 1991: 398). Similarly, Cordella et al. (1995: 249) assert that investigating compliments may be insightful and suggestive of the etiquette norms and value system of a certain society and cultural environment. Cheng (2003: 25) concurs as well that "compliments vary from culture to culture in terms of acceptable or preferred compliment topics, and yet within a culture or speech community, there is a strong agreement as to the relative importance of compliment topics". A closer look at the tendencies and preferences regarding paying compliments in the cultures of English and Polish speakers will be presented in the sections below.

5.1.2.1.1 Paying compliments in English/Anglo Saxon cultures

Compliments in English as a global language and a lingua franca today have been extensively researched with studies narrowing down their focus to a certain variety of English. Therefore, the literature on complimenting behaviour in American English (Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Wolfson, 1983) and New Zealand English (Holmes 1986, 1988) makes a good starting point not only when it comes to technicalities i.e. methodology and analysis techniques, but also regarding discovering cross-cultural tendencies. Namely, a great number of empirical studies have been conducted in non-English language communities with the aim of discerning similarities and differences between two different cultures by comparing and contrasting the usage, functions and topics of compliments.

Wolfson (1983), Holmes (1986, 1988) and Rees-Miller (2011) show comparable results on the frequency of topics of compliments. It was found out that American and New Zealand speakers complimented mostly on the addressee's apparel and their performance or skills. Bearing in mind that compliments are regarded as a positive politeness strategy (Holmes, 1988), these results might indicate that in Western cultures, paying compliments on someone's appearance or ability is sociably appropriate and favoured.

5.1.2.1.2 Paying compliments in Polish

Even though paying compliments as a speech act has attracted a fair amount of attention in the last decades, I have not to date encountered any study on complimenting behaviour in Serbian or any language from the South Slavic languages group which share a great similarity in terms of morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics with the Serbian language.[15]

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[15] The author makes references to Croatian and Bosnian

As Serbian belongs to the Slavic language group, Serbian speakers' identity and culture are deeply-rooted in the European traditional and cultural postulates. Therefore, and due to the lack of literature on paying compliments, I resort to presenting research results on Polish complimenting behaviour (Herbert, 1991). The study (Herbert, 1991) offers empirical evidence from the cultural and linguistic environment most similar to the Serbian one and may serve a comparable and relying function when it comes to topics of compliments in Serbian.

Herbert (1991: 393) compares his findings on topical analysis of the Polish corpus with the one of the English topics in Holmes (1988) and concludes:

> The most striking point of contrast between the English and Polish data sets concerns the category possessions, which is the most common topical subtype in Polish compliments, accounting for about 50% of the sample whereas the category occurs in only 11% of Holmes' sample. There is a sharply reduced frequency of compliments on ability/performance in the Polish data.

Bearing in mind the preponderance of possessions compliments in the study of Polish and the above described connection between Serbian and Polish, one could hypothesize that Serbian speakers pay compliments mostly on possessions. My intuitions as a native speaker of Serbian are that Serbian speakers pay compliments mostly on appearance as the looks seems to be quite an aspect of an individual in Serbian society i.e. Serbian women are said to take care of their attire and appearance and pay a great attention to it when it comes to both formal and informal settings. Regarding possessions, I expect that compliments directed at one's belongings are equally, if not more frequent in Serbian communication because of the great similarity of the core values in Polish and Serbian cultures[16] and similar political and economic circumstances in which both Poland and Serbia found themselves into during the 1990s. The causal relationship of the circumstances and the majority of possessions compliments in Polish communication is speculated by Herbert (1991: 393) who suggests:

> Without any firm evidence to support the conclusion, it is nonetheless tempting to speculate on the relationship between the high frequency of possession compliments in Polish and life within the consumer-troubled society of modern Poland. The fact is, as readily acknowledged by official and unofficial sources, consumer goods are in very short supply, or they are imported and available only for Western currency or at very high, occasionally staggering, prices. There is a variety of sources through which people acquire the consumer goods which they need and desire. The acquisition of goods, ranging from sheepskin coats to washing machines to the trivial purchases of everyday life, is often regarded as an accomplishment – by oneself and by fellow members of the society.

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[16] The similarity is elaborated in Chapter on Cross-cultural communication of the present thesis

However, paying compliments in Serbian is not one of the objectives of the present thesis, so it remains as an interesting research question for future linguistic researchers.

5.1.2.2 Factor of gender

Since the very beginning of gender studies in the 1970s, a substantial body of linguistic research has been done from the gender perspective (Lakoff, 1973b; Fishman, 1978; Hyndman, 1985; Holmes, 1995; Cameron, 2007; Schumann & Ross, 2010; Talbot, 2010). The research has been devoted to discerning similarities, but more importantly differences between women and men in language use. With regard to speech acts, it is ascertained that gender is a significant factor that modulates paying compliments (Holmes, 1988; Herbert, 1990; Parisi & Wogan, 2006). The findings on female/male distinction in complimenting behaviour will be exhibited on two levels – frequency i.e. who pay more compliments and who receive most of them and from whom, and topics i.e. who compliment on what. However, only studies of English will be reviewed as no study of Polish revealing gender differences has been encountered to date.

5.1.2.2.1 Frequency

The research studies on paying compliments across gender produce comparable results on either men's or women's greater engagement in complimenting behaviour. To a greater or lesser extent, the findings suggest that women are those who not only give more compliments, but also who receive the bulk of them (Wolfson, 1983; Holmes, 1988; Herbert, 1990; Cordella et al, 1995; Parisi & Wogan, 2006; Rees-Miller, 2011). This claim is valid regarding both general frequency and frequency of compliments across sex dyads.

5.1.2.2.2 Topics

Sex of interlocutors appears to be a significant factor in ways how people select on what they will compliment other people (Holmes, 1988; Wolfson, 1983; Parisi & Wogan, 2006, Rees-Miller, 2011). In spite of the lack of specific numbers (Rees-Miller 2011: 2676), Wolfson (1983: 92) makes a claim that appearance compliments seem to be exclusively reserved for and addressed to women.

Certain patterns of the interaction between gender and compliment topics may be noticed across the studies mentioned above. Comparing the results from the three studies (Holmes, 1988, Parisi & Wogan, 2006 and Rees-Miller, 2011), one can notice that few compliments were directed at personal traits and possessions in all sex dyads and that the preponderance of the compliments accounts for those referred to appearance and performance or skills.

In male same-sex communication, performance appears to be the predominant compliment topic in Parisi and Wogan (2006) and the Rees-Miller 2008 corpus (2011) while Holmes (1988) shows a quite balanced distribution of the performance and appearance topics yet slightly weighting in favour of appearance (appearance compliments amount to 36% while performance ones make 32%). When it comes to women, it was found that their topic preference falls into the category of appearance compliments, with performance/skill compliments following i.e. Holmes (1988), Parisi and Wogan (2006) and Rees-Miller (2011) present similar percentages of the appearance compliments in female same-sex interaction, 61%, 52.14% and 67.4%, respectively.

With regard to cross-sex interaction, men tend to compliment women on their appearance (Holmes, 1988; Parisi & Wogan, 2006) while women rather choose to compliment men on their performances and skills (Parisi & Wogan, 2006; Rees-Miller, 2011). Incorporating interviews into the research methodology for their study, Parisi and Wogan (2006) were able to explain some of the findings. Namely, the interviews they administered provided relevant and useful information on the participants' attitude and opinions that eventually helped throw some light on their complimenting decisions and gender-based language use in general. Their rationale (Parisi & Wogan 2006: 23) for the discrepancy in appearance and ability compliments in cross-gender interaction is that:

> they [females] were constrained by gendered rules of romance: that is, females sense that they have to be careful not to look like they're "coming on too strongly" with males. A female-male appearance compliment is risky in a double sense: it could easily be misinterpreted by the male as an invitation to romantic involvement; and even if the female does feel attracted to the male, she could appear too forward if she compliments him directly on his appearance, a more intimate, potentially romantic-sounding topic than, say, performance on a test.

Apart from the statistically significant difference between women and men in terms of women's dramatically strong tendency to compliment on appearance, Holmes (1988: 455) makes an inference as well that "male preference for complimenting other men, but not women, on possessions contributes very strongly to the statistically significant sex differences". Reasons for such complimenting behaviour may be found in Holmes' interpretation (1988: 455):

> A compliment on someone's appearance is difficult to interpret other than as an expression of solidarity, a positively affective speech act, so the predominance of this compliment topic in women's interactions is consistent with the view that women use compliments for this positive function. Compliments on possessions are much more vulnerable to interpretation as FTAs since […] there is the

possibility that the complimenter will be heard as expressing desire for the object referred to. To this extent, men's greater use of these compliments reinforces the suggestion that they are more likely perceive and experience compliments as potential FTAs.

This Holmes' suggestion seems to be in accordance with the finding that men compliment less than women and the logic that one tries to avoid situations in which s/he might feel uncomfortable or threatened.

Another finding of Holmes that raises curiosity is quiet a percentage of ability compliments (44%) given by men to women, i.e. nearly as the percentage of the leading appearance compliments (47%). Holmes (1988: 456) links this result to pre-supposed and deeply-rooted gender roles in society and suggests that:

> skills or abilities tend to be considered appropriate topics for compliments to those of different status. Hence the tendency for men to compliment women on this topic may reflect women's subordinate social status in the society as a whole. Compliments on a person's appearance may be felt to presume an intimacy which could be regarded as inappropriate in some cross-sex interactions, whereas comments on another's abilities may be justified in many social contexts.

5.1.2.3 Factor of status

Taking into consideration the assumption that a relationship between an addresser and an addressee is one of the key factors influencing compliment exchanges and speech acts in general (Wolfson, 1989), the impact of social status is analyzed on the level of frequency (Holmes, 1988; Yu, 2005) and topics of compliments (Holmes, 1986) between interlocutors who show three different social status relations (recipient is higher, equal and lower in status).

Holmes examined the influence of social status on a deeper level correlating this variable with the variables of compliment topics (Holmes, 1986) and gender (Holmes, 1988). The correlation test on social status and compliment topics suggests (Holmes 1986: 498) that compliments between interlocutors of unequal status revolve around particular topics i.e. 54% of upwards or downwards compliments refer to performance or skills and only 27% relate to appearance. However, compliments between status equals show the opposite distribution i.e. 57% of the total number of compliments were appearance compliments and 25% of them related to performance and ability (Holmes 1986: 498).

Combining all three variables (topic, gender and social status), Holmes (1988: 458) confirms the hypothesis that women perceive compliments as solidarity boosters and consider appearance compliments the best way to express friendship and affectionate feelings. Two status-based results that trigger such a confirmation are the appearance superiority over other

topics between women regardless of status differences and "the almost total absence of appearance compliments between cross-sex pairs of different status (Holmes 1988: 458-459).

5.1.3 *Interpretations*

Bearing in mind all the findings, Holmes (1988: 462) concludes that paying compliments is a positive politeness strategy, a strategy that is much more employed by women than men, because they consider them positively affective speech acts, whereas other linguistic strategies may act as solidarity signals for men (Holmes 1988: 451-452). Moreover, Holmes (1988: 451) argues that the frequency results and women's positive usage of compliments are congruent with another research assumption about female communication behavior, which indicates "that, in general, women's linguistic behaviour can be broadly characterized as 'affiliative' or cooperative, rather than competitive or control-oriented […] and as interactively facilitative and positive-politeness oriented […]".

Last but not least, Holmes affirms (1988: 452) Wolfson's argument (1984: 243) that the reason why women tend to receive so much more compliments than men is related to women's relative socially subordinate status i.e. the inferiority allows women to be regarded as more acceptable recipients of compliments because it is more reasonable to express approval and increase self-esteem to those who a priori do not seem to possess enough.

5.2 Compliment responses

A speech act that completes a complimenting event is a compliment response. It is vital that compliment responses be analyzed as well in order to discern linguistic politeness patterns regarding complimenting behaviour. Not only has the research on compliment responses been extensive in a single language community (Holmes, 1986; Herbert, 1990; Wang & Tsai, 2003; Ruhi, 2006; Chen & Yang, 2010; Yousefvand, 2010; Cai, 2012), but also there is a great number of contrastive studies with the aim of revealing differences in compliment response strategies in different languages and across different cultures (Lorenzo-Dus, 2001; Golato, 2002; Yu, 2003; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Sorahi & Nazemi, 2013; Razi, 2013; Şakirgil & Çubukçu, 2013). Furthermore, studies focusing on pragmatic transfer analyze compliment responses in order to evaluate pragmatic impact of L1 on linguistic behaviour in L2 (Al-Falasi, 2007; Cheng, 2011; Aijuan, 2010; Motaghi-Tabari & de Beuzeville, 2012).

5.2.1 *Classifying compliment responses*

First analytical considerations on compliment responses from a pragmatic perspective were provided by Pomerantz (1978). Since then, this pioneering and highly influential paper

has been serving as a cornerstone for all empirical studies on this particular speech act, for it proposed a theoretical framework of compliment response strategies on which any later classification of compliment responses would be based (Holmes, 1986, 1988; Herbert, 1989, 1990).

Holmes (1986, 1988) devised a taxonomy of compliment responses for the purpose of her research in New Zealand and this taxonomy has been quite frequently used in versatile studies on compliment responses in original form (Razi, 2013; Sorahi & Nazemi, 2013) and also in adapted and amended form (Ruhi, 2006; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Cheng, 2011). According to Holmes' classification, compliment responses can be categorized on macro and micro levels and be grouped into three classes – acceptance, deflection/evasion and rejection.

Another taxonomy that has also been applied in many studies on compliment responses as the main instrument of categorizing data is the one by Herbert (1990), who classifies compliment responses into two main groups – agreement and non-agreement, and several further sub-categories in each of the two groups.[17]

5.2.2 *Factor of culture*

As Chen and Yang (2010: 1951) report, the earliest research work on compliment responses concentrated on various English varieties during the 1980s, while the beginning of the 1990s marked the start of research not only on compliment responses in other languages, but it has also allowed for contrastive studies to appear and indicate certain linguistic and cultural differences between two different languages. To date, studies on compliment response strategies in Serbian have not been conducted, which makes this thesis an innovative study that will reveal the existence of differences or similarities between Serbian and British English in responding to compliments.

What follows is a review of findings on deployment of response strategies of people of different cultural backgrounds when they are engaged in a compliment exchange event. Relying on a great number of research works on compliment responses, the sections below will try to provide insights into various cultural system of values (Anglo-Saxon, Polish and Chinese) in order to justify the adoption of the approach of culture-specificity in language use within this thesis. Additionally, the review of literature on compliment response strategies in

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[17] Taxonomies of compliment responses according to Holmes (1986) and Herbert (1990) are presented in Tables 11 and 12 in the Section 6.1.3.2

English and Polish will set ground for comparing the results of the present study with the existing empirical evidence of relevance.

5.2.2.1 Compliment responses in English/Anglo-Saxon cultures

It has been noted (Cheng 2003: 26) that compliment responses serve a more complex pragmatic function than the very compliments, for the type of response is usually influenced by the degree of what is considered to be a culturally appropriate answer. One might say that in English speaking cultures, accepting a compliment by saying a single 'Thank you' may suffice and at the same time be considered the most adequate response (Johnson 1979: 43-44). However, Pomerantz (1978) argues that this might not be the case in the American English setting. Her theory supposes two conflicting principles that puts pressure on an addressee when s/he is to respond to a compliment. She suggests (Pomerantz, 1978) that in any conversation, it is preferable to avoid disagreements and as such, a preferred compliment response should be one of acceptance and agreement. However, a response of this kind would correlate with one's expression of self-praise, which may be regarded negative by the complimenter. Even though Pomerantz (1978: 80) advises that compliments could be accepted with grace, her American data shows that her 'advice' is not acted on in most of the cases – the data reveal that the rejection and disagreement compliments in American English are much more frequent than compliments of acceptance (1978: 81).

Referring to Pomerantz's dilemma of avoiding self-praise and agreeing with the interlocutor, Wolfson (1989) suggests compliment downgrading, for such a response would satisfy both principles and retain the compliment function of increasing solidarity between the speakers. Wolfson (1989: 116) exemplifies:

> In response to a compliment on the beauty of a house, therefore, an American might say, 'Well, we would have liked to have a bigger one' or 'We wish the neighbourhood were quite.', but American would be very unlikely to suggest that the speaker was wrong and that the house was not beautiful at all.

Although the considerations on complimenting behaviour by Pomerantz (1978) put the speech act to the fore of pragmatics and as such, are doubtlessly invaluable and irreplaceable in the literature, as reported in Holmes (1986: 495), her understanding was not based on the quantitative analysis and thus, the assumptions need to be taken with caution when discussing the frequency/infrequency of the compliment response strategies in American English.

Holmes (1988: 459) also disagrees with Pomerantz (1978) on the prevalence of rejection and disagreement compliments not only because her New Zealand data, quantitatively

analyzed, show a completely different distribution of compliment responses, but also because she argues that Pomerantz (1978) "appears to include in this reference to "disagreements and rejection", responses which in my [Holmes'] view express qualified acceptance rather than outright rejection". Contrary to Pomerantz (1978), Holmes' results of compliment responses in New Zealand English (1986: 495) suggest that the majority of compliments were accepted (61.1%), followed by 28.8% responses that deflected or evaded the credit and only 10% were responses that had been qualified as rejections. Additionally, it is stated (Holmes 1988: 460) that gender does not influence the choice of compliment response i.e. the frequency of compliment response strategies on macro level according to respondent's sex is similar and shows the same pattern of distribution (see Table 7 below).

Table 7 Compliment responses according to respondent's sex in Holmes (1988)[18]

| Response type | F | | M | |
	No.	%	No.	%
Accept	205	62	73	64
Reject	33	10	9	7.9
Deflect/Evade	92	27.8	36	31.6
Total	330	100	118	100

In spite of the fact that there are no statistically significant differences between sexes on macro-level of the compliment responses strategies, Holmes reports (1988: 461) that a closer look at micro-level strategies discloses some tendencies for men that eventually could be accounted for when stating that men are much more likely to experience a compliment as an FTA. Namely, within the category of Deflection/Evasion, men show a greater preference for ignoring or legitimate evading compliments (19.3%) than women (11.2%). This finding about men's higher percentage of the compliment evasion could be linked to their feelings of shame and embarrassment and therefore, is consistent with the hypothesis that for men, compliments have a function of an FTA more often than for women (Holmes 1988: 461).

Lorenzo-Dus' contrastive study (2001: 114) of compliment responses among British and Spanish university students suggests that the use of reassignments in both cultures was a strategy in order to "avoid self-praise on topics such as natural talent and intelligence", i.e. ability and personality compliments. The study also revealed that humour was frequently used by both speaker groups when accepting compliments (Lorenzo-Dus 2001: 113). The differences between Brits and Spaniards were found in the British English speakers' greater

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[18] Table 7 is an amended version of Table 7 in Holmes, 1988: 460

tendency to question the sincerity of a compliment and their almost absence of "a request for repetition and, most likely, an expansion of the compliment" (Lorenzo-Dus 2001: 113-114).

Contrastive studies by Tang and Zhang (2009) and Motaghi-Tabari and de Beuzeville (2012) on compliment responses in Australian English confirm the Holmes' results (1986) on the prevalence of Acceptance strategies. In both studies, it was found that to accept a compliment is the most favourable and preferred strategy of responding to a compliment in the Anglo-Australian cultural settings. Tang and Zhang (2009: 331) report that the percentage of acceptance responses are almost 80%, with evasion responses amounting to 15% in the second place and rejection responses that show a minimal occurrence (below 10%). On micro level, it was discovered that the most utilized strategy was a response containing an appreciation token to the compliments referring to appearance, ability and possession. When it comes to character compliments, Australians tend to shift credit in most cases. The second preferred strategy differs from topic to topic (see Table 8).

Table 8 The most preferred compliment response strategies in Australian English according to compliment topics in Tang and Zhang (2009)

	Appearance	*Character*	*Ability*	*Possession*
Compliment response strategy No. 1	Appreciation token	Shift credit	Appreciation token	Appreciation token
Compliment response strategy No. 2	Return compliment	Appreciation token	Return compliment	Downgrading

Motaghi-Tabari and de Beuzeville (2012) affirm Australians' major employment of acceptance strategies, suggesting that apart from appreciation token, they accept compliments by commenting history and reassigning. Although they did not conduct statistical significance tests, they also argue (2012: 33) that "Anglo-Australians […] tended to use disagreement and scaling down as their most common type of response to compliments about possessions", for example (Motaghi-Tabari & de Beuzeville 2012: 33-34),

(28)   Disagreement to "You have a very smart child."

         Anglo-Australian: I am not sure about that, but she has some other great strengths.

(29)   Scale Down to the compliment "You have a very nice car."

         Anglo-Australian: Thank you. It's leased.

Apropos disagreements, Motaghi-Tabari and de Beueville (2012: 31) indicate that humour was also employed, mostly by Australian male speakers as a means to indirectly express their disagreement with a compliment.

With regard to personality compliments, it was found that (Motaghi-Tabari & de Beuzeville 2012: 34):

> Anglo-Australians […] mostly tend to evade the force of compliment, when possible. For example, in reply to the compliment, *"what am I going to do without you?! I'll hate not having you around! You're such a good friend!"* most of the Australians responded only to the first part *"what am I going to do without you?"* as if to find a way to solve this problem and did not acknowledge the main compliment *"you are such a good friend"*.

Cheng (2011) is another contrastive study on compliment responses which took into consideration compliment responses by American English speakers and whose results are consistent on both macro and micro level with the results already suggested above.

5.2.2.2 Compliment responses in Polish culture

Unlike the section on paying compliments, where it was possible to present in-depth empirical evidence from the cultural setting most similar to Serbian i.e. Polish, the only study revealing some empirical results on compliment response strategies in Polish, available to the author, is Bhatti and Žegarac (2012). Their cross-cultural study compares and contrasts English and Polish in terms of several speech acts. The data on compliment responses suggest identical frequency of the strategies of responding to compliments in the two groups (Bhatti & Žegarac, 2012: 288). Namely, the results show that 29 out of total 30 compliments were accepted and only one returned in both groups – no compliment was rejected.

Similarly to paying compliments, my hypothesis as a native speaker of Serbian, is that Serbian speakers accept compliments most frequently; deflection and rejection strategies are rarely used. The present thesis will test the hypothesis and present the results in the next chapter.

5.2.2.3 Compliment responses in Chinese culture

While English is a European language that has been most extensively researched in terms of compliment response behaviour, Chinese is assumed to be the one that is best pragmatically researched as a non-European language (Chen 2010: 86). Brown and Levinson's (1987) proposal that there is a universal model of linguistic politeness that can be applied to all cultures and languages worldwide has prompted intensive linguistics research to empirically test the hypothesis in the Chinese context (Chen, 1993; Yu, 2003). The fact that English and

Chinese represent quite different cultural value systems and that they are not even slightly linguistically similar (Yu 2003: 1681) triggered a plethora of research studies on compliment responses (Chen, 1993; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Yu, 2003; Chen & Yang, 2010; Cai, 2012).

The research on compliment responses in Chinese started with Chen (1993), whose results show considerable differences in strategies Chinese and American speakers employ when responding to compliments. Namely, the study results suggest that Chinese speakers reject 95% of compliments, while they accept only 1%, whereas Americans accept 39% of compliments and reject 13%.

Since the present thesis does not focus on the compliment response behaviour in Chinese, elaboration on particular studies on Chinese compliment responses will be left out and only a tabular overview of the studies mentioned earlier will be included (Table 9) followed by a brief interpretation.

Table 9 Compliment responses in Chinese on macro-level

Study by	Subject	Acceptance	Deflection/Evasion	Rejection
Chen (1993)	Xi'an Chinese	1.03%	3.41%	95.73%
Yuan (2002) DCT	Kunming Chinese	50.28%	20.79%	28.93%
Yuan (2002) Natural	Kunming Chinese	31.26%	34.76%	33.98%
Wang and Tsai (2003)[19]	Taiwan Mandarin	28.4%	8.1%	62.4%
Tang and Zhang (2009)	Mandarin Chinese	>50%	>40%	>15%
Chen and Yang (2010)	Xi'an Chinese	62.60%	28.27%	9.13%
Cai (2012)	Chinese College Students	72.3%	10.3%	3.4%

When analyzing the studies from the linear perspective, Table 9 suggests that there are significant discrepancies in the use of compliment responses strategies in Chinese. It appears that the Chinese used to reject compliments most of the time and accept them quite rarely (Chen, 1993; Cai 2012: 547) and that in time, the pattern of responding to compliments has drastically changed showing a completely opposite distribution of acceptance and rejection

[19] Wang and Tsai (2003) adopted Herbert's taxonomy of compliment responses which reflects the categories of agreement and non-agreement, the former divided into acceptance and non-acceptance. To suit other studies in the tabular overview, the original percentage of non-acceptance, whose sub-categories correspond to deflection/evasion sub-categories of the other studies, represent the percentage of deflection/ evasion in Table 9

strategies (Tang & Zhang, 2009; Chen & Yang, 2010; Cai, 2012). The change that has caused such a shift is claimed to be linked to the political and economic reformation that started in the 1980s and flourished in the 1990s in all the regions of China (Chen & Yang 2010: 1958-1959). Furthermore, Chen and Yang argue (2010: 1959) that the change in linguistic behaviour of Chinese speakers may be due to the fact that Chinese culture has been heavily influenced by Western cultures through the increased media availability i.e. TV programs, music CDs, books, films. Their hypothesis that the change in Chinese compliment response behaviour is caused by the cultural change of the Chinese society is consistent with the studies by Tang and Zhang (2009) and Cai (2012), studies that were conducted in the approximately same time and whose results bear remarkable resemblances (Chen & Yang, 2010: 1959).

However, it is reported (Tang & Zhang 2009: 341) that no universal model of politeness and the speech act in question can be applied to Western and Chinese cultures in spite of the considerable impact of Western cultures onto the Chinese cultural values and the fact that most recent studies show similarities between the two language communities (Yu, 2003; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Cai, 2012). According to Tang and Zhang (2009: 341), "no universal model of CRs would work because different cultures have different sets of protocols, preventing any valid generalizations". One of the response patterns that can explain different cultural norms is Chinese preference of implicit compliment responses to explicit ones which are more present in Australian or American English culture (Tang & Zhang, 2009; Cai, 2012). Tang and Zhang (2009: 342) reason that:

> an indirect acceptance may show modesty and 'self-praise avoidance', in line with collectivism and modesty – two important values of Chinese culture. For the Chinese, strategies like *Evade* are viewed as self-effacement and therefore virtuous. This is not necessarily the case in Australian English culture, which demonstrates a more positive self-image when responding to compliments.

Referring to Leech's theory of Politeness Principle and its maxims (1983), Cai (2012: 547) adds:

> The Maxim of Modesty is especially true in China. People are reluctant to exaggerate their achievement or show off. When responding to a compliment, people still prefer to take an implicit way. Although they are influenced by western cultures and less frequently adopt a Rejection Strategy, they still avoid self-praise.

5.2.3 *Factor of compliment topics*

Apart from one's cultural background that plays a vital role in how one will respond to a compliment, topic of the compliment is also reported to affect compliment response strategies (Katsuta, 2012). Katsuta (2012) discovered that compliment responses by Japanese and American college students varied according to the topic of compliments. It is suggested

(Katsuta 2012: 58) that both groups responded in a similar and predictable fashion when the topic of compliments was taken into consideration:

> Acceptance rates were highest for both language groups in responses to compliments about belongings. Responses to compliments about achievements exhibited similarly high acceptance rates. Conversely, avoidance and rejection rates spiked for both language groups in responses to compliments about appearance. Lastly, responses to compliments in the characteristic and ability categories generally fell between the outer extremes of acceptance and rejection ratios in both groups.

5.2.4 Interpretations

The research on compliment responses reveals globally the same pattern of responding to compliments i.e. the preference of Accept strategies over the Deflect and Reject ones. The widespread presence of acceptance strategies is in accordance with the propositions that complimenting behaviour is a positive politeness strategy and that its main interactional function is to express positive judgments and boost solidarity between interlocutors (Holmes, 1988). However, a closer look at the strategies on micro level, along with the considerations of the factors of age, gender, topic of compliments, what is considered a compliment and most importantly cultural background of recipients, shows that compliment response strategies vary cross-culturally (Holmes 1986: 502). Those discrepancies caused by different attitudes, protocols and norms within different value systems are possible to easily trigger misunderstandings and communication breakdowns when it comes to intercultural communication which is the reason why Brown and Levinson's universal model lacks feasibility (Tang & Zhang 2009: 342). Holmes suggests (1986: 503) that social, cultural and pragmatic factors need to be considered so that appropriate compliment responses occur. For example, knowing appropriate topics for compliments and knowing who to compliment on what is essential not only for having a successful and pleasant interaction, but also for understanding a certain culture.

This thesis will contrast compliment responses of British English and Serbian speakers and reveal the two groups' tendencies and communicative preferences when it comes to this positive politeness strategy. Additionally, the thesis will account for the influence of factors such as gender, status and topic of compliments on the employment of compliment response strategies.

6. The Empirical Study

"[…] all communication is more or less cross-cultural. We learn to use language as we grow up, and growing up in different parts of the country, having different ethnic, religious, or class backgrounds, even just being male or female – all result in different ways of talking […]"

Deborah Tannen

(cited in Beck, Bennett and Wall, 2013 :96)

6.1 Methodology and research design

6.1.1 Research instrument

The data for the present research study are divided into two data sets. One data set includes compliment responses from Serbian native speakers, whereas the second data set includes the responses provided by British English native speakers. The research methodology technique employed for the data collection is a discourse completion test (DCT) which has two versions - Serbian and English. The DCT is designed into three parts. The first part of the DCT represents the author and aims of the research followed by the consent form that guarantees confidentiality to the informants and the anonymity of the data material they have provided. The second part deals with five demographic questions which provide information on a participant's age, sex, country of birth, cultural background and mother tongue. The final third part consists of twelve scenarios describing situations in which informants are given a compliment. The informants' task is to imagine themselves in those situations and note down a response or responses (if they have thought of more responses adequate for the situation described) in exact words that they would utter.

6.1.1.1 Why DCT?

When a researcher launches on a study that attempts to examine an interaction-related phenomenon, it is essential that various methods of data collection be considered and an adequate research instrument be found (Golato 2003: 90):

> Presumably, studies of talk-in interaction use databases that have been compiled using similar methods of data collection that adequately capture those features of talk that are to be investigated. Yet one simply has to browse through any of the journals devoted to the study of discourse in order to see that there are a variety of data collection procedures and methodological frameworks available to students of discourse and pragmatics.

Golato (2003: 90) begins her argumentative paper on different methodological procedures for investigating compliment responses arguing that the nature of the data upon which compliment responses studies are based has scarcely been taken into consideration and

more considerations of this aspect need to be included in the analysis, so that more valid and reliable results are obtained. Having based her claims on an extensive list of studies examining speech acts of paying compliments and compliment responses (Pomerantz, 1978; Wolfson & Manes, 1980; Knapp, Hopper, & Bell, 1984; Barnlund & Araki, 1985; Herbert & Straight, 1989; Wieland, 1995; Yuan, 1996; Saito & Beecken, 1997; Golato, 2002), she concludes that many study results may be questioned when their methodological procedures and research questions are put under greater scrutiny (Golato 2003: 91):

> Despite coming from different research directions, almost all of these studies include a discussion section reporting on what people are actually saying/doing when they are responding to a compliment. Significantly, most of the studies do not claim to address intuitions concerning compliments, the value that is placed on them in a given society, etc. Instead, they purport to describe actual language use […] Here, then, the question of selecting an appropriate method of data collection becomes crucial. I would argue that many such studies of compliments and compliment responses do not – in fact, cannot – describe actual language use, simply because their analyses are not based upon data that illustrate actual language use with sufficient granularity. In other words, due to an inappropriate choice of data collection procedure, the claims of many published articles on compliment and compliment responses may need to be attenuated.

DCT as a research methodology technique has been extensively administered not only in order to discern language patterns of a single community, but it has also found an application in cross-cultural investigations on language uses. However, this data collection technique has received a certain amount of criticism directed to the nature of the data aggregated in this way (Yuan, 2001; Golato, 2003; Jucker, 2009). All three scholars point out that the main shortcoming of a DCT is that the collected data cannot reflect actual language use i.e. it cannot be said that the results based on this kind of data are valid when it comes to real and natural interaction. Jucker (2009: 1632) states that research based on DCT data is able to reveal tendencies and stereotypes of a language community, for "it is, of course, artificial to ask informants to write down what they would normally say". Golato (2003: 91) is more direct when makes a claim that DCTs are completely inadequate for investigating actual language use. This claim of hers finds support in Holmes (1991), Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) and Aston (1995). Additionally, Golato (2003: 92) indicates a point present in a review by Wolfson (1989), which suggests that "the native speaker intuitions about language collected with discourse completion tasks do not reflect real-time interactional sequences" and Beebe and Cumming's point (1985) that states that "discourse completion tasks do not show the interactional facets of a speech event: for example, they do not capture whether and how multi-turn sequences develop in order to fulfill a certain speech function".

Although the technique has the above mentioned flaws, Yuan (2001), Golato (2003), Jucker (2009) and a great number of research studies that have employed DCT as a research instrument do not contest the technique's important advantages and indicate its immense application, convenience and operational benefits (Chen, 1993; Lorenzo-Dus, 2001; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Chen & Yang, 2010).

The greatest benefit of employing DCTs in order to collect the research data concerns the time needed for this step of research. According to Yuan (2001), Golato (2003) and Jucker (2009), it is not burdensome for researchers to collect large quantities of data using this instrument. For example, for the sake of this thesis, I easily managed to compile at least twelve compliment responses from one informant only. This is one of the key reasons why such a great body of research studies on compliments and compliment responses have utilized DCTs, for the technique represents a preferable choice for obtaining as much data as it is possible which is desirable and often necessary if a statistical analysis is to be performed. Namely, from a statistical point of view, the bigger data are, the more valid results are.

Furthermore, as Jucker states (2009: 1632), another aspect that increases the usability and convenience of the technique is the fact that designing a DCT offers a researcher a possibility to control certain variables that are of paramount importance to research questions a study tries to answer. With regard to this thesis, I had control over the variables of cultural background, country of birth, mother tongue, topic of compliments, status and gender relations. The first three variables decided on the informants' profile in terms who could participate in the research study and who could not. The latter three variables i.e. topic of compliments, gender and status relations shaped the imaginary relationships between an imaginary complimenter and an informant described in the twelve scenarios of the DCT. This control over the variables has enabled me to obtain a sufficient and balanced number of compliment responses influenced by the above mentioned variables and as a consequence, allowed me to perform a statistical analysis that has provided relevant and statistically valid results.

According to Golato (2003: 93) and Jucker (2009: 1632), a DCT is a data collection technique that facilitates cross-cultural examinations and it represents a preferable method for comparing and contrasting particularities and tendencies of a language practice in different cultures and language communities. Yuan (2001: 289) adds and concludes that "although the written DCT has its limitations, it would still be a preferable choice if the goal of a study is to describe the realization patterns of a particular speech act of a particular language at an initial stage".

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Bearing in mind all these points of criticism, I have opted for a DCT as it satisfies all the essential and necessary criteria of the research and research questions I attempt to examine. The criteria are related to the three aspects discussed by Golato, Jucker and Yuan. Those are cross-cultural perspective of the research, actual language production description versus non-actual one and technical particularities of the research. First and foremost, the thesis targets to examine cross-cultural linguistic behavior of responding to compliments of British English and Serbian native speakers. Additionally, a DCT is an appropriate technique for the thesis investigates a single speech act across two cultures. Secondly, the prospective results will not try to describe the actual language production of compliment responses, but speakers' tendencies of responding to compliments. Thirdly, utilizing DCT as a data collection technique has allowed me to aggregate two sets of data in a relatively short time period. Furthermore, the thesis tries to investigate the influence of certain factors such as status and gender which means that those factors need to be controlled and the DCT has made it possible.

6.1.1.2 The DCT

In order to design a research instrument which would yield a representative data sample that would in turn allow for a sound statistical analysis, a special attention has been paid to the variables that most significantly shape the research questions of the thesis.

The factors of gender and status as well as of the topic of compliment are the leading and main components that have been equally structured and their corresponding values ordered with the aim of having all possible combinations.

Compliments are speech acts, utterances by which a complimenter approves, admires and generally praises something that is a tangible or an intangible asset of a complimentee (Holmes 1988: 446). Based on her research, Holmes (1986: 496; 1988: 455) suggests four topics of compliments according to which those assets of a complimentee can be classified. Those topics are appearance, possession, ability and personal characteristics.

Table 10 Variables and their values corresponding to each situation in the DCT[20]

Topic of compliment	Gender relation		Status relation
Appearance	M – M	F – M	L – H
Appearance	M – F	F – F	H – L
Appearance	M – M/F[21]	F – M/F	E – E
Possession	M – M	F – M	L – H
Possession	M – F	F – F	H – L

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[20] Gender relation values: M- male, F – female; Status relation values: L – lower, H – higher, E - equal
[21] For M/F explanation, see Figure 5 and section on the gender variable below

Possession	M – M/F	F – M/F	E – E
Ability	M – M	F – M	L – H
Ability	M – F	F – F	H – L
Ability	M – M/F	F – M/F	E – E
Character	M – M	F – M	L – H
Character	M – F	F – F	H – L
Character	M – M/F	F – M/F	E – E

It is worth mentioning that age as an essential aspect that might influence the language production, has also been considered i.e. how the informant would respond to a certain compliment. However, age variable is not included in the above scheme, for the influence that age difference might have is reflected in the status relation.[22] Namely, the status relationship between a complimenter and complimentee refers to relationships such as those between a teacher and a student, a boss and an employee, a manager and an assistant, a friend and a friend. Those relationships a priori or even stereotypically show a certain difference in age (in the case of friends, the age difference is supposed to be insignificant, as the friends are assumed to be the same or similar age).

The DCT is designed taking into consideration Brown and Levinson's (1987) sociological factors of social distance and relative power between interlocutors. These two factors are incorporated into one variable called status relationship and this variable has three values:

- Lower – higher
- Equal – equal
- Higher – lower

Furthermore, the gender variable has also played a significant role while designing the scenarios, as one of the research questions concerns the influence of same-sex or cross-sex interaction on the compliment response strategies. This variable is called gender relationship and the responses are allotted one of the values depending on the informant's gender. The scheme below shows coding possibilities for this variable:

Informant	*Complimenter*	*Informant*	*Complimenter*
	Male		Male
Male	Female	Female	Female
	Male/female		Male/female

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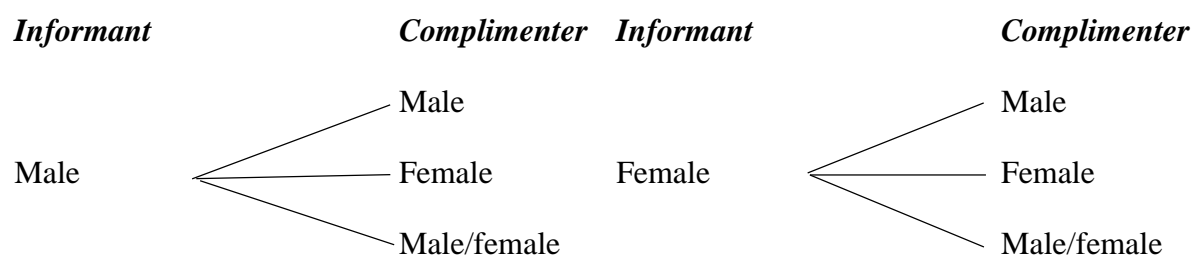
[22] The age difference is not determined, as the age of the imaginary compliment givers is not specified.

Figure 5 The scheme of the values for the gender relationship variable

[Explanation] As can be seen from Figure 5, informants, either male or female are to imagine themselves into situations in which they have been complimented by a male interactant, a female interactant or an interactant whose gender is not specified and hence is not of a relevant significance to a complimentee when deciding how to respond to the complimenter. Those situations in which the gender is not previously determined (Situations 3, 6, 9 and 12) depict a friendly, status-equal relationship and they offer the complimentee to decide on his/her own the gender of the complimenter. The reason why I left the gender variable open in these scenarios is the presupposition that gender will not influence compliment response strategies in an interaction between people who show a high level of camaraderie.

6.1.2   Research questions

Taking into consideration the research instrument employed for the data collection, this thesis attempts to discover tendencies of the two language and cultural communities and their preferences when it comes to the speech act of responding to compliments. Apart from the general descriptive results in terms of macro- and micro-level strategies, the thesis will try to provide the insight into a possible influence of gender, status and topic of compliments onto participants' choice of a compliment response strategy. The four main research hypotheses that will be tested by the means of inferential statistics include the following:[23]

- **Compliment response strategies on macro-level**

H_0: Compliment response strategies employed by British English speakers are not different from the ones employed by Serbian speakers

= There is a global standard in the use of compliment response strategies among British English and Serbian speakers

H_1: Compliment responses strategies employed by British English speakers significantly differ from those employed by Serbian speakers

= There is no global standard in the use of compliment responses strategies among British English and Serbian speakers

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[23] The null and alternative hypotheses are opposite to each other as inferential statistics suggests that the hypotheses be formulated so that they signify the opposition

- **<u>The impact of gender on responding to compliments</u>**

H$_0$: Gender is not associated with the strategies of compliment responses

H$_1$: Gender is associated with the strategies of compliment responses

- **<u>The impact of status i.e. social distance on responding to compliments</u>**

H$_0$: Status is not associated with the strategies of compliment responses

H$_1$: Status is associated with the strategies of compliment responses

- **<u>The impact of topics of compliments on responding to compliments</u>**

H$_0$: Topic of compliments is not associated with the strategies of compliment responses

H$_1$: Topic of compliments is associated with the strategies of compliment responses

6.1.3 Analysis

Bearing in mind the scope, diversity and complexity of the research questions this thesis tries to answer, a complex statistical analysis needs to be conducted. In order that this analysis is successfully performed and trustworthy and valid results are achieved, which would be also generalizable to some level, both qualitative and quantitative data analyses would be an absolute necessity.

6.1.3.1 Statistical perspective of the analysis

The data will be statistically analyzed using IBM statistical software package SPSS. My preferences to use this particular statistics package over some others lie in its user-friendly interface and my positive experience from the formal education.

6.1.3.2 Taxonomy

Quite a substantial number of research studies on compliment responses, both within one language and cultural community and on cross-cultural level, have employed different modes of categorization and taxonomic classification for their main analytical descriptions. This thesis makes use of the taxonomy of compliment responses devised by Ruhi (2006) and adapted by me to reflect the nature of the gathered data. The adaptation involves one more sub-strategy to the acceptance category and three combination strategies proposed by Yu (2003). Ruhi (2006) based the taxonomy on Holmes' (1986, 1995) and Herbert's (1990) classifications.

Table 11 Holmes' taxonomy of compliment responses (Holmes, 1986)

ACCEPT	Appreciation or agreement token
	Agreeing utterance
	Downgrading or qualifying utterance
	Return compliment
REJECT	Disagreeing utterance
	Question accuracy
	Challenge complimenter's sincerity
DEFLECT/EVADE	Shift credit
	Informative comment
	Ignore
	Legitimate evasion
	Request reassurance/repetition

Table 12 Herbert's taxonomy of compliment responses (Herbert, 1990)

AGREEMENT	1. Acceptances	a) Appreciation token
		b) Comment acceptance
		c) Praise upgrade
	2. Comment history	
	3. Transfers	a) Reassignment
		b) Return
NON-AGREEMENT	1. Scale down	
	2. Question	
	3. Non-acceptance	a) Disagreement
		b) Qualification
	4. No acknowledgment (silence)	
OTHER INTERPRETATIONS	1. Request	

Making a comparison between the two taxonomies, Ruhi (2006: 48) firstly discusses them on macro-level of the compliment response strategies and gives the advantage to the Holmes' taxonomy (1986, 1995)

> The semantic coding of the CRs follows Holmes' (1986, 1995) threefold division into acceptance, deflection/evasion and rejection. The coding shifts/adds some categories into the three major strategies, most of which are from Herbert's (1990) and Chen's (1993) classifications (e.g., *praise upgrade, joke, and request interpretation*). The three-way distinction in Holmes (1986, 1995) was preferred over Herbert's binary classification into agreement and non-agreement as the latter leads to a rather confusing analysis of CRs. For example, informing about the object of compliment, which is classified as an agreement in Herbert (1990: 208-211), is better handled as a form of evasion.

On the other hand, Ruhi (2006: 48) abandons some Holmes' terminology (1986, 1995) on micro-level and adopts Herbert's terms (1990).

A number of terms from Herbert (1990) also replace those in Holmes (1995) since they reflect a lesser degree of interpretation by the analyst (e.g., *question* instead *request reassurance/repetition*). In addition, the label *return* is used as a cover term for CRs that pay back a C either on the same topic or an inferentially related topic to that of the C. The former type has been named *return* proper, while the latter has been classified as *reciprocation*, as it expresses something good for or about the Cer.

Table 13 Ruhi's taxonomy of compliment responses (Ruhi, 2006)

ACCEPTANCE	1. Praise upgrade		
	2. Agreement		
	3. Return	a) Return	
		b) Reciprocate	
	4. Offer		
	5. Appreciation	a) Appreciation token	
		b) Smile	
		c) Kiss/hug	
	6. Joke		
	7. Laughter		
DEFLECTION / EVASION	1. Deflection	a) Shift credit	a1) to Complimenter
			a2) to 3rd P/T
		b) Question	
		c) Comment history	
	2. Evasion	a) Topic shift	
		b) Legitimate evade	
REJECTION	1. Disagreement		
	2. Silence		
	3. Downgrade		
OTHER INTERPRETATIONS			

To reflect the nature of the data collected, both regarding the Serbian and British data sets, I decided to embed one of the compliment strategies nominated by Yu (2003). The annexation of Ruhi's taxonomy (2006) is reflected through the inclusion of the sub-category of *Appreciation (token + comment)* as an acceptance strategy and addition of three combination strategies on macro-level. This macro-level strategy – *Combination* – accounts for the responses manifesting two sub-categories of the macro-level strategies of *Acceptance*, *Deflection/Evasion* or *Rejection*. Table 14 below depicts the three combination strategies added to the taxonomy that will be employed for the analysis.

Table 14 Combination strategies of compliment responses

Combination strategy	
Combination 1	Acceptance + Deflection/Evasion
Combination 2	Acceptance + Rejection
Combination 3	Deflection/Evasion + Rejection

6.2 Data collection

Versatile strategies have been employed in order to collect a sufficient and statistically representative sample for both British English and Serbian groups. The strategies differ on two levels. On the one hand, two DCT modes have been utilized – hardcopies of DCTs where the informants are to fulfill the questionnaires in handwriting and an online approach via google forms. On the other hand, strategies for recruiting informants include personal connections, recruiting informants out on the field, posting the DCT in different facebook groups, on a social network forum, and contacting different British associations in Austria and Serbia.

6.2.1 Study criteria for recruiting informants

Recruiting informants was based on two criteria that decided upon whether an informant was eligible for the research or not. Each informant was asked two questions and a positive answer to both of them qualified them as potential participants. The two criteria are those related to the country of birth and their mother tongue.

Table 15 Criteria questions for recruiting informants for the research study

British English informants	Serbian informants
Are you a native speaker of British English?	Are you a native speaker of Serbian?
Were you born in the United Kingdom?	Were you born in Serbia i.e. on the territory of Serbia of the Former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia?

6.2.2 The recruitment process considerations

Some tendencies of how Serbian and British informants have been found are discovered and my considerations on this very process might be of some help to future researchers with similar research methodology criteria who will embark on the quest for study participants.

In spite of the technological advancement and a wide range of modes of communication that the technological enhancement has brought, from my perspective, the traditional, in-person approaches to finding informants for the empirical study have proven to be a more efficient and effective method. Furthermore, a personal connection that may act as an insider in or a direct connection to an association is greatly beneficial, because the other members of the association are more likely to participate if the researcher is someone who is known to at least one of the members and who is able to recommend and promote the researcher. This has considerably eased and shortened my research process. Opposite to my expectations, I have been welcomed with positive feedback and inquisitive and curious reactions from many participants, both British and Serbian, asked in person to participate in the research. However,

what has astonished me is that only few informants, contacted via social platforms, have agreed to participate in the research.

Table 16 The frequency and percentage of the written DCTs fulfilled in person and via Google form version of the DCT

Data set	Written DCTs	Percentage	DCTs via Google forms	Percentage	Total
Serbian	48	0.80 %	12	0.20 %	60
English	47	0.82 %	10	0.18 %	57

As Table 16 reveals, less than 20% of all informants were participants who fulfilled the DCT online.

6.2.3 Discarded DCTs

The total number of British English speakers who participated in the research is 66, whereas there were 63 Serbian speakers who took part in the research. However, these numbers include few DCTs that were discarded in the later phase of the research i.e. compiling the definite two corpora.

Table 17 The frequency and percentage of the valid DCTs and discarded DCTs

Data set	Valid DCTs	Percentage	Discarded DCTs	Percentage	Total
Serbian	60	0.95 %	3	0.05 %	63
English	57	0.86 %	9	0.14 %	66

As can be seen from Table 17 above, there are three DCTs from the Serbian data set that were discarded on the grounds of incomplete or irrelevant completion. Irrelevant completion of the two DCTs manifests in the informants' providing their attitude and giving comments on some of the twelve scenarios, which was not required. Regarding the English data set, the number of the discarded DCTs is somewhat higher than that of the Serbian data – there are nine DCTs which were eliminated from the further analysis of British English compliment responses. The great majority of those DCTs were discarded due to the informants' countries of birth which were other than the United Kingdom (e.g. India, Lithuania, Australia, and Ireland), despite the fact that some of those informants declared themselves as native speakers of British English. One DCT was excluded due to the illegible handwriting. Here, I consulted my colleagues, but their mutual attempt to decipher the responses was met with failure. Similarly to the Serbian discarded DCTs, some English ones were eliminated because the informants commented on, providing their personal opinion on some compliment exchanges. Some comments include their evaluations of a compliment as inappropriate or

embarrassing, others represent informants' excuses of non-experiencing some of the situations in their private life.

6.3 Findings

6.3.1 Research process and participants

The research process lasted three months during the summer of 2015. Since I am Serbian by origin, it was not difficult to find Serbian informants. However, finding British English native speakers was a task that needed employing versatile strategies (see Section 2 on data collection strategies of this Chapter) and a greater effort which led to a somewhat time-consuming process due to the fact that a statistical condition of having a representative sample had to be satisfied. Moreover, a greater amount of time and resolution were invested so that more interesting and valid results would be produced.

The total number of research informants whose responses have been included in two corpora is 117 out of which 57 were British English native speakers and the rest of 60 informants represent Serbian native speakers.
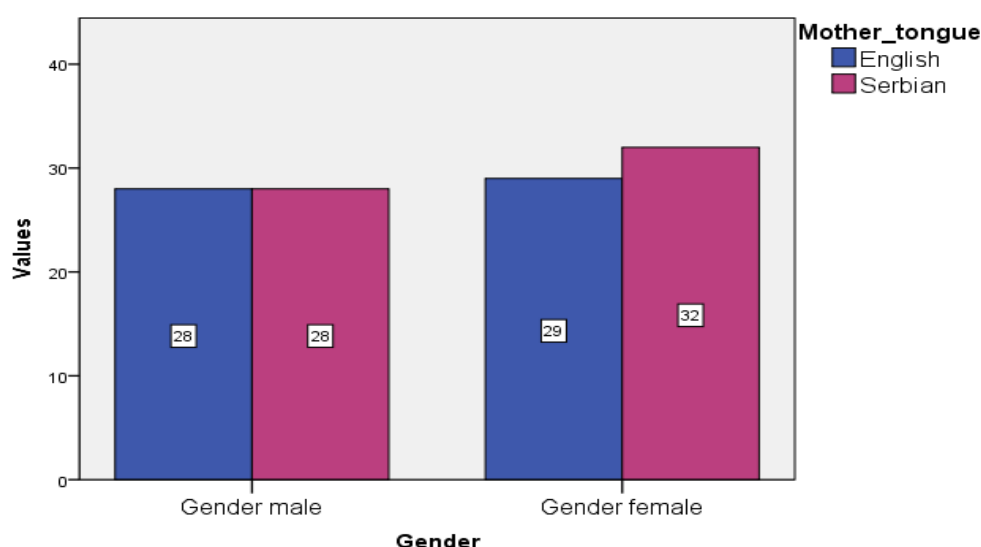
Figure 6 Distribution of informants according to gender in both data sets

[Explanation] Figure 6 shows the gender distribution within two data sets and one can see a slightly higher number of female participants in both English and Serbian data sets i.e. 28 male and 29 female British English speakers and 28 male and 32 female Serbian speakers participated in the research.

When it comes to age aspect, there was no limit apart from the lower age limit which was not specifically and numerically determined, but which was based exclusively on the presupposition that the informant had to be old enough to understand the aims of the research and what his/her task was. The data points of age are divided into six age groups and the distribution is as below.

Table 18 Age distribution in both data sets

Age * Mother_tongue Crosstabulation

Count

| | | Mother_tongue | | Total |
		English	Serbian	
Age	-20	5	3	8
	21-30	22	25	47
	31-40	5	17	22
	41-50	9	8	17
	51-60	11	3	14
	61-	5	4	9
Total		57	60	117

Table 18 indicates that most of the informants in both British English and Serbian data sets are aged between 21 and 41. However, it also needs to be noted down that a substantial number of English informants are placed in the age groups of elderly people – there are 11 people aged between 51 and 60 and who make up 19% of the total number of English respondents.

Cultural considerations are an important factor that influences one's linguistically polite behaviour and more specifically, one's interpretation and reaction to compliments (Wierzbicka, 2003). The answers that informants provided regarding their cultural background are diverse, especially when it comes to the British English speakers. Pie charts below display cultural diversity and informants' most prominent identity patterns.
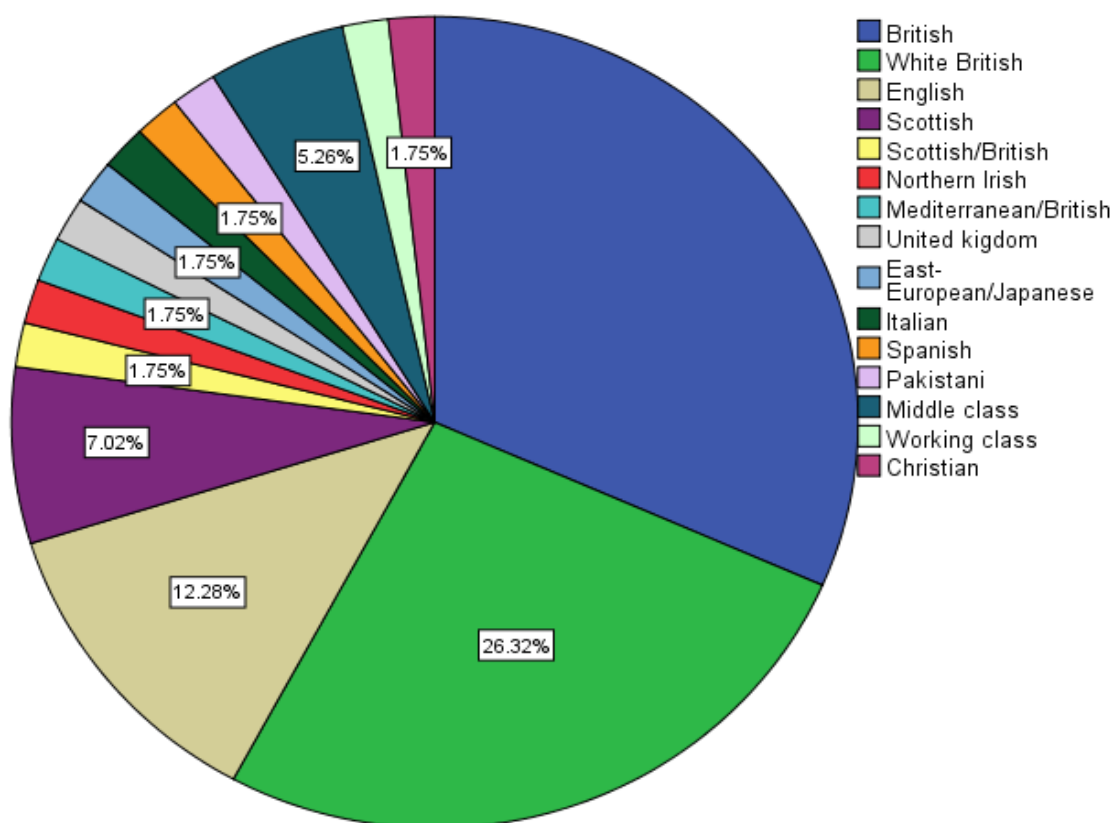
Figure 7 Cultural backgrounds of British English informants

[Explanation] Figure 7 suggests that the majority of British English participants in the study identified themselves as having British cultural background one way or the other.[24]

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[24] Figures 7 and 8 encompass all the answers on cultural background provided by British English and Serbian research participants, although some of the responses do not constitute relevant answers to the question of one's cultural background (e.g. Christian, Middle class, orthodox, socialism)
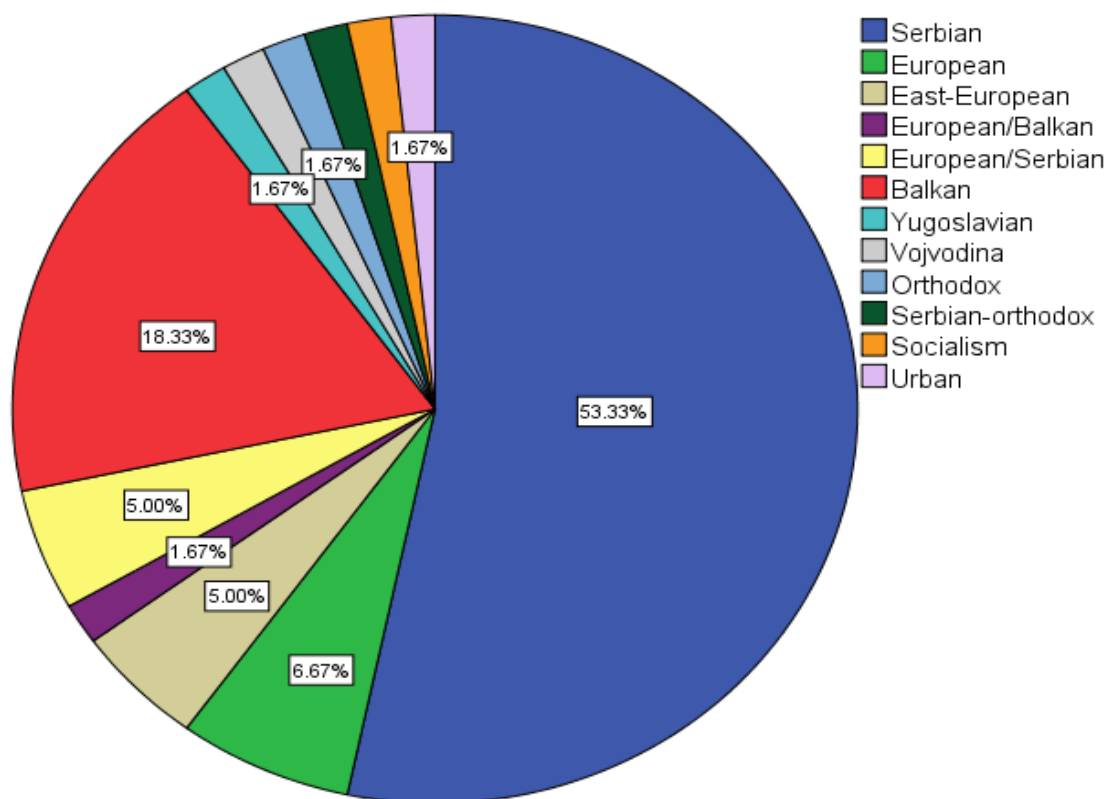
Figure 8 Cultural backgrounds of Serbian informants

[Explanation] As can be seen from Figure 8, Serbian participants identified themselves predominantly as belonging to Serbian culture specifically (53.33%). Other responses include Balkan, Yugoslavian, East-European cultures that also may be more or less equated to Serbian cultural background, especially when their mother tongue – Serbian – is considered.

6.3.2 Compliment response analyses

British English and Serbian compliment responses will be subject to separate analyses aiming at discovering the most probable patterns of responding to compliments in two different language communities. Eventually, macro-level strategies employed by British English and Serbian speakers will be contrasted and statistically analyzed in order to test one of the main research hypotheses, whose result will answer if there are statistically significant differences between these two cultures in this particular speech act under the investigation.

6.3.3 Analysis of British English compliment responses

Statistical analysis of the compliment responses provides two types of findings – descriptive statistics and inferential statistics results. Descriptive frequency results will concern two levels that correspond to the taxonomy used for analysing the data – macro- and micro-levels. Additionally, the results based on the variables of gender, status and topic will be

included. Inferential statistics results will account for the associations between the variables of gender, status and topic, and compliment response strategies and these results will be used to answer research hypotheses. In addition to this, examples will be incorporated so as to facilitate the presentation and discussion on compliment response strategies.

6.3.3.1 Macro-level findings

A total of 739 compliment responses were collected from 57 British English native speakers and they are classified according to the taxonomy of compliment responses adopted for the present research analyses.[25]

Table 19 Compliment responses on macro-level (British English data)

MACRO-LEVEL STRATEGIES	Frequency	Percent
Acceptance	496	67.1%
Deflection/Evasion	115	15.6%
Rejection	100	13.5%
Combination 1 (deflection/evasion and rejection)	6	0.8%
Combination 2 (acceptance and rejection)	16	2.2%
Combination 3 (acceptance and deflection/evasion)	6	0.8%
Total	739	100.0%

As Table 19 suggests, the majority of compliment responses were accepted (67.1 %) while deflection strategies account for 15.6% of all the responses and rejection responses, as the least favoured strategies in terms of macro-level strategies, amount to 13.5%. The three combination strategies were employed in 3.8% of cases only, out of which Combination 2 (acceptance and rejection) takes place as the most preferable combination strategy with the 2.2% occurrence frequency.

6.3.3.2 Micro-level findings

Results on micro-level show a deeper and more detailed distribution of compliment response strategies. As can be seen from Table 20, *appreciation* is the most favoured strategy amounting to 44% of the total percentage. Within the category of *appreciation*, which lists four sub-categories (*token; token and comment; smile; kiss/hug*), a response consisting of a token e.g. *thank you, thanks* and a comment was found to be the most preferable choice – 23.1%. A

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[25] More information on the taxonomy design is available in Section 6.1.3.2 of this Chapter

sole token of appreciation follows in sequence of the most favourite sub-categories appearing in 20.8% of cases.

Table 20 Compliment responses on micro-level (British English data)

MICRO-LEVEL STRATEGIES	Frequency	Percent
Praise upgrade	18	2.4%
Agreement	36	4.9%
Return (return)	42	5.7%
Return (reciprocate)	10	1.4%
Offer	28	3.8%
Appreciation (token)	154	20.8%
Appreciation (token + comment)	171	23.1%
Appreciation (smile)	0	0.0%
Appreciation (kiss/hug)	1	0.1%
Joke	34	4.6%
Laughter	2	0.3%
Shift credit (to the complimenter)	5	0.7%
Shift credit (to a 3rd party)	9	1.2%
Question	16	2.2%
Comment history	35	4.7%
Topic shift	17	2.3%
Legitimate evade	33	4.5%
Disagreement	25	3.4%
Silence	6	0.8%
Downgrade	69	9.3%
Combination	28	3.8%
Total	*739*	*100.0%*

Some examples of *appreciation* responses are as follows:

(30)   Thanks, I got them for my birthday from my sister. [E3_4]

(31)   Oh! Thank you! I'm really pleased I'm getting a bit better! [E6_7]

(32)   Thank you, hopefully, you will also have your own exhibition one day and receive similar compliments! [E12_8]

When it comes to the least favoured acceptance strategies, apart from the physical reactions (*kiss/hug; smile; laughter*), which show a minimal or non-occurrence, returning a compliment by *reciprocating* appears to be the strategy that British English speakers prefer the least – 1.4%. However, it does not necessarily mean that British English speakers rarely return compliments. In fact, they do, and the results show that they do it quite frequently, but by

returning the compliment on the same topic. This strategy was employed in 5.7% of all complimenting events, meaning that it ranks third of the most frequently employed strategies. Examples of *returning* compliments are the following:

(33)   On the same topic: Thank you, you look quite dashing tonight, too. [E44_1]

(34)   On a different topic: I have a brilliant manager, it's difficult to go off track. [E8_10]

Agreement responses account for 4.9% of all responses, occupying the forth place and right next to this strategy is *joking* as providing a humorous response with the frequency rate of 4.6%. The examples below nicely illustrate these two strategies respectively.

(35)   Yes, I was lucky an opportunity came and I took the apartment. [E5_5]

(36)   I'm not coming home with you, boss, and I'm not working overtime. [E19_1*]

Accepting a compliment by *offering* the object of complimenting occurred in 3.8%, which compared to other acceptance strategies indicates a rare implementation of this strategy among British English speakers.

(37)   Thank you, I can give you the recipes, if you would like? [E18_9]

As regards deflection/evasion strategies, the most used one is *commenting history* (4.7%), followed by *legitimate evading* (4.5%). *Shifting credit* either *to the complimenter* or *to a 3rd party* do not appear to be compliment response strategies preferably exploited by Brits as the two strategies do not together make up 2% of all the responses.

(38)   I worked very hard to achieve what I've done. [E5_8]

(39)   I'm glad you're feeling better. [E27_12]

Topic shift belongs to the least favoured deflection/evasion strategies, too, even though it occupies the third place. However, the strategy is almost twice less frequent (2.3%) than the second one i.e *legitimate* evade (4.5%).

(40)   Shall we have a cup of coffee before we start? [E48_5]

Questioning the complimenter's utterance i.e. his/her truthfulness and sincerity is also something that Brits rarely do - 2.2% of the responses within the British English data set were requests for reaffirming the complimenters' propositions.

(41)   Oh, yeah? This does seem pretty good? [E59_6]

Lastly, even though rejection strategies account for the least favoured compliment response strategies, *downgrading* a compliment shows not a so negligible rate – 9.3%. *Disagreement* responses follow, but amounting to an almost three times lower rate than *downgrading* - 3.4%. *Silence* i.e. not providing any response to a compliment took place only in 0.8% of all cases. Examples of rejection strategies are listed below from the highest to the lowest frequency rate:

(42)   It's nothing, it's hard when you're new and only right I helped. E24_11]

(43)   I don't think so. [E10_3]

(44)   No response. *move the conversation on [E46_3]

As was already mentioned, *combined* compliment responses account for 3.8% of the total number of responses. *Combination 2* was found to be the most favourite combination (2.2%), standing for a response denoting acceptance and rejection at the same time. The other two, *Combination 1* (deflection/evasion and rejection) and *Combination 3* (acceptance and deflection/evasion) are identical in the distribution – 0.8%. The examples of responses suggesting combination strategies are as follows:

(45)   Oh no – I do my best, but you're brilliant at x/y/x. I'm really for you. [E52_10]

(46)   Nonsense! It was team work! You are very easy to work with. [E47_10]

(47)   Thanks, I don't scrub up too badly, do I? [E59_1]

6.3.3.3   Gender-based results

In order that comprehensive and in-depth results are obtained, two gender-based variables were created and separate tests on macro- and micro-level were conducted. The first variable is gender_informant and relates to the sex of a research informant. The second one, gender_relation, represents the relation between the informant and an imagined compliment giver whose sex is specified in the DCT scenarios. Therefore, values of this variable give different sex-dyads.

Findings based on the gender_informant variable will be presented first.

The distribution of a total of 739 compliment responses across gender collected from the British English native speakers appears to be balanced:

Table 21 Compliment responses across gender (British English data)

Gender_informant		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	353	47.8
	Female	386	52.2
	Total	739	100.0
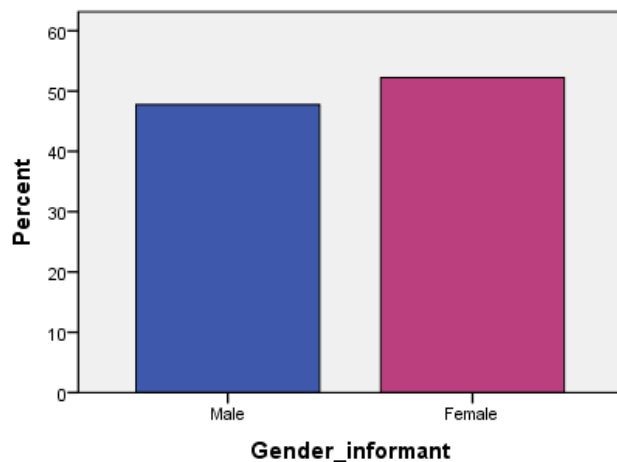
Figure 9 Compliment responses across gender (British English data)

Table 22 Chi-square goodness-of-fit test for the variable "gender_informant" (British English data)

Gender_informant

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Male	353	369.5	-16.5
Female	386	369.5	16.5
Total	739		

Test Statistics

	Gender_informant
Chi-Square	1.474[a]
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.225

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 369.5.

Frequency Table 21 suggests that 47.8% of all compliment responses were given by men, whereas 52.2% of the responses were given by women. Despite the residuals of -16.5 and 16.5, indicated in Table 22, the chi-square goodness-of-fit test determined that the observed values were not statistically significantly different from the expected ones (the p-value = 0.225, which is above the significance level of 0.05). These findings imply that the data sample is not biased in terms of the informants' gender i.e. the numbers of compliment responses given by both men and women are balanced.

How British men and women responded to compliments on macro-level can be seen from a table and a figure below:

Table 23 Compliment responses on macro-level across gender (British English data)

MACRO-LEVEL STRATEGIES	Male (frequency)	Male (percent)	Female (frequency)	Female (percent)
Acceptance	233	66.0%	263	68.1%
Deflection/ Evasion	61	17.3%	54	14.0%
Rejection	44	12.5%	56	14.5%
Combination	15	4.2%	13	3.4%
Total	353	100.0%	386	100.0%
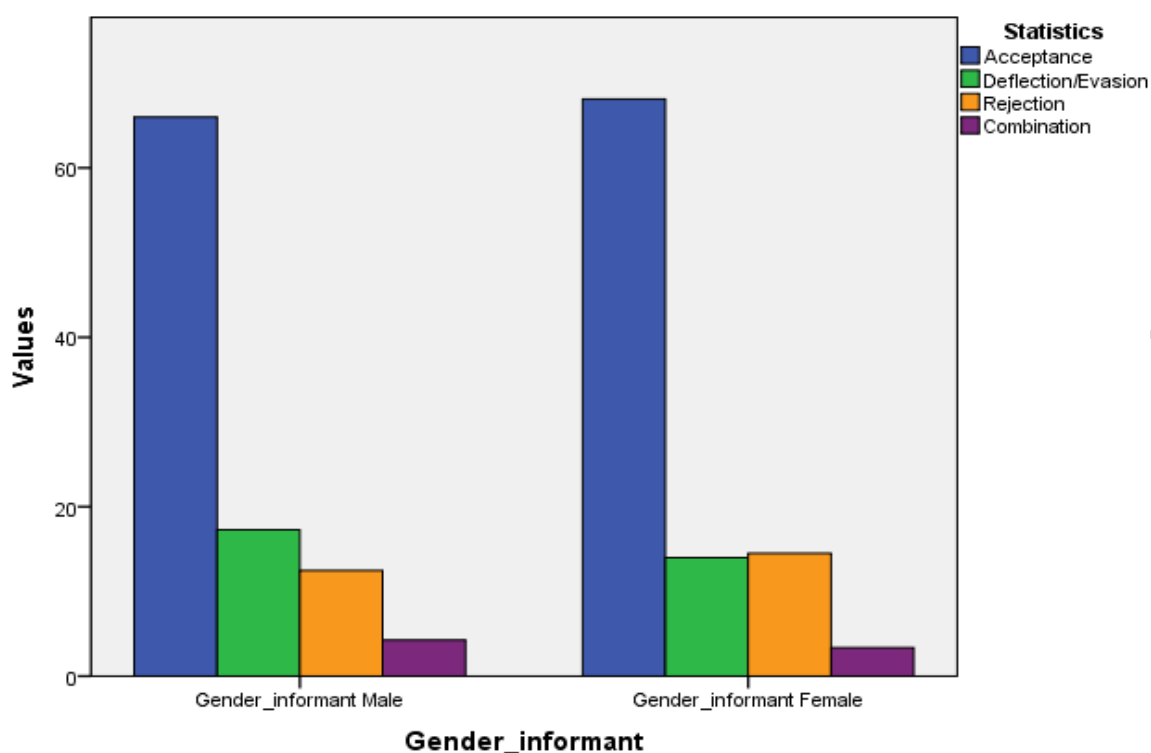
Figure 10 Compliment responses on macro-level across gender (British English data)

Table 23 and Figure 10 suggest that British men and women responded to compliments in a comparable fashion – the responses from men and women are similarly distributed on macro-level. Specifically, 66.0% of all responses given by men were acceptance responses, whilst 68.1% of the compliments were accepted by women. The sole difference, though a very slight one, is the women's greater tendency to use rejection strategies than deflection/evasion strategies – 14.5% and 14.0%, respectively. On the other hand, men's responses are distributed according to the general distribution with the deflection/evasion strategies amounting to 17.3% and the rejection ones to 12.5%. When it comes to combination strategies, men were found to call upon these strategies more often than women – 4.2% compared to women's 3.4%.

As can be presumed from Table 23 and Figure 10, there are no significant differences between males and females in employing macro-level strategies; in fact a similar trend on

macro-level exists among female and male British English speakers. This presumption is as well tested by means of inferential statistics – the chi-square test is applied and adjusted residuals are recovered in order to go deeper into the analysis and elaborate on the interpretation of the chi-square test results.

Table 24 Contingency table and chi-square test for macro-level strategies and informants' gender (British English data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Gender_informant Crosstabulation

			Gender_informant		Total
			Male	Female	
Macro_level_adjusted	Acceptance	Count	233	263	496
		Adjusted Residual	-.6	.6	
	Deflection/Evasion	Count	61	54	115
		Adjusted Residual	1.2	-1.2	
	Rejection	Count	44	56	100
		Adjusted Residual	-.8	.8	
	Combination	Count	15	13	28
		Adjusted Residual	.6	-.6	
Total		Count	353	386	739

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	2.355[a]	3	.502	.503		
Likelihood Ratio	2.354	3	.502	.505		
Fisher's Exact Test	2.363			.501		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.084[b]	1	.772	.798	.402	.033
N of Valid Cases	739					

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.37.

b. The standardized statistic is -.290.

Chi-Square Exact test suggests the chi-square statistic of 2.355, the degrees of freedom of 3 and the p-value of 0.502. Being above the significance level of 0.05, the p-value shows that there is no statistical significance in the association between macro-level compliment response strategies and the variable of gender_informant. Additionally, adjusted residuals are used to indicate the cells showing interesting and possibly statistically significant results when it comes to contingency tables bigger than 2x2. According to Agresti (2007: 38), "a standardized residual having absolute value that exceeds about 2 when there are few cells or

about 3 when there are many cells indicates lack of fit of H_0 in that cell"[26]. However, the values of residuals in Table 24 confirm the above said on the absence of statistically significant difference, for there is no adjusted residuals greater than 2 and less than -2.

However, a closer look at the micro-level strategies reveals that there are certain British men's and women's preferences in responding to compliments, yet insignificant. Table 25 below displays the raw frequencies and percentages of the micro-level strategies across gender.

Table 25 Compliment responses on micro-level across gender (British English data)

MICRO-LEVEL STRATEGIES	Gender			
	Male (frequency)	Male (percent)	Female (frequency)	Female (percent)
Praise upgrade	9	2.5%	9	2.3%
Agreement	13	3.7%	23	6.0%
Return (return)	25	7.1%	17	4.4%
Return (reciprocate)	6	1.7%	4	1.0%
Offer	15	4.2%	13	3.4%
Appreciation (token)	60	17.0%	94	24.4%
Appreciation (token + comment)	85	24.1%	86	22.3%
Appreciation (smile)	0	0%	0	0%
Appreciation (kiss/hug)	1	0.3%	0	0%
Joke	18	5.1%	16	4.1%
Laughter	1	0.3%	1	0.3%
Shift credit (to the complimenter)	1	0.3%	4	1.0%
Shift credit (to a 3rd party)	5	1.4%	4	1.0%
Question	9	2.5%	7	1.8%
Comment history	19	5.4%	16	4.1%
Topic shift	11	3.1%	6	1.6%
Legitimate evade	16	4.5%	17	4.4%
Disagreement	10	2.8%	15	3.9%
Silence	6	1.7%	0	0%
Downgrade	28	7.9%	41	10.6%
Combination	15	4.2%	13	3.4%
Total	353	100.0%	386	100.0%

Moreover, adjusted residuals of the contingency table of micro-level strategies and gender (see Appendix C) indicate that men show a greater tendency than women to be silent when they are to respond to a compliment (adjusted residual = +2.6), whereas women are found

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[26] In hypothesis testing, H_0 typically represents a hypothesis that claims that there is no statistically significant association between two variables

to be more prone than men to respond to a compliment with a simple and short *thank you* or *thanks* (adjusted residual = +2.5).

With regard to sex dyads, the results reveal that compliments given by men, regardless of the sex of a recipient, tend to be more rejected than deflected or evaded, which is in opposition to the distribution on a more global level i.e. the distribution not taking gender into consideration, which proposes that deflection/evasion strategies are a more usual recourse to responding to compliments than the rejection ones.

Furthermore, the contingency table of the variables representing sex dyads and macro-level strategies (see Table 26) nicely illustrates adjusted residuals which helpfully pinpoint certain female aspirations both in terms of same-sex interaction and cross-sex interaction in which the complimentee i. e. the informant is a woman. Specifically, in these sex-dyads (F-F, F(complimentee)-M(complimenter)), compliment responses denoting acceptance and accordance are much more regular and indicate a slight overrepresentation of the acceptance strategies (adjusted residuals for same-sex interaction and acceptance category of the macro-level strategies is 2.3 and for cross-sex interaction is 3.5). In addition to findings concerning interactions between a female complimentee and a male complimenter, deflecting/evading a compliment is a strategy statistically significantly underrepresented i. e. rare. Statistically speaking, only 3.9% of all male compliments given to women were deflected/evaded (adjusted residual = -4, see Table 26).

Lastly, it is notable that both women and men are prone to reject or deflect/evade a compliment from friends[27] more often than it is expected. In other words, although acceptance strategies are employed in most of the cases (51.2% and 48.5%), they are essentially underrepresented in these two sex dyads. This significant result is supported by the adjusted residuals that are below the negative threshold of underrepresentation (the adjusted residuals are -4.1 and -5, for men and women as compliment recipients, respectively; see Table 26).

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[27] In situations where a value of the variable gender_relation is specified "neutral", the person who pays a compliment is a friend

Table 26 Contingency table for macro-level strategies and sex dyads (British English data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Gender_relation Crosstabulation

			Gender_relation						Total
			male R - male G	male R - female G	male R - neutral G	female R - male G	female R - female G	female R - neutral G	
Macro_level _adjusted	Acceptance	Count	85	86	62	103	97	63	496
		% within Gender_relation	72.6%	74.8%	51.2%	80.5%	75.8%	48.5%	67.1%
		Adjusted Residual	1.4	1.9	-4.1	3.5	2.3	-5.0	
	Deflection/ Evasion	Count	12	17	32	5	20	29	115
		% within Gender_relation	10.3%	14.8%	26.4%	3.9%	15.6%	22.3%	15.6%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.7	-.3	3.6	-4.0	.0	2.3	
	Rejection	Count	15	7	22	12	9	35	100
		% within Gender_relation	12.8%	6.1%	18.2%	9.4%	7.0%	26.9%	13.5%
		Adjusted Residual	-.2	-2.5	1.6	-1.5	-2.4	4.9	
	Combination	Count	5	5	5	8	2	3	28
		% within Gender_relation	4.3%	4.3%	4.1%	6.3%	1.6%	2.3%	3.8%
		Adjusted Residual	.3	.3	.2	1.6	-1.5	-1.0	
Total		Count	117	115	121	128	128	130	739
		% within Gender_relation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0 %

6.3.3.4 Status-based results

Compliment responses in British English are also examined taking into consideration factor of status. The status variable has been controlled in the very process of data collection in order to obtain data that are balanced and all variable values i.e. *higher, lower, equal* are proportionally assigned to data points. Notwithstanding, the chi-square goodness-of-fit test is performed and suggests a high p-value i.e. a value considerably above the cut-point of 0.05. The results of the chi-square goodness-of-fit test therefore indicate that further analysis taking the status variable into consideration will provide unbiased results based on a representative sample. The test output is available in Appendix D.

Status-based results are also exhibited on two levels – macro- and micro-level.

Table 27 Contingency table for macro-level strategies and status relation (British English data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Status_informant Crosstabulation

			Status_informant			Total
			Lower	Higher	Equal	
Macro_level_adjusted	Acceptance	Count	198	174	124	496
		Adjusted Residual	5.3	2.0	-7.4	
	Deflection/Evasion	Count	33	21	61	115
		Adjusted Residual	-1.2	-3.6	4.7	
	Rejection	Count	8	34	58	100
		Adjusted Residual	-5.8	.3	5.5	
	Combination	Count	8	12	8	28
		Adjusted Residual	-.6	1.2	-.6	
Total		Count	247	241	251	739

Table 27 highlights adjusted residuals which explain that compliments given by someone of equal status are tended to be less accepted and more deflected or rejected than it is expected. In other words, acceptance strategies are underrepresented between status equals i.e. friends (adjusted residual amounting to -7.4), whereas deflection/evasion and rejection strategies are found to be overrepresented (adjusted residuals are 4.7 for deflection/evasion and 5.5 for rejection).

The analysis of compliment responses in terms of the status relation between a complimenter and a complimentee reveals that recipients of compliments higher in status do not follow the pattern of general distribution of compliment response strategies according to

the macro-level taxonomy (see Figure 11 below). Namely, it was discovered that they rejected compliments more often than they deflected or evaded. This finding could be interpreted as a greater candidness of people who enjoy higher status in society for they may not fear being opposed by someone of lower status. Furthermore, this pattern of linguistic behaviour could be even related to their possible lack of need of showing politeness towards the inferior.
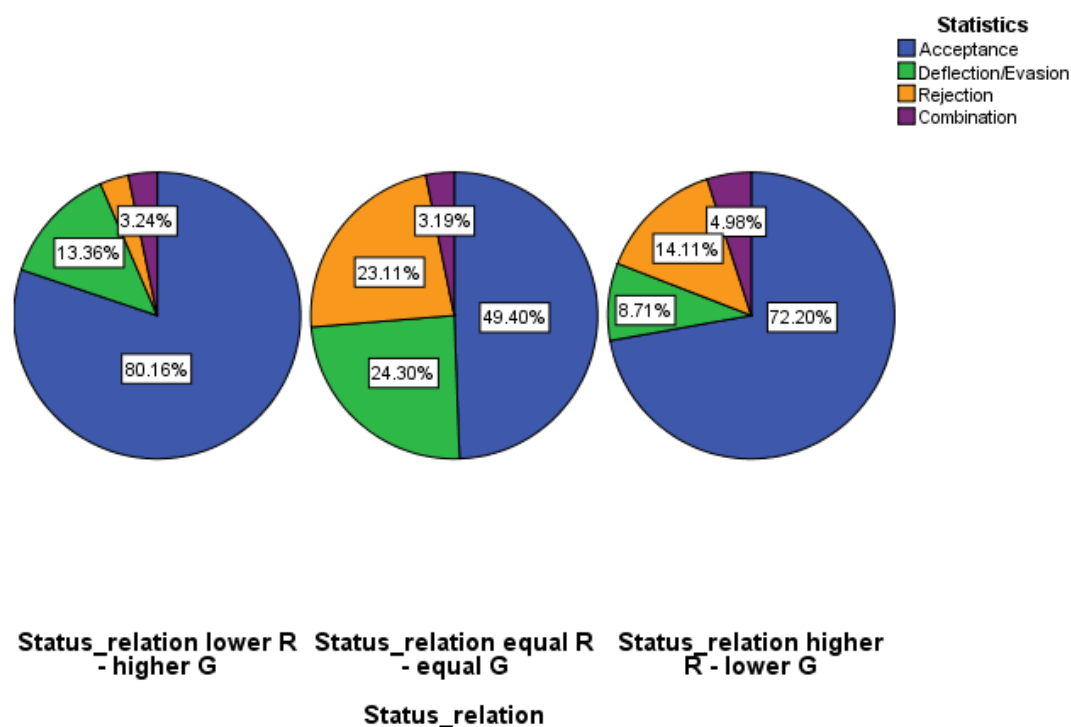
Figure 11 Compliment responses on macro-level across status relations (British English data)

When it comes to micro-level strategies, interesting results are related to complimenting behaviour of status equals and those of lower status (see Appendix E). Status equals were found to use the *praise upgrade* strategy more often than the recipients of status different from the status of a compliment giver. It could be due to a relaxed and friendly atmosphere that status equals enjoy and for this reason, they do not fear being considered pretentious or conceited. Also, adjusted residuals show that those compliment recipients of lower status tend to return compliments more often than others. This could be because of the possibility that they may feel as if they owed something, should they receive a compliment from someone who is higher in status than them, and that being the case, they consider paying another compliment as a suitable way to come out even. Moreover, those of lower status were found not to offer the complimented object, probably out of fear that it would be considered inappropriate or insulting to those of higher status – the leading presumption could be that those of higher status should

be superior in any aspect and that the complimented object could be of little or insignificant value to them.

6.3.3.5 Topic-based result

The British English data set numbers a total of 739 compliment responses and they are distributed across topics in the following manner:

Table 28 Compliment responses across topics of compliments (British English data)

Topic

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	appearance	200	27.1
	possession	179	24.2
	ability	177	24.0
	character	183	24.8
	Total	739	100.0
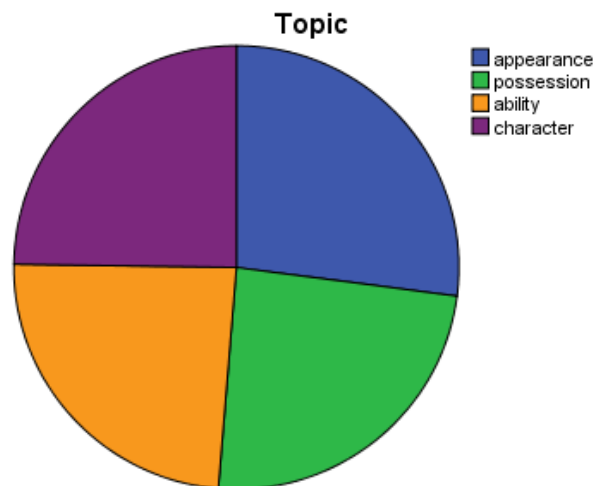
Figure 12 Compliment responses across topics of compliments (British English data)

Table 29 Chi-square goodness-of-fit test for the variable "topic" (British English data)

Topic

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
appearance	200	184.8	15.3
possession	179	184.8	-5.8
ability	177	184.8	-7.8
character	183	184.8	-1.8
Total	739		

Test Statistics

	Topic
Chi-Square	1.779[a]
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.619

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 184.8.

Frequency Table 28 and Figure 12 imply quite a balanced distribution of compliment responses according to the topics of compliments. This implication is also proved by the chi-

square goodness-of-fit test that shows that even though there are some relative discrepancies between the observed and expected values (see *residual column* of Table 29), those discrepancies are not of statistical significance (the p-value = 0.619 > 0.05). Similarly to the gender factor, these findings indicate, too that the British English data are somewhat equally distributed across topics and that no topic represents a significant majority which otherwise could lead to skewed results.

The association of topics of compliments and macro-level strategies is also examined and the findings are illustrated in Figure 13 below. In addition, a cross-tabulation of topics (appearance, possession, ability and character) and macro-level strategies yields some compelling results presented in Table 30.
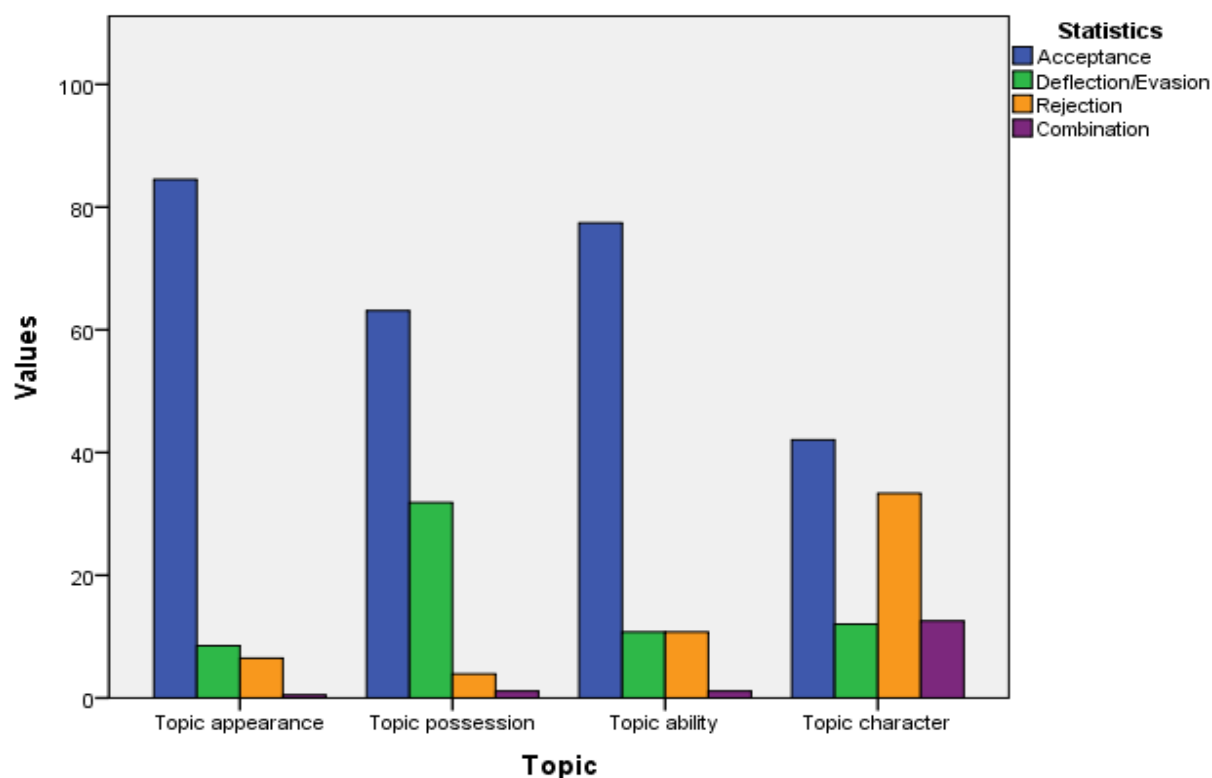
Figure 13 Compliment responses on macro-level across topics of compliments (British English data)

[Explanation] It can be seen from Figure 13 that compliments on appearance, possession and ability mark the acceptance rate above 50%. On the other hand, Figure 13 is indicative of a relatively considerable tendency of compliments on character to be responded with a rejection response. Furthermore, deflection/evasion strategies are mostly used to respond to

compliments on possessions[28]. An in-depth analysis of the impact that topics of compliments might have on compliment response strategies ensues.

Table 30 Contingency table for macro-level strategies and topics of compliments (British English data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Topic Crosstabulation

			Topic				
			appearance	possession	ability	character	Total
Macro_level _adjusted	Acceptance	Count	169	113	137	77	496
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	34.1%	22.8%	27.6%	15.5%	100.0%
		% within Topic	84.5%	63.1%	77.4%	42.1%	67.1%
		Adjusted Residual	6.1	-1.3	3.3	-8.3	
	Deflection/ Evasion	Count	17	57	19	22	115
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	14.8%	49.6%	16.5%	19.1%	100.0%
		% within Topic	8.5%	31.8%	10.7%	12.0%	15.6%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.2	6.9	-2.0	-1.5	
	Rejection	Count	13	7	19	61	100
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	13.0%	7.0%	19.0%	61.0%	100.0%
		% within Topic	6.5%	3.9%	10.7%	33.3%	13.5%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.4	-4.3	-1.2	9.0	
	Combination	Count	1	2	2	23	28
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	3.6%	7.1%	7.1%	82.1%	100.0%
		% within Topic	0.5%	1.1%	1.1%	12.6%	3.8%
		Adjusted Residual	-2.9	-2.2	-2.1	7.2	
Total		Count	200	179	177	183	739
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	27.1%	24.2%	24.0%	24.8%	100.0%
		% within Topic	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

It can be concluded from Table 30 that appearance and ability compliments were responded with acceptance at a quite high rate (84.5% and 77.4%), whereas character compliments did not even make 50%. Furthermore, possession compliments were responded with deflection/evasion strategies significantly more (adjusted residual = 6.9) than other compliments. Another noteworthy finding concerns character compliments and combination

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[28] Compliments on possession include only those compliments which are directed at alienable possessions

strategies – 82.1% of all combination strategies were used to respond to character compliments only. All these observations lead to a statistically significant difference among strategies used for answering on compliments varying in topic i. e. compliment response strategies are associated with the topic of compliments in a way that it can be said with 95% certainty that the association is not due to chance. This is proven as well by the chi-square test that suggests a p-value lower than 0.05 (see Appendix F).

6.3.4 *Analysis of Serbian compliment responses*

Same as British English compliment responses, the analysis of Serbian data set will be represented in terms of descriptive and inferential statistics results. The general frequency results on macro- and micro-level strategies will be first introduced and then the findings based on the variables of gender, status and topic will follow. In order to provide context for each compliment strategy, Serbian examples will be incorporated in the section on micro-level findings together with the translation into English.

6.3.4.1 Macro-level findings

The sample size of Serbian data is 733 compliment responses collected from 60 native speakers of Serbian. The distribution of Serbian compliment responses across macro-level strategies is displayed in Table 31.

Table 31 Compliment responses on macro-level (Serbian data)

MACRO-LEVEL STRATEGIES	Frequency	Percent
Acceptance	488	66.6%
Deflection/Evasion	127	17.3%
Rejection	95	13.0%
Combination 1 (deflection/evasion and rejection)	0	0.0%
Combination 2 (acceptance and rejection)	9	1.2%
Combination 3 (acceptance and deflection/evasion)	14	1.9%
Total	733	100.0%

Macro-level analysis suggests that two thirds of all responses are accepted (66.6%), whereas 17.3% account for deflection/evasion in responses and only 13.0% reflect rejection. As regards combined compliment response strategies, they were rarely employed (3.1%), out of which Combination 1, illustrating deflection/evasion and rejection, shows non-occurrence.

6.3.4.2 Micro-level findings

A more detailed picture of the compliment responses in Serbian was gained by means of analyzing micro-level strategies. Table 32 reveals that *appreciation* is the most preferred response strategy amounting to 50.1% of a total of 733 responses. *Appreciation* compliment responses include 24.0% of responses consisting of a simple appreciation token i.e. *hvala, hvala ti, zahvaljujem*, and a slightly higher percentage of responses (26.1%) composed of a token and a comment.

Table 32 Compliment responses on micro-level (Serbian data)

MICRO-LEVEL STRATEGIES	Frequency	Percent
Praise upgrade	19	2.6%
Agreement	40	5.5%
Return (return)	27	3.7%
Return (reciprocate)	10	1.4%
Offer	9	1.2%
Appreciation (token)	176	24.0%
Appreciation (token + comment)	191	26.1%
Appreciation (smile)	0	0.0%
Appreciation (kiss/hug)	0	0.0%
Joke	13	1.8%
Laughter	2	0.3%
Shift credit (to the complimenter)	21	2.9%
Shift credit (to a 3rd party)	11	1.5%
Question	14	1.9%
Comment history	21	2.9%
Topic shift	22	3.0%
Legitimate evade	38	5.5%
Disagreement	30	4.1%
Silence	6	0.8%
Downgrade	59	8.0%
Combination	24	3.3%
Total	733	100.0%

By way of illustration, let us consider some examples of the *token+comment appreciation*:

(48)   Hvala, meni se svideo na prvi pogled! [S51_6]

Thank you, I liked it the moment I saw it.

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(49)   Hvala, zaista sam se trudio u proteklom period. [S37_7]

Thank you, I've been really doing my best lately.

(50)   Hvala, ja uživam u spremanju i aranžiranju. [S4_9]

Thank you, I enjoy preparing and decorating food.

Regarding strategies that mark a low rate of frequency among Serbian speakers and apart from those of non-verbal type i.e. *kiss\hug* or *laughter*, which record non- or minimal occurrence, *reciprocating* and *offering* the object of compliment seem to be rarities – the occurrence rates for the strategies are 1.4% and 1.2% of all data points. Some examples of returning a compliment to the complimenter by *reciprocating* and *offering* are presented below respectively:

(51)   Hvala, tvoja haljina je prelepa. [S2_3]

Thank you, your dress is beautiful.

(52)   Uzmi još, i spakovaću ti i da poneseš malo. A i recepte sam da probaš da napraviš, nije teško, videćeš. [SS40_9]

Have some more, I'll also pack some of it to take home with you. I will also give you the recipes, so you can try it yourself, it's not difficult at all, you'll see.

Other acceptances strategies, though appearing insignificant in comparison to *appreciation* strategies, include *agreement* with 5.5% occurrence rate, third in the rank order, right after the leading *appreciation* strategies. *Returning* compliment on the same topic and *praise upgrading* follow with the percentages of 3.7% and 2.6%, respectively. The last to mention are humorous responses that were given in 1.8% of cases. Examples of the strategies elaborated in this paragraph are listed below accordingly.

(53)   Da, i ja mislim da je odličan. [S46_6]

Yes, I also think it's great!

(54)   Zato služe iskreni prijatelji! I ti mene uvek saslušaš i posavetuješ. [S42_12]

That's what friends are for! You are also a great listener and you always have some advice for me.

(55)   Pih, Džejmi je mala maca za mene! Hvala u svakom slučaju. [S6_9]

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Jamie is nothing in comparison to me! Thank you, anyways.

(56)   Šta ću, kriv sam, priznajem. [S31_3]

          Guilty as charged, I admit.

In relation to deflection/evasion strategies, Serbian people were found to make the greatest use of *legitimate evasion*, which was the case in 5.2% of all complimenting events. *Shifting topic, commenting history* and *shifting credit to the complimenter* responses follow with the percentage rates of 3.0%, 2.9% and 2.9%, respectively. *Questioning* the given compliment and *shifting credit to a 3rd party* appear to be sporadic compliment response strategies in terms of the deflection/evasion category – these types of responses appear only in 1.9% and 1.5% of cases. Examples of such responses are presented below according to their distribution, beginning from the most frequent one – *legitimate evade*.

(57)   Još nisam shvatila sve funkcije. Trebaće mi malo vremena dok shvatim sve prednosti. [S5_6]

          I still don't understand all the functions. I would need a little more time to get to know all the advantages.

(58)   Korigovao sam malo ishranu, tako da se sada mnogo jače osećam, a tehnika dolazi sama od jačih treninga. [S50_7]

          I have made a few diet changes, so I feel I am much stronger now and regarding the technique, it comes with intensive work-out.

(59)   Gde je taj konobar? [S48_3]

          Where's that waiter?

(60)   Ja ipak mislim da si sama zaslužna za ovu nagradu. [S3_10]

          Anyway, I believe you deserved this award all by yourself.

(61)   Zaista tako misliš, misliš da sam napravila pravi izbor? [S1_6]

          You really think so? You think I've made a good choice?

(62)   Sve zasluge idu mojoj ženi. [S49_5]

          All credits go to my wife.

Last but not least, rejection strategies are classified into three sub-categories i.e. *disagreement, silence* and *downgrade*. The preferred response type among Serbian speakers seems to be compliment *downgrade* which reaches 8% of the total of 733 responses in the data set. *Disagreement* follows in order, but appears almost twice less likely to occur, as the strategy accounts for 4.1% of all responses. Ultimately, rarely were Serbian people found not to say anything to a compliment – *silence* as a response strategy appeared in 0.8% of all the cases. Examples of rejection strategies (*downgrade* and *disagreement*) are the following:

(63)   Još to nije onako kako sam zamislila. [S27_5]

It's still not the way I want it.

(64)   Ne slažem se s tobom, to je preterano, nisam ni blizu Džejmija. [S33_9]

I disagree with you, you're exaggerating, I'm nowhere near as good as Jamie.

Combined responses have already been reported to be infrequent. When classified in three different categories (*Combination 1, 2* and *3*), the frequency analysis demonstrates that Serbian speakers made use of *Combination 2* and *3* only – there are no data points representing *Combination 1*. *Combination 2* representing acceptance and rejection in a response accounts for 1.2% of the total number of responses, whereas *Combination 3*, consisting of acceptance and deflection/evasion responses, shows a somewhat higher percentage rate – 1.9%. Examples of *Combination 2* and *3* are illustrated below, respectively.

(65)   Hvala, potrudila sam se. Mada nisam sigurna da možeš da me porediš sa njim. [S46_9]

Thanks, I've tried my best. But, I'm not sure I can be compared to him.

(66)   Hvala, potrudili smo se, a što se tiče kuhinje, to je suprugin izbor. [S50_5]

Thank you, we did our best, and as for the kitchen, my wife picked it.

6.3.4.3 Gender-based results

Like British English data set, two variables for the analysis of Serbian compliment responses were created and exploited in order to produce gender-based results. Same as the variables in the British English data matrix, the two variables include the one representing the sex of an informant and the other one representing sex dyads. In this way it is possible to build up a fuller picture of the impact that gender has on one's perception of a compliment and his/her eventual response.

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The following sections will introduce the results based on the gender_informant variable first and then the results based on sex dyads will follow.

A total of 733 compliment responses collected from Serbian informants are distributed across gender to a similar extent.

Table 33 Compliment responses across gender (Serbian data)

Gender_informant

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	343	46.8
	Female	390	53.2
	Total	733	100.0
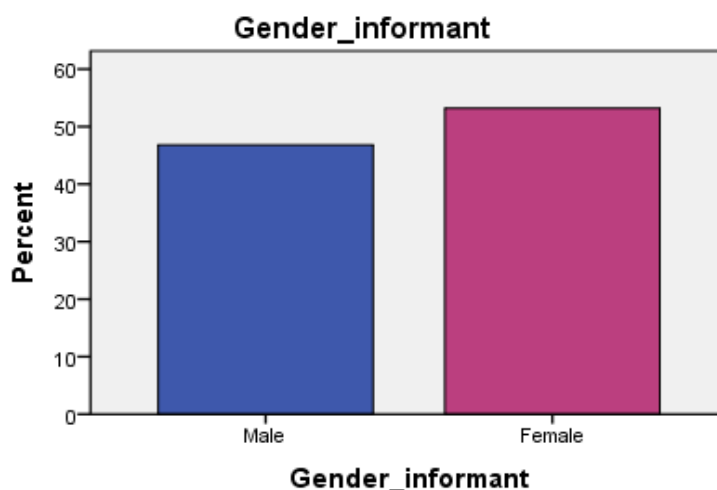
Figure 14 Compliment responses across gender (Serbian data)

Table 34 Chi-square goodness-of-fit test for the variable "gender_informant" (Serbian data)

Gender_informant

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Male	343	366.5	-23.5
Female	390	366.5	23.5
Total	733		

Test Statistics

	Gender_informant
Chi-Square	3.014[a]
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.083

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 366.5.

Frequency Table 33 and Figure 14 make a suggestion that the majority of Serbian responses (53.2%) were given by women. In spite of the fact that residuals of +/- 23.5 may imply that the numbers of responses given by men and women are statistically significantly different, the chi-square goodness-of-fit test proves that those discrepancies are statistically

insignificant (the p-value = 0.083 is above the significance level of 0.05). This signifies that the results could not be deemed biased on the ground of a potential preponderance of responses given by women.

The distribution of compliment responses on macro-level across gender is illustrated in Table 35 below:

Table 35 Compliment responses on macro-level across gender (Serbian data)

MACRO-LEVEL STRATEGIES	Male (frequency)	Male (percent)	Female (frequency)	Female (percent)
Acceptance	213	62.1%	275	70.5%
Deflection/ Evasion	74	21.6%	53	13.6%
Rejection	47	13.7%	48	12.3%
Combinations	9	2.6%	14	3.6%
Total	343	100%	390	100%
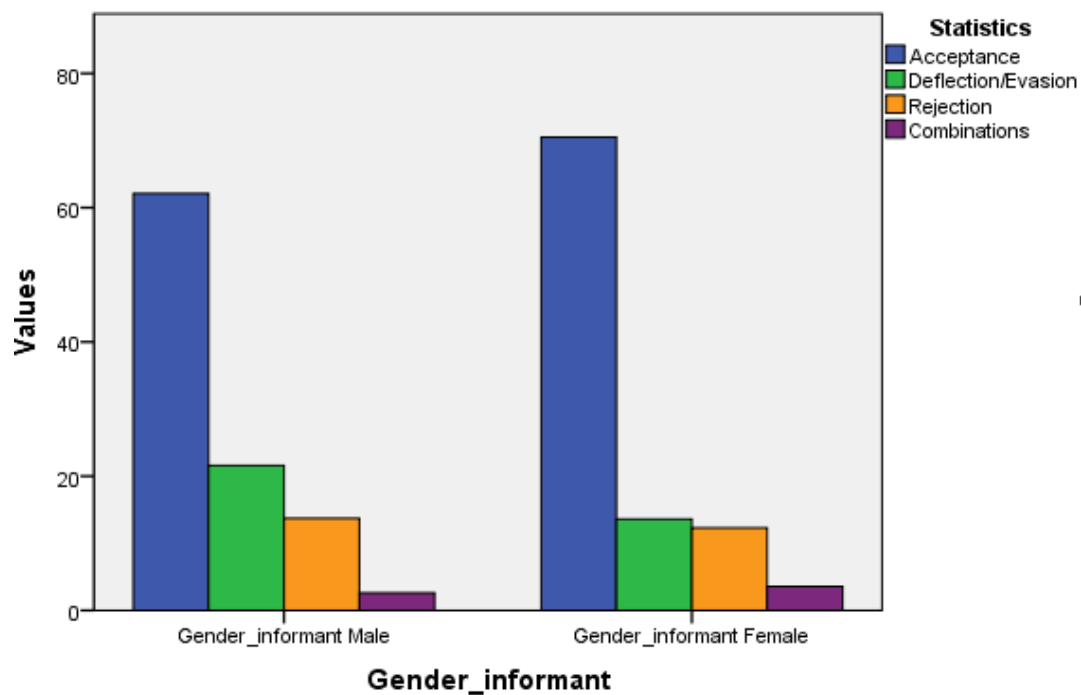
Figure 15 Compliment responses on macro-level across gender (Serbian data)

Looking at the frequencies and percentages in Table 35 and relying on a visual representation of the male and female distribution of responses on macro-level that Figure 15 provides, one can hypothesize that men and women do not differ in responding to compliments i.e. gender does not exert any influence on the choice of a response strategy. In order to test this hypothesis, the chi-square test is conducted and adjusted residuals, pointing out whether

any association between two variables is significant or not, are added to inferential statistics results:

Table 36 Contingency table and chi-square test for macro-level strategies and informants' gender (Serbian data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Gender_informant Crosstabulation

			Gender_informant		Total
			Male	Female	
Macro_level_adjusted	Acceptance	Count	213	275	488
		Adjusted Residual	-2.4	2.4	
	Deflection/Evasion	Count	74	53	127
		Adjusted Residual	2.9	-2.9	
	Rejection	Count	47	48	95
		Adjusted Residual	.6	-.6	
	Combinations	Count	9	14	23
		Adjusted Residual	-.7	.7	
Total		Count	343	390	733

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	9.472[a]	3	.024	.023		
Likelihood Ratio	9.477	3	.024	.025		
Fisher's Exact Test	9.434			.024		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.623[b]	1	.203	.215	.110	.016
N of Valid Cases	733					

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.76.

b. The standardized statistic is -1.274.

Although the general pattern of employing compliment response strategies exists and it appears to be quite similar between Serbian women and men, the exact chi-square test of independence with the chi-square statistic of 9.472, the degrees-of-freedom = 3 and the p-value = 0.023 shows that gender affected the choice of a response strategy among Serbian speakers. A closer look at the adjusted residuals reveals the cells which contributed most to the statistically significant difference in responding to compliments between women and men. Namely, as Table 36 above indicates, deflection/evasion responses are essentially overrepresented among men, whereas acceptance responses are considerably scarce (adjusted residuals are 2.9 and -2.4, respectively).

Analysis of compliment responses on micro-level will say further on these particular differences in responding to compliments between Serbian women and men. An elaborate examination of each sub-category will set aside those particular response strategies that show a statistically significant difference between men and women.

Table 37 Compliment responses on micro-level across gender (Serbian data)

MICRO-LEVEL STRATEGIES	Gender			
	Male (frequency)	Male (percent)	Female (frequency)	Female (percent)
Praise upgrade	8	2.3%	11	2.8%
Agreement	14	4.1%	26	6.7%
Return (return)	15	4.4%	12	3.1%
Return (reciprocate)	5	1.5%	5	1.3%
Offer	6	1.7%	3	0.8%
Appreciation (token)	71	20.7%	105	26.9%
Appreciation (token + comment)	83	24.2%	108	27.7%
Appreciation (smile)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Appreciation (kiss/hug)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Joke	9	2.6%	4	1.0%
Laughter	2	0.6%	0	0.0%
Shift credit (to the complimenter)	14	4.1%	7	1.8%
Shift credit (to a 3rd party)	7	2.0%	4	1.0%
Question	8	2.3%	6	1.5%
Comment history	14	4.1%	7	1.8%
Topic shift	15	4.4%	7	1.8%
Legitimate evade	16	4.7%	22	5.6%
Disagreement	12	3.5%	18	4.6%
Silence	5	1.5%	1	0.3%
Downgrade	30	8.7%	29	7.4%
Combination	9	2.6%	15	3.8%
Total	343	100.0%	390	100.0%

Adjusted residuals of the cross-tabulation of micro-level strategies and gender do not show any significant values (less than -2 and greater than 2); the only cell that exhibits the adjusted residual value of 2 is the cell representing the *appreciation (token) strategy* and females (see Appendix G). This adjusted residual suggests that this strategy is overrepresented among females. However, the reason why there is a statistically significant difference between men and women on macro-level and why the adjusted residuals do not show the difference on micro-level might be that men's acceptance underrepresentation and deflection/evasion

overrepresentation on macro-level is somewhat equally distributed across micro-level strategies and as a consequence, insignificant discrepancies are yielded. Notwithstanding, the difference between men and women on micro-level could be explained by comparing the very percentages. For example, five of six deflection/evasion strategies were used by men at least twice as much as by women e.g. 4.4% of all male responses are *topic shifts*, whereas female responses show only 1.8% frequency rate of the same strategy.

Within gender-based results, the analysis performed from the perspective of sex dyads provides some interesting results (see Table 38). The highest acceptance rate is noticed in the interactions where the compliment giver is a men, especially when women are the recipients of compliments - 82.3% of all compliments given by men to women are accepted. Apart from the acceptance category, adjusted residuals in Table 38 reveal other women's preferences. The negative adjusted residual for rejection strategies and female same-sex communication (-3.1) could be linked to a most likely women's general linguistic behaviour which perceives compliments as socially appropriate speech acts that help maintain good vibes and the same wavelength in interaction.

Another interesting result concerns combination strategies that appear to have been predominantly employed in same-sex communications (see Table 38). Namely, 78% of all combined responses given by men were given to men, whereas 77% of all women's combinations occurred in female same-sex communication. One of possible implications of this finding is that both sexes in interaction with the opposite sex are not likely to elaborate while responding to compliments, but tend to stick to one thought and one strategy and express it without combining it with other strategies.

Lastly, the findings suggest that both sexes show the tendency to reject or deflect /evade compliments given by their friends (see Table 38). Even though compliments acceptance still prevails in interaction between assumed friends (50.0% for men, 55.3% for women), the adjusted residuals indicate that this strategy is underrepresented regarding both men and women i.e. -4.2 and -3, respectively. Regardless of acceptance strategy, it was also found that in interaction with friends, men were discovered to prefer to deflect/evade a compliment to rejecting it (30.5%, adjusted residual = 4.1), whereas, women tended to reject compliments more frequently than to use deflection/evasion strategies (25.8%, adjusted residual = 4.8).

Table 38 Contingency table for macro-level strategies and sex dyads (Serbian data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Gender_relation Crosstabulation

			Gender_relation						Total
			male R - male G	male R - female G	male R - neutral G	female R - male G	female R - female G	female R - neutral G	
Macro_level_adjusted	Acceptance	Count	78	76	59	107	95	73	488
		% within Gender_relation	69.0%	67.9%	50.0%	82.3%	74.2%	55.3%	66.6%
		Adjusted Residual	.6	.3	-4.2	4.2	2.0	-3.0	
	Deflection/ Evasion	Count	17	21	36	14	17	22	127
		% within Gender_relation	15.0%	18.8%	30.5%	10.8%	13.3%	16.7%	17.3%
		Adjusted Residual	-.7	.4	4.1	-2.2	-1.3	-.2	
	Rejection	Count	11	13	23	8	6	34	95
		% within Gender_relation	9.7%	11.6%	19.5%	6.2%	4.7%	25.8%	13.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.1	-.5	2.3	-2.5	-3.1	4.8	
	Combination	Count	7	2	0	1	10	3	23
		% within Gender_relation	6.2%	1.8%	0.0%	0.8%	7.8%	2.3%	3.1%
		Adjusted Residual	2.0	-.9	-2.1	-1.7	3.3	-.6	
Total		Count	113	112	118	130	128	132	733
		% within Gender_relation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

6.3.4.4 Status-based results

Another factor that this research study on compliment responses takes into consideration is the factor of relative status ascribed to a complimenter and a complimentee and of the relation between them which can either be of different or equal status. Like British English data, Serbian data are balanced when the status variable is tested, for the data collection instrument was made with the view to obtaining the data that would show somewhat equally distributed status values (*lower, higher, equal*) i.e. status variable was a controlled one and hence, the data yielded proportional numbers of data points for each variable value. In addition, the chi-square goodness-of-fit test was performed and the test statistics containing a high p-value is available in the Appendix H.

The results on the influence of status onto the choice of a compliment response strategy made by Serbian informants will be presented from the perspectives of macro- and micro-level strategies.

Table 39 Contingency table for macro-level strategies and status relation (Serbian data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Status_informant Crosstabulation

			Status_informant			
			Lower	Higher	Equal	Total
Macro_level_adjusted	Acceptance	Count	185	171	132	488
		Adjusted Residual	4.0	1.8	-5.7	
	Deflection/Evasion	Count	37	32	58	127
		Adjusted Residual	-1.0	-2.0	3.0	
	Rejection	Count	11	27	57	95
		Adjusted Residual	-4.8	-1.0	5.7	
	Combinations	Count	9	11	3	23
		Adjusted Residual	.6	1.6	-2.2	
Total		Count	242	241	250	733

As the adjusted residuals in Table 39 above imply, there are some important differences in responding to compliments when status of the interlocutors engaged in a complimenting event is analyzed. It was discovered that status equals did not accept compliments as frequent as it was expected – the negative adjusted residual for acceptance reaches -5.7 and the strategies of deflection/evasion and rejection seem to have been overrepresented in communication among

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friends (adjusted residuals are 3.0 and 5.7, respectively). Another finding that raises interest is the way how those of lower status typically respond to a compliment. Namely, those of lower status seem to accept compliments most of time (76.4%) and reject them quite rarely (only 4.5%) which is more than twice less than the rejection frequency of those higher in status and status equals (see Figure 16 below).

Statistics
- Acceptance
- Deflection/Evasion
- Rejection
- Combination

Status_informant Lower

Status_informant Higher

Status_informant Equal

Status_informant
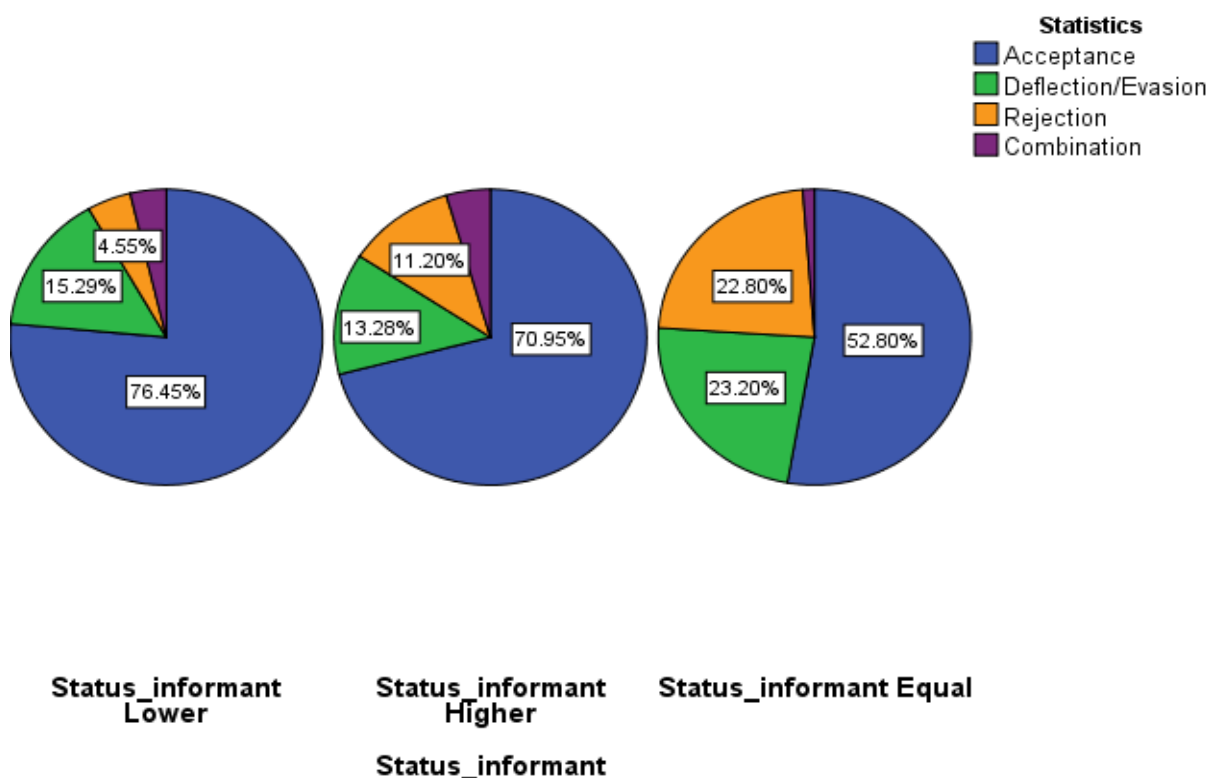
Figure 16 Compliment responses on macro-level across status relations (Serbian data)

As regards micro-level strategies and their distribution with respect to status factor, some intriguing and thought-provoking results were obtained (see Appendix I). Regarding those of lower status and their tendencies or lack of it with respect to particular compliment response strategies, it was found that they tended to make use of the *appreciation (token + comment)* strategy extensively (adjusted residual = 3.4), but also that they never accepted compliments responding with a *joke* or overt *laughter*. The total absence of responding to compliments with a humorous attach to it could be explained as a probable awareness of the factor of status, social distance and conventions how one should behave, norms and protocols that must be respected and acted upon

so that a socially appropriate communication is achieved. This supposition is also strengthened by the lack or almost absence of the same strategies from the part of those higher in status. Additionally, *downgrade* responses, despite being the preferred rejection strategy among Serbian informants, show that they are underrepresented in interactions where a compliment addressee is inferior to a compliment giver (adjusted residual = -4.2). When it comes to status equals, interesting results concern the *joke* acceptance strategies as the adjusted residual reaches 4.5, potentially implying that Serbian people joke around exclusively with their friends, as they might believe that this linguistic behaviour is adequate for friendly and relaxed contexts. Furthermore, Serbian status equals were discovered to disagree more often than it was expected, possibly for the same reason as they make jokes – they are not afraid how the complimenter would react to disagreement as friendships are supposedly based on trust and honesty. Considerable overrepresentation of *legitimate evade* and *downgrade* strategies is also present among status equals (adjusted residuals are 4.2 and 4, respectively).

6.3.4.5 Topic-based results

A total of 733 compliment responses collected from 60 native speakers of Serbian are distributed according to the topics of compliments in the following way:

Table 40 Compliment responses on macro-level across topics of compliments (Serbian data)

Topic

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	appearance	186	25.4
	possession	182	24.8
	ability	181	24.7
	character	184	25.1
	Total	733	100.0
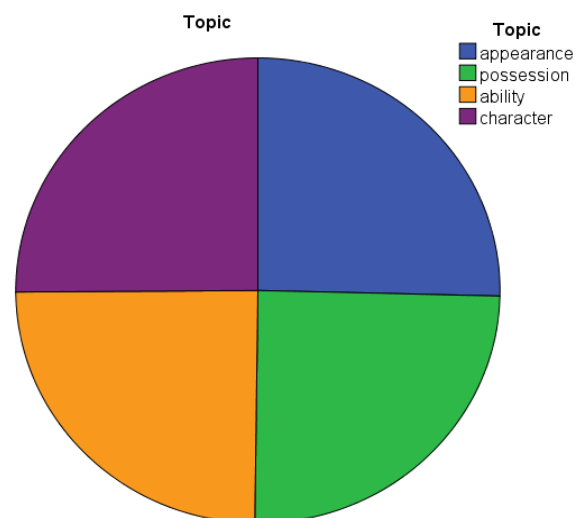
Figure 17 Compliment responses across topics of compliments (Serbian data)

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Table 41 Chi-square goodness-of-fit test for the variable "topic" (Serbian data)

Topic

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
appearance	186	183.3	2.8
possession	182	183.3	-1.3
ability	181	183.3	-2.3
character	184	183.3	.8
Total	733		

Test Statistics

	Topic
Chi-Square	.080[a]
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.994

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 183.3.

Table 40 shows the raw and relative frequencies of compliment responses when topic of the compliment is taken into consideration. The Serbian data set consists of 25.4% compliment responses to appearance compliments, 24.8% to possession compliments, 24.7% to ability compliments and 25.1% to compliments that are addressed to the character of a complimentee. It can be assumed, both from Table 40 and from the visual implication of the distribution according to the topics in Figure 17, that the data sample is balanced. The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was additionally conducted and the assumption was confirmed. As can be seen from Table 41 above, the chi-square statistic is 0.80 and the p-value is 0.994, which is highly above the significance level. This means that the distribution of compliment responses is not statistically significantly different across topics and that the data are not leaning essentially more towards one topic over others and as a result, do not produce biased results.

Whether or not a topic of a compliment exerts a certain influence onto compliment response strategies on macro-level is another question that this study tries to answer. The contingency table of these two variables – topics of compliments and macro-level strategies - shows the following:
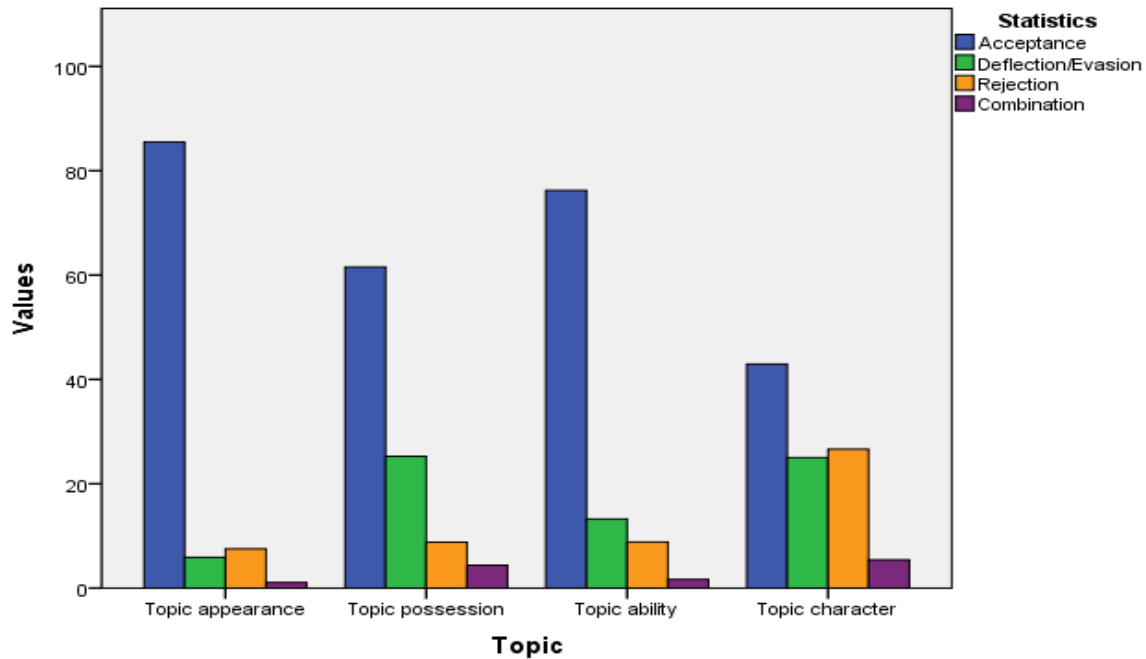
Figure 18 Compliment responses on macro-level across topics of compliments (Serbian data)

[Explanation] As Figure 18 suggests, compliments on one's appearance, possession and ability are responded predominantly with an accepting response. Furthermore, character compliments also record acceptance as a response category mostly resorted to, but not at the degree that compliments of other topics do. A more elaborate analysis of the potential influence that topics had onto how compliments were responded will be given by the means of a contingency table (see Table 42).

Table 42 Contingency table for macro-level strategies and topics of compliments (Serbian data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Topic Crosstabulation

			Topic				
			appearance	possession	ability	character	Total
Macro_level _adjusted	Acceptance	Count	159	112	138	79	488
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	32.6%	23.0%	28.3%	16.2%	100.0%
		% within Topic	85.5%	61.5%	76.2%	42.9%	66.6%
		Adjusted Residual	6.3	-1.7	3.2	-7.9	
	Deflection/ Evasion	Count	11	46	24	46	127
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	8.7%	36.2%	18.9%	36.2%	100.0%
		% within Topic	5.9%	25.3%	13.3%	25.0%	17.3%

		Adjusted Residual	-4.8	3.3	-1.7	3.2	
	Rejection	Count	14	16	16	49	95
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	14.7%	16.8%	16.8%	51.6%	100.0%
		% within Topic	7.5%	8.8%	8.8%	26.6%	13.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-2.6	-1.9	-1.9	6.4	
	Combination	Count	2	8	3	10	23
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	8.7%	34.8%	13.0%	43.5%	100.0%
		% within Topic	1.1%	4.4%	1.7%	5.4%	3.1%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.9	1.1	-1.3	2.1	
Total		Count	186	182	181	184	733
		% within Macro_level_adjusted	25.4%	24.8%	24.7%	25.1%	100.0%
		% within Topic	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 42 indicates that 85.5% of all appearance compliments and 76.2% of the ability compliments were accepted. Regarding the other two topics, although the responses were accepted in majority, the acceptance rates were low i.e. adjusted residuals are negative and even in the case of character compliments indicative of a significant underrepresentation (adjusted residual for this type of compliments and acceptance strategies is -7.9). On the other hand, as can be expected, character compliments show a high rejection rate – compliments on appearance, possession and ability show rates three times lower than character compliments (7.5%, 8.8%, 8.8%, respectively compared to 26.6% regarding character compliments). Due to the massive employment of acceptance strategies, appearance and ability compliments show a minimal frequency rate of deflection/evasion and combination strategies; in the case of appearance compliments, deflection/evasion strategies are even statistically significantly underrepresented (adjusted residual for the cell of appearance compliments and deflection/evasion is -4.8). In comparison with other two topics i.e. possession and character, appearance compliments record percentage of deflection/evasion and combined compliment responses at least three times lower. It can be argued from the cell by cell examination and interpretation that there is a statistically significant association between macro-level strategies and topics of compliments i.e. the employment of compliment response strategies across four topics is not due to chance. This argument is also

verified by the means of the chi-square test whose results signal a p-value below the significance level of 0.05 (see Appendix J).

6.3.5 *British English vs. Serbian compliment response strategies*

In order to test whether Brits and Serbs significantly differ in employing compliment response strategies on macro-level, the chi-square goodness-of-fit test will be conducted and will eventually state if we can say that there is a global standard between British English and Serbian native speakers in responding to compliments.

As previously elaborated, compliment responses provided by British English speakers are 67.1% accepted, 15.6% deflected or evaded, 13.5% rejected and 3.8% answered with a combination response. These values will serve as observed values in employing the chi-square goodness-of-fit test and will be compared to the Serbian ones which will be defined as expected values. The chi-square goodness-of-fit test produces the following output:

Table 43 Chi-square goodness-of-fit test for British English and Serbian compliment responses on macro-level

Macro_level_adjusted

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Acceptance	496	492.2	3.8
Deflection/Evasion	115	127.8	-12.8
Rejection	100	96.1	3.9
Combination	28	22.9	5.1
Total	739		

Test Statistics

	Macro_level_adjusted
Chi-Square	2.613[a]
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.455

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 22.9.

Table 43 suggests observed values of the British English compliment responses and expected values defined according to the distribution of Serbian compliment responses on macro-

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level. The chi-square goodness-of-fit test gives the x^2 test statistic of 2.613, degrees of freedom of 3 and the p-value of 0.455. The p-value is above the significance level and therefore, it may be concluded that British English and Serbian speakers do not show a statistically significant difference in responding to compliments on macro-level. In other words, it can still be assumed that there is a global standard in British English and Serbian cultures in the way of employing compliment response strategies. However, in terms of the hypotheses, it surely does not mean that we can reject H_1 and accept H_0. Non-significant result calculated by the means of the chi-square goodness-of-fi test signifies that we cannot accept either H_0 or H_1, but we can only state that we have failed to accept H_0. A potential rationale for such a state of affairs is that the data are not big enough to obtain a somewhat definite result.

6.4 Discussion

Compliment responses are speech acts that have been extensively researched and they have been found to represent a functionally complex language practice (Holmes 1988: 464). The research on this very speech act is able to give numerous insights not only of linguistic nature, but also insights related to certain social and cultural aspects.

This contrastive study focuses on compliment response strategies in British English and Serbian and the findings make a certain contribution to the rich body of work in this particular area of interest in pragmatics and linguistic politeness research. Furthermore, this study appears to bring to light the first empirical considerations on Serbian complimenting behaviour. In addition to this, the findings on British English compliment responses are able to contribute, support or challenge the huge, already available body of empirical evidence of the compliment response strategies in British English and English in general.

6.4.1 Comparisons with other studies

The results on compliment response strategies employed by British English speakers are congruent with the findings of the studies on several English varieties by Holmes (1986), Tang and Zhang (2009) and Motaghi-Tabari and de Beuzeville (2012). Across the studies, the pattern of macro-level strategies are identical and the distribution is varying only slightly in percentages. This study confirmed the global distribution and suggests that British English participants accepted 67.1%, deflected/evaded 15.6% and rejected 13.5% of the responses.

When micro-level strategies are examined, the frequency results of the present study are in accordance with the finding of Tang and Zhang (2009) that suggests that the most favourite acceptance strategy is appreciation.

Apart from the taxonomical analysis, this study makes an attempt to investigate whether a variable such as gender exerts an essential influence on the choice of a compliment response strategy or not. Another finding of Holmes (1988) was confirmed by the results of this study. Namely, the results of inferential statistics regarding British English compliment responses, showed that gender and macro-level strategies are not associated in the way that the association would provoke statistically significant differences between women and men. What is also mutual to both studies is that they explain that there are certain men's and women's preferences and inclinations in the way they respond to compliments. For example, this study showed that *silence* as a rejection strategy was much more often employed by men than by women, supporting inference by Holmes (1988) on men's greater predisposition to experience a compliment as an FTA. On the other hand, females were discovered to accept a compliment with a simple and short appreciation token significantly more frequently than men, which again proves another suggestion of Holmes (1988) that women perceive compliments as positively valued speech acts and a language practice that is helpful to establishing a pleasant relationship and boosting and maintaining harmony between interactants. Additionally, these findings on females provide further support and evidence for Holmes' proposition on women's linguistic behaviour which is typically described as cooperative and "as interactively facilitative and positive politeness-oriented" (Holmes 1988: 451).

As regards the factor of compliment topics, this study results are partly in agreement with the findings proposed in Katsuta (2012). The agreement concerns possession compliments that were found in both, Katsuta's and my studies, to be accepted at a high rate. However, a strong disagreement relates to appearance compliments that were dominantly answered with an acceptance response in my study (84.5%) whereas, it is suggested (Katsuta 2012: 58) that avoidance and rejection strategies were heavily employed in responding to appearance compliments.

When it comes to Serbian data, the findings this study gives present valuable empirical evidence on Serbian complimenting behaviour, as I have not encountered any study on Serbian

complimenting behaviour and compliment responses, in particular. The only study that is of certain relevance for comparison with the Serbian data results is the contrastive study by Bhatti and Žegarac (2012) on compliment response strategies in Polish and English.[29] The findings of compliment responses in Serbian, concerning macro-level strategies, are in accordance with the finding of the Polish study that states that the majority of compliments were accepted. Therefore, the hypothesis on the similarity between Polish and Serbian language behaviour, accounted for in the previous Chapter has been confirmed by these results and they propose that speakers of the languages of the Slavic language group bear a resemblance when it comes to the speech act of compliment responses.

6.4.2 *Theoretical considerations*

Communication is what we are, it is the reflection of ourselves and our attitude about the outer world. What and how we communicate speak volumes about our nature, culture and our own preferences. Bearing in mind the fact that human beings are aware of the world around them and that they are not only focused on themselves (ego-oriented), but also surrounded with other people and hence alter-oriented (Bax, 2010; 2011), it comes as no surprise that we tend to be a socially developed individual and an accepted member of the community in which we live. Verbal interaction is one of the communication channels available through which we express ourselves in the most direct manner. A great number of linguistic practices and strategies in any language are at people's disposal to be used in order to interact with the world around them and successfully convey meanings. These linguistic strategies are usually believed to follow certain norms and protocols, adequate and appropriate for the certain society. One of the aspects of relevance for one's linguistic behaviour is politeness which we linguistically show towards others doing diverse speech acts and resorting to various linguistic practices.

Politeness and especially linguistic politeness is assumed to be the most relevant research aspect when it comes to research on complimenting behaviour. As previously elaborated in Chapter 3, theories of politeness offer principles of linguistically polite behaviour and verbal strategies that account for polite communication. Apart from the main examination of compliment responses in terms of the taxonomy analysis, the results of the present empirical study enable one

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[29] The reason why Polish serves as a relevant source is elaborated in Section 5.1.2.1.2.

to reflect on the leading theoretical frameworks offered by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Leech (1983).

With regard to speech acts such as compliment responses and Leech's Politeness Principle (1983), maxims of relevance to consider appear to be the Maxim of Agreement and Maxim of Modesty. When a person finds himself/herself in a conversation in which s/he receives a compliment from an interlocutor at one moment, the compliment may create an uncomfortable atmosphere for the complimentee, for s/he might feel confused and insecure how to respond to the compliment and yet retain a harmonious and pleasant interaction. The reason is that the complimentee risks being regarded as vainglorious and ostentatious, on the one hand. On the other hand, if a complimentee decides to evade or reject the compliment and stay bashful, s/he might be considered to violate social conventions and let go of preferences of having a smooth, agreeing interaction void of disagreements and situations that might cause conflicts and other outcomes that have a negative connotation.

Since complimenting behaviour is thought to be a positively affective speech act (Holmes, 1986, 1988), it goes without saying that one would like to support an interaction that is positively valued by sharing the same attitude with the interlocutor. Therefore, an utterance whose proposition is agreement and reflects being on the same side and cooperation would be considered to be the most suitable one. However, depending on various contextual factors that influence the interaction, and taking into consideration personal characteristics of a complimentee (e.g. shyness), paying a compliment might cause the complimentee to provide an answer that could be felt as a personification of the complimentee's character.

As regards this thesis, in terms of Leech's politeness model, it is possible to give an account of relative adherence to the Maxim of Agreement and Maxim of Modesty of British English and Serbian speakers when it comes to the speech act of responding to compliments. Bearing in mind the predominant proportion of compliment responses that are classified as acceptance responses in both data sets, it could be inferred that the Maxim of Agreement is the maxim governing the Politeness Principle in the complimenting event among both British English and Serbian native speakers.

However, the picture is not that black and white and it surely does not mean that expressions of modesty in interaction are absolutely absent. Looking at the micro-level taxonomy

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used for the analysis, there are sub-categories of the deflection/evasion and rejection strategies whose usage is possible to be interpreted as the complimentee's self-effacement and unpretentiousness. These sub-categories report a certain percentage of usage and therefore, this amount of compliment responses classified as deflection/evasion and rejection could be correlated with the Maxim of Modesty. Comparing the British English and Serbian results, one is able to make a rough inference on who adhere to which maxim more, an inference which is in no way generalizable and statistically supported. By way of contrasting the percentages for each macro-level category and for each micro-level category, British English speakers seem to adhere to the Maxim of Agreement more than Serbian speakers. Analyzing micro-level categories, results of the Serbian data set suggest a slightly more elevated usage of *shifting credit* and *legitimate evading,* strategies whose usage is possible to be interpreted as one's expression of modesty.

Taking into consideration the interpretation of the results in terms of Leech's maxims, some assumptions regarding British and Serbian culture might ensue. Being proportionally estimated as complying with the Maxim of Modesty more than British English participants, Serbian speakers could be thought to be more aware of the alter and more prone to lower credit to oneself i.e. reduce the ego. It could be argued as well that Serbian speakers are more inclined to denigrate themselves or in Leech's terms "to minimize self-praise and maximize self-dispraise" (Leech, 1983). Consequently, Serbian speakers show a greater tendency to experience unpleasant feelings and discomfort triggered by the feelings of bashfulness more frequently than British English speakers. From the perspective of British English speakers, it is possible to discuss their need and respect for autonomy and self-assertiveness in terms of the assumed frigidity and a greater distance between people, characteristics which are often ascribed to members of Western cultures.

However, these interpretations need to be taken with caution as they do not represent the findings of the present study with a statistical validity. It could be even stated that this study findings of British English and Serbian compliment responses bear a higher degree of resemblance than of difference. Furthermore, they need to be regarded as assumptions exclusively and as such could act as desiderata for further research.

Another set of theoretical considerations based on the findings on compliment response strategies in British English and Serbian is related to Brown and Levinson's concept of face-

threatening acts (FTAs). In spite of the fact that compliments are classified as a positive politeness strategy (Holmes, 1988) and thus could be thought as utterances that are a priori hardly to be regarded as FTAs, positively valued speech acts are as well reported to have the ability to infringe personal liberties or call into question their freedom of action (Brown & Levinson 1987: 65-66). The dilemma that complimentees face i.e. whether to accept a compliment or not, represents an act threatening to the speaker's positive face (self-image) (Brown & Levinson 1987: 65-68).

This study has provided an empirical basis for discussion on FTAs and a further contribution to the application of the Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987). The findings imply that compliments, although predominantly experienced as a positive affective speech act, can constitute FTAs for the very fact that certain number of compliments were deflected/evaded and rejected in both data sets.

When gender is taken into consideration, it can be discussed that there is no statistically significant difference between British men and women in perceiving a compliment as an FTA. However, Serbian compliment responses reveal that Serbian men and women show a statistically significant difference in employing macro-level strategies. Thus, it is possible to project this difference as a potential discrepancy between men and women in experiencing an FTA. Namely, the findings could suggest that men show greater proneness towards regarding a compliment as an FTA. This suggestion is congruent with Holmes' deduction from her own research, pointing out that men are more likely to perceive compliments as something "embarrassing and discomfiting" (Holmes 1988: 452). Although British men and women do not show a statistically significant difference and Serbian women and men do, a deeper level of contrasting and debating strengthens the proposition of Holmes (1988) that men are more inclined to view compliments as FTAs than women. By way of explanation, men, both British and Serbian, show much a greater preference to deflect a compliment by *changing topic* or reject a compliment by remaining *silent*, a preference for strategies that do repudiate the compliment in a more firm and definite way than other evasion strategies do.

Should the topics of compliments be pondered on in terms of FTAs, the findings on micro-level of this thesis could advocate that compliments on possessions are most likely to be perceived as FTAs[30]. The micro-level compliment response strategies whose usage can be assumed to

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[30] Here, possessions relate to alienable possessions exclusively

indicate a face threat to a complimentee, suggest that the highest adjusted residuals account for the possessions compliments. Even though, this hypothesis and other suppositions focused on the concept of FTAs are not statistically tested and thus cannot be accepted with certainty and validity, this assumption finds support in Holmes (1988: 463) who states that possession compliments are mostly inclined to be felt as FTAs. It is also noteworthy that those particular micro-level strategies show somewhat high values of adjusted residuals for character compliments in Serbian data set as well. This could be related to the already proposed Serbian greater adherence to the Maxim of Modesty and their assumed susceptibility to the feelings of embarrassment and discomfort when someone says kind words about them. Moreover, one may believe that Serbian speakers have a higher level of self-consciousness and lower self-esteem. Therefore, they could be thought to be more prone to self-criticism so that when they hear someone telling nice things to him/her, they find themselves overwhelmed and uncomfortable. Accordingly, they give a response which combined with the 'innate' modest nature, shows that the compliment was in fact negatively experienced.

6.4.3 Cross-cultural considerations

This thesis makes an attempt to contribute the rich body of work in cross-cultural communication. One of the study aims was to identify possible differences between British English and Serbian speakers in the ways they responded to compliments and eventually detect certain cultural values that would in turn account for the existence of those differences. Finally, by the means of the inferential statistics results, it has been determined that British English and Serbian speakers do not statistically significantly differ in responding to compliments and that despite the fact that two groups of participants belong to two different cultural systems, it still can be assumed that there is a global standard between these two groups in the use of compliment response strategies. This potential similarity could be argued to be due to a possible British and Serbian similar perception on compliments i.e. it may be the case that both cultures view compliments as positive and kind expressions uttered with best intentions. Furthermore, the assumption on the British – Serbian resemblance could be explained by the fact that the cultural division into British English and Serbian could be considered to be based on a nano-level culture classification and as such it is difficult to dig up any serious and major discrepancy when in fact both cultures may be thought to stem from the same one – the European culture.

6.4.4 Implications for further research

As we have seen, British English and Serbian participants of this study show that the compliment response strategies they have employed are relatively similar and the slight differences, noticed on a deeper level may explain certain cultural distinctions. So, it may be speculated that an interaction between British English and Serbian speakers may trigger some misunderstandings and communication breakdowns which could be debated to have their roots in those assumed cultural differences. This speculation is a potential issue worth further exploration. In addition to this, it would be beneficial if this research along with the same research questions and methodology is repeated, but with an augmented data set. Here, a future researcher is well-advised to consult power and effect size as statistical measures that would come handy to determining the size of a sample.

When it comes to pragmatic considerations on the Serbian language and linguistic politeness behaviour of Serbian speakers, further investigation of compliment responses with the main focus on politeness models (Leech, Brown and Levinson) can be pursued in Serbian language communities so that a broader and composite picture of the interaction of one's cultural system and linguistic behaviour is constructed and the applications of the politeness models are tested. In terms of responding to compliments in Serbian, it would be also useful to conduct research on this particular speech act using a different methodology technique so that those results could be compared to the results of the present study and checked if they still hold. Another desiderata regarding Serbian is to examine the speech act of paying compliments in order that more comprehensive considerations of the complimenting behaviour in Serbian are obtained. In this way, a better insight into Serbian linguistic behaviour would be provided and a potential influence of the cultural background would be further examined.

7. Conclusion

"The essence of effective cross-cultural communication is more to do with releasing the right responses than with sending the right messages."

Edward T. Hall, Understanding Cultural Differences

(cited in Carté and Fox, 2008: 12)

This thesis has attempted to investigate the speech act of responding to compliments among British English and Serbian native speakers. Additionally, the results of both speakers' groups have been contrasted and compared in order that findings on potential distinctions in this use of language are found and are correlated with some cultural values typically ascribed to British and Serbian cultural systems. In addition to this, the thesis has tried to examine the influence of gender, status and topic of compliments, factors that may exert impact on the course of interaction and one's language production.

It has been found that Brits generally perceive compliments as speech acts that are positive and with good intentions produced and as a consequence, they typically experience them with the same attitude. Therefore, a compliment response constituting acceptance has been discovered to be mostly used. The results of the British English data set have empirically confirmed that *thank you* or *thanks* is the predominant response and that this kind of response does actually suffice when a response to a compliment is to be given, as proposed by Johnson (1979: 43-44). Other findings that have taken into consideration factors of gender, social distance and topic, suggest that the ways Brits answered to compliments vary which results in the detection of certain tendencies and preferences of this group when it comes to strategies of compliment responses. However, overall, the acceptance compliment responses still prevail in all types of interaction i. e. interactions in which a complimenter and a complimentee show both difference and similarity with respect to gender and social status, and across four different topics of compliments.

By and large, findings of Serbian compliment responses bear a high degree of resemblance with the findings of British English compliment responses. Similarly, Serbs predominantly experience compliments as positively affective speech acts and as such, are mostly inclined to provide a response that suggests acceptance and appreciation. The more elaborate findings of the

influence of gender, status and topic are also congruent to a certain degree with the British English compliment response strategies this study has detected.

Various perspectives have been taken to account for the compliment response strategies exploited by British English and Serbian native speakers. A complex analysis of the responses has provided interpretations not only in terms of the taxonomy categorization, but also with respect to politeness models by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Leech (1983) and from the perspective of cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural pragmatics. Considering all these points of view, one may draw a conclusion that Brits and Serbs, apart from the slight differences detectable on a more profound level, use comparable and parallel compliment response strategies suggesting that in both cultures, compliments are perceived and experienced in a more or less analogous manner.

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9. Appendices

APPENDIX A: Discourse completion test – British English version

Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Compliment responses

Thank you very much for participating in the research for my Master's Thesis project. Your time and effort in providing the information is greatly appreciated.

Consent Form

I, _____ agree to participate in Olivera Mojovic's research study.

The purpose and nature of the study have been explained to me.

I am participating voluntarily.

I give permission for my data to be used only for the purposes of scientific analysis to which only the experimenter has access. I understand that anonymity and security of my personal information will be ensured in all phases of the research project.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without consequences, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.

Personal information:

Sex: M / F

Age: _____

Country of birth: _____

Cultural background: _____

Mother tongue: _____

DCT

Twelve situations in which you receive a compliment are described. Imagine that you are the complimentee in these situations and write down how you would most likely respond to them. If you have more than one possible response, that are socially adequate for the situations described, feel free to note down all of them. There are no wrong responses.

Situation 1:

A company that you are working for throws an annual cocktail party. You bought a new cocktail dress/tuxedo for this occasion. As you're entering the hotel where the party is being held, your boss (male) approaches you and after having greeted you, says: "You look stunning/handsome! The dress/tuxedo perfectly matches you! You're very stylish!"

Your response(s):

-

Situation 2:

You have just walked out of the hairdresser's. As you are walking down the street, you bump into one of your students (female). After the greetings exchange, she compliments your new look: "Oh you have a new haircut/You have shaved the beard! It looks great, I like it very much!"

Your response(s):

-

Situation 3:

You have recently started a new job. Your new colleagues regularly go out for a drink on Friday after work. You decided to join them last Friday and during conversation, one of your colleagues said to you: "You have beautiful eyes!"

Your response(s):

-

Situation 4:

You got Ray Ban sunglasses as a birthday present from your sister. You have just got back from a summer holiday in Turkey and you are back at work again. During lunch break, your colleagues are looking the photographs on your smartphone. Your superior (female) comes in and wants to see the photos as well. As she is flicking through, she says: "I like your glasses, they are superb!"

Your response(s):

-

Situation 5:

You are a supervisor of a project that needs to be submitted in two days. Since it is weekend and the company you are working for is closed, the only option for you and your team to work and finish the project before the deadline is to invite them into your new apartment. One of your assistants (male) likes your apartment and after the grand tour through it, he says: "The flat is amazing! It is very bright and spacious, but the kitchen is a real piece of art! Lucky you!"

Your response(s):

-

Situation 6:

You bought a tablet a few days ago and you are still trying out what it can do. When you want to take a picture, your friend, a passionate techie, notices immediately and after checking the tablet,

he says: "It's awesome, the functions are extraordinary and the screen is huge! It's high time I changed my tablet!"

Your response(s):

-

Situation 7:

You are in a tennis team and next month you are playing for your university on a state tournament. For the past few weeks, you have been working really hard and one day your coach (male) approaches you after finishing practice session and says: "I'm very satisfied with you, you've improved a lot both technically and physically. Keep going!"

Your response(s)

-

Situation 8:

You are a photographer and you are organizing your first independent exhibition. You are also a photography teacher and a lot of your students show up at the exhibition. One of them (female student) says to you: "The photos are marvelous! You have amazing skills to achieve sharpness and depth of field! Great job!"

Your response(s):

-

Situation 9:

You have invited your friends for a dinner to celebrate your promotion at work. For the occasion, you have prepared some really exotic and unusual dishes. One of your friends says to you after the dinner: "Everything was decorated beautifully and smelled so nice, I had to taste everything you prepared and everything was so delicious! You're better than Jamie Oliver!"

Your response(s):

-

Situation 10:

You are an assistant to a project manager (female). After a few successful projects, your manager has been awarded the best manager of the company. One day she says to you: "I would never get awarded, had it not been for you. You keep everything on track. It is your organizational skills that paved the way to the success of the projects."

Your response(s):

-

Situation 11:

You are working in a university library. One international freshman (male) walks in and asks for a book. You direct him to a computer where he can find the book by himself. However, he seems confused, because he doesn't know how to use the computer program. You approach him and patiently explain to him how it functions and finally find the book for him. At the exit, the student says to you: "You're very helpful and kind. It meant a lot to me, because I'm new at the university."

Your response(s):

-

Situation 12:

A friend of yours comes by unexpectedly. As he/she enters your apartment, he/she starts to cry and ramble about the break-up with his/her partner. You listen to him/her patiently, comforting him/her and trying to make him/her feel better. After some time, he/she hugs you and says: "I'm so glad to have you. You're such a good listener and great friend!"

Your response(s):

-

APPENDIX B: Discourse completion test – Serbian version

Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Odgovori na komplimente

Hvala Vam što učestvujete u istraživačkom projektu mog master rada. Vaše vreme koje ulažete kako biste dali bitne podatke se veoma ceni.

Pristanak na učešće u istraživanju

Ja, _____ pristajem da učestvujem u istraživačkom projektu Olivere Mojovic.

Svrha i način istrživačkog postupka su mi objašnjeni i ja ih u potpunosti razumem.

Učestvujem dobrovoljno.

Dajem dozvolu da se moji lični podaci koriste samo u okviru istraživačko-naučne analize kojoj samo vođa istraživanja ima pristup. Anonimnost i bezbednost mojih podataka su mi zagarantovani u svim fazama ovog istraživačkog projekta.

Svestan/Svesna sam da mogu da odustanem od učestvovanja u projektu bez ikakvih posledica bilo kada u toku učešća u istraživačkom projektu.

Lični podaci:

Pol: M / Ž

Starost: _____

Zemlja rođenja: _____

Kultura u kojoj ste odgajeni: _____

Maternji jezik: _____

DCT

Dvanaest situacija u kojima je dat kompliment su opisane. Zamislite da ste Vi ta osoba koja u ovim situacijam dobija kompliment i zapišite kako biste Vi najprikladnije i najverovatnije odgovorili na dati kompliment. Ako imate više od jednog odgovora za koje smatrate da su odgovarajuci i koje bi Vi dali, zapišite sve moguće. Nema netačnih odgovora.

Situacija 1:

Firma u kojoj radite organizuje godišnju zabavu. Za ovu priliku, Vi ste kupili novu haljinu/smoking. Dok ulazite u hotel gde se priređuje zabava, Vaš šef Vam prilazi i nakon pozdrava kaže: „Izgledaš sjajno! Ta haljina/smoking ti odlično pristaje, baš imaš stila!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 2:

Samo što ste izašli iz frizerskog salona. Dok šetate, slučajno srećete jednu od Vaših učenica/studentkinja. Nakon što ste pozdravili jedno drugo, ona Vam daje kompliment: "Imate novu frizuru/Obrijali ste se! Baš Vam lepo stoji, jako mi se sviđa!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 3:

Skoro ste počeli da radite u jednoj kompaniji. Vaše nove kolege redovno izlaze na piće petkom posle posla. Prošlog petka ste odlučili da im se pridružite i u toku priče, jedan kolega/koleginica Vam je rekao/la: „Imaš prelepe oči!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 4:

Dobili ste Ray Ban naočare za rođendan od sestre. Vratili ste se sa letovanja u Turskoj i krenuli ste ponovo da radite. Za vreme pauze za ručak, kolege gledaju Vaše fotografije na telefonu. Vaša šefica se pojavljuje i želi da vidi slike takođe. Dok ih gleda, kaže: "Sviđaju mi se tvoje naočare, fenomenalne su!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 5:

Vi ste supervizor projekta koji treba da se preda za dva dana. S obzirom na to da je vikend i da kompanija gde radite je zatvorena, jedino što Vam preostaje jeste da pozovete kod sebe, u novi stan, svoj tim kolega da radite kako biste završili projekt pre roka. Jednom Vašem asistentu se jako svideo Vaš stan i posle razgledanja, on Vam kaže: "Stan je neverovatan! Baš je svetao i prostran, ali od svega mi se najviše svidja kuhinja, pravo remek-delo! Blago Vama!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 6:

Kupili ste pre nekoliko dana tablet i još uvek isprobavate kakve sve funkcije ima. Kada ste hteli da fotografišete nešto, Vaš prijatelj/projateljica, koji/a se jako dobro razume u tehniku odmah primećuje Vaš novi tablet i nakon što ga je pogledao/la kaže: "Odličan je! Ima sjajne funkcije i ekran je ogroman! Krajnje je vreme da i ja kupim novi tablet!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 7:

Trenirate tenis i sledećeg meseca sa svojim timom predstavljate Vaš univerzitet na državnom takmičenju. Već nekoliko sedmica vežbate jako puno i jednog dana posle treninga Vam prilazi Vaš trener i kaže: "Veoma sam zadovoljan tobom, poboljšao/la si kondiciju i tehnički si napredovao/la! Samo tako nastavi!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i)

-

Situacija 8:

Bavite se fotografijom i organizujete Vašu prvu samostalnu izložbu. Takođe, držite kurs fotografije i dosta Vaših učenika se pojavilo na izložbi. Jedna Vaša učenica Vam kaže: "Fotografije su izuzetne! Posedujete izvanredne sposobnosti za jasnoću detalja i izražavanje dubine kadra! Svaka Vam čast!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 9:

Pozvali ste prijatelje da proslavite to što su Vas unapredili na poslu. Za tu priliku, Vi ste pripremili neka jako egzotična i nesvakidišnja jela za naše podneblje. Jedan od Vaših prijatelja

Vam kaže: „Sve je aranžirano perfektno i miriše izvrsno, tako da sam ja morao/la da probam sve i sve je prste da poližeš! Džejmi Oliver može da ti pozavidi na umeću!"

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 10:

Asistent ste projektnoj menadžerki. Posle nekoliko jako uspešnih projekata, ona je dobila nagradu za najboljeg menadžera u okviru kompanije u kojoj radite. Jednog dana Vam ona kaže: "Da nije tebe, nikada ne bih dobila nagradu. Ti sve držiš pod konac i upravo je tvoja odlična organizacija ono što je utrlo put svim prethodnim uspešnim projektima."

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 11:

Radite u biblioteci jednog univerziteta. Jedan internacionalni brucoš (muško) ulazi u biblioteku i traži neku knjigu. Upućujete ga na kompjuter koji studenti koriste kako bi sami našli knjige koje žele i videli gde se one nalaze. Međutim, čini Vam se da je ovaj brucoš zbunjen, jer ne zna kako se koristi taj program za pretraživanje kniga u biblioteci. Prilazite mu i strpljivo mu objašnjavate kako sve funkcioniše i na kraju mu Vi nalazite knjigu. Na izlazu, on Vam se obraća: "Veoma ste ljubazni. Puno mi je značilo što ste mi pomogli, jer ja sam nov na univerzitetu."

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

Situacija 12:

Vaš/a prijatelj/ica dolazi kod Vas neočekivano. Kako ulazi u stan, počinje da priča o raskidu sa partnerom i Vi primećujete suze na njegovom/njenom licu. Slušate pažljivo, pokušavajući da pružite utehu i da ga/je orasploži. Posle nekog vremena, on/a Vas grli i kaže: "Srećna sam što imam tebe. Divan si prijatelj, uvek mogu da ti se poverim."

Vaš(i) odgovor(i):

-

APPENDIX C: Contingency table of micro-level strategies and informants' gender (British English data)

Micro_level * Gender_informant Crosstabulation

			Gender_informant		Total
			Male	Female	
Micro_level	Praise upgrade	Count	9	9	18

		% within Micro_level	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	2.5%	2.3%	2.4%
		Adjusted Residual	.2	-.2	
Agreement	Count		13	23	36
	% within Micro_level		36.1%	63.9%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		3.7%	6.0%	4.9%
	Adjusted Residual		-1.4	1.4	
Return (return)	Count		25	17	42
	% within Micro_level		59.5%	40.5%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		7.1%	4.4%	5.7%
	Adjusted Residual		1.6	-1.6	
Return (reciprocate)	Count		6	4	10
	% within Micro_level		60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		1.7%	1.0%	1.4%
	Adjusted Residual		.8	-.8	
Offer	Count		15	13	28
	% within Micro_level		53.6%	46.4%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		4.2%	3.4%	3.8%
	Adjusted Residual		.6	-.6	
Appreciation (token)	Count		60	94	154
	% within Micro_level		39.0%	61.0%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		17.0%	24.4%	20.8%
	Adjusted Residual		-2.5	2.5	
Appreciation (token + comment)	Count		85	86	171
	% within Micro_level		49.7%	50.3%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		24.1%	22.3%	23.1%
	Adjusted Residual		.6	-.6	
Appreciation (kiss/hug)	Count		1	0	1
	% within Micro_level		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		0.3%	0.0%	0.1%
	Adjusted Residual		1.0	-1.0	
Joke	Count		18	16	34
	% within Micro_level		52.9%	47.1%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		5.1%	4.1%	4.6%
	Adjusted Residual		.6	-.6	

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Laughter	Count		1	1	2
	% within Micro_level		50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
	Adjusted Residual		.1	-.1	
Shft credit (to the complimenter)	Count		1	4	5
	% within Micro_level		20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		0.3%	1.0%	0.7%
	Adjusted Residual		-1.2	1.2	
Shift credit (to a 3rd party)	Count		5	4	9
	% within Micro_level		55.6%	44.4%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		1.4%	1.0%	1.2%
	Adjusted Residual		.5	-.5	
Question	Count		9	7	16
	% within Micro_level		56.3%	43.8%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		2.5%	1.8%	2.2%
	Adjusted Residual		.7	-.7	
Comment history	Count		19	16	35
	% within Micro_level		54.3%	45.7%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		5.4%	4.1%	4.7%
	Adjusted Residual		.8	-.8	
Topic shift	Count		11	6	17
	% within Micro_level		64.7%	35.3%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		3.1%	1.6%	2.3%
	Adjusted Residual		1.4	-1.4	
Legitimate evade	Count		16	17	33
	% within Micro_level		48.5%	51.5%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		4.5%	4.4%	4.5%
	Adjusted Residual		.1	-.1	
Disagreement	Count		10	15	25
	% within Micro_level		40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		2.8%	3.9%	3.4%
	Adjusted Residual		-.8	.8	
Silence	Count		6	0	6
	% within Micro_level		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		1.7%	0.0%	0.8%

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		Adjusted Residual	2.6	-2.6	
	Downgrade	Count	28	41	69
		% within Micro_level	40.6%	59.4%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	7.9%	10.6%	9.3%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.3	1.3	
	Combination	Count	15	13	28
		% within Micro_level	53.6%	46.4%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	4.2%	3.4%	3.8%
		Adjusted Residual	.6	-.6	
Total		Count	353	386	739
		% within Micro_level	47.8%	52.2%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

APPENDIX D: Chi-square goodness-of-fit test for the variable "status_informant" (British English data)

Status_informant

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Lower	247	246.3	.7
Higher	241	246.3	-5.3
Equal	251	246.3	4.7
Total	739		

Test Statistics

	Status_informant
Chi-Square	.206[a]
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.902

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 246.3.

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APPENDIX E: Contingency table of micro-level strategies and informants' status (British English data)

Micro_level * Status_informant Crosstabulation

			Status_informant			
			Lower	Higher	Equal	Total
Micro_level	Praise upgrade	Count	3	2	13	18
		% within Micro_level	16.7%	11.1%	72.2%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	1.2%	0.8%	5.2%	2.4%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.5	-2.0	3.5	
	Agreement	Count	9	16	11	36
		% within Micro_level	25.0%	44.4%	30.6%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	3.6%	6.6%	4.4%	4.9%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.1	1.6	-.4	
	Return (return)	Count	24	5	13	42
		% within Micro_level	57.1%	11.9%	31.0%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	9.7%	2.1%	5.2%	5.7%
		Adjusted Residual	3.4	-2.9	-.4	
	Return (reciprocate)	Count	6	4	0	10
		% within Micro_level	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	2.4%	1.7%	0.0%	1.4%
		Adjusted Residual	1.8	.5	-2.3	
	Offer	Count	0	14	14	28
		% within Micro_level	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	0.0%	5.8%	5.6%	3.8%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.8	2.0	1.8	
	Appreciation (token)	Count	59	61	34	154
		% within Micro_level	38.3%	39.6%	22.1%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	23.9%	25.3%	13.5%	20.8%
		Adjusted Residual	1.4	2.1	-3.5	
	Appreciation (token + comment)	Count	81	68	22	171
		% within Micro_level	47.4%	39.8%	12.9%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	32.8%	28.2%	8.8%	23.1%
		Adjusted Residual	4.4	2.3	-6.6	
	Appreciation (kiss/hug)	Count	0	0	1	1
		% within Micro_level	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	% within Status_informant	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.1%
	Adjusted Residual	-.7	-.7	1.4	
Joke	Count	16	4	14	34
	% within Micro_level	47.1%	11.8%	41.2%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	6.5%	1.7%	5.6%	4.6%
	Adjusted Residual	1.7	-2.7	.9	
Laughter	Count	0	0	2	2
	% within Micro_level	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.3%
	Adjusted Residual	-1.0	-1.0	2.0	
Shft credit (to the complimenter)	Count	5	0	0	5
	% within Micro_level	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
	Adjusted Residual	3.2	-1.6	-1.6	
Shift credit (to a 3rd party)	Count	3	1	5	9
	% within Micro_level	33.3%	11.1%	55.6%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	1.2%	0.4%	2.0%	1.2%
	Adjusted Residual	.0	-1.4	1.4	
Question	Count	4	3	9	16
	% within Micro_level	25.0%	18.8%	56.3%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	1.6%	1.2%	3.6%	2.2%
	Adjusted Residual	-.7	-1.2	1.9	
Comment history	Count	15	8	12	35
	% within Micro_level	42.9%	22.9%	34.3%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	6.1%	3.3%	4.8%	4.7%
	Adjusted Residual	1.2	-1.3	.0	
Topic shift	Count	2	3	12	17
	% within Micro_level	11.8%	17.6%	70.6%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	0.8%	1.2%	4.8%	2.3%
	Adjusted Residual	-1.9	-1.3	3.2	
Legitimate evade	Count	4	6	23	33
	% within Micro_level	12.1%	18.2%	69.7%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	1.6%	2.5%	9.2%	4.5%
	Adjusted Residual	-2.7	-1.8	4.4	
Disagreement	Count	3	5	17	25

		% within Micro_level	12.0%	20.0%	68.0%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	1.2%	2.1%	6.8%	3.4%
		Adjusted Residual	-2.3	-1.4	3.7	
	Silence	Count	0	2	4	6
		% within Micro_level	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	0.0%	0.8%	1.6%	0.8%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.7	.0	1.7	
	Downgrade	Count	5	27	37	69
		% within Micro_level	7.2%	39.1%	53.6%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	2.0%	11.2%	14.7%	9.3%
		Adjusted Residual	-4.8	1.2	3.6	
	Combination	Count	8	12	8	28
		% within Micro_level	28.6%	42.9%	28.6%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	3.2%	5.0%	3.2%	3.8%
		Adjusted Residual	-.6	1.2	-.6	
Total		Count	247	241	251	739
		% within Micro_level	33.4%	32.6%	34.0%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

APPENDIX F: Chi-square test of independence of macro-level strategies and topics of compliments (British English data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Topic Crosstabulation

Count

		Topic				
		appearance	possession	ability	character	Total
Macro_level_adjusted	Acceptance	169	113	137	77	496
	Deflection/Evasion	17	57	19	22	115
	Rejection	13	7	19	61	100
	Combination	1	2	2	23	28
Total		200	179	177	183	739

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	193.556ª	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	172.868	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	93.630	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	739		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum

expected count is 6.71.

APPENDIX G: Contingency table of micro-level strategies and informants' gender (Serbian data)

Micro_level * Gender_informant Crosstabulation

			Gender_informant		
			Male	Female	Total
Micro_level	Praise upgrade	Count	8	11	19
		% within Micro_level	42.1%	57.9%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	2.3%	2.8%	2.6%
		Adjusted Residual	-.4	.4	
	Agreement	Count	14	26	40
		% within Micro_level	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	4.1%	6.7%	5.5%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.5	1.5	
	Return (return)	Count	15	12	27
		% within Micro_level	55.6%	44.4%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	4.4%	3.1%	3.7%
		Adjusted Residual	.9	-.9	
	Return (reciprocate)	Count	5	5	10
		% within Micro_level	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	1.5%	1.3%	1.4%
		Adjusted Residual	.2	-.2	
	Offer	Count	6	3	9
		% within Micro_level	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	1.7%	0.8%	1.2%
		Adjusted Residual	1.2	-1.2	

Appreciation (token)	Count		71	105	176
	% within Micro_level		40.3%	59.7%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		20.7%	26.9%	24.0%
	Adjusted Residual		-2.0	2.0	
Appreciation (token + comment)	Count		83	108	191
	% within Micro_level		43.5%	56.5%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		24.2%	27.7%	26.1%
	Adjusted Residual		-1.1	1.1	
Joke	Count		9	4	13
	% within Micro_level		69.2%	30.8%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		2.6%	1.0%	1.8%
	Adjusted Residual		1.6	-1.6	
Laughter	Count		2	0	2
	% within Micro_level		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		0.6%	0.0%	0.3%
	Adjusted Residual		1.5	-1.5	
Shift credit (to the complimenter)	Count		14	7	21
	% within Micro_level		66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		4.1%	1.8%	2.9%
	Adjusted Residual		1.9	-1.9	
Shift credit (to a 3rd party)	Count		7	4	11
	% within Micro_level		63.6%	36.4%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		2.0%	1.0%	1.5%
	Adjusted Residual		1.1	-1.1	
Question	Count		8	6	14
	% within Micro_level		57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		2.3%	1.5%	1.9%
	Adjusted Residual		.8	-.8	
Comment history	Count		14	7	21
	% within Micro_level		66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		4.1%	1.8%	2.9%
	Adjusted Residual		1.9	-1.9	
Topic shift	Count		15	7	22
	% within Micro_level		68.2%	31.8%	100.0%
	% within Gender_informant		4.4%	1.8%	3.0%

		Adjusted Residual	2.0	-2.0	
	Legitimate evade	Count	16	22	38
		% within Micro_level	42.1%	57.9%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	4.7%	5.6%	5.2%
		Adjusted Residual	-.6	.6	
	Disagreement	Count	12	18	30
		% within Micro_level	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	3.5%	4.6%	4.1%
		Adjusted Residual	-.8	.8	
	Silence	Count	5	1	6
		% within Micro_level	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	1.5%	0.3%	0.8%
		Adjusted Residual	1.8	-1.8	
	Downgrade	Count	30	29	59
		% within Micro_level	50.8%	49.2%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	8.7%	7.4%	8.0%
		Adjusted Residual	.7	-.7	
	Combination	Count	9	15	24
		% within Micro_level	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	2.6%	3.8%	3.3%
		Adjusted Residual	-.9	.9	
Total		Count	343	390	733
		% within Micro_level	46.8%	53.2%	100.0%
		% within Gender_informant	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

APPENDIX H: Chi-square goodness-of-fit test for the variable "status_informant" (Serbian data)

Status_informant

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Lower	242	244.3	-2.3
Higher	241	244.3	-3.3
Equal	250	244.3	5.7
Total	733		

Test Statistics

	Status_informant
Chi-Square	.199a
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.905

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected
frequencies less than 5. The
minimum expected cell
frequency is 244.3.

APPENDIX I: Contingency table of micro-level strategies and informants' status (Serbian data)

Micro_level * Status_informant Crosstabulation

			Status_informant			
			Lower	Higher	Equal	Total
Micro_level	Praise upgrade	Count	9	2	8	19
		% within Micro_level	47.4%	10.5%	42.1%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	3.7%	0.8%	3.2%	2.6%
		Adjusted Residual	1.3	-2.1	.7	
	Agreement	Count	19	9	12	40
		% within Micro_level	47.5%	22.5%	30.0%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	7.9%	3.7%	4.8%	5.5%
		Adjusted Residual	2.0	-1.4	-.6	
	Return (return)	Count	14	1	12	27
		% within Micro_level	51.9%	3.7%	44.4%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	5.8%	0.4%	4.8%	3.7%
		Adjusted Residual	2.1	-3.3	1.2	
	Return (reciprocate)	Count	4	3	3	10
		% within Micro_level	40.0%	30.0%	30.0%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	1.7%	1.2%	1.2%	1.4%
		Adjusted Residual	.5	-.2	-.3	
	Offer	Count	0	5	4	9
		% within Micro_level	0.0%	55.6%	44.4%	100.0%
		% within Status_informant	0.0%	2.1%	1.6%	1.2%
		Adjusted Residual	-2.1	1.5	.7	

Appreciation (token)	Count	56	76	44	176
	% within Micro_level	31.8%	43.2%	25.0%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	23.1%	31.5%	17.6%	24.0%
	Adjusted Residual	-.4	3.3	-2.9	
Appreciation (token + comment)	Count	82	74	35	191
	% within Micro_level	42.9%	38.7%	18.3%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	33.9%	30.7%	14.0%	26.1%
	Adjusted Residual	3.4	2.0	-5.4	
Joke	Count	0	1	12	13
	% within Micro_level	0.0%	7.7%	92.3%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	0.0%	0.4%	4.8%	1.8%
	Adjusted Residual	-2.6	-2.0	4.5	
Laughter	Count	0	0	2	2
	% within Micro_level	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.3%
	Adjusted Residual	-1.0	-1.0	2.0	
Shift credit (to the complimenter)	Count	20	0	1	21
	% within Micro_level	95.2%	0.0%	4.8%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	8.3%	0.0%	0.4%	2.9%
	Adjusted Residual	6.2	-3.3	-2.9	
Shift credit (to a 3rd party)	Count	2	4	5	11
	% within Micro_level	18.2%	36.4%	45.5%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	0.8%	1.7%	2.0%	1.5%
	Adjusted Residual	-1.1	.2	.8	
Question	Count	4	1	9	14
	% within Micro_level	28.6%	7.1%	64.3%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	1.7%	0.4%	3.6%	1.9%
	Adjusted Residual	-.4	-2.1	2.4	
Comment history	Count	4	10	7	21
	% within Micro_level	19.0%	47.6%	33.3%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	1.7%	4.1%	2.8%	2.9%
	Adjusted Residual	-1.4	1.5	-.1	
Topic shift	Count	2	9	11	22
	% within Micro_level	9.1%	40.9%	50.0%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	0.8%	3.7%	4.4%	3.0%

		Adjusted Residual	-2.4	.8	1.6	
Legitimate evade	Count	5	8	25	38
	% within Micro_level	13.2%	21.1%	65.8%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	2.1%	3.3%	10.0%	5.2%
	Adjusted Residual	-2.7	-1.6	4.2	
Disagreement	Count	5	5	20	30
	% within Micro_level	16.7%	16.7%	66.7%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	2.1%	2.1%	8.0%	4.1%
	Adjusted Residual	-1.9	-1.9	3.8	
Silence	Count	1	2	3	6
	% within Micro_level	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	0.4%	0.8%	1.2%	0.8%
	Adjusted Residual	-.9	.0	.8	
Downgrade	Count	5	20	34	59
	% within Micro_level	8.5%	33.9%	57.6%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	2.1%	8.3%	13.6%	8.0%
	Adjusted Residual	-4.2	.2	4.0	
Combination	Count	10	11	3	24
	% within Micro_level	41.7%	45.8%	12.5%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	4.1%	4.6%	1.2%	3.3%
	Adjusted Residual	.9	1.4	-2.3	
Total	Count	242	241	250	733
	% within Micro_level	33.0%	32.9%	34.1%	100.0%
	% within Status_informant	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

APPENDIX J: Chi-square test of independence of macro-level strategies and topics of compliments (Serbian data)

Macro_level_adjusted * Topic Crosstabulation

Count

		Topic				Total
		appearance	possession	ability	character	
Macro_level_adjusted	Acceptance	159	112	138	79	488
	Deflection/Evasion	11	46	24	46	127
	Rejection	14	16	16	49	95
	Combinations	2	8	3	10	23
Total		186	182	181	184	733

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	100.645[a]	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	100.931	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	48.549	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	733		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.68.

Zusammenfassung

In der Wahrnehmung von Höflichkeit und insbesondere Komplimenten spielt der kulturelle Hintergrund eine entscheidende Rolle (Holmes, 1988; Watts, 1992; Yuan, 2001; Yu, 2003). Nach Brown und Levinson (1978: 75) können Komplimente als positive Sprechakte und gesichtbedrohende Akte funktionieren. Darüber hinaus wird behauptet, dass durch die Faktoren Geschlecht und Status die beiden Themen Komplimente und Komplimentantworten (KA) wesentlich beeinflusst werden (Wolfson, 1983; Holmes, 1988). Diese Masterarbeit zielt auf die Unterscheidung von interkulturellen Variationen und wahrscheinlichkeitsbasierten Mustern von KA unter den Sprecherinnen des britischen Englisch und Serbisch ab. Zwei Datensätze wurden mit Hilfe eines Diskursvervollständigungstests, welcher zwölf Situationseinstellungen abbildet in denen Komplimente auf Aussehen, Besitz, Fähigkeit und Persönlichkeit auftreten, gesammelt. Die statistische Analyse liefert deskriptive Statistikergebnisse in Bezug auf KA-Strategien auf Makro- und Mikroebene, d.h. diese Ergebnisse demonstrieren die KA-Strategien für *Akzeptanz*, *Ablehnung* und *Ausweichen* und zeigen schließlich, ob die Maxime der Akzeptanz mehr als die Maxime der Bescheidenheit eingehalten wurde. Darüber hinaus zeigt inferentielle Statistik, ob es einen globalen Standard in der Verwendung von KA zwischen serbisch und britisch-englisch Sprechenden gibt. Andere Hypothesen umfassen die Prüfung der Signifikanz der Variablen von Geschlecht, Status und Kompliment Themen. Diese Masterarbeit hat der Studie des Kompliment Verhaltens einen neuen Blickwinkel hinzugefügt und die Ergebnisse zeigen, ob ein universelles Modell der KA zwischen britischen und serbischen Kulturen gezeichnet werden kann.

Schlüsselwörter: Kompliment, Komplimentantwort, Höflichkeit, interkulturell, Geschlecht, Status, Serbisch, Britisches Englisch