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Language and Gender – Politeness Strategies in Language and Gender Differences

Jezik i rod – Strategije učtivosti u jeziku i rodne razlike

Final paper

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ABSTRACT

This survey examines the usage of politeness strategies of the native speakers of the Bosnian language. The sociolinguistic goal of this paper is to examine the impact of the non-linguistic factor of gender on the choice of politeness strategies of male and female speakers when confronted with face-threatening acts in everyday-life situations, such as making requests, asking a favour and apologizing. Other factors or sociological variables such as social power and social distance were taken into consideration as well since they also inevitably affect the use of language and the speaker's level of politeness. Linguistic corpus used for the research is gathered from the native speakers of the Bosnian language.

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is used as the main theoretical framework for analysing and interpreting the collected data. Therefore this theory, including very significant terms of (positive/negative) face and politeness strategies (bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record) are extensively discussed in the introductory chapters including the very terms of politeness and gender. A questionnaire that was designed for the purposes of this research was based on Discourse Completion Test, and it contained fifteen hypothetical situations. It was distributed to 25 females and 25 males. The overall results showed that the strategy of negative politeness is the most common strategy used by both male and female speakers, followed by positive politeness and bald on record strategy. Negative politeness is most commonly used in performing the speech acts of making a request and asking a favour, whereas more direct strategies of positive politeness and bald on record are found as often as negative politeness in performing the speech act of apologizing.

This paper emphasizes the importance of studying politeness related to very important role of pragmatics across different languages, cultures and societies because it is widely known and accepted that a competent speaker must be familiar with linguistic as well as non-linguistic (i.e. social and cultural) rules or norms of one society in order to be able to successfully communicate with other people.

Key words: politeness, gender, politeness strategies, face, speech acts, request, asking a favour, apologizing, face-threatening acts, social distance, social power

APSTRAKT

Ovaj rad se bavi istraživanjem upotrebe strategija učtivosti izvornih govornika bosanskog jezika. Sociolingvistički cilj ovog rada jeste istražiti da li i u kojoj mjeri ekstralingvistički faktor roda utiče na izbor govornika kada izvršavaju činove ugrožavanja obraza poput izvinjenja, traženja usluge i zahtjeva. S obzirom na to da je faktor društvene moći također usko povezan sa ovim fenomenom, i on je uzet u razmatranje kada su se analizirali dobijeni rezultati.

U uvodnim poglavljima ovog rada su predstavljeni pojam učtivosti i pojam roda. Samu srž teorijskog uporišta ovog rada čini teorija Penelopi Braun i Stivena Levinsona (Penelope Brown & Stephen Levinson), te je zbog toga ovaj model detaljno objašnjen skupa sa veoma značajnim pojmovima pozitivnog/negativnog obraza kao i osnovnih strategija učtivosti (strategije nemodificirane direktnosti, strategije pozitivne učtivosti, strategije negativne učtivosti i strategije nekonvencionalizirane učtivosti). Jezički korpus na kome je sprovedeno istraživanje je prikupljen putem sociolingvističkog upitnika koji se sastoji od petnaest hipotetičkih situacija. Upitnik je jednako distribuiran među ispitanicima (25) i ispitanicama (25). Rezultati su pokazali da govornici najčešće upotrebljavaju strategiju negativne učtivosti, nakon koje su tu i strategija pozitivne učtivosti kao i diretna strategija. Ispitanici su najčešće koristili strategiju negativne učtivosti kada je su pitanju govorni činovi traženja usluge i zatjeva, dok su direktnije strategije dolazile do izražaja pri govornom činu izvinjenja.

Rad ističe važnost proučavanja strategija učtivosti u vezi sa veoma bitnom ulogom pragmatike koja predstavlja sastavni dio lingvističke kompetencije, jer kompetentan govornik mora da bude upoznat ne samo sa lingvističkim već i društveno-kulturološkim pravilima jedne zajednice kako bi mogao na prikladan način ostvariti komunikaciju sa drugim govornicima.

Ključne riječi: učtivost, rod, strategije učtivosti, obraz (fejs), govorni činovi, zahtjev, traženje usluge, izvinjenje, činovi ugrožavanja obraza, društvena distanca, društvena moć

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1. Introduction

The scope of the linguistic theory is not limited to what Chomsky calls 'linguistic competence' anymore. Numerous studies have shown that it is not possible to understand the nature of language and language as a whole without paying attention to the way language is being used in interaction. Just like Geoffrey Leech states (2014, p. 4), discourse analysis refuses to accept the limitation of linguistics to grammar; conversational analysis and sociolinguistics emphasize the importance of the social dimension of language study, and pragmatics pays attention to meaning in use, rather than meaning in the abstract. Thus we all witness a change of huge importance in the course of linguistic study which underlies a shift from Chomsky's 'competence' to what he calls 'linguistic performance'. This can also be interpreted in terms of the difference between the formalist and functionalist paradigms. One of the main differences between the two paradigms is that formalism observes language as primarily mental phenomenon as opposed to functionalists' observation of language as primarily societal phenomenon. But nowadays many linguists share the belief that language use is as important as the grammar itself within linguistics. Accordingly, it cannot be denied that language is both a psychological and social phenomenon.

One of the major elements of everyday communication is politeness which seems to be appreciated over almost everything else in this day and age. A person may speak correctly in terms of grammar but if they are rude then there is a huge probability that nobody will want to talk to them. This problem appears to be even bigger when the language we are using at a particular occasion is not our first or native language, and thus we are facing many more difficulties in knowing which expressions are (im)polite and/or when to use them.

Various dictionaries offer different definitions of politeness. Thus for example, *Oxford's Advanced Learner's Dictionary of current English* (2010, p. 1132) says polite means 'having or showing good manners and respect for feelings of others', while its opposite term 'impolite' is defined as 'socially correct but not always sincere'. The online *Cambridge Dictionary* says that 'behaving in a way that is socially correct and shows understanding of and care for other people's feelings' is the meaning of the adjective polite, and then again emphasizes that this kind of behaviour is 'socially correct rather than friendly'. Thus the polite society or company would consist of the 'people who have been taught how to behave in a socially correct way'. We can notice that it is mainly the respect and keeping good

relations with others that is common to various dictionary entries for polite/politeness. But the lay members of the society can probably agree that the impolite behaviour is the one that can be evaluated as rude, disrespectful, inconsiderate and not possessing good manners or simply not showing them at a particular occasion. This is, of course, in sharp contrast with the folk theory of what people see as polite behaviour. Another very important fact that we cannot help but notice here is that the noun society as well as the adjective social constantly appears when defining politeness. This tells us a lot about the highly complex nature of this phenomenon which can be viewed from at least two different perspectives, i.e. linguistic and socio-cultural perspective.

An enormous amount of empirical research regarding these different aspects of the phenomenon of linguistic politeness has been amassed in a wide range of diverse cultures over the last fifty years. The major focus or centre of attention of this and many other studies is the relation of the politeness and gender, i.e. the polite behaviours of men and women, which represents only one aspect of this phenomenon. Understanding the way people perceive politeness and make use of it in their everyday interaction can be a big step towards bridging the communication gap between men and women.

This research is a small-scale, quantitative survey and its sociolinguistic goal is to examine the impact of the non-linguistic factor of gender on the choice of politeness strategies of male and female speakers when confronted with face-threatening acts in everyday-life situations, such as making requests, asking a favour and apologizing. Other factors or sociological variables, such as social power and social distance, were taken into consideration as well since they also inevitably affect the use of language and the speaker's level of politeness.

This paper will or will not confirm the following hypotheses:

H1: Men and women use different politeness strategies, i.e. strategies which differ in relation to the degree of directness, in the same situational context.

H2: Both male and female participants use more direct strategies when in the position related to greater social power.

The instrument used for the purposes of this research was in the form of a questionnaire. It is formed on the basis of Discourse Completion Test, which is widely used for sociolinguistic research studies. Jasna Popović at the University of Belgrade developed her

own questionnaire for the purpose of writing her doctoral dissertation on the topic of Politeness strategies in Serbian and English (2017). She decided to keep the basic concept of DCTs and thus preserved the hypothetical situations which are characteristic for such tests. We decided to use Popović's questionnaire as the foundation for developing our own questionnaire.

The paper is organized into six chapters. The very terms of politeness and gender are discussed in the second chapter of this paper. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is used as the main theoretical framework for the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. Therefore this theory, including very significant terms of (positive/negative) face, face-threatening acts (FTAs) and politeness strategies (bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record) are extensively discussed in the following chapter 3. The next chapter is the longest one since it deals with the research itself. It describes the research design and methodology used to investigate the research hypotheses, instrument, corpus, data collection process, data analysis method and ends with the results and discussion section. Chapter 5 represents a brief comparison of Bosnian and English community where the choice of politeness strategies of native speakers of Bosnian (i.e. the results obtained in this research) is compared to the choice of politeness strategies of native speakers of English (i.e. the results that Jasna Popović obtained in her doctoral dissertation research). The conclusions drawn on differences in the choice of strategy within a defined social context and the influence of the various non-linguistic variables (gender, social power, social distance, rate of imposition) on the directness of strategies are presented in the final chapter of the paper.

2. Language and gender

Even though the term 'gender' is typically used to refer to male – female distinction, this is also a social concept that was defined by many sociolinguists. Many people still use the terms 'gender' and 'sex' interchangeably, as they are not familiar with or aware of the difference in sense (i.e. meaning) that exists between the two. Ronald Wardhaugh (2006) explains this difference as follows:

Sex is to a very large extent biologically determined whereas gender is a social construct (but still one heavily grounded in sex, as we can see in recent publications that use the term 'sexuality',

e.g., Kulick, 2003, and Cameron and Kulick, 2003) involving the whole gamut of genetic, psychological, social, and cultural differences between males and females. (p. 315)

In the same vein Segal (2004, p. 3) says that gender refers to 'a culturally based complex of norms, values and behaviours that a particular culture assigns to one biological sex or another' (as cited in Keikhaie & Mozaffari, 2013, p. 53). Historically, sex and gender have been used indiscriminately but this is not the case in the modern and much more flexible world we live in. The most important difference between the two is that 'sex' refers to the biological distinction, i.e. distinction that can be described as physiological or anatomical. 'Gender' is a term that is much more complex and difficult to define, but it denotes primarily the social, cultural and even personal identity that does not necessarily coincide with the sexual nature of an individual.

Men and women are generally considered as belonging to two different worlds or even as 'coming' from two different planets. Moreover, males and females are very often presented as two separate cultures, and John Gumperz's studies are relevant in this aspect since his studies provide roots for the whole field of difference theory. Although this theory is not the only one, many sociolinguists dealt with the difference theory since this is one of the theories most frequently used and referred to in studying the relation of language and gender.

The relation between politeness, gender and language has always been an important topic for many sociolinguistic researchers as well as for linguists in general. This relation started being extensively examined only in the early seventies of the past century when people started increasingly to investigate if and to what extent men and women use language, its structures and vocabulary differently. The linguistic behaviour of men and women differs in many different aspects such as vocabulary or lexical choice, voice and tone and other prosodic phenomena, syntactic structure, etc.

Many sociolinguists investigated this topic, and amongst them are Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, Robin T. Lakoff, Deborah Tannen, Deborah Cameron, etc. Different linguists proposed different factors that affect these differences in the language of men and women. Thus Wardhaugh (2006, pp. 316-317) states that these differences 'may result from different socialization practices'. He continues to say that women and men enact different roles in society and work in different industries and occupations which may be a primary reason why women live longer than men. According to him, differences in upbringing largely

affect any differences in verbal skills whereas beliefs about what men and women should sound like have an impact on the differences in voice quality (pp. 316-317).

Robin T. Lakoff is a well-known American linguist who studied politeness as an important aspect of interaction and who is especially known for her works on language and gender. According to Lakoff, women are known for using polite structures more than men and this is partly because women are from their early childhood being taught not to represent their opinions and attitudes in a direct manner (1975). Women's language style is characterized by the use of elements such as 'hedges, tentativeness, tag questions which show indirectness, mitigation and hesitation' and male speech is characterized as 'direct, forceful, confident, using features such as direct, unmitigated statements and interpretation' (Keikhaie & Mozaffari, 2013). All of this led to the development of notions such as gender cultures and genderlects which are becoming increasingly dominant in research studies.

However, there are also those researchers who claim judgements regarding topics such as this one are just individual and personal assessments. Mills (2003, p. 202) even argued that certain practices that are considered to be polite are in fact 'stereotypically gendered' and not based on truth (as cited in Keikhaie & Mozaffari, 2013, p. 54) . So there are also those who take the opposite side and claim that linguistic behaviour of men and women still have more similarities than differences. Another important thing that many sociolinguists, such as Montgomery (1998), mentioned and examined is whether males and females use more polite strategies, structures and language in general when speaking to women. These are all things that need to be thoroughly and cross-culturally examined in order to be able to give some general conclusions regarding the complex relation between gender, language and politeness (Keikhaie & Mozaffari, 2013).

3. What is politeness and what is polite behaviour?

Politeness represents both a linguistic and socio-cultural phenomenon which can be observed and studied from different perspectives respectively. It can be observed in verbal and nonverbal communication as well, but the phenomenon appears to be even more complex than that. According to Leech (2014, p. 139), apart from being manifested in the content of conversation, politeness is also seen in the way the conversation as a whole is structured and

managed by its participants. This means that the conversational behaviour itself can be interpreted as being polite or impolite. For example, speaking at the right or wrong time and being silent at the right or wrong time also possesses certain implications related to being polite or impolite. There is a West African proverb which states 'Silence is also speech'. In some cultures, including our own, there is a proverb saying 'Silence is golden'. All of this indicates that there is no universal definition of silence, let alone politeness in different societies.

Not only are there no common cultural implications of silence, but in fact, quite the opposite, these might be very contradictory moving from one society to the other. For example, it is widely known that in many Asian cultures a few seconds to a minute of silence before answering someone's question is considered as being very polite. In contrast, more than a second or two of silence during conversation in many Western cultures is considered as being quite uncomfortable because the inquirer might be lured into thinking that the listener either does not understand the question or does not know the answer. In any case, in appropriate circumstances silence might be interpreted as a form of impoliteness.

On March 26, 2018, BBC News published an article titled 'I'm not rude, just French'. The story was about a French waiter who was fired from a restaurant in Canada due to his allegedly aggressive tone and nature. His explanation of 'the aggressive, rude and disrespectful behaviour' was that it was due to his French approach and manner which was characterized as being 'more direct and expressive' than the Canadian culture ('Fired Vancouver waiter: I'm not rude, just French,' 2018). This and many other similar examples clearly indicate that although the phenomenon of politeness is common to all cultures, every separate culture has a different perception of what is polite and/or impolite behaviour.

Locher and Watts (2006) draw a nice parallel saying that just as beauty is in the eye of the beholder, politeness depends on the individual's perception as well, stating that according to them, politeness is also a matter of experience and acculturation. Furthermore, every language has various devices for expressing politeness. So a person's behaviour is evaluated as polite or impolite not only on the basis of the linguistic expressions that he or she uses, but it also depends on the interpretation of a particular kind of behaviour in the overall social interaction (Watts, 2003, p. 8).

Linguistic politeness has been an area of extensive research since 1970s. Many linguists have been trying to define it since then. Hill et al. (1986, p. 349) define politeness as

'one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider other's feelings, establish levels of mutual comfort, and promote rapport' (as cited in Watts, 2003, p. 51). Lakoff (1990, p. 34) defines politeness as 'a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange'. According to Yule (2006, p. 119) politeness is 'showing awareness of and consideration for another person's face'. Brown and Levinson's definition of politeness focuses on the speaker, and they describe politeness as 'rational behaviour aimed at the strategic softening (or mitigation) of face-threatening acts' (Watts, Ide, & Enlich, 2005, p. 15).

Locher and Watts (2005, p. 10) state that polite behaviour is part of the relational work inherent in all human social interaction, and relational work is described as 'the 'work' individuals invest in negotiating relationships with others', whereas language is seen as one of its crucial means of communication. Watts (2003) even differentiates between first-order and second-order politeness. According to him, first-order politeness is seen as the layperson's understanding, while second-order politeness refers to the constructs of theoretical politeness models proposed in the literature (Locher, 2006). Watts offers two additional terms for the first-order and the second-order politeness, and these are 'polite behaviour' for the former, and 'politic (social) behaviour' for the latter.

It is not easy to define the criteria related to describing someone as being polite or impolite either. When people are asked about the prototypical image of polite behaviour that is present in their minds, there is a surprising amount of disagreement almost to the point where it appears to be easier to describe impolite behaviour for them. Some people feel that polite behaviour is the kind of behaviour best described as socially 'correct', meaning acceptable or appropriate behaviour in a particular society. Some might characterize a polite person as always being considerate towards other people. Then there are those who consider it to be 'the hallmark of the cultivated man or woman' (Watts, 2003, p. 1). Many people also believe that a polite person is a modest and retiring one, always trying to keep himself or herself out of the focus of attention. There are even people who consider that being polite is way too formal which in turn sends a slightly insincere or even unfriendly image. Be that as it may, what we can all agree on is that there are certain social norms that we are either aware or unaware of, but the fact is that they do exist.

If we move away from describing the polite behaviour in general to a bit more specific case of polite language usage, we encounter the same types of problem. In order to

characterize the polite language usage, we might turn to expressions such as 'the language a person uses to avoid being too direct', or 'language which displays respect towards or consideration for others', 'language that displays certain 'polite' formulaic utterances like please, thank you, excuse me or sorry', etc. (Watts, 2003). Here we encounter the same case as with polite behaviour where we have people who interpret polite language negatively and thus characterize it as insincere, deceptive, untrustworthy, detached, standoffish, etc. So even though we take the polite language and polite behaviour in general as something universal that as such exists in all societies, we can clearly see that the two differ not only from culture to culture, but also from one individual to the other in the sense that not every person within one and the same society has the same perception of the social norms characterizing that specific community.

Another thing that is certain about polite behaviour/language is that it is not something innate, i.e. something that we as human beings are born with. Therefore it is something that is acquired and that needs to be learned. So, given the everyday nature of politeness, it might seem surprising to learn not only that it occupies a central place in the social study of language, but also that it has been the subject of intensive debate in linguistic pragmatics, sociolinguistics and social theory for many years (Watts, 2003).

4. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory

The most common source of information regarding politeness represents the work of Erving Goffman done in 1967. Many of the politeness studies following Goffman's seminal work, including the theory of Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson (1987), drew ideas and inspiration from this valuable source. Next to Brown and Levinson, there have been other researchers whose work has considerably advanced the understanding of politeness: Lakoff (1973) speaks of 'Rules of Politeness'; Leech (1983) propagates a 'Politeness Principle' with several maxims; Fraser (1990) looks at politeness as the norm and argues that only impoliteness is commented on; Meier (1990) calls for equalling polite behaviour with appropriate behaviour and so on (as cited in Locher, 2006, p. 250). Nevertheless, the theory proposed by Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson has many proponents and it was described by Cameron (2001, p. 79) as 'probably the best known account of politeness as a

pragmatic phenomenon'. Watts, Ide, & Ehlich (1992, p. 2) argue that this is 'probably the most influential publication on politeness'.

The theory was originally published in a book on social interaction in the form of a chapter titled '*Politeness: Some Universals of language usage*' in 1978, but after it proved to be extremely influential during the 1980s, the original text was reprinted in book form in 1987 without any changes made to it (Watts, 2003, p. 10). Penelope Brown states that politeness is 'essentially a matter of taking into account the feelings of others as to how they should be treated in interaction, including behaving in a manner that demonstrates appropriate concern for interactors' social status and their social relationship'. Brown continues along the same lines claiming that 'since politeness is crucial to the construction and maintenance of social relationships, politeness in communication goes to the very heart of social life and interaction; indeed it is probably a precondition for human cooperation in general' (Kádár & Haugh, 2013, p. 11). However, Watts (2005) mentions Schmidt's comment on Brown and Levinson's conceptualisation of politeness as being 'an overly pessimistic, rather paranoid view of human social interaction'.

But even though many linguists frequently criticized this theory, it cannot be denied that Brown and Levinson's work has been regarded as a seminal work that eventually became a classic when it comes to the topic of politeness. Their theory definitely spurred and influenced many research studies related to this topic in different fields of linguistics such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, pragmatics, conversation analysis, discourse analysis and so on and so forth. It is also important to note that this phenomenon has been studied not only within the field of linguistics but also within the field of social science in general.

Brown and Levinson devised their theory at Stanford University. It intertwines the speech act theory and Grice's theory of implicatures with Goffman's notion of face (1967, p. 213), defined as 'the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact'. The concept of face will be dealt with in detail in a separate section since it represents one of the most relevant concepts and can be regarded as the foundation of the politeness theory. According to Ogiermann (2009, p. 11), face and rationality are characteristics attributed to 'all competent adult members of a society'.

Brown and Levinson (1987) discuss politeness as a complex system for mitigating face-threatening acts. Thus we can say that beside the extremely important notion of face, their

theory is also based on this hierarchy of linguistic strategies. Brown and Levinson claim that these linguistic strategies that are available to the interlocutors allow them to appear polite in various degrees, i.e. the strategies vary in the degree of directness on a scale from direct to indirect. Thus we have a polite behaviour on one end of the scale moving towards the behaviour which is not characterized as polite and is then implicitly interpreted as impolite. Politeness represents a certain kind of norm, whereas impoliteness represents a breach of this norm (Locher, 2006, p. 225).

4.1. The notion of 'face'

If we want to get straight to the core of Brown and Levinson's theory, understanding one of the most relevant concepts regarding linguistic politeness, the concept of face, is essential. As previously mentioned, this concept derived from Erving Goffman (1967), a Canadian-American sociologist who himself based it on the model of the French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1915).

The notion of face is based on the assumption that each time participants are involved in conversation they enact certain roles which differ from one conversation to the other. Many languages possess metaphors related to 'losing one's face' and/or 'gaining face'. But of course it is not the case that every language is in possession of such metaphors.

According to Locher (2004), Goffman originally defines face as:

..the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself/herself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes – albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself. (p. 52)

Thus politeness assumes that all people have face and there is no such thing as a 'faceless communication' (Locher, 2004). Interestingly, Locher (2004, p. 52) compares the notion of face to a mask that a participant in a specific situation puts on himself. She continues to say that these masks or images about ourselves that we present to others can be multiple and depending on our necessities in a particular interaction we choose which one to wear at a

specific occasion. From this follows that all people have certain face wants and needs (Ogiermann, 2009), which at times end up as not being recognized by others.

These different faces are not something that exists inherently within each of us. Face is a construct, i.e. something that every one of us needs to create and present to the society and, more importantly, we need the society to accept the image we have created about ourselves. What is universal about the concept of face is that majority of people want to create a good face but what constitutes the good face differs across diverse cultures and societies (Locher, 2004).

Face is something that can be maintained/saved or lost during an interaction. It is in every interactant's interest to maintain each other's face (Brown & Levinson, 1987), i.e. we try to protect face. When we say 'to maintain or save face', we are immediately facing the implication that faces can be threatened or even damaged while communicating with others. The usual, ordinary speech acts we are dealing with every single day without even being aware of their presence such as asking a favour, apologizing or even complimenting all carry the potential risk of posing a threat to someone's face. Brown and Levinson regard all speech acts as potentially face-threatening. Furthermore, there are different types of face threats in various face-threatening acts, and sometimes the face threats are posed to the hearer, while at other times it is the speaker's face that is endangered. One's face is damaged when he or she is deprived of any of his/her wants or needs, i.e. when their wants are not recognized by the society.

So we established that every member of a speech community has an attribute called face, which represents a public self-image or the social role that we want to represent to other people. But within politeness theory we can also find the idea that there are two different and even somewhat conflicting kinds/aspects of face: positive face and negative face. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 311) defined positive face as 'the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants'. On the other hand, they claim that negative face is 'the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction—i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition'.

In order to be able to completely understand the concept of face it is important to mention the term of 'face wants'. These aspects of face (positive and negative) are basically treated as interlocutor's basic wants. People's expectations that their public self-image will be respected

comprise the basis of what we call 'face wants'. To elaborate on this, a positive face is the individual's desire for her/his wants to be appreciated and approved of in social interaction, whereas negative face is the desire for individual's actions to be unimpeded by others (Watts 2003, p. 86). Thus when someone is being polite, what is being implied is that he or she is trying to save or defend either his or her own face or the face of his or her interlocutor.

Positive face is the desire for identification with the community, i.e. the desire to be accepted by others, whereas negative face represents the desire or need for freedom of action, freedom from imposition, and the right to make one's own decisions (Stockwell, 2002). All of these are the basic social needs that must be recognized and interpreted as a basic concern determining polite behaviour. Whereas Brown and Levinson's negative face reflects the want that one's actions be unimpeded by others, their positive face is the want for one's wants to be desirable to others (Ogiermann 2009, p. 12). It is important to emphasize that the adjective 'negative' is not used here in the sense of being wrong or bad, rather it is used only as the opposite term of positive. Since the positive face represents the need to be connected, the negative face represents the need to be independent (Yule, 2010).

The assumption which then lays the foundation of this theory is that most, if not all, speech acts undoubtedly threaten either the speaker or the hearer's face, and that a crucial element when trying not to threaten anybody's face is politeness. Trying to maintain each other's face in interaction is very important because otherwise we might be exposed to communication barriers, undesirable feelings and overall bad atmosphere which in turn might lead to communication breakdown. In other words, politeness can be defined as showing consideration for another person's face because we do not want anyone to 'lose his/her face' in the sense of ending up being humiliated or embarrassed to say the least. When someone says an utterance that avoids or at least lessens a potential threat to a person's face, this is called a face-saving act. Otherwise, we have a face-threatening act. These will be discussed in detail in the next section.

4.2. Face-threatening acts

The notion of a face-threatening act is of extreme importance within this theory, because politeness is interpreted as a 'redressive action serving to mitigate the potential face threat involved in some communicative acts' (Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 69-70). So face-

threatening acts (or FTAs) are those acts that threaten the face of the speaker or the addressee because these acts by their nature contradict or act in opposition to the face wants and desires of the addressee, the speaker, or both (Brown & Levinson, 1987). It is important to notice that FTAs can be both verbal and non-verbal.

The example of an FTA that Yule (2010) gives is using a direct speech act to get someone to do something. Thus when someone wants the other person to give them a paper and asks for it saying 'Give me that paper!', they are actually performing an FTA. The explanation he gives is that a person performing such a speech act is behaving as if they possess more social power than their interlocutor when in reality they don't. Now if that person would change their question into 'Could you pass me that paper?', then the FTA is not being performed anymore since the assumption of the social power is removed. On the contrary, we are performing a face-saving act because we are not demanding anything anymore. The request seems to be less threatening to the hearer's face and the possibility of communication breakdown is minimized. But Brown and Levinson point out that there are also the so called intrinsic FTAs and in such cases it is simply not possible to maintain the face.

When they speak about face-threatening acts, Brown and Levinson make two main distinctions, i.e. classifications of FTAs. The first distinction derives from the very fact that there are two aspects of face (positive and negative), and thus this differentiation refers to the kind of face that is being threatened (whether the positive and/or negative face is at stake), whereas the second involves the person whose face is being threatened (the speaker and/or listener's) since every interaction involves at least two interlocutors.

Thus the further distinction regarding the former is made between the acts that represent a threat to the hearer's positive face (and face-wants) indicating that the speaker does not pay attention or respects the hearer's wants, needs or feelings (e.g. expressions of disapproval, criticism, contempt or ridicule, complaints, accusations, insults, disagreements, challenges, etc.) and acts that threaten the hearer's negative face-wants indicating that the speaker is limiting the hearer's freedom of action and making decisions (including orders and requests, suggestions, advice, reminders, threats, warnings, dares, offers, promises, compliments, etc.). Furthermore, regarding the second main distinction mentioned previously, there are acts that can pose a potential threat to the speaker's face as well. These are again subsumed under two main categories. The first group includes the acts of excuses, expressing thanks (but also acceptance of hearer's thanks or apology), acceptance of offers, unwilling

promises and offers, and all these represent a threat to the speaker's negative face. On the other hand, the group of FTAs that might offend the speaker's positive face consists of apologies, acceptance of a compliment, emotion leakage (non-control of laughter or tears), bodily leakage (breakdown of physical control over body, stumbling or falling down), self-humiliation, admissions of guilt or responsibility, and many others (Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 313-315).

Emotional and bodily leakages clearly underlie the fact that not only verbal but also non-verbal acts can pose a threat or damage someone's face. So an FTA is not bound to a linguistic unit. Keeping in mind that every person is in need of maintaining their and their interlocutor's face, it is assumed that everyone will do their best in order to avoid the FTAs in communication, but since some FTAs are inevitable we can at least lessen them and this can be accomplished by using some of the appropriate politeness strategies.

4.3.   Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies

Brown and Levinson (1987) classify hierarchically the politeness strategies to five categories: positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on record, off record (indirectness), and not doing face-threatening acts (Figure 1).
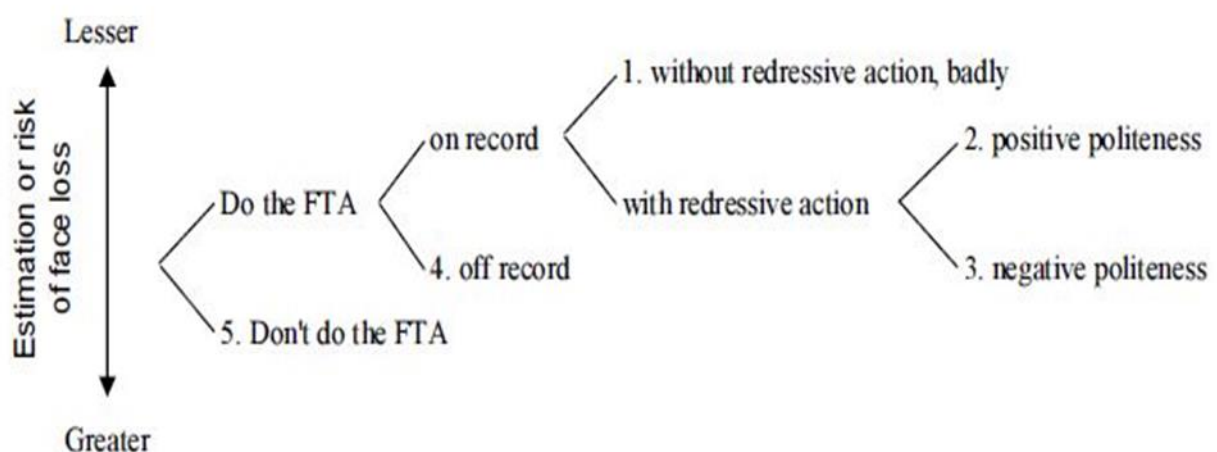
Figure 1. Circumstances determining choice of strategy (Brown & Levinson. 1987, p. 60)

Bald on record is a strategy that can be used when people know each other well so practically there is no need for the interlocutors to maintain each other's face. For example, a mother may tell her child 'eat your food'. This strategy is often used in urgent situations and can be threatening if it's taken out of context (Keikhaie & Mozaffari, 2013). Bald on record strategy represents the most direct and concise strategy of the Brown and Levinson's taxonomy of politeness strategies, because it does absolutely nothing to lessen the threat to someone's face. Instead we are asking the hearer to do something for us in a direct manner. There are different types of motivation for the usage of this strategy. Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that the primary reason for using this strategy is reflected in situations where 'speakers want to do FTA with maximum efficiency more than they want to satisfy hearer's face'. Another type of motivation appears when rather than focusing on efficiency, the speaker clearly orients towards the concept of face. These include different offers and requests in the form of imperatives. Yule (1996, p. 63) gives the example of a person saying 'Have some more cake', to a friend while simply offering or one might say even encouraging him/her to eat something. This must not be confused with regular commands since the speaker implies that the hearer's interest is in focus here and there's no need for worrying about a potential threat. Authors claim that the most common examples of bald on record usage (certainly not the only ones) are direct imperatives, where the speaker is expressing his or her personal needs. These demands are very often softened with hedges or conventional politeness markers such as 'please' and 'would you?' and Yule (p. 63) calls such expressions mitigating devices. And finally, the third type of motivation appears in cases of social inequality in terms of power, i.e. the speaker is obviously socially superior over the interlocutor and therefore choses to ignore his/her face.

The off record politeness strategy is a complete opposite of bald on record strategy. Whereas the on record strategy is rendered the most direct one, the off record strategy relies upon implication. It is very indirect in the sense that we are not actually asking for anything nor directly addressing the hearer, well at least not verbally. The speaker's utterance can be interpreted in various ways, and the speaker does not give any kind of indication about the way his/her utterance should be interpreted. It is up to the hearer's ability to grasp the speaker's intention behind the utterance and his/her readiness to do what the speaker wants him/her to do. The speaker's intended meaning is indirectly conveyed and s/he relies on the hearer's ability to decipher it. For example, if there's a person sitting next to a window and we want them to open the window for us, we might just say 'It is very stuffy in here', and hope

that the hearer will be able to infer that we would like them to open the window. Nevertheless, the threat to the hearer's face in this case is completely minimized as the hearer might just as well chose to ignore our wish by pretending that he did not hear the utterance or did not understand the point we are trying to make. According to Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 316) linguistic realizations of the off record strategy include metaphor, irony, rhetorical questions, tautologies and other various kinds of hints.

Any interpersonal event is potentially a face-threatening act which needs to be negotiated with particular politeness strategies (Stockwell, 2002, p. 23), i.e. with positive or negative politeness depending which aspect of the face we want to attend to. Thus the acts where either of these politeness strategies is employed can be called face-saving acts.

Positive politeness strategy is directed at the hearer's positive face, which, as it is previously stated, represents the self-image that reflects the need for connection with other members of the community. As this strategy is the one that brings the interlocutors closer to each other, it is expressed through informality of the occasion, solidarity and friendship. The speaker face-wants can in a way be equated to those of the hearer, and this can be regarded as their common goal that is bringing them closer as well. The speaker recognizes, cherishes and enhances the positive face of the hearer by showing that he respects his desire to be acknowledged and appreciated. He wants the hearer to know that he himself has the same wants and thus they can be regarded as the members of the same group. In order to do this, one might bring forward and emphasize various common grounds such as interests, needs, culture or religion affiliation, while at the same time avoiding sensitive topics that might cause disagreement. And this in turn can be done through usage of distinctive markers in language such as slang, jargon, dialect and so on. Joking might also be seen as a way of invoking familiarity. The potential face threat is minimized when using this strategy which evidently stresses similarity, familiarity, understanding and cooperation. It is often being used in, for example, groups of friends characterized by the atmosphere of intimacy as the members know each other well and are socially equal in terms of power. Finally, in an effort to establish positive politeness, the speaker can seek to fulfil the hearer's wants in some way and this can be induced through gift-giving, though these gifts can be material objects, as well as sympathy, etc. (Ogiermann, 2009).
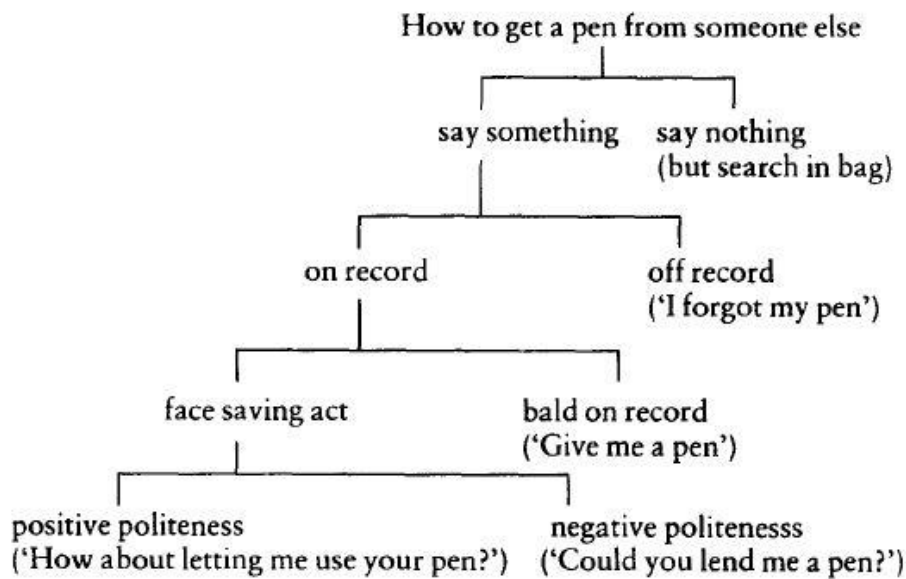
While positive politeness enhances the hearer's positive self-image, negative politeness aims for the hearer's negative face which lies at the foundation of the need for freedom of

action and freedom of imposition. Another crucial difference between the two strategies is that positive politeness minimizes social distance between the interlocutors, whereas negative politeness serves precisely to create that kind of distance. Brown and Levinson (1987) also state that just like positive politeness represents the core of 'familiar and joking behaviour', negative politeness is the essence of respective behaviour. They (1987) continue to say that:

> FTAs are redressed with apologies for interfering, with linguistic and non-linguistic deference, with hedges on the illocutionary force of the act, with impersonalizing mechanisms (such as passives) that distance speaker and hearer from the act, and with other softening mechanisms that give the addressee an 'out', a face-saving line of escape, permitting him to feel that his response in not coerced. (p. 317)

It is exactly the notion of negative politeness that is widely known and present in the books on etiquette. This strategy typically involves questions and hedges such as could, might, etc. that serve to soften the speaker's statements. Yule (1996, p. 65) explains that questions such as 'Might I ask..?' present the opportunity for the hearer to answer in a negative manner but the result will not be the same refusal effect when responding with a negative to bald on record strategy. Statements used with this type of strategy are usually longer, consist of more complex structures and are much more elaborate than in any of the previously discussed strategies.

A positive politeness strategy can also be called a 'solidarity strategy' as it will typically include personal information such as nicknames, whereas negative politeness can be seen as a 'deference strategy', which is impersonal, since no personal information is being shared and it can thus be characterized as formal politeness (Yule, 1996, p. 66). Locher (2004, p. 55) proposes another dichotomy when it comes to positive and negative politeness, namely involvement and independence strategies. She regards these terms as being more neutral as opposed to more technical positive and negative politeness which 'tend to be associated with value judgments' and transfers this differentiation onto positive and negative face as well and calls them the involvement and independent aspects of face (Locher, 2004, p.55).

```
              How to get a pen from someone else
           ┌──────────────────┴──────────────────┐
      say something                          say nothing
                                             (but search in bag)
   ┌────────────┴────────────┐
 on record                 off record
                           ('I forgot my pen')
   ┌──────────┴──────────┐
 face saving act        bald on record
                        ('Give me a pen')
   ┌─────────┴─────────┐
positive politeness         negative politenesss
('How about letting me use your pen?')  ('Could you lend me a pen?')
```

Figure 2. How to get a pen from someone else (Yule, 1996, p. 66)

In their conclusion of the politeness strategies discussion, Brown and Levinson (1987) summarize the payoffs associated with each of the strategies. Thus on record payoffs include efficiency, clarity, outspokenness, honesty and non-manipulativeness. In using off record, the speaker demonstrates tactfulness, non-coerciveness and avoids responsibility for potential face-threat. When the speaker uses positive politeness, s/he satisfies the hearer's positive face and minimizes the face-threatening aspects of acts through 'of the same kind' portrayal of him/herself and the addressee. On the other hand, when using negative politeness the speaker satisfies the hearer's negative face and pays respect to the other, at the same time maintaining the social distance between them. Brown and Levinson portray the strategies for performing an FTA, the degree of face-redress they represent and their hierarchical order, as well as the factors determining their selection as universal (Ogiermann, 2009).

4.4. Sociological variables that determine FTA seriousness/weight

Sociological variables come into play when considering a face-threatening act (FTA), since these will determine seriousness or weight of the FTA and the appropriate type of

strategy to be used at a particular occasion (Watts, 2003, p. 96). There are three such factors that Brown and Levinson consider as being present in many if not all cultures.

The first variable is the social distance between the speaker and the hearer and this is a symmetric relation. Basically, what is important here is whether the targeted hearer is a close friend or a distant acquaintance of the speaker. Various research studies have shown that this variable has a significant impact on the interlocutor's interaction. People agree that they tend to be much more polite when talking to a person they don't know well. Thus for example if we are having dinner with our family members, we will probably say 'Pass me the salt, please', rather than 'Could you pass me the salt, please?'

The relative power represents the second sociological variable and this variable is an asymmetric relation unlike the first one, since in this case we look for superiority, subordination or social equality between interlocutors. The impact of this variable on the choice of politeness strategies is the most conspicuous when, for example, we talk to our bosses in the workplace.

And finally, the third variable is the absolute ranking of impositions in the particular culture, i.e. the degree of sensitivity of the particular topic or subject within a culture. In some cultures topics such as person's income, woman's age and weight are considered as being sensitive and if the speaker includes questions about these subjects in the conversation s/he will probably be judged as being rude and disrespectful. This of course does not have to be the case in all cultures and societies. Or for example, asking a new colleague to do something for us is more face threatening than asking a long standing colleague, and this involves the distance variable; asking one's employer to do something for us is more face threatening than asking a colleague as this involves the power variable; and asking for a glass of expensive wine is more face threatening than asking for a glass of water as here the ranking variable comes into play (Culpeper, 2011, p. 8). These variables might and very often do combine so it is not rare that we are not as close with people who possess higher social power than us. According to Culpeper (2011, p. 8) various research studies confirm the idea that the greater the speaker's social power is, the less polite will be the strategy that s/he will use.

Of course, the choice of the appropriate strategy will depend upon various circumstances, that is, who is the speaker's addressee in the sense of his/her social relationship with that person, and what is the topic that the conversation revolves around. In our research where the

major focus is on politeness and gender, we will also try to consider some of these variables when analysing the collected data from the questionnaire.

4.5. Why is Brown and Levinson's politeness theory appropriate for this research?

The theory proposes five main politeness strategies for doing face-threatening acts (bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record/indirectness, and not doing/avoiding the FTA). From our point of view, people generally tend to use any of these strategies when dealing with everyday communication and interaction.

Furthermore, Brown and Levinson treat face as a basic want which everybody claims for himself/herself (1987). Their theory may be seen as a 'face saving' approach because all of these strategies focus on avoiding the violation of both the speaker's and hearer's face or the so called 'face saving', which is a fundamental part of the theory. In Bosnia and Herzegovina people believe it is very important not to lose face, in the sense of a person's honour and dignity ('obraz'). By using Brown and Levinson's framework we will try to see if the respondents have some kind of pattern when dealing with face threatening situations in everyday communication.

As we have previously seen, this theory also takes into account the role of sociological factors: the social distance between the speaker and the hearer, the relative power the hearer has over the speaker and the rank of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 74). These factors that are crucial in determining the level of politeness are very influential in Bosnian and Herzegovinian society as well. It is very important to match the politeness strategy to the force of the imposition, since we would not require much politeness to ask the time or to ask for a pen, but we would need a lot of it to borrow some money or a car. Mismatching the expected norm will be seen as rudeness, over-familiarity, aggression, or over-formality, obsequiousness or sarcasm (Stockwell, 2002).

5. Research methodology

There are many different approaches when one is dealing with research. However, two of them, namely quantitative and qualitative, seem to be the most common, prominent and widespread approaches. On the one hand, quantitative research is the one in which variables are manipulated to test hypotheses and in which there is usually quantification of data and numerical analyses (Gass & Mackey, 2005, p. 2). On the other hand, qualitative studies in general are not set up as experiments and thus the data cannot be easily quantified. We decided to use quantitative method for this study since it is characterized as outcome-oriented, reliable, involving "hard" and replicable data, generalizable, etc. (Gass & Mackey, 2005).

5.1. Research questions and hypotheses

The politeness strategies used when performing speech acts of making a request, asking a favour and apologizing represent the subject of this research. In the research the politeness is being observed when related to the context or situation. We adopted the stance of Yuling Pan who claims that different situations or settings affect and govern politeness behaviour (2000). Brown and Levinson's theory that forms the core of the theoretical framework of this research as well as of the analysis to come also stresses the importance of the context.

Language as a socio-cultural phenomenon reflects the relationship of power and difference in the social position of men and women. This fact lays the foundations of the enormous interest to investigate if and to what degree male and female linguistic behaviour differs. So a frequent research question of the sociolinguistic but also many studies of other narrow scientific fields of linguistics is 'Do women speak more politely than men'? Having in mind various sociolinguistic research studies in which language is defined in terms of gender polarization where women are said to be more polite than men (i.e. they use more polite language), the sociolinguistic goal of this paper is to determine if male and female speakers use the same or different strategies of politeness in the same situation or context. Based on the previously mentioned research question, the first hypothesis of this paper is formed: men and women use different politeness strategies, i.e. strategies which differ in relation to the degree of directness, in the same situational context.

Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson claimed the greater social power of the speaker is related to lesser degree of politeness, and many sociolinguistic research studies confirmed their claim (1987). Therefore another variable taken into consideration is social power. Thus in some of the situations described in the questionnaire the participants had equal social power, whereas in some of them the respondents were put into different positions related to different degree of social power. For example, in one of the situations informants have taken the role of the college professor, while in the other they've taken the role of a student. So we wanted to find out whether social power in male and female participants affected their choice of politeness strategy. Having in mind all these studies, the second hypothesis that this paper will or will not confirm is: both male and female participants use more direct strategies when in the position related to greater social power.

On the other hand, there is also different empirical evidence showing that there is a high degree of politeness even in the relationship of the people who know each other very well, i.e. who are close to each other so to say, which allows us to conclude that the degree of politeness does not necessarily increase with the appearance of social distance between the participants. Therefore another thing that needs to be taken into account is whether speakers and listeners in each of the situations are represented as being strangers, colleagues, neighbours, acquaintances or friends, i.e. if they are socially distant or not. This is subsumed under the non-linguistic variable of social distance which is tightly connected to the variable of social power.

We expect the results to show that there are differences in specific contexts between men and women regarding their choices of politeness strategies, i.e. regarding the degree of directness of the chosen strategies. Apart from taking into consideration the gender of the speaker, i.e. the respondent, it is also very important to pay attention to the gender of their interlocutors in specific situational contexts. So another thing that we will observe is whether the gender of the interlocutors affects the choice of these strategies, and if men and/or women use more direct or indirect strategies when speaking to men as opposed to speaking to women. Also, the expected results should confirm that apart from gender, the non-linguistic variables of social power and distance also affect the respondents' choice of politeness strategies in interaction. We assume that the degree of directness is going to rise with the rise of the social power of speaker, i.e. that the rise of politeness (or the degree of indirectness) rises with the rise of the social power of the respondent's interlocutor.

5.2.   Corpus and procedure

This research is a small-scale, quantitative survey with the sociolinguistic goal to examine if and to what extent the non-linguistic factor of gender affects the way males and females use strategies of politeness in language. Therefore the questionnaire was distributed evenly between the male and female participants, so out of the fifty participants in total, twenty five of them were females and twenty five were males. The process involved an online survey distribution, i.e. we used e-mail and social networks that the participants were using most frequently (Facebook in most cases) to send our online questionnaire to respondents. The answers were collected during the month of May, 2018. The respondents were randomly selected and their age varied from 20 to 33 years old. The participants are native speakers of the Bosnian language with different family and socio-economic backgrounds which were not examined for the purposes of this research. The main criterion when selecting the respondents was that they are native speakers of the Bosnian language.

5.3.   Instrument and data analysis method

Questionnaires are typically used to obtain information in the quantitative research studies. Therefore, the instrument used for the purposes of this research was in the form of a questionnaire which is generally one of the most common methods of collecting data on attitudes and opinions from a large group of participants. It is formed on the basis of Discourse Completion Test, which is widely used for sociolinguistic research studies. Jasna Popović at the University of Belgrade developed her own questionnaire for the purpose of writing her doctoral dissertation on the topic of Politeness strategies in Serbian and English (2017). She decided to keep the basic concept of DCTs and thus preserved the hypothetical situations which are characteristic for such tests. Some of the situations were taken over from other author's discourse completion tests (Cohen, Olshtain, 1981; Blum-Kulka, Olshtain, 1984; Marquez-Reiter, 2000), whereas some of them were created by the author Popović herself (2017). We decided to use Popović's questionnaire as the foundation for developing our own questionnaire. In that light some of the situations were taken over from her questionnaire and adapted to the Shtokavian dialect and Jekavian pronunciations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while other situations were translations from English the author was able to

find in the seminal works related to the topic of politeness strategies (such as Brown and Levinson, Leech, etc).

In the first part of the questionnaire the participants were given detailed instructions in terms of filling out the questionnaire correctly. The author considered it was very important to emphasize that there were no right or wrong answers and that the participants should respond as honestly as possible. The only personal information that the participants were required to give were gender and age. The questionnaire contained fifteen situations that are considered common in daily life. It differs from the standard DCT in that it gives the participants four possible answers that the author created for them, unlike in the DCT where they are only given the possibility to construct and write down their own answer. For each of the situations described in the questionnaire, the participants are asked to choose one of the four provided responses. These closed-item questions were very important typically since they typically involve a greater uniformity of measurement and therefore greater reliability. We tried to construct them to sound as natural as possible in a given language.

Since the Brown and Levinson's taxonomy of the politeness strategies was adopted, these four answers were created according to it and listed from the most direct to the least direct, i.e. indirect strategy. So the first answer always represented the bald on record which represented the most direct strategy, the second answer was the strategy of positive politeness which is somewhat direct, the third answer was the negative politeness strategy which is somewhat indirect, and the final fourth answer always represented the off record or the indirect strategy. Even though open-ended items allow respondents to express their own thoughts and ideas in their own manner, and thus may result in more unexpected and insightful data, we decided that it was necessary to include these in the questionnaire as well. Thus the participants were also given the fifth option of writing down their own answer if none of the provided responses represented the right choice for them, which we then tried to analyse in terms of these four strategies as belonging either to one of the four strategies or as being a combination of two or more of these strategies. Of course, the fifth option also ensured that the participants could decide for doing nothing which is also one of the strategies (the so called 'say nothing strategy/approach').

There were also three main types of situations that the participants were put into, or different types of speech acts that the participants were required to perform. These were five

speech acts of making a request, five speech acts of asking a favour and five speech acts of apologizing.

Also, the social power varies in different contexts. In some of the situations, the participants in conversation possess equal social power. In other contexts the speaker/respondent possesses greater social power than his/her interlocutor, whereas in some of them it is the interlocutor who possesses greater social power than the speaker. As we mentioned before, the non-linguistic factor of social distance is inextricably related to the variable of social power, therefore we have not observed it as a separate variable but we have taken it into account when related to social power. In terms of variables of this research, the independent variables include: native language, gender of the participants, social power (which might be greater, equal or lower in relation to the interlocutor), and the speech acts (a request, asking a favour and apologizing). On the other hand, the dependent variables are: the degree of directness which is measured over the choice of politeness strategies (bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record, strategy of avoiding the speech act), the choice of the strategy according to the gender of the speaker, and the choice of the strategy according to the gender of the interlocutor.

In order to make sure that the questionnaire was formed in a simple and uncluttered format and included unambiguous and answerable questions, we performed a pilot research on two participants who are native speakers of the Bosnian language. The piloting results showed that the participants did not have any kind of difficulties relative to interpreting questions/offered answers and the format proved to be user-friendly and the questions were clear. This way we ensured there was no need for rephrasing, making any kind of changes or adding some kind of additional explanations and/or instructions.

As far as the method of data analysis is concerned, the collected data were stored, organized and analysed in Microsoft Excel 2010. The same electronic spreadsheet program is also used for the purposes of making tables, drafts, charts and calculating percentages.

5.4.   Results and discussion

In the first situation described in the questionnaire, the respondent is taking the role of a student and he is supposed to perform the speech act of making a request. The respondent did

not attend an important lecture, so (s)he is about to ask his/her colleague that (s)he is friends with to borrow his notes. The interlocutor is the speaker's male colleague, so they possess equal social power in this situation. Therefore the participants in this conversation are not socially distant. The results of the survey showed that the male participants in this case mainly decided for the negative politeness strategy – option 'c', whereas more than half of women decided for positive politeness strategy – option b. This means that women used more direct strategy in this situation, unlike men who opted for more indirect strategy. Women chose the answer which contains the element of positive politeness, namely using a nickname for their interlocutor, thus expressing friendship and closeness. On the other hand, the response that men mostly chose contained mitigating devices such as 'molim te' and 'da li bi mogao' which serve to soften the actual demand. In both cases, the speaker is giving the interlocutor an opportunity for refusal. However with the use of negative politeness this refusal might be softened as well.

Only a few of male and female participants decided for the most direct strategy – option 'a'. Also it is visible that both men and women rather choose to use the indirect strategy (females: 20%, males: 24%) than direct strategy (females: 12%, males: 4%). This is quite understandable, since the bald on record strategy is generally used and associated with speech acts where the speaker assumes that (s)he has power over his/her interlocutor.
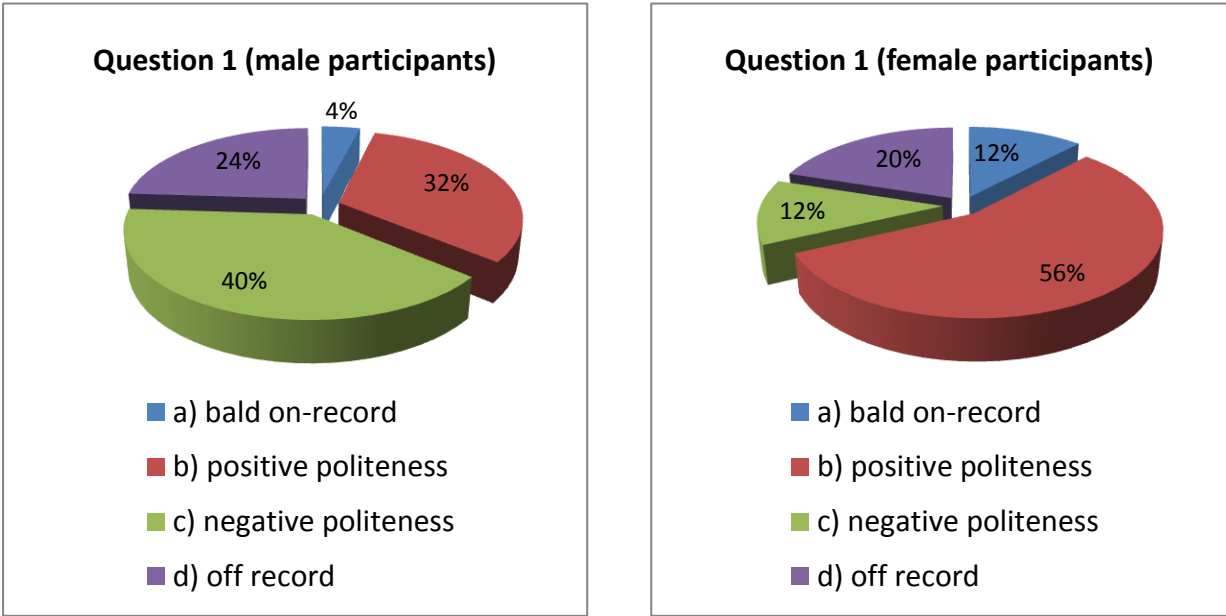
Diagram 1: Question 1 – results

Since this situation represents an everyday interaction between two colleagues who are socially equal, such bald on record strategy is generally avoided because it would represent a threat to the interlocutor's face (Yule, 1996). In both cases, participants rather chose responses containing elements of positive or negative politeness, in order to avoid face-threatening acts. There were no participants who decided to avoid performing the speech act, which shows that making such a request does not represent a threat for the other's face.

Situation number two is taking place in some of the means of public transport (tram, bus, etc.). The speech act the participants are required to perform is the one of making a request again. However in this situation the speaker's interlocutor is a woman, who is a complete stranger, unlike in the previous situation where the participants of the conversation were colleagues and friends. Nevertheless the interlocutors are socially equal again, which means that neither of the participants has the power over the other. The results in this situation are somewhat different when compared to the first situation where all of the four strategies were chosen more or less frequently. Most of the female and male participants chose the third answer which represented the negative politeness strategy (84% in both cases). Also some of the female participants decided to choose the indirect strategy – option 'd' (8%), while the rest of them (8%) wrote the following answers given under the fifth option that was left for the participants in the case none of the provided answers was the right choice for them:

- Pomjerite se malo.

- Mogu izać'?

These two answers contain elements of the direct as well as the positive politeness strategy. However, when it comes to the male participants the situation is slightly different since 8% of them decided for the answer with the elements of positive politeness, whereas 4% chose the indirect strategy.

There was also the following answer given under the fifth option that was left for the participants in the case none of the provided answers was the right choice for them:
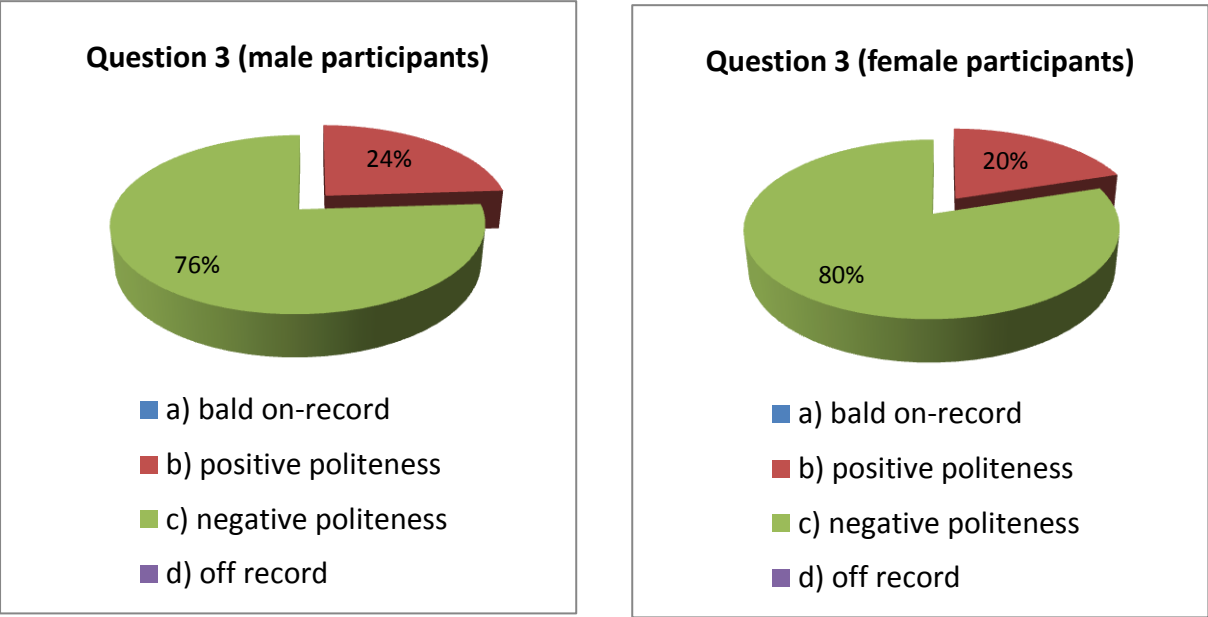
-Zavisi od raspoloženja.

This particular answer did not give any contribution to the overall results. It is widely known these open-ended questions may sometimes result in insightful data. Although this answer could not be classified as belonging to one of the four main politeness strategies, it can suggest another non-linguistic factor that might influence the use of politeness strategies in everyday communication, namely the individual's mood. There are many sociolinguists as well as linguists in general who claimed that although Brown and Levinson's theory is one of the most widely used and acknowledged theories regarding politeness, it also possesses many weaknesses. Daena Goldsmith focuses on everyday communication and researches how we enact identities and relationships through what we say and more importantly how we say it. Among other things, Goldsmith mentions 'individual differences' which influence the choice of politeness strategies and she claims that mood may also drive how people choose to respond to a situation regardless of politeness strategies (2007).
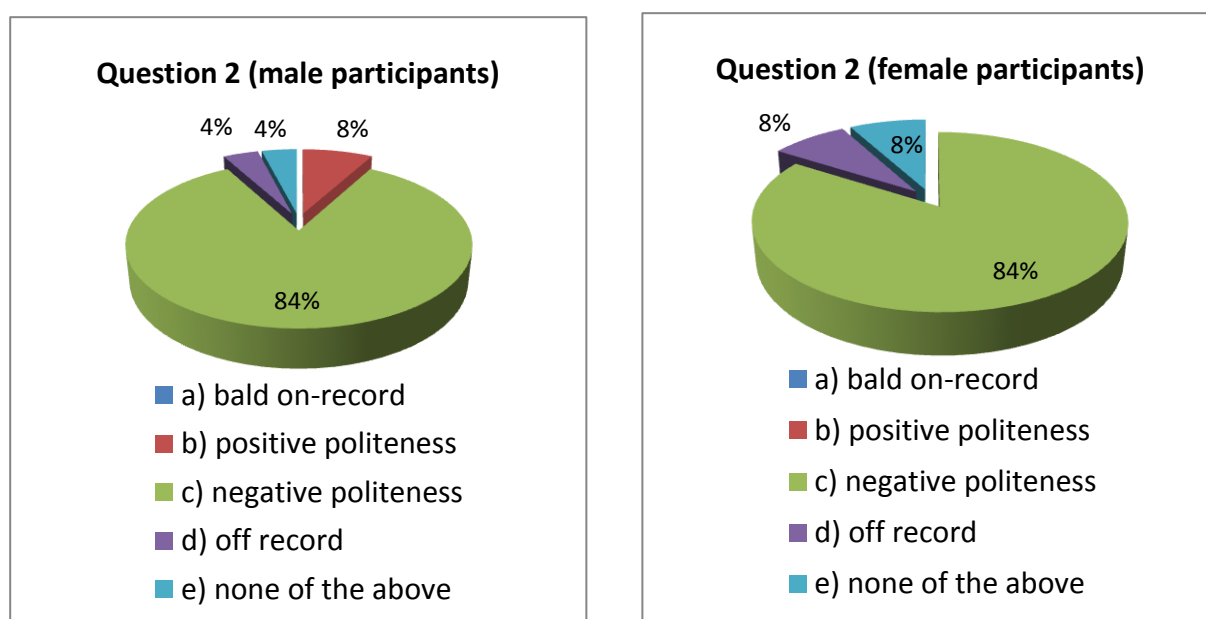
Diagram 2: Question 2 – results

The third situation is the one where the participant takes the role of the student and is about to perform the speech act of making a request, i.e. to ask to borrow the professor's book that he needs in order to write a paper. In this situation the speaker has lower social power than his interlocutor, namely the professor who possesses greater social power. The analysis of the collected data showed that participants, both male and female, mostly used the negative

politeness strategy – option 'c' (females: 80% and males: 76%). This clearly shows that the majority of native speakers of Bosnian believe it is very important to maintain the social distance within the institutionalized contexts and not to try to lessen it. The rest of the male and female respondents chose the positive politeness strategy which slightly reduces the social distance between the participants in conversation, but such respondents were much smaller in number.

Question 3 (male participants)

24%

76%

- a) bald on-record
- b) positive politeness
- c) negative politeness
- d) off record

Question 3 (female participants)

20%

80%

- a) bald on-record
- b) positive politeness
- c) negative politeness
- d) off record

Diagram 3: Question 3 – results

So this situation showed that when they are speaking to the person in possession of higher social power than they do, the participants will use the constructions through which they would be able to clearly show the respect (possibly even the fear) that appears as a consequence of the other person's authority. Apart from using the formal register and respecting the traditional hierarchy of the society, the markers of negative politeness (such as apologizing in this case) contribute to the fact that the authority is not violated in any way. The bald on record and the indirect strategy turned out to be the unwanted strategies in this case since none of the participants chose these answers.

The fourth situation also represented the speech act of making a request but in this situation both participants were students/colleagues and hence have equal social power. The participant and interlocutor are situated in the classroom waiting for their lecture to begin and the speaker is about to ask his/her colleague to open the window for him/her. It is interesting that the most dominant strategy used in this situation was the negative politeness strategy, since we generally did not expect the social distance to exist on such a great scale in this case. Nevertheless, the results obtained for this question were much more diverse when compared to situation number 3. Although most of both the female (72%) and male participants (68%) used the negative politeness strategy, some of them decided to use the direct strategy as well (females: 16%, males: 16%). However, the difference was that none of the female respondents used the indirect strategy, whereas 8% of male participants did choose the indirect strategy as the right one for this situation.
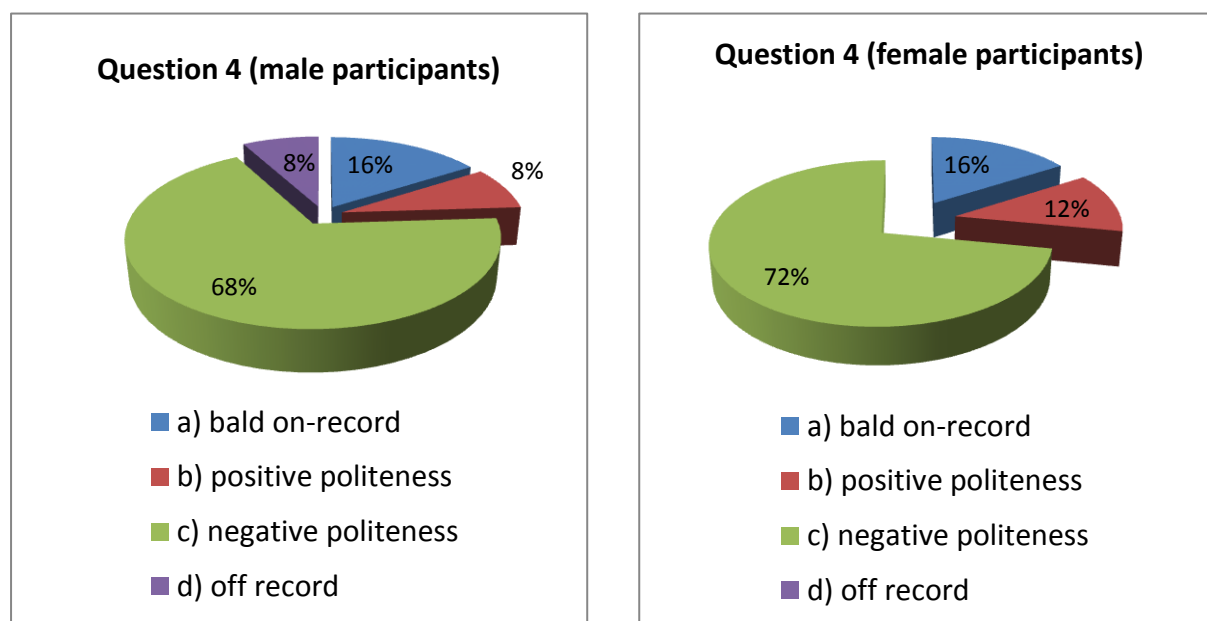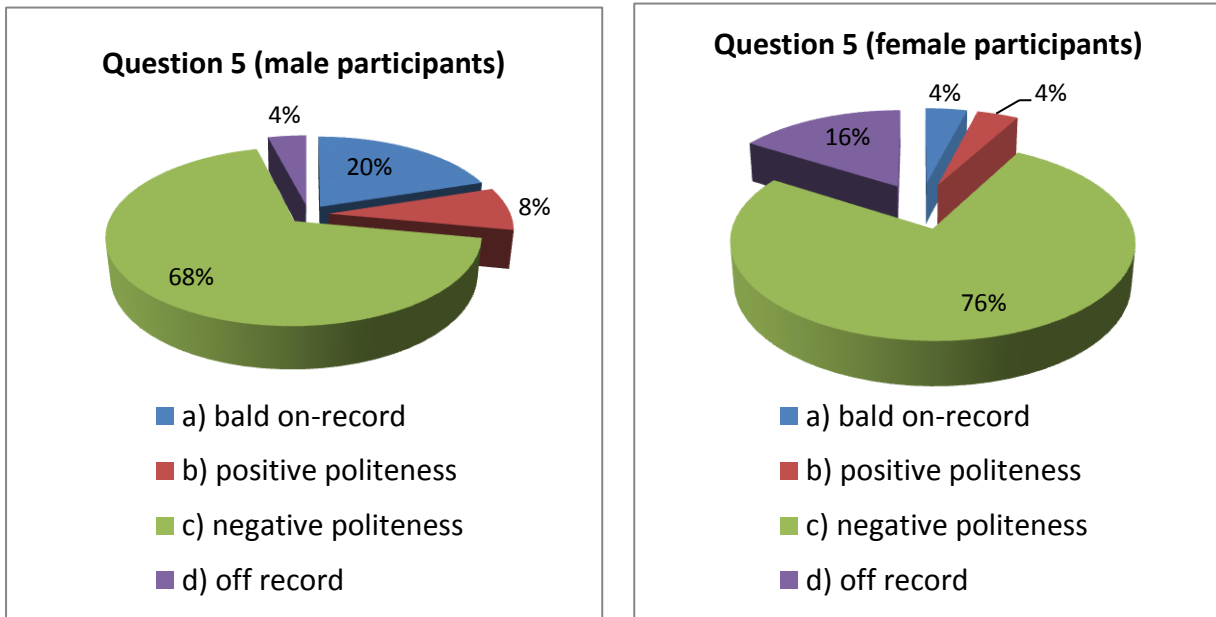

Diagram 4: Question 4 – results

The indirect strategy does not show the speaker's intention directly or openly but the indirect language used here leaves space for the interlocutor to interpret it in his/her own way. In this way this strategy completely secures the speaker from being potentially imposing. In this example, a speaker using the indirect strategy might merely say 'it is very hot in here' insinuating that it would be nice if the listener would get up and open the window without

directly asking the listener to do so. This strategy is used as a way to completely avoid losing face.

In the fifth situation the speech act that the participants were required to perform was asking a favour. The speaker is supposed to ask his male neighbour to buy the pain reliever (aspirin) for him since he's having a terrible headache and hence cannot go out and buy it himself/herself. The participants have equal social power in this case. Most of the participants decided for the negative politeness strategy when talking to a male neighbour (females: 76%, males: 68%), but the first difference that can be noted here is that fewer males than females chose this strategy. Moreover, only 8% of females used the direct or the positive politeness strategy containing the elements of direct strategy. On the other hand 28% of male participants used these strategies, meaning that male participants are more direct than female participants when asking a favour from a male listener. This is also confirmed when we compare the usage of the indirect strategy in this case, where only 4% of the male participants used the indirect strategy – option 'd', in contrast with 16% of female participants who chose the indirect strategy as the right choice for this situation. In sum, female participants lean towards the use of either the indirect strategy or the negative politeness when talking to the male person that they know, whereas male participants use both elements of positive and negative politeness. Brown and Levinson claim that the speakers are more polite and indirect when talking to the people that they do not know very well and that the degree of politeness rises with the increase of social distance between the participants (1987).

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that speakers are more polite when conversing with people they do not know very well and when their relationship is characterized with higher degree of social distance. Our results regarding this situation however show that there is a great degree of politeness between people who know each other very well. It actually appears that the social power does not affect the choice of the strategy that much in this context, but the speakers might actually consider the rate of imposition to be much more important in this case. This is one of the cases where some kind of additional examination (e.g. interview or some other kind of qualitative method) would be necessary in order to gain an in-depth insight into this phenomena and to find out what exactly is affecting the choice of strategy the most in this case. Asking a favour is generally the riskiest of all FTAs and people are trying to minimize the threat to the interlocutor's as well as their own face as much as possible.
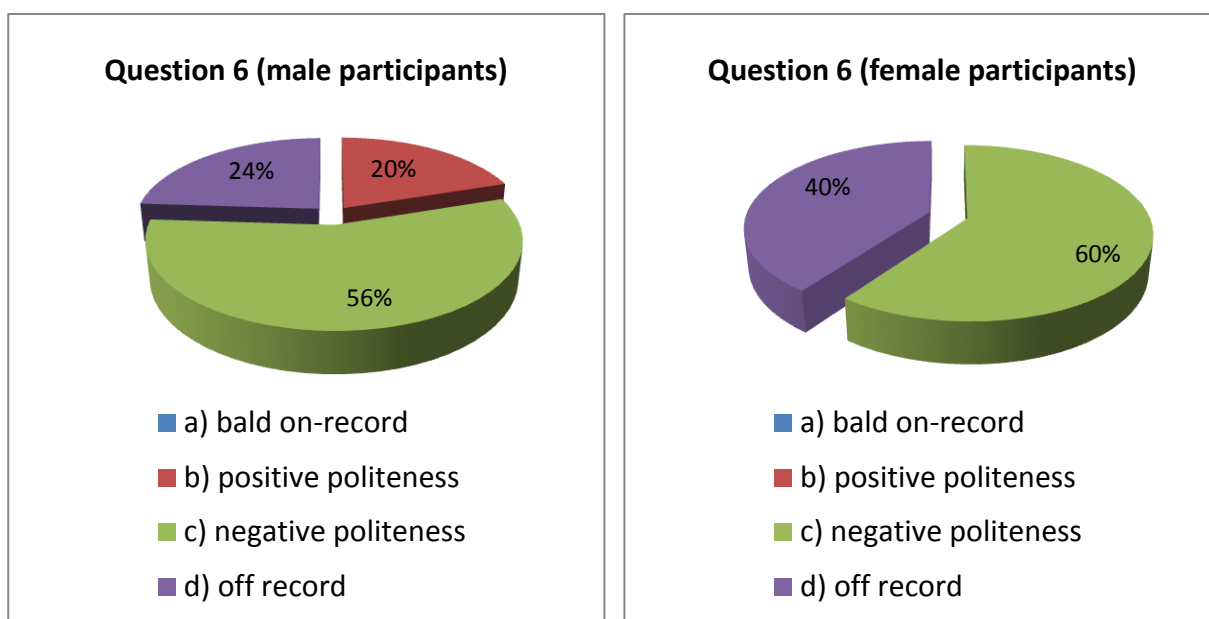
Diagram 5: Question 5 – results

In situation number six the participant is required to perform the speech act of asking a favour again, but this time his/her interlocutor is a female neighbour. The speaker has to go on an unplanned/sudden trip and wants to ask his/her neighbour Sara to take care of his/her cat while being away for two days. The participants have equal social power in this case as well, and when compared to the previous situation the only difference is that (s)he is speaking to a woman this time. Interestingly enough women did not use direct strategies at all in the case of asking a favour from their female neighbour. All of them decided either for the negative politeness strategy – option 'c' (60%) or the indirect strategy – option 'b' (40%). Females were now even more indirect than in the previous case of asking a favour from their male neighbour.

It is very important to mention that according to Brown and Levinson's theory, the degree of politeness is proportional to the weight of the FTA (1987). So here we might propose that the factor which affects this choice might be the type/weight of the favour as well, since asking someone to take care of our pet while being away is a much bigger favour than asking them to buy something for us. This might be the reason why males also decided to use indirect strategies more than in the previous situation. 56% of male participants used the negative politeness strategy, 24% of them used the indirect strategy, while the rest of them

(20%) chose the positive politeness strategy. However, we can clearly see that women rather than men were more indirect in this situation just like in the previous one. Therefore we can conclude that speakers are striving to protect the hearer's negative face in this context by reducing the imposition on him/her, which is an instance of respect politeness as well.
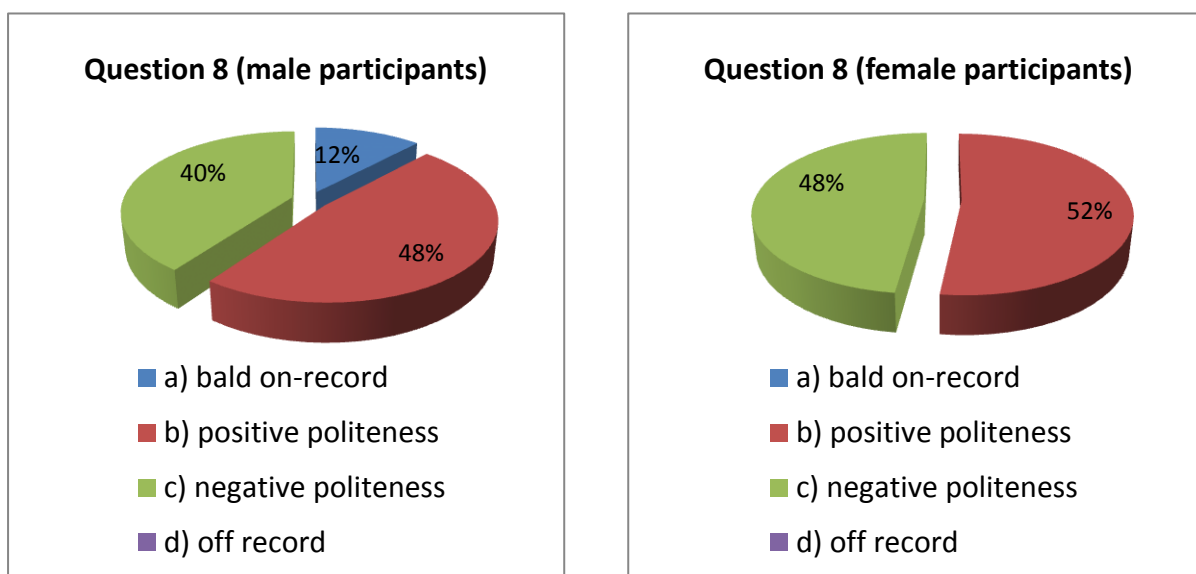

Diagram 6: Question 6 – results

Situation number seven is the one where the speaker takes the role of a student who is doing a research study. The speaker realized that his/her colleague is familiar with the topic of his/her paper, so (s)he wants to ask a colleague to have a look at it. So the speech act the participant is about to perform is the one of asking a favour. The participants mainly decided to choose the negative politeness strategy again (females: 88%, males: 72%). According to the previous situation results we would expect the rest of the female respondents to choose the indirect strategy. However, this was not the case because they chose either the direct strategy (8%) or the positive politeness strategy with the elements of direct strategy (4%), and none of them actually chose the indirect strategy. Since both male and female participants chose the answers comprising the elements of the indirect strategy, we can conclude that speakers generally believe that in this case they are striving to protect the hearer's negative face, i.e. his/her need not to be disturbed. So just like in the previous context, here we also have the case of respect politeness.
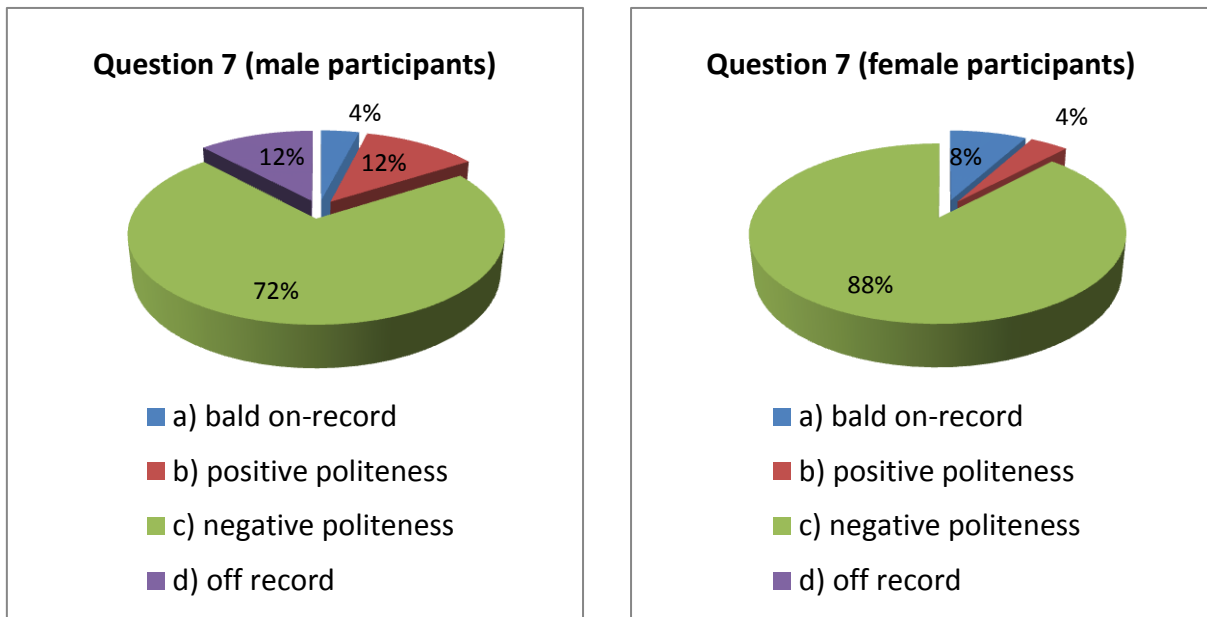
Diagram 7: Question 7 – results

In question number eight the participants were required to perform the speech act of apologizing. There is a situation where a speaker takes a role of a student who borrowed a book from a professor, and promised to return it on the first occasion, but he/she forgot to bring the book to the professor's class. Professor notices the student and asks him/her to return the book. It is important to notice that in this situation the speaker has lower social power than his interlocutor, namely the professor who has some kind of power over the student and hence we say that he has higher social power than the student. The speaker's task in this situation was to choose an appropriate strategy in order to apologize to the professor for not bringing the book to his class. The obtained results showed that majority of females, 52%, opted for choosing positive politeness strategy or the answer 'b', while 48% of them opted for negative politeness strategy where they directly apologized and promised to return the book as soon as possible.

When it comes to male participants, we have a similar situation where again the majority of them, 48% opted for the positive politeness strategy, 40% chose negative politeness, and surprisingly 12% chose the bald on record strategy where they just apologized with no other explanations or promises to return the book on the first occasion.

Diagram 8: Question 8 – results

We can make a conclusion that since the majority of males and females used the positive politeness strategy when it comes to this speech act of apologizing, they might have considered that alongside an apology it was also extremely important to give some kind of explanation as well as solution for such a situation. This is why the formal apology was usually followed by some of the markers of positive politeness such as giving an explanation and/or promising to return the book on the first possible encounter with the professor. The most common forms of addressing were 'Izvinjavam se' and 'Baš mi je žao' and both of these implicate the greater degree of formality between the participants in conversation. None of the participants said they would avoid performing the speech act or they would use 'Tu' instead of 'Vous' form for addressing the professor which showed that they believed it was very important to show respect to their interlocutor possessing higher social power, to apologize and to give an explanation for committing such a 'misdemeanor'.
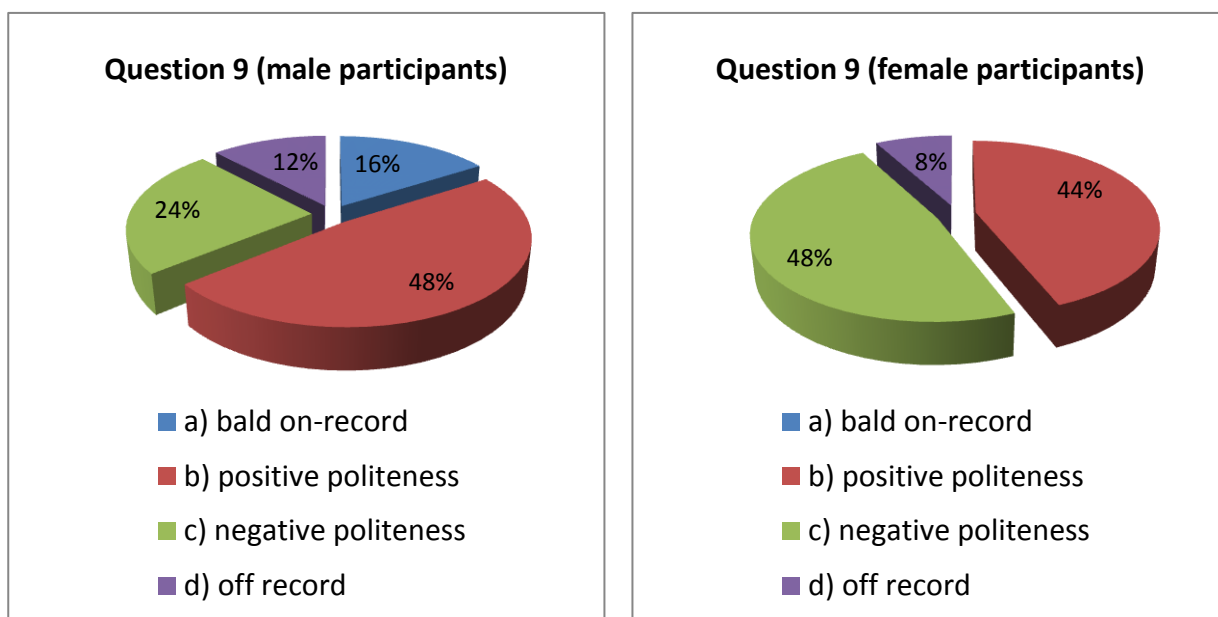
In situation number nine, participants take a role of a professor at the university who promised to check the student's paper, but (s)he did not have time to complete that task. Unlike in the previous situation, in this case it is the speaker who has higher social power than the interlocutor/student. So the student comes to the professor's office and asks him/her for an opinion, and the majority of female participants (48%) who are now enacting a role of the professor opted to use the negative politeness strategy, 42% of them opted for the positive

politeness or option 'b', and the minority of females (8%) chose the indirect or off record strategy (the answer 'd'). When we compare these results (where the participant has higher social power than his interlocutor) to the previous question's results (where the participant has lower social power than his interlocutor), we can see that when it comes to female participants there are no major differences in the choice of the strategy, the only difference being that two female participants opted for the indirect strategy in this situation. While we would expect them to be more direct in this context since generally bald on record expressions are associated with speech events where the speaker assumes that he or she has power over the other (Yule, 1996), our results showed that women are more indirect when in the position related to higher social power than in the position related to lower social power.

When it comes to male participants, while taking the role of a professor, the majority of them (48%) are using the positive politeness strategy – option 'b'. Furthermore 24% of males chose the negative politeness strategy, 16% chose the bald on record option 'a', and 12% chose the indirect strategy (option 'd'). Here we may conclude that while females are more indirect when speaking to a student who has lower social power than them, men are mostly opting for positive politeness and bald-on record strategy thus being more direct than females on this occasion. All females tried to save the interlocutor's face and avoided the bald on record strategy, while some of the male participants, however, used this strategy (16%) and potentially made an FTA to their interlocutor. Needless to say, the majority of males did avoid this strategy and tried to save the interlocutor's face.

So regarding this situation related to higher social power and apologizing, women are leaning towards more indirect strategies, whereas men are leaning towards more direct strategies. However that does not necessarily implicate that females are more polite than males. The responses given by female participants might also show that they believe that when taking the role of a professor it is appropriate to be formal and conventional, not to explain too much thus maintaining the existing social distance between the professor and the student. By using somewhat more informal language and giving explanations in this situation, male participants showed that they do not insist on maintaining that distance.
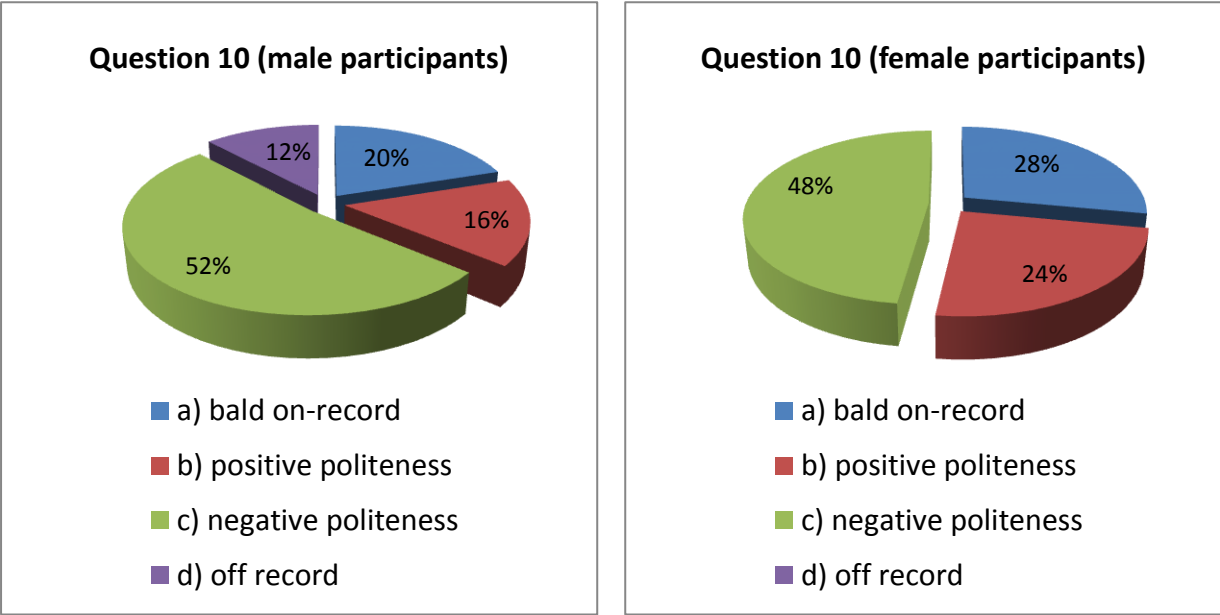
Diagram 9: Question 9 – results

In question number ten, we have a situation where there is an equal social power relation between the speaker and interlocutor. Participants take a role of a speaker who has promised to visit their friend Damir to help him with some kind of a computer program that is important for Damir's job. Nevertheless, the speaker forgot about this arrangement, and then (s)he is about to make a phone call where they are supposed to apologize to him. Here the interlocutor is male, and the majority of female speakers (48%) opted for option 'c' or the negative politeness strategy where they apologized for their mishap and offered to make up for their mistake. However it is important to notice that 28% of females used the bald on record strategy or option 'a', where they simply apologized without offering further explanation or help, and 24% of them used the positive politeness strategy – option 'b', and showed a friendly attitude, expressed their grief over the mishap and offered to help some other time. We can say that the majority of females saved the interlocutor's face. Although half of the females used the negative politeness strategy, the other half of them split and went for the more direct strategies (direct bald-on record strategy or positive politeness strategy).

When it comes to male participants, the majority of them or 52% opted for the negative politeness strategy or option 'c' just like female participants. They apologized for

their mishap, explained why they forgot about the arrangement and offered to make up for a mistake. 20% of male speakers used the bald on record strategy – option 'a' where they simply expressed that they forgot about the arrangement and apologized with no further explanations or promises for adding up for a mistake. 16% male speakers used positive politeness, option 'b', which emphasized their closeness to the interlocutor, and the remaining 12% used the off record strategy, option 'd'. None of the female participants used the off record strategy.

The author's expectations were that in this situation most of the participants would mainly use the positive politeness strategy where they would be in need of giving some kind of explanation for their 'misdemeanor' and expressing their friendly relationship with their interlocutor. The actual results showed that the majority of both males and females used the negative politeness strategy, and the apology without the explanation for the mishap was followed by the offer to add up for it. Male participants were even more indirect than females in this case since in addition to 52% of those who chose negative politeness were 12% of those who chose the indirect strategy. Thus, contrary to our expectations, men were more indirect to their male friend than women.

Diagram 10: Question 10 – results

In question number eleven, there is a case of an equal social power relation between the speaker and interlocutor, and the speaker is having lunch with his/her work colleagues, and accidentally (s)he spills water on a colleague sitting next to him/her. Here, the majority of female speakers (88%) used the negative politeness strategy – option 'c', where they used a formal apology followed by the intensifier 'zaista'. In this case the formal apology is not followed by any kind of offer to help the interlocutor. Furthermore, 8% of females used the bald on record strategy – option 'a', where the apology is simply followed by an explanation what they are sorry for. Finally, only 4% of females used the positive politeness strategy – option 'b', where they didn't apologize at all but suggested instead to call a waiter to bring some towels for the interlocutor.
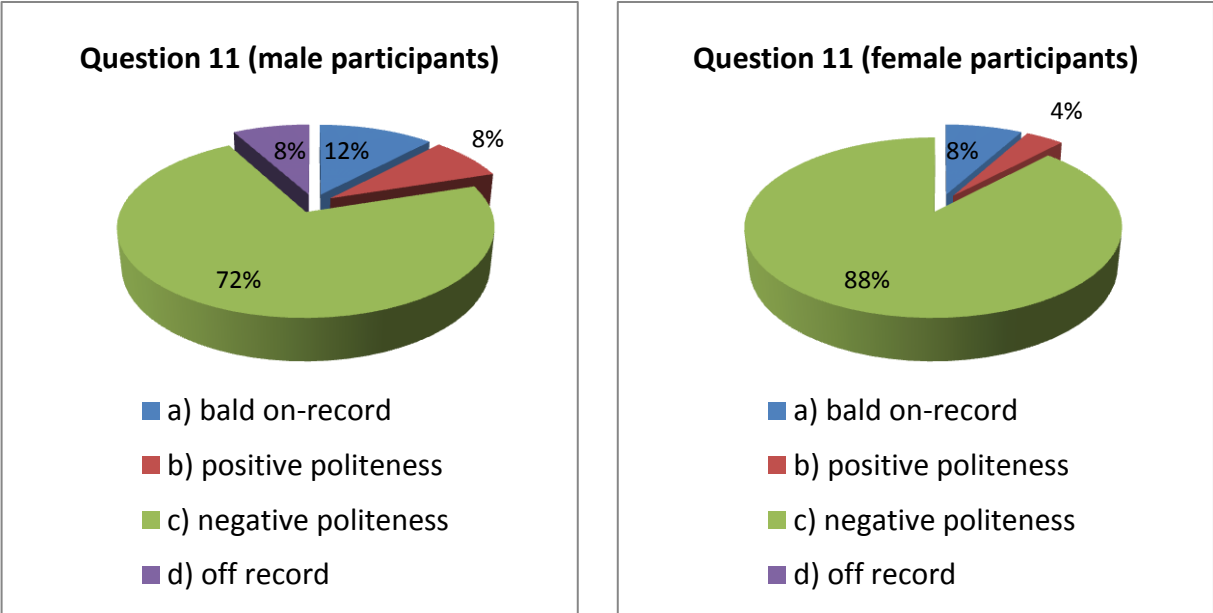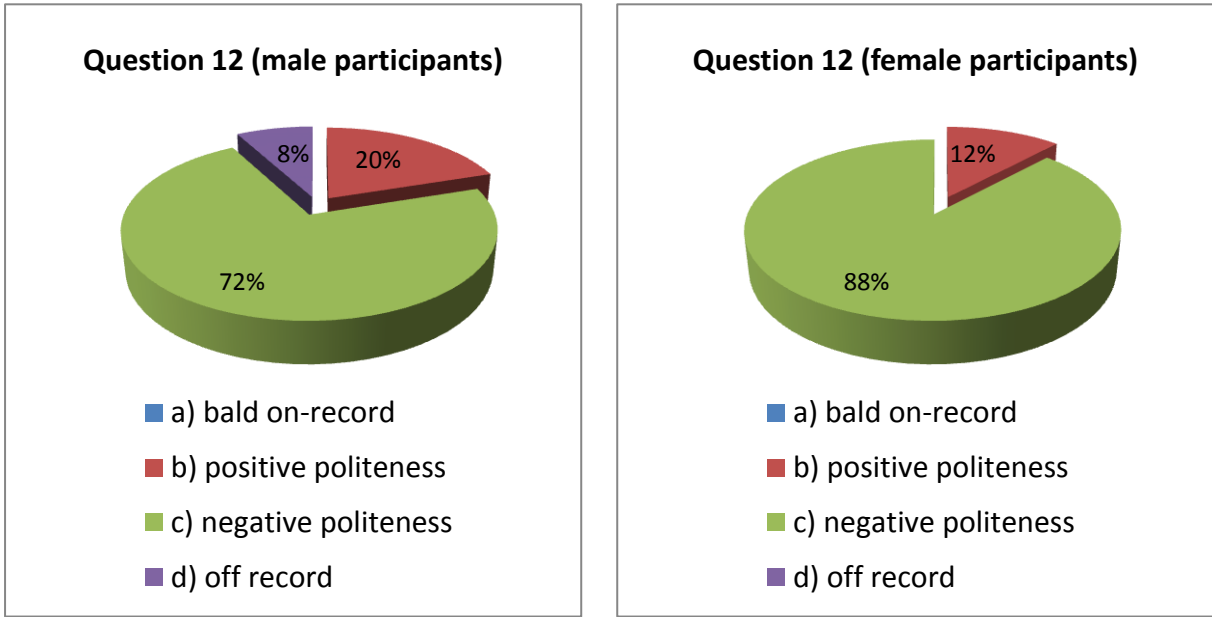

Diagram 11: Question 11 – results

When it comes to males, again the majority of them or 72% used the negative politeness strategy – option 'c', where they apologized directly for the accident thus implying that they realize the weight of their 'misdemeanor' and they completely take over the blame for it. Then 12% of male speakers used the bald on record strategy or option 'a', i.e. a direct apology without emphasizing their own guilt related to this accident. The other 8% of them used the positive politeness strategy – option 'b', while the remaining 8% used the off record

strategy where they exclaimed how inconvenient this situation is, and offered no help or direct apology. We may conclude that the majority of both males and females opted for a negative politeness strategy where they saved the interlocutor's face by directly apologizing, but also showed that they would maintain high social distance between them and their interlocutor in this situation by using very formal language with no offer to help or compensate whatsoever.

In question number twelve we have a situation where there is again an equal social power relation between a speaker and interlocutor, and where the speaker is placed in the institution of municipality and (s)he has to fill out a form, but the speaker doesn't have his/her pen with him/her. The speaker then notices that a man standing next to him/her has a pen, and decides to ask to borrow it for a moment. In this situation where the interlocutor is male, female participants mainly chose the answer with the elements of either positive or negative politeness strategy. Thus 88% of female speakers used the negative politeness strategy – option 'c', where they entitled the man by using the polite 'Mister', and offered an apology for interrupting him first and only then politely asked if they could borrow a pen if he does not need it at the moment. This option is the ultimate face-saving act and completely saves the interlocutor's face and gives him an option to reject the request while still saving his face. The remaining 12% of female speakers used positive politeness strategy or option 'b', where they greeted the gentleman first, then offered an explanation that they forgot the pen and asked for his pen.

Diagram 12: Question 12 – results

When it comes to male participants, again the majority of them, 72%, used the negative politeness strategy – option 'c', where they entitled the man by the polite 'Mister', and offered an apology and politely asked if he could borrow a pen if it is not needed at the moment. Then 20% of male speakers used the positive politeness strategy or option 'b', while the remaining 8% of male participants used the off record indirect strategy where they were simply complaining out loud about how they forgot their pen. None of the female participants used the indirect strategy in this case. From the analysis of these results we may conclude that in the situation where the speaker and his/her interlocutor have equal social power, the interlocutor being an adult male person, the majority of both male and female speakers lean towards more indirect strategies and thus avoid an FTA. This is completely understandable since the speaker is talking to a stranger and hence does not have the need to express any kind of emotions or feelings towards the interlocutor except the usual obligatory respect expressed through language used when talking to strangers or people who are socially distant from us.

In question number thirteen, there is a situation where there is an equal social power relation between the speaker and interlocutor, who in this case could be male or female. Namely, the speaker is situated in the public transport vehicle, it is very crowded inside, and the speaker accidentally steps on someone's foot. It is interesting and very important to mention that none of the participants decided not to perform the speech act of apologizing in this case, which implicates that even though they found themselves in a situation related to equality of social power they still estimated that it was very important to apologize and/or give an explanation for the mishap. Here, the majority of female speakers, 60%, used the bald on record strategy – option 'a', which simply offered an apology ('Izvini'). On the other hand, 28% of them used the negative politeness strategy, option 'c', where they apologized and offered some kind of explanation for the mishap. The remaining 12% wrote different answers from those offered in the questionnaire, which were usually variations to the direct strategy:

- Oprostite.

- Izvinite.

We classified these answers as belonging to the bald on record strategy since the only difference was that participants thought it was important to use 'Vous' form instead of 'Tu' provided in option 'a'.

When it comes to male participants, the situation is somewhat similar, 56% of them opted for the bald on record strategy, which simply offered an apology. 28% used the negative politeness strategy – option 'c', where they apologized and offered an explanation for the mishap, while 8% used the off record, indirect strategy, where they complained about the crowd and didn't say anything to the interlocutor directly. 4% of male speakers used the positive politeness strategy – option 'b', where they expressed they are sorry, gave an explanation and a general statement about how the crowd is unbearable. The remaining 4% wrote different answers from those offered in the questionnaire:

- Izvinite molim vas.

When analysing these answers we can conclude that majority of both male and female participants used the bald on record strategy and thus did not try to avoid an FTA because they didn't offer any further explanation or statement about their mishap. However, the other big percentage of both males and females used the negative politeness strategy and maintained the interlocutor's face wants by minimizing the FTA. The participants mainly used the imperatives oriented towards the listener ('Izvini/te') or the forms that implicate a greater degree of formality in communication ('Izvinjavam se; žao mi je') usually followed by a brief explanation of the circumstances brought about them stepping on someone else's foot.
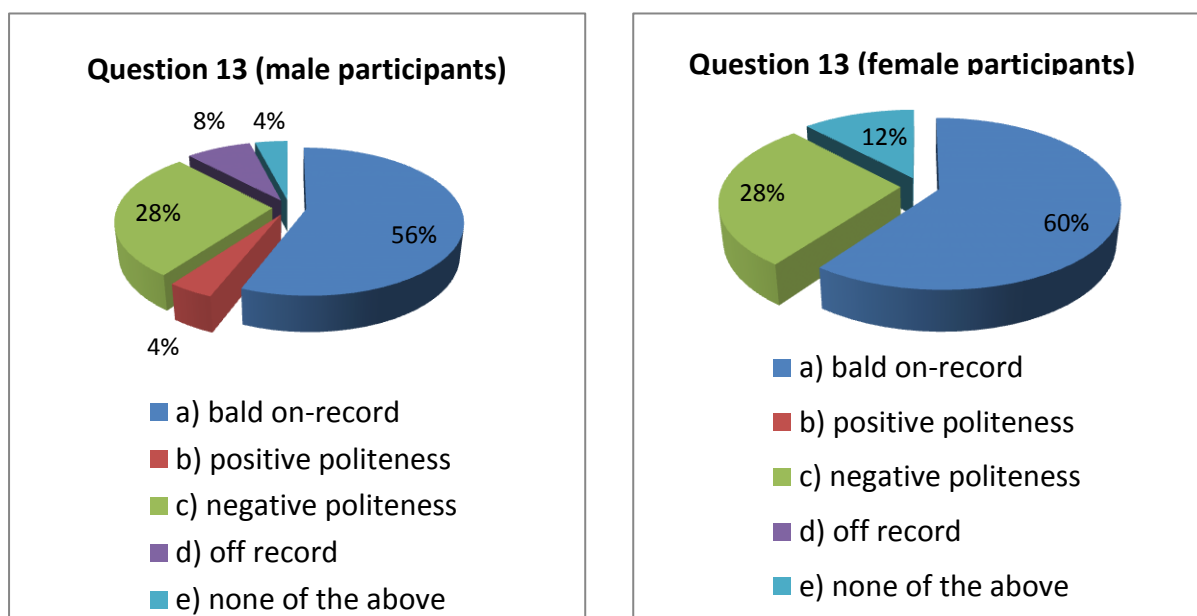
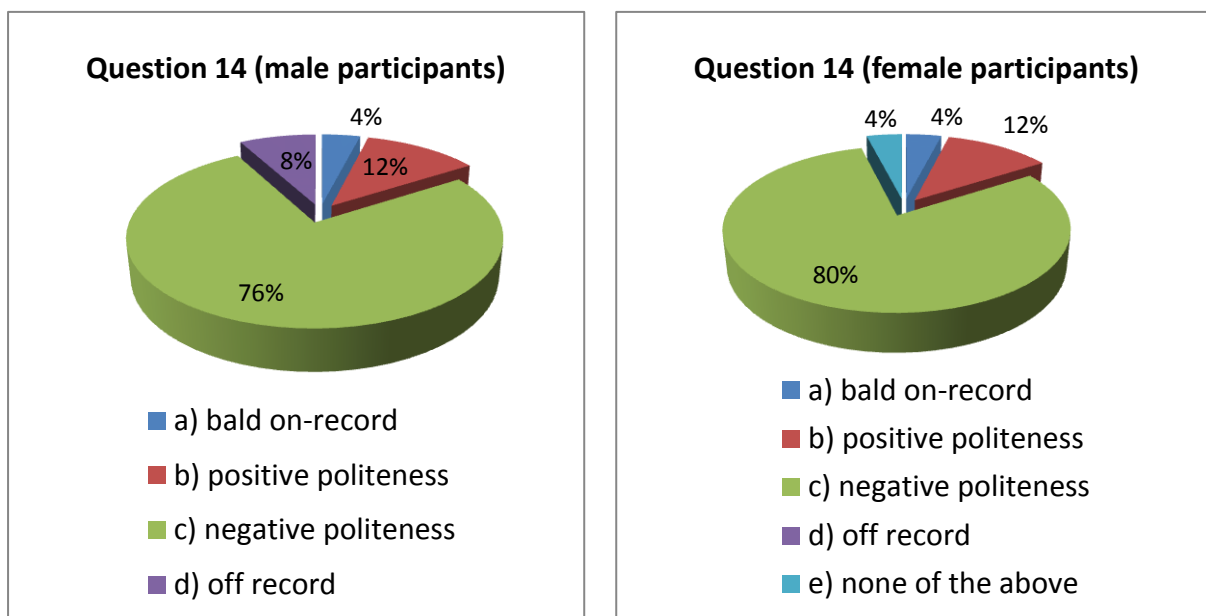**Diagram 13**: Question 13 – results

In question number fourteen, there is a situation where a speaker has lower social power because (s)he is asking a favour from his/her mother who is by social parameters on a higher scale when it comes to power. Namely, the speaker is sitting in a living room and watching a movie, and (s)he would like to have a cup of coffee in that particular moment but would miss out an important part of the movie if (s)he gets up to prepare a cup of coffee. Then, the speaker's mother enters the living room and the speaker has to make a request and ask his/her mother to prepare a cup of coffee for him/her. Contrary to our expectations, 80% of female speakers used the negative politeness strategy, where by using 'molim te' they politely asked their mother to prepare a cup of coffee if she is not busy at the moment. 12% of them used the positive politeness strategy – option 'b', where they expressed how they would really like to have a cup of coffee, then they offered an explanation why they are unable to prepare it themselves at that moment, and eventually asked her to prepare it for them. 4% of females used the bald on record strategy – option 'a', where they make a request by using an imperative form, and the remaining 4% wrote different answers from those offered in the questionnaire:

- Mamice draga, može li kafa pliz?

This answer is also put under the umbrella of direct strategy since the participant used the interrogative form followed by mitigating devices ('pliz' and 'može li?') and bald on record forms may often be followed by expressions such as 'please' and 'would you?' which serve to soften the demand (Yule, 1996, p. 63).

Similarly, the majority of male speakers used the negative politeness strategy, 76% of them, where they politely used 'molim te' in order to ask their mother to prepare a cup of coffee if she is not busy at the moment. 12% of male speakers used the positive politeness strategy – option 'b', and 4% of them used the bald on record strategy – option 'a', where they simply requested a coffee. Also 8% of males used the off record strategy where they simply expressed how they would really enjoy a cup of coffee and that they were unable to do so because they would miss out on a movie. Basically, they avoided to ask their mother explicitly to prepare a cup of coffee for them and left space for her own interpretation of their utterance. None of the female participants used the indirect strategy in this case. It can be concluded that both males and females mostly used the negative politeness strategy when asking a favour from their mother. This shows that they respect her and her time and avoid using FTAs thus giving her an option to reject to do a favour without losing her face.

Diagram 14: Question 14 – results

Finally, in situation number fifteen there is an equal social power relation between the speaker and interlocutor, where the interlocutor is a female and a close friend to the speaker. Here, the speaker is invited for lunch at her place, and after they have started eating the speaker is asking her to pass the salt. Female participants of the questionnaire (80%) mostly opted for the negative politeness strategy – option 'c', 12% of females opted for the positive politeness strategy – option 'b', whereas 8% of them used the bald on record strategy – option 'a', which simply stated 'pass me the salt'. None of the female participants used the indirect strategy. Thus female participants treated their female friend in the same way they treated their mother in the previous situation, the results being almost completely the same. Male speakers, by majority (68%), opted for the negative politeness strategy. Then 20% males used the bald on record strategy by simply stating 'pass me the salt'. The remaining 12% of them used the indirect off record strategy – option 'd', where they simply commented that the meal is great but that it would be even better with a pinch of salt. We may conclude that both males and females used mostly the negative politeness strategy when talking to their female friend.
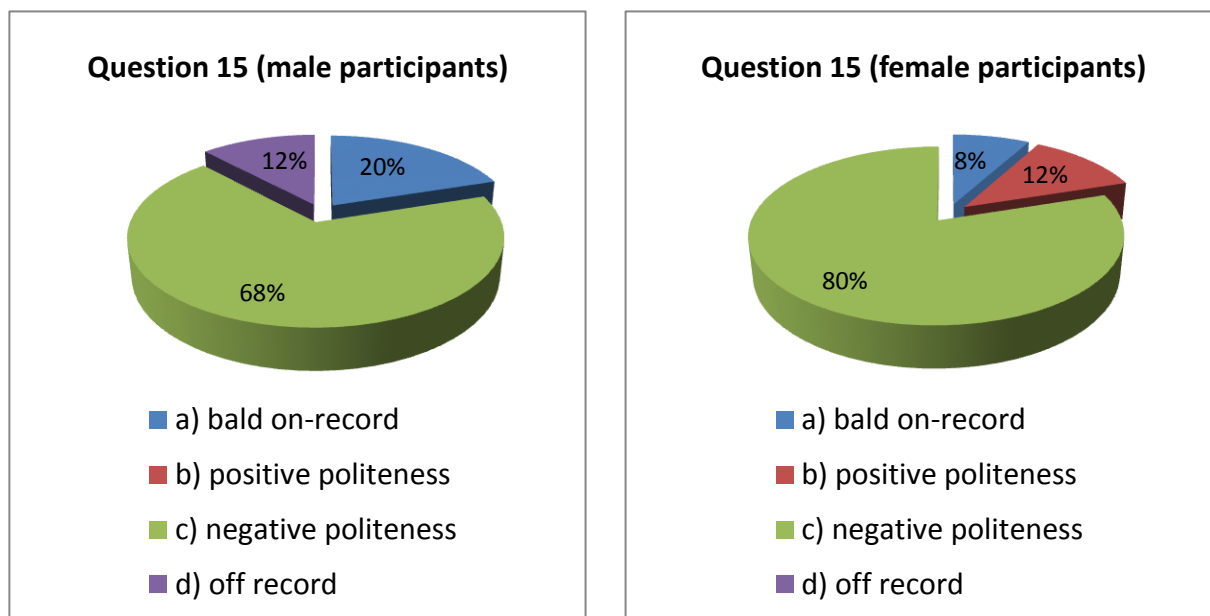
Diagram 15: Question 15 – results

5.5. Differences/similarities between English and Bosnian community

Many comparative studies of various cultures and/or cultural values which are inevitably reflected in the linguistic behaviour reveal the fact that something that is considered linguistically appropriate in one culture/language does not necessarily have to be appropriate in another. From this fact follows the assumption that the native speakers of Bosnian and native speakers of the English language will use different politeness strategies in the same situational context because specific politeness strategies that they use will reflect different cultural patterns of their social communities.

When it comes to the first question or situation described in the questionnaire, there are no significant differences between the answers obtained in this research, i.e. in the Bosnian community, and the answers that Popović collected in the part of the research dealing with politeness strategies of English native speakers. Her results showed that English speakers mainly combined elements of positive and negative politeness strategies and thus used some kind of combined version of the two. She said that they make the request in the form of conventional politeness but do feel the need of accompanying this with further explanation as to why the request is being made in the first place (Popović, 2017, p. 125). In this research as

we have previously seen, the majority of male and female participants opted for either positive or negative politeness strategy. The only possible difference between the two communities might be that English speakers thought it would also be important to explain the reason for them not coming to the lecture, which is also seen as an element of the positive politeness strategy.

When we observe the results obtained regarding the third question describing the student-professor relationship where the speaker has lower social power than his/her interlocutor, we can see that even though the majority of speakers decided to use the negative politeness strategy, there was almost a quarter of the total number of the participants (F: 20%; M: 24%) who opted for the positive politeness strategy. Nevertheless, the results showed that Bosnian speakers still consider it to be very important to show respect to a person with authority or higher social power and thus maintain the social hierarchy. However, Popović mentions an interesting finding she came across when interviewing English speakers. She noticed that within English academic discourse there is a tendency of trying to reduce the hierarchical distinction between the professor and the student by using two forms of addressing (personal name and/or the title) relative to the professor's wants (Popović, 2017, p. 133). We consider that in the Bosnian community it is extremely important to use the title when the student is addressing the professor, or generally the person with higher social power, but further examination would be necessary in order to give some kind of empirical evidence for this, since the participants who decided to use the positive politeness strategy in these circumstances might be seen as those who, like English speakers, would perhaps use both forms of addressing.

When it comes to situation number five where the participant is asking his/her neighbour to buy an aspirin for him/her, Popović claims that English speakers used the negative politeness strategy. Even though the majority of Bosnian speakers used the negative politeness strategy, we also noticed that a quarter of the male speakers actually opted for direct strategies (bald on record and positive politeness). Also, situation number six, where the participant asks his/her female neighbour to take care of their pet for a couple of days, offers significant findings. We definitely see that the rate of imposition in these two situations plays a major role since the favour of taking care for one's pet is much bigger than asking someone to buy an aspirin. Thus in this situation Bosnian participants didn't use the direct strategy at all, and most of them opted for the negative politeness strategy, while according to Popović (2017, p. 148) most of the English speakers' answers focus on the conventional

indirectness, whereas the author did notice examples of combined elements of positive and negative politeness as well. Bosnian speakers on the other hand are in need of completely avoiding the FTA in this case.

When it comes to situation number eight, where the participant is offering an apology to his/her professor because (s)he forgot to bring the professor's book back, there seem to be no major differences between Bosnian and English community. Speakers from both communities prefer to use either positive or negative politeness strategy as well as the combination of elements of the two. When in the position associated with lower social power, speakers believe it is important to offer the conventional apology accompanied by giving an explanation and/or solution to the situation in the form of promise or offer. According to Popović (2017, p. 167), English speakers mostly use the phrase *I'm sorry*, or some of its variants with intensifiers such as *I'm so sorry/I'm really sorry,* followed by an element or substrategy of positive politeness which is giving a promise or an offer to solve the resulting situation. Bosnian speakers also express their regret using very formal phrases of apology (*Žao mi je* and *Izvinjavam se*) which is then accompanied with a promise to bring the book tomorrow or a similar offer (e.g. to go home and get the book immediately, etc).

6. Conclusion

Politeness as a phenomenon is always and inevitably related to the context, and different situations/settings definitely affect the choice of strategies and govern politeness behaviour of both men and women.

The first hypothesis that men and women use different politeness strategies in the same situational contexts, i.e. strategies which differ in relation to the degree of directness, was not confirmed. Namely, our results have shown that both men and women mainly used the same politeness strategy, more precisely negative politeness strategy, in thirteen out of fifteen situational contexts. Accordingly, their answers differed only in two situations, situation number one (performing the speech act of making a request) and situation number nine (where participants take the role of a professor at university and they are about to perform the speech act of apologizing). Generally, the participants avoid to use the direct bald on record strategy. Since there are many other factors influencing this phenomenon, there might be

many reasons for such results. We noted minimal differences in the choice of politeness strategies while being observed under the umbrella of the speaker's as well as interlocutor's gender.

As it is discussed previously, social power is another important aspect observed in this paper. The second hypothesis that both male and female participants use more direct strategies when in the position related to greater social power is not true or is only partially true. In situation number nine, female respondents used the negative politeness strategy and thus our results showed that women are even more indirect when in the position related to higher social power than in the position related to lower social power. On the other hand, male participants used the positive politeness strategy in the same situation and thus we might conclude that men were being more direct than females on this occasion. Therefore, we could see that when it comes to female participants this variable of social power did not affect much their choice of a politeness strategy. So regarding this situation related to higher social power and apologizing, women lean towards more indirect strategies, whereas men lean towards more direct strategies. Thus, an interesting finding is that the degree of directness does not necessarily increase with the rise of social power.

Another important thing we mentioned in our 'Results and Discussion' section was the gender of our interlocutor which in many sociolinguistic researches proved to be another important factor influencing the choice of a politeness strategy. The overall analysis of the individual results, however, did not show any particular difference in sentences addressed to males on the one hand and the ones addressed to women on the other. This question of the impact of the interlocutor's gender should definitely be more thoroughly examined in a research of a larger scope. For example, we could examine and see whether speakers would change their strategies in one and the same situational context when talking to the male and when talking to the female person. It would be interesting to see how the participants would, for example, ask their male and how they would ask their female colleague to open the window (or if they would do it at all).

Also our results showed that the most dominant strategy was the negative politeness strategy when it comes to the speech acts of making a request and asking a favour. However, when it comes to the speech act of apologizing, by closely comparing the individual results we could clearly see that both male and female participants chose more direct strategies (positive politeness and bald on record) more freely. This might be explained by referring to

another factor influencing the politeness behaviour, namely the rate of imposition. Since the rate of imposition is higher in relation to the speech acts of making a request or asking a favour than in relation to the speech act of apologizing, it is understandable that the degree of indirectness is also rising in relation to the former speech acts. The use of both negative and positive politeness generally implies that respondents believe it is important to show respect and solidarity while at the same time avoiding confrontation (face-threatening acts).

All cultures across the world are different in many ways. The same goes for politeness, what is polite and appropriate in one culture does not have to be polite in another culture. For example, we know that in some cultures it is desirable to get the answer from our interlocutor right away and without making any pause, moreover any kind of pause would be considered as embarrassing, whereas in other cultures it is actually polite to make a pause first and only after that to give a reply. Thus we believe that there is a need to investigate linguistic politeness across different cultures in order to be able to draw broader conclusions and determine politeness strategies of men and women.

APPENDIX 1

<div align="center">UPITNIK</div>

Pred Vama se nalazi upitnik koji je namijenjen ispitivanju strategija učtivosti u bosanskom jeziku a dobijeni podaci će se koristiti za potrebe izrade završnog diplomskog rada. Da bi se ovo istraživanje uspješno realizovalo, od suštinske je važnosti da što iskrenije odgovorite na sva postavljena pitanja. Vaša anonimnost će u potpunosti biti zagarantovana i rezultati će biti predstavljeni samo zbirno.

Hvala na izdvojenom vremenu!

Spol: **M**   **Ž**

Vaša starosna dob _____

UPUTA: Molimo Vas da pažljivo pročitate situacije označene rednim brojevima i obilježite odgovor za koji ste se opredijelili. Ukoliko ne izaberete nijedan od ponuđenih odgovora, na označenom mjestu dopišite Vaš odgovor. Odgovarajte spontano i bez previše razmišljanja, onako kako stvarno mislite da biste reagovali u datim situacijama.

1. Vi ste student i trebalo je da odete na fakultet da slušate predavanje ali ste se razboljeli i niste otišli. Zovete kolegu Benjamina s kojim se družite jer želite da Vam posudi svoje bilješke. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Benjamine, posudi mi svoje bilješke sa predavanja.

b) Zdravo, Benjo, kako je bilo na predavanju? Mogu li da uzmem tvoje bilješke da prepišem? Vratit ću ti ih kada se budemo vidjeli sljedeći put.

c) Da li bi molim te mogao da mi posudiš svoje bilješke, ukoliko ti trenutno nisu potrebne?

d) Zdravo, jučer sam se osjećao/la baš loše i nisam mogao/la da dođem na fakultet. Treba da nabavim bilješke od nekoga ko je bio na tom predavanju jer hoću da vidim o čemu je profesor pričao.

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

2. Nalazite se u javnom prijevoznom sredstvu (npr. tramvaj, trolejbus, autobus, i sl.). Velika je gužva i Vi pokušavate doći do izlaza ali jedna žena Vam stoji na putu i nikako da se pomjeri. Vi ćete reći:

a) Pomjeri se.

b) Hoćeš li se pomjeriti da izađem?

c) Možete li se, molim Vas, pomjeriti da izađem?

d) Joj ovih ljudi, niko neće da se pomjeri, čovjek ne može da izađe od njih.

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

3. Vi ste student i treba da napišete rad za koji Vam je neophodna knjiga koju ste vidjeli u kabinetu Vašeg profesora. Odlazite kod profesora u kabinet jer želite da posudite knjigu od njega. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Profesore, posudite mi knjigu, molim Vas.

b) Dobar dan, profesore, kako ste? Znam da ste zauzeti pa samo hoću da posudim knjigu od Vas, vratit ću Vam je za par dana.

c) Izvinjavam se ako smetam, ali da li bih mogao/la da Vas zamolim da mi posudite knjigu ukoliko Vam trenutno ne treba?

d) Dobar dan, profesore, treba da napišem rad, i ova knjiga bi mi bila jako korisna...

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

4. Vi ste student i u prostoriji u kojoj treba da slušate predavanje je veoma toplo i zagušljivo. Želite da otvorite prozor koji je mnogo bliži kolegi nego Vama. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Kolega, otvori prozor.

b) Kolega, ti sjediš do prozora, šta misliš da ga otvorimo?

c) Izvinite kolega, da li biste mogli da otvorite prozor?

d) Ovdje je baš zagušljivo, zar ne?

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

5. Imate glavobolju i cijelo jutro ne možete da ustanete iz kreveta. Zovete Vašeg komšiju Damira sa kojim se družite da ga pitate da svrati do apoteke i kupi Vam aspirin pošto Vi ne možete da izlazite. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Damire, kupi mi aspirin u apoteci, molim te.

b) Zdravo, komšija, kako si? Cijelo jutro me jako boli glava, hajde učini mi uslugu i kupi mi aspirin.

c) Damire, da li bih mogao/la da te zamolim da mi kupiš aspirin?

d) Damire, imam jaku glavobolju i ne mogu da ustanem iz kreveta a nemam aspirin u kući...

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

6. Morate hitno da otputujete na dva dana ali nemate kome da ostavite Vašu mačku. Sjetili ste se Vaše komšinice Sare, i zovete je telefonom da je pitate da Vam pričuva ljubimca dok se ne vratite. Vi ćete joj reći:

a) Saro, pričuvaj mi mačku dok se ne vratim.

b) Zdravo, komšinice, ti umiješ sa mačkama i one te vole, hajde budi drug i pričuvaj mi mačku, ok?

c) Saro, izvini što ti namećem ovakvu obavezu, ali da li bi mogla da mi pričuvaš mačku na dva dana?

d) Saro, ne znam šta da radim, imam problem. Iskrslo mi je nešto i moram hitno da otputujem na dva dana, a nemam kome da ostavim mačku da je pričuva.

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

7. Vi ste student i radite istraživanje za fakultet. Vaš kolega je već obrađivao ranije istu temu, i Vi želite da ga zamolite da pogleda Vaš rad prije nego ga predate. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Pogledaj moj rad, molim te.

b) Zdravo kolega, kako si? Hajde da pogledaš moj rad, može?

c) Kolega, izvinjavam se što ti ovo tražim ali da li bi mogao da pogledaš moj rad, ako nisi u velikoj gužvi?

d) Uh, ovo je stvarno teška tema, kad bi neko mogao malo pregledati moj rad prije nego što ga predam.

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

8. Vi ste student i posudili ste knjigu od profesora koju ste obećali da ćete vratiti na narednom predavanju. Dolazite na predavanje i shvatate da ste zaboravili da ponesete knjigu. Profesor traži knjigu nazad. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Izvinite. Zaboravio/la sam da donesem Vašu knjigu.

b) Baš mi je žao, ali sam bio/la u žurbi i potpuno sam zaboravio/la da Vam donesem knjigu. Donijet ću je na sljedećem predavanju, obećavam.

c) Izvinjavam se, profesore, knjiga će biti sutra na Vašem stolu.

d) Uh, kada čovjek ima puno obaveza, jednostavno zaboravi na nešto...

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

9. Vi ste profesor na fakultetu i obećali ste studentu da ćete mu pregledati rad, međutim niste stigli da to uradite. Student dolazi kod Vas po rad i pita Vas da li ste ga pregledali. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Nisam stigao/la da Vam pregledam rad.

b) Kolega, razumijem da želite da Vam dam komentare na rad što prije, ali imam mnogo radova koje treba da pregledam. Bolje je da dođete sutra, tada ćemo razgovarati o Vašem radu.

c) Kolega, izvinjavam se ali Vaš rad još uvek nije pregledan.

d) Bliži se kraj semestra i svi pitaju za svoje radove... Jako je teško svim studentima izaći u susret za ovako kratko vrijeme.

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

10. Trebalo je da odete kod Vašeg prijatelja Damira da mu objasnite neki kompjuterski program koji mu je potreban za posao, ali ste zaboravili. Idući dan ga zovete da mu se izvinite. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Damire, zaboravio/la sam na naš dogovor, izvini.

b) Ćao, druže, jesi li mnogo ljut? Baš mi je žao što nisam stigao/la da dođem jučer. Hajde da se vidimo neki drugi put da popričamo o tom programu, može?

c) Damire, izvini što nisam došao/la kad smo se dogovorili. Ako je moguće, hoću da ti se iskupim nekako.

d) Ja poštujem tuđe vrijeme ali kada čovjek ima previše obaveza, jednostavno ne stigne da uradi sve što je planirao...

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

11. Nalazite se na poslovnom ručku sa zaposlenima iz Vašeg sektora. Slučajno prosipate vodu po zaposlenom koji sjedi do vas. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Izvinite, prosuo/la sam vodu po Vama.

b) Kolega, hajde da pozovemo konobara da Vam donese ubrus.

c) Zaista se izvinjavam.

d) Uh, ovo je baš neprijatno, zar ne?

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

12. Nalazite se u općini i treba da popunite formular ali ste zaboravili ponijeti olovku. Primjećujete da čovjek koji stoji ispred Vas ima olovku. Vi ćete mu reći:

a) Gospodine, posudite mi olovku.

b) Dobar dan gospodine, zaboravio sam olovku, posudite mi svoju nakratko.

c) Gospodine, izvinjavam se, ali da li bih mogao da Vas zamolim da mi posudite olovku ukoliko Vam trenutno nije potrebna?

d) Joooj, opet sam zaboravio/la olovku... Kako ću sad ispuniti ovaj formular?

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

13. Nalazite se u javnom prijevoznom sredstvu. Velika je gužva i slučajno ste nagazili nečiju nogu. Vi ćete reći:

a) Izvini.

b) Žao mi je, gurnula me gospođa koja stoji iza mene. Ove gužve su strašno naporne.

c) Izvinjavam se, malo sam zamišljen/a pa nisam pazio/la.

d) Uh, ova gužva više ne može da se izdrži...

 e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

14. Kući ste i gledate film. Pije Vam se kafa ali ako ustanete i odete da je napravite samo propustit ćete važan dio filma. U tom trenutku u sobu ulazi Vaša majka i Vi želite da Vam ona napravi kafu. Vi ćete joj reći:

a) Mama, napravi mi kafu.

b) Mama, pije mi se kafa, a ako odem sada da je napravim prospustit ću važan dio filma. Hajde napravi mi jednu, hoćeš?

c) Mama, možeš li mi, molim te, napraviti kafu ako nisi zauzeta?

d) Uh, baš mi se pije kafa, a ako odem sada da je napravim propustit ću važan dio filma. A baaš mi se pije kafa.

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

15. Prijateljica Vas je pozvala kod sebe na ručak. Nakon što ste počeli jesti primjećujete da Vam je potrebna so. Vi ćete joj reći:

a) Dodaj mi so.

b) Ja inače volim više slanu hranu, hajde molim te dodaj mi so.

c) Možeš li mi, molim te, dodati so?

d) Ovo jelo je super, samo kada bih još dodao/la mrvicu soli bilo bi odlično.

e) Ukoliko Vaš odgovor nije nijedan od ponuđenih, navedite šta biste rekli:

_____

APPENDIX 2

Table 1: Female participants				
	a) bald on record	**b) positive politeness**	**c) negative politeness**	**d) off record**	**e) none of the above**
1.	12%	56%	12%	20%	-
2.	-	-	84%	8%	8%
3.	-	20%	80%	-	-
4.	16%	12%	72%	-	-
5.	4%	4%	76%	16%	-
6.	-	-	60%	40%	-
7.	8%	4%	88%	-	-
8.	-	52%	48%	-	-
9.	-	44%	48%	8%	-
10.	28%	24%	48%	-	-
11.	8%	4%	88%	-	-
12.	-	12%	88%	-	-
13.	60%	-	28%	-	12%
14.	4%	12%	80%	-	4%
15.	8%	12%	80%	-	-

Table 2: Male participants				
	a) bald on record	**b) positive politeness**	**c) negative politeness**	**d) off record**	**e) none of the above**
1.	14%	32%	40%	24%	-
2.	-	8%	84%	4%	4%
3.	-	24%	76%	-	-
4.	16%	8%	68%	8%	-
5.	20%	8%	68%	4%	-
6.	-	20%	56%	24%	-
7.	4%	12%	72%	12%	-
8.	12%	48%	40%	-	-
9.	16%	48%	24%	12%	-
10.	20%	16%	52%	12%	-
11.	12%	8%	72%	8%	-
12.	-	20%	72%	8%	-
13.	56%	4%	28%	8%	4%
14.	4%	12%	76%	8%	-
15.	20%	-	68%	12%	-

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