

**'POLITE' AND 'IMPOLITE' REQUESTS AND APOLOGIES IN BRITISH
ENGLISH AND URUGUAYAN SPANISH: A COMPARATIVE STUDY.**

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ABSTRACT

The research hereby presented provides an analysis and interpretation of the realisation patterns of requests and apologies by female and male native speakers of British English and Uruguayan Spanish. The speech acts in question have been analysed following Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) 'negative' and 'positive' politeness distinction.

The data for the study were collected in Uruguay and England by means of a non-prescriptive open role-play designed for the present study and performed by university students in both countries.

The results obtained show that the performance of the above speech acts is motivated by the same social variables in Uruguayan Spanish and British English. The level of (in)directness in requests correlates negatively with the social distance between the interlocutors. In other words, the smaller the social distance between the participants the more direct the request will be. The performance of apologies, on the other hand, is motivated by an interaction between the severity of the offence and social power in that the less social power a speaker has in relation to his/her addressee and the more severe the offence, the more likely s/he is to apologise.

The results also show that higher levels of indirectness together with heavily modified requests are appropriate in British English but not in Uruguayan Spanish where a preference for less tentative requests is expected. In terms of the apologies, this study shows the British employing a much higher number of intensified as well as non-intensified apologies than the Uruguayans.

With respect to the distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' politeness this study shows that both forms of politeness interpreted as the want for association and dissociation respectively, are present in both British and Uruguayan culture with the British showing a tendency to pursue 'negative' politeness more than the Uruguayans. This pattern was also found to be present in the linguistic behaviour British and Uruguayan females when compared to their male counterparts.

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INTRODUCTION

The proposed aim of the research presented here is to carry out a contrastive analysis of the realisation patterns of requests and apologies in British English and Uruguayan Spanish, identifying the similarities and/or differences between the conceptualisation of politeness by female and male native speakers of both languages. By studying the expression of politeness through the aforesaid speech acts we seek to demystify pre-conceived ideas of rudeness and/or politeness usually associated with certain cultures' linguistic behaviour.

Although a lot of work has been carried out on politeness phenomena, mainly through the analysis of the realisation patterns of speech acts in a number of languages such as different varieties of English -British, American, Australian and New Zealand- Canadian French, French, German, Chinese, Japanese, Greek and Hebrew as well as British English and Iberian Spanish, there is not, as yet a comparative analysis of particular kinds of speech acts as realised in Uruguayan Spanish and British English. Through the comparison of the realisation of requests and apologies in these two languages we shall study the differences and similarities in the repertoire of linguistic behaviour as exhibited in the performance of these speech acts relative to the same social constraints. This will enable us to compare the value or function of politeness as realised by the performance of requests and apologies in British English and Uruguayan Spanish from a cross-cultural and sociopragmatic perspective.

Three main reasons have underlined the choice of Uruguayan Spanish as opposed to Iberian Spanish or any other variety of the language. Firstly, the fact that although Spanish has not been as widely researched as English, the realisation of speech acts in Iberian Spanish and British English (Vázquez-Orta, 1995) has been studied through the use of discourse completion tests together with close role-plays administered to native speakers of both languages. Speech acts in Peruvian Spanish have also been studied in relation to English, this time American English (García, 1996) through the use of an open role-play where Peruvians residing in the United States of America acted as informants. Speech acts have also been studied in Cuban Spanish (Ruzcicowka, forthcoming) in relation to American English.

Secondly, Uruguayan linguistics under the orientation of Professor Elizaincín has mainly focused on very specific issues such as forms of address, language in the classroom, frontier dialects, their presence, development and their ramifications for education. Thus nothing of this sort has been done in relation to Uruguayan Spanish probably due to the fact that there are only two universities in the country: each of them has their own orientation and no one yet has taken up the issues presented in this study.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the fact that I am a native speaker of Uruguayan Spanish and although most varieties of Spanish are mutually intelligible in the same way British and American English are, being a native speaker offers an additional advantage: it allows one to have a 'feel' for the language, a 'feel' which often translates into accurate intuitions about the way the language works.

Amongst all the possible speech acts that could have been chosen for the present study requests and apologies were chosen. Requests and apologies were selected since they have been widely researched in a number of languages excluding Uruguayan Spanish. In a request the speaker to a greater or lesser extent imposes on the addressee hence there is a need to put politeness strategies into action in order to mitigate the imposition, in other words, to soften what the addressee might regard as an impingement on his/her freedom of action. Apologies, on the other hand, were chosen since by apologising the speaker admits that a social norm has been violated and that to some extent s/he partly caused it. Thus we have chosen a 'pre-event act' and a 'post-event' act with the aim of obtaining a more balanced picture, before and after the event.

The theoretical framework of this analysis is based on Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) distinction between 'negative' and 'positive politeness'. Despite the fact that Brown and Levinson's original 'face-saving' model of politeness phenomena dates back to 1978 and to its republication in 1987 this time accompanied by an extensive introduction, it has up to now constituted the only comprehensive and explicit empirical theory of politeness. The main building blocks in Brown and Levinson's theory are Goffman's (1967) seminal study of 'face' and Grice's (1975) logic of conversation. Criticisms have been voiced not only in relation to Brown and Levinson's interpretation of the concept of 'face' but also to the universality of Grice's logic of conversation, a point which will be explored in Chapter 1. Brown and Levinson have taken the notion of 'face' to have universal applicability, however, it does not seem to account for the motivation of politeness phenomena in certain non-Western cultures (Matsumoto, 1988, 1989; Gu, 1990), where the notion of 'discernment' as opposed to 'saving-face' appears to be of utmost importance. Brown and Levinson's conception of 'face' has, however, proved adequate to account for the motivation of politeness phenomena in a number of Western languages including Hebrew (Blum-Kulka, 1987), Greek (Sifianou, 1992) and Iberian Spanish (Vázquez Orta and Hickey, 1996). Notwithstanding, the results of these studies cast doubt on the weightiness of 'negative politeness' over 'positive politeness' since what is seen as polite in some Western cultures (e.g. Anglo-Saxon countries) is generally associated with 'negative politeness' or deference strategies, characterised by indirectness in general, whereas other Western cultures (e.g. Greek and Spanish) seem to show a

preference for directness in interaction. There appear to be other norms such as clarity and sincerity which are preferred over non-imposition. In this study we shall try to discover what motivates politeness in Uruguayan Spanish and British English and whether Brown and Levinson's distinction between 'positive' and 'negative politeness' is a suitable concept to explain politeness phenomena in these two cultures.

Having now established the context of politeness theory, more specifically requests and apologies, we now need analytical tools to understand the expression of politeness through the realisation of speech acts. Ideally all the data for this study should be based upon spontaneous requests and apologies, that is to say, on fully naturalistic non-reactive data collection, since in sociolinguistic research we should observe the way people use language when they are not being observed (Labov, 1972). Due to the fact that this is a contrastive study between two cultures it would be physically impossible to implement the above suggestion due to time and financial constraints. But even if there were no time or financial impediments some of the problems of recording naturally occurring requests and apologies arise from their frequency of occurrence. Although requests are fairly easy to find and have a high frequency of occurrence, apologies are much more difficult to encounter. Moreover, it is (very) difficult if not impossible to control certain variables such as social class, educational background, age, etc. due to lack of knowledge about the informants. Therefore the realisation of speech acts has mainly been studied through elicitation techniques such as discourse completion tests and open questionnaires, following Blum-Kulka *et al* (1989) and non-interactive role-plays following Olshtain and Cohen (1981). These methods, however, have been criticised since they fail to provide 'natural' interactive speech acts in their full discourse context. This point will be explored in detail in Chapter 3. Thus a new method of elicitation, one which is of an interactive nature and provides 'natural' speech acts in their full discourse context, has been devised for the present study. This new elicitation method, a non-prescriptive open role-play has been used as the instrument of data collection both in Great Britain and Uruguay.

The instrument for data collection consists of twelve situations eliciting requests and apologies which vary according to context-external and context-internal factors. The situations have been role-played by the informants who have engaged in an interactive language activity involving a genuine interchange of information and opinion rather than just providing data for measurement. The role-play has been contextualised by means of natural, everyday situations which have an element of the unpredictable. The informants, all native speakers of British English and Uruguayan Spanish are university students studying a subject not related to language and/or

linguistics. The role-plays have been recorded. The benefits of this new method as well as its possible limitations will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Following the findings of the major studies carried out in the field, Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), Blum-Kulka *et al* (1989), Olshtain and Cohen (1981), and Holmes (1995) on the subject and my insights as a bilingual and bicultural, my provisional expectations are:

- that Uruguayan females and males will recur to more direct strategies in requesting than their British counterparts, who will recur to more indirect strategies;
- that females in both cultures will recur to more indirect strategies than males;
- that the most preferred strategy for requesting in both languages will be conventional indirectness;
- that it will be difficult to distinguish between Uruguayan and British conventional indirectness in terms of speaker's intentionality, or what goes on in the mind of the speaker;
- that British females and males will express a higher frequency of apologies when compared with their Uruguayan counterparts;
- that English apologies will show a more diverse spectrum of illocutionary force indicating devices.

Chapter 1 will provide the general survey of the main exponents of politeness theory up to the time of writing. It will also lay the foundations for Chapter 2. Chapter 2 will provide a general view of speech acts narrowing the focus to two specific speech acts, requests and apologies, which bring their own dynamic and require different analytical tools. Having singled out two speech acts, we now need analytical tools to understand the phenomenon of politeness through their study. Thus in Chapter 3 we will discuss the different methodological approaches for the study of politeness phenomena, the structure of the study, its methodology, the results of the pilot and the coding scheme. In Chapters 4 and 5 the findings of the study will be presented and discussed, in the former the realisation of requests and in the latter the realisation of apologies. Finally we will present the conclusions of the study; the different and/or similar perceptions of politeness in British English and Uruguayan Spanish will be discussed as well as the implications for future research.

CHAPTER 1

POLITENESS THEORY

1.1. On the history of the term

Politeness is not something human beings are born with but something which is acquired through a process of socialisation. Politeness in this sense is not a 'natural' phenomenon which existed before mankind but one which has been socioculturally and historically constructed.

The English term 'polite' dates back to the fifteenth century and etymologically derives from Late Medieval Latin *politus* meaning 'smoothed', 'accomplished'. Thus 'polite' was usually associated with concepts such as 'polished', 'refined', and so on when referring to people. According to *The Oxford Dictionary of Etymology*, in the seventeenth century, a polite person was 'of refined courteous manners'. Although the term does not provide us with any direct clues as to its historical connections, its definition associates it with the social conduct of the upper classes. In contrast, the etymology of the Spanish, French, German and Dutch equivalents: *cortesía*, *courtoisie*, *höflichkeit* and *hoffelijkheid*, respectively, help us to trace the origins of the phenomenon back to court life.¹

It is in the Middle Ages that Western feudal knights, influenced by the courteous behaviour of the secular upper classes, or at least some of the leading groups within those classes, start distinguishing themselves from the rest of the people by expressing and thus identifying themselves with a set of courtesy values such as loyalty and reciprocal trust (Ehlich, 1992). Such values were to be followed if one wished to behave appropriately at court, achieve success, win honours and the like. According to Ehlich (1992:94) this was the behaviour adopted by the courtly knights surrounding the great feudal lords which later spread into wider social classes.

The etiquette of this courteous behaviour was not only public but private and became a respectable social behavioural model to be aspired to by the rest of the social classes. Some examples of public etiquette are found in the codification of norms for weddings and burials and those of private etiquette can be seen in the norms to be followed in dealing with females and/or males (Haverkate, 1994).

¹It should be noted that English has borrowed French terms such as 'courtesy', 'courteous', etc. where the connection with 'court' is as clearly seen as in the previously mentioned languages.

During the Renaissance period the concept of *courtoisie* starts becoming associated with that of *civilité*. The upper classes are not just concerned with the cultivation of social manners and social tact but with a civilised society in which the consideration that one person owes to another becomes crucially important in order to maintain and balance a social hierarchy where not just social distance but reciprocal obligations and duties between those who are higher and lower needs to be determined (Elias, 1969). Thus, the aim of this courteous or polite behaviour is that of maintaining the equilibrium of interpersonal relationships within the social group.

1.2. Politeness: social or individual entity?

As soon as one talks about politeness one is referring directly and/or indirectly to society. Although the act of behaving politely is performed by an individual agent, that act is intrinsically a social one since it is socially determined in the first place and it is geared towards the structuring of social interaction. In order for an act to be regarded as 'polite' it has to be set upon a standard, a standard which lies beyond the act itself but which is recognised by both the actor and the hearer or a third party who might be part of the interaction. This standard is based on collective values or norms which have been acquired by individual agents usually early in their lives as part of a socialisation process.² Those norms or collective values, such as the deference shown to elderly people, the physical distance we maintain from other people in order to feel comfortable, etc. have been 'programmed' early in our lives and thus determine the individual's subjective definition of rationality (Hofstede, 1984:18), a definition of rationality which may or may not be shared by different societies.

Politeness, then, is not a characteristic inherent to the action itself but is constituted by an interactional relationship, a relationship based upon a standard shared, developed and reproduced by individuals within a social group. At the individual level politeness is represented by the wide range of alternative ways in which an actor can perform an act within the shared standard. This standard is thus a collective one, one which is common to people belonging to a certain group but maybe different between people belonging either to other groups or categories within those groups.

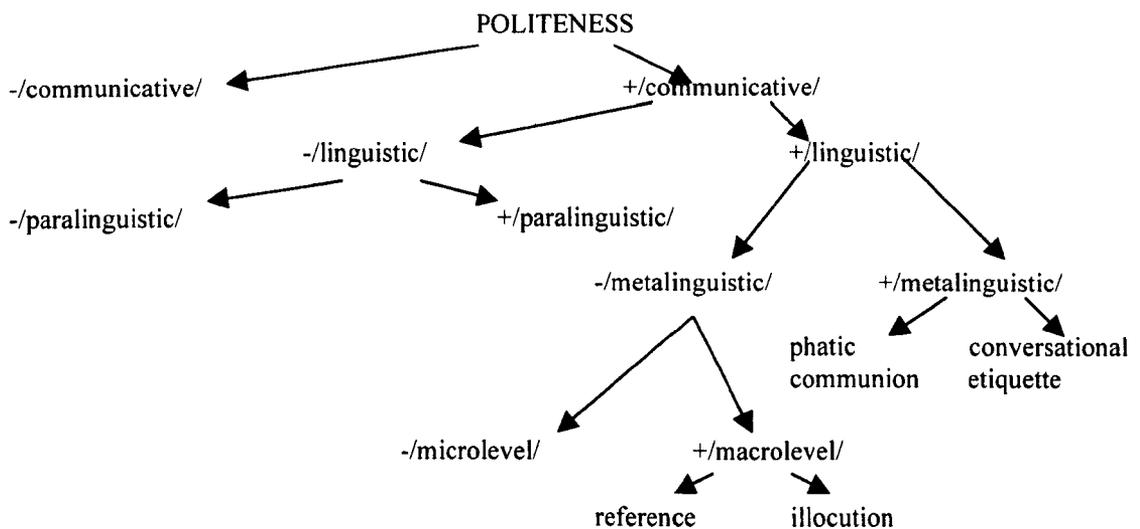
As Werkhofer (1992) explains, politeness can be seen as:

² The definition of value employed here is that given by Hofstede (1984:18) 'a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others'.

The power of a symbolic medium that, being used and shaped in acts of individual speakers, also represents social standards of how to behave or of what kind of conduct is considered “just and right”. (p.156)

Politeness is thus a form of social interaction, a form that mediates between the individual and the social. The polite or impolite act is performed by an individual whose choices for the instrumentality of such an act are based upon collective norms and whose motivation in performing the act is that of structuring social interaction.

Politeness can be expressed through communicative and non-communicative acts. Haverkate (1987:28)³ provides the following diagram in order to explain the different manifestations of politeness:



Although of limited usefulness due to the lack of unanimous agreement as to what is interpreted as communicative, the above diagram provides a point of departure for describing various categories of politeness. It should be noted that Haverkate is the only scholar to date who has attempted to delineate the different types of politeness. Non-communicative politeness consists of acts which are merely instrumentally realised, i.e. giving a seat to an elderly person on a bus. The social norms related to such acts are usually found in books of etiquette.

³ Please note that the original diagram was in Spanish and that we are hereby offering a translation into English.

Communicative politeness can be linguistic or non-linguistic and the latter can either be paralinguistic or non-paralinguistic. The difference between the two types of non-linguistic politeness is that the first one, paralinguistic, is expressed through gestures combined with verbal signs, i.e. when a speaker touches his hat and says 'Morning!'. The second one, non-paralinguistic, is merely expressed through gestures and no verbal signs, i.e. when a speaker moves his/her head to indicate interest in what a hearer is saying.

Linguistic politeness consists of metalinguistic and non-metalinguistic acts. The aim of the former is to establish and maintain social contact, at the same time trying to avoid any kind of social tension. The type of conversation which characterises this type of politeness is called phatic communion⁴ together with conversational etiquette. Conversational etiquette consists of three maxims: do not shout, pay attention to what your interlocutor is saying and do not interrupt the speaker.⁵

Non-metalinguistic politeness is what is commonly understood as linguistic politeness and will be the principal subject of this thesis.

1.3. Perspectives on politeness

According to Fraser (1990) one can effectively distinguish four clearly different views of politeness: the 'social norm' view, the 'conversational maxim' view, the 'face-saving' view and his own 'conversational-contract' view.

The 'social norm' view reflects the historical understanding of politeness. It assumes that each society has its own prescriptive social rules for different cultural contexts. Those explicit rules generally refer to speech style, degrees of formality and the like, and have not only been codified in etiquette manuals but enshrined in the language. One example of these rules is the distinction some languages make between a formal form of address *vous* and an informal *tu*. Although this view has few adherents amongst researchers it can be evidenced in parental efforts to educate

⁴The term phatic communion was first used by Malinowski (1930). Some of the characteristics of phatic communion are to continue talking, to avoid silence and to talk about stereotypical topics. An example can be seen in the use of tag phrases in a number of languages such as 'n'est-ce pas' in French; 'não é' in Portuguese; '¿verdad que sí?' or even '¿no?' in Spanish and 'nicht wahr' in German with the purpose of either eliciting a response or at least an acknowledgement that communication is taking place. It should be noted that although phatic communion is present in all cultures in one way or another, its expression is culture-specific.

⁵Not everyone agrees with this last maxim, for a discussion see Lycan (1977).

children in socially acceptable ways (Clancy, 1986; Blum-Kulka, 1990; Snow *et al*, 1990) and in the claims of some British conservative policy makers who consider the 'decline' in manners to have a more destructive effect on social order than crime (Anderson, 1996).

The 'conversational-maxim' view postulates a Politeness Principle together with Grice's Co-operative Principle. The main adherents to this view are Lakoff (1973, 1989), Leech (1983) and to a lesser extent Edmondson (1981) and Kasher (1986). The 'face-saving' view was proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) and has been up to now the most influential politeness model. The 'conversational-contract' view was presented by Fraser and Nolen (1981) and Fraser (1990) and converges in many ways with the 'face-saving' view. It has been said to be 'the most global perspective on politeness' Kasper (1994:3207).

1.4. Conversation as a co-operative activity

Before we proceed to a discussion of the different accounts of linguistic politeness theory, we should refer to some of the principles of conversation which have been the starting point for some of the explanations of politeness phenomena. One of the most important contributions to the study of pragmatics has been that of Grice's (1975) Co-operative principle (CP) and his Maxims of Conversation which were formulated on the assumption that the main purpose of conversation is 'the effective exchange of information' (Grice 1989:28). Grice was merely concerned about the rationality and/or irrationality of conversational behaviour rather than any other general characteristics of conversation. Although the CP is not directly related to politeness, its formulation has constituted a basis of reference on which other principles, such as politeness principles, have been built in order to explain linguistic phenomena that could not be explained by the CP.

Grice observed that conversation between interactants is usually coherent and continuous, thus he assumed there must be some kind of prior agreement between the participants concerning the principles of the exchange, an agreement which makes the participants recognise common aims and specific ways of achieving them. According to Grice there is an overriding principle of conversation which participants will be expected to observe, the CP:

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged (p. 45)

According to this principle, we interpret language on the assumption that the user is obeying four maxims: quantity, quality, relation and manner. Each of these maxims consists of one or more sub-maxims which govern appropriate conversational behaviour. The maxim of quantity requires one to make one's contribution as informative as is required, and not to make it more informative than is required. The maxim of quality requires one to make one's contribution one that is true, not say what one believes is false and not to say something for which one lacks adequate evidence. The maxim of relation simply states that the utterance should be relevant. And finally the maxim of manner requires one to avoid obscurity of expression and ambiguity, to be brief and orderly.

Sometimes it is very easy to obey all four maxims at once as in the following example:

- 1) Son: Where are the cornflakes?
Mother: They're in the kitchen cupboard.⁶

In this example the Mother has answered clearly, following the maxim of Manner, truthfully, following the maxim of Quality, has given the necessary amount of information, following the maxim of Quantity, and has directly answered her son's question, following the maxim of Relation.

Grice says that the first three maxims refer to what is said while the fourth one refers to how something is said. He adds that these maxims characterise ideal exchanges but the maxims are often flouted for a variety of communicative purposes, including motives of politeness, as in the following example:

- 2) A: Do you like my new hair style?
B: Well... it's very different, isn't it?

These departures call for specific interpretation which he calls 'conversational implicature'. Instead of consistently observing the maxims, the speaker may flout the maxims and thus imply something rather different from what s/he actually says. Thus

⁶ These examples were created for the purposes of illustrating the way in which Grice's maxims work.

the addressee is 'triggered' to look for a specific point in the conversation by which to interpret the speaker's intended meaning, which s/he did not explicitly state.

Grice describes the observance of the CP and the systematic exploitation of its maxims as reasonable and rational behaviour and thus he assumes they are universal. However the notion of rationality of co-operation between humans, which in his view appears to be totally indisputable is not shared by everyone. Leech and Thomas (1988), amongst others, claim that this assumption is too broad and sweeping. When it comes to the issue of universality, Hymes (1986) states that the maxims can only be considered to be universal if they are reinterpreted as dimensions of behaviour. Keenan (1976) in her study of Malagasy speakers, noticed that the observance of the maxim of quality was very much constrained by social features related to the interaction, making the maxim culturally dependent as opposed to universal. Malagasy speakers, especially men, are reluctant to explicitly state information which may prove to be false, in particular information about future events, since new information appears to be rare and less easily accessible. Loveday (1983), amongst others, claims the maxims are culturally relative. He says that in Japan the maxim of manner is not very frequently attended to since clarity and explicitness can be interpreted as offensive in most contexts. In some cultures such as the Jewish American and the Black American, contrariness and immodesty are seen as co-operative ways of behaving, while in others such as the Chinese and the Vietnamese, co-operative behaviour means saying little enough to avoid causing conflict (Clyne, 1994). Wierzbicka (1985) goes even further and describes the universality of the logic of conversation as ethnocentric since she claims it is based upon the English language. Despite disagreement on the idea of universality and rationality, scholars such as Lakoff (1973), Brown and Levinson (1978) and Leech (1983), among others, not only acknowledge Grice's contribution to the theory of conversation but expand it even further.

1.5. Lakoff's rules of politeness

Lakoff (1973) was among the first linguists to adopt Grice's universal construct of conversational principles in order to account for politeness phenomena. Expanding on Grice's views, she argues that grammars should not only specify the applicability of grammatical rules but also include pragmatic factors, since as she says 'the pragmatic component is as much a part of the linguist's responsibility as is any other part of

grammar' (p.296). She claims that pragmatic rules will allow us to determine which utterances are deviant and respond neither to a semantic nor to a syntactic problem but to a pragmatic explanation. Thus Lakoff integrates Grice's conversational maxims with her own rules of politeness in order to account for pragmatic competences and thus fall within the domain of linguistics. She proposes two rules of pragmatic competence:

1. Be clear.
2. Be polite.

Lakoff explains that the rules of pragmatic competence sometimes coincide in their effects and thus reinforce each other, although they are more often in apparent conflict, in which case one will take precedence. If the aim is for the message to be communicated, the speaker will concentrate on clarity, while if consideration of the status of the participants and/or the situation is paramount, the speaker will concentrate on politeness and thus sacrifice clarity. An example of the latter can be seen in example 2) cited above and in everyday encounters, in which interlocutors are generally more interested in establishing relationships as opposed to conveying precise information. In Lakoff's view avoidance of offence appears to be a more important consideration than the achievement of clarity.

Lakoff condenses Grice's maxims by her first pragmatic rule since Grice's maxims mainly refer to clarity in conversation. She further claims that the maxims of conversation are violated in everyday interaction and that communication would be a more straightforward activity if this were not the case. When it comes to her second rule, Lakoff postulates three sub-rules:

- (a) don't impose.
- (b) give options.
- (c) make A feel good, be friendly.

The first sub-rule is concerned with distance and formality, the second one with deference and the third one with making the addressee feel liked and wanted.

In 1975, Lakoff rephrased the rules of politeness as follows:

1. Formality: keep aloof
2. Deference: give options
3. Camaraderie: show sympathy

Although Lakoff has not until now specified what she takes politeness to be, it can be deduced from her sub-rules that it has to do with not intruding into other people's territory, letting the addressee take his/her own decisions and making the addressee 'feel good', hence politeness appears to be closely related to the avoidance of conflict. In her later work (1979:64) she describes politeness as a tool used for reducing friction in personal interaction.

Lakoff (1973) claims that Grice's maxims fall under her first pragmatic rule, since they mainly concentrate on the clarity of the conversation. However, she later claims that 'clarity' falls under her first rule of politeness: 'don't impose' and that the rules of conversation can thus be looked at as subcases of her first rule since the goal is to communicate the message in the shortest time possible with the least difficulty, without imposing on the addressee. Thus, she is implying that the rules of conversation are one type of politeness rule and since Grice considers his rules of conversation to be universal, Lakoff would be suggesting here, that this type of politeness is of universal applicability.

When it comes to the reformulation of her rules of politeness, she does not provide a definition of the terms she uses; instead she appears to equate formality with aloofness, camaraderie with showing sympathy. However, without a definition of how aloofness, deference and camaraderie work in a particular society it is very difficult to see how politeness will be expressed in that particular group, and thus one cannot make claims for the universality of the concept.

According to Brown (1976:246) the problem with Lakoff's analysis is that she does not offer an integrating theory which places her rules of politeness in 'a framework which explains their form in terms of social relationships and expectations about humans as interactants'. Franck (1980) critically comments on the status of Lakoff's rules since she places pragmatic rules on a level with other linguistic rules and thus loses the distinction between sentence meaning and communicative function. Notwithstanding, Lakoff has greatly contributed to the study of politeness phenomena by extending the scope of its study, and her rules have been applied to valuable research in this area (Smith-Hefner, 1981; Tannen, 1981; Pan, 1995).

1.6. Leech's Principles and Maxims of Interaction

Leech (1983), like Lakoff, adopts Grice's construct of conversational principles and elaborates a thorough analysis of politeness in terms of principles and maxims within

a pragmatic framework in which politeness is seen as a regulative factor in interaction. In his extension of Grice's framework Leech attempts to explain why people often convey meaning indirectly. The author regards politeness as the key pragmatic phenomenon for indirectness and one of the reasons why people deviate from the CP.

One very important point in Leech's theory of politeness is the distinction he makes between a speaker's illocutionary goal and a speaker's social goal. In other words, the speech act/s the speaker intends to perform by the utterance, and the position the speaker adopts: being truthful, polite, ironic, etc. He elaborates a pragmatic framework which consists of two main parts: textual rhetoric and interpersonal rhetoric, each of which is constituted by a set of principles. Politeness is treated within the domain of interpersonal rhetoric, which consists of three sets of principles: Grice's co-operative principle (CP), which he adopts with its four maxims, his own 'politeness principle' (PP) and his 'irony principle' (IP). The author sees the IP as a second-order principle which allows a speaker to be impolite while seeming to be polite; the speaker is ironic by superficially breaking the CP. The IP then overtly conflicts with the PP, though it enables the hearer to arrive at the point of the utterance by way of implicature, indirectly.

Leech not only regards the PP as having the same status as Grice's CP but sees it as the reason for the non-observance of the Gricean maxims. His PP is constructed in a very similar format to the CP and is analysed in terms of maxims: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement and sympathy; all very subjective values impossible to measure. Leech states that in communication the CP and the PP interact with each other; the CP and its maxims are used to explain how an utterance may be interpreted to convey indirect messages and the PP and its maxims are used to explain why such indirectness might be used. Leech, like Lakoff, says these two principles can conflict and that where there is conflict the speaker will have to sacrifice one of them. If the speaker sacrifices the PP in favour of the CP, s/he will be putting at risk the maintenance of 'the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being co-operative in the first place' (1983:82).

Leech's (1983:123) maxims have a set of pragmatic scales associated with them which are considered by the hearer to determine the degree of tact or generosity appropriate in a given speech situation:

1. the 'cost/benefit' scale, which describes how the action is assessed by the speaker to be costly or beneficial either to the speaker or to the addressee;
2. the 'optionality' scale, which describes to what extent the action is performed at the choice of the addressee;

3. the 'indirectness' scale, which describes how much inference is involved in the action;
4. the 'authority' scale, which describes the degree of distance between the speakers in terms of power over each other;
5. the 'social distance' scale, which describes the degree of solidarity between the participants.⁷

According to these scales, if the speaker perceives an increased cost and social distance, the greater the effort made by him/her to provide the addressee with more options and the greater the need for indirectness. Blum-Kulka (1987, 1990) and Sifianou (1992) in their studies of politeness phenomena, have shown this view to be defective since politeness and indirectness do not co-vary.

Leech (1983:133) notes that not all his maxims are of equal importance. He says that the tact maxim is more powerful than the generosity maxim, and that the approbation maxim is more powerful than the modesty maxim. Thus he suggests that his concept of politeness is more focused on the addressee than on the speaker. However, it is not very clear in which way one can judge that the tact maxim focuses more on the addressee than the generosity maxim, and the same with the approbation and the modesty maxims. This seems to be culturally dependent, since different cultures are likely to place higher values on different maxims. Although Leech acknowledges the possibility of cross-cultural variability on this point, his theoretical framework remains unchanged, and thus without an appropriate understanding of how the maxims vary cross-culturally it would be impossible to apply them to this study.

Furthermore, Leech points out that each maxim is comprised of two sub-maxims, thus the tact maxim consists of a) minimise cost to other, b) maximise benefit to other; in the case of the generosity maxim, we have a) minimise benefit to self, and b) maximise cost to self, and so forth with the rest of the maxims. He also states that within each maxim, sub-maxim b) seems to be less important than a). Hence he is claiming that there is a 'more general law that negative politeness (avoidance of discord) is a more weighty consideration than positive politeness (seeking concord)' (p.133). Once again, we are faced with the problem of cross-cultural variability: different cultures may vary in their assessment of each sub-maxim.

Leech also offers a distinction between what he calls 'absolute' and 'relative' politeness. The former has a positive and a negative pole since some speech acts, such as offers, are intrinsically polite whereas others such as orders, are intrinsically

⁷ The 'authority' and 'social distance' scales are based upon Brown and Gilman's (1960) concepts of 'power' and 'solidarity', and are roughly equivalent to them.

impolite. He thus views positive politeness as a way of maximising the politeness of polite illocutions and negative politeness as a way of minimising the impoliteness of impolite illocutions. The latter, he says, depends on the context and the situations since the CP and the PP will operate differently in different cultures.

As Fraser (1990) points out, the problem with this approach is that Leech asserts that particular types of illocutions are, *ipso facto*, polite or impolite. He further states that 'while the performance of an illocutionary act can be so evaluated, the same cannot be said of the act itself' (p.227). The problem here appears to be trying to define an act as intrinsically polite and/or impolite without taking into account the cultural and situational context. Thus, ordering, which he considers to be intrinsically impolite, might not be so in a classroom situation in which the teacher orders one of his/her students to do something. Another major problem with Leech's account as pointed out by several scholars (Dillons et al 1985; Thomas, 1986; Brown and Levinson, 1987; Lavandera, 1988; Fraser, 1990 and Turner, 1996) is that he leaves open the question of how many principles and maxims may be required in order to account for politeness phenomena, hence theoretically the number of maxims could be infinite.

1.7. Brown and Levinson's Theory of Politeness

Politeness as a linguistic theory was first systematised by Brown and Levinson (B&L) (1978). Extending ideas from scholars like Grice the authors carried out a comparative study of the way in which speakers of three unrelated languages, English, Tamil and Tzeltal, departed from the observance of the conversational maxims for motives of politeness. B&L noticed many similarities in the linguistic strategies employed by speakers of these three very different languages and observed the employment of the same strategies in other languages, thus assuming the universality of politeness as a regulative factor in conversational exchanges:

one powerful and pervasive motive for not talking Maxim-wise is the desire to give some attention to face...Politeness is then a major source of deviation from such rational efficiency, and is communicated precisely by that deviation. (1978:100)

In order to account for the linguistic similarities they observed in language use and understanding communication as purposeful and rational activity, B&L refer to a

Model Person (MP). An MP, consists of a fluent speaker of a natural language who is endowed with the properties of rationality, that is to say, the ability to reason from ends to means that will satisfy those ends, and 'face'. A key concept in B&L's theory is the idea of 'face'. B&L's interpretation of the term derives from Goffman (1967) and from the English folk terms 'losing face' and 'saving face'. The concept of 'face' will be discussed later on in this chapter.

1.7.1. Politeness strategies

B&L assume that all competent adult members of a society are concerned about their 'face', the self-image they present to others, and that they recognise other people have similar 'face' wants. They distinguish two aspects of 'face' which they claim are universal and refer to two basic desires of any person in any interaction, 'negative face' and 'positive face'. The former is a person's desire to be unimpeded by others, to be free to act without being imposed upon. The latter is a person's wish to be desirable to at least some other who will appreciate and approve of one's self and one's personality. 'Positive face' is fundamentally determined by the culture and by the social group to which the participant belongs; it is ultimately of an idiosyncratic nature. 'Face', they claim, is 'something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction' (1978:66). Since one's own face wants can only be sustained by the actions of other, they claim it is in everyone's interest to co-operate in order to maintain each other's face.

Besides having 'face', competent adult members are rational agents, they will choose means of satisfying their goals as efficiently as possible. B&L, as previously said, claim that both the concept of 'face' and the rational behaviour of individuals to satisfy those 'face' wants are universal human properties.

Whereas Leech proposes that certain types of communicative acts are intrinsically polite or impolite, B&L suggest that certain acts inherently threaten the 'face' needs of one or both participants. In other words, both authors agree there is a threat to specific 'face' wants. However, what is intrinsically costly or beneficial, in Leech's words, or what is inherently threatening or non-threatening in B&L's words, is determined by the theoretical framework used to account for politeness phenomena.

B&L (1987:65) regard face-threatening acts (FTAs) as those acts which run contrary to the addressee's and/or the speaker's positive and/or negative 'face'.

Requests, orders, threats, suggestions and advice are examples of acts which represent a threat to 'negative face' since the speaker will be putting some pressure on the addressee to do or refrain from doing a specific act. Expressing thanks and accepting offers could also be said to threaten the speaker's 'negative face', since in the first case, they could be interpreted as a way of acknowledging a debt and thus the speaker will be humbling her/his own 'face'; in the second case, the speaker will be 'constrained to accept a debt and to encroach upon the hearer's negative face' (1987:67). Apologies and accepting compliments are seen as FTAs to the speaker's 'positive face' since in the first case, the speaker will be indicating that s/he regrets doing a prior FTA and thus s/he will be damaging his/her own face; in the second case the speaker might feel that s/he has to reciprocate the compliment in one way or another (1987:68). In their view practically any human interaction comprises communicative acts whose content threaten the 'face' of the speaker and/or addressee, thus as Kasper (1990:195) points out, B&L regard communication as 'fundamentally dangerous antagonistic behaviour'.

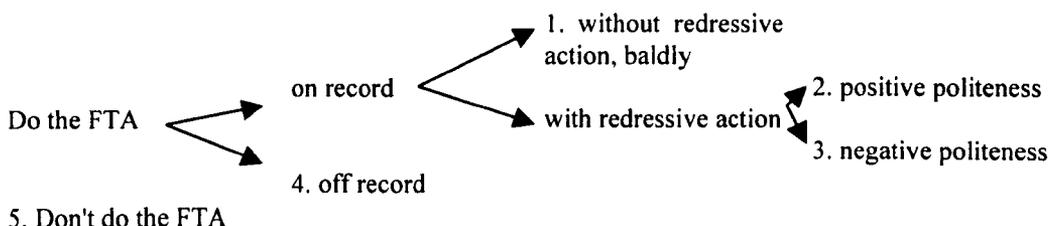
Like Leech, B&L (1978:79) propose a scale designed to evaluate the degree of politeness required in a specific situation. B&L claim that a speaker assesses the required face work according to three independent and culturally-sensitive social variables, which they claim are universal. First is the social distance (D) between the speaker and hearer, where the speaker and the addressee are on a scale of horizontal difference. The second variable is the relative power (P) between the participants, where the speaker and the addressee are located on a scale of vertical difference. The third variable is the absolute ranking (R) of impositions in a particular culture, the degree of imposition intrinsic to a particular act. B&L regard this variable as culturally-dependent since it is assumed that cultures rank acts with reference to their degree of imposition, which will vary according to the culture. The values of D, P and R are then added in order to know the amount of 'face' work to be performed. Thus if the speaker evaluates D, P and R as minimal, s/he might request his hearer to close the window by simply uttering:

3) Please close the window.

Whereas if the speaker evaluates maximum D, maximum P and maximum R, s/he may utter the same very differently:

4) It's gone a bit too cold, hasn't it? Would you mind closing the window, please?

Because participants are rational agents, apart from determining the seriousness of a FTA according to the above mentioned variables, in an interaction they will choose from a set of five possible strategies which will enable them to either avoid or mitigate FTAs:



(From Brown and Levinson, 1987:69)

These five linguistic strategies are ordered in terms of the degree of politeness involved. The risk of the loss of 'face' increases as one moves up the scale from 1 to 5; the greater the risk the more polite the strategy employed.

The first strategy is employed when there is no risk of loss of 'face' involved; the participants have no doubts about the communicative intention of the speaker, i.e. a promise. B&L (1987:69) claim there is no need for redressive action since the interlocutors are either on intimate terms or because other demands for efficiency override their 'face' concerns. Therefore, the act will be performed in the most direct, concise, clear and unambiguous way, conforming to Grice's maxims. The second and third strategies involve redressive action: the speaker tries to maintain his/her 'face' as much as possible and at the same time s/he tries to mitigate the potential threat of the act. The fourth strategy is employed when the risk of loss of 'face' is great, the communicative act is ambiguous, i.e.: a hint, and its interpretation is left to the addressee. The 'off record' strategy, also called hints or non-conventional indirectness, is thus related to the flouting of Grice's maxims in which meaning is to some degree negotiable by means of conversational implicatures. Their fifth strategy includes cases in which nothing is said due to the fact that the risk involved is too great. B&L present a very detailed description of the specific manifestations each of the strategies may take by providing examples from English, Tamil and Tzeltal.

B&L's distinction between 'negative' and 'positive politeness' is very much related to Goffman's (1967) concepts of 'avoidance/presentational rituals', acts through which a speaker shows the hearer distance and involvement in an interaction, respectively. The authors see these two ways of expressing politeness as mutually

exclusive since 'positive politeness' is characterised by the expression of approval and appreciation of the addressee's personality by making him/her feel part of an in-group. 'Negative politeness', on the other hand, mainly concentrates on those aspects of the addressee's 'face' wants, which are concerned with the desire not be imposed upon and is characterised by self-effacement and formality. Examples of 'positive politeness' put forward by the authors are: paying attention to the other person, showing exaggerated interest, approval and sympathy, use of in-group identity markers, search for agreement and common ground. Examples of 'negative politeness' relate to etiquette, avoidance of disturbing others, indirectness in making requests or in imposing obligations, acknowledgement of one's debt to others, showing deference, overt emphasis on other's relative power.

B&L (1987:67) claim that when thinking about politeness, 'negative politeness' inevitably springs to mind since they say it is our familiar formal politeness: a viewpoint more explicitly expressed by Leech (1983:133) who claims 'negative politeness' is a more 'weighty' consideration than 'positive politeness'. Although Leech's characterisation of 'positive/negative' politeness is not the same as that offered by B&L, in both descriptions Goffman's concepts of 'avoidance' and 'presentation' are present. B&L (1987:25), however, point out that stratified and complex societies will show both 'positive' and 'negative' politeness with perhaps the upper classes showing a 'negative' politeness ethos and the lower classes a 'positive' politeness one. Although B&L acknowledge the possibility of having both forms of politeness in certain societies, they seem to regard 'negative' politeness as a more important consideration than 'positive' politeness.

1.8. Criticisms of Brown and Levinson's model

Although several scholars and reviewers have commented on the usefulness of various aspects of B&L's framework, the universality of their theory has received vigorous criticisms. As Janney and Arndt (1993) point out, discussions of the theory are either based on the idea that the aim of comparative research is to discover underlying universals of politeness by empirically testing the validity of universal categories across different cultures, or to collect more empirical data about politeness phenomena in different cultures generating new universal categories. As the authors rightly observed, 'the validity of the universality hypothesis itself as a basic research assumption is not questioned' (1993:15). Criticisms have mainly focused on the

principle of rationality, the universality of 'face' as understood by B&L, the universality of their politeness strategies, the rigidity of the politeness scale in relation to their three sociological variables, the neglect of discourse and the absence of context.

1.8.1. The principle of rationality

The rationality principle allows us to choose a course of action which will lead to the given end in the most effective way and which will require the least effort. According to B&L's view, a reconstruction of an intentional action in a particular context, should identify the end/ends which that person intended to obtain by performing the action under consideration. This rational reconstruction would, however, fail to identify the values by which that person's action is preferable to other courses of action. When a speaker performs a speech act s/he will not only identify the ends s/he wants to obtain by performing an appropriate speech act, but also identify the values by which certain speech acts are considered to be more appropriate than others under the circumstances.

Moreover, in many situations the more effective an action is, that is to say, the more effectively a speaker directs his/her action to a given end, the more the 'face' costs to either the speaker and/or hearer. Under certain circumstances the more informative one is, the more impolite one's actions can become (see example 2) above). In other words, there appears to be a tension between different considerations related to rational actions; more specifically a tension between effectiveness, Grice's conversational maxims, costs and politeness maxims. Thus concentrating upon costs might diminish effectiveness and vice versa. So what really determines the equilibrium between costs and effectiveness? What makes a speaker in a given context utter one of the following:

5) Please take the rubbish downstairs

I think you should take the rubbish downstairs

Why don't you take the rubbish downstairs?

Can you take the rubbish downstairs?

Will you take the rubbish downstairs?

Would you mind taking the rubbish downstairs?

Although it is reasonable to believe that certain expressions will not be in the list due to questions of effectiveness, it is also reasonable to believe that other expressions will not be part of the list due to matters of cost. While the application of considerations of costs and effectiveness does not reduce the list of possible expressions to a single item, it does give the speaker a range of options. According to Kasher (1986) and Kingwell (1993) the above examples appear to respect a rationality of their own although B&L make the claim that rationality is universal and that similar divergences can be found in a number of languages.

Ide (1988) points out that politeness strategies and polite forms in Japanese are not always the results of the principle of rationality but of conventionality:

If the framework of linguistic politeness is to restrict the scope to a rational or logical use of the strategies, we will have to exclude not only the use of honorifics but also greetings, speech formulas used for rituals, and many other formal speech elements which are used according to social conventions (p.242)

She argues that B&L's theory fails to explain how rationality operates in a non-Western collective (see section 1.8.3.) culture like Japan and that the authors' theory is based upon a rational individualistic Western tradition. Other scholars (Held, 1989; Rhodes, 1989; Werkhofer, 1992) have argued that the framework is essentially based on British analytical logic and North American psychology.

1.8.2. Goffman's notion of 'face'

Goffman's principal concern was with what he called 'social interaction'. By social interaction he referred to behaviour in public places as well as in social encounters. He observed and analysed the conduct of individuals as an attribute of social order, of society, not as an attribute of individual persons. He provided notions crucial to the understanding of the practice of politeness as an aspect of what he called 'interpersonal rituals'. He defined ritual as:

a perfunctory, conventionalised act through which an individual portrays his respect and regard for some object of ultimate value or to its stand-in.
(1971:63)

These interpersonal rituals are directed to the sacred property of individuals which he calls 'face'. He says that the term may be defined as:

the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself 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 [1967:5 quoted in Owen (1983:13)].

Goffman (1967) explains that although 'face' is an individual's most personal possession it is only 'on loan' from society and can thus be withdrawn should the individual behave in a way that is unworthy of it. He points out that an individual tends to conduct him/herself during an encounter in such a way so as to maintain both his/her own 'face' and that of the other participant/s. Bearing on Durkheim's distinction between 'positive' rituals (paying homage through offerings) and 'negative' ones (interdicts and avoidance), he claims that 'face'-preserving behaviour can be divided into 'supportive' interchanges ('positive rituals') and remedial interchanges ('negative rituals'). Supportive interchanges are brief episodes of interaction concerned with establishing, continuing, or renewing relationships. In contrast, remedial interchanges are verbal and non-verbal rituals commonly used to assuage injury, insult, or offence, and so restore relationships endangered by behaviour which might be taken as offensive (Burns, 1992).

1.8.3. The universality of 'face'

B&L claim that their interpretation of 'face' derives from two sources, Goffman's notion of 'face' and the English terms 'losing face' and 'saving face', which seem to be Chinese in origin.⁸ Goffman, it will be recalled, sees 'face' as a public property which is assigned to individuals by others upon their interactional behaviour. In Goffman's view 'face' is a public, interpersonal image which is 'on loan from society'. B&L, however, define 'face' as 'the public 'self'-image that every member wants to claim for himself' (1987:61). While in Goffman's definition the public element is the major factor in the construal of 'face', in B&L's the individual appears to be of crucial

⁸The concept of 'face' was first studied by the Chinese anthropologist Hu in 1944, although it is believed that the term had been used in English for at least several centuries before that (Scollon and Scollon, 1995).

importance. As Fraser (1990:239) observes, in Goffman's definition the public is an intrinsic constituent whereas in B&L's the public is seen as an 'external modifier'. This has led many scholars to refer to B&L's theory as having an 'anglocentric bias' or as underlying Western individualistic interactional dynamics (Wierzbicka, 1985; Mao, 1994).

When it comes to their other source of interpretation, the English terms 'losing face' and 'saving face'; Ho (1975:867) points out that 'face' is a translation of Mandarin *miànzi* and *lián* which carry a range of meanings based upon the concept of 'honour'. It is believed that the term originally appeared in the phrase 'to save one's face' in the English community in China and it referred to the strategies the Chinese employed so as to avoid incurring shame or disgrace. Mao (1994:454) argues that B&L's 'failure to identify the original source of 'face', and to consider its impact upon their formulation of face, has consequences for their theory's claim of universality'.

As previously mentioned B&L divide the notion of 'face' into two interdependent parts: 'positive' and 'negative' face. Of these two notions, 'negative face' has been severely criticised. Although the notions have been extensively employed to explain communicative norms in a great number of languages, scholars studying the communicative norms of a particular language do not seem able to agree upon the usefulness of such distinction. Sifinaou (1992) finds the distinction a useful one when comparing British and Greek politeness systems, however, Pavlidou (1994) finds it very difficult to employ such a distinction in order to explain Greek and German norms of politeness over the telephone. Similarly, Kuiper and Tan Gek Lin (1989) employed it in an analysis of communicative norms in Singapore Chinese; yet Gu (1990), Mao (1994) and Pan (1996) have claimed its irrelevance to mainland Chinese culture. Tokunaga (1992) finds it partially useful to account for the Japanese system of honorifics but Matsumoto (1988, 1989) and Ide (1989) claim it is not applicable to Japanese culture. Nwoye (1992) argues that it has no place in the dynamics of Igbo society and Wierzbicka (1985) claims that the concepts have no equivalent in Polish culture.

B&L point out that Japanese culture is 'negative politeness' orientated (1987:245); in this respect, Matsumoto (1989) and Ide (1989) argue that in Japanese culture the concept of 'negative face' as the desire to be unimpeded in one's action has no applicability. They claim that what is of crucial importance to the Japanese is not so much a territorial position in the sense of an individual's own 'space' but their relation to others in the group and thus their acceptance by those others (see section 1.8.1.). Ide (1989) says that a distinctive property in Japanese speakers is their sense

of place or role in a given situation relative to social conventions. This sense is known as *wakimae*, discernment. Similar criticisms are found for Chinese. Gu (1990) and Mao (1994) explain that Chinese 'negative face' is threatened when what 'self' has done is likely to incur ill fame or reputation. Moreover, they argue that interaction in politeness is not just instrumental or strategic but normative or non-strategic. They say that politeness is 'a phenomenon belonging to the level of society, which endorses its normative constraints on each individual' (Gu, 1990:241).

Nwyo (1989), like Matsumoto and Ide, also observed that B&L's notion of 'face', in particular that of 'negative face', is not applicable to the Igbo. The most pertinent notion of 'face' in this culture is that of 'group face' which he defines as 'the avoidance of behaviour capable of lowering the public self-image or self-worth of one's group dictated by the fear of *imecu iru* (to darken face)' (p.314). He claims that in Igbo the main concern is for the collective self-image of the group and not that of the individual's.

According to Ide (1989) these differences stem from the fact that:

In a Western society where individualism is assumed to be the basis of all interactions, it is easy to regard face as the key to interaction. On the other hand, in a society where group membership is regarded as the basis of interaction, the role or status defined in a particular situation rather than face is the basis of interaction (p.241)

Following Hill *et al's* (1986) distinction between 'discernment politeness' as a form of social indexing and 'volitional politeness' which aims at specific goals, Ide (1989) and Nwyo (1992) claim that for a model of politeness to be cross-culturally valid it must incorporate B&L's volitional aspect (individual 'face') and discernment aspect (group 'face'). However, as O'Driscoll (1996) points out both Ide and Nwyo seem to equate volitional politeness with B&L's strategic motivation and discernment politeness with non-strategic motivation. O'Driscoll explains that certain situations such as asking for a week off and proposing marriage are likely to involve deliberate strategy which is consciously perceived as such, whereas others like greetings and borrowing a pen are so basically mundane that they are not.⁹

Matsumoto (1989) also claims that due to the social and grammatical way of using honorific forms at all times in Japanese, there is no rational distinction between

⁹ O'Driscoll is here manipulating B&L's R variable, the overall ranking of the imposition. This variable is understood by B&L as being universal though culturally-dependent since it is assumed that cultures rank acts with reference to their degree of imposition, which will vary according to the culture.

a FTA and a non-FTA. Ide (1988) points out that these lexicalised forms¹⁰ are combined with linguistic strategies in order to make the utterance polite. Thus, even if the choice of these linguistic strategies involves discernment and not volition, they are still strategically motivated since they are geared towards maintaining the relation to others in the group and hence the acceptance of those others.

Strecker (1993) carried out a study of the politeness norms of the Hamar in southern Ethiopia and, like the above mentioned researchers, found B&L's notion of 'face' not applicable to the Hamars' conceptualisation of politeness. He claims that the Hamar appear to be more concerned with the collective self-image of the group rather than with that of the individual. In attempt to find a possible theoretical explanation as to why B&L's notion of 'face' has no place in non-Western cultures, he expanded on Bourdieu's (1979) ideas and suggested a still untested hypothesis which claims that societies with long lasting inequalities and 'arguments' of power, such as feudal and monarchical societies, appear to develop concepts of 'face' which focus on the inner 'self'. On the other hand, egalitarian societies develop a concept of 'face' which does not appear to have an inward direction but an outward direction and are thus more concerned with the other than with the 'self'.¹¹ Strecker's hypothesis contains two definitional problems, the first one is that presumably when referring to egalitarian societies, he is referring to non-Western societies, such as the Japanese and Chinese, which he previously mentioned as having more of a concern with the other than with the 'self'. However, the former have had a 'monarchical' system and the latter have a long established history of powerful statesmen; historical facts which are not usually associated with egalitarianism but with inequality. Thus it is extremely difficult within this hypothesis to understand how the Japanese and Chinese have developed outward concepts of 'face' when their history shows a clear record of inequality. Although inequality and egalitarianism are universal concepts, their interpretation is a subjective one and hence they cannot be used as parameters for

¹⁰Ide (1988) pointed out that these lexicalised forms are not exclusive to oriental languages. Watts (1992) claims that 'discernment' is operative in European cultures too, though not as automatic as the grammaticalised and lexicalised honorifics in Japanese. An example of these forms in Spanish is the T/V distinction to designate the intimate pronominal form of address and the distant pronoun respectively, studied by Brown and Gilman (1972). Moreover, French, Italian, German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Greek, Russian and Portuguese all offer a choice of 'you' forms. In the case of Portuguese, Odber de Baubeta (1992:90) explains that in addition to 'tu' 'there is the relatively neutral *você*, and then a series of *formas nominais* used with a third person verb'. As Hook (1984) points out, English cannot any longer distinguish between power and solidarity, however, it relies on the use of first names and titles to do so.

¹¹This view is also shared by Nwoye (1992) who regards it as a possible explanation for the Igbo's notion of 'face'.

comparing cultures unless they are culturally defined. The second problem resides in the notion of 'self', a term which has been extensively used in the literature of 'face' and not so often defined.

The notion of 'self' consists of two universal aspects. The first aspect is physical in the sense that people all over the world are bound to develop an understanding of themselves as physically distinct and separable from others (Hallowell, 1955). The second aspect is what is usually referred to as inner or private 'self' in psychology. Besides the physical sense of 'self', people are also bound to have some consciousness of internal activity in the form of thoughts, feelings and dreams. This internal activity is to some extent private since other people cannot directly know about it, and it leads human beings to a sense of an inner or private 'self'. Although the notion of 'self' as composed by a physical and a private 'self' appears to be universal, the work of several psychologists and anthropologists (Geertz, 1975; Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 1984; Hsu, 1985; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989) has shown that people in different cultures have different construals of the 'self', the other, and of the interdependence of the two; and thus that there are two different construals of 'face': the independent and the interdependent one. The interdependent construal is evidenced in a number of Asian, African, Latin American and many southern European cultures (Hall, 1976; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), many of which have had feudal and monarchic systems. Fiske (1984 in Markus & Kitayama, 1992:226) explains that in the independent construal the person is also responsive to the environment but this social responsiveness derives from the need to strategically determine the best way to express or assert the internal attributes of the 'self'. In other words, the social situation is important so far as it reflects and verifies the inner core of the 'self'. On the other hand, in the interdependent construal, the 'self' is seen as part of an encompassing social relationship and one's behaviour is determined by what one perceives to be the thoughts and actions of others in the relationship.¹²

As O'Driscoll (1996) very rightly points out, if B&L's scheme of 'face' is not valid in studies of oriental cultures, it is also likely to be unhelpful in the study of several other cultures. Bearing on Schumacher's (1972) distinction between 'consciousness', the ability to respond to stimuli shared by all animals, and 'self-

¹² Markus & Kitayama (1991:227) point out that the notion of an interdependent 'self' is linked with a monistic philosophical tradition in which the person is thought to be of the same substance as the rest of nature, and thus the relationship between the 'self' and the other is assumed to be much closer; whereas the independent 'self' is linked with Western Cartesian thinking in which the 'self' is separated from the object and from the natural world.

awareness', the reflexive ability to be conscious about 'consciousness'; he argues that 'face' consists of three reflexes: 'culture-specific face', 'positive face', and 'negative face'. 'Culture-specific face', he says, is the foreground consciousness, that is Schumacher's 'self-awareness', and it consists of the desire for a 'good' 'face'. He explains that the constituents of this 'face' are culturally determined. 'Positive face' is part of the background consciousness, Schumacher's 'consciousness', and is the universal need for proximity and belonging or interdependence which is given symbolic recognition in interaction. In the same way, 'negative face' is also part of the background consciousness, and is the universal need for distance and individuation or independence which is also given symbolic recognition in interaction. Thus, he claims that neither 'positive' nor 'negative face' are primary concepts but compounds derived from the combination of 'wants dualism'. He further explains that the essence of being 'unimpeded in one's actions' is the desire to be free from the ties of contact and that those needs which involve either greater or lesser degree of contact are 'positive' wants. Thus the needs of this universal 'face' are inherent in the human condition though its constituents are culturally variable.

A similar view is expressed by Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) who quoting documented cross-cultural research such as that of Adamopoulos (1984), Lonner (1980) and Triandis (1972, 1977, 1978), claim that B&L's 'positive face' refers to the need for association or interdependence and their 'negative face' to the need for dissociation or independence, two psychological universals which cut across cultural boundaries. They explain that:

While one might expect both negative facework and positive facework to be present in all cultures, the value orientations of a culture will influence cultural members' attitudes toward pursuing one set of facework more actively than another set of facework in a face-negotiation situation. Facework then is a symbolic front that members in all cultures strive to maintain and uphold, while the modes and styles of expressing and negotiating face-need would vary from one culture to next. (p.86)

In this study we will try to discover what motivates politeness in British English and Uruguayan Spanish basing our theoretical framework on the distinction between 'positive' and 'negative face'. The two components of 'face' will be understood as compounds of 'wants dualism', that is to say, the need for interdependence and independence, respectively.

1.8.4. Facework

In B&L's model of social interaction each interlocutor 'plays off' his/her own 'positive' and 'negative face' wants against those of the other. With regard to this, Scollon and Scollon (1981, 1983, 1995) observed that the process of granting 'face' is much more dynamic and multifunctional than that. They say that in a 'positive politeness' system where the overriding value for all members is on 'positive face', by granting 'positive face' to the H, the S is simultaneously asserting it to him/herself'; since 'my hearer in return must grant me positive face and in order for it to be noticeable it must be granted with some increment of gain' (1981:176). In this way the H will be increasing his/her 'positive face'. Therefore, they claim 'positive politeness' not only attends to the 'positive face' of the H but it also consolidates the 'positive face' of the S. On the other hand, they claim that 'negative face' can only be gained by the H at the S's loss:

To the extent I assert my own right to autonomy, my own negative face, I risk that of my hearer. To the extent that I grant the freedom of unimpeded activity to my hearer I lose my own. (1981:176)

B&L claim that the amount of facework needed was a computation of the S's estimation of social distance (D) between S and H, relative power (P) that the H has over the S, and the overall ranking of the imposition (R); summarising this in a formula: $W = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R$. While there seems to be a 'general' acceptance of the role assigned to P and R there are many more discrepancies concerning the role assigned to D. As pointed out by Spencer-Oatey (1996) the concept of social distance does not have a unanimous interpretation. Authors (Lim and Bowers, 1991; Olshtain, 1989, to mention some) using social distance as part of their theoretical framework understand the notion differently; some consider 'acquaintances' as a distant relationship and others as intermediate. It will be recalled, that B&L claim that the less familiar the interlocutors, the more polite the expression. Baxter (1984), McLaughlin *et al* (1983) and Holmes (1990) did not find D to act as determinant of politeness. What is more, Baxter (1984) found that a closer relationship between the participants resulted in greater rather than less politeness. Brown and Gilman (1989) argue that interlocutors tend to choose more polite expressions when they like and/or appreciate their conversational partners and that this choice is not dependent upon D. Slugoski & Turnbull (1988:117) argue that 'the role of affect in the encoding of politeness has been overlooked both empirically and theoretically' and explain that:

the tendency for subjects to perceive a positive relationship between perceived and reciprocal liking means that it may be practically impossible to manipulate perceived liking without influencing people's expectations about the social distance between the participants.

Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992) point out that the variables are not independent of each other. They observe that the degree of imposition crucially depends on P and D. Thus in order to assess the value of R, the model person will have to have prior knowledge of the values of P and D. However, B&L appear to provide no indication as to how this might be carried out. Moreover, they argue that the value of P could also depend upon knowing the value of D.

Furthermore, Slugowski and Turnbull (1988) argue that B&L's formula is not symmetric and therefore the variables cannot be added. Holtgraves and Yang (1992) observed that when one of the variables reaches a high level, i.e. asking for an extremely large favour or committing an extremely offensive act, the other two variables will either lessen or drop completely, and thus the S will be polite regardless of the closeness of the relationship with the H. This as Holtgraves and Yang say is not yet conclusive and further research is needed in order to substantiate it.

Another question to be posed is the effect of third parties. Ehlich (in Watts *et al.*, 1992) explains that an act is considered to be polite when there is a standard invoked. This standard though related to the action lies outside of it. Alongside the standardisation of politeness he says there is another way in which 'politeness' is relative:

The qualification cannot simply be carried out by the actor himself. Qualifications are carried out by a third party who possesses the necessary evaluative competence. S/he may be the actor B with respect to whom the action is carried out, but s/he may be beyond the activity frame within which the individual action takes place...It is then s/he who applies the action F to the standard S, C carries out a judgement by applying S. (p.76)

Although scholars (Goffman,1971; Clark and Carlson, 1982; Yahya-Othman, 1994 and others) agree that the effect of third parties is very great, as Turner (1996:5) points out, up to now 'there is no recognised way of theorising more elaborate participant frameworks'.

When it comes to the P variable, B&L refer to it as hierarchical status in the calculus of politeness formulae, but as Chilton (1990:204) observes:

the impression is given that the function of polite formulae is to mask or lessen social friction - friction which does arise from substantively real asymmetries.

He claims that politeness phenomena do not just depend on the existing power relationships of a community but reinforce them and should thus be seen as a mechanism for manoeuvring and changing those relationships. A view also expressed by Fairclough:

Politeness is based upon recognition of differences of power, degrees of social distance, and so forth, and oriented to reproducing them without change. (1989:66)

In B&L's framework 'power' is seen as the vertical difference between interlocutors in a hierarchical structure. There are two points that should be made in this respect, the first one being that hierarchical relations and their understanding will differ across cultures, the second one, and maybe the most important one theoretically is that power is not a static concept but a dynamic one. Thus in referring to a hierarchical relationship, it should be borne in mind that this vertical difference is non-static. As Hofstede (1984) explains:

The power distance between boss B and a subordinate S in a hierarchy is the difference between the extent to which B can determine the behaviour of S and the extent to which S can determine the behaviour of B. (p.72)

He further explains that this power difference is not only accepted by both participants but supported by their social environment which is to a considerable extent determined by their culture. Moreover, as Bourdieu (1977:95 in Fairclough, 1992:162) observes the concessions of politeness are always political concessions since:

the practical mastery of what are called the rules of politeness, and in particular the art of adjusting each of the available formulae...to the different classes of possible addressees, presupposes the implicit mastery hence the recognition, of a set of oppositions constituting the implicit axiomatics of a determinate political order.

Thus it could be said that the use of politeness conventions implicitly acknowledges power differences and in so doing, it reproduces those power relations.

Another factor not considered in B&L's theory is context. The importance of the situational context can be seen in cases where the illocutionary force of an utterance differs from its propositional content, as in an off-record request to shut the window 'It's a bit cold in here'. Lavandera (1988) explains that the ultimate estimate of the threat of a speech act is provided by the situation in which the speech act occurs. One can think of many situations in which P is unknown whereas D and R are known and the crucial variable is the situational context, i.e.: asking another passenger at a train station for information, asking a passer-by the time: in these situations we cannot predict whether the S will produce either a positive politeness strategy or a negative one. Situational and cultural factors are largely ignored in B&L's theory. Sifianou (1989, 1992) observed that in Greek culture requests to 'in-group' members are not regarded as impositions since it appears that the Greeks see it as their duty to help others in the in-group and, thus employ 'positive politeness' strategies and not 'negative politeness' strategies as B&L's theory predicts. Hickey and Vázquez Orta (1996) made the same point for Iberian Spanish. Nwoye (1992) made a similar point for Igbo where he says very few acts are considered to be impositions.

Knowledge of a particular culture is crucial in determining the 'face' constituents and in order to understand what is considered to be 'polite' language in that culture. Although B&L recognise the existence of cultural differences, they seem to underplay them in the interest of universals. Hymes (1986) argues that knowledge of universal linguistic forms is not enough, that one also needs to know how those forms are selected and grouped with other cultural practices. He claims that one also needs to know the social structure in which those forms occur as well as the cultural values which inform the structure.

Apart from the situational and cultural context, there is also the linguistic context. Zimin (1981 in Lavandera, 1988:1197) claims that politeness is a property of utterances rather than of sentences, therefore, politeness cannot be assigned to any structure out of its linguistic context. A similar view is shared by Fraser and Nolen (1981) who argue that what makes a sentence polite and/or impolite is the conditions under which they are used and not the expressions themselves.

When it comes to B&L's hierarchy of politeness strategies, their ranking of 'negative politeness' and 'off record' strategies is questioned by Blum-Kulka (1987) who found that in Israeli society 'off record' requests to superiors received a lower politeness rating than a more direct request. Since, she says, that requiring the addressee to work out 'beyond reasonable limits' the intended meaning from an 'off-

record', non-conventionally indirect, request is an imposition which decreases the level of politeness.¹³

Scollon and Scollon (1981, 1983, 1995) argue that 'positive politeness' is relevant to all aspects of an individual's 'positive face' and that 'negative politeness' is FTA-specific. They say that:

While positive politeness is directed more to the general nature of the relationship between interactants, negative politeness is directed to the specific act of imposition. (1981:174)

Although it has been claimed (Janney and Arndt,1993) that B&L's theory lacks a culturally unbiased conceptual framework for objectively and empirically evaluating their politeness universals, B&L's framework has been the most influential politeness model to date. As Kasper (1994:3208) explains B&L's face-saving approach 'is the only one which satisfies the criteria for empirical theories, such as explicitness, parsimony, and predictiveness'.

1.8.5. Concluding remarks

Having discussed the different theoretical frameworks for politeness phenomena with their concomitant implications of 'face', we will now proceed to look at Speech Act Theory and Politeness. Speech acts have been extensively employed as the medium to investigate politeness phenomena due to the fact that they have been claimed by some (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969, 1975) to operate by universal pragmatic principles. More specifically, their modes of performance appear to be governed by universal principles of co-operation and politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1978; Leech, 1983). However, different cultures have been shown to vary greatly in their interactional style, hence exhibiting different preferences for modes of speech act behaviour. Such preferences have been interpreted as differences in politeness orientation, namely 'positive' and 'negative' politeness. In particular, we shall look at the form and function of requests and apologies in British English and Uruguayan Spanish in order to find out whether these two cultures show different preferences in their modes of speech act behaviour

¹³Although B&L discuss Blum-Kulka's findings in the introduction to the second edition of their book, they claim that this 'efficiency factor' is only present in those societies which place a higher value on a superior's time.

and if those differences and/or similarities can be attributed to differences in politeness orientation.

As previously expressed, requests were chosen since in a request the speaker to a greater or lesser extent imposes on the hearer, hence there is a need for politeness strategies to mitigate the imposition. Apologies were chosen since by apologising the speaker admits that a social norm has been violated and that to a certain extent s/he was part of its cause. Therefore it could be said that apologies involve a certain loss of 'face' for the speaker and at the same time they provide a kind of 'support' for the addressee. The next chapter will consider the place of requests and apologies within Speech Act Theory, as well as the relation between the speech acts and 'positive' and 'negative' politeness.

CHAPTER 2

SPEECH ACT THEORY AND POLITENESS: REQUESTS AND APOLOGIES

2.1. Introduction

Speech act theory has its origins in the British tradition of thinking about language. The main precursors were a British and an American philosopher, John Austin (1962) and John Searle (1969). The latter studied under Austin at Oxford and became the most important defender of Austin's ideas not only in the United States but world-wide. These philosophers observed that when people use language they do not just produce a set of correct sentences in isolation, they produce them in action. That is to say, through the use of language people do things or have others do things for them, they apologise, promise, request, etc. As Searle explains (1969:16):

The unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence, or even the token of the symbol, word or sentence, but rather the production or issuance of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of the speech act.

Moreover, he explains that speech acts are performed in actual situations of language use. Thus the basic assumption in speech act theory is that the minimal unit of human communication is the performance of certain kinds of acts.

Searle (1979) proposed a system of five different categories of speech acts in order to explain what people can do with language: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations. Assertives describe states or events in the world, such as asserting, boasting or claiming; directives, such as ordering and requesting, direct the addressee to perform or not to perform an act; commissives commit the speaker to a future course of action, such as promising and threatening; expressives express the speaker's attitudes and feelings about something, such as congratulating, thanking, pardoning, apologising; and declarations change the status of the person or object referred to by performing the act successfully, such as sentencing in a court of law.

Requests fall into the group of directives or what Green (1975:125) and Leech (1983:106) call 'impositives' in order to avoid confusion in using the term 'directive' in relation to direct and indirect illocutions. Apologies, on the other hand, fall into the

group of expressives since they are intended to provide support for the hearer who was malaffected by a specific violation of a social rule.

As far as 'negative politeness' and 'positive politeness' are concerned, Leech (1983:107) maintains that 'negative politeness' belongs pre-eminently to the directive class whereas 'positive politeness' pre-eminently belongs to the commissive and expressive classes. He also points out that assertives are usually neutral in terms of politeness and that declaratives can hardly involve politeness since by their nature they are institutional as opposed to personal actions. As it will be recalled by his claim that certain acts are *ipso facto* polite or impolite, as discussed in Chapter 1 section 1.6., he is neglecting the influence of the situational and cultural context. There are a number of social factors, such as sex, age, familiarity, the social status of the participants and the weight of a particular imposition, which will determine the kind of politeness strategy employed in performing the speech act. The knowledge, beliefs and assumptions of these factors constitutes the social knowledge each member of any society possesses. The way in which these factors are assessed may vary according to the society and this explains why different societies employ different politeness strategies.

While Austin and Searle claimed that speech acts operate by universal pragmatic principles, other scholars have observed that they tend to vary in terms of their conceptualisation and verbalisation across cultures and languages (Green, 1975; Wierzbicka, 1985). B&L (1978) and also Leech (1983) suggest that the modes in which speech acts are performed follow universal principles of co-operation and politeness. Notwithstanding, different cultures have been shown to vary greatly in their interactional styles, showing different modes of speech act behaviour. B&L's explanation of this fact resides in the varying importance assigned to situational and contextual factors by different societies. Thus the authors explain that in those societies in which high D dominates in public encounters one would expect high-numbered politeness strategies, 'negative politeness' and/or 'off-record', to be employed. Conversely, they say, in those societies in which low D dominates in public and P is minimised, one would expect the use of 'bald on record' and 'positive politeness' strategies.

B&L claim England is a society where relatively high value is placed on D, hence 'negative' and 'off-record', the high-numbered strategies, will prevail in social encounters. They also explain that there might be a preference for not performing the act at all due to the risk of loss of 'face'. However, Baxter (1984) explains that sometimes 'positive politeness' is regarded as more polite than 'negative politeness'

and Blum-Kulka (1987) and Sifianou (1992) argue against the highest degree of politeness assigned to 'off-record' strategies. We shall refer to this point later on in this chapter.

Although speech acts have been criticised as a tool for studying linguistic behaviour since when we try to understand an utterance in context, the speech act one is looking at depends almost entirely on that particular context.¹ Indeed, this is a property of all utterances. But perhaps the most important criticism so far voiced is the fact that speech theory fails to account for an interactional model. Whilst a lot of attention is paid to the illocutionary force of the utterance, and in that sense the theory could be termed as 'speaker-orientated', very little attention is paid to the perlocutionary force which could be said to provide a 'hearer-orientated' angle. In other words, the effect(s) the illocutionary act has on the development of the conversation has not been taken into account. Fairclough (1989:9) claims that speech act theory has no theory of action; or if it does, action 'is thought of atomistically, as wholly emanating from the individual'. This should not be surprising when one considers the culture of the philosophers who proposed the theory in the first place; given that our view of the world will predispose us to look at new phenomena with old eyes. Thus the individualistic Anglo-Saxon viewpoint has inevitably put far too much emphasis on the individual and the object of the speech act disregarding and/or neglecting the effects on the addressee, and perhaps most importantly the effects on the interaction. However, as argued by Mey (1993) speech act theory does provide:

A kind of mini-scenario for what is happening in language interaction and they suggest a simple way of explaining the more or less predictable sequences of conversation. (p. 207)

In the light of these and similar objections, the speech acts chosen for this study have been embedded in an interactional model. This model will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3. As explained in the previous chapter the speech acts chosen are associated with 'negative' and 'positive' politeness. We shall now proceed to look at their place within speech act theory.

¹ An utterance such as 'You've been busy, haven't you?' uttered in a kitchen could either be interpreted as a compliment seeing that the kitchen is impeccably clean or as an indirect request to clean the kitchen after seeing its state of filthiness.

2.2. The speech act of requesting

As already stated, requests fall into the group of directives which according to Searle (1979) are an:

attempt by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. They may be very modest attempts as when I invite you to do it, or they may be very fierce attempts as when I insist that you do it. (p.13)

Directives embody an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something, that is, to direct the hearer towards pursuing a goal, generally a speaker's goal. Bach and Harnish (1982) distinguish different subcategories of requests such as requests for action, requests for information, requests for attention, requests for sympathy. However they all involve a request for an action of some kind from another person.

Requests are a good example of speech acts which imply an intrusion on the addressee's territory, thus limiting his/her freedom of action and threatening his/her 'negative face'. In B&L's terms they are intrinsically FTAs and in Leech's scheme intrinsically impolite. But consider the following requests realised by the use of imperative constructions:

1) *A sergeant major addressing his/her troops*

S.M.: Present weapons! march! to the left! to the right!

2) *A teacher addressing his/her pupils*

T: Open your books on page ten and complete the exercise.

3) *A is knocking on B's door*

B: Come in! Take a seat!

4) *A and B are having lunch at A's house*

A: Have another piece of cake!

5) *At the newsagents'*

A: What would you like?

B: A pint of milk and a pack of Silk Cut, please.²

Are the speakers in the above situations intruding in the addressee's territory and thus threatening his/her 'negative face'? How far is it valid to assume that all requests always threaten the addressee's 'negative face' and thus to what extent is 'negative politeness' important? It has been argued (Sifianou, 1992) that 'negative politeness' will be more important in those situations in which 'negative face' is more important than 'positive face'. Requests can also denote closeness and intimacy since the speaker must feel close enough to the addressee in order to ask him/her to do something and thus requests should also be considered within the realm of 'positive politeness'. Moreover, requests addressed to shop assistants are not exactly imposing acts, or at least they are not seen as such by the shop assistant who welcomes the business.

While it is true to say that every language provides its speakers with a variety of grammatical possibilities in order to mitigate the impact of a 'face' threat, it is also the case that the choice of those grammatical possibilities might also indicate intimacy, like the use of imperatives in Spanish as will be demonstrated below.

2.2.1. Form and function of requests

Requests consist of two parts: the core request or head act and the peripheral elements. The former is the main utterance which has the function of requesting and can stand by itself, thus it can be used on its own, without any peripheral elements in order to convey the request. In most cases, however, core requests are either followed and/or preceded by peripheral elements. These elements such as hedges, boosters, address forms and the like, do not change the propositional content although they either mitigate it or aggravate it. We shall return to the peripheral elements after analysing the ways in which main core requests are realised.

In both English and Spanish requests can be linguistically realised with imperatives, interrogatives, negative interrogatives and declaratives. In English direct imperatives are usually defined as appropriate constructions for commands and instructions (Lyons, 1968:307) thus they are less appropriate or even unacceptable for making requests.³ Searle (1975:64) says that the 'ordinary conversational requirements of politeness normally make it awkward to issue flat imperatives and we

² The examples hereby presented were not taken from the corpus of the present study; they are instances of observed natural conversations.

³ As a matter of fact some imperative constructions such as 'Make yourself at home' are generally interpreted as an invitation and not as a request.

therefore seek to find indirect means to our illocutionary needs'. Leech (1983:119) claims that imperatives are the least polite constructions since they are tactless in that they risk non-compliance by the addressee. If once again we look at the above examples the risk of non-compliance could only be possible in 1) and 2) by the addressees' disobedience, in 3) by the addressee not taking a seat but should this be the case one would probably expect some kind of explanation for not doing so, such as 'I'm in a hurry', or 'It'll only be five minutes'; in 4) that would probably not be due to an impolite act on the part of the speaker but because the addressee does not want anything else to eat⁴ and in 5) if the shop had run out of such essential items.

In Spanish, however, imperatives are not simply used for commands and instructions, they are also used to express hopes, desires and wishes and they are much more frequent than in English. An important difference between English and Spanish imperatives is their morphology. While English imperatives are uninflected and marked by neither aspect nor number, in Spanish they are more elaborate. They mark the distinction between singular and plural, formality and informality, the T/V distinction, and they can be used with the present subjunctive and in the present indicative. Thus a Uruguayan Spanish speaker may want to express a desire for the well-being of his/her addressee by issuing an imperative:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 6) ¡Mejorate pronto! | (Hope you) get better soon |
| 7) ¡Que se mejore pronto! | I hope you get better soon |

These two examples mark the distinction between T/V. In 6) the speaker addresses his/her hearer on more intimate terms by using *tú*, in 7) the speaker addresses his/her hearer with *usted* (V) thus marking a more formal relationship. It should be noted that although 7) is an elliptical subjunctive construction its pragmatic force is still that of an imperative. In the case of the English examples, the inclusion of the subject pronoun 'I' makes the utterance a slightly more formal one.

It should be noted that unlike standard Peninsular Spanish Uruguayan Spanish, like other varieties of Latin American Spanish, lacks second person plural morphology, every semantic and syntactic second person plural is realised with third person morphology. Thus a Peninsular Spanish second person plural imperative like 'haced' and 'id' has as its Uruguayan Spanish morphological counterpart 'hagan' and 'vayan', respectively. Due to the aforesaid it has been recently argued (Harris, 1998)

⁴In certain cultures like the Chinese it is 'polite' for the H to refuse such an offer a number of times in order to indicate that s/he does want to have another piece.

that the overt difference in morphology indicates that Peninsular Spanish makes use of the imperative whereas Latin American varieties of Spanish, like Uruguayan Spanish, makes use of the subjunctive instead. Having said that these utterances have the pragmatic and semantic force of an imperative.⁵

In the case of interrogatives, English appears to have more elaborate constructions with modals whereas in Spanish they are generally formulated with the present indicative or conditional constructions:

8) ¿Me das la hora?⁶

9) ¿Me darías la hora?

The indicative expresses certainty and thus a preference for involvement and not detachment as is the case in English with the use of modals. Thus a Spanish request when translated literally into English may sound like a request for information: '¿Me das un lapicera?' 'Are you giving me a pen?' and thus lose its requestive force. It should be noted, however, that present indicative constructions can be used as requests in English only when they are negatively phrased and followed by a question tag, or when they are indirect:

10) You haven't got a cigarette, have you?

In 10), the request for a cigarette, it should be noted that in Spanish cigarettes are regarded as 'free goods', that is to say, an item which individuals feel entitled to either ask for or just take from others, whereas in British society they appear to be considered 'non-free goods' and thus individuals might feel that asking for a cigarette is a kind of 'imposition' on the addressee and hence requests are either usually phrased with modals or indirectly in English whereas in Spanish they are not realised at all or when they are, they are generally realised with the present indicative or with imperative constructions. Consider the following examples, 11) and 12) were

⁵ Two points should be borne in mind, firstly, that this particular area is very under-researched and that most grammar books take English as their point of departure. Secondly, that although Uruguayans employ the subjunctive instead of the imperative both in spoken and written discourse, the grammar books Uruguayans refer back to prescribe the use of the imperative as the 'correct' form. It should be pointed out that up to now there is not a grammar book of Uruguayan Spanish and that in Uruguayan Spanish as in many other varieties of non-Peninsular Spanish it is the Royal Academy's Prescriptive Grammar book which helps (non) linguists settle disputes over 'correct' and 'incorrect' usage.

⁶ The examples hereby presented are of British English and Uruguayan Spanish.

exchanges between two different pairs of Uruguayan friends and 13) between two British friends:

11) *A and B are at a coffee shop, A's cigarettes are on the table*

B: Te saco un cigarrillo.

I'll take one of your cigarettes.

A (nodded in approval)

12) *C and D are at D's house*

C: Dame un cigarrillo, D.

Give me a cigarette, D.

D: Están en mi campera anda a buscarlos.

They're in my jacket go and get them.

13) *A couple, A and B, are having a coffee at the train station while waiting for their train. Suddenly, C, a friend of A, turns up.*

A: Hi!

C: Hi! Is this your girlfriend?

A: Yeah!

B: Hi!

A: Have you got any cigarettes on you?

C: Yeah!

A: Good! We've been sharing the last one between us.

C (gives A and B a cigarette each)

A: Cheers!

One cannot help but notice the directness of 11) and 12) and the indirectness of 13) in which A first checks for availability and then provides an explanation for wanting a cigarette without explicitly saying so.

Requests can also be realised in both languages by declaratives. In English, *'I'd like'* is a conventionalised way of stating a request, the modal *would* enhances the unreal and hypothetical. In Spanish though the unreal and hypothetical can be achieved by using the verbs *'gustar'* (like), *'querer'* (want) or *'necesitar'* (need) in the conditional followed by a subjunctive form as in *'Me gustaría que limpies/limpiaras la cocina'*, *'Quisiera que limpies/limpiaras la cocina'*, *'Necesitaría que limpies/limpiaras la cocina'*, these expressions are very rarely used in Montevidean Spanish especially among equals and in respect of small everyday tasks. Instead the verbs *'querer'* and

'*necesitar*' are usually employed in requests of these type without any modals, thus requests of this sort may sound too direct and impolite to English speakers:

- 14) Quiero que limpies la cocina. I want to you to clean the kitchen.
15) Necesito que me prestes plata I need you to lend me money to pay
 para pagar la cuenta. the bill.

Another way of expressing requests within this group is the use of hints or using what B&L term 'off-record strategies' which were defined in the previous chapter. We shall return to this point when discussing the notion of indirectness.

Core requests or head acts are usually followed and/or preceded by peripheral elements. These elements, it will be recalled, do not change the propositional content of the request but mitigate or aggravate its force. Requests may include alerters, opening elements preceding the core request such as terms of address or attention getters:

Mrs Robinson, please type this letter for me.

Excuse me, do you know the way to the train station?

They may also include supportive moves, units external to the core request which modify its impact either by aggravating or mitigating its force:

Do your homework, or I'll tell your father about it.

Could you lend me some money for the bus fare? I don't know what happened to my change, I seem to have lost it somewhere.

There are various different types of alerters and supportive moves, and some supportive moves may in fact serve as requests themselves. We shall refer to them in more detail when presenting the coding scheme for analysing the data for this study.

2.2.2. Indirect requests

Indirectness has been one of the central issues in politeness theory. The treatment of indirect requests presupposes direct counterparts. Direct requests do not require explanation and they will be used by speakers unless there is some good reason to

avoid them.⁷ One of the reasons that has been put forward for avoiding direct requests follows the Anglo-Saxon tradition, that is that of Leech (1983) and B&L (1978, 1987), according to which direct forms appear to be inherently impolite and FTAs, respectively. Leech (1983:108) claims that indirect illocutions tend to be more polite since they increase the degree of optionality and decrease the force of the illocution. B&L, it will be recalled, claim that the more imposing, face-threatening the act, the higher in number (the more indirect) will be the strategy chosen by the S. Thus it could be said that the indirectness expressed in the realisation of the act shows the effort made by the S to minimise the threat, to save the H's 'face' and thus it equals politeness. However, it should be pointed out that neither Leech nor B&L ever claimed politeness to be the sole motivation for indirectness. What they claimed was that indirectness was one of the several strategies available for avoiding threatening 'face'. Having said so, Holtgraves (1986) conducted experiments in order to find out whether indirect questions were perceived as more polite than their direct counterparts. His results failed to confirm the above; he explains that indirect questions are perceived as more polite only when phrased as requests for information since they encode a lower degree of imposition than requests for action.

Nevertheless, politeness and indirectness have always been linked, a reason for this could derive from the fact that most analyses of speech acts are based on the English language, where indirect speech acts appear to constitute the vast majority of the conventionalised forms for polite requesting, particularly questions. Davison (1975:153) explains that individuals who behave politely do not use indirect speech acts exclusively in all situations. He further points out that politeness is related to both pleasant and unpleasant things and that indirect speech acts are generally associated with bad news, unfavourable opinions and intrusive questions; and that it is through indirect speech acts that speakers can distance themselves from unfavourable messages. The ethnocentricity of the link between politeness and indirectness is clearly reported by Hymes (1986:79, cited in Sifianou 1992:112) when referring to Irvine's experience in a Wolof-speaking community in Senegal:

She learned that a direct request or demand was actually more polite than an expression that was hedged or qualified by mention of the wishes or situation of the speaker.

⁷For a choice of factors other than politeness see Hickey (1992), Thomas (1995) and Holtgraves (1998).

In a given situation a speaker can choose from a variety of forms for requesting something; these forms will vary from the very direct, the mildly direct to the indirect. A speaker wanting a glass of water can say the following:

16) Get me a glass of water, please.

17) Would it be possible to have a glass of water, please?

18) I'm so thirsty!

16) is the direct way of performing the request, 17) and 18) are alternative ways of performing the act indirectly, while 17) is conventionally indirect, 18) is non-conventionally indirect.⁸ The force of 17) is clear; while the literal meaning may be inadequate in the context, it could be said that the speaker was still being co-operative, in the Gricean sense, when formulating the utterance. In 18), however, the hearer needs to infer the meaning. The main difference in the last two examples resides in the force conveyed. Searle (1975) explains that there is a difference between what he calls 'literal sentence meaning' and 'speaker utterance meaning', and that in trying to interpret what s/he has heard, the H will follow a procedure from sentence meaning towards utterance meaning. Morgan (1978), bearing on Searle's distinction between literal sentence meaning and utterance meaning (1975), talks about 'conventions of language', the literal meaning of utterances, and 'conventions of usage', utterance meaning, and claims that in order to interpret what they have heard, hearers follow a procedure from conventions of language to conventions of usage. It has been argued (Gibbs, 1979) that conventionally indirect speech acts such as 'Can you pass the salt?' have become frozen over time so that the implied meaning, 'Pass the salt', is automatically processed by bypassing the literal meaning.⁹

Clark and Schunk (1980), however, found empirical evidence to support the claim that the literal meaning is essential to the right interpretation of indirect speech acts. They found that different forms of the same request were perceived by subjects as differing in the degree 'politeness', and that the degree of 'politeness' differed according to the nature of the literal request. The more the literal meaning of the

⁸ Sifianou (1992:114) rightly points out that although the terms 'conventional indirectness' and 'non-conventional indirectness' have been widely used in the description of the two types of indirectness, 'non-conventional indirectness' or pragmatic indirectness can also be a conventionalised means for requesting.

⁹ Wierzbicka (1991) points out that in Polish a formula like 'Can you pass the salt?' would be understood as a genuine question and not as a 'polite' request since Polish very rarely employs interrogatives with an intended illocutionary force different from that of the question. Hence Poles would find it strange because they assume that is evident they can pass the salt.

request implies personal benefits for the hearer, the more polite the request. Thus they claim, 'May I ask you what time it is?' is more polite than 'Won't you tell me what time it is?' since the literal meaning of the first one not only demands very little from the hearer but it also entails permission.

The other type of indirect request mentioned above is that in which the meaning has to be inferred by the hearer. These types of indirect requests are known as non-conventional requests, hints, or using B&L's terms, 'off-record' requests. These requests are usually produced when Grice's maxims of conversation are flouted, hence conversational implicatures are needed in order to understand the intended meaning. Moreover, when uttering a non-conventional indirect request, the 'speaker who has performed the indirect request, has in fact performed two communicative speech acts, of which he can deny one but not the other' (Frans van Eemeren, 1987 in Hickey, 1992:80). Thus when uttering 'I'm thirsty', the speaker can deny requesting a glass of water, but he cannot deny being thirsty. B&L, it will be recalled, regard 'off record' utterances as highly polite since they successfully minimise impositions. However, Blum-Kulka (1987) found that non-conventional indirectness varies cross-culturally. She argues that for an utterance to be polite there has to be a balance between clarity and non-coerciveness. While she acknowledges that this is achieved by conventional indirectness, she claims that in the case of non-conventional indirectness non-coerciveness overrides clarity and thus they are seen as less polite than conventionally indirect utterances, at least by her Hebrew and American subjects.¹⁰ Although B&L (1987:19) acknowledge the fact that there might be an 'efficiency' factor involved in the evaluation of politeness, they argue that Blum-Kulka's results do not offer a strong counter case for their ranking of 'off-record' strategies as more polite than negative politeness strategies.

When it comes to conventional indirectness Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) have found it to be a universal phenomenon with some degrees of cross-linguistic variation. We shall return to this point in the analysis of the data.

2.3. The speech act of apologising

Apologies fall into the group of expressives defined by Searle (1979:15) as speech acts which express 'the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a

¹⁰ It should be pointed out that Blum-Kulka's results might have been different had her informants been native speakers of British English and not American English, since as Gumperz (1982) argues the English appear to be more indirect than the Americans.

state of affairs specified in the propositional content'. He claims that in performing an expressive the 'truth of the proposition is presupposed'. Thus he explains that when a speaker utters the following:

19) I apologise for stepping on your toe.

his/her purpose is neither that of claiming that the other person's toe was stepped on nor to get it stepped on. According to Searle, an individual who apologises for carrying out an action (A) expresses regret at having done A. Thus the act of apologising can only take place if the S believes some act A has been carried out before the time of speaking and that A has resulted in an infraction which has affected another person (H) who at the same time deserves an apology. Moreover, as Fraser (1990) points out, S, the apologisee believes that s/he was at least partly responsible for the offence. Apologies, as opposed to requests, occur post-event and by the S apologising for its occurrence the act becomes an acknowledged transgression. Apologies can be defined as compensatory action for an offence committed by S which has affected H.¹¹

Using B&L's terminology, apologies are generally perceived as 'negative politeness' since they express respect rather than friendliness. Apologies are a clear example of a speech act whose main purpose is that of redressive action, that is to say, they redress face-threatening behaviour and in so doing they acknowledge the addressee's need not be imposed upon and/or offended. In other words, apologising is 'face-saving' for H and 'face-threatening' for S. For Leech, apologising is a convivial speech act whose goal coincides with the social goal of maintaining harmony between S and H by providing some benefit for the H and some cost to the S (1983:125). Only Holmes (1990) grants some importance to the S's 'positive face' by suggesting that apologies can be described as 'face-supportive acts' for the S and the H since they derive some benefit for both.¹² She claims that although apologies are generally aimed at offences which have damaged the H's 'face' and are thus regarded as 'negative politeness' strategies, certain elements within the realisation of the apology may also address the victim's or the S's positive 'face' needs. She explains that from the S's point of view, the apology may be seen as the FTA which damages his/her own

¹¹ Having said that, one cannot help but notice that native speakers of British English appear to have a habit of apologising in advance before they even bump into someone or brush against them. This will be discussed in section 2.3.1. of this chapter.

¹² When using the term 'face-supportive acts' she contrasts apologies with speech acts such as threats and insults which Austin (1990) refers to as 'face-attack acts'.

'positive face' in the sense that the S admits that s/he has offended the H, thus 'the remedial exchange may incorporate an attempt to simultaneously redress the S's positive face needs as well as the victim's face needs' (1990:162). She illustrates this point by means of two examples:

[Introducing B to C, A has used *Mr.* instead of *Dr.* for B.]

A: Oh I am sorry - it's Dr. Hall not Mr. Forgive me.

[B smiles in an embarrassed way and addresses C.]

B: Nice to meet you.

[A is phoning B to warn her of potential inconvenience.]

A: I'm sorry but I'm going to be a bit late for work. The buses aren't off strike yet and with it being a wet Friday, it'll probably be a while until my taxi arrives.

B: Uh-huh as long as you're here by six, cos I'm going then.

Holmes points out that in the first interchange the S is redressing damage to the victim's positive 'face' since the S recognises the H's need that others recognise and respect his achievements. The second interchange shows an awareness of a potential offence to the H's negative 'face' as well as an attempt by the S to redress his/her own positive 'face' by providing not one but two reasons why the potential offence may be unavoidable. It will be recalled, that a similar claim was made by Scollon and Scollon (1981) when discussing the process of granting 'face' as a dynamic and multifunctional one (see Chapter 1, section 1.8.4.).

Goffman (1971) views apologies as 'remedial interchanges', that is to say, remedial work which aims at re-establishing social harmony after a real or virtual offence has been performed. He distinguishes between ritual and substantive compensation and thus classifies apologies into: a) those which redress virtual offences, generally remedied by offering an apologetic formula, and b) those which redress real damage on the addressee, apart from requiring an apologetic formula they may also include an offer of material compensation. Both ritual and substantive apologies have been shown to vary cross-culturally (Mir, 1992; Bergman and Kasper, 1993; amongst others).

2.3.1. Form and function of apologies

There are a number of linguistic strategies which express apologies and a number of researchers have developed systems for classifying different apology strategies

(Fraser, 1981; Cohen and Olshtain, 1981; Cohen and Olshtain, 1983; Owen, 1983; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Trosborg, 1987; Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1987). We shall refer to the latter's since it appears to be one of the most comprehensive and it has been widely used to compare apologies in a number of different languages.

According to Blum-Kulka *et al* (1987) the apology speech act set can be on its own or made up of different combinations of semantic formulas: a) an expression of apology, b) an explanation or account, c) an acknowledgement of responsibility, d) an offer of repair and e) a promise of forbearance. We shall refer mainly to the first semantic formula since in English as well as in Spanish it can be realised by functionally similar phrases.

The first semantic formula, the expression of an apology generally results from the S using a word, expression or sentence which contains a performative verb such as apologise, forgive, excuse, or to be sorry and thus it has been classified into a number of sub formulas:

- i) an expression of regret, i.e. 'I'm sorry';
- ii) an offer of apology, i.e. 'I apologise';
- iii) a request for forgiveness, i.e., 'Please forgive me', 'Pardon me'.

In all of these sub formulas the apology is realised directly by means of an apology verb and in Goffman's terms, it will be recalled, they are ritual apologies. In English ritual apologies employing 'excuse me' are generally offered as territory invasion signals when addressing strangers:¹³

20) *A asks a person on the street the way to the train station*

A: Excuse me, could you tell me the way to the train station?

In 20) 'excuse me' can also be considered as an element whose function is that of alerting the H's attention to the ensuing speech act, in this case a request for information. In Uruguayan Spanish though 'perdón' and 'disculpe' are used as 'excuse me' in 20), people also employ different attention getters such as titles: 'Sr.', 'Sra.', 'Srta.' either followed or not by greetings without resorting to an apologetic formula as in:

¹³ The examples provided in this section were instances of spontaneous speech in British English and Uruguayan Spanish in Great Britain and Uruguay, respectively.

21) *A and B are in a car. The car is parked. They need to go to X street and they do not know how to get there. They see a pedestrian, C, at the end of the road and ask him for directions.*

- | | |
|---|---|
| A: ¿Dónde miercoles estamos? | Where the hell are we? |
| B: No tengo ni idea. | I haven't got a clue. |
| A: Bajá la ventana y preguntale a ese tipo. | Open the window and ask that bloke. |
| B: ¿Qué tipo? | What bloke? |
| A: El que está al final de la calle. | The one at the end of the road. |
| B: (opens the window and shouts)
¡Señor! | Mr.! |
| (the pedestrian walks towards the car) | |
| B: ¡Buenos días! ¿Sabe dónde queda
la calle X? | Good morning! Do you know where
X street is? |
| C: Sí, sigan todo derecho y doblen a la
izquierda. | Yes, go straight ahead and turn left. |
| B: Gracias. | Thank you. |
| C: De nada, chau. | You're welcome, 'bye. |

The fact that an apologetic formula was not employed by B and that C did not seem to be bothered by the territory invasion, quite the opposite, it was C who walked towards the car, could be interpreted as an indication that Uruguayans seem to be more tolerant or less sensitive to territorial intrusions than the English. However, more data would be necessary in order to substantiate this point.

'Excuse me' can also be employed as an announcement of temporary absence:

22) *A and B are having a conversation at A's flat when the telephone rings. A stands up to answer the telephone and utters:*

A: Excuse me.

'Excuse me' is commonly used when there is a virtual or real intrusion into another person's physical space, i.e. passing someone in a narrow space. Having said this, both 'excuse me' and 'I'm sorry' can be used as formulaic remedies in certain situations with little difference in effect, i.e. when two people accidentally bump into each other. 'Excuse me' tends to be used pre-event, that is to say, before an infraction or when someone is making his/her way through a crowd of people, whereas 'I'm sorry' tends to

be used post-event, after getting in someone's way. To this respect, Borkin and Reinhart (1978) carried out a study in order to find out the differences and similarities between these two formulaic remedies. They concluded that 'excuse me' is employed 'as a formula to remedy a past or immediately forthcoming breach of etiquette or other light infraction of a social rule' (p.61); with the exception of 'excuse me' being more appropriate than 'I'm sorry' 'in getting someone to step aside, while either *excuse me* or *I'm sorry* might be used after getting in someone else's way'(p.59). In the case of 'I'm sorry', they claim it is used in a wider range of contexts, particularly 'in remedial interchanges when a speaker's main concern is about a violation of another person's right or damage to another person's feelings' (p.61).¹⁴

In the same way as English has 'excuse me' and 'I'm sorry' as two of its formulaic remedies to express regret, in Uruguayan Spanish and in particular the variety spoken in Montevideo there are several: 'lo siento', 'lo lamento', 'perdón', 'disculpe', 'permiso' or 'con permiso'. 'Lo siento'¹⁵ is generally employed in formal and informal contexts in which the addressee is in a position of power and does not want to help the speaker:

23) *At the office. A and B are colleagues. A is a very experienced secretary; she has been explaining a task to B who is also a secretary and has the same hierarchical status but is not as experienced.*

B: No sé como voy a hacer para terminar esto a tiempo.

[I don't know what I'm going to do to finish this on time]

A: Lo siento pero lo vas a tener que hacer sola.

[I'm sorry but you're going to have to do it on your own]

or as a way of announcing bad news:

¹⁴ Borkin and Reinhart's (1978) analysis has received empirical support by House (1988) who found that for substantive offences native speakers of British English employed 'I'm sorry' and not 'Excuse me'.

¹⁵ 'Lo siento' and 'lo lamento' are generally employed in formal and informal contexts in which the addressee has lost something or someone very dear to him/her, i.e. an expression of condolence as in 'Lo lamento mucho' or 'Lo siento mucho' uttered at a funeral. A more formal expression of condolence in Uruguayan Spanish is 'Mi más sentido pésame' or 'Le acompaño en el sentimiento'.

24) *A and B are two friends discussing exam results.*

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A: ¿Cómo te fue? | How did it go? |
| B: Pasé por suerte. | Luckily I passed. |
| A: ¿Viste mi nombre en la lista? | Did you see my name on the list? |
| B: Lo siento, marchaste. | I'm sorry, you flunked. |

'Lo lamento' is employed in the same contexts as 'lo siento'. Native speakers appear to regard 'lo siento' as more informal than 'lo lamento'.

'Perdón' and 'disculpe' can be both employed pre- and post-event. They are generally used pre-event with the purpose of interrupting a conversation, as an announcement of temporary absence from an ongoing conversation as 'excuse me' in example 22) above and can also be offered as a territory signal when addressing strangers as 'excuse me' in example 20) above, though as we have seen in example 21) a form of address followed by a greeting can be used instead. 'Perdón' and 'disculpe' can also be employed as way of asking permission before entering someone's territory:

25) *At the office: A knocks on B's door, opens the door and says*

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| A: Perdón... | Excuse me. |
| B: Adelante. | Come in. |

when wanting to draw someone's attention or when entering the wrong room. The main difference between these two formulaic remedies is a question of frequency and formality; native speakers of Montevidean Spanish appear to use 'perdón' more rarely than 'disculpe' and consider the former more formal than the latter.

Both expressions can also be used post-event, after getting into someone's way, violating someone's physical space, violating another person's rights or damaging another person's feelings. The difference between the two in this case appears to reside in the severity of the infraction, 'disculpe' is more often employed with light offences whereas 'perdón' seems to be more appropriate when the physical transgression could have slightly hurt someone, i.e. when someone brusquely bumps into you. In this case 'perdón' could be employed as a request for forgiveness by uttering 'perdone', 'perdoná', 'perdóneme' or 'perdoname'. A literal translation of 'perdoná' and 'perdone' would just be 'forgive' in English, whereas in Spanish the difference between the two is based on the T/V distinction.

The choice of the S between 'perdone' and 'perdoná' appears to be based on how s/he regards the H in terms of degree of familiarity and age. Thus a young S apologising to a middle-aged H whom s/he does not know is likely to use 'perdone', however, a middle-aged S apologising to a young H is likely to use 'perdoná'. In the case of 'perdóneme' and 'perdoname' the same distinction as 'perdone' and 'perdoná' applies. However, the inclusion of the object pronoun 'me' emphasises the desire of the S to be forgiven by the H and to a certain extent the S recognises s/he is responsible for the offence; its literal translation would be 'forgive me' whereas 'perdone' and 'perdoná' just emphasise an infraction towards the H. Moreover, 'perdóneme' and 'perdoname' are usually employed when the infraction towards the H is regarded as a more serious one, thus if a young S steps on a middle-aged person's foot, s/he might say 'perdone'; however, if the same young S pushes a middle-aged person onto the floor, 'perdóneme' would be more appropriate.

'Permiso' or 'con permiso' as the word suggests, is a way of asking permission or saying 'May I? If you don't mind...' prior to entering someone's physical space, that is to say, when someone is making his/her way through a crowd of people or before entering someone's office as 'perdón' in example 25) above. 'Perdón' emphasises the fact that the S has 'violated' the H's physical space, and thus is used after having entered into someone's office. 'Permiso', however, emphasises the desire of the S to be given license by the H and thus it is more appropriate than 'perdón' when entering someone's office without being expected or when invited to someone's house for the first time:

26) *A and B are work colleagues. A invited B to her flat for a coffee. A is making coffee in the kitchen while B is sitting in the front room. B stands up and goes to the kitchen in order to talk to A. As B enters the kitchen she says:*

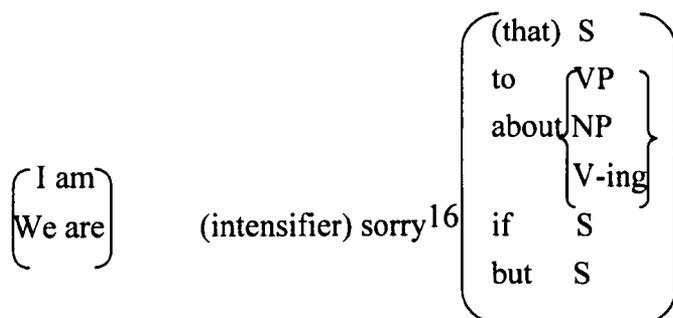
B: Permiso...

A (does not say anything with reference to the apologetic formula and starts commenting on the kitchen facilities due to the fact that s/he does not feel the need to grant permission, that is to say, it is taken for granted).

It is also employed when joining and/or leaving a space or gathering. Its English equivalent would be 'would you excuse me..'

An important difference between English and Spanish phrases for expressing an apology is based on their morphology. While 'excuse me' can mark the distinction between singular and plural as in 'excuse us' or 'excuse them', 'sorry' cannot. It can only do so by including a subject pronoun before the phrase such as 'I'm sorry', 'We

are sorry', and thus also make it more formal. The vast majority of apology expressions in English can be accounted for as forms of 'sorry'. The frequency of '(I'm) (intensifying adverb) sorry' appears to indicate that this lexical stem has developed into an unmarked routine (Ferguson 1981:27). This particular phrase can be said to be very flexible in that it allows for a number of modifications to take place. Thus it can be used in the following way:



In Spanish, 'perdón' is a masculine noun which directly refers to the action of 'perdonar', to forgive and its effect, to be granted pardon. 'Disculpe' and 'disculpa' is the conjugation of the first person singular of the transitive verb 'disculpar', to apologise, when addressing the H as *usted* and when addressing the H as *tú*. These two phrases not only mark the distinction between the singular and the plural but also between formality and informality, the T/V distinction when used as verbs:

Table 1

SPEAKER	HEARER	T	T	V	V
1st p. sing. (yo)	2nd p. sing. (vos/tu/Ud.)	Perdoná/ Perdoname	disculpá/ disculpame	perdone/ perdóneme	Disculpe/ Discúlpeme
1st p. sing. (yo)	2nd p. plural (ustedes)	Perdonen/ Perdónenme	disculpen/ discúlpenme	perdonen/ perdónenme	Disculpen/ Discúlpenme
1st p. plural (nosotros)	2nd p. sing. (vos/tu/Ud.)	Perdonanos	Disculpanos	perdónenos	Discúlpenos
1st p. plural (nosotros)	2nd p. plural (ustedes)	Perdónennos	discúlpennos	perdónennos	Discúlpennos

¹⁶ Although less common double intensifiers are also possible: i.e. 'most awfully sorry'.

The distinction in Spanish between *tú* ('you' singular), *vosotros* ('you' plural) and *usted* ('you' singular), *ustedes* ('you' plural) signals a difference in formality. *Tú* and *vosotros* are used in situations in which there is intimacy and it expresses a feeling of 'solidarity'. *Usted* and *ustedes* are used when addressing one or more individuals in formal situations, it is the 'polite' form of address. It should be noted that in Uruguay, Argentina, certain regions of Chile and in Central America there is an alternative pronoun which expresses 'solidarity': *vos* which has almost replaced *tú*. Moreover, the 'you' plural, *vosotros*, has almost disappeared in America. In Hispanoamerican Spanish there is no distinction between the solidarity 'you' plural, *vosotros*, and the formal 'you' plural, *ustedes*; there is only one form *ustedes* (Pedretti de Bolón, 1983:95-98).

The second semantic formula, an explanation or account, indirectly refers to what brought about the offence and is offered 'either in addition to or in lieu of an expression of apology' (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983:22) as in the following example:

27) *A is 15 minutes late for her lecture; when she arrives she addresses her lecturer and says:*

A: Sorry I'm late, my car broke down in the middle of the motorway.

Explanations, as previously mentioned can be employed on their own as a way of apologising; the effectiveness of an explanation on its own rests upon the degree to which the apologiser can transfer the responsibility of the offence either to another party or to another source (Fraser, 1981).

The third formula, an acknowledgement of responsibility, will be chosen by the S only when s/he recognises responsibility for the offence and as with the first semantic formula it has a number of sub formulas:

- i) accepting blame, i.e. 'It was my fault', 'Fue mi culpa';
- ii) expressing self-deficiency, i.e. 'I wasn't thinking', 'I didn't see you', 'No te ví';
- iii) recognising the other person as deserving an apology, i.e. 'You're right', 'Tenés razón';
- iv) expressing lack of intent, i.e.; 'I didn't mean to', 'No lo hice por gusto'.

The fourth formula, an offer of repair or an offer of restitution since sometimes there is nothing that needs repairing, is situation-specific and it 'would be relevant only if physical injury or other damage has resulted' (Olshtain, 1983:23). This strategy suggests that the offender will carry out either an action or provide some kind of

compensation for the damage which resulted from his/her infraction. The last semantic formula, a promise of forbearance, is also situation-specific and it refers to a situation which the offender could have avoided but did not do so, i.e., in England when someone has forgotten a meeting with a friend more than once. The strategy is employed whenever the speaker's sense of guilt is strong enough for her or him to take responsibility in order to make sure the offence will not happen again.

Apologies, like requests, can be intensified or downgraded. Some intensifying devices are the use of adverbials: 'very', 'terribly', 'awfully' in English and 'mucho' or 'muchísimo' in Spanish. Downgrading devices have the purpose of diverting the H's attention from the offence. An example of these is the use of diverted tactics, as in 'Am I really late?' or querying the S as in 'Are you really sure we had to meet on Monday?' We shall discuss these when analysing the data.

One major research question relates to the factors that affect the S's decision to choose one of the realisations of the apology speech act over others. Olshtain and Cohen (1983) suggest that social power which they define in terms of the status of the interactants, social distance, understood as the familiarity between the interactants whether they are strangers, acquaintances or friends, gender and age¹⁷ are the social factors which affect the S's decision. The authors also refer to contextual factors, that is to say, the situational features such as the severity of the offence and the obligation of the S to apologise. Thus they claim that the higher the status of the H over the S, the higher the social distance between the S and the H and the more severe the offence the more apologetic the speech act will be. We shall return to this point in the next chapter.

2.3.2. Concluding remarks

Having defined the speech acts of requesting and apologising in British English and Uruguayan Spanish and discussed the form and function of such acts from a comparative perspective, we could speculate that the requests and apologies to be collected for this study will probably show a larger number of requests realised by imperative constructions in Uruguayan Spanish; and a higher use of formulaic remedies in British English.

In the next chapter we shall consider different methodological approaches for the study of requests and apologies. As explained before, these speech acts are

¹⁷ It should be noted that in the present study we will not be dealing with the age factor since the informants are roughly the same age.

believed to vary according to a number of social variables such as the social distance, the social power between the interlocutors as well as how different cultures perceive the total ranking of the imposition. We shall also look at the instrument devised for the collection of requests and apologies, its advantages and some of its possible limitations. Furthermore, other methodologies for studying requests and apologies will be considered, as well as their advantages and possible limitations. Finally we will present the coding scheme for requests and apologies, such scheme will be based upon the form and function of the speech acts taking account of some of the differences already discussed in the present chapter between Uruguayan Spanish and British English.

CHAPTER 3 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The aim of this study is to investigate the expression of politeness in two different languages, British English and Uruguayan Spanish, establishing the similarities and/or differences between its conceptualisation by female and male native speakers of both languages.

The realisation of two speech acts, namely requests and apologies, was chosen as the focus of the study. Amongst the variety of speech acts requests were chosen since they are the method used in 'polite' societies to get someone to do something (Green, 1975). In Brown and Levinson's terms they are face-threatening acts since hearers can interpret them as impingements on their freedom of action and thus speakers might hesitate to make a request for the fear of risking loss of 'face'. Due to the aforesaid speakers tend to employ a variety of strategies to try and make sure their requests will be granted; such strategies will inevitably reflect the expression of politeness. Apologies were chosen since when apologising, the speaker admits that a social norm was violated and that s/he was to some extent part of its cause. Therefore apologies involve a certain loss of 'face' for the speaker and at the same time a kind of 'support' for the addressee. Although these two speech acts are rather different in that requests are 'pre-event acts' and apologies usually 'post-event acts' apologies were also selected for consideration because of their frequency and because people tend to use them as tools for judging societies as more or less 'polite' than others. Also the fact that a pre-event speech act was chosen as well as a post-event one will help us obtain a more balanced picture, one before and after the event.

3.2. The structure of the study

According to Labov (1972a, 1972b) data should come from everyday speech in natural settings since only unconscious unreflective speech will give the linguist unadulterated data. That is to say, the more everyday and natural the speech, the more realistic. Labov noticed that the act of observing speech makes it 'uneveryday' and unnatural. This is what he referred to as the 'observer's paradox' when he claimed that 'our goal is to observe the way people use language when they are not being observed' (1972a:61). Ever since (socio) linguists became aware of such a paradox

they have devised ingenious methods of data collecting in order to minimize an apparently in-built social science limitation; a limitation which seems to be insurmountable. We shall discuss this point in more detail later on in this chapter.

Ideally the data for this study should be based upon non-reactive naturally occurring requests and apologies. Unable to achieve this goal due to time, financial constraints and more importantly the nature of the speech acts themselves- believed to vary according to a combination of social variables- the data were collected from an open role-play both in Uruguay and in Great Britain and confirmed by discussions with informants, colleagues, acquaintances and from my personal polycultural experience.

3.2.1. Population

The open role-play was constructed in English and Spanish and performed by 61 native speakers of British English (29 males and 32 females) and 64 native speakers of Uruguayan Spanish (33 males and 31 females) in their respective countries. The informants were all university students doing their first degree in a subject not related to languages or linguistics. Most of the students were between 18 and 25 years of age. The British were students of geography, sports science, mathematics, sociology, biology, history, drama and education at St Mary's University College, Twickenham, England. The Uruguayans were students of engineering, mathematics, anthropology, history, biology, geology, veterinary sciences, architecture, medicine and law at the Universidad de la República, Montevideo, Uruguay. Thus the sample could be said to be representative of the student population at university level. Students were chosen as the target population in order to ensure as much homogeneity as possible in terms of educational background, age range, social class and possible future occupation.

3.2.2. The instrument

The instrument was an open role-play comprising 12 combined situations resulting in the elicitation of 12 requests and 12 apologies,¹ and a short questionnaire where the informants were asked general questions about their age, sex, educational background, place of residence, birth place, occupation, etc. (see Appendix 1). The situations depicted in the role-play represent socially differentiated situations which reflect

¹ It should be noted that situation 7 has not been divided into two separate sections since during the design of the instrument it was thought that such a request would necessarily include some kind of apology.

everyday occurrences of the type expected to be familiar to both British and Uruguayan university students. The situations vary according to a number of social variables: the social distance between the speakers, the relative social power of the participants, the ranking of the request and in the case of apologies the severity or seriousness of the offence, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Classification of open role-play situations according to contextual and social variables

SITUATION	SOCIAL POWER	SOCIAL DISTANCE	RANKING OF IMPOSITION SEVERITY OF OFFENCE
R.1. Student asks lecturer to borrow his/her book	S<H	+SD	Low
A.1. Student forgets to return book on time	S<H	+SD	Low
R.2. Employee asks manager/ess to cover for him/her while s/he runs errands	S<H	-SD	Low
A.2. Employee spills coffee on manager/ess' trousers	S<H	-SD	Low
R.3. Employee asks new trainee to mind telephone while s/he pops out for a few minutes	S>H	+SD	Low
A.3. Employee returns one hour and a half later than expected	S>H	+SD	Low
R.4. Speaker is driving and asks his/her friend to ask someone for directions	S=H	-SD	Low
A.4. Driver realises s/he had a map all along	S=H	-SD	Low
R.5. Speaker asks a neighbour for help to move out of flat using his/her car	S=H	+SD	High
A.5. Whilst in neighbour's car oil is spilt over the back seat	S=H	+SD	High
R.6. Employee asks manager/ess to borrow car	S<H	-SD	High
A.6. Employee crashes car	S<H	-SD	High
7. Employee put in charge of work project asks colleague about to go on holiday to stay	S>H	-SD	High
R.8. Employee put in charge of work project asks colleague to type a few letters	S>H	-SD	Low
A.8. Employee asks colleague to rewrite them	S>H	-SD	Low
R.9. Friend asks another friend to borrow his/her house in the countryside	S=H	-SD	High
A.9. Friend spills ink on expensive carpet	S=H	-SD	High
R.10. Speaker asks bus passenger to swap seats	S=H	+SD	Low
A.10. Speaker steps on passenger's toes	S=H	+SD	Low
R.11. Employee asks new	S<H	+SD	High

manager/ess for loan			
A.11. Employee returns money later than agreed	S<H	+SD	High
R.12. Employee asks new trainee to borrow his/her brand new laptop computer	S>H	+SD	High
A.12. Employee smashes computer screen	S>H	+SD	High

R= request, A= apology, S= speaker, H= hearer, SD= social distance, SP= social power

As can be seen from Table 1 the situations of the role-play were designed in order to elicit the speech acts in question for all the possible combinations of the social variables as shown for easier reference in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Combination of explanatory variables

SITUATION 1	S<H	+SD	LOW
SITUATION 11	S<H	+SD	HIGH
SITUATION 2	S<H	-SD	LOW
SITUATION 6	S<H	-SD	HIGH

SITUATION 3	S>H	+SD	LOW
SITUATION 12	S>H	+SD	HIGH
SITUATION 8	S>H	-SD	LOW
SITUATION 7	S>H	-SD	HIGH

SITUATION 10	S=H	+SD	LOW
SITUATION 5	S=H	+SD	HIGH
SITUATION 4	S=H	-SD	LOW
SITUATION 9	S=H	-SD	HIGH

A wide range of studies in pragmatics and sociolinguistics indicate that both social distance and social power affect the interpretation of language, however, very few authors have explicitly defined these factors. As a matter of fact, authors tend to use the same non-defined terms with different meanings and thus we have Lim and Bowers (1991) considering 'acquaintances' as a distant relationship while Olshtain (1989) regards them as intermediate in terms of distance (Spencer-Oatey, 1996). Apart from the theoretical difficulties in defining these social variables, cross-cultural research poses a further source of difficulty since people from different cultures may differ in their considerations of role-relationships. In the same way that the Australian prototypical conception of a 'mate' might be different from that of the British, the Uruguayan conception of a 'friend' might be different from the British one. Hence the situations of the role-play were carefully designed and discussed with native speakers

in both cultures to try to ensure 'sameness' of context in both languages. Despite the fact that social distance has been heavily criticised (Spencer-Oatey, 1996) it still plays an important role in the design and analysis of the situations contained in the role-play. As a matter of fact social distance appears to correlate negatively with politeness investment. In other words, the less familiar the interlocutors the more indirect and tentative their illocution. This point will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter where the findings of the requests will be presented.

Due to the nature of the population of this study we have taken social distance to represent the degree of familiarity between the participants, that is to say, how well-though not necessarily how long- they have known each other. Thus for the purposes of this study we have taken 'friends' as people who know each other very well, work colleagues who get on well as people who know each other well and strangers or new work colleagues as not knowing each other well.² For the purposes of coding the data we considered 'friends' and 'acquaintances' as a familiar relationship (-SD) whereas 'strangers' and 'neighbours you do not know well' as not familiar (+SD). Having said that, we are aware that in 'real life' not all the informants are not familiar with each other (+SD) and that the social distance factor may be carried over their role-play performances.

Considerations of 'like-mindedness' as advocated by Brown and Gilman (1972) or 'affect' as argued by Slugoski and Turnbull (1988) have not been taken into account. While we recognise the influence that 'like-mindedness' and 'affect' have in the production and interpretation of language, we agree with Wood and Kroger (1991) who maintain that the key issue is the level at which factors such as 'affect' need to be taken into account.

Social power is hereby understood as a nonreciprocal relationship, where one person can have control over the behaviour of another (Brown and Gilman, 1972). The bases of power to which we refer to here are not physical, sexual or related to age but given to the subject by way of his/her institutionalised role in society or by something s/he has that others have no access to. Hence we assume that a new manager at work will have more power than an employee. We are aware, however, that 'social power' is not static, that it can change hands and that it is constantly negotiated.

In terms of the other social variables, that is, the ranking of the imposition for requests and the severity of the offence for the apologies, they have been alternated in

² Although three different levels of social distance have been distinguished the statistical tests employed only need two values of the variable in question to work.

terms of high and low impositions and offences. Thus we have considered smashing someone else's computer screen as a high offence while stepping on someone else's toes as a light or low ranking of imposition or offence. For the purposes of coding the data we considered serious offences such as crashing someone's car and spilling oil on someone's back seat high offences. Although it could be argued that the former offence is more severe than the latter and that as a consequence one should distinguish between the offences, the statistical analysis of the data only needs two values for each explanatory variable with the exception of social power for which it needs three ($S < H$, $S = H$, $S > H$). Moreover, the informants are not told what the values of each of the variables are, this is something they interpret themselves and respond accordingly by varying their requesting and apologising strategies.

As previously explained the situations of the role-play are combined ones, thus situation R1 elicits a request and A1 elicits an apology under the same social variables. The reason underlying the choice of combined situations as opposed to single ones resided in the difficulty of producing situations which reflected 'everyday' occurrences in both cultures under the same combination of social variables.

The situations of the role-play describe scenarios in which there are two participants, the speaker and the addressee (see Appendix 1). Both participants receive a card each clearly indicating the social power and social distance between the participants, some character information and the setting where the conversation between the interlocutors is meant to take place for that situation. The only difference between the speaker's and the addressee's card is that in the former's the object of the speech act in question is specified whereas the latter's only indicates that the speaker will talk to him/her but it does not say the reason why as shown below:

R5

Informant A:

You ask a neighbour you do not know very well to help you move some things out of your flat with his/her car since you haven't got a car and you haven't got anyone else to ask since everyone you know appears to be on holiday and you have no money either to hire someone who can help or to arrange transport. You see your neighbour on the street. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You're on the street. A neighbour you do not know very well comes to talk to you. Respond to him/her.

3.3. The pilot test

Although the design of the situations as well as their content was carefully thought out and thoroughly discussed with native speakers of both languages in order to ensure they were sufficiently natural and that they meant the same to both Britons and Uruguayans, the instrument was pilot-tested. The main objectives of the pilot test were:

- (a) To carry out a preliminary analysis in order to determine whether the wording, the format and the setting of the situations would present any difficulties
- (b) To identify any problematic items in the instrument and remove those elements which did not yield usable data so that the informants in the main study would experience no difficulties in doing the role-play
- (c) To double check that the instructions were clear to all informants and that there was no confusion as to what they were meant to do
- (d) To estimate how long it would take the informants to act out the situations
- (e) And finally, to ensure some sort of 'validity' for the instrument of data collection and to check its 'reliability'; in other words, to make sure that the instrument is an effective and 'dependable' means of eliciting results without leading the questions to the answers.

3.3.1. The population of the pilot test

Ideally the instrument should have been tried out on a group similar to the actual population of this study. Although this was done for the English version of the instrument which was piloted in three different stages with university students at St Mary's University College between 18 and 25 years of age studying a subject not related to languages or linguistics, this was not possible for the Spanish version of the role-play. It was impossible to find Uruguayan university students between 18 and 25 years of age in England. Thus the Uruguayan Spanish version of the role-play was

piloted with two groups (one female interacting with one male and one male interacting with one male) of Uruguayans residing in the UK. The Uruguayan groups were diverse in terms of education, occupation and age. The female was 23 years of age and had recently graduated, one male was 45 years of age, unemployed and did not have any tertiary studies, the second male was 30 years of age, a fitness instructor and again did not have any tertiary studies, finally the third male was 66 years of age, a retired businessman with tertiary studies completed.

3.3.2. The pilot study and the modifications to the instrument

The necessary precautions were taken to avoid stating what the object of the research was since this could have pre-conditioned the outcomes of the study. The informants were told to read some brief situations in which there were two participants and to role play one of them. They were told that the situations of the role-play were constructed in order to do some research in linguistics and that their linguistic competence and/or ability to act out situations was not being tested at all. The informants had been told that the interactions would be tape recorded.

The pilot test for the English version took place in a familiar environment for the informants: one of the rooms at the University. The Spanish version of the role-play took place after the English version had been piloted and modifications had been made. The piloting of the Uruguayan Spanish version of the instrument took place in two different houses belonging to the informants themselves.

As previously expressed the piloting of the English version took place in three different stages. In the first stage the informants were two females interacting with each other throughout the 12 combined role-play situations. It took the first group of informants 23 minutes to act out the whole set of situations. In the second stage the informants consisted of one female and one male interacting with each other throughout the total number of situations. The role-playing went on for 26 minutes.

A few modifications to the instrument were introduced. The wording of situation A4 was unclear to one of the couples and thus was changed accordingly. A second modification was made this time to the cards given to the informants. During the interaction it was clear that although situations R2 and A2 and R10 and A10 were different in that the R part elicits a request and the A an apology, they should have been written on the same card in order to increase naturalness and avoid unnecessary and unnatural repetitiveness.

Having made the necessary modifications to the wording of the role-play, the instrument was piloted once more, this time with one female and one male doing all 12 situations. Although this time the informants did not have any problems performing the modified situations it was noticed that after a few situations the informants started developing a natural personal relationship. In other words, the number of situations created a cumulative effect and in this particular case the informants ended up being unco-operative with each other and finally arguing. The interesting thing is that with the previous couple of informants this did not happen. This could lead us to believe that they might have been more co-operative. Having said that it is only natural to assume that after having been asked to do 12 or less things by the same person and apologised to so many times by the very same human being one can only lose patience.

In view of the above experience the instrument was piloted a third time. This time there were two females and two males: A, B, C, D. In order to ensure that they would not get too comfortable in their role we had two people at a time while the other two waited outside to be called in. The couples were systematically swapped to make sure they all interacted with each other. Each couple role-played a maximum of 4 situations. This procedure will be explained in detail in section 3.4. of this chapter.

Once the last British version of the role-play had been successfully pilot-tested the Uruguayan version was tested following the same procedure. No modifications had to be made to the wording of the situations or to the instructions.

3.4. Data collection and procedure

3.4.1. Recruiting the informants

The data collection activity took place in England and in Uruguay. The first phase took place in London, England. Lecturers who taught subjects not related to languages or linguistics were first contacted at the beginning of October 1996. The nature and purpose of the study was explained to them as well as what was expected from the informants. They were also asked when and whether it would be convenient to visit some of their classrooms in order to talk to the students with the purpose of recruiting unpaid volunteers. It was unexpectedly difficult for the majority of the lecturers contacted to make enough time before, during or after their lectures for me to have a five minute talk to their students. Finally, a month later, the negotiations had been finalised and the data collection began to take place. The first group of

informants to participate in the role-play did so at the beginning of November and the last group of British informants did so in the middle of December 1996.

The second phase of the data collection took place in Montevideo, Uruguay after the English data had been gathered. Although some lecturers were contacted from England in November 1996 in order to introduce myself to them and explain the purpose of the research, the number of students needed and dates when the data collection was planned for: May 1997, it was obviously too early for them to do anything about it. The role-plays themselves took place in an allocated room in the Students' Union section of each of the Faculties I visited. The first group of informants to participate in the role-play was recorded seven days after the negotiations had started, 9 May, and the last one on 21 May 1997.

Having discussed the way in which the informants were recruited to participate in the role-play we will now consider other possible methodologies followed by a discussion of the data collection and procedures involved.

3.4.2. Other methodologies considered

In the world of contemporary sociolinguistics where the quest for 'natural' language appears to be an insatiable requirement, possibly a result of the discipline's need to be recognised as epistemologically efficient (Harris, 1998; Coupland, 1998), we should ask ourselves what 'natural' language really is. Is it language in context? Is it language in an appropriate context? If so, what is understood by context? Would language in context be understood as the 'natural' language spoken by New York City department store attendants and triggered by the researcher himself (Labov, 1972); just to mention one of the many studies carried out to study language variation. Or would 'natural', 'spontaneous' language be what Hymes (1974a) described in his ethnographic studies of communication where the investigator is involved with the subjects s/he is studying and thus making the methodological procedure particularistic (Figuroa, 1994)? Or would 'natural' language be the type of conversation gathered by Gumperz (1982) and his followers? The answer that the discipline appears to covertly provide us with is that it varies. It varies according to the aim of what we are studying.

Wolfson (1976) argues that no single, absolute entity answers to the notion of natural/casual speech, a point also supported by Stubbs (1983:225) who claims that 'the hunt for pure, natural or authentic data is a chimera'. Wolfson further explains that 'if speech is felt to be appropriate to a situation and the goal, then it is natural in

that context' (1976:202). Thus there appears to be no such thing as natural speech in any absolute sense since all language changes in order to be appropriate to the situation. Furthermore, if looked at from a deterministic philosophical angle there is no such thing as spontaneous or unprovoked language since this so called 'spontaneity' has got to be triggered by something and languages show perplexing similarities in their 'spontaneous' responses to similar phenomena. Therefore as pointed out by Clifford (1988 in Blum-Kulka 1997), amongst others, we should not seek to obtain objective observation in the social sciences since this is unattainable. Instead we should study the social realities we help to create and replace the language of objectivity with that of reflexivity. By objectivity we understand the mental stance of the disinterested onlooker, in other words, the point of view of the detached observer (Schuetz, 1970). Thus objectivity is impossible since the researcher, in this case the observer, is just another social actor who can only interpret, understand and attribute meaning to the social phenomenon s/he is analysing by virtue of the fact that s/he is capable of engaging in meaningful social interaction with other social actors. Therefore the only sort of explanations s/he can provide are reflexive accounts of how, as a meaning-attributing individual, s/he has arrived at a particular understanding of a specific social phenomenon (Bilton *et al*, 1987). As social actors, human beings have reflexive abilities in that they possess the capacity to understand what they do while they do it. It is this reflexive though not objective capacity that helps us see that the observation of the phenomenon we are analysing is selective since it is an account of 'reality' from the point of view of the particular role the researcher has chosen to take.

It is with reflexivity that we shall discuss the type of data obtained by the open role-play. Ideally the data should have been non-reactive. That is, the speech acts in question should have been collected from 'natural', 'spontaneous' conversations; this point will be discussed later on in this chapter. The problem with collecting speech acts in this way is that:

With the exception of highly routinized and standardized speech events, sufficient instances of cross-linguistically and cross-culturally comparable data are difficult to collect through observation of authentic conversation. (Kasper and Dahl, 1991:245)

In addition, the design of the situations of the role-play not only enables the investigator to elicit similar semantic formulas in both cultures under the same combinations of explanatory variables but also under all and every possible combination of the explanatory variables. Attempting to collect the above data non-

reactively would be extremely time-consuming and I would say extremely difficult if not impossible to achieve due to the goal of the study: to collect instances of the response variable, namely requests and apologies, under all and every possible combination of the explanatory variables. There would also be theoretical problems related to the choice of population to be observed since it would probably involve a heterogeneous sample which will probably raise questions on how representative the data is. Even if it were possible and feasible to collect such data after having recorded the informants, presumably with their knowledge, the investigator would have to interview every single case in order to evaluate the explanatory variables. This could translate as a further imposition on the informants, this time on their time. This brings us to another issue, that of triangulation which will be discussed after the data collection procedure.

3.4.3. Data collection

As previously mentioned all the English data were recorded in one of the rooms at St Mary's University College. The Uruguayan data were collected in a designated room in the students' union of each Faculty visited. Thus all the informants were familiar with the environment and with the type of situations contained in the role-play. Although it was assumed that by choosing a familiar environment natural behaviour would be encouraged, natural behaviour, as discussed earlier on in this chapter, does not necessarily coincide with realistic behaviour since as observers we cannot guarantee that the informants will behave as they would normally do if the observer were not present.

The role-play was acted out by same gender (male-male and female-female) and cross-gender (male-female and female-male) couples. The aim was to elicit the same number of requests and apologies by females and males in same gender role-plays and by females and males in cross-gender role-plays, both in English and Spanish. As discussed in section 3.3.2. four informants were recruited per set of role-plays in order to prevent the cumulative effect of the role-play situations. While two of the informants were in the recording room doing the role-play the other two waited outside to be called. Once in the recording room the informants sat facing each other. Although the informants knew their interactions were being tape-recorded they could not see either the tape recorder or its minute microphone which was hidden behind them on a book shelf.

Whilst getting the same number of requests and apologies by females and males in same gender role-plays did not present any problems, careful steps were taken in order to implement the cross-gender interactions where we had two females and two males. The aim was to elicit the same number of requests and apologies by males and females per situation- as will be recalled the situations are discrete and they all present a different combination of social variables- in the role of speaker bearing in mind the possible dangers of the cumulative effect. Tables 3 and 4 below show the way in which the informants who participated in same and cross-gender role-plays were alternated in order to obtain the same number of speech acts by males and females interacting with members of the opposite sex per situation and without allowing them to get too comfortable in their role.

Table 3: Same-gender interactions

SITUATION NO.	FEMALES		MALES	
	Speaker	Hearer	Speaker	Hearer
R.1.	F1	F2	M1	M2
A.1.	F1	F2	M1	M2
R/A 2. ³	F2	F1	M2	M1
R.3.	F3	F4	M3	M4
A.3.	F3	F4	M3	M4
R.4.	F4	F3	M4	M3
A.4.	F4	F3	M4	M3
R.5.	F1	F3	M1	M3
A.5.	F1	F3	M1	M3
R.6.	F3	F1	M3	M1
A.6.	F3	F1	M3	M1
R/A 7	F2	F4	M2	M4
R.8.	F2	F4	M2	M4
A.8.	F2	F4	M2	M4
R.9.	F4	F2	M4	M2
A.9.	F4	F2	M4	M2
R/A 10	F2	F3	M2	M3
R.11.	F3	F2	M3	M2
A.11.	F3	F2	M3	M2
R.12.	F1	F4	M1	M4
A.12.	F1	F4	M1	M4

F1= first female, F2= second female, F3= third female, F4= fourth female, M1= first male, M2= second male
M3= third male, M4= fourth male

³ Although the situations of the role-play are discrete it should be recalled that situations 2 and 10 are continuous ones and thus they were written on the same card in order to avoid unnaturalness and that the contextual factors contained in situation 7 were designed to elicit both a request and an apology.

Table 4: Cross-gender interactions⁴

SITUATION NO.	COMBINATION OF INFORMANTS I		COMBINATION OF INFORMANTS II	
	Speaker	Hearer	Speaker	Hearer
R.1.	F1	M1	M1	F1
A.1.	F1	M1	M1	F1
R/A 2.	M1	F1	F1	M1
R.3.	F2	M2	M2	F2
A.3.	F2	M2	M2	F2
R.4.	M2	F2	F2	M2
A.4.	M2	F2	F2	M2
R.5.	F1	M2	M2	F1
A.5.	F1	M2	M2	F1
R.6.	M2	F1	F1	M2
A.6.	M2	F1	F1	M2
R/A 7	F2	M1	M1	F2
R.8.	F2	M1	M1	F2
A.8.	F2	M1	M1	F2
R.9.	M1	F2	F2	M1
A.9.	M1	F2	F2	M1
R/A 10	F1	M1	M1	F1
R.11.	M1	F1	F1	M1
A.11.	M1	F1	F1	M1
R.12.	F2	M2	M2	F2
A.12.	F2	M2	M2	F2

F1= first female, F2= second female, M1= first male, M2= second male

The systematic alternation of the informants in same and cross-gender interactions resulted in the summary provided in Tables 5 and 6 respectively.

⁴ It should be noted that both in same and cross-gender role-plays there were 4 informants per set. Whereas in same-gender interactions there were either 4 males or 4 females, in cross-gender interactions there were 2 males and 2 females. In order to elicit the same number of requests and apologies by males and females in cross-gender interactions the informants were alternated in two ways: combination of informants I and combination of informants II. With respect to these combinations it should be pointed out that the informants who participated in the first combination are not the same ones who participated in the second one. In other words, the first female (F1) in combination of informants I is not the same female as F1 in combination of informants II. The same applies for F2, M1 and M2.

Table 5: Number of situations role-played per informant in same-gender interactions in the role of speaker

FEMALES - NO. OF SITUATIONS ROLE-PLAYED AS SPEAKER	MALES - NO. OF SITUATIONS ROLE-PLAYED AS SPEAKER
F1 - 3	M1 - 3
F2 - 4	M2 - 4
F3 - 3	M3 - 3
F4 - 2	M4 - 2

Table 6: Number of situations role-played per informant in cross-gender interactions in the role of speaker

NO. OF SITUATIONS ROLE-PLAYED AS SPEAKER ACCORDING TO COMBINATION OF INFORMANTS I	NO. OF SITUATIONS ROLE-PLAYED AS SPEAKER ACCORDING TO COMBINATION OF INFORMANTS II
F1 - 3	F1 - 3
F2 - 4	F2 - 2
M1 - 3	M1 - 4
M2 - 2	M2 - 3
RESULT: 7 requests and apologies by females, 5 requests and apologies by males	RESULT: 5 requests and apologies by females, 7 requests and apologies by males

By alternating the informants and the order of the situations the informants participated in we made sure they did not get too comfortable in the role and thus avoided the cumulative effect of the situations. As can be seen in the above tables each informant only participated in a maximum of four situations per role-play set. Ideally all the informants in each cross-gender role-play should have role-played the same number of situations but due to the design of the instrument this was not possible. Moreover, it would have been ideal to have had two more informants per role-play in order to reduce the number of situations performed by each informant. Unfortunately this was not possible since it would have meant recruiting 6 people for each role-play and as will be recalled the data collected for this study comprises 4 sets of Uruguayan cross-gender interactions and 4 sets of English cross-gender interactions plus the data collected from same gender role-plays in each culture.

3.4.4. Methodological considerations: from the discourse completion test to the open role-play

The choice of an open role-play as the instrument of data collection was motivated by the need to gather as 'real' and interactive speech acts as possible according to a systematic variation in the combination of the explanatory variables believed to be involved in the production of the acts. One of the problems of collecting speech acts following the above in unprovoked 'natural' conversation is firstly, their frequency of occurrence and secondly, the very large amount of time it would take to collect the speech acts under every specific combination of the believed explanatory variables.

The most widely used solution to overcome the above has been the use of discourse completion tests (hereafter DCTs). DCTs were originally developed by Blum-Kulka (1982) following Levenston (1975) for comparing the speech act realisation of native and non-native speakers of Hebrew. DCTs consist of scripted dialogues that represent socially differentiated situations. The descriptions of the situations clearly specify the setting as well as the social distance and power between the interlocutors. The descriptions are then followed by an incomplete dialogue where the respondents need to complete the turn of the speaker by providing the speech act in question. There are two types of DCTs: those that include the hearers' response and those that do not as can be seen below.

At the University

You missed a lecture yesterday and would like to borrow the notes from a class mate

You:

Classmate: Sure, but please let me have them back before the lecture next week

At the University

You missed a lecture yesterday and would like to borrow the notes from a class mate

You:

DCTs have the advantage over 'natural' data in that they provide a controlled context for the speech acts and can be used to collect large amounts of data quite quickly as well as help to create initial classifications of formulas and strategies that may occur in natural speech (Rose, 1992). However, speech acts gathered by this instrument are not 'performed' in their full discourse context and they are written and not spoken. Thus it has been argued (Rintell and Mitchell, 1989) that the written speech acts provided by the respondents might be more formal than what they would actually say in 'natural' conversation. What is more, the respondents' answers might be influenced by the actual wording of the descriptions provided directly above their answers.

It has also been claimed (Johnston *et al*, 1998) that DCTs do not elicit the amount of external modifications and supportive moves which usually accompany head acts or core requests in 'natural' speech. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993) have looked at the differences in speech act production in DCTs with hearer's response and open questionnaires and concluded that DCTs where the hearer's turn was provided actually helped the respondents frame their answers. It should be noted that the respondents were non-native speakers and that the hearer's turn was a positive one, that is to say, if the speech act was a request the hearer's turn would indicate compliance. Rose (1992), however, found no significant differences in the responses given by non-native speakers in DCTs with and without hearer's response. Notwithstanding, he observed that the responses elicited from native speakers in DCTs without the hearer's turn showed longer requests and greater use of downgraders and supportive moves. These results are in line with those found by Johnston *et al* (1998); the authors found that no indication of interlocutor uptake and in fact non-compliance by the hearer appears to trigger greater politeness investment.

Rintell and Mitchell (1989) also compared speech acts elicited by means of a DCT and a closed role-play and found both elicitation procedures yielded similar data. This is not surprising when one takes into account the non-interactive nature of both procedures.

Beebe and Cummings (1985:13-4) point out that although the type of data provided by DCTs do not adequately represent:

- the length of response or the numbers of turns it takes to fulfill the speech act,
- the number of repetitions and elaborations which occur in 'natural' conversation,
- the actual wording employed in 'real' interactions, and

- the actual role of occurrence-e.g.: whether or not someone would naturalistically refuse at all in a given situation

they are an effective means of :

- collecting large amounts of data quickly,
- creating at least an initial classification of the semantic formulas that (may) occur in 'natural' speech,
- studying the perceived requirements for socially appropriate responses,
- gaining insight into the social and psychological factors that (may) affect the performance of speech acts, and
- ascertaining the canonical shape of speech acts in the minds of the speakers of that language.

In other words, when studying speech acts one is faced with the 'context' dilemma. On the one hand, we need to collect speech acts in their full discourse context for the reasons outlined above. On the other hand, speech acts in their full discourse context can only be gathered in 'real' conversation. This would leave us with an uncontrolled context where the explanatory variables cannot be manipulated and thus very little insight into the social motives behind the production of speech acts can be gained. What is needed is a way of allowing the informants involved to carry out complete interactions where they have maximum control over their conversational exchange and the variables can be manipulated by the researcher. This can be achieved by means of a role-play where the speech acts under study can be embedded in a more 'natural' discourse context.

Although role-plays have been employed as instruments to collect speech acts due to the shortcomings of DCTs, most of the role-plays employed were closed ones,⁵ that is to say, non-interactive ones. In closed role-plays the investigator allows each informant to read the situation which is usually typed onto a file card. When it is quite clear to the informant what the task involves the investigator him/herself role-plays the situation. In the case of an apology the investigator role-plays the person who the apology is owed to and the informant reacts to the verbal clue by providing the speech act as shown below:

⁵ Closed role-plays have been used as instruments for data collection of speech acts in a number of studies: Cohen and Olshtain (1981), Olshtain and Cohen (1983), and Mir (1992) to study the production of English apology strategies by non native speakers learning English.

You are at a meeting and you say something that one of the participants interprets as a personal insult to him

Investigator: I feel your last remark was directed at me and I take offense

Informant: _____

(From Olshtain, 1983)

Thus it could be argued (Rintell and Mitchell, 1989) that the type of data elicited by this method is not very different from that of a DCT without specifying the addressee's response.

In an attempt to counterbalance some of the limitations of non-interactive role-plays, open role-plays were employed to collect speech acts. In this type of role-play the informant is expected to engage in a regular conversation with another informant and not with the investigator. Individual instructions are given and the situations are described to both informants as shown below:

Your employee has been coming late to work, leaving early and not doing his/her work. This morning you call him/her and talk to him/her. He/she does not agree with you.

(From García, 1996)

Although this type of open role-play represents an advance when compared to closed role-plays where the investigator subjectively interacts with the informants playing the role of addressee, the communicative goals are prescribed for both informants thus leaving very little room for negotiation. Thus a more 'natural' open role-play was constructed for this study.

Like other role-plays the one designed for this study also specifies the roles of the participants as well as the initial situation of both interlocutors. However, unlike other open role-plays, only the informant in the role of the speaker is told what the communicative goal is. The addressee knows that some interaction will take place but does not know the speaker's communicative goal in advance.⁶ Therefore the interaction between the informants is 'real' in the context of the role-play since neither the conversational outcomes nor how those outcomes are to be reached are prescribed. Hence they need to be negotiated. This type of instrument provides 'communication'

⁶ It should be pointed out that an open-ended role-play is reported by Edmondson *et al* (1984) as the main method of data elicitation of the Bochum project (Edmondson, W., House, J., Kasper, G., McKeown, J., and Stemmer, B.; 1976-1981) designed to study the communicative competence of German learners of English.

orientated interaction with the focus on what is being talked about and not 'message' orientated communication with the focus on how things are being talked about. The speech acts are elicited in contextualised natural situations where there is an element of the unpredictable. Here is an example of one of the situations taken from the instrument of the present study:

Informant A received the following card:

You are a university student. You need to get a book from the library to finish your assignment on time. The library is closed and there is only one person you know has the book you need, one of your lecturers. On the way to his/her office you meet him/her on the hallway. What do you say?

Informant B received the following card:

You are a university lecturer. While leaving your office you meet one of your students on the hallway. Respond to him/her.

To sum up the use of an open role-play as the instrument of data collection has the benefit of providing us with a controlled context yet one which allows us to examine speech act behaviour in its discourse context; one where the social variables believed to be involved in the performance of the speech acts can be manipulated whilst allowing for 'real' interaction and thus a certain amount of 'spontaneity'.

Having said that, as 'real' as the interaction might be in the context of the role-play it is difficult to tell how representative the interactions are of what the informants would say in 'spontaneous' unprovoked conversation. What is obtained by a quasi-naturalistic approach, like the one used here, is not guaranteed to be as casual and 'spontaneous' as what is obtained by a naturalistic one. As pointed out by Klein-Braley (1991) the non-linguistic concomitants of verbal interaction are typically absent. Thus in a role-play when apologising for smashing someone else's computer screen the 'anger' of real life may be absent and a new computer will certainly not be received at the end. Although the situations of the role-play were very carefully

chosen in order to ensure (cross) cultural 'validity',⁷ could we not speculate that the participants might feel obliged to request and/or apologise in situations where in real life the option of not performing the act(s) might be favoured instead? Moreover, as an observer one can never be quite sure as to how much linguistic accommodation is taking place. Are the interlocutors thinking more about what they are saying and thus altering their style making the interaction more formal than needs to be? Or are they putting themselves in a desirable light, flattering themselves by showing a great degree of deference and co-operation in the interactions? The above are major issues in the social sciences and in particular in sociolinguistics since the emergence of Labovian 'realism'.

A key aspect in the social sciences, more specifically in sociolinguistics is to try and reduce the contribution of the measurer in order to avoid creating 'additional' artificiality. Thus in this role-play the measurer was present as a third person observer only. Closed role-plays, on the other hand, are characterised by the fact that the informants interact with the measurer. The effect of the measurer has been particularly discussed in relation to sociolinguistic interview-type work under the rubric of the already mentioned observer's paradox, though it is really an instance of what is known in psychology as the Hawthorne effect (Scholfield, 1995:88). The very presence of the observer may alter what s/he is observing, in particular the naturalness and casualness of the informants' speech. Besides we should not forget the informants were tape recorded, however tiny and far away from the informants' sight the tape recorder might have been. If we assume it is unethical to record people without their previous consent, then we cannot try to minimize the artificiality and the effects of recording people by claiming that after a while informants get used to being recorded (Tannen, 1984) in the same way that we cannot claim that once the informants have role-played a few situations their conversations can be interpreted as 'natural' since they would have got used to each other, to the type of task in hand and to the recording room. Moreover, people who are permanently being recorded such as celebrities and politicians develop special verbal strategies to deal with it (Stubbs, 1983).

As Blum-Kulka (1997) explains in support of Goodwin's (1981) view that recording is one type of observation:

⁷ Please note that the situations of the role-play were not only discussed with native speakers of both languages but that a multiple-choice questionnaire (see appendices III and IV) assessing the context-internal and context-external factors of the situations was administered to 30 (15 females and 15 males) university students in Uruguay and 30 (15 females and 15 males) university students in England prior to collecting the role-play data. These informants were different from the ones who participated in the open role-play.

The presence of an observer and a tape recorder represent two very different types of intrusion. Though tape recorders are by now widely employed in sociolinguistic research, their possible effects need to be reconsidered every time they are used (p.18)

Other possible limitations of the instrument could be based upon the assumption that the informants are good actors and feel comfortable and natural acting out provoked situations.

Some other limitations are related to recording conversation in general, regardless of whether it is reactive or non-reactive. Part and parcel of recording conversation is transcribing it. And just as there are theoretical biases in recording conversational data, as discussed above, transcription does not escape subjectivity. Even if the tapes used for recording are of excellent quality and the recording of the conversation itself is extremely clear, very often whole utterances cannot be heard even if repeated several times. To the aforesaid one should add instances of overlaps and trying to decipher different types of hesitation devices by rewinding tapes over and over again. An interesting point is that sometimes after having tried to decipher the same part of the conversation several times though unsuccessfully, a third party listens to it and does it instantly. These 'mind games' are most likely to lead to inaccuracies hence it is essential to double-check the work done in long hours of transcription. As a matter of fact, it would be highly desirable to have a second person transcribing the same data so that comparisons could be later made.

It could also be argued that it would have been advantageous to have collected and compared different perspectives of the same situations. In other words, ideally the data obtained by means of the role-play should have been checked against other methods of data collection as a way of providing some cross-validation since all methods of data collection have sources of errors. This would refer us back to the already discussed problems involved in collecting naturally occurring speech acts under each and every possible combination of the explanatory variables against a population with similar characteristics as the one of the role-play.

It could be counter-argued, however, that the informants who participated in the role-play could have been interviewed in order to have their own interpretation/account of the data compared with that of the investigator's. Two problems come to mind: firstly, it goes without saying that it took a great amount of tenacity to get the informants to participate in a twenty-five to thirty-minute role-play for neither money nor merits. Thus it is only reasonable to assume that asking them to

stay for an extra ten to fifteen minutes could be interpreted as an unreasonable imposition on their time and this is likely to affect the quality of their responses. Secondly, the aim of the study is to analyse speech act behaviour *in situ* and in its discourse context.

Had the investigator interviewed the informants s/he should have done so after every situation role-played by the informants in order to obtain their perception of the speech acts they had performed a minute ago as well as their view of the context internal and external factors. Apart from the fact that this could have been seen as a 'further' imposition on their time, it could not have been implemented since this would have made the data collection procedure totally 'unnatural' and artificial as the type of questions the investigator would have asked would have made the informants aware of the precise object of study and thus influenced their conversational behaviour in the next situations of the role-play, since as will be recalled there were four informants per set of role-play and they were alternated, see section 3.4.3. Moreover, if the investigator had asked the informants about their perceptions of the speech acts they had performed, s/he would have had to do so immediately after the informants had performed the acts. This would have meant that each informant could only have been unaware of the point of the exercise for one role-play situation hence the investigator would have needed to recruit 48 informants per set of role-plays since the role-play consists of 12 requests and 12 apologies and whilst one informant plays the role of the speaker another one has to play the role of the addressee.

It could also be argued that the investigator could have asked the informants to listen to the recordings of the speech acts and give their perceptions of the speech acts they had performed a while ago. Apart from the logistics difficulty in so doing the informants would be giving their views of something which is now longer *in situ*. What is more, sociolinguistic research has shown that speakers' perceptions of their own speech differs from their observed speech (Wolfson, Marmor and Jones, 1989 in Rose, 1992). Hence it could be argued that the participants' perception of the situation whilst doing the role-play may be different from their perception after the role-play.

Although different methods of data collection were not combined for the above reasons, the situations of the role-play were carefully designed and discussed with native speakers of both languages. This does not necessarily mean that we are not taking into account the type of errors that (may) emerge from this type of data. But perhaps one of the most important methodological issues to be considered here is the type of conversational data chosen for this study; more specifically the fact that the

present study is based upon an analysis of quasi-naturalistic data and not naturalistic for the reasons outlined above.

As previously expressed an open role-play represents an advance when compared to closed role-plays where the investigator interacts with the informants playing the role of the addressee. This type of open role-play is also more 'natural' than open role-plays where the communicative goal has been prescribed for both participants hence leaving very little room for negotiation. Finally, open role-plays combine the benefits of discourse completion tests whilst allowing the investigator to study speech act behaviour in its full interactional discourse context. By using open role-plays large amounts of data can be gathered and unexpected variables such as the different speech acts elicited in situation 9 of this role-play can be revealed (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.5.). Most importantly, the speech acts are embedded in a context where the turn-taking mechanism is in full operation, where planning decisions are made impromptu depending on the interlocutors' input and where global and local goals are negotiated and even meaning if required (Kasper and Dahl, 1991) as illustrated by the following exchange:

Situation R8

1. A: X!/ Would you type these letters for me I'm quite um/.../ and I REALLY REALLY need to type them up 'cos I'm in a rush//
2. B: Yeah/ sure/ how many have you got?
3. A: I've got 8 letters to type up
4. B: I mightn't get them done till this evening/ though 'cos [I've got to work..]
5. A: [Well they're quite urgent] they're quite urgent X
6. B: Well/ when do we have to/ when do I have to have them done for you/ straight away?
7. A: Ah/ well/ this evening by 5
8. B: OK/ well I'll try to get my own/ stuff/done and I'll try to fit in your letters
9. A: OK/ [thanks so much]
10. B: [I hope to get them done before..]
11. A: Thanks very much
12. B: No problem.

In the above conversation the speech act in question, a request, has been embedded in a natural context where as we can see the turn-taking mechanism at work through overlaps, pauses and the like. The core request is uttered in line 1 together with some grounders including adverbial intensifiers in order to support the petition.

The addressee responds positively though poses the question of number in line 2. Once the answer is given the speaker realises the task at hand is greater than she had expected and tries to negotiate an extended deadline for the letters by giving work grounders herself. As can be seen in line 5 the speaker overlaps with the addressee in order to stress the urgency of his request followed by a turn repeat so as to make sure that there should no doubt as to its urgency. This is followed by a dispreferred response in line 6 through the use of 'well' and some questioning as to the haste with which the letters are needed. In line 6 we can see the addressee making use of self-repair by employing the first personal singular subjective pronoun instead of the first person plural subjective pronoun with the aim of negotiating a later or extended deadline. The strategy worked and the speaker accepts a later deadline for the letters as shown in line 7. Having said that, the use of 'ah' and 'well' could be said to characterise his utterance as a dispreferred one; in other words, he realises that the speaker will only comply with his request provided the deadline is extended. Then follows line 8 where the addressee promises to try and have the letters ready on time.

As a matter of fact open role-plays not only represent an advance when compared to closed role-plays, they also have an advantage over 'natural non-reactive' conversational data: they are replicable.

3.5. Data analysis: the procedure

The analysis of the data of this study is based upon an adaptation of Blum-Kulka *et al*'s (1989) CCSARP (Cross Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project) coding scheme used to study the realisation of speech acts in a number of languages -American English, Canadian French, Hebrew, Argentinian Spanish,⁸ Russian, German, Thai, amongst others- and Brown and Levinson's distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' politeness discussed in Chapter 1. The CCSARP collected requests and apologies in a number of languages through the use of a discourse completion test (DCT) discussed in section 3.4.4. of this chapter.

3.5.1. Blum-Kulka *et al*'s coding scheme for request head acts

Following Searle's classification of speech acts, Brown and Levinson's distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' politeness as well as previous classifications of

⁸ The Argentinian Spanish results obtained by the CCSARP were based on a small sample. Thus the authors themselves expressed the need for the results to be further confirmed with a larger sample (Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1989:135).

request and apology strategies (Ervin-Tripp, 1976; House and Kasper, 1981; Cohen and Olshtain, 1981; Owen, 1983), Blum-Kulka *et al* (1989) devised a coding scheme to analyse the speech acts yielded by their discourse completion tests. It is this coding scheme that has been adapted to analyse the speech acts elicited by the open role-play.

Requests are made up of two parts, the core request or head act and the various peripheral elements. The core request is the main utterance which fulfils the function of requesting and it can be used successfully without any peripheral elements. In most cases, however, requests are either preceded and/or followed by expressions which mitigate or aggravate their force, but do not change their propositional content.

Let us first look at the realisation of core requests. Blum-Kulka *et al*'s (1989) analytical framework is based upon the universal premise that request strategies in all languages will show three major levels of directness: direct, conventionally indirect, non-conventionally indirect.

- (a) the most direct, explicit level realised by requests syntactically marked as such, for example, imperatives, or by other verbal means that name the act as a request, such as performatives (Austin, 1962) or hedged performatives (Fraser, 1975) [Blum-Kulka *et al* (1989:46)].

In their coding manual they explain that 'by directness is meant the degree to which the speaker's illocutionary intent is apparent from the locution' (1989:278) and provide examples ordered in decreasing degree of directness:

Mood derivable: where the grammatical mood of the locution conventionally determines its illocutionary force, e.g.: the imperative

Explicit performative: where the illocutionary intent is explicitly named by the speaker by using a relevant illocutionary verb, e.g.: I am *asking* you to...

Hedged performative: where the illocutionary verb denoting the requestive intent is modified, e.g.: I *must/have to ask* you to...

Locution derivable: where the illocutionary intent is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the locution, e.g.: You'll *have to/should/must/ought to*...

Want statement: where the utterance expresses the speaker's desire that the event denoted in the proposition come about, e.g.: I *'d like* to...

In the above examples the illocutionary intent of the speaker is apparent from the locution, in other words his/her intent is transparent in that it contains no ambiguity. This is due to the fact that the main verb makes the speaker's communicative intent explicit. Thus it could be said that the examples above are characterised by a correlation between syntactic form and illocutionary force presumably based upon the idea that there is a direct relationship between syntactic structures and their pragmatic interpretations. Here we are faced with two problems: the directness and/or indirectness of the linguistic encoding of utterances and the 'impact' with which the utterance is interpreted by the hearer.

If we look at Blum-Kulka's want statement subcategory we will see that while its linguistic encoding is indirect in the sense that the hearer is not explicitly asked to do anything, its pragmatic interpretation is unambiguous. When uttering:

1. Me gustaría que me prestaras tu coche
[I'd like you to lend me your car]
2. Quisiera pedirte prestado tu coche⁹
[I'd like to borrow your car]

the speaker is uttering a desiderative declarative sentence, which is interpreted by the hearer as a request and not as an expression of the speaker's desire or wishful thinking. The strategic advantage of such a sentence resides in the fact that the speaker is seen as non-imposing. Thus from the viewpoint of its linguistic mapping such a request should not be included in the direct category but in the conventionally indirect one.

- (b) the conventionally indirect level: strategies that realise the act by reference to contextual preconditions necessary for its performance, as conventionalised in a given language (1989:47). Conventional indirectness is associated with ambiguity at the utterance's level and characterised by pragmatic duality. The range of ambiguity in this case tends to be limited to two, specific interpretations (1989:45).

They further write that the most important typical features of conventional indirectness are the co-existence of conventionalisation of means and form, pragmatic duality and negotiability. Using Clark's (1979) definition they say that:

⁹ Please note that the examples provided were taken from the corpus of this study.

conventions of means determine the kinds of sentences that are standardly used as indirect requests. For example, it is a convention of means that questioning the hearer's ability is a standard way of requesting indirectly. Conventions of forms specify the exact wording used. The use of 'can you' in questioning ability (instead of 'are you able to') is a convention of form' (1989:41).

In their coding manual conventionally indirect requests are classified as 'suggestory formula: *how about.../why don't you....*' and 'preparatory'. Following Searle's (1975) felicity conditions for directives, more specifically Searle's preparatory condition by which the hearer is believed to be able to perform the act, Blum-Kulka *et al* claim that in preparatory requests:

the utterance contains reference to a preparatory condition for the feasibility of the request, typically one of ability, willingness or possibility as conventionalised in the given language. Very often, but not necessarily so, the speaker questions rather than states the presence of the chosen preparatory condition (query preparatory) (1989:280).

Blum-Kulka *et al*'s work is also known by the name of CCSARP (Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project). One of the languages studied by the CCSARP was Argentinian Spanish.¹⁰ In their analysis of Argentinian requests they claim that in uttering a request such as '¿Me prestás los apuntes de la clase pasada?' the speaker is predicting the hearer doing the act (1989:55). They write that 'Spanish and French use a question form which reflects non-obviousness of compliance (Haverkate, 1984)' and provide the following English translation for the request above 'Will you lend me your notes from yesterday?' since a literal translation ('Are you lending me your notes?' or 'Do you lend me your notes?') cannot render its force.

However, it is difficult to see what they mean by non-obviousness of compliance and it is unclear whether they equate non-obviousness of compliance with prediction. If we look back at their definition of conventionally indirect requests we will see that in '¿Me prestás los apuntes de la clase de ayer?' there is no reference to any precondition for its performance. If we then look at the two conventionally indirect substrategy types, that is, suggestory formula and query preparatory (see previous page), we will see that the request in question is neither conventionally

¹⁰ Argentinian Spanish, in particular the variety spoken in Buenos Aires is very similar to the variety spoken in Montevideo, to the point that speakers themselves find it hard to distinguish between them (Lipski, 1994).

phrased as a suggestion nor contains any reference to a preparatory condition for its feasibility. While its linguistic encoding is direct in the sense that the verb is unambiguous, the fact that it was phrased as an interrogative gives its speaker the chance to say s/he was only asking a question to obtain information. The request (in question) is realised by the present indicative. The mood employed shows the speaker's attitude towards the factual content of his/her utterance. The indicative mood expresses certainty and/or reality. The only reason why Blum-Kulka *et al* claim the compliance of such a request could be interpreted as non-obvious is because of the sentence's syntactic class: an interrogative. But non-obviousness of compliance or predictability, following Blum-Kulka *et al*, could be said to be present in all types of requests regardless of the way in which they are realised since requests fall into the group of directives which are defined as:

Attempts (of varying degrees, and hence, more precisely, they are determinates of the determinable which includes attempting) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something (Searle 1979:130).

Finally, the authors define the last level of directness as:

- (c) the nonconventional indirect level,...strategies that realise the request either by partial reference to the object or element needed for the implementation of the act by reliance on contextual clues (1989:47) i.e.: 'Will you be going home?' intent: getting a lift home.

The authors distinguish between two types of non-conventionally indirect requests: strong hints and mild hints. By strong hints they understand those utterances whose illocutionary intent is not immediately derivable from the locution. Having said that the locution refers to relevant elements of the intended illocutionary act; the example above was given by the authors as a strong hint. By mild hints they understand those locutions which contain no elements of immediate relevance to the intended illocution. The authors provide the following example of a mild hint: 'You've been busy, haven't you?' intent: getting the hearer, a flatmate, to clean a filthy kitchen before the speaker has to start cooking dinner for some guests.

Whilst we agree that some non-conventionally indirect requests are more tentative than others we do not find this distinction a useful one since it is extremely difficult to distinguish between them.¹¹ This difficulty arises due to matters of

¹¹ It should be noted that Weizman (1989:86) provides an analysis of hints in terms of grammatical differences which she claims can be translated into different degrees of intrusion - the relationship between syntactic forms and their pragmatic interpretation has been discussed on p. 82 of this chapter

subjective interpretation in context. A mild hint could be interpreted as a strong hint depending upon the personality of the speaker, that is to say, is the speaker an ironic character or a shy one?, and depending upon the relationship between the interlocutors. Moreover, it might be difficult at times to distinguish between mild hints and pre-requests. If a speaker utters 'I'm so thirsty' when entering someone else's house, his/her utterance could either be interpreted as non-conventionally indirect request, in which case the addressee would offer him/her a drink or it could be employed by the speaker as a grounder for requesting a drink in which case a request head act will follow. Therefore it could be argued the main difference in the classification of mild hints and pre-requests is that the latter are followed by a request head act. In view of the aforesaid we have not distinguished between mild and strong hints in our coding scheme.

3.5.2. The coding scheme: request head acts

Having drawn upon Blum-Kulka *et al*'s coding scheme we have adapted it to the particular needs of this study. Instead of using a nine-point scale based on the utterance's directness level, the request head acts have been classified on a ten-point scale of mutually exclusive categories according to the utterance's form directness level and its impact on the hearer. As explained before we do not consider Blum-Kulka's 'want statement' category as belonging to the directness or impositive category. We have also taken into account need statements in the indicative and in the imperfect or conditional as part of the impositive category. Query preparatories have also been differentiated according to whether they are in the indicative, in the conditional or imperfect and in the suppositional future and/or subjunctive. As it will be recalled we have not distinguished between mild and strong hints for the reasons outlined before. Blum-Kulka's strategies have been listed below together with an example given by the authors themselves for easier reference. Following Blum-Kulka's strategies the reader will find the coding scheme of the present study.

.She argues that statements are less intrusive than questions since in the former the speaker may pretend s/he never expected any response whereas in the latter the speaker cannot deny having tried to involve the hearer. Although her proposed framework is an elaborate one it is still very difficult to see how it would work with the following utterances taken from the CCSARP data: 'I've missed my bus and live very near your house' and 'Do you have a car?'. Moreover, the CCSARP data were not originally analysed according to Weizman's classification. As a matter of fact Weizman re-classified the data for her chapter on 'Requestive Hints'.

Mood derivable: 'Leave me alone'

Explicit performative: 'I am asking you to move the car'

Hedged performative: 'I must/have to ask you to clean the kitchen right now'

Locution derivable: 'Madam you'll have to/should/must ought to move your car'

Want statement: 'I'd like to borrow your notes for a little while'

Suggestory formula: 'How about cleaning up the kitchen?'

Query preparatory: 'Can I borrow your notes?'

Strong hint: 'Will you be going home now?' Intent: getting a lift home

Mild hint: 'You've been busy here, haven't you?' Intent: getting hearer to clean the kitchen

The strategies are listed in decreasing order of directness and impact.

1. **Mood derivable:** utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force
 - 'Atendé el teléfono'
[Answer the telephone]
 - 'Open the window and ask that bloke for directions'
2. **Performative:** utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named
 - 'Te dejo encargada de atender el teléfono'¹²
[I'm leaving you in charge of answering the telephone]
3. **Obligation statement:** utterances which state the here-and-now obligation of the addressee to comply with the request
 - 'Tenés que atender el teléfono'
[You have to answer the telephone]
 - 'Vas a tener que atender el teléfono'
[You are going to have to answer the telephone]
 - 'You are gonna have to cancel your holiday'
4. **Need statement:** utterances which state the here-and-now need of the speaker that the hearer carry out the act

¹² Although to the non-native ear such requests together with those in the imperative may sound like commands, following Searle's propositional condition the speaker is predicting a future act by the addressee: that of answering the telephone.

- 'Necesito/preciso que me pases unas cartas a máquina'
[I need you to type some letters for me]
5. **Need/want statement in Conditional or Imperfect:** utterances in which the speaker expresses a desire that the hearer carries out the act by means of the imperfect or the conditional instead of the indicative
- 'Precisaba/necesitaba usar tu computadora'
[I'd need to use your computer]
 - 'I'd like/love to try your computer'
6. **Query preparatory in the Present Indicative:**¹³ utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions as conventionalised in the language
- '¿Te animás a pasarme éstas cartas en la computadora?'
[Can you type these letters in the computer for me?]
 - '¿Me podés atender el teléfono?'
[Can you answer the telephone?]
 - 'Can you answer the phone?'
 - 'Do you want to answer the telephone?'
7. **Suggestory formulae:** utterances which contain a suggestion to do something
- '¿Por qué no le preguntás al Sr. dónde queda la calle X?'
[Why don't you ask that man where X street is?]
 - 'Why don't you ask the pedestrian over there?'
 - 'How about asking that man?'
8. **Query preparatory: in Conditional or Imperfect in US only and modal could/would in BE**
- '¿Podrías/podías cambiarte de asiento?'
[Could you change seats?]
 - 'Could/would you type these letters for me?'
9. **Query preparatory with more than one precondition or in suppositional future and subjunctive in US only**
- 'Podría ser que me prestara el coche?'
[Would it be possible for you to lend me your car?]
 - '¿Te sería mucha molestia si te pidiera que me adelantaras un poco de mi sueldo?'
[Would you really mind if I asked you for a cash advance on my salary?]
 - 'Would it be possible to get a loan?'

¹³ As previously explained this category was taken from Blum-Kulka and adapted to the present study. Its name comes from Searle's preparatory condition for directives by which the speaker believes his/her hearer is able to perform the act. Blum-Kulka added 'query' to the category's name since the sentence's syntactic class is that of an interrogative.

- 'Would you be able to help me financially?'
- 'Would it be alright to leave early?'
- 'I don't suppose you'd be able to give me a cash advance?'

10. **Hint:** utterances containing partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act

- 'I could really do with X book'
- 'Justo hay sólo una copia del libro que necesito y alguien lo sacó de biblioteca'

[There's only one copy of the book I'm looking for and someone borrowed from the library]

Strategies 1-5 have been considered to be direct or impositives, 6-9 conventionally indirect and 10 non-conventionally indirect. Although it is possible to regard strategies 3-5 as conventionally indirect, in that the hearer is not explicitly asked to do anything but is simply asserting his/her needs/wants and/or the hearer's obligations, their impact is less tentative than the hypothetical needs/wants expressed in strategies 6-9 through the use of imperfect tenses and the subjunctive in US only.

Need statements are particularly interesting. They were only used by Uruguayans after pre-requests in situations where the speaker had higher social power than the hearer and both participants were familiar with each other:

3) Te quería pedir un favor. Sé que tenés una computadora nueva ahí. *La precisaba usar un ratito* [R8]

[I wanted to ask you a favour. I know you've got a new computer there. I would need to use for a while]

While it is true that the hearer is not explicitly told to do anything as such making the linguistic mapping of the request indirect, it could be argued that the speaker is directly expressing his/her needs/wishes by means of a declarative desiderative utterance. This type of utterance is generally employed in cases where there is pressure to comply with the request. Either 'institutional' pressure, either at work or at home: mother to child, or 'social' pressure, amongst friends, to be seen to be doing the right thing, showing solidarity. Here are some examples of naturally occurring need statements:¹⁴

¹⁴ The naturally occurring data hereby presented is only meant to be used for reference since it was collected on an informal basis.

- 4) Boss to secretary over the phone: ‘ Necesito que escriba unas cartas a máquina’

[I need you to type a few letters]

- 5) Mother to child in the kitchen: ‘Necesito un kilo de azúcar para terminar la torta; sacá plata de mi monedero’

[I need a kilo of sugar to finish the cake; take money from my purse]

Having discussed the classification of head acts we will now proceed to look at the perspective of the head acts and the peripheral elements which accompany them. Requests can have internal and external modifications. Such modifications have the purpose of either intensifying or downgrading the requests. Requests can be mitigated by the inclusion of certain lexical and phrasal devices.

3.5.2.1. Perspective

An important source of variation in requests is their perspective. When uttering a request a speaker can choose to stress the role of the addressee by uttering a hearer orientated request: ‘Can *you* lend me your car?’, or s/he can choose to stress his/her own role and utter a speaker orientated request: ‘Can *I* borrow your car?’. Speakers can also choose to make their request inclusively: ‘Can *we* start now?’ or avoid the issue completely by issuing an impersonal request: ‘Is there any chance of starting now?’ This will be discussed in section 4.2.3.

3.5.2.2. External modifications

External modifications can be achieved by means of **reasons** or grounders, clauses which can either precede and/or follow the core request. The aim is to give reasons for the request:

- 6) *Yo andaba necesitando una computadora porque tengo que hacer un trabajito, yo no sé si vos me la podrías prestar un ratito* [R12, MM ROU]

[I'd need a computer because I have to do a little job, I don't know if you could lend it to me for a little bit]

- 7) *All the computers have packed in and I have to type a report for a Japanese counterpart... Would it be alright if I borrowed it for a bit?* [R12, MF UK]

Requests can also be externally modified by means of **preparators**. Preparators, as illustrated by the term, have the function of preparing the addressee for the ensuing request:

- 8) *I have this small problem I've got a little bit behind the rent and...* [R11, MF UK]

Disarmers are another way in which speakers can externally modify their requests. By employing disarmers the speaker provides reasons to 'disarm' the addressee from the possibility of refusal:

- 9) *Me enteré que no va a haber nadie en tu casa ¿no me dejarías ir por un par de semanitas?* [R9, MMROU]

[I've heard there won't be anyone at your house Could you not let me stay for a couple of weeks?]

- 10) ...I need a book *that I know you have*. I don't suppose you'd be able to lend this to me, would you? [R1, FF UK]

Other external mitigating devices are: **getting precommitments** and **promises of reward**. In getting a precommitment the speaker tries to commit his/her hearer before telling him/her what the object of the request is. Precommitments are usually realised by questions such as 'Will you do me a favour?', '¿Te puedo pedir un favor?', etc. Promises of reward are used by speakers as a way of increasing the likelihood of the hearer's compliance:

11) ...if we don't finish this project we're gonna lose the projects and all the business we can get from there *I'll give you a bonus once we get paid for the project if you stay* [R7, MMUK]

3.5.2.3. Internal modifications

As mentioned before requests can be internally modified by means of downtoners, diminutives, adverbials, cajolers and hedges.

Downtoners are used in order to modulate the impact of the speech act on the addressee, to make the request more 'tentative'. Some very common downtoners are: 'possibly', 'perhaps', 'parece', 'quizás', etc.

Diminutives tend to work as mitigating devices in Spanish and are generally employed with nouns with the purpose of conveying the idea of 'little' or 'small'. They are also used to express affection and/or inspire pity and sympathy. In examples 4) and 7) above, both head acts contain diminutives ('*ratito*' [short time], '*semanita*' [short week]).

Softening adverbials are employed with the aim of mitigating the request. Some common adverbials are: 'really', 'just':

12)...Do you think you could *just* type them quickly? [R8, MM UK]

Cajolers are speech items that have no semantic content as such but they can be used to invite the addressee to join in the conversation, to participate in the speech act and to restore harmony. A common cajoler in English is the use of 'you know'.

13) ...Any chance I could um, sort of, have a go with it for a while, try out, *you know?* [R12, FF UK]

14) ...No sé si podría por esta vez hacer una excepción, *digo*, y adelantarme el dinero [R11, FF ROU]

[I don't know if this time you could make an exception, I mean, and pay in advance]

Hedges are adverbials such as ‘somehow’, ‘kind of’, ‘sort of’, used by speakers when they wish to avoid a precise propositional content as shown in example 13) above.

3.5.3. The coding scheme: apologies

Apologies can be performed by any one of the strategies below, or any combination or sequence thereof (Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1989:289). In the case of this speech act Blum-Kulka *et al*'s coding scheme suited the data hence there was no need to modify it.

Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID)

Taking on Responsibility

Explanation

Offer of Repair/Restitution

Promise of Forbearance

The first semantic formula, **IFID**, are routinised formulaic expressions where the speaker's apology is made explicit: the use of ‘sorry’, ‘perdonar’, ‘disculpar’, etc. A detailed analysis of IFIDs is given in Chapter 5.

The second semantic formula, taking responsibility,¹⁵ by which the speaker expresses responsibility for having committed an offence can be divided into different subformulas:

Explicit self-blame: the speaker directly expresses the fact that it was his/her fault

- My fault
- My mistake
- Fue mi culpa
[It was my fault]
- Mi error, etc.
[My mistake]

Lack of intent: the speaker directly states that the offence was non deliberate

- It was an accident

¹⁵ Please note that although the data contains no examples of the impersonal reflexive, native speakers of Uruguayan Spanish tend to use it as a way of disclaiming responsibility; e.g. ‘Se cayó mucha sal en la comida’.

- I didn't mean to
- Fue sin querer, etc.
[I didn't mean to]

Express embarrassment:

- I feel awful about it
- ¡Qué horrible!, etc.
[How terrible!]

Admit facts: the speaker does not deny his/her involvement in the offensive act but abstains from openly accepting responsibility

- The book's still at home, I haven't read it yet.
- No sé dónde estamos, me olvidé del mapa en casa.
[I don't know where we are, I've left the map at home]

Refusal to acknowledge guilt:

- It wasn't my fault
- Yo no tuve nada que ver, etc.
[I didn't have anything to do]

The third semantic formula, **explanation**, is where the speaker gives an account of the reasons which brought about the offence:

- Sorry I'm late, the boss asked me to stay behind to finish some work.
- Disculpá que llegué un poco tarde, me encontré con María y nos quedamos charlando.
[Sorry I'm a bit late, I bumped into María and we stayed chatting]

The fourth semantic formula, **offer of restitution**, is employed when the speaker will compensate the addressee for any damage resulting from his/her infraction:

- Your computer got smashed but don't worry we'll get you another one.
- No te preocupes mandalos a la tintorería que yo pago.
[Don't worry send them to the drycleaners and I'll pay for them]

The last formula, **promise of forbearance**, is employed when the speaker feels 'guilty' enough to take full responsibility for the offence and promises it will not happen again:

- I promise it won't happen again.
- Le prometo que no se va a volver a repetir
[I promise it won't happen again]

3.6. Transcription conventions

The recorded conversations are presented in Volume II and were transcribed as simply as possible. Here are some of the features the reader will find in the transcriptions.

- Pause length is indicated by slashes: / indicates a short pause, 0.5 seconds or less and // indicates a slightly longer one, 0.8 seconds or more
- Simultaneous speech is indicated with brackets:

A: um/I don't know/ did [you read] it

B: [I haven't yet]

- Unclear speech is indicated as follows : (.....).
- Emphatic stress is indicated by capital letters: e.g.: REALLY

CHAPTER 4

THE FINDINGS: REQUESTS

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter we shall discuss the requests yielded in the twelve situations of the open role-play. The analysis of the data resulting from the open role-play is based upon an independent evaluation of each response according to a number of dimensions. These dimensions have been presented in the previous chapter in the form of a coding scheme. The coding scheme is divided into three main parts in order to analyse the realisation of requests: strategy types, perspective and external/internal modifications. The strategy types are classified on a ten-point scale of mutually exclusive categories based on three levels of directness and impact: impositives, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect strategies (Blum-Kulka, 1989:18-9). The strategy types will be discussed in section 4.2.. In section 4.2.3. the request strategies will be analysed according to their perspective, in section 4.3. according to gender. Finally, in section 4.4. the internal and external modifications of the speech act will be discussed.

4.2. Request strategies

We will start this section by presenting a percentage distribution of the main request strategy types in British English (BE) and Uruguayan Spanish (UE) across twelve situations. The analysis of the data will be presented in terms of request strategies and not by situations since the coding scheme for this study is based upon three levels directness and, as it will be recalled the three different levels of directness have been interpreted as strategies. As can be seen on Table 1 and Figure 1 the distribution of the request strategies reveals a high degree of cross-cultural agreement. Relatively higher levels of impositives are attributed in some situations in both languages (e.g.: S4 and S7) and there is a marked preference for conventional indirectness across most situations in both languages.

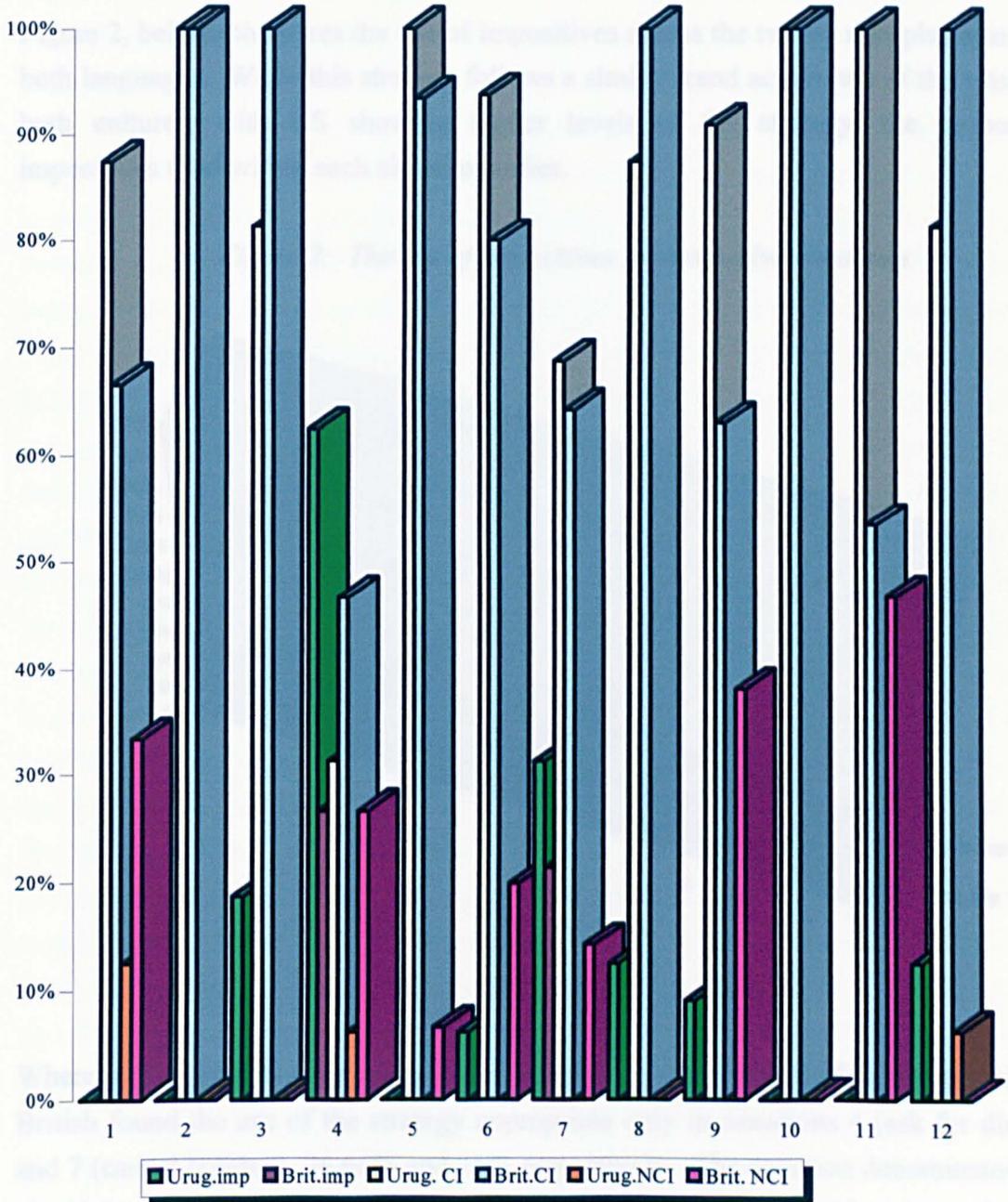
Table 1: Distribution of main request strategy types in twelve situations

TARGET REQUEST	STRATEGY TYPE	BRITISH ENGLISH (BE)	BE (%)	ROU SPANISH	ROU (%)
R1 Borrow book	I	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	CI	10	66.66%	14	87.50%
	N-CI	5	33.33%	2	12.50%
No. informants		(15)		(16)	
R2 Time off – errands	I	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	CI	15	100%	16	100%
	N-CI	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(15)		(16)	
R3 Mind telephone	I	0	0.00%	3	18.75%
	CI	15	100%	13	81.25%
	N-CI	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(15)		(16)	
R4 Ask for directions	I	4	26.66%	10	62.50%
	CI	7	46.66%	5	31.25%
	N-CI	4	26.66%	1	6.25%
No. informants		(15)		(16)	
R5 Ask for lift	I	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	CI	14	93.40%	15	100%
	N-CI	1	6.66%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(15)		(15)	
R6 Borrow car	I	0	0.00%	1	6.25%
	CI	12	80.00%	14	93.75%
	N-CI	3	20.00%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(15)		(15)	
R7 Cancel holiday	I	3	21.00%	5	31.25%
	CI	9	64.28%	11	68.75%
	N-CI	2	14.28%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(14)		(16)	
R8 Type letters	I	0	0.00%	2	12.50%
	CI	15	100%	14	87.50%
	N-CI	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(15)		(16)	
R9 Borrow house	I	0	0.00%	1	9.09%
	CI	6	63.00%	10	90.90%
	N-CI	3	38.00%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(9)		(11)	
R10 Swap seats	I	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	CI	15	100%	16	100%
	N-CI	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(15)		(16)	
R11 Ask for loan	I	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	CI	8	53.34%	16	100%
	N-CI	7	46.66%	0	0.00%
No. informants		(15)		(16)	
R12 Borrow computer	I	0	0.00%	2	12.50%
	CI	15	100%	13	81.25%
	N-CI	0	0.00%	1	6.25%
No. informants		(15)		(16)	

R = request, I = impositive, CI = conventional indirectness, N-CI = non-conventional indirectness

Figure 1: Percentage distribution of main request strategy types in twelve situations

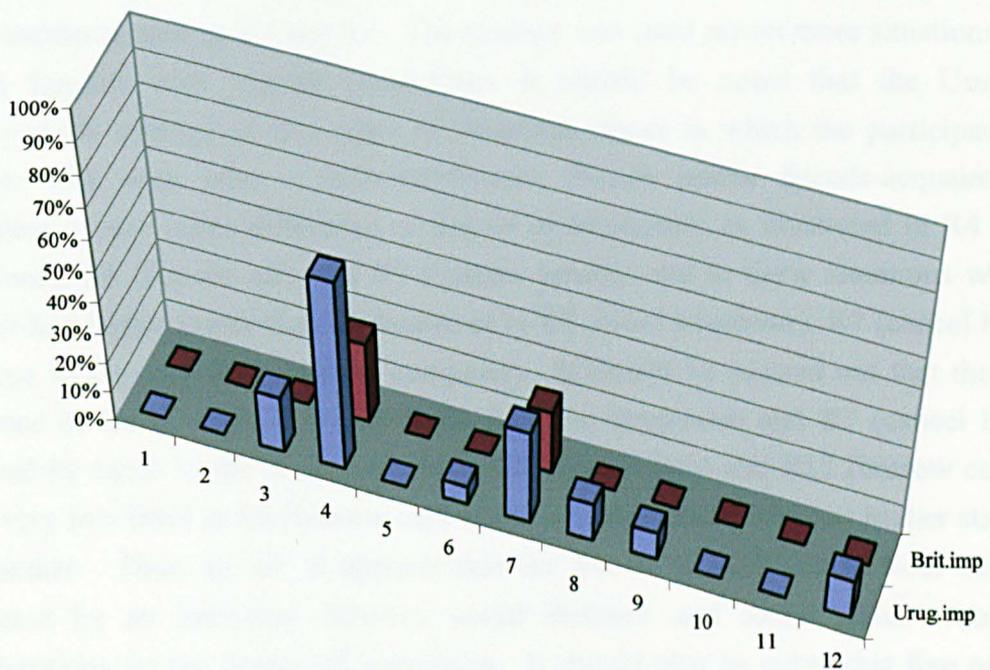
4.2.1 The use of imperatives



4.2.1. The use of imperatives

Figure 2, below, compares the use of imperatives across the twelve role-play situations in both languages. While this strategy follows a similar trend across two of the situations in both cultures, with US showing higher levels of the strategy, the proportion of imperatives used within each situation varies.

Figure 2: The use of imperatives across twelve situations



Whereas the Uruguayans employed the strategy in more than half of the situations, the British found the use of the strategy appropriate only in situations 4 (ask for directions) and 7 (cancel holiday), 26.66% and 21% respectively. The common denominator in both situations is the fact that the interlocutors are familiar with each other. In R4 the participants are friends and in R7 they are work colleagues. In R4 (ask for directions) the speaker and the hearer have equal status and the imposition is deemed as low. On the other hand, in R7 (cancel holiday) the speaker has been recently granted higher status

than the hearer having been put in charge of the execution of a high profile work project. A project for which s/he needs the co-operation of all members of staff, including the addressee who had booked a holiday. So, although the speaker and the hearer have equal status in that they have the same position at work, the speaker has gained institutionalized power, even if only temporarily. This institutionalized power would make it easier or shall we say, less personal for the speaker to ask for such a high cost request, since in the mind of the participants the requester is the company and not the individual.

The Uruguayans also employed this strategy in R4 (ask for directions) and in R7 (cancel holiday) showing a higher incidence than the British, particularly in R4 where the strategy was employed by 62.50% of the informants and 31% in R7. The use of impositives was also deemed appropriate in situations 3, 6, 8, 9 and 12 though showing a lower incidence than in R4 and R7. The strategy was used across more situations than in British English with varying proportions. It should be noted that the Uruguayans employed the strategy in two types of situations: those in which the participants were familiar with each other - intimates-friends, friends and/or friends-acquaintances - regardless of any status difference or degree of imposition as illustrated in R4 (ask for directions), R6 (borrow car) and R9 (borrow house); and in those situations where the speaker had higher status than the hearer as in R3 (mind telephone), R7 (cancel holiday), R8 (type letters) and R12 (borrow computer). It should be pointed out that the highest incidence of the strategy is found in R4 (ask for directions) and R7 (cancel holiday), followed by equal levels of impositives in R8 (type letters) and R12 (borrow computer) and a very low level in R6 (borrow car) where it is the hearer who has higher status than the speaker. Thus, so far, it appears that the use of impositives in both cultures is motivated by an inter-play between social distance and social status without any considerations for the degree of imposition. It should also be noted that five out of the seven situations where the Uruguayans employed the strategy are characterised by the fact that the participants know each other to varying degrees. The more familiar the participants the more direct the strategy. This is confirmed by the statistical results of a linear multiple regression test. A linear multiple regression test was employed in order to describe the response variable -the level of directness-indirectness in requests- as a function of three explanatory variables –social distance, social status and ranking of imposition. It should be pointed out that separate analyses of the response variable for each of the explanatory variables cannot replace multiple regression if there is some

correlation between the explanatory variables. The results,¹ contained in Table 2 below, show that the only statistically significant interaction effect between the variables is the existing negative correlation between social distance and directness, border line significant at $p < 0.08$ for US and $p < 0.06$ for BE; whereas social power or status shows a positive correlation though not significant at $p < 0.27$ for US and at $p < 0.12$ for BE.²

Table 2: Significance levels resulting from a linear multiple regression for each language.

British English

VARIABLE	COEFFICIENT	STD. ERROR	STD. COEF.	TOLERANCE	T	P (2 TAIL)
Social power	8.87500	5.03212	0.43999	1.00000	1.76367	0.11580
Social distance	-18.16667	8.21742	-0.55153	1.00000	-2.21075	0.05801
Ranking of imposition	-2.16667	8.21742	-0.06578	1.00000	-0.26367	0.79870

Uruguayan Spanish

VARIABLE	COEFFICIENT	STD. ERROR	STD. COEF.	TOLERANCE	T	P (2 TAIL)
Social power	8.12500	6.91988	0.31854	1.00000	1.17415	0.27410
Social distance	-23.16667	11.30012	-0.55618	1.00000	-2.05013	0.07449
Ranking of imposition	0.83333	11.30012	0.02001	1.00000	0.07375	0.94302

A further explanation for the use of impositives in these situations by speakers of both languages can be found in Ervin-Tripp's (1976) empirical research into the requesting

¹ I would like to thank Dr D. Grey for his advice on the statistics.

² Please note that the figures for discussing the results have been rounded up and down to two decimal places when compared to those presented in the tables.

behaviour of Americans.³ The results of the research show that requests between family and friends tend to be more direct than those between strangers. Using Ervin-Tripp's findings we could hypothesise that the difference in the proportion of impositives used in those situations where the strategy was employed by both groups of informants, appears to show that the British see relationships with friends as more distant than their Uruguayan counterparts. There seems to be, still amongst close friends, an inclination to be seen as respecting the freedom of action of the hearer by not imposing upon him/her, in other words, an inclination for 'negative' politeness. On the other hand, Uruguayans appear to see the distance between friends differently and show a higher degree of 'positive' politeness. Although there is also respect for the freedom of action of the hearer, as seen by the inter-play of the strategies employed, there is an assumed reciprocity between the participants. There is an implicit cultural 'guarantee' of no fear of loss of 'face' in requesting directly from a friend and/or close acquaintance. The mutually shared factual background information the speaker has of the hearer and vice versa makes the use of impositives not only appropriate but probably the expected behaviour. It could be said that by using impositives speakers show how committed they are to the belief that their addressees will comply with their requests, not because they will find them imposing but probably because of assumed cultural expectations of solidarity and reciprocity amongst friends.

4.2.2. The use of conventional indirectness

As can be seen in Table 1 and Figure 1, conventional indirectness constitutes the most frequently used main strategy type in both cultures.

Cross-cultural agreement on the appropriateness of the strategy is particularly salient in two scenarios: in the request to leave the office in order to run some errands, R2 (time off), and in the request to swap bus seats with a passenger, R10.

Cross-cultural variation coincides with a lower incidence of the strategy as it is shown in the house scenario, R9 and in the request for a loan, R11. In R9 there is almost a 30% difference in the use of the strategy between US and BE. This difference increases in R11 (ask for loan) where it reaches almost 50%.

³ Although Ervin-Tripp's informants were native speakers of American English and not of British English, more similarities than differences in the requestive behaviour of Anglo-Saxons have been found in the existing literature on English requests.

The lowest incidence of the strategy in both languages is found in R4 (ask for directions), 46.66% in BE and 31.25% in US; and its highest incidence is marked by a cross-cultural agreement with both languages reaching their peak in R2 (time off) and R10 (swap seats), 100%.

Conventional indirectness is dominant in more than half of the situations. The strategy is particularly salient in the request to leave the office in order to run some errands, R2 (time off) and in R10 (swap seats) where the speaker asks a passenger on a bus to swap seats with him/her so that s/he can sit next to his/her child. According to Brown and Levinson a speaker assesses the seriousness of a FTA according to the social distance, the social power between him/her and the addressee and the degree of imposition of the act. They claim that the less socially familiar the interlocutors are, the more social power/status the hearer has over the speaker and the more imposition an act involves the more indirect and thus polite the speaker will be. In R2 (time off) and R10 (swap seats) not all three social variables are low: in the former situation though there is a status difference between the participants, boss-employee, the interlocutors have a friendly relationship and the weightiness of the request is low.

In R10 (swap seats) the participants have the same status, they are both bus passengers that do not know each other and the weightiness of the request is low since there are plenty of other seats available. It could be argued, however, that the addressee has a right to his/her seat and that neither in Britain nor in Uruguay would the addressee feel obliged to move seats unless s/he was sitting on a priority seat, and this is not the case here. Thus the request might have been interpreted as costly. But even if this had been the case the degree of imposition does not seem, contrary to Brown and Levinson's theory, to be a significant variable affecting the informants' strategic choice. The variable that seems to be affecting this situation is social distance since as explained before, there is a negative correlation between the variable and directness. Due to the fact that the participants are complete strangers and taking into account this negative correlation we would expect higher levels of indirectness. However, both groups of informants chose conventional indirectness instead of non-conventional indirectness. This linguistic behaviour could be explained by the very same reason that makes us expect higher levels of indirectness: social distance. Let us not forget that the participants are strangers and that a non-conventional indirect request may not secure uptake under the circumstances, whereas a conventionally indirect one will not only make the compliance of the request

appear as a free act but also secure the addressee's interpretation of the additional speaker's meaning.

In R2 (time off) the participants know each other and have an amicable boss-employee relationship. The degree of imposition is also low. An impositive would have not been appropriate bearing in mind the status difference of the participants and the fact that the speaker is asking the addressee for a favour. And a non-conventionally indirect request could have been employed had the participants not been as familiar with each other.

4.2.3. The perspective of conventionally indirect requests

As explained in the coding scheme the choice of request perspective or orientation presents an important source of variation in requests. Following Blum-Kulka et al (1989:58-9) a speaker can choose:

- a) To stress the role of the agent by issuing a hearer orientated head act such as: 'Can you cover for me?'
- b) To stress his/her own role as a recipient by issuing a speaker orientated head act such as: 'Could I have a look at your laptop?'
- c) To avoid the issue by using an inclusive 'we' as in: 'Why don't we ask the pedestrian at the end of the road?'
- d) To avoid the issue by using an impersonal construction as in: 'I was wondering if there'd be any possibility of borrowing a company car?'

As the authors point out (p.59), the above alternatives are frequently available to speakers within a single situation, though not necessarily for the same request strategy.

The results yielded by the open role-play demonstrate conclusively that conventionally indirect strategies constitute the most frequently used main strategy type in both languages. The distribution of conventional indirect strategies by perspective, as shown in Table 3 below, indicates cross-linguistic differences between the languages.

Table 3: Distribution of conventionally indirect strategies by perspective

	BRITISH ENGLISH	URUGUAYAN SPANISH
Hearer-orientated	69.50%	98.03%
Speaker-orientated	26.95%	0.65%
Inclusive	2.13%	0.65%
Impersonal	1.42%	0.65%
Total no. of conventionally indirect requests	(141)	(149)

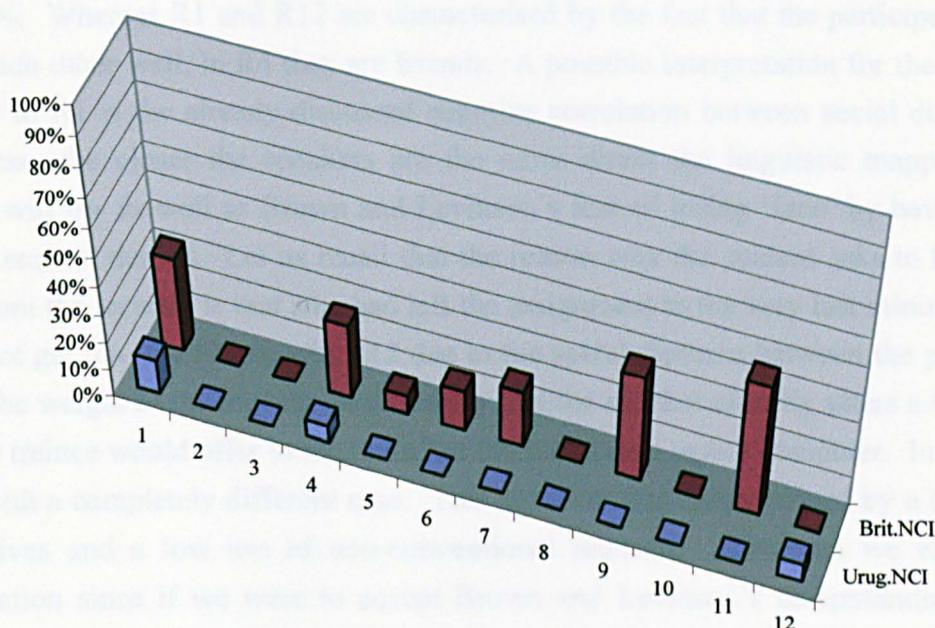
The distribution of conventional indirect strategies by perspective indicates cross-linguistic differences in choice. Although in both languages most conventional indirect requests are hearer-orientated, the results show that Uruguayans seem to be less bothered by considerations of perspective. In other words, English speakers appear to be more concerned than Spanish speakers to avoid referring to the hearer as actor and thus reducing the level of coerciveness inherent in requests. Therefore it appears that Uruguayans seem to be more tolerant of or less sensitive to intrusions into their privacy. In other words, the almost monolithic choice of hearer-orientated requests by the Uruguayans seems to be pointing at different levels of intrusion tolerance. It would appear that hearer-orientated requests are the 'norm' thus we can only assume that they are not regarded as imposing or as demanding from the addressee. The importance attributed to 'negative' politeness in both cultures seems to be different. These similarities and differences, as can be seen from the results, are mostly matters of degree as opposed to absolute equivalencies and discrepancies.

4.2.4. The use of non-conventional indirectness

As can be seen in Table 1 and Figure 3, below, non-conventional indirectness constitutes the least frequently used main strategy type in US, where it was only employed in three situations out of twelve and with a very low incidence. The results of BE, however, show a different scenario. The strategy had a higher incidence than that of impositives though a lower incidence than CI.

NCI was employed across seven situations with different degrees of incidence. There seems to be cross-cultural and situational agreement in the use of the strategy in R1, the request to borrow a book, and in R4, where the speaker has to ask a pedestrian for directions. However, the proportion of hints employed varies: in R1, BE employed 33.33% of NCI whereas US usage of the strategy did not even reach half of that figure, 12.50%. In R4 BE showed 26.66% against 6.25% of US. Although both groups of informants coincided in the choice of NCI in R1 and R4 there is more than 20% difference in the use of the strategy between BE and US.

Figure 3: The use of non-conventional indirectness across twelve situations



The highest incidence of the strategy is found in R11, the request to borrow money followed by R9 the request to borrow a friend's house to go on holiday. Non-conventional indirectness,⁴ as previously expressed, is associated with strategies that

⁴ It could be argued that this is the only really indirect strategy from the point of view of its tentativeness since the partial reference to the object of the request can only be understood by contextual clues. It could also be claimed that certain syntactic forms are conventionally used as hints. An example of these would be the use of need statements in BE as well as semantically related utterances such as 'I'm really thirsty'. The use of intensifying adverbs such as 'really' suggest a slight element of conventionality.

realise the request either by partial reference to an object or element needed for the implementation of the act or by reliance on contextual clues (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989). The strategy comprises what is generally understood as 'hints' or to use Brown and Levinson's term, 'off-record' requests. The classic example used to illustrate the strategy is an utterance like 'It's cold in here' uttered by a speaker with the intention of getting someone to close the window and not with the intention of discussing the room temperature.

Uruguayan Spanish

The strategy was employed by Uruguayans in R1 (borrow book), R4 (ask for directions) and R12 (borrow computer) with a very low incidence in all three: ranging from 12.50% to 6.25%. Whereas R1 and R12 are characterised by the fact that the participants do not know each other well, in R4 they are friends. A possible interpretation for the use of the strategy in R1 is the already discussed negative correlation between social distance and directness –the closer the speakers are the more direct the linguistic mapping of the request will be- as well as Brown and Levinson's fear of losing 'face' by having an 'on record' request denied. Let us recall that the reason why the student asks to borrow the book from the lecturer is that s/he had left the assignment to the very last minute and thus could not get into the library. In R12 due to the social distance between the participants and to the weight of the request we could say that the speaker cleverly utters a hint so that the new trainee would offer to lend him/her the brand new laptop computer. In R4 we are faced with a completely different case. This situation was characterised by a high use of impositives and a low use of non-conventional requests. How can we explain this combination since if we were to accept Brown and Levinson's understanding of 'off-record' requests, we would assume that they were used in order to minimise the degree of imposition. Since the degree of imposition is very low, the interlocutors are friends and they have the same social status, there must have been another motivation to choose the strategy. Would it not be logical to assume that by employing 'off-record' requests the speaker provides the addressee with the opportunity to volunteer? Therefore someone using a hint could either be leaving the options open to the addressee because they do not want to impose on him/her, or because they do not want to deprive the addressee of the pleasure of offering and indicating consideration for the speaker's needs. In fact, Brown

and Gilman (1989) have suggested that 'off-record' strategies mix with both 'positive' and 'negative' politeness strategies and that they can be interpreted in different ways.

British English

In BE the strategy had a much higher incidence and it was used across several situations: R1 (borrow book), R4 (ask for directions), R5 (ask for lift), R7 (cancel holiday), R6 (borrow car), R9 (borrow house) and R11 (ask for loan).

In R11 (ask for loan) the participants are recent acquaintances. The hearer, the recently appointed new manager, has higher status than the speaker who is an old employee of the company and the degree of imposition is very high since the latter has a record of late payment. In terms of the strategies employed there is a slight preference for non-conventional indirectness over conventional indirectness, 53.34% and 46.66% respectively. The common pattern for all the informants in this situation was indirectness. This was probably due to the already discussed relationship between social distance and directness levels and to some of the situational factors mentioned above. In order for the new manager to lend the speaker some money s/he will probably have to contact accounts and ask them for extra money to help the employee. This could be deemed by some informants, as indeed it was by two British males, as 'not going down too well'; in other words as a way of losing 'face' taking into account that the manager has recently been appointed and that s/he would be expected to work with the existing company budget. Moreover, the employee in question has got a record of late payment. Hence it would be in his/her interest to avoid uttering the request directly since standard procedure would be to contact the accounts department and this is precisely what the speaker wants to avoid for fear of loss of 'face'.

In R9 (borrow house) the participants are friends and have the same status, the object of the request is high: the speaker wants the hearer to lend him/her his/her house in the countryside so that s/he can have a holiday. This situation yielded a variety of speech acts: requests by the speaker and by the hearer, invitations and offers by the hearer. In this section we shall discuss the requests made by the speaker and in a separate section at the end of this chapter the different responses given to this situation will be discussed in detail. The informants who performed requests did so by means of conventional indirectness and non-conventional indirectness.

According to what has been discussed so far, one would expect higher levels of directness - and so the use of impositives - since the participants are friends. Instead, the informants chose conventional indirectness, 63% for BE and 90% for US. In terms of the use of non-conventional indirectness, 38% for BE and 0% for US, it could be claimed it was used with a two-fold purpose: that of not imposing upon the addressee seeing the weight of the request and with the purpose of letting the addressee show his/her consideration for the speaker, in this case a friend, by offering him/her the house.

In R7 (cancel holiday) the participants know each other well. The speaker has higher status than the hearer since s/he has been put in charge of a very important project at work and the weightiness of the request is very high since the hearer is asked to cancel his/her already booked holiday because of this project. Although the strategy had a low incidence its purpose was the same as that of situation 9 (borrow house).

In R6 (borrow car) there is a slightly higher incidence of the strategy, probably due to the combination of a negative correlation between social distance and a positive one with social status. The participants have a friendly relationship, the speaker has less social status than the hearer and the weight of the request is very high. Thus the use of the strategy could either be interpreted as a non-imposition or as a solidarity seeking technique.

- 1) My car's just broken down. I've got half an hour to get to the airport to pick up my parents and I have no other means of transport. *Can you help me at all?*[R6, FM UK]

- 2) Do you remember that big favour I did to you last year around Christmas, just before that...I just got this...to get to the airport and my car's broken down, you know *any chance that you can just give us a hand?* [R6, MM UK]

Whereas the use of non-conventional indirectness in R1 (borrow book) could be said to be motivated by the same reasons that motivated the Uruguayans to use the strategy in the same situation, the same is not true for R4 (ask for directions). Whilst the Uruguayans employed non-conventional indirectness expecting their hearers, in this case friends, to offer to ask the pedestrian for directions; the British employed it as a way of not imposing upon the addressee, as can be seen in 3) below. This situation was characterised by a lot of arguing between the British informants, the participants kept

blaming each other for not having the map and refused to ask the pedestrian for directions.

4.2.5. Divergent situations

Situation 4, as expressed before, is characterised by the fact that the participants are friends and have equal status. The object of the request is to get the addressee to ask a pedestrian for directions after having left the map behind. Although the request has no cost as such, one could argue that stopping someone on the street could be imposing on that person's time and space. This could probably help to explain the observed behaviour of British people when they rather spend more time working out a route by reading a complicated map or road signs than stop and ask complete strangers for directions. It could be counter argued, however, that most British people do not wait until they see a street clock or try to work out the position of the sun to know the time, they tend to ask complete strangers for the time. The difference between these two requests for information is that the stranger does not actually have to stop in order to tell the time whereas asking for directions is generally more time-consuming. As a matter of fact, two of the informants in the role-play refused to ask a pedestrian by simply alleging that they did not like asking.

This was a very conflictive situation for the British informants. While the majority of the Uruguayans in role (A) admitted they had left the map at home, the British blamed each other for not having the map and those in role (A) refused to acknowledge responsibility. This could be explained by the possibility of losing 'face' since they had to ask their partners to ask a pedestrian for directions and they might have thought their partners would refuse to do so on the basis that it was A's responsibility and not theirs. Having said that, even when facts were admitted by the speakers, (mainly by females in F-F and F-M interactions) the requestees refused to ask the pedestrian. As a result, the interlocutors started blaming each other (see Volume II). Below is an example of one of these interactions:

- A: Well// Do you know where it is
B: Well/ you've got the map
A: NO/ YOU'VE got the map
B: No/ I haven't got the map/ YOU'VE got the map
A: No/ Julie/ YOU'VE got the map

- B: No/ I haven't got the map/ I wish we had the map/ you HAVE to know where we're going/ I've got no idea/ I REALLY haven't got any clue/ I know roughly the area but/ [I don't/]
- A: [Julie you said] you had the map
- B: No/ I DIDN'T say I had the map/ I DID have the map/ yeah
- A: Yeah/ you said you HAD the map
- B: Yeah but/ I gave it to YOU/ I left it on the table for you to pick up/ I gave it to YOU/ I told you it was there/ [Have you got it]
- A: [No/ you DIDN'T]/ you didn't
- B: Yes/ I DID
- A: You said I'm going out to the car/ I said/ FINE/ I ASSUMED that you had the map//
- B: No/I haven't
- A: No/ you MUST have had the map/ because like/I'm lost/
- B: Oh/ so am I
- A: Well/ exactly 'cos I'm [driving]
- B: [So/ OK]
- A: [So/]
- B: None of us got the map
- A: // yeah
- B: we HAVE GOT to get there/ Where do we go
- A: Right/ there's someone at the end of the street/I'll just.../
- B: OK

In terms of the strategies employed almost half of the British informants showed a preference for conventional indirectness compared with a lower though equal incidence of non-conventional indirectness and directness. Non-conventional indirectness was only used by one Uruguayan male in M-M interaction. The strategy itself could be interpreted as an invitation for the addressee to take the initiative and suggest what to do next. Having said that, this is only suppositional since we would need more evidence to substantiate this point. The use of the NCI by the British had the same incidence as the use of directness and it was only employed by males. One of the instances in which it was used was after male (B) had reprimanded (A) for having forgotten the map. Thus we could assume that (A) did not want to make the request 'on record' for fear of 'face' loss. In a second instance the request is made 'off record' and interpreted as such by (B) who in return explains he would not ask the pedestrian since it was not him who had left the map behind.

3) We've been looking for this street for half an hour now. I mean you're supposed to know where we're going. *The best thing to do is to ask someone* [R4, MF UK]

4) I'm lost I don't know where to go. I'll try and work it out, I just can't, um, which way to look. What street is it again? Where do we need to get to? *I can't work it out. Can I, we need to find the street* [R4, MM UK]

When it comes to M-F interactions the strategy was employed after the informants had finished arguing about whose fault it had been. Hence it could be argued that this strategy was used by the British as a face-saving mechanism when uncertain as to the compliance of their request.

By the linguistic behaviour of both groups of informants in this situation one could say that Uruguayans appear to be less concerned about considerations of 'negative' face amongst friends when compared to the British. One can also observe that the Uruguayans do not seem to regard higher levels of directness amongst friends as inappropriate, probably due to the fact that there is an implicit cultural guarantee of compliance amongst friends.

Situation 9 elicited a number of speech acts including invitations and offers by both groups of informants.

Informant A:

A friend of yours has a house in the countryside. You want to go on holiday somewhere relaxing for a week and you know nobody is going to be in the house for at least two weeks. You meet your friend in a pub and ask him/her to stay in his/her house for a week. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You have a house in the countryside which is not going to be used for at least two weeks. You meet a friend of yours in a pub. What do you say to him/her?

Let us first look at the type of requests yielded by this situation. This situation was characterised by two different types of requests: those by which the speaker, informant (A), asks the addressee, informant (B), if s/he could stay in the addressee's country house for some time, and those by which informant (B) acted as speaker and requested informant (A), now in the role of addressee, to house-sit for him/her.

The strategies employed for the first type of requests show a preference in both cultures for the use of conventional indirectness. A possible explanation for this is the fact that the speaker is asking the hearer for a favour, a favour which is totally dependent upon the availability of the house and the ability and willingness of the hearer to lend it to him/her. Hence the linguistic suitability of conventional indirectness. It should be noted that one British male interacting with another male and one British female interacting with a member of the opposite sex requested through means of conventional indirectness to rent the house and not to borrow it. Yet, a third informant, this time a British female interacting with another female phrased her request as if volunteering to house-sit for the addressee, as shown in example 7) below. This was probably due to the fact that the object of the request was deemed as costly for the British and thus the speaker was uncertain as to the likelihood of the addressee's compliance, as shown in the examples to follow:

5)A:...There's something I'd like to ask you about this cottage. Do you ever rent it? *I'll be very, um, glad if you allow me to rent it.* [R9, MMUK]

6) A:...Listen, there's been something I've been meaning to ask you I'm glad I bumped into you...I was wondering *if possibly I could rent your house.* [R9, FM UK]

7) A:...This is really big favour to ask you but, *is there any chance I could stay there and kind of look after it for you?* [R9, FF UK]

When it comes to non-conventional indirectness the Uruguayans did not make use of this strategy at all, whereas both British males and females in same and cross-gender interactions employed it. The reason behind the use of non-conventional indirectness in this situation, could once again be attributed to the desire not to impose upon the

addressee as well as to let the addressee show consideration for the speaker by offering his/her house to a friend.

This situation also yielded two non-conventionally indirect requests by two British females playing the role of addressee. The use of this requestive strategy could once again be interpreted as a way of not imposing on the addressee and/or as a way of giving the addressee enough 'tools' to offer to help.

8) B:..I'm going away for two weeks *and I need someone to house-sit* 'cos like the pets need looking after. [R9, FF UK]

9) B:..I hear you're gonna be free for a week....nobody is staying *and I really need someone to stay, to guard for security reasons* I don't like leaving it empty. [R9, FM UK]

As previously mentioned, this situation also yielded offers and invitations. When it comes to the offers it should be noted that in US it was only the females who offered their houses: two females interacting with males and one with another female. British offers, however, were performed by one male interacting with a female and one female in a same gender interaction.

10) B:...I'm going away so, um, if you would like the house, my house will be empty for two weeks. [R9, FF UK]

When it comes to the invitations it should be noted that this time it was only the Uruguayans who invited their conversational partners to the house. Within the Uruguayans it was the males who uttered the speech act in same gender and cross-gender interactions with the purpose of having a party, as shown below:

11) A:...¿Qué tenés pensando hacer las próximas semanas? Yo tengo la casa afuera, si querés nos podemos ir y quedar ahí, podemos invitar a alguna otra gente también. [R9, MM ROU]

[A:..What are your plans for the next few weeks? I've got the house in the country, if you want to we could go and stay there, we could also invite some other people.]

12) B:..Mirá vos sabés que se fueron mis viejos y tengo una casa libre. Vamos a hacer un fiestita el sábado ¿qué te parece? [R9, MF ROU]

[B:..Look, you know that my parents have gone away and I have a house available. We're gonna throw a small party on Saturday. What do you think?]

This situation elicited different responses from both groups of informants. When requesting the British showed higher levels of indirectness compared to the Uruguayans; when offering, the Uruguayans in general did so slightly more times than the British who at the same time did not utter any invitations whatsoever. Due to the small number of speech acts yielded in this situation we cannot draw any general conclusions as to the realisation of these acts in BE and US or as to the underlying motives for their performance. Notwithstanding, we can ask ourselves what motivated such a similar range of speech acts both in US and BE. Could it be that Uruguayans and Britons regard friendship in slightly similar ways and that this is reflected in their choice though not necessarily in the performance of speech acts? Logical as this may seem, we cannot possibly make such speculations on the basis of such small data.

The most probable reason behind this array of speech acts lies in the design of the situation itself. As will be recalled, during the design of the open role-play we were very careful to make it as non-prescriptive as possible, thus instead of providing the first conversational turns for the interlocutors or telling the addressee what the intentions of the speaker were, we left it open. It was this 'openness' which led the informants in role (B) to produce requests, invitations and offers as shown by the composition of the situation of the role-play, shown below for easier reference:

Informant A:

A friend of yours has a house in the countryside. You want to go on holiday somewhere relaxing for a week and you know nobody is going to be in the house for at least two weeks. You meet your friend in a pub and ask him/her to stay in his/her house for a week. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You have a house in the countryside which is not going to be used for at least two weeks. You meet a friend of yours in a pub. What do you say to him/her?

In view of the above it could be said that the differences and similarities in the linguistic behaviour of both groups of informants in situation 9 were conditioned by the way the situation was depicted, particularly to informant B). Having said that, this situation elicited only requests from informant A) during the pilot stage.

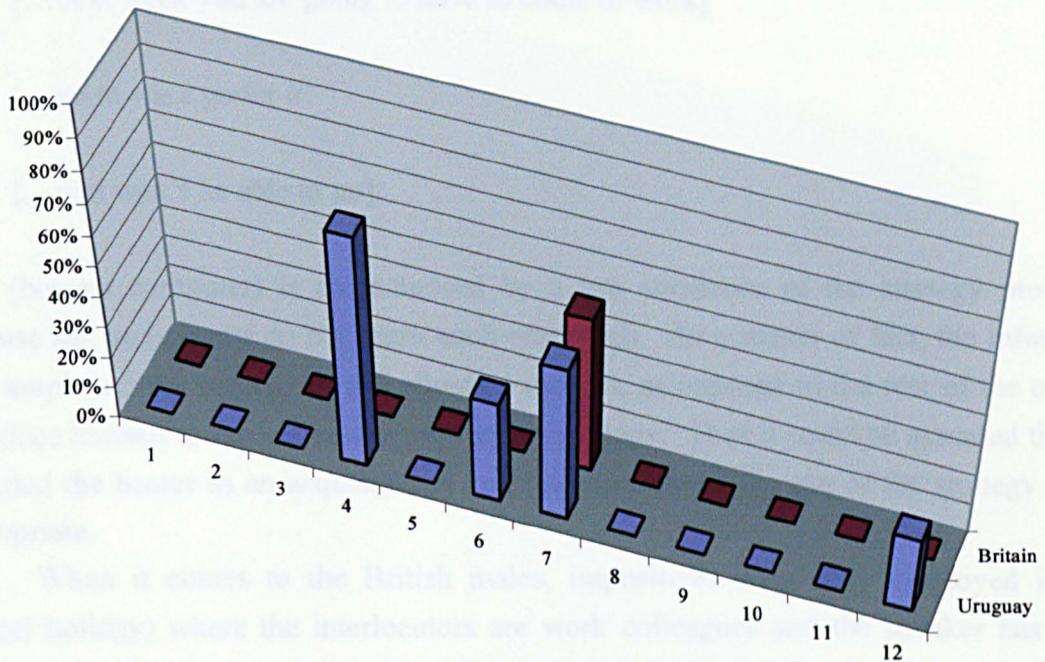
4.3. Gender analysis of the main request strategies

In this section we will analyse the use of the main strategy types from the point of view of gender. We will start by looking at requests in male-male interactions, followed by female-female interactions, then those by male-female and finally female-male interactions in order to find out what the similarities and/or differences between Uruguayan and British males and females are.

4.3.1. Same gender interactions: the case of males

Figure 4, below, compares the use of impositives by British and Uruguayan males

Figure 4: The use of impositives in M-M interactions



The use of the strategy by Uruguayans is much higher than that of British males and is used across more situations. The Uruguayans employed the strategy in those situations where the interlocutors were familiar with each other with the exception of R9 (borrow house) where the strategy was not used at all. This is probably due to the nature of the situation itself since the speaker, as already discussed, has to ask the addressee for a favour and this favour is dependent upon the availability of the object of the request and upon the ability of the hearer to do so. Hence the inappropriateness of issuing an impositive here. It should be noted that the more familiar the participants the more direct the use of the strategy is, thus R4 (ask for directions), where the participants are friends, is characterised by 75% of impositives against 25% in R12 (borrow computer). Having said that, there is a higher level of impositives in R7 (cancel holiday) than in R6 (borrow car). This could be explained by the fact that in R7 (cancel holiday) the speaker has been put in charge of a very important work project and has the backing of the company to ask the hearer to cancel his/her holiday, to work with him/her on this project. Thus the type of impositives employed in this situation were obligation statements:

‘...la semana que viene vas a tener que venir a trabajar’

[...next week you are going to have to come to work]

‘...no te vas a poder ir’

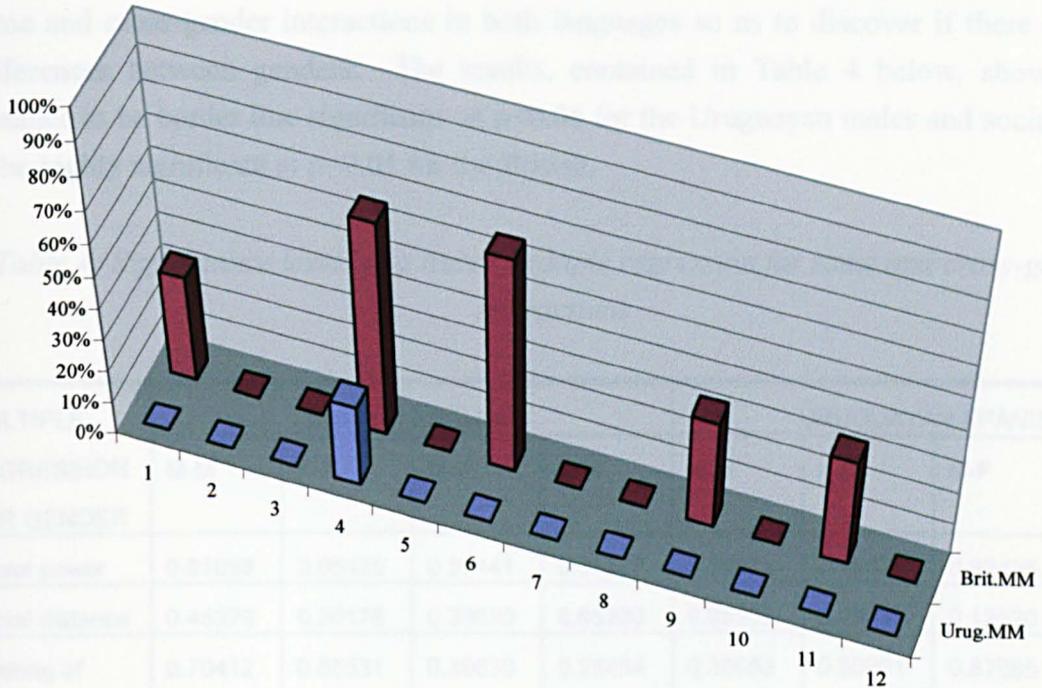
[...you won't be able to go]

R12 (borrow computer) is characterised by a low incidence of the strategy probably because the participants do not know each other well. As a matter of fact, the informant who employed the strategy in this situation did not, as opposed to the rest of the males, introduce himself to the hearer as a pre-request strategy. Thus it could be assumed that he regarded the hearer as an acquaintance and thus considered the use of the strategy to be appropriate.

When it comes to the British males, impositives were only employed in R7 (cancel holiday) where the interlocutors are work colleagues and the speaker has been given ‘power’ by the company. Thus the speaker could justify the use of the strategy by claiming the importance the project has for the company. In other words, by asking the hearer to cancel his holiday the speaker will not so much be seen as asking for a personal favour but he will be seen as asking a favour on behalf of the company, a favour which is most likely to show how committed the hearer is to the company.

Let us now look at the use of non-conventional indirectness since the reasons that motivate the preference for conventional indirectness have been discussed in section 4.2.2. and will be further discussed in Chapter 6. As can be seen in Figure 5, below, the Uruguayans showed a very low incidence of the strategy which was only employed in R4 (ask for directions). R4, as previously expressed, is characterised by the fact that the participants are friends and by the fact that the weightiness of the request is very low. The use of non-conventional indirectness here could be interpreted along the lines of solidarity as opposed to non-imposition.

Figure 5: The use of non-conventional indirectness in M-M interactions



When it comes to the British males the strategy had a much higher incidence. NCI was employed in two different ways: in R4 (ask for directions) and R9 (borrow house) where the interlocutors are friends, probably as a way of expecting the addressee to offer and/or volunteer; and in R1 (borrow book), R6 (borrow car) and R11 (ask for loan). The common denominator in these three situations is the difference in social status between the interlocutors: the speaker has less social status than the hearer. On the one hand, it could be claimed that the choice of strategy by Uruguayan males, though very low, appears to be motivated by the fact that the interlocutors are friends and as previously discussed (see section 4.2.4.), the speaker could be providing the addressee with the opportunity to volunteer. In which case the use of NCI by the Uruguayans could have been motivated by the social distance between the participants and not by differences in social status. On the other hand, the linguistic behaviour of the British males seems to be motivated by the difference in social status between the interlocutors. Confirmation of this point has been found in the results of a further linear multiple regression test (see Table 4 below). As discussed in section 4.2.1. a linear multiple regression test was used to discover significant interactions between the response variable and the three explanatory variables for the whole population of the study regardless of gender

differences. The results of this test have been presented in Table 2. Following these results, a further linear multiple regression test was employed differentiating between same and cross-gender interactions in both languages so as to discover if there are any differences between genders. The results, contained in Table 4 below, show social distance to be border line significant at $p < 0.06$ for the Uruguayan males and social status to be highly significant at $p < 0.01$ for the British.

Table 4: Significance levels of a linear multiple regression for same and cross-gender interactions

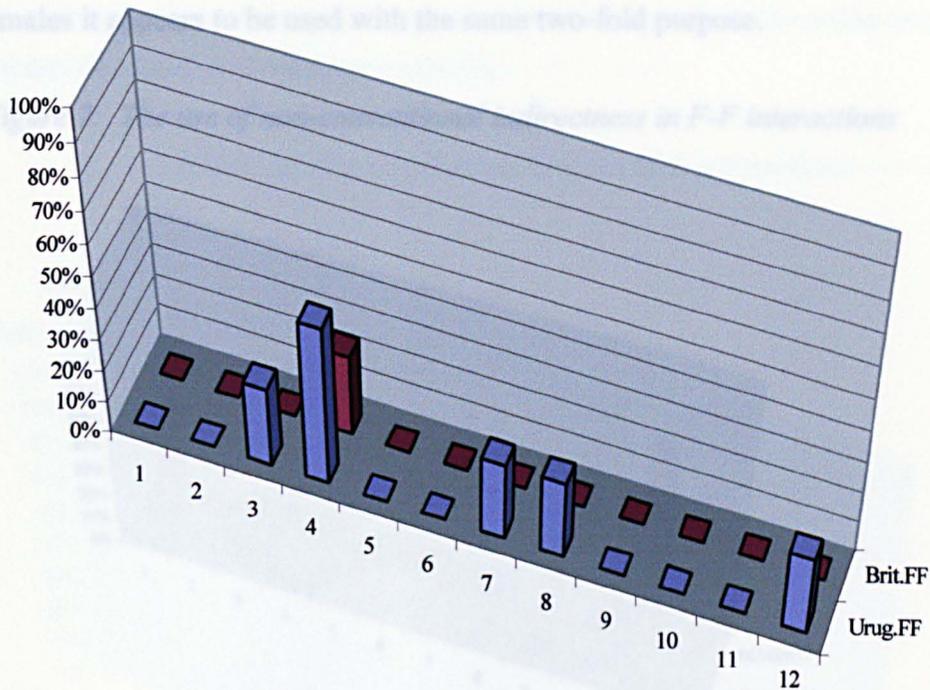
MULTIPLE REGRESSION FOR GENDER	BRITISH ENGLISH				URUGUAYAN SPANISH			
	M-M	F-F	M-F	F-M	M-M	F-F	M-F	F-M
Social power	0.01095	0.95125	0.57441	0.31727	0.62971	0.16008	0.63496	0.20992
Social distance	0.45379	0.20178	0.39630	0.05200	0.05902	0.28357	0.12520	0.26084
Ranking of imposition	0.70412	0.65531	0.39630	0.23454	0.35953	0.50991	0.87085	0.74350

M-M= male speaker addressing a male, F-F= female speaker addressing a female, M-F= male speaker addressing a female, F-M= female speaker addressing a male.

4.3.2. Same gender interactions: the case of females

Figure 6, below, shows the use of impositives by British and Uruguayan females interacting with other females. As in those interactions between British and Uruguayan males, the Uruguayans made greater use of impositives than their British counterpart.

Figure 6: The use of impositives in F-F interactions

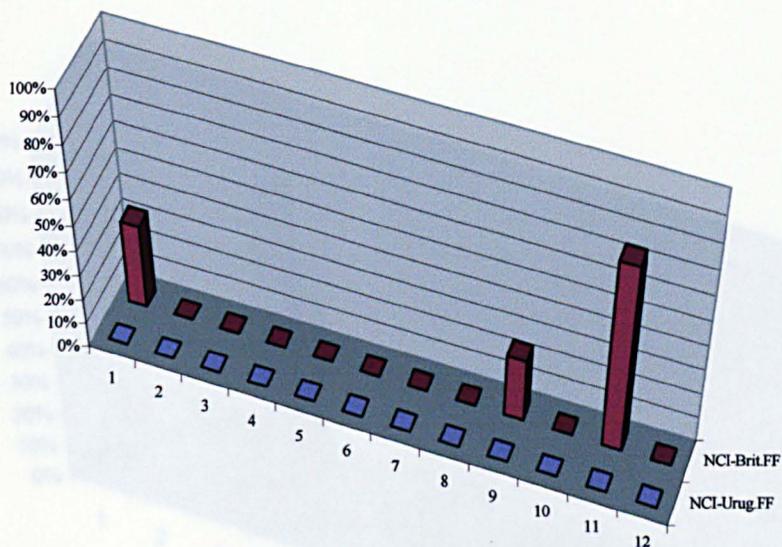


Impositives were employed in R3 (mind telephone), R4 (ask for directions), R7 (cancel holiday), R8 (type letters) and R12 (borrow computer) by the Uruguayans and only in R4 by the British. Although the use of the strategy by Uruguayan females shows slightly lower levels of directness compared to the linguistic behaviour of Uruguayan males, it does not seem to be motivated by social distance. The strategy was employed in R4 (ask for directions) where the participants are friends and the request is deemed as very low cost and then in those situations where the speaker has more social status than the hearer, regardless of the object of the request. Having said that, the use of the strategy in these situations is very low; in fact lower than in R4 where there is no social status difference between the interlocutors. Thus it is difficult to claim that social status is the main motivation behind the use of the impositives by Uruguayan females. The results of the linear multiple regression test do not show any of the independent variables –social distance, social status and total ranking of imposition- to be significant here; either for the Uruguayans or for the British informants.

In terms of non-conventional indirectness, as can be seen in Figure 7, below, the strategy was only employed by British females in R1 (borrow book) and R11 (ask for

loan) where the speaker has less social status than the addressee and the participants do not know each other very well, and in R9 (borrow house) where the interlocutors are friends and have equal social status. Although the use of NCI is lower than that of the British males it appears to be used with the same two-fold purpose.

Figure 7: The use of non-conventional indirectness in F-F interactions



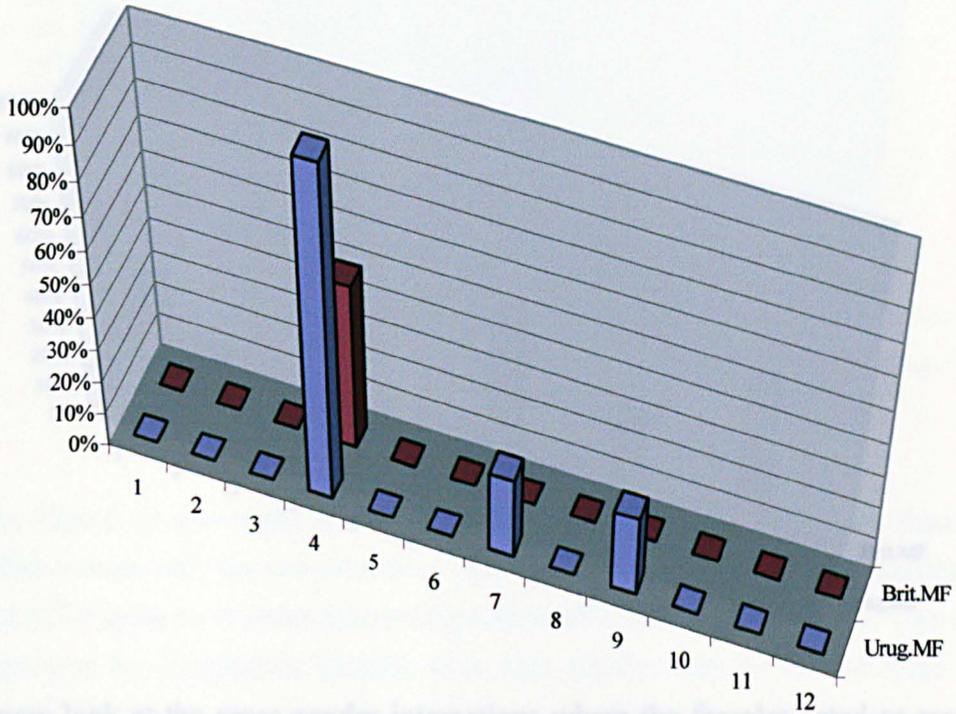
By comparing the use of request strategies between Uruguayan and British males and females in same gender interactions (see Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7), it could be argued so far that:

- both Uruguayan and British males employ higher levels of impositives than females
- both Uruguayan males and females employ higher levels of impositives than their British counterpart
- while non-conventional indirectness has an extremely low incidence in Spanish where it was only employed once, it has a higher incidence in English, where it constitutes the second most preferred strategy after conventional indirectness
- the requestive behaviour of British males shows a slight preference for non-conventional indirectness when compared to that of British females.

4.3.3. Cross-gender interactions

We will start by looking at those cross-gender interactions where the males acted as speakers and the females as addressees (M-F).

Figure 8: The use of impositives in M-F interactions

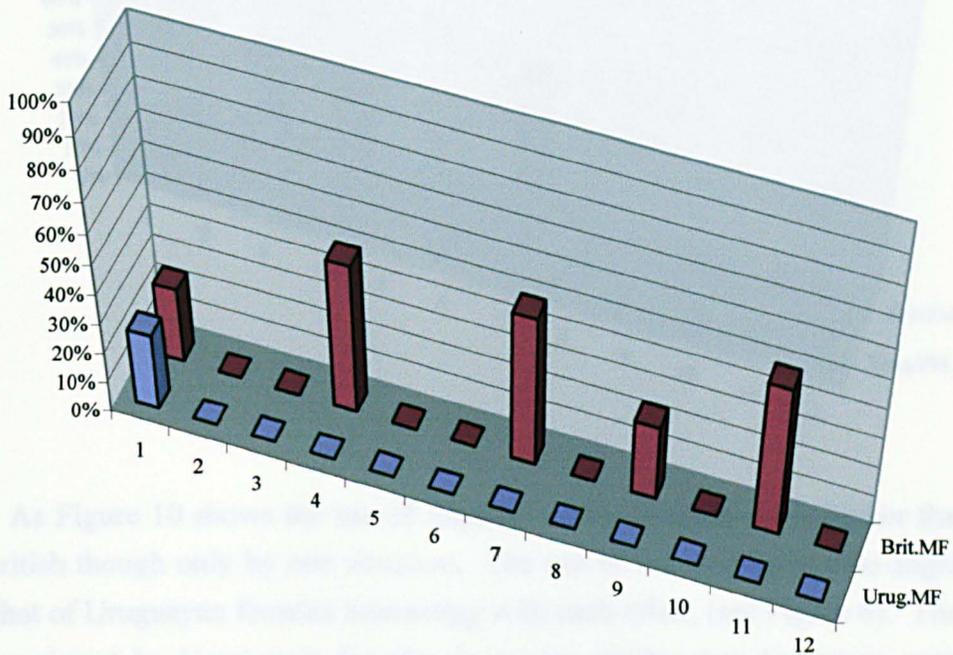


As shown in Figure 8, above, the Uruguayans once again employed higher levels of impositives compared to their British counterpart. We will also see a marked preference for the strategy in R4 (ask for directions) by the Uruguayans and a low incidence in R7 (cancel holiday) and R9 (borrow house). The common denominator of these situations is social distance. However, the results of the multiple linear regression do not show social distance to be significant. With respect to the use of the strategy by the British, impositives were only deemed to be appropriate in R4 (ask for directions). As a matter of fact, this is the highest level of impositives employed by the British informants so far. The use of the strategy in R4 (ask for directions) could be explained by the fact that the informants argued with each other during the interaction, a point that

will be discussed further on, thus by issuing an imposition the males try to put an end to the disagreement.

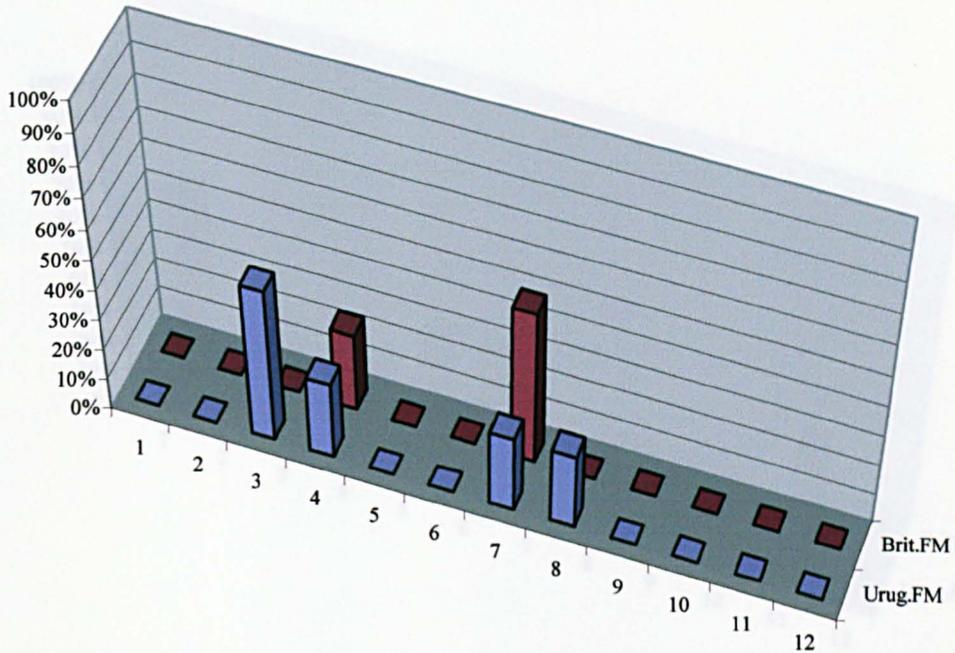
Although the levels of non-conventional indirectness, as shown in Figure 9, below, were not as high as same gender interactions by males (see Figure 5), the strategy was employed in a similar fashion with very few differences.

Figure 9: The use of non-conventional indirectness in M-F interactions



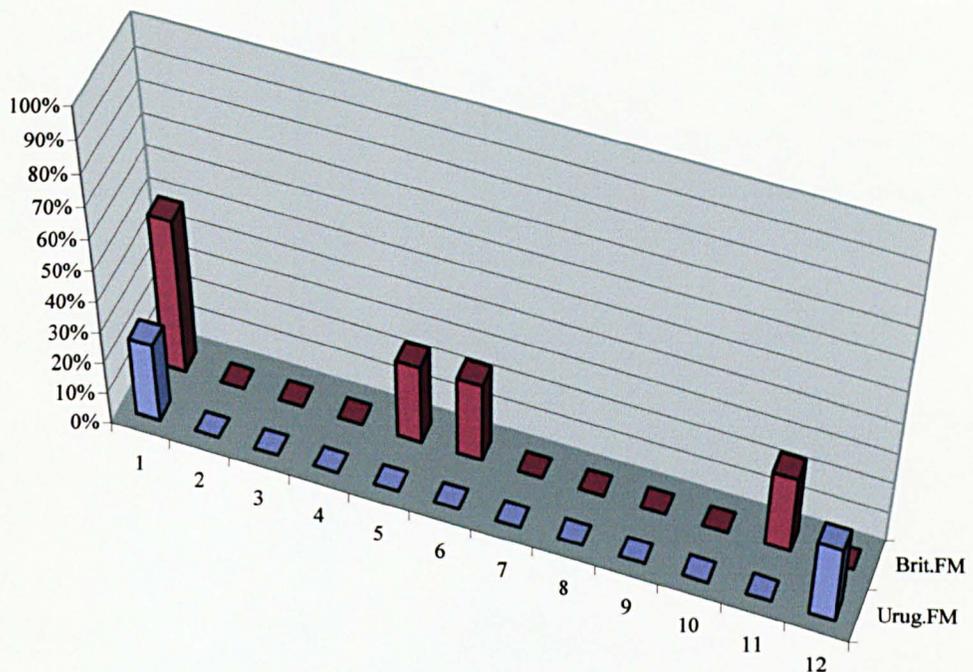
Let us now look at the cross-gender interactions where the females acted as requesters and the males as requestees, as shown by Figure 10 on the following page.

Figure 10: The use of impositives in F-M interactions



As Figure 10 shows the use of impositives by Uruguayans is higher than that of the British though only by one situation. The use of the strategy is also slightly lower than that of Uruguayan females interacting with each other, (see Figure 6). The strategy was employed by Uruguayan females in a very similar way to that in same gender interactions. That is to say, it was used in those situations where the participants know each other well and in those where the speaker has higher social status than the hearer. The use of the strategy by Uruguayans would appear to be motivated by social status asymmetries between the participants. However, none of the social variables was found to be sufficiently significant. When it comes to the use of the strategy by the British we could see a difference between cross-gender interactions and same gender interactions. This time the females appear to be motivated by considerations of social distance, hence the use of the strategy in R4 (ask for directions) and R7 (cancel holiday) where the participants know each other. This could also explain the use of non-conventional indirectness in R1 (borrow book), R5 (ask for lift) and R11 (ask for loan) where the interlocutors do not know each other well, (see Figure 11 below).

Figure 11: The use of non-conventional indirectness in F-M interactions



Hints were also employed by the British in R6 (borrow car) where the participants know each other well though there is an asymmetry in terms of social status. This could be interpreted as a technique by the female to get the male to offer his car. The results of the multiple regression show social distance significant at $p < 0.05$ for the British. With respect to the use of hints by the Uruguayans, the strategy as shown in Figure 11 was employed for the first time in R1 (borrow book) and in R12 (borrow computer), marking, if only, a slight difference in the requestive behaviour of Uruguayan females in same gender and cross-gender interactions. It would appear that Uruguayan females are more direct when interacting with other females and more indirect when interacting with members of the opposite sex.

4.4. Request modification

Having discussed the most preferred request head acts in Uruguayan Spanish and British English we will now proceed with the types of request modification available. As previously explained, a head act is the minimal unit which can realise a request, in other

words, it is the core of the request sequence. The possible external and internal modifications function as a way of upgrading or intensifying and downgrading or softening the impact of the request.

The fact that very few intensifiers have been found in the production of English requests has led to an almost exclusive study of downgraders with requests (House and Kasper, 1981:177). This does not necessarily mean that the use of intensifiers in English as in other languages is not linguistically possible. The infrequency of their use suggests that Britons and Uruguayans tend to find them socially inappropriate with requests.

4.4.1. External modification

This type of modification is achieved through the use of optional clauses which either mitigate or emphasize the force of the whole request. Most external modifiers are means by which the speaker tries to get the addressee to support the actual request. Sometimes single external modifiers or a combination of them are used with the purpose of not uttering the request but allowing the addressee to offer.

The most frequent external modifiers found in the data in decreasing order are: reasons, preparators, disarmers, enquirers and getting pre-commitments. Table 5, below, shows the frequency of such devices in same gender and cross-gender interactions in English and Spanish.

Table 5: Total number of external modification strategies in British English and Uruguayan Spanish

External modification	UK				ROU				TOTAL	
	M	F	MF	FM	F	M	MF	FM	UK	ROU
•Preparator	14	18	19	20	20	19	16	17	71	72
•Reason	29	35	39	33	32	36	31	31	136	130
•Disarmer	10	10	14	13	5	3	9	8	47	25
•Getting a pre-commitment	12	21	13	20	6	5	7	10	66	28
•Promise of forbearance	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
•Promise of reward	4	1	0	3	1	3	1	3	8	8
•IFID	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	1
•Admission of facts	2	2	0	2	2	3	3	2	7	10
•Blame the hearer	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	3	2
•Put responsibility on hearer	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	2	4	3
• Friendly insult	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1

4.4.1.1. Reasons

Reasons or grounders as they have been usually called are clauses which can either precede and/or follow a request head act. As illustrated by the term the speaker gives reasons or justifications to support his/her request.

- 13) *Llegaron las cuentas de luz, de la intendencia y todo y tengo que pagar. ¿Me podría dar un adelanto de sueldo?* [R11, MM ROU]

[The electricity and community charge bills and everything have arrived and I have to pay. Could you give me an advance on my salary?]

- 14) Excuse me, you couldn't move, could you? *So that my child can sit next to me, she's only three.* [R10, MM UK]

The use of reasons or grounders can be seen as a co-operative strategy towards harmonious exchanges since by giving reasons the speaker expects the addressee to be more understanding and willing to co-operate. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) asking for and giving reasons for a speech act is a 'positive' politeness strategy in that it 'is a way of implying 'I can help you' or 'you can help me', and, assuming cooperation, a way of showing what help is needed' (p.128). It could be counter argued, however, that by giving reasons the speaker is showing consideration for the addressee, providing a 'good enough' stance from which to ask the addressee to interrupt his/her course of action in order to help the speaker. Thus the giving and asking for reasons could either be related to 'positive' and/or 'negative' politeness. This would probably help to explain why reasons, as demonstrated in studies of other languages including English and Spanish⁵ (Kasper, 1981; House and Kasper, 1987), stand out as the single most frequent supportive move.

⁵ The languages in question were American English and Argentinian Spanish.

4.4.1.2. Preparators

Preparators, another type of supportive move, constitute the second most preferred external modification by speakers of both languages as seen in Table 5 and 6. They are used by the speaker in order to prepare the addressee for the ensuing request. The speaker usually announces that s/he will be making a request either by means of checking the addressee's availability for carrying out the request or by asking the addressee for permission to make the request. It should be noted that in doing so the speaker does not tell the addressee the content of the request and does not, necessarily, get a positive commitment from him/her.

15) *Che, te acordás que vos tenés, no te vas a acordar, digo, allá en Tacuarembó tenés un ranchito ahí.* Este, no sé como me imagino que en esta época vos no vas para ese lado. Andaba con ganas de tomarme una semana. [R9, MF ROU]

[Do you remember you've got, no you won't remember, I mean, over there in Tacuarembó a little house. Um, I don't know I'd imagine this time of the year you won't go. I've been wanting to take a week off.]

16) *La verdad que tengo que pedirte un favor enorme.* Justo tengo que ir al aeropuerto y se me acaba de romper el coche. Digo, yo sé que vos tenés auto, lo cuidas mucho pero bueno, ta. Te lo voy a pedir a ver si no me lo podés prestar para ir hasta allá. [R6, MM ROU]

[The truth is I've got to ask you for a big favour. As it happens I have to go to the airport and my car's just broken down. I mean, I know you have a car and that you look after it a lot, but, well, OK. I'm gonna ask you if you can lend it to me to go there.]

17) *I need to ask you a really big favour.* My car's just broken down and I need to pick my mum up from the airport. It's really desperate that I can't pick her up. Is it possible I could borrow your car just for a few, just half an hour. [R6, FF UK]

Table 6: Request modification in British English and Uruguayan Spanish across twelve situations

SITUATION	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12	
	uk	rou																						
External modification																								
•Preparator	10	6	1	1	0	9	0	0	4	1	8	10	10	9	6	7	8	4	1	1	11	13	12	11
•Reason	11	3	14	16	15	3	0	0	15	12	15	15	13	16	11	9	5	9	14	16	11	15	12	6
•Disarmer	7	9	2	1	1	0	0	0	9	2	6	4	0	0	6	2	2	3	3	0	9	4	2	0
•Getting a precommitment	6	8	7	8	6	2	0	0	12	4	8	0	4	0	7	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
•Promise of forbearance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
•Promise of reward	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	5	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•IFID	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Admission of facts (s/h inclusive)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Admission of facts (s)	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Blame the hearer	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Put responsibility on hearer	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Friendly insult	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Internal modification																								
•Downtoner	5	1	10	0	1	0	0	0	9	0	10	0	6	1	1	3	5	0	5	0	7	2	9	2
•Diminutive + ind. Determiner	0	0	0	2	0	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	6	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	7
•Softening adverbial	0	0	6	0	6	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	7	1	2	0	5	4	4	1	7	2	10	6
•Cajoler	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0
•Hedge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
•Politeness marker	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	6	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0
•Appealer	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
•No. of requests	14	16	15	16	15	16	15	16	15	16	15	16	14	16	15	16	10	11	15	16	15	16	15	16

4.4.1.3. Disarmers

Disarmers are all the possible external modifying devices which 'disarm' addressees from the possibility of refusal. In other words, the speaker tries to remove any potential objections the addressee might raise upon being confronted by with the request. Disarmers may include formulaic promises, complimenting phrases, and most specifically clauses that express the speaker's awareness and concern that the request might be deemed as an imposition on the addressee.

In example 16), above, 'yo sé que vos tenés auto y que lo cuidas mucho pero bueno ta' works as a disarmer in the sense that the speaker directly lets the addressee know that s/he knows there is a car available and that s/he also knows the addressee looks after it very well. Thus the speaker raises every single possible objection for refusal in the hope of securing co-operation from the addressee. Other examples of disarmers can be seen below:

18) I'm sorry to bother you. *We don't know each other very well. I know we're neighbours and everything* would it be possible for you to help me move my things out of my flat? Would that be OK? [R5, FF UK]

19) I'm just on my way to see you actually. I need this book.....*but I know you've got it* would you be able to let me borrow it at all?

As shown in Table 5 there is almost a 50% difference in the use of the disarmers by British and Uruguayan informants. The device was used by the British in all the situations of the role-play with the exception of situation 4, where the participants argued, and situation 7. In this last situation the request itself could be deemed as 'unacceptable' since as we shall recall, the speaker has been put in charge of a very important project at work and asks the addressee, a work colleague who has already booked a holiday, to stay and help finish the project. Instead, it appears that in this situation disarmers were replaced by another external modifier: promise of reward as can be seen in Table 6. The Uruguayans, on the other hand, only employed disarmers in half of the situations of the role-play and some of them, like situations 1 and 2 show a very low incidence of the device. It would appear that Uruguayans employed the highest number of disarmers in those situations where there was social status difference between the participants (R9, R6,

R4), whereas the British use of the device does not seem to be motivated by differences in social status between the interlocutors.

4.4.1.4. Getting pre-commitments

Getting pre-commitments fall into the group of what has been described as commitment-seeking devices (Edmondson, 1981), hence the name. They are part of what he calls 'pre-exchanges' since the outcome of such an exchange will directly lead to the beginning of the head act. Although such pre-sequences do not oblige the hearer to give either a positive or a negative response, speakers do not tend to expect negative responses and sometimes not even a response at all. When an answer is given by the hearer it expresses the level of his/her commitment. Getting a pre-commitment helps the speaker feel s/he has a 'safer' ground for uttering his/her request.⁶

20) I was wondering *if you could do me a big favour*. I was wondering whether I could borrow your car for about two hours. [R6, MM UK]

21) Mirá estoy en un aprieto bárbaro, *¿me podés ayudar?* Tengo que ir al aeropuerto ya porque me está por llegar un familiar y se me quedó el auto, *¿vos no me prestarías el tuyo?*

[Look I'm in a bit of a difficult situation. Can you help me? I have to go to the airport because a relative of mine is about to arrive and my car won't start. Could you not lend me yours?]

In terms of the frequency of use of this commitment-seeking device it is interesting to note that the British employed it nearly two and a half times more often than the Uruguayans (see Table 5). It appears from the data that Uruguayans either seem to be less bothered about where they stand with respect to their addressees or that the mutually shared information the interlocutors have about each other provides a 'safer', or to put it differently, culturally-guaranteed ground for requesting.

⁶Getting pre-commitments differ from preparators in that in the former the speaker asks the addressee directly for 'help', 'a favour' whereas in the latter the speaker only prepares the addressee for what could be deemed as a 'favour'.

4.4.1.5. Promise of reward

Promise of reward, another type of supportive move, is employed by speakers in order to increase the likelihood of the hearer's compliance. This strategy is achieved by announcing a reward which will be given to the addressee upon fulfillment of the request.

As can be seen in Table 5 the device has a low incidence in both languages. Whereas the British employed it in four situations (R2, R5, R6 and R7), the Uruguayans only employed it in R7 probably due to the situational factors, in that the addressee was asked to postpone or cancel his/her holiday and thus some kind of reward was considered necessary to get him/her to comply with the request. Here are some examples:

22) Estamos por terminar el proyecto de 'Equio'. Precisamos que estén todos. Vos no podías postergar tus vacaciones. *Igual, si querés, después te podés tomar una semana más.* [R7, FF ROU]

[We're about to finish the 'Equio' project. We need all of you. Could you not postpone your holidays. If you want to you can then take an extra week off]

23) I've got some really important things to do in town, if I don't do them today they're not gonna get done and consequently things are not gonna happen for me. Is there any chance you could help me out stay? *And obviously likewise in the future I'll be doing the same for you if ever you need me to.* [R2, MM UK]

With respect to the rest of the external modification devices, that is, promise of forbearance, admission of facts, blame the hearer, put responsibility on the hearer, as can be seen in Table 6 they were only employed in situation 4 and thus they will be discussed later on in this chapter.

4.4.2. Internal modifications

Whereas external modification is achieved by intensifying or mitigating devices occurring in the immediate context of the speech act, internal modifications occur within the speech act itself. As with external modifications they can either soften or aggravate the force of

the act (Faerch and Kasper, 1984). Blum-Kulka *et al* (1989) distinguish between two types of internal modifications: syntactic and lexical/phrasal downgraders. The former are choices between different grammatical structures, interrogative versus imperative constructions, conditional constructions, negation and tenses. The latter comprise a large number of mitigating devices such as politeness markers, hedges, diminutives and the like.

In this section we will only consider lexical and phrasal downgraders as part of internal modifications since syntactic considerations of modality, tense and aspect have already been taken into account for the design of the head act coding scheme which is based upon directness and impact (see Chapter 3). With respect to regarding the negation of interrogative forms as a syntactic downgrader, as advocated by Blum-Kulka amongst others, we believe that this does not necessarily hold true for Spanish and certain cases of English, as shown below.

According to Blum-Kulka *et al*'s analytical framework the negation of a preparatory condition as in 'I don't suppose you'd like to...' or 'Can't you...?'⁷ is syntactically downgrading or mitigating the impositive force of the request. Thus its inclusion would make the request more tentative. Leech (1983) also claims that the inclusion of the negative implies that the speaker assumes the listener cannot or does not want to do the action, and asks if the assumption is true. While this appears to be the case for English requests such as 'I don't suppose you'd...' it does not necessarily hold true for requests in which the modal auxiliary verb is negated. Consider the following requests between friends:

- i) 'Can you give us a fiver?'
- ii) 'Can't you give us a fiver?'

In the first example the speaker conventionally questions the hearer's ability and makes no indication as to his/her assumptions whereas in the second one s/he appears to assume that the hearer can fulfill the request. The speaker is conveying the assumption that it can be done, in other words it could be said that such an utterance could presuppose a possible refusal which is now being challenged. Thus the purpose of negating the preparatory condition could be that of upgrading instead of downgrading the request.

⁷ It should be noted that 'I don't suppose you'd like to...' is applied to the speaker's beliefs and not to the hearer's as is the case of 'Can't you...?'

According to Koike (1989:524) ‘this questioning would seem to make the imposition of the request greater’. When it comes to ‘I don’t suppose you’d like...’ the problem may rely on the semantic meaning of the verb in the subordinate clause. The verb itself expresses tentativeness/uncertainty and it is therefore seen as mitigating. The most frequent internal modifiers found in the data can be seen in Table 7. As can be seen in this table British requests show a very high incidence of internal modifications overall (156/173) compared to Uruguayan requests (51/187). Whereas more than 90% of British English requests are internally modified, only 27% of Uruguayan Spanish requests are. This greater preference for internally modified requests by the Britons makes their requests more tentative, showing more of an inclination towards considering the addressee’s freedom of action.

Table 7: Total number of internal modification strategies in British English and Uruguayan Spanish

Internal modifications	UK				ROU				TOTAL	
	M	F	MF	FM	M	F	MF	FM	UK	ROU
•Downtoner	10	23	18	19	3	1	0	3	70	7
•Diminutive	0	0	0	0	5	6	6	5	0	22
•Softening adverbial	13	13	13	14	2	5	3	4	53	14
•Cajoler	2	1	7	4	1	0	2	0	14	3
•Hedge	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
•Politeness marker	3	3	5	4	0	3	2	0	15	5
•Total no. of internal modifications									156	51
•Total no. requests									173	187

4.4.2.1. Downtoners

Downtoners are propositional modifiers used by the speaker with the purpose of modulating the impact his/her request is likely to have on the addressee. Examples of the use of the device can be seen in the following examples:

24) I wonder if there is *any possibility* I could borrow your car to go and pick him up from the airport. [R6, FF UK]

25) I was wondering if you could *possibly* postpone it, give the tickets back. [R7, FF UK]

26) I was wondering if you could *perhaps* help me. [R5, MM UK]

27) *Me parece* que no te vas a poder ir. [R7, MM ROU]

[I think you won't be able to leave]

As can be seen in Table 7 the use of downtoners is very low in Spanish whereas in English it constitutes the most frequent internal modifier. The use of downtoners help make the request more tentative, that is to say help to soften its impact. It could be said that downtoners belong to the realm of 'negative' politeness since they show the speaker does not either assume that the addressee will/has to comply with the request or coerce the addressee into complying with the request. The low incidence of the device by the Uruguayans appears to show that they seem to be less bothered by considerations of 'negative' politeness when compared to the British.

4.4.2.2. Diminutives

Diminutives constitute the most frequent internal modifier employed by the Uruguayans. Diminutives are produced from a variety of parts of speech though the most frequent word class employed here is that of nouns.

Whereas in Spanish, as well as many other European languages, diminutives are largely used, in English there are few diminutive suffixes⁸ and they are not so frequently used. As a matter of fact no diminutives were employed by any of the British informants.

⁸ Some of those suffixes are: *-ette* as in *kitchenette*, *-let* as in *piglet*, *-ie* as in *doggie*. There are also morphological derivatives such as contracted forms of longer words which are similar to diminutives: *veg* for *vegetables*, etc. and the Scottish use of the adjective *wee* to convey the idea of very small, tiny as in 'We'll be a *wee* bit late'.

The main purpose of diminutives is to convey the idea of 'small' or 'little'. Having said that they may also be used to express a range of emotions such as tenderness and contempt.⁹ Diminutives affect the force of the whole utterance and they can be used with imperatives, interrogatives and declaratives. In the case of imperatives they help to mitigate the impact of the request:

28) *Atendeme el teléfono por un minutito y decí que vuelvo enseguida.* [R3, FM ROU]

[Answer the telephone for a bit and say I'll back soon]

It should be pointed out that diminutives do not minimize the imposition but mitigate the force of the utterance in that to the native ear they are interpreted as a sign of 'friendliness'. They are usually associated with in-group language where co-operation is expected from the addressee. Thus in Spanish diminutives are seen as a sign of solidarity, a marker of 'positive' politeness.

In Uruguayan Spanish they are commonly heard when requesting 'small things' such as water:

*Che, ¿no me das un vasito con agua?
Dame un poquito de leche para el café*

As Wierzbicka (1985a:168) points out 'Rich systems of diminutives seem to play a crucial role in cultures in which emotions in general and affection in particular is expected to be shown overtly'. By contrast, the 'Anglo-Saxon culture does not encourage unrestrained display of emotions', and this could explain why expressive derivation has not developed to that extent in English.

4.4.2.3. Softening adverbials

Although softening adverbials could be said to be an example of downtoners since indeed their effect is to mitigate the request, the difference between them is that the former tend

⁹ Augmentatives such as 'ota' and 'ote' in Spanish tend to be used negatively: 'Una mujer grandota', 'Quijote' from the eponymous book by Cervantes ridiculing the character.

to make the force of the request more tentative whereas the latter tend to minimize the object of the request. Some adverbials like 'just' were employed with requests with the same purpose as diminutives in Spanish, that of minimizing the imposition:

29) Could you please *just* ask them what they want [R3, FM UK]

Other adverbials such as 'really' were used with the purpose of intensifying the request:

30) I *really really* would appreciate it if maybe I could borrow your car....[R6, MF UK]

The use of adverbials is four times as high in English than in Spanish. More than half of the adverbials employed by the British informants had the purpose of minimizing the imposition as opposed to intensifying the force of the request which once again seems to point to considerations of 'negative' politeness.

4.4.2.4. Cajolers

Cajolers have been defined (Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1989) as speech items whose semantic content is of little transparent relevance to their discourse meaning. In English they are addressee orientated in that they function as attempts by speakers to make things clearer for the addressees and invite them, at least metaphorically, to join in the conversation, in this case to participate in the speech act. The use of cajolers had a very low incidence in both languages as shown in Table 7, particularly in Spanish where they were only employed three times. Here are two examples taken from the data:

31) no sé cómo haría, *digo*, ¿me lo podría prestar? [R1, MF ROU]

[I don't know what I'd do, I mean, could lend it to me?]

32) Is there any chance I could take my lunch break now and *you know* you cover for me [R2, MF UK]

4.4.2.5. Hedges

Hedges have been defined as adverbials used by speakers when they wish to avoid a precise propositional specification. According to Brown and Levinson (1987):

a 'hedge' is a particle, word, or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or noun phrase in a set; it says of the membership that it is *partial*, or true only in certain respects, or that is *more* true and complete than perhaps might be expected (p.145)

Examples of hedges are the use of 'somehow', 'kind of', 'sort of' and 'at all' in requests.

33) Do you mind if I sit there and you *kind of* sit there. [R10, MM UK]

As can be seen in Table 7 had a very low incidence in English and were not used at all in Spanish.

4.4.2.6. Politeness markers

Although everything we have discussed so far could come under the category of 'politeness marker', we have chosen the term to describe the use of 'please' in English and 'por favor' in Spanish. Following Blum-Kulka *et al* (1989) we had expected a higher incidence of the device in British English. However, the device was only employed fifteen times in English and five in Spanish.

4.4. Concluding remarks

The results obtained in this study show that both Uruguayan and British native speakers have a clear preference for conventional indirectness over any other request strategy.¹⁰ The preference for conventional indirectness could be explained by the fact that in uttering such a strategy the speaker is balancing clarity and non-coerciveness, thus ensuring his/her utterance will have the correct interpretation and the right impact on the

¹⁰ It will be recalled that conventional indirectness was also found to be the most preferred requesting strategy in a number of speech act studies including the CCSARP.

addressee, leading to success. The analysis of the data also indicates cross-linguistic differences in the choice of request perspective. Although the majority of conventionally indirect requests in BE and US are hearer-orientated, the Uruguayans appear to be less concerned about naming the addressee as actor and reducing the level of coerciveness.

The results also show that Uruguayans employ higher levels of directness than the British and that there is a negative correlation between directness levels and social distance. In other words, the more familiar the interlocutors the more direct the request. On the other hand, the British employed higher levels of non-conventional indirectness which had a very low incidence in Uruguayan Spanish. In this study Uruguayans employed higher levels of impositives than the British without fear of 'face' loss. This seems to indicate that the interlocutors' mutually shared factual information makes the use of higher levels of directness not only appropriate but probably expected. This higher level of directness combined with lack of fear of losing 'face' appears to reflect how committed the speakers are to belief that their addressees will comply with their requests.

The comparison of the requestive behaviour of British and Uruguayan males in same gender interactions points to the fact that the former seem to be motivated by considerations of social status between the interlocutors whereas the latter appear to be motivated by considerations of social distance. The results also show that Uruguayan males deem directness as appropriate across more situations than their British counterpart.

With regard to the linguistic behaviour of British and Uruguayan females in same gender interactions, the data show that their behaviour does not seem to be motivated either by considerations of social distance or social status. Uruguayan females, like their male counterparts, employed higher levels of directness than British females. Such levels of directness were, however, lower than those employed by British and Uruguayan males in same gender interactions. It was also found that contrary to the stereotypical belief that females are more 'indirect' than males, British males showed a slight preference for non-conventional indirectness when compared to the opposite sex. Whilst it is true that British males employed slightly higher levels of impositives than females, they also employed slightly higher levels of non-conventional indirectness.

When it comes to M-F cross-gender interactions the Uruguayans made more use of impositives than the British. Having said that, the level of impositives in M-F interactions was slightly lower than that employed in M-M interactions in both languages. The level of non-conventional indirectness was also found to be slightly lower than that

of M-M interactions. With regard to F-M cross-gender interactions the data once again show Uruguayans employing higher levels of impositives than the British though this time only by one situation and in a similar way to F-F interactions. However, the use of the strategy in British F-M cross-gender interactions showed a different scenario from that of F-F interactions. It would appear that British females interacting with the opposite sex appear to be motivated by considerations of social distance.

Whilst there were no significant differences in the use of non-conventional indirectness in British same and cross-gender interactions, Uruguayan females employed slightly higher levels of the strategy when interacting with the opposite sex. Thus it would appear that Uruguayan females are more direct when interacting with other females and more indirect when interacting with males.

In terms of external modifications to requests the most frequent modifiers found in the data in decreasing order are: reasons, preparators, disarmers, enquirers and getting pre-commitments. The British not only employed higher levels of modifiers across the role-play situations but they also employed a larger repertoire of them. This was mirrored by the use of internal modifiers. Once again the Uruguayans' use of internal modifiers was much lower than that of the British, thus making Uruguayan requests less tentative.

The use of request strategies and external and internal modifications seem to point out that Uruguayans appear to be less motivated by considerations of 'negative' politeness when compared to the British and that higher levels of directness appear to be appropriate in Uruguayan Spanish and not in British English. In the next chapter we shall analyse the performance of apologies in these two languages and investigate whether the same patterns found for requests are present in apologies.

CHAPTER 5

THE FINDINGS: APOLOGIES

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter we shall discuss the apologies yielded in the twelve situations of the open role-play. As with requests, the analysis of the data resulting from the open role-play is based upon an independent evaluation of each response according to a number of dimensions. These dimensions have been presented in Chapter 3 in the form of a coding scheme. In section 5.2. we will discuss the form and function of apology strategies in British English and Uruguayan Spanish with reference to the choice made by the informants. In section 5.3. we will look at how the situational parameters and the explanatory variables affect the frequency of apology strategies. In section 5.4. we will discuss the differences and similarities in same and cross-gender interactions in both cultures. Finally, in section 5.5. we will present the concluding remarks of this chapter.

5.2. Apology strategies

As with the case of requests the apology data were collected via an open role-play consisting of twelve request situations and twelve apology situations (see Chapter 3). Table 1 below shows the classification of apology situations. Since apologising is directed to address the hearer's 'negative' face-needs - and in so doing address the speaker's 'positive' face-needs - and since it is intended to remedy an offence for which the speaker takes responsibility, we can logically expect a range of apology strategies depending on the type of offence committed. Fraser (1981:263) establishes a categorisation of apologies in nine strategies. Olshtain and Cohen (1983), on the other hand, distinguish only five basic categories but recognise a large number of subcategories. Aijmer (1996) has found it useful to distinguish between thirteen different apologising strategies even if those strategies did not appear in her corpus. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 we will follow Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) taxonomy, the most frequently used classification system until now, consisting of five non-exclusive main strategies: an explicit expression of apology, an explanation or account of the violation, an expression of responsibility, an offer of repair and a promise of forbearance and, with

sub-strategies, eleven in all. Table 2 shows the choice and frequency of apologising strategies by British and Uruguayans in each situation of the role-play.

Table 1: Classification of apology situations according to the social distance and social power between the interlocutors and the severity of the offence.¹

SITUATION	SOCIAL POWER	SOCIAL DISTANCE	SEVERITY OF OFFENCE
A1. Book return	S<H	+SD	Low
A2. Ruin trousers with coffee	S<H	-SD	Low
A3. Being late	S>H	+SD	Low
A4. Forget map	S=H	-SD	Low
A5. Damage car with oil	S=H	+SD	High
A6. Crash car	S<H	-SD	High
A7. Cancel/postpone holiday	S>H	-SD	High
A8. Rewrite letters	S>H	-SD	Low
A9. Damage carpet	S=H	-SD	High
A10. Step on stranger's toes	S=H	+SD	Low
A11. Overdue payment	S<H	+SD	High
A12. Smash computer screen	S>H	+SD	High

The results presented in Table 2 refer to twelve apology situations and indicate the number of times each (sub) strategy was employed per situation.

¹ A definition of each of the independent variables together with an explanation as to the way in which they have been coded is provided in Chapter 3, section 3.2.2.

Table 2: Choice and frequency of apologising strategy per situation.

SITUATION →	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12	
STRATEGY	UK	ROU																						
• IFID	1	6	3	14	3	7	5	3	1	11	2	5	6	3	1	7	1	6	6	16	2	11	1	14
• IFID intensified	8	0	12	1	11	0	1	0	14	0	9	1	0	0	4	0	11	0	9	0	9	0	11	0
Taking responsibility:																								
• Explicit self-blame	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
• Lack of intent	2	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	6	0	0	5	6	
• Expression of embarrassment	1	1	6	2	1	0	0	0	6	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	4	1	2	1	0	1	6	1
• Admission of facts	13	16	1	0	4	6	13	16	5	4	14	15	7	1	9	13	14	16	0	0	9	3	15	14
• Refusal to acknowledge guilt	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	3	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
• Explanation	7	2	0	1	11	5	2	0	0	0	8	6	12	13	2	2	9	0	0	0	10	9	9	10
• Offer of repair	8	7	11	7	3	0	0	0	13	12	14	14	7	8	1	0	13	12	0	0	2	1	14	12
• Promise of forbearance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0
• Distracting from offence	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	0	0
• No. of apologies	14	16	15	16	15	16	15	16	15	16	15	16	14	16	14	16	15	16	15	16	15	16	15	16

Examining the data presented in this table, one can see that 'explicit expression of apology' (IFID and IFID intensified) and 'taking responsibility' are present in all situations in both languages and in rather high numbers. When it comes to the first strategy the British show a clear preference for the intensification of IFIDs in almost all the situations, whereas the Uruguayans only intensified their IFIDs once in just two of the situations showing a clear preference for non-intensification. It should also be pointed out that in those situations where the offence resulted in some kind of damage of the addressee's property [situation 2 (ruin trousers), 5 (damage car), 9 (damage carpet) and 12 (smash computer screen)] a higher incidence of intensified IFIDs is found; with the exception of situation 6 (crash car) where the number of intensified IFIDs could be deemed as low considering the offence committed. As can be seen in Table 2, the intensified IFIDs were not employed in situation 7 (cancel holiday) and were hardly used in situation 4 (forget map). Whereas situation 4 (forget map) is characterised by a non-serious offence hence the low frequency of explicit expressions of apology, in situation 7 (cancel holiday) the offence is a serious one. Having said that the speaker could be said to be committing an offence on behalf of his/her company and thus may not see the need for redressing the addressee's 'face'.

Within 'taking responsibility' the admission of facts appears to be the most preferred sub-strategy by speakers of both languages across all but two situations. In these situations [2 (ruin trousers) and 10 (step on toes)] the offence could be described as a physical transgression. In situation 2 the physical transgression results in the damaging of the hearer's possession (spilling coffee on the hearer's skirt/trousers) and in situation 10 in disturbing and intruding on the hearer's privacy (stepping on the hearer's toes after having requested him/her to swap seats). It is due to these reasons that an admission of facts would have been pointless unless the hearer had not noticed or felt the hot liquid 'burning' his/her legs or the weight of a fellow passenger on his/her toes.

When it comes to the other three semantic strategies - explanation, offer of repair and promise of forbearance - their use varies situationally and cross-culturally. Referring back to situations 2 (ruin trousers) and 10 (step on toes) one can see there is no need to provide an explanation since the offence and most probably the reasons which triggered it are pretty self-explanatory, since the victim witnessed the whole process. From the use of the next strategies, one can see the relevance in choosing an offer of repair in situation 2 - by offering to pay for the dry-cleaners, to buy a new garment for the hearer and the like - and not in situation 10 where there is nothing to repair. The same line of thinking applies

to the use of promise of forbearance. The strategy was only deemed appropriate by both groups of informants in situation 11 (overdue payment) where the speaker might want to borrow money from the company again in the future and thus needs to restore his/her 'positive' face as well as the 'negative' face of the hearer.

So far the data of this study partly confirms Blum-Kulka *et al*'s (1989) claim that the use of IFID and expression of responsibility will materialise to varying degrees in all situations in all languages whereas the other three strategies will materialise only in relevant situations. Apologies have been studied in a number of languages: English, German, French, Russian, Hebrew, Thai and Spanish and as predicted by Blum-Kulka *et al* the use of IFID and expression of responsibility were present in all these languages across all situations. While it is true that the first two strategies were employed in British English and Uruguayan Spanish across all the situations of the role-play and that the other three strategies are situation dependent, we do not claim that the taxonomy hereby presented has universal applicability. Having briefly discussed the semantic formulas that make up the apology speech act we will now proceed to look at each of these formulas in more detail before presenting a quantitative analysis of the data.

5.2.1. Explicit expression of apology

Apologies generally comprise a small repertoire of fixed expressions. Some of these expressions are represented by verbs (perdonar, disculpar, lamentar, sentir, apologise, excuse, pardon), by adjectives (sorry, afraid) and nouns (pardon). All of these expressions can be expanded and modified, generally by means of adverbs. The vast majority of apology expressions in English can be accounted for as forms of 'sorry' (see Chapter 2, section 2.3.). In this section we will only discuss the forms contained in the corpus.

Owen (1983:86) claims that the use of '(I am)² sorry about that' or 'sorry about this' conveys that the speaker does not want to take responsibility for the offence, since the offence is now in the past.

² It should be noted that the expansion of 'I'm' to 'I am' allows for stress on the copula which emphasises the idea that the feeling being expressed is indeed experienced by the speaker (Owen, 1983:70).

- 1) ...my girlfriend came round and we had a bit of a ...*I'm sorry about that*. [A3, MM UK]
- 2) ...I don't really know what to say about it, *I'm really sorry about this*, it was my fault. [A9, MM UK]

Whereas Owen's observation can help to explain the use of the phrase in the first example it is not applicable to the second example where the speaker not only expresses his embarrassment but also explicitly blames himself for the offence. In this sense one could argue that Owen's observation can be applied to those inconveniences which are beyond the speaker's control when the demonstrative pronouns are used for distant reference. In other words, we agree with Owen in that the use of 'that' implies there is nothing that can be done about the situation. However, it does not necessarily mean the apologise will not take responsibility, merely, that being a 'pragmatist' s/he realises the event cannot be salvaged. S/he may then make an offer of repair depending on how much s/he feels s/he contributed to the offence and on the nature of the situation itself.

'I'm sorry to + VP' was only employed as an attention getter and not to address a 'real' offence. The phrase was employed in situation 10 to call the attention of a fellow passenger on the bus before requesting him/her to swap seats with the speaker. The use of this phrase is very similar to the use of 'excuse me' when offered as a territory invasion signal and as a way of alerting the H's attention to an ensuing speech act (see Chapter 2, section 2.3.1.).

- 3) Um, *I'm terribly sorry to disturb you* but would you mind changing ... [A10, MF]

In the corpus 'I'm sorry (that) Subject' was also used as a phrase to announce bad news:

- 4) I know you've booked to go on holiday but this....*I'm sorry*.... [A7, FM]
- 5) Um. Look. *I'm sorry I have to tell you this* and I know that you've booked your holiday...[A7, FM]

The use of the phrase in 4) and 5) has the aim of prefacing the giving of bad news and indicating that the situation is out of personal control hence the speaker abdicates responsibility. This lexical phrase appears to have a very similar function to the use of 'I'm afraid' in:

- 6) *I'm afraid* I'll have to ask you, is there any possibility you could postpone your holiday? [A7, MF]

- 7) *I'm afraid* I've got some bad news, you're gonna have to cancel your holiday. [A7, FF]

The use of 'I'm sorry S' and 'I'm afraid' in 5), 6) and 7) serve the same purpose as an adverb such as 'unfortunately' and does not constitute a 'real' apology but a 'ritual' one. It should be noted that 'I'm afraid' was only employed in situation 7. Although the expressions are also used to preface dispreferred³ second parts in adjacency pairs, they were hardly employed by the informants.

Referring back to the use of 'I'm (intensifier) sorry', it should be pointed out that although the potential number of intensifiers is very large, the commonest intensifiers in the corpus were, in decreasing order of frequency: 'really', 'so', 'terribly', 'awfully' and 'dreadfully'. They were widely used by the British in preference to non-intensified apologetic expressions as shown in Table 2 and Table 5.

The other explicit expression of apology found in the data is realised by the performative verb 'to apologise'. It has been claimed that the phrase is employed in formal contexts (Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1989; Aijmer, 1996). As a matter of fact it was only employed eight times in formal as well as informal situations where the offence was considered to be severe. It could be argued that it was used either because the offence was culturally serious as in situation 9 (damage carpet), 11 (overdue payment) and 12 (smash computer) or because during the conversational exchange the speaker realises the (potential) damaging effect the offence has had on his/her relationship with the addressee, as can be seen in situation 1 (book return) and 3 (being late). The expression can be used in the following way:

³ In the ethnomethodological theory of preference, responses are considered to be preferred or dispreferred in terms of the structural organisation of the utterance as well as its turn shape (Levinson, 1983; Pomerantz, 1984, etc.).

$\left(\begin{array}{l} I \\ We \end{array} \right)$ (intensifier) apologise (intensifier) $\left(\begin{array}{l} \text{for S} \\ \text{for V-ing} \end{array} \right)$

- 8) B: ...But you did promise that you'd give it to me today
A: I did, but I can still go and get it and bring it back to you
B: Is it back in the halls or have you taken it?
A: No, I'm certain, I have it at hand
B: You've got it at the moment?
A: Yeah, *I apologise for this* [A1, MM UK]
- 9) B: ...Yeah, you're actually like an hour and a half and I've just had my boss coming and tell me that I'm in trouble, yeah. There were some phone calls I've written them down here and I mean, you were an hour and a half late
A: Yeah, *I apologise for that* I didn't mean to be so long [A3, FM UK]
- 10) A: ...Thanks, I realise the money I used is overdue. I'm here to bring it back to you and *to apologise*, I've been rather bad, particularly with my bills recently, and I'm really sorry, it won't happen again [A11, FM UK]
- 11) A: ...I said it'd be back and there it is again *I apologise for it being late* [A11, MF UK]

The expression of apology was also intensified by means of modal verbs, auxiliary emphatic 'do' and adverbs as can be seen in the examples to follow:

- 12) A: Yes, *I really must apologise for not paying back the money any sooner* but I've had some relatives and they paid me back so...[A11, FF UK]
- 13) A: Well, I did try my hardest but there's still a bit of stain there. Now, Is there anything I can do, you know, whatever it costs just let me know, *I do apologise* [A9, MM UK]

14) B: So, is it broken?

A: Part of the screen has been smashed, yes, I will refund you for it *I do apologise sincerely* [A12, FM UK]

In Uruguayan Spanish the explicit expression of apology can be realised by the verbs 'perdonar', 'disculpar', 'lamentar' and 'sentir'. It should be pointed out that apart from four instances where 'lamentar' was employed, 'disculpar' and 'perdonar' were employed in the rest of the cases, making them the most widely used expressions of apology. While 'perdonar' and 'disculpar' throw the burden of effort on the addressee or victim, 'lamentar' and 'sentir' place the onus on the speaker or offender. In other words, it could be argued that 'perdonar' and 'disculpar' are hearer-orientated whereas 'lamentar' and 'sentir' are speaker-orientated. Although these verbs can be intensified by means of politeness markers such as 'por favor' either preceding or following the verb, Uruguayans as shown in Table 2 show a marked preference for non-intensification. As a matter of fact the verbs were only intensified twice, in situation 2 (ruin trousers) and 6 (crash car) and this was realised by means of 'por favor'. It will be recalled from the discussion of the form and function of 'perdonar' and 'disculpar' in Chapter 2 section 2.3.1., that both formulaic remedies are interchangeable. And that due to the morphology of the language when employed they mark the distinction between singular and plural and formality and informality, the T/V distinction.

Let us now look at the last two verbs in the range of apology expressions. Although there were not any instances of 'sentir' in the corpus, this verb together with 'lamentar' when used as apologetic expressions are preceded by unstressed neuter direct object pronouns, making the explicit expression of apology 'lo siento' and 'lo lamento', respectively. The expression can be used in the following way:

Lo $\left(\begin{array}{l} \text{Siento/sentimos} \\ \text{lamento/lamentamos} \end{array} \right)$ (intensifier)

The first example shows the conjugation of the verb for the first person singular (siento/lamento) and the second one the conjugation for the first person plural. These verbs are not intensified by the use of a politeness marker such as 'por favor'. Instead they tend to be followed by the adverb 'mucho' and like 'I'm afraid', they were only used

in situation 7 (cancel holiday) as a dispreferred second part in adjacency pairs. Here are some examples:

15) A: Bueno, mire no va a poder irse porque resulta que surgió un nuevo trabajo y requiero de su presencia y de todo el personal para quedarse

B: Bueno

A: *Lo lamento mucho* pero no, no va a poder irse [A7, MF ROU]

[A: Well, look, you won't be able to go because a new job's turned up and I need you and all the staff to stay

B: Well

A: I'm very sorry but no, you won't be able to go]

16) A: Recién me doy cuenta que no me da el tiempo, no sé, te pago más o te doy..

B: *Lo lamento*, digo, si querés yo voy a tener unas horas antes de irme, digo, vemos las cosas, te puedo ayudar [A7, FM ROU]

[A: I've just realised that I've not got enough time, I don't know, I pay you more or I give you...

B: I'm sorry, I mean, if you want I'm going to have a few hours before I leave, I mean, we can look at the things, I can help you]

5.2.2. Taking responsibility

This formula has a direct link to the speaker's cost and loss of face which results from performing the speech act of apology (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1972; Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1989). The speaker admits responsibility for the offence by choosing from a number of sub-formulas: explicit self-blame, lack of intent, expression of embarrassment, admission of facts and refusal to acknowledge guilt. Within these sub-formulas the speaker shows how much responsibility s/he is prepared to take for the offence.

5.2.2.1. Expressing explicit self-blame

In choosing 'explicit self-blame' the speaker explicitly acknowledges that s/he has been at fault and thus accepts a high level of responsibility. This direct level of responsibility is two-fold. While it redresses the addressee's 'negative' face and threatens the speaker's 'positive' face it also, even if only indirectly, helps to accentuate the speaker's 'positive' face in that the speaker avoids any kind of disagreement and deepens his/her sympathy with the hearer. This sub-formula was only employed by the British in situations 3 (being late), 4 (forget map), 8 (rewrite letters) and 12 (smash computer) with a very low incidence and by the Uruguayans in situations 2 (ruin trousers), 6 (crash car), and 8 (rewrite letters).

17) A: I'm sorry I was a bit longer than I expected to be. I apologise for that, I didn't mean to be so long, *it's my fault and I will take the blame*, I will go to your boss and I'll explain and say that I'm sorry [A3, FM UK]

18) A: *My fault*. Sorry, got it in my pocket all the time..[A4, FM UK]

19) A: Oh dear! *Complete error on my part*, I gave you some of the wrong wording to type out...[A8, MF UK]

20) A: ..No me dí cuenta y la choqué de atrás, *la culpa es mía*...[A6, MF ROU]

[A:..I didn't realise and crashed into it from the back, it's my fault]

21) A: Vos sabés que tá, *la culpa fue mía*, me confundí de trabajo, te dí otro [A8, FF ROU]

[A: You know that, OK, it was my fault, I got the work mixed up, I gave you another one]

5.2.2.2. Expressing lack of intent

The second non-language specific sub-formula, lack of intent, was used across more situations by both groups of informants. This is probably due to the fact that in using this sub-strategy, as suggested by the term itself, the speaker explicitly expresses that the offence was non-intentional and in so doing mitigates the offence. Here are some examples:

22) A: ...*Disculpame fue un accidente* [A12, MM ROU]

[A: ...Sorry it was an accident]

23) A: ...*Vos sabés que sonó el teléfono y sin querer, al querer contestar se me cayó al piso y se me rompió la pantalla* [A12, MF ROU]

[A: ...You know that the telephone rang and unintentionally, whilst wanting to answer the telephone it fell onto the ground and the screen got smashed]

24) A: Well, the screen's in shit, it kind of fell on the ground when I was answering the phone, *it was a total and utter accident* [A12, MF UK]

25) A: I'm so sorry, *I meant to bring it*, I left it on the side [A1, FM UK]

5.2.2.3. Expressing embarrassment

The third sub-formula, an expression of embarrassment, had a higher incidence amongst the British, particularly in those exchanges where females were involved either as the offended party or as the offenders themselves.

26) A: ...*¡Qué horrible!* Nunca tiro nada, aparte un pantalón nuevo [A2, FF ROU]

[A: ...How horrible! I never spill anything, besides a new pair of trousers]

27) A: ..Espero que me disculpe, *la verdad es que no sé cómo expresarle lo que siento en éste momento* [A6, FM ROU]

[A:...I hope you forgive me, the truth is that I don't know how to tell you what I feel at this moment]

28) A: I'm so sorry, I'm really sorry, *how embarrassing, I'm so embarrassed* [A5, FM UK]

29) A:..*I'm afraid I don't really know what to say.* I'll go and clear this out, look, it's the least I can do, it's my responsibility [A12, FF UK]

5.2.2.4. Admitting facts

The fourth sub-formula, admission of facts, was by far the most widely used expression of responsibility by both groups of informants. This could be explained by the nature of the sub-formula itself. By admitting facts the speaker does two things: s/he does not deny his/her involvement in the offensive act and most importantly abstains from openly accepting responsibility (Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1989). This sub-formula is generally accompanied by other sub-strategies in both languages as can be seen in Table 2. There were very few instances in the corpus where the sub-strategy was used on its own. Here are some examples:

30) A: ¡Ups! *¿Qué encontré acá?* [A4, MMROU]

[A: Oops! What have I found here?]

31) A: Oh goodness! *I've just found the map in my pocket* [A4, MM UK]

Examples 30) and 31) were taken from situation 4. As will be recalled, in this situation the speaker and the addressee have got to get to X street for which the former was given a map with directions. Once in the car the speaker who is also the driver realises s/he has not got the map on him/her and asks the addressee to ask a pedestrian for directions. After the addressee had complied with the request the speaker realises s/he had the map

all along. Although the choice of apology strategies by both groups of informants in this situation is very similar as can be seen in Table 2, the situation developed very differently. In order to analyse these differences we will have to refer back to the request strategies employed by the informants in situation R4 (forget map).

As previously explained, the object of the request is to ask a pedestrian X for directions after having left the map at home. Although the request has no high cost as such, it could be argued that stopping someone on the street could be imposing on that person's time and space. Moreover, giving directions can be quite time-consuming. As a matter of fact, two British informants refused to comply with the request by simply alleging they did not like asking.

This was a very conflictive request situation for the British. Whereas the majority of the Uruguayans admitted they had left the map behind, the British blamed each other for not having the map. This was probably motivated by the fear of losing 'face' since the speaker had to get the addressee to ask a pedestrian for directions and s/he might have thought the addressee would refuse to do so on the basis that it was the speaker's responsibility and not the addressee's.

Thus, referring back to the admission of facts in situation 4 (forget map), one could argue that the British employed the sub-strategy as a means of finalising an argument and indirectly admitting their partners were right. The Uruguayans, on the other hand, had not found the situation conflictive at all therefore their admission of facts was either interpreted as unnecessary by their conversational partners or responded to with smiles (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.5). Below is an example of an interaction between Uruguayan males:

R4

A: Bo/ sos un boludo/ te dije que traigas el/ el mapa

B: No bo/ eras vos que lo tenías que traer bo

A: Bueno a ver/ preguntale al flaco ese que está ahí parado

A4

A: UPS/ ¡qué encontré acá! (los dos se rien)

B: Estás pintado/ estás pintadísimo

This sub-strategy was also employed on its own in situation 3 by the Uruguayans as a way of accepting that an offence, in this case minor, was committed. By employing

the sub-strategy by itself they only indirectly take responsibility for the offence, as shown below. Having said that the inclusion of the object pronoun 'me' personalises the utterance.

32) A: *Se me hizo un poco tarde* [A3, FF ROU]

[A: It got a bit late]

5.2.2.5. Refusing to acknowledge guilt

The last sub-formula, refusal to acknowledge guilt, is employed when the speaker completely rejects responsibility for the offence, either by denying responsibility as in example 33), by blaming the hearer as in example 34) and 35) or by pretending to be offended. There are no instances of the last case in the data.

33) A: We had a slight accident unfortunately, just a slight bump in the front, *it wasn't my fault* [A6, FF UK]

34) A: *When did you sneak that into my pocket? You had it all along, didn't you?*[A4, MF UK]

35) A: ...Es que éstas no eran. *Me confundí como vos te pusiste a hablar...*[A8, FM ROU]

[A:...They weren't these. I got confused because you started talking...]

It could be argued that the above are not 'real' apologies since they are not directed to address the hearer's 'negative' face-needs. Having said that, in the very few instances where the sub-strategy was employed it was clear to both speaker and addressee that although the speaker was refusing to take the blame for the offence, s/he was (partly) responsible for it.

5.2.3. Explanation

Explanations or accounts, where the speaker expresses the reasons which (in)directly brought about the offence, are given in addition to or in lieu of the expression of apology. While the semantic formula as such is non-language specific in that neither English nor Spanish have a linguistically conventional way of giving explanations; its appropriateness appears to be culture specific as can be seen in situation 9 (damage carpet), Table 2, where the British felt an explanation was needed and the Uruguayans did not. As previously discussed, 'goodness' of an account depends on the extent to which the apologiser can transfer the responsibility of the offence to another party or source.

This helps to explain why the strategy was not used in situations 5 (damage car) or 10 (step on toes) as well as why the highest incidence of the strategy was found in situation 7 (cancel holiday) for both languages. In this last situation the speaker has the advantage of speaking on behalf of the company, it is the company who needs the addressee's co-operation and by providing an explanation the speaker is in a way transferring the responsibility of the offence to the company. Hence the low frequency of expression of apology accompanying the strategy in situation 7 (cancel holiday), as shown in Table 2. Below are some examples of the strategy in other situations:

36) A: I'm really sorry *it was just, you know, one of those stupid accidents. I was writing a letter and the ink went over* [A9, FM UK]

37) A: Le reventé las luces y el paragolpes. *Me comí a uno que frenó adelante mío* [A6, MM ROU]

[A: I smashed the lights and the bumper. I crashed into someone who braked in front of me]

5.2.4. Offer of repair/restitution

This formula is only appropriate when actual damage has occurred. Hence the fact that it was not used in situations 4 (forget map) or 10 (step on toes), where no actual damage was inflicted. Although it could be argued that there was some kind of physical damage

(pain) in situation 10 since the speaker stepped on the addressee's foot, there was nothing to be repaired and there was no need to compensate the addressee for the infraction.

The appropriateness of the strategy is particularly evident in situations 2 (ruin trousers), 5 (damage car), 6 (crash car), 9 (damage carpet) and 12 (smash computer) . The common denominator for these situations is the type of offence committed: damaging one's person's possessions –ruining the addressee's trousers, the addressee's car back seat, smashing the addressee's car, ruining the addressee's carpet and finally, smashing the addressee's laptop computer. Examining the results shown in Table 2 it would be safe to assume that the more damaging the offence the more likely the speaker is to produce an offer of repair. The strategy was also employed in situation 7 (cancel holiday) as an offer of compensation, as can be seen in example 14) above.

38) A: I'm so sorry *I'll pay for the dry-cleaning* [A2, FM UK]

39) A: *Perdoná te lo limpio ahora* [A5, MM ROU]

[A: I'm sorry I'll clean it now]

40) A: ...Sorry, it's gonna need a repair...*I will get you a replacement in the day*
[A12, FFUK]

5.2.5. Promise of forbearance

This particular strategy had a very low incidence in both languages and it was only employed in situation 11 where it is in the speaker's interest to save his/her own 'face' and redress that of his/her boss since s/he might need to borrow money from his/her employers again. Here are some examples:

41) A:...*Se lo alcanzo ahora y le pido que me disculpe por el atraso. Discúlpeme no se va a volver a repetir* [A11, FF ROU]

[A:...I bring it now and ask you to forgive me for the delay. Forgive me, it won't happen again]

42) A: ...Sorry *it won't happen again* [A11, FF UK]

43) A: ... Recién hoy pude conseguir el dinero *le prometo que no va a volver a suceder* [A11, MF ROU]

[A: ...Only today did I manage to get the money I promise it won't happen again]

Having discussed the form and function of the apology strategies in both languages we will now look at how the situational parameters and the explanatory variables affect the speakers' choice of strategy.

5.3. Situational parameters and explanatory variables

As with the case of requests, the twelve apology situations of the open role-play vary according to the following parameters: social distance, social power and the severity of the offence as shown in Table 1 at the beginning of this chapter.

During the design of the data collection instrument an attempt was made to calculate the relative seriousness of the offence in both cultures independently of the overall weighting of the FTA, to use Brown and Levinson's term. The evaluation also took account of other relevant situational factors. The relative cost of the imposition of asking the addressee to rewrite some letters due to the speaker's own mistake will depend on how long it will take the addressee to carry out the act, whether s/he has any pending work, and the like.

If we add up the frequency with which each (sub)strategy occurred per situation as shown in Table 3, below, we immediately notice several things. Firstly, that Uruguayans and Britons show a general agreement as to the seriousness of the offences involved in the situations of the role-play. Secondly, that the British seem to apologise more than the Uruguayans. Thirdly, that the more severe the offence the more the speakers tend to apologise in both languages (see Table 1 for high/low severity). Fourthly, that the frequency of apologies appears to be related to an interaction between the seriousness of the offence and social power or status in that although the offence of situation 1 (book return) is low, both British and Uruguayan speakers showed a high frequency of apologies. On the other hand, if one looks at the number of apologies employed in

situation 7 (cancel holiday), where the speaker has more social power than the hearer and the offence is (very) serious, one will notice that both groups of informants employed a very small number of apologies comparatively.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics: sum of strategies per situation.

UK	SUM OF STRATEGIES	ROU	SUM OF STRATEGIES
Sit 12	63	Sit 12	58
Sit 6, 9	52	Sit 6	46
Sit 5	41	Sit 9	36
Sit 1	40	Sit 1	32
Sit 3, 11	36	Sit 5	29
Sit 2	35	Sit 2, 11	28
Sit 7	32	Sit 7, 8	25
Sit 4, 8, 10	23	Sit 10	23
		Sit 4	19
		Sit 3	18

These observations are confirmed by the results of a log linear regression⁴ realised with forward selection. Table 4, below, shows the significance levels of the explanatory variables for both languages.⁵ The results of the statistical test show severity of offence to be highly significant $p < 0.00$ and social power border line significant $p < 0.07$.

⁴ As will be recalled, a multiple linear regression test was employed to study the relationship between the three explanatory variables -social distance, social power and total ranking of imposition- and the level of (in)directness in the performance of requests. Due to the nature of requests a scale in decreasing order of (in)directness and impact was designed in order to measure the performance of the speech act by the informants (see Chapter 3, section 3.5.2.). Since some of the apologising strategies are situation-specific it would have been incorrect to design a scale for the response variable in decreasing or increasing order and hence to have employed a multiple regression. Consequently each apologising (sub) strategy was given one point per occurrence per conversational exchange and hence this time a log linear regression was employed to study the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

⁵ I would like to thank Jean Russell for her advice on the log linear regression model.

Table 4: Significance levels of the effect of the explanatory variables on the response variable.

MODEL	CHI-SQUARE	D.F.	CHANGE CHI	CHANGE D.F.	P-VALUE
Social power	113.322	86	5.4677	2	0.0650
Social distance	117.3898	87	1.3999	1	0.2367
Severity of offence	83.5505	87	35.2392	1	0.0000

In view of the above results a further test was run in order to obtain more information about the interaction between the two statistically significant explanatory variables. The base model for the log linear regression test was the nationality of the informants -Uruguayan or British- and the sex of the speakers –same and cross-gender interactions, MM, FF, MF and FM. Table 5, below, shows that the only significant interaction between the elements of the model is that of social power and severity of offence, $p < 0.02$.

Table 5: Significance level of the interaction between the explanatory variables.

VARIABLES	CHI-SQUARE	D.F.	CHANGE CHI	CHANGE D.F.	P-VALUE
Social distance	76.6829	84	1.3999	1	0.2367
Seriousness of offence + Nationality	78.0592	84	0.0236	1	0.8779
Seriousness of offence + Sex	77.0591	82	1.0237	3	0.7955
Social power + Nationality	77.8178	83	0.265	2	0.8759
Social power + Sex	75.7208	79	2.362	6	0.8836
Seriousness of offence + Social power	70.3137	83	7.7691	2	0.0206

A further analysis of the interaction between social power and seriousness of offence shows the results contained in Table 6.

Table 6: The interaction between social power and seriousness of offence.

FACTOR	OBSERVED COUNT	EXPECTED COUNT
S<H		
Non-serious offence	102 (12.36%)	102 (12.36%)
Serious offence	178 (21.53%)	178 (21.53%)
S=H		
Non-serious offence	88.50 (10.68%)	88.50 (10.68%)
Serious offence	158 (19.12%)	158 (19.12%)
S>H		
Non-serious offence	138 (16.71%)	138 (16.71%)
Serious offence	162 (19.60%)	162 (19.60%)

Analysing the results of the above Table one can observe the following:

- if the speaker has less social power than the hearer and the offence is severe s/he is more likely to apologise than if the offence is non-severe, as is the case with situation 6 (crash car) compared to situation 1 (book return). It will be recalled that both situations are characterised by the fact that the speaker has less power than the hearer, however, the offence of situation 6 is very serious and the one in situation 1 is non-serious;
- if the speaker has less social power than the hearer and the offence is severe s/he is more likely to apologise than if s/he has more power than the hearer, as is the case with situation 7 (cancel holiday) where the speaker has more power than the hearer and the offence is severe;
- if the speaker has less social power than the hearer and the offence is severe s/he is more likely to apologise than if the speaker and the hearer have equal social power/status, as evidenced by the frequency of apologising strategies in situations 5 (damage car) and 9 (damage carpet), where the interlocutors have equal social power and the offence is severe, when compared to situation 6 (crash car);
- if the speaker and the hearer have equal social power/status and the offence is severe the speaker is more likely to apologise than if the offence was not severe, as shown

by the frequency of strategies employed in situations 5 (damage car) and 9 (damage carpet) compared to situations 4 (forget map) and 10 (step on toes) where there is equality of social power between the interlocutors and the offence is non-serious;

- if the speaker and the hearer have equal social power/status the severity of the offence is given more weighty consideration, that is to say, if the offence is serious the speaker is likely to produce more than half of the apologies than if the offence was a light one, as evidenced by the results of situations 6 (crash car) and 10 (step on toes) respectively;
- finally, it is only in symmetrical social power relationships that the difference between the ratio of apologies for serious and non-serious offences is almost double, as shown in Table 6.

Despite the fact there is a general agreement in their assessment of the severity of offence and its interaction with social power in the above situations, there are a few differences in the apologising behaviour of both cultures. Situation 3 (being late) is particularly interesting. Whereas the British placed it in fifth position on a par with situation 11 (overdue payment), the Uruguayans considered the offence to be non-severe. As we shall recall, the nature of the offence here is based on the fact the speaker had asked the addressee to mind the telephone on his/her behalf while s/he popped out for a few minutes to get some things. The addressee returns to the office an hour and a half later than 'expected', a 'clear' time offence, at least for the British. During the design of the role-play a period of an hour and a half was chosen since according to Hall (1976) in polychronic-time systems⁶ like Latin America being an hour late does not necessarily trigger an apology.

According to Hall (1976:17) monochronic-time systems, of which Anglo-Saxon countries are an example, emphasize schedules, segmentation and promptness; whereas polychronic-time systems are characterised by several things happening at the same time. They emphasise involvement of people and completion of transactions rather than adherence to present schedules. In polychronic-time systems, he adds, 'things are constantly shifted around. Nothing seems solid or firm, particularly plans for the future,

⁶ For Hall, Latin American, Middle Eastern, Japanese and French cultures are representative of polychronic-time systems, while Northern European, North American and German cultures are representatives of monochronic-time systems.

and there are always changes in the most important plans right up to the very last minute' (p.18). A point also discussed by Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) who claim:

For people who follow M-time schedules, if they are five minutes late for an appointment, they mumble something. If they are 10 to 15 minutes late, they would probably make a slight apology. For people who follow P-time schedules, it is not unusual for a person to be 45 to 60 minutes late and not even 'mumble something', or to express a slight apology. (p.129)

Judging by the results presented in Table 2 and 3 one could even argue that for the majority of the Uruguayan informants being an hour and a half later than expected did not constitute an offence, hence the low incidence of strategies employed. Not even half of the Uruguayans produced an expression of apology or an explanation. Some of the very few explanations given by the Uruguayans would probably intensify the nature of the offence from an Anglo-Saxon perspective. Here are some of the explanations given by both cultures:

44) A: Me demoré un poquito *porque me encontré con un conocido ahí y nos quedamos tomando una* [A3, MM ROU]

[A: I got a bit delayed because I bumped into an acquaintance there and we stayed having a drink]

45) A: I'm really really sorry man *my mum was rushed to hospital OK? I went back to the house, got some quick shopping, alright? My mum was rushed to hospital* [A3, MM UK]

46) A: Disculpá porque me retrasé un poquito *pero a veces pasa viste, me encontré con María y me entretuvo, me charló y después, bueno* [A3, FM ROU]

[A: Sorry I'm a bit late but it sometimes happens, you know, I bumped into Maria and we started chatting and then, well]

47) A: I'm really sorry *I got held up there was a horrific accident outside* [A3, FM UK]

As can be seen in the examples above while the Uruguayans alleged social matters for their lateness such as having a pint with a mate and a 'gossip' with a girlfriend, the Britons claimed that 'tragic' circumstances beyond their control prevented them from being on time. It should also be noted that Uruguayan explanations were mitigated by means of diminutives and presuppositions of common values ('a veces pasa, viste'), both characteristics of 'positive' politeness.

The results presented so far do not seem to be in line with those of Fraser (1981) and Holmes (1995)⁷ who claim that lesser social distance decreases the need for apologies. The latter observed this in respect to the linguistic behaviour of males and not females. Examining these results and those presented in Tables 1 and 3, we will notice that while it is probably true that social distance, in particular lesser social distance, has a role in the performance of apologies, as evidenced in situations 4 (forget map) and 8 (rewrite letters), it is also true that severity of the offence is the overriding factor in the use of apologies in combination with considerations of social power. Social distance was not found to be statistically significant in regard to apologies. This can be evidenced by the results of situation 9 (damage carpet) where the interlocutors are close friends and there is a high level of apologising strategies. This would seem to indicate that in those situations where a severe offence has been committed by one of the conversational partners, considerations of social distance become secondary. This also explains the low frequency of apologising strategies by both groups of informants in situation 10 (step on toes) where the participants are strangers and the offence is not serious. Thus the linguistic behaviour of the Uruguayan and British informants⁸ does not appear to conform to Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness by which apologies are sensitive to increased social distance and the seriousness of the offence. We should insist, however, that apologies are dependent upon the interaction between the seriousness of the offence and social power.

⁷ It should be noted that Fraser studied apologies in American English and Holmes did so in New Zealand English.

⁸ The results and discussion presented so far takes into account all the British and Uruguayan informants who participated in the open role-play irrespective of gender differences.

Having discussed the influence of the independent variables -social power, social distance and severity of offence- on the apology strategies of all the Uruguayan and British informants we shall now analyse the differences and similarities in same and cross-gender interactions in both cultures.

5.4. Gender differences and apologies

As shown in Table 7, below, overall both British and Uruguayan women and men make use of almost the same range of apology strategies and use them in similar proportions. The main difference in the linguistic behaviour of males and females can be explained by differences between languages i.e. the preference for IFID intensification in English and not in Spanish. The table below shows that both Uruguayan and British males when interacting with other males do not tend to accept the blame overtly and thus focus on the relative power of the relationship as claimed by Holmes (1995:163). Having said that Holmes data were based on different type of offences. Moreover, as can be seen in Table 7 neither British nor Uruguayan women used the aforesaid strategy in large numbers. The same could be said for the use of 'promise of forbearance' that was not employed at all by either the British or the Uruguayan males and had a very low incidence in the rest of the interactions in both cultures. The low incidence of these two strategies could reside in the situational parameters of the role-play itself that made the use of the (sub)strategies inappropriate. However, these strategies have not been found to have a high incidence in any of the existing research into the language of apologies. This is not surprising when one thinks of the nature of the strategies themselves and the implications they have for the 'face' of the speakers. When a conversational participant explicitly blames him/herself for having committed an offence s/he redresses the hearer's 'negative' face by showing respect and damages his/her own 'positive' face. And when s/he makes a promise of forbearance s/he not only addresses his/her hearer's needs but commits him/herself to a future course of action which s/he may not be able to comply with and thus eventually lose 'face'.

Table 7: Apology strategies in same and cross-gender interactions.

APOLOGY STRATEGY	BRITISH ENGLISH				URUGUAYAN SPANISH			
	M-M	F-F	M-F	F-M	M-M	F-F	M-F	F-M
A. Explicit expression of apology								
•IFID	4	9	11	8	24	26	27	26
•IFID intensified	16	28	24	31	0	1	0	1
B. Taking responsibility								
•Explicit self-blame	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	1
•Lack of intent	2	6	4	6	3	7	3	4
•Expression of embarrassment	5	9	9	5	0	3	3	4
•Admission of facts	20	23	28	33	26	25	24	29
•Refusal to acknowledge guilt	5	1	2	3	1	2	1	0
C. Explanation or account	10	20	19	21	12	13	12	11
D. Offer of repair	16	20	22	28	16	22	14	21
E. Promise of forbearance	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	1
No. of apologies per gender group	34	47	48	48	48	48	48	48

In order to find out whether there were any significant differences in the proportion and choice of strategies employed between same and cross-gender interactions in both languages the Kruskal-Wallis H test was employed. At the 0.05 significance level and assuming a Chi-square distribution with 3 degrees of freedom the critical value of X^2 is 7.82. Thus we assumed that if the difference between the samples was larger than the critical value ($X^2=7.82$) there would be a statistical real difference between the populations of the samples. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Statistically significant differences in the proportion of (sub) strategies employed in same gender and cross-gender interactions (critical value $X^2=7.82$).

APOLOGY (SUB)STRATEGY	SAME-GENDER INTERACTIONS		CROSS-GENDER INTERACTIONS	
	(MM- FF)		(MF-FM)	
	ROU	UK	ROU	UK
IFID	17	—	16	—
IFID intensified	—	27	—	30
Expression of embarrassment	—	9	—	—

It should be pointed out that there were no significant differences in the apology behaviour of Uruguayan males and females or in the behaviour of British males and females. The only significant differences found were cross-cultural. These differences were only found in the use of certain apology strategies. More specifically, the high use of non-intensified illocutionary force indicating devices (IFIDs) by the Uruguayans as opposed to intensified IFIDs by the British. This difference was present in same gender and cross-gender interactions as shown above; that is to say, $17 > 7.82$ and $16 > 7.82$ for Uruguayan same and cross-gender interactions, respectively and $27 > 7.82$ and $30 > 7.82$ for British same and cross-gender interactions, respectively. The other significant difference in the use of apology strategies was found in the expression of embarrassment, a clear marker of 'negative' politeness, in British same-gender interactions ($9 > 7.82$). This (sub)strategy was found to be insignificant in Uruguayan Spanish.

Although there were no significant intercultural differences in the use of apologies Table 7, above, shows that females (F-F and F-M interactions)⁹ in both cultures apologise slightly more often than the males. This would seem to contradict Fraser's (1981) claim that women do not offer more apologies than men. What is more, if we compare the linguistic behaviour of the Britons and the Uruguayans we will notice that contrary to the Ford's (1981) study of apologies in English and Spanish (cited in Olshtain and Cohen (1983)), Uruguayans did not express an apology twice as often as the British. Thus this finding is inconsistent with the apparently common belief in the Anglo-Saxon world that Latin Americans irrespective of their geographical region within the sub-continent are 'more polite' than Americans in certain routinised interactions.

5.5. Concluding remarks

The results obtained in this study confirm the claim by Blum-Kulka *et al*'s (1989) that IFID and 'expression of responsibility' emerge to varying degrees in all situations in both languages whereas the other apologising semantic formulas are situation dependent. The results also indicate that although the 'expression of apology' can be realised in a number of ways in English and Spanish, speakers of British English show a marked preference for

⁹ It should be noted that the difference in the proportion of apologies in same and cross-gender interactions is independent of any considerations of all the explanatory and social variables, according to the log linear regression model utilised for this study.

the 'I'm sorry' lexical phrase in its intensified form. The intensification of this phrase is realised by means of adverbs such as 'really', 'so', 'terribly', 'awfully' and 'dreadfully'. The use of these intensifiers in expressions of apology seems to be a convention representing a ritualised Anglo-Saxon conflict avoidance strategy aimed at redressing the hearer's 'negative' face. On the other hand, speakers of Uruguayan Spanish show a clear preference for the non-intensification of their expressions of apology. Their most preferred formulaic remedies are realised by means of the verbs 'disculpar' and 'perdonar'. Both verbs are interchangeable and mark the distinction between singular and plural and formality and informality. Thus it would appear that the use of intensified expressions of apology is deemed inappropriate in Spanish. In other words, the need to redress the hearers 'negative' face does not seem to be as high in Uruguayan Spanish.

The analysis of the data also shows that the most preferred way of taking responsibility in both languages is the admission of facts. As explained before this is probably due to the nature of the sub-strategy itself. By admitting facts speakers acknowledge their involvement in the offensive act while abstaining from overtly accepting responsibility.

Most importantly the results show there is a general agreement as to the nature and severity of the offences contained in role-play situations in both cultures. This cross-cultural agreement is also evidenced in the frequency of apology strategies employed in both languages and in the assessment of the motivating factors behind the speech act of apology. While it is true that lesser social distance might reduce the need to apologise in both languages, the seriousness of the offence together with social power were found to be the crucial factors behind the use of apologies in English and Spanish.

Whereas significant differences were found in the choice and realisation of apologising strategies cross-culturally i.e. the use of intensified IFIDs and the expression of embarrassment, intercultural differences did not prove to be significant. Having said that, both, British and Uruguayan females employed more apologies than their male counterparts and British informants employed more apologies than Uruguayans. This seems to point out that females in both cultures appear to be slightly more concerned about considerations of 'negative' face and that overall British informants when compared to Uruguayan informants also show more of an orientation towards 'negative' face. In other words, the notion of being unimpeded by others, although present in both cultures seems to be granted more importance in British English than in Uruguayan Spanish.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

6.1. Introductory remarks

In this study we set out to determine the similarities and/or differences in the realisation patterns of requests and apologies in British English and Uruguayan Spanish. One of the premises of the present study was that through the study of the above mentioned speech acts one would be able to identify similarities and/or differences between the conceptualisation of politeness by British and Uruguayan males and females.

Several studies in pragmatics and sociolinguistics, including Brown and Levinson's from which we have taken the theoretical distinction between 'negative' and 'positive' politeness, have indicated that the realisation of speech acts varies according to a number of social variables, namely social distance, social power and the total ranking of the imposition. Despite the fact that these variables have been shown to play an important part in the realisation of speech acts and in social relations in general, very few authors have explicitly defined them. This is probably due to the fact that what is understood as social distance and social power in one particular culture may not be the same in another. Apart from the difficulties posed in providing a comprehensive and exhaustive definition of the variables, some authors (Spencer-Oatey, 1996) have not only criticised the lack of homogeneity with which the terms have been employed but, perhaps more importantly, the weight attributed to the variables, in particular that of social distance, by claiming that considerations of closeness or familiarity between the interlocutors are not a motivating factor in the performance of speech acts.

Following my intuitions on the subject and previous studies in this field, it was decided to include the variable in the design of the data collection instrument and to test its significance both qualitatively and quantitatively in conjunction with social power and total ranking of imposition through means of an open role-play.

Although it could be argued that it is difficult to tell how representative the data obtained by means of the open role-play is when compared to what the informants would say in 'spontaneous' unprovoked conversations, the non-prescriptive open role-play designed for the present study provided us with a controlled context. This type of context allowed us to examine speech act behaviour

in its discourse context and to manipulate the social variables whilst allowing for 'real' and 'natural' interaction.

6.2. Requests

The analysis of the data shows that both British English and Uruguayan Spanish speakers vary the way they frame their requests according to the social distance between the interlocutors. The smaller the social distance between the interlocutors the more direct the request strategy will be. An explanation for this could reside in the fact that in a 'familiar' social (distance) relationship, such as friends, the speaker and the addressee not only know each other but have mutually shared information about each other on the grounds of their own experience of that particular person or on the basis of their experience of people in general in similar situations. Thus when a speaker performs a request directly amongst people s/he is familiar with s/he does so in the belief that his/her request will be granted. At the same time his/her addressee will probably expect the speaker to request in a direct manner since this will translate as an implicit confirmation of the 'closeness' of their relationship. To put it differently, in 'unfamiliar' relationships where there is increased social distance between the interlocutors the underlying logic for the variable seems to stem from the unknown potential for aggression and so (in)directness is used to signal the lack of aggressive intent (Holtgraves, 1998:77). Thus it could be claimed that the potential for aggression in 'familiar' relationships is less of a concern than in 'unfamiliar' relationships where the speakers have less information about each other and hence find it more difficult to 'predict' the reactions of their conversational partners.

Although neither the total ranking of the imposition nor social power were found to be significant in the realisation patterns of requests of all the British and Uruguayan informants regardless of their gender, a closer look at the interactions between same and cross-gender couples in these two languages shows that:

- requests by British and Uruguayan males interacting with members of the same sex and British females interacting with males, are motivated by social power and social distance;
- requests by British males interacting with other males do not appear to be motivated by considerations of social distance but social power, that is to say, the more social power the speaker has in relation to his hearer the more direct his request will be;

- the requestive behaviour of the Uruguayan males interacting with other males, on the other hand, seems to be motivated by social distance and not social power, thus it appears that considerations of 'closeness' are more important than considerations of social power asymmetries between interlocutors;
- although the requestive behaviour of British females in same gender interactions appears to be independent of any considerations of the social variables discussed (here), when it comes to requesting from members of the opposite sex considerations of social distance become predominant.

The speech acts of this study were analysed following Blum-Kulka *et al*'s (1989) coding scheme. Whilst no difficulties arose in applying their apology coding scheme to our data since the (sub) strategies contained therein were also present in the apologies yielded for this study, their coding scheme for requests had to be adapted. The main reason for this adaptation was Blum-Kulka *et al*'s implicit understanding of the existence of a direct relationship between an utterance's syntactic form and its illocutionary force (see Chapter 3, section 3.5.1. and 3.5.2.).

The analysis of the request findings confirms my provisional expectation of distinct levels of directness: there is a general trend in Uruguayan Spanish for higher levels of directness and a general trend in British English for higher levels of indirectness. The Uruguayans employed higher levels of impositives than the British without the fear of losing 'face' thus indicating not only the appropriateness of directness in 'close' social distance relationships but probably the fact that it is the expected behaviour in such situations, whereas the British employed higher levels of non-conventional indirectness, which had a very low incidence in Uruguayan Spanish.

With regard to the requestive behaviour of British and Uruguayan males, as already expressed, the former seem to be motivated by considerations of social power whereas the latter's requestive behaviour appears to be motivated by considerations of social distance. In terms of the levels of directness, as originally expected, Uruguayan males in same gender interactions deemed directness as appropriate across more situations than their British counterparts. The linguistic behaviour of British and Uruguayan females in same-gender interactions, on the other hand, was neither motivated by considerations of social distance nor by considerations of social power. Although the requestive behaviour of the females was not triggered by the same social variables as that of the males, the pattern of directness amongst Uruguayan females repeated itself. In other words, Uruguayan females employed higher levels of directness than their British counterparts, though lower than those employed by Uruguayan males in same-gender interactions. Despite the fact that both Uruguayan

and British males in same-gender interactions employed higher levels of impositives than females, British males as opposed to females showed a slight preference for non-conventional indirectness. Therefore contrary to our original expectation that females in both cultures would recur to more indirect strategies than males (see Introduction), this study has shown that the above statement only holds true for the Uruguayans. Whilst it is true that British males employed higher levels of impositives than females, they also employed higher levels of non-conventional indirectness.

When it comes to the requestive behaviour of males and females in cross-gender interactions, the Uruguayans once again employed higher levels of directness than the British. In terms of the use of non-conventional indirectness the data seem to point out that Uruguayan females employed slightly higher levels of the strategy, though lower than the British, when interacting with males. Hence it would appear that Uruguayan females are more direct when interacting with other females and more indirect when interacting with males.

In terms of the orientation of conventionally indirect requests, the most preferred requestive strategy adopted by the British and Uruguayan informants irrespective of gender distinctions, the results obtained show that although there seems to be a preference in both languages for hearer-orientated requests, British English speakers appear to be more concerned than Uruguayan Spanish speakers with reducing the level of coerciveness in requests. In other words, the British appear to be more concerned than the Uruguayans to avoid naming the hearer as actor and thus also orient their requests to themselves making more of a quarter of them speaker-orientated (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.3.). The Uruguayans, on the other hand, appear to have different levels of tolerance for 'intrusions', or to put it differently, the importance attributed to 'negative politeness' in both cultures appears to be different: the British seem to be more sensitive to considerations of privacy.

When it comes to request modifications the British not only employed a much higher number of external modifiers than the Uruguayans but they also employed a more varied repertoire (see Chapter 4, section 4.4.). The same linguistic behaviour was mirrored by the use of internal modifiers where the Uruguayans show a low incidence of the devices compared to the British (see Chapter 4, section 4.4.2.).

Bearing in mind the directness levels employed by both groups of informants when requesting, the orientation of the requests and the degree to which they were modified it could be argued that Uruguayans are less bothered than the British by considerations of 'negative' politeness. Moreover, it appears that higher levels of indirectness together with heavily modified requests are appropriate in British English

but not in Uruguayan Spanish. Uruguayans appear to show a preference for less tentative requests probably due to the fact that they feel more certain as to where they stand in relation to other Uruguayans.

6.2.1. The conventional indirectness category

The analysis of the request findings also shows, as predicted, that conventional indirectness is the most preferred strategy for requesting in both languages in all gender combinations. As a matter of fact, conventional indirectness is dominant in more than half of the situations in both languages. In Blum-Kulka *et al*'s CCSARP English, German, French, Hebrew and Spanish also showed a marked preference for this strategy over the use of impositives and non-conventional indirectness. The results of other comparative studies (Sifianou, 1992; Vázquez-Orta, 1995; García, 1996) have also shown a high incidence of conventional indirectness over other requestive strategies. The preference for the strategy could be explained by the fact that in uttering a conventionally indirect request the speaker is balancing clarity and non-coerciveness hence ensuring that his/her utterance will have the correct interpretation and the right impact, thus leading to success. Both British and Uruguayan native speakers showed a marked preference for the strategy across all situations, following the pattern of the languages studied by the CCSARP.¹ It is our understanding that apart from the practicalities of choosing the outlined languages for the CCSARP, the authors believed the languages selected were diverse enough in order to show either differences and/or similarities in speech act behaviour. Although certain differences were found, they also showed that 'there are certain pragmatic regularities underlying requestive and apologising behaviour in all the languages examined' (1989:9). One of the 'pragmatic regularities' found was the use of conventional indirectness. Thus in view of the results of this study and taking into account those of previous comparative studies we should ask ourselves whether conventional indirectness means the same in all these languages; if it does then we could argue that the strategy could have an element of universality.

According to the definition of what is understood by a conventionally indirect request one cannot differentiate between 'Can you lend me your notes?', 'Could you lend me your notes?', 'Will you lend me your notes?' or 'Would you lend me your notes?' since they all encode the same level of indirectness because of the interplay

¹ One of the situations of the CCSARP elicited a higher number of impositives than conventional indirectness. This is not surprising when one takes into account the external and internal contextual factors of the situation: a policeman asks a driver to move his/her car.

between conventions of forms and means (see Chapter 3, section 3.5.1.). However, it could be argued (Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1989; Haverkate, 1984) that in uttering 'will' and 'would' the speaker is questioning the hearer's willingness to perform the act and in uttering 'can' and 'could' the hearer's ability. Having said that, it could be counter argued that in uttering the first modals the speaker could be questioning the hearer's wish to do so. Besides, it is often difficult to tell the difference, if any, in the way native speakers use 'Would you post this for me?' and 'Could you post this for me?'. To the non-native ear there appears to be no distinction between them, they seem to be interchangeable. As a matter of fact, the notion of ability in English can bring in the implication of willingness, especially in spoken English: 'Could you do me a favour?' (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973).

Turnbull and Saxton (1997) point out that the use of modal expressions allows speakers to qualify their commitment to what they say. Thus they claim that a speaker uttering 'I must ask you to move your car' expresses his/her total commitment to the necessity of the 'state of affairs'. Whereas a speaker who utters 'Would you move your car?' is not just concerned whether his/her hearer is willing to comply with the request or not but s/he is also committing him/herself to the probability and maybe desirability that the hearer will do so. Likewise an utterance such as 'Can/could you move your car?' not only entails a concern about the hearer's ability to do so but shows the speaker is committed to the possibility of the state of affairs. Thus the authors make a distinction between 'would' and 'can/could'; it would appear that they regard the former as more likely than the latter. As a matter of fact, they claim (p. 148-49) that modals indicating necessity (must, have got to, need to) represent the strongest claim about the states of affairs occurring. Modals such as 'will, would, should' encode an intermediate degree of likelihood, that is to say, they indicate that the state of affairs is likely to occur, the event is probable. Finally, modals like 'can, could, might, may' are the weakest claims about the occurrence of the state of affairs; they show that the circumstances do not prevent the event from occurring, the event is possible.

It is difficult to see how the authors' likelihood scale would differentiate between 'could' and 'would' in the examples given above. Having said that, the difference in modality could be said to mark the speaker's attitude towards the realisation of the request, in other words, how far/close s/he regards his/her addressee complying with it. Although the indirectness level is the same, in terms of the speaker's commitment to the belief in the likelihood of the hearer complying with it, the request may be different.

As a bilingual and bicultural I feel that although request head acts such as: ‘Can you cover for me?’ and its Uruguayan Spanish equivalent ‘¿Me podés cubrir?’ show morphosyntactic and semantic equivalencies and express the same level of indirectness, the assumed expectations of compliance by the speaker are different. As a native speaker of Uruguayan Spanish I feel that in uttering requests like the above, the speaker is almost certain that his/her hearer will comply with the request. But how can requests which show almost complete morphological, syntactic, semantic and ‘pragmatic’² equivalencies mean different things in different cultures?

If conventional indirectness means different things in British English and Uruguayan Spanish, how would we prove it since we are here speculating that in uttering morphosyntactically, semantically and ‘pragmatically’ equivalent requests, like the ones above, speakers are committed to different beliefs as to the likelihood of their addressees’ complying with their requests? In order to prove such a statement we would need to have access to the speaker’s mind since this is a mentalist claim.

Given that this was unachievable, a list of every type of conventionally indirect request head act uttered by the informants during the role-play was compiled. The head acts were written in random order and presented to three native speakers of Uruguayan Spanish³ and three native speakers of British English individually. The informants were individually asked to read the head acts and to tell the investigator how committed they thought a speaker would have to be to the belief that his/her addressee would comply with the request to utter them. In other words, they were asked what they thought the speaker’s expectations of compliance would be when choosing such head acts. Is the speaker certain that the hearer will comply with the request, if so, how certain? Does s/he think that it is probable or possible that the addressee will comply with it, and if so what is the probability and the possibility of the hearer doing so.

It should be noted that the informants were asked to express their views by looking at isolated head acts performed by other people and not themselves, thus they only gave their opinions as native speakers as to what an utterance might represent out of its context. Therefore it could be argued that had they been provided with the full request in its discourse context their answers might have been different. Having said that, we did not want to give the informants any other information which could have

² The utterances are pragmatically equivalent in terms of their level of indirectness.

³ It should be noted that at this stage, the data for the study had already been collected and once in the UK we had no access to Uruguayan native speakers who had not been residing in the UK. The three native speakers mentioned here happened to be on holiday for a few days and kindly accepted to be interviewed.

distracted them from focusing on the head acts. The informants' views indicate that 'equivalent' levels of conventional indirectness in both languages (i.e.: 'Can you type these letters for me?' and '¿Me podés pasar estas cartas a máquina?') and within each language are perceived differently in terms of the speaker's expectations of compliance in English and Spanish, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The conventionally indirect spectrum in decreasing order of likelihood

CERTAINTY	PROBABILITY	POSSIBILITY
▪ ¿No te animás a...?	▪ ¿No (me) podías/podías...?	▪ ¿Podrías ser que me...?
▪ ¿Te animás a...?	▪ ¿(Me) podías/podías...?	▪ ...si es posible que me...
▪ ¿No (me) podés...?	▪ ...si (no) (me) podías/podías...	▪ ...si le sería mucha molestia si yo le pidiera que me...
▪ ¿(Me) podés...?	▪ ¿(No) serías tan amable de...?	
▪ ...si no (me) podés...		
▪ ...si (me) podés...		
▪ ¿Por qué no...?		

	• Can you...?	• Will I be able to...?
	• Maybe we should.../ Why don't we...?	• Would it be possible to...?
	• Do you want to...?	• Would it be alright ...?
	• Is it OK for you to...?	• Would you be able to...?
	• I promise I'll ...if you'll...	• ...if it would be possible...
	• Could you...?	• I don't suppose you'd...
	• ...if you could...	
	• Would you mind...?	

The categorisation done by the British informants, however, shows fewer differences between the conventionally indirect head acts. As expected, there were no British informants who regarded the compliance of a conventionally indirect request head act as certain. All of them were regarded as either probable and/or possible. As a matter of fact, it was difficult for the informants to distinguish clearly between probability and possibility. Contrary to Turnbull and Saxton's (1997) theoretical frame, modals such as 'can' and 'could' were seen as encoding an intermediate degree

of likelihood whereas 'will' and 'would' were interpreted as encoding the weakest claims about the occurrence of the state of affairs. The Uruguayans, on the other hand, clearly distinguished between the three degrees of likelihood. Their answers show that equivalent head acts in English and Spanish are not seen equally in terms of the addressee's likelihood of compliance.

Although there are difficulties in accepting report behaviour data, like the above, as opposed to actual data and further difficulties in that the report behaviour data is based on head acts only, the aim here was to confirm and/or disconfirm intuitions. Moreover, the report behaviour of six informants cannot be taken as crucial evidence in favour or against a theoretical category like conventional indirectness. According to these two groups of informants 'equivalent' head acts at the level of morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics in British English and Uruguayan Spanish are not interpreted in the same way. This is not surprising when one thinks of the use of the imperative in Spanish in English. Whereas in Spanish the imperative can be used to express wishes, requests and orders, in English it appears to be appropriate only for giving orders, probably due to different expectations of compliance.⁴

Could it be that conventional indirectness itself is a bit of an 'umbrella' term or have we in fact identified a lacuna resulting from linguistic ethnocentrism? Linguacentrism in our view, is to a certain extent unavoidable due to the fact that the English language appears to have worked as the 'language-parameter' against which all other languages have been compared. Furthermore, as human beings whenever we identify phenomena which resemble our own or that which is familiar to us, we tend to apply the same scheme of cultural interpretation which helped us understand the 'same' or shall we say similar phenomena in our own culture. Thus we assume that if a speaker S proceeds as indicated by a specific cultural recipe X, in this case conventional indirectness, S cannot possibly regard the compliance of his/her request by an addressee A as certain, since X by definition encodes uncertainty. As pointed out by Schuetz (1970):

Thus it is a function of the cultural pattern to eliminate troublesome inquiries by offering ready-made directions for use, to replace truth hard to obtain by comfortable truisms, and to substitute the self-explanatory for the questionable. (p. 81)

⁴ It should be noted that the imperative is used in English for transactional requests mainly, see Chapter 2.

Interesting as the results presented above may be, they cannot be taken as substantial evidence for what goes on in the mind of the speaker when requesting. They can, however, be taken as an indication that some of the theoretical conceptions employed in the field need to be reconsidered. It should be stressed that it is only by putting theoretical conceptions and methodological categories to work that theories are forced to evolve by being confronted with unforeseen phenomena (Sbisà, 1995).

6.3. Apologies

With reference to the significance of the social variables in the performance of apologies, the analysis of the data shows that although social distance is taken into account when apologising, the main motivation behind this speech act in British English and Uruguayan Spanish is the severity of the offence in conjunction with considerations of social power. The interaction between social power and severity of offence indicates that the less social power the speaker has in relation to his/her addressee and the more severe the offence the more likely s/he is to apologise. Likewise, if the speaker has more social power than the hearer and the offence is severe s/he is less likely to apologise. The results also show that when the interlocutors have equal social power the severity of offence gains more importance in that it is only in symmetrical social power relationships that the difference in the frequency of apologies between severe and non-severe offences almost doubles. A closer look at the apologising behaviour of both groups of informants in same and cross-gender interactions indicates that their linguistic behaviour is independent of any considerations of the social variables discussed here.

The analysis of the apology findings also confirms our provisional expectations in that the British employ more apologies than the Uruguayans. Moreover, females in both cultures are more apologetic than males (see Introduction). The results obtained for the apologies are in line with those found by Blum-Kulka *et al* in that IFID and 'expression of responsibility' emerge to varying degrees across all the situations of the role-play in both languages. In other words, the above strategies are situation independent as opposed to the rest of the apologising strategies which are situation dependent.

The realisation of IFIDs in British English and Uruguayan Spanish indicates that although the strategy can be realised in a number of ways in both languages, the British show a marked preference for 'I'm sorry' in its intensified form. This lexical phrase can be intensified by means of adverbs such as 'really', 'so', 'terribly',

'awfully' and 'dreadfully'. The unvarying performance of intensified IFIDs, their frequency of occurrence in everyday interactions and their lack of 'substantial' semantic content in that they function as a means of phatic communion have led some scholars (Ferguson, 1981) to regard the sub-strategy as an 'unmarked routine'. The Uruguayans, on the other hand, show a marked preference for non-intensification in their expressions of apology. Although Spanish offers a range of apologising verbs such as 'perdonar', 'disculpar', 'lamentar', and the like, the most preferred formulaic remedies by Uruguayans are 'perdonar' and 'disculpar' in their non-intensified form. Thus it appears that while intensified expressions of apology are not only appropriate but probably expected in British English, in Uruguayan Spanish they are regarded as inappropriate. When it comes to the other situation independent strategy, taking responsibility, admitting facts is the most preferred apology sub-strategy by speakers of both languages.

With respect to other apologising strategies: explanation, offer of repair/restitution and promise of forbearance, their use varies not only situationally but cross-culturally. The purpose of offering an explanation rests on the degree to which the offender can transfer (some of) the responsibility of the offence to another source hence the fact that the strategy is situation dependent. The results obtained show that the British appear to give more explanations than the Uruguayans. The second situation-dependent semantic formula, offer of restitution, is only deemed appropriate in both cultures when actual damage has occurred. The offender offers to his/her addressee to repair the damage, to retribute him/her or to compensate him/her for the offence. As with the case of explanations, the British employed slightly higher levels of the strategy in relation to the Uruguayans. Finally, promise of forbearance is employed in British English and Uruguayan Spanish whenever the offender's sense of guilt is strong enough for him/her to promise the offence will not happen again. This strategy had a low incidence in both languages.

As with the case of requests it seems that speakers of Uruguayan Spanish do not consider 'negative' politeness as weighty as the British who show more of a need to redress the addressee's 'negative' face. As will be recalled, 'negative' and 'positive' face are understood as 'wants dualism' (see Chapter 1, section 1.8.3.), the desire for independence and interdependence, respectively. A similar (socio)linguistic pattern is found in the behaviour of females, both in British English and Uruguayan Spanish. Females in both cultures seem to be more concerned than their male counterparts about respecting the addressee's need for distance and individuation, considerations of 'negative' face. This is illustrated by the lower use of impositives in

requests when compared to that of the males and their higher frequency of apologies. Therefore both 'negative' and 'positive' politeness, understood as the need for dissociation and association, respectively could be said to be present in both cultures with the British showing a tendency to pursue 'negative' politeness more actively than the Uruguayans. This pattern is also evidenced in the linguistic behaviour of females, both British and Uruguayan when compared to males.

It should be borne in mind that the results presented here are based on the collection of quasi-naturalistic data by means of an open role-play. Although the interaction between the role-play informants is 'real' and 'natural' in the context of the role-play, it is difficult to tell how representative the interactions are of what the informants would say in 'unprovoked' conversation. Having said that, the data presented here could be said to be representative of the student population at university level both in Great Britain and Uruguay.

6.4. Implications for further research

The results obtained in this study demonstrate that contrary to what some scholars have claimed, social distance and social power do play an important role in the performance of requests and apologies, respectively. As a matter of fact, social distance appears to be the motivating factor behind the use of request strategies and an interaction between social power and severity of offence seems to account for the frequency of apologising strategies. In view of the aforesaid the first question that comes to mind is: why would certain social variables explain the performance of certain speech acts and not others? Is it because of the nature of the speech acts themselves? If so, would other speech acts show a different interaction between the social variables discussed here?

Requests, as will be recalled, fall into the group of what Searle (1979) has called directives in that they direct the addressee to perform or not to perform an act. This speech act is considered after Brown and Levinson (1978) as a face-threatening act since it implies an intrusion on the addressee's territory thus threatening his/her 'negative' face'. But how do social actors regard what is 'intrusive' or 'non-intrusive'? How do they determine the 'intrusiveness' of their actions? This can only be assessed by the reciprocal social knowledge they have about each other. In other words, in order to guarantee that their requests will be complied with they would need to know how far their addressees are prepared to co-operate with them. It could be argued from personal experience and informal observations of social relations that we

expect people with whom we are closer in terms of social distance to be more cooperative than those with whom we are distant; probably due to the fact that they would not interpret our requests as imposing.

Apologies fall into the group of Searle's expressives. By means of expressive speech acts the speaker expresses his/her attitudes and feelings about something, in this case an offence. In apologising the speaker provides support for the hearer who was malaffected by a violation of a social rule. Therefore apologies occur post-event and could be claimed to provide some kind of compensatory action for the hearer. The overriding factor in this compensatory action appears to be the severity of the offence. The more serious the offence the more speakers apologise to each other. The results also show that the seriousness of the offence interacts with considerations of social power and not social distance.

The results of this study prove that both social power and social distance are determining factors in the realisation of speech acts in British English and Uruguayan Spanish. Whilst social distance appears to be the deciding factor behind requestive behaviour, an interaction between severity of offence and social power seems to motivate the need to apologise. In other words, it would appear that different interactions of the social variables presented affect the performance of different speech acts. However, this is only hypothetical since further research into different speech acts is needed in order to substantiate such claim. As a matter of fact what is needed is a study of the speech acts contained in Searle's categories; a study of assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations in order to discover what combination of social variables, if any, is behind a particular speech act behaviour and how that particular behaviour compares with that of other speech acts within the same category across different languages. Further research into the realisation of speech acts belonging to the above categories would probably be very revealing not only in terms of realisation of the acts themselves and how they compare with other speech acts in other languages but also demonstrate which combination, if any, of social variables are at work and what type of value(s) orientation, 'positive' and 'negative' politeness, they reflect. Moreover, it would be very interesting to put some of the theoretical conceptions employed in the field -conventional indirectness- to the test in order to find out if this conventionally defined and codified request strategy interpreted to be generally valid means the same across different cultures. Furthermore, research into the expression of non-verbal politeness would also probably prove to be revealing since body contact such as kissing, embracing, hand-shaking, even the physical distance between interlocutors are very much associated

with considerations of politeness and practised in different ways in different cultures. It has been claimed (Hall, 1976; Morain, 1986 amongst others) that people from high-contact cultures such as Arabs and Latin Americans are more comfortable when interacting at shorter distances than people from low-contact cultures such as, North Europeans and Americans. Although the reasons for this apparent difference have not yet been elucidated it would be interesting to discover if there is a relationship between physical distance and the notion of 'association' or 'interdependence' and 'dissociation' or 'independence'. For the present, however, we have shown through the study of the realisation patterns of requests and apologies in British English and Uruguayan Spanish that both 'negative' and 'positive' politeness, interpreted as the need for independence and interdependence, respectively, exist to different degrees in both cultures, with the British showing a greater need to pursue 'negative' politeness strategies more actively than the Uruguayans.

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APPENDIX I
OPEN ROLE-PLAY

INSTRUCTIONS

You will be asked to read some brief situations in which there are two participants. You will role play one of the participants and another person will role play the other. You both know who you are and where you are; however, one of you does not know what the other one wants. The interaction will be recorded. You will have to act as you would in an actual situation: you will have to act the situation and interact with the other person, thus expect there could be some social chat. Do not think too much try to be as spontaneous as possible. Please indicate when you've finished reading the situation.

R1

Informant A:

You are a university student. You need to get a book from the library to finish your assignment on time. The library is closed and there is only one person you know has the book you need, one of your lecturers. On the way to his/her office you meet him/her on the hallway. What do you say?

Informant B:

You are a university lecturer. While leaving your office you meet one of your students on the hallway. Respond to him/her.

A1

Informant A:

You are a university student. You have borrowed a book from your lecturer which you promise to return today. When meeting your lecturer on the hallway you realise that you forgot to bring it along. What do you say him/her?

Informant B:

You are a university lecturer. You have lent a book to one of your students, s/he promised to give it back to you today. You meet the student on the hallway. What do you say to him/her?

R2

Informant A:

You need to run a few errands down town, you think they'll take you an hour. You go to your manager/ess' office at work with whom you get on well and ask him/her to cover for you. What do you say?

Informant B:

You are the manager/ess of a company. You're in your office. One of the employees with whom you get on well wants to talk to you.

A2

Informant A:

After work you and your manager/ess from work, with whom you get on well, arranged to meet in a self-service coffee shop near work to have a coffee together. You get yourself a coffee while waiting for him/her to arrive. As soon as you get your coffee and are about to sit down your manager/ess arrives. What do you say to him/her?

You're now both having a coffee and chatting away. In the middle of the conversation you accidentally spill coffee on his/her trousers. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You're the manager of a company. You've arranged to meet one of the employees, with whom you get on well, after work in a self-service coffee shop near work to have a coffee together. When you arrive to the self-service coffee shop, the employee is about to sit down and drink his/her coffee. What do you say to him/her?

You're now both having a coffee and chatting away.

R3

Informant A:

You have been an employee of a company for some time now. One of your duties is to answer the telephone. You go to the desk of a new trainee and ask him/her to answer the telephone while you pop out for a few minutes to get some things. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You are a new trainee at a company. One of the employees who is in charge of answering the telephone comes to your desk and talks to you. Respond to him/her.

A3

Informant A:

You have been an employee of a company for some time now. One of your duties is to answer the telephone. You asked a new trainee to answer the telephone for you for a few minutes while you popped out to get some things. You come back an hour and a half later. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You are a new trainee at a company. One of the employees who is in charge of answering the telephone asked you to cover for him/her for a few minutes while s/he popped out to get some things. S/he comes back an hour and a half later. What do you say to him/her?

R4

Informant A:

You are in your car with a friend. You are driving. You both need to get to X street. Your friend was given a map with directions which s/he gave to you just before leaving the house. You are now lost. What do you say to your to him/her?

You suddenly see a pedestrian at the end of the road. You ask your friend to ask the pedestrian for directions. What do you say to your friend?

Informant B:

You are in a car with a friend. S/he is driving. You both need to get to X street. You were given a map with directions which you gave to your friend just before leaving the house. Your friend talks to you. Respond to him/her.

A4

Informant A:

After you had asked your friend to ask the pedestrian for directions of how to get to X street you realise there was no need since you had the map in your pocket. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

After you had asked the pedestrian for directions of how to get to X street, your friend talks to you. Respond to him/her.

R5

Informant A:

You ask a neighbour you do not know very well to help you move some things out of your flat with his/her car since you haven't got a car and you haven't got anyone else to ask since everyone you know appears to be on holiday and you have no money either to hire someone who can help or to arrange transport. You see your neighbour on the street. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You're on the street. A neighbour you do not know very well comes to talk to you. Respond to him/her.

A5

Informant A:

Your neighbour has agreed to help you move some things out of your flat with his/her car. Once in his/her car you notice how clean and spotless the car is. While turning round a bend a bottle of oil which was amongst your belongings falls onto the back seat and its contents are spilt all over the seat. You both notice it. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You have agreed to help your neighbour move some things out of his/her flat in your car. While turning round a bend a bottle of oil which was amongst your neighbour's

belongings falls on to the back seat and its contents are spilt all over your car's back seat. You both notice it. What do you say to him/her?

R6

Informant A:

Your car has just broken down and you need to collect someone from the airport urgently and there is no other means of getting there other than by car. You go to your manager/ess' office at work, with whom you get on well, and ask him/her for his/her car. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You're the manager/ess of a company. An employee with whom you get on well comes to your office and talks to you. Respond to him/her.

A6

Informant A:

Your manager/ess with whom you get on well agreed to lend you his/her car for you to collect someone from the airport urgently. On the way back from the airport you had a small road accident which results in a broken headlight and a bent bumper. You go to your manager/ess' office to return the keys. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You are the manager/ess of a company. You lent your car to an employee, with whom you get on well, for him/her to collect someone urgently from the airport. S/he comes to your office and talks to you. Respond to him/her.

R7

Informant A:

You have been put in charge of a very important project at work. Your colleague has already booked a ticket to go on holiday. You realise you will be needing all members of staff to finish the project on time and thus you ask him/her to stay. You ask him/her to come to your office to break the news. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You have booked a ticket to go on holiday. One of your colleagues has been put in charge of a very important project at work, s/he calls you into his/her office to talk to you. Respond to him/her.

R8

Informant A:

You have been put in charge of a project at work. You go to the desk of a colleague of yours and ask him/her to type a few letters for you. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

Your colleague has been put in charge of a project at work. S/he comes to your desk and talks to you. Respond to him/her.

A8

Informant A:

You have been put in charge of a project at work. You asked a colleague of yours to type a few letters for you. Your colleague comes to your office with the typed letters. When s/he gives them to you, you realise you gave him/her the wrong wording. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

Your colleague has been put in charge of a project at work. S/he asked you to type a few letters for him. You go to his/her office to give him/her the typed letters. What do you say to him/her?

R9

Informant A:

A friend of yours has a house in the countryside. You want to go on holiday somewhere relaxing for a week and you know nobody is going to be in the house for at least two weeks. You meet your friend in a pub and ask him/her to stay in his/her country house for a week. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You have a house in the countryside which is not going to be used for at least two weeks. You meet a friend of yours in a pub. What do you say to him/her?

A9

Informant A:

A friend of yours has lent you his/her house in the country side for a week for you to have a holiday. During your stay you dropped black ink on a very expensive carpet and you could not get rid of it. As arranged you go to his/her house to return the keys of the country house. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You lent your country house to a friend of yours for a week for him/her to go on holiday. Your friend, as arranged, comes to your house to return the keys of the country house. What do you say to him/her?

R10

Informant A:

You are on a bus with a child. There are plenty of seats on the bus but there aren't any for two people together. You ask a passenger who is sitting on his/her own on a two seater to change seats with you so that you can sit next to the child. What do you say to him/her?

A passenger has agreed to change seats with you so that you can be next to a child on the bus. While changing seats you accidentally step on the passengers toe. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You are on the bus. You're sitting on your own on a seat for two people. There are plenty of seats on the bus but there aren't any for two people together. A passenger with a child talks to you. Respond to him/her.

You have agreed to change seats on a bus so that a passenger with a child can sit next to each other. You stand up in order to change seats.

R11

Informant A:

You have received a lot of house bills which are due for payment. You haven't got any money. You can't ask your friends for money since you've got a reputation of never paying back. The company where you work won't give you a cash advance since the last time you asked for one they said that would be the last time. You desperately need to pay these bills or otherwise you won't have any electricity, gas or telephone. You go to the office of the recently appointed manager/ess and ask him/her for the money. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You have been recently appointed manager/ess of a company. One of the employees comes to your office to talk to you. Respond to him/her.

A11

Informant A:

The recently appointed manager/ess at work has lent you some money for you to pay some bills. You promised him/her you would return the money in one week. It has now been three weeks since s/he lent you the money. You go to his/her office to return the money. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You have been recently appointed as manager/ess of a company. You lent some money to one of the employees. S/he promised to return it in one week's time. It's now been three weeks since you lent him/her the money. S/he comes to your office. What do you say to him/her?

R12

Informant A:

You've been working for a company for some time now. One of the new trainees has brought his/her brand new laptop to work. You ask him/her to use it for a while. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You're a new trainee in a company. You've taken your brand new laptop to work. One of the employees, who has been working for the company for some time now, talks to you. Respond to him/her.

A12

Informant A:

The new trainee has lent you his/her brand new laptop for you to use it for a while. Accidentally while trying to answer the phone you drop it on the floor and smash part of the screen. What do you say to him/her?

Informant B:

You're a new trainee in a company. You have lent your brand new laptop to one of the employees. S/he talks to you. Respond to him/her.

Could you please fill in the blanks or put a tick (✓) next to the correct answer.
PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY.

Age: 18-25 26-40 41-60

Sex: F M

Place of birth: _____

Place of residence: _____

(If you have resided in different places, please write the name of the place in which you have resided for the longest period of time)

How many years have you lived there?

Up to 2 3-10 Over 10

Occupation/Profession: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX II
ROLE-PLAY ABIERTO

INSTRUCCIONES

Tendrás que leer unas breves situaciones en las cuales participarán dos personas. Tú harás el papel de uno de ellos y la otra persona hará el papel del otro. Ambos participantes saben quiénes son y dónde están; sin embargo, sólo uno de ustedes sabe lo que le otro desea. La interacción será grabada. Tendrás que actuar con la mayor naturalidad posible e interactuar con la otra persona por lo cual lo más probable haya un poco de charla social. No pienses mucho y tratá de ser lo más espontáneo/a posible. Por favor avisá cuando termines de leer la situación.

R1

Informante A:

Sos un/a estudiante universitario/a. Necesitaa un libro de la biblioteca para terminar un trabajo en tiempo. La biblioteca está cerrada y sólo sabes de una persona que tiene el libro que necesitas: uno de tus profesores universitarios. Camino a la sala de profesores te encontrás con el/la profesor/a que tiene el libro que necesitás en el pasillo. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos un/a profesor/a universitario/a. Al salir de tu oficina te encontrás con uno de tus alumnos/as en el pasillo. El/la alumno/a te habla. Respondele

D1

Informante A:

Sos un/a estudiante universitario/a. Un/a profesor/a universitario/a te prestó un libro. Le prometiste devolvérselo hoy. Te encontrás con el/la profesor/a en el pasillo y te das cuenta que te olvidaste de traer el libro. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos un/a profesor/a universitario/a. Le prestaste un libro a un/a alumno/a. El/la alumno/a prometió devolvértelo hoy. Te encontrás con el/la alumno/a en el pasillo. ¿Qué le decís?

R2

Informante A:

Sos empleado/a de una compañía hace ya un tiempo. Necesitás ir al centro a hacer unos mandados que te llevarán una hora. Vas a la oficina del/la gerente, con quien te llevás bien, y le pedís que te cubra mientras estás en el centro. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos el/la gerente de una compañía. Estás en tu oficina. Un/a empleado/a, con quien te llevás bien, viene a hablar contigo. Respondele

D2

Informante A:

Sos empleado/a de una compañía hace ya un tiempo. Arreglaste de encontrarte después del trabajo con el/la gerente, con quien te llevás bien, en un café auto-service. Llegás al café antes que el/la gerente y te pedís un café. Estás a punto de tomar el café cuando llega el/la gerente. ¿Qué le decís?

Ahora están los/las dos tomando un café y charlando. En el medio de la conversación accidentalmente se te cae el café encima de los pantalones del/la gerente. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos gerente de una compañía. Arreglaste de encontrarte después del trabajo con un/a empleado/a, con quien te llevás bien, en un café auto-service. Cuando llegás el/la empleado/a está por sentarse a tomar un café. ¿Qué le decís?

Ahora están los/las dos tomando un café y charlando.

R3

Informante A:

Sos empleado/a de una compañía para la cual trabajás hace ya bastante tiempo. Entre tus tareas tenés que atender el teléfono. Te acercás al escritorio de un/a aprendiz y le pedís que atienda el teléfono mientras salís unos minutos a buscar unas cosas. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos un/a nuevo/a aprendiz en una compañía. Uno/a de los/las empleados/as que está a cargo de atender el teléfono se acerca a tu escritorio y te habla. Respondele.

D3

Informante A:

Sos empleado/a de una compañía para la cual trabajas hace ya bastante tiempo. Entre tus tareas tenés que atender el teléfono. Le pediste a un/a aprendiz que atendiera el teléfono mientras salías unos minutos a buscar unas cosas. Volvés a la oficina una hora y media más tarde. ¿Qué le decís al/ a la aprendiz?

Informante B:

Sos un/a nuevo/a aprendiz en una compañía. Uno/a de los/las empleados/as que está a cargo de atender el teléfono, te pidió que lo atendieras mientras el/ella salía unos minutos a buscar unas cosas. El/la empleado/a vuelve a la oficina una hora y media más tarde. ¿Qué le decís?

R4

Informante A:

Estás en tu coche con uno/a amigo/a. Vos estás manejando. Los/as dos necesitan ir a la calle X. A tu amigo/a le fue dado un mapa con instrucciones para llegar a la calle X y él/ella te lo entregó antes de salir. Ahora están los/las dos perdidos/as. ¿Qué le decís?

De pronto ves a un peatón al final de la calle y le pedís a tu amigo/a que le pregunte al peatón cómo llegar a la calle X. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Estás en el coche de tu amigo/a. Tu amigo/a está manejando. Los/as dos necesitan ir a la calle X. A vos te fue entregado un mapa con instrucciones de cómo llegar a la calle X. Antes de salir se lo diste a tu amigo/a. Tu amigo/a te habla. Respondele.

D4

Informante A:

Luego de haberle pedido a tu amigo/a que le pregunte a un peatón cómo llegar a la calle X, te das cuenta que no hubiese sido necesario ya que tenías el mapa en uno de tus bolsillos. ¿Qué le decís a tu amigo/a?

Informante B:

Luego de haberle preguntado a un peatón cómo llegar a la calle X, tu amigo/a te habla. Respondele.

R5

Informante A:

Le pedís a un/a vecino/a, a quien no conoces muy bien, que te ayude a trasladar algunas cosas de tu departamento con su coche. Vos no tenés coche y tampoco tenés a quién pedirle que te ayude dado que toda la gente que conoces está de vacaciones y tampoco tenés dinero ni para alquilar un coche ni para contratar un servicio de transporte. Te encontrás con tu vecino/a en la calle. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Estás parado/a en la calle. Se acerca un/a vecino/a que no conoces muy bien y te habla. Respondele.

D5

Informante A:

Tu vecino/a acordó ayudarte a trasladar algunas cosas de tu departamento en su coche. Una vez adentro del coche, notás que el mismo está impecable. Al dar la vuelta en una esquina, una botella de aceite, que estaba en el asiento de atrás junto con otras de tus pertenencias se cae y el contenido de la misma es volcado sobre el asiento de atrás. Los/las dos se dan cuenta. ¿Qué le decís a tu vecino/a?

Informante B:

Acordaste ayudar a un/a vecino/a a trasladar algunas cosas de su departamento en tu coche. Ahora están los/as dos en tu coche y vos estás manejando. Al dar vuelta en una esquina, una botella de aceite, que estaba en el asiento de atrás junto con otras

pertenencias de tu vecino/a se cae y el contenido de la misma es volcado sobre el asiento de atrás. Los/as dos se dan cuenta. ¿Qué le decís a tu vecino/a?

R6

Informante A:

Se te acaba de romper el coche y necesitás ir a buscar a alguien al aeropuerto con urgencia. No hay otra forma de llegar al aeropuerto más que en coche. Vas a la oficina de su gerente, con quien te llevás bien, y le pedís prestado el coche. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos el/la gerente de una compañía. Un/a empleado/a, con quien te llevás bien, viene a tu oficina a hablarte. Respondele.

D6

Informante A:

El/la gerente te prestó su coche para que vayas a buscar a alguien al aeropuerto con urgencia. En el camino de regreso tuviste un accidente en el cual se rompieron los faroles y el paragolpes se abolló. Regresás a la oficina y le devolvés las llaves del coche al/a la gerente. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos el/la gerente de una compañía. Le prestaste el coche a un/a empleado/a para que vaya a buscar a alguien al aeropuerto con urgencia. El/la empleado/a viene a tu oficina a hablarte. Respondele.

R7

Informante A:

Te han puesto a cargo de un proyecto muy importante en tu trabajo. Un/a colega del trabajo reservó un pasaje para irse de vacaciones. Vos te das cuentas que vas a necesitar de todo el personal para terminar el proyecto a tiempo. Llamás al/a la colega que está por irse de vacaciones a tu oficina y le pedís que se quede. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Reservaste un pasaje para irte de vacaciones. Un/a colega del trabajo que ha sido puesto/a a cargo de un proyecto muy importante te llama a su oficina para hablar contigo. Respondele.

R8

Informante A:

Te han puesto a cargo de un proyecto en el trabajo. Te acercás al escritorio de un/a colega y le pedís que le escriba unas cartas a máquina. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

A un/a colega del trabajo lo/a han puesto a cargo de un proyecto. El/ella se acerca a tu escritorio y te habla. Respondele.

D8

Informante A:

Te han puesto a cargo de un proyecto en el trabajo. Le pediste a un/a colega que te escribiera unas cartas a máquina. El/la colega viene a tu oficina a entregarte las cartas. Cuando te las entrega te das cuenta que le diste la redacción equivocada. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Un/a colega del trabajo que ha sido puesto/a a cargo de un proyecto te pidió que le escribieras unas cartas a máquina. Vas a a la oficina de tu colega a entregarle las cartas. ¿Qué le decís?

R9

Informante A:

Un/a amigo/a tuyo/a tiene una casa en el interior. Vos querés irte de vacaciones a un lugar tranquilo donde puedas descansar y sabés que no habrá nadie en la casa de tu amigo/a al menos por dos semanas. Te encontrás con tu amigo/a en un bar y le pedís para quedarte en su casa por una semana. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Tenés una casa en el interior en la que no habrá nadie por dos semanas. Te encontrás con un/a amigo/a en un bar. ¿Qué le decís?

D9

Informante A:

Tu amigo/a te prestó su casa en el interior para que tomes unas vacaciones. Durante tu estadía se te cayó tinta negra encima de una alfombra muy cara y no pudiste sacar la mancha. Como fuese acordado, vas a la casa de tu amigo/a para devolverle las llaves. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Le prestaste tu casa en el interior a un amigo/a para que se vaya de vacaciones. Como fuese acordado, tu amigo/a viene a tu casa a devolverte las llaves. ¿Qué le decís?

R10

Informante A:

Estás en un ómnibus con un niño. Hay suficientes asientos disponibles pero no queda ninguno para que dos personas se sienten juntas. Le pedís a un/a pasajero/a que está sentado/a solo/a en un asiento para dos que te cambie el asiento, así te podés sentar junto al niño. ¿Qué le decís?

El/la pasajero/a acordó cambiarse de asiento. Mientras el/la pasajero/a se levanta para cambiar asientos, accidentalmente le pisás el pie. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Estás en un omnibús. Estás sentado/a solo/a, en un asiento para dos personas. Hay muchos asientos disponibles pero no queda ninguno para que se sienten dos personas juntas. Se acerca un/a pasajero/a con un niño y te habla. Respondele.

Te parás para cambiarte de asiento.

R11

Informante A:

Recibiste una cantidad de cuentas de su casa que deberás pagar con urgencia ya que de lo contrario te quedarás sin agua, sin gas y sin teléfono. No tenés dinero y no le podés pedir a ninguno de tus amigos/as ya que tenés fama de mal pagador/a. La compañía donde trabajás no te va a dar un adelanto de sueldo dado que la última vez que pediste un adelanto te dijeron que era la última vez que te adelantaban el sueldo. Vas a la oficina del/la nuevo/a gerente y le pedís que te preste dinero. ¿Qué le decís/

Informante B:

Sos el/la nuevo/a gerente de una compañía. Uno/a de los/as empleados/as viene a tu oficina con el fin de hablarte. Respondele.

D11

Informante A:

El/la nuevo/a gerente te prestó dinero para que puedas pagar las cuentas. Le prometiste devolverle el préstamo en una semana. Han pasado tres semanas desde que el/la gerente te prestó el dinero. Vas a la oficina del/la gerente a devolvérselo. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos el/la nuevo/a gerente de una compañía. Le prestaste dinero a un/a empleado/a para que pague sus cuentas. El/la empleado/a prometió devolvértelo en una semana. Han pasado tres semanas. El/la empleado/a viene a tu oficina. ¿Qué le decís?

R12

Informante A:

Sos empleado/a de una compañía. Ya hace un tiempo que trabajás para la misma. Uno/a de los/as nuevos/as aprendices trajo al trabajo su nueva computadora portátil. Le pedís que te la preste un rato. ¿Qué le decís?

Informante B:

Sos un/a nuevo/a aprendiz en una compañía. Trajiste a la oficina tu nueva computadora portátil. Uno/a de los/las empleados/as que trabaja para la compañía hace ya un tiempo se acerca a hablarte. Respondele.

D12

Informante A:

El/la nuevo/a aprendiz te prestó su nueva computadora portátil por un rato. Al intentar atender el teléfono, accidentalmente se te cayó la computadora al piso y se rompió la pantalla de la misma. ¿Qué le decís al/ a la aprendiz?

Informante B:

Sos un/a nuevo/a aprendiz en una compañía. Le prestaste tu nueva computadora portátil a uno/a de los/as empleados/as de la compañía por un rato. El/la empleado/a se acerca a hablarte. Respondele.

Le agradecería completase el siguiente cuestionario. Llene los espacios o ponga un tick (✓) al lado de la respuesta correcta.

Edad: 18-25 26-40 41-60

Sexo: Femenino Masculino

Lugar de nacimiento: _____

Lugar donde reside: _____

(De haber residido en distintos lugares, escriba el lugar donde residió por más tiempo)

¿Hace cuántos años vive allí?

Hasta 2 3-10 Más de 10

Ocupación: _____

GRACIAS POR TU COOPERACION

APPENDIX III

BOOKLET

I) Would you please read the situations in this booklet and the questions attached and tick (✓) the box next to the answer you think is right.

- **Each situation has a number (1.1., 1.2, 2.1., 2.2., etc.) and there is a box next to each question where you have to tick (✓) the right answer**
- **Next to each situation in the booklet you will find the question numbers that need to be answered per situation in brackets**
- **I would very much appreciate it if you could fill in the form at the end of this booklet.**

Situation 1.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

A university student needs to get a book from the library to finish his/her assignment on time. The library is closed and there is only one person s/he knows has the book s/he needs, one of his/her lecturers. On the way to his/her lecturer's office the student meets the lecturer on the hallway and asks him/her for the book.

Situation 1.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

A university lecturer has lent his/her book to a student. The student promised to return it today. The student meets the lecturer on the hallway and realises that s/he forgot to bring it along. The student speaks to the lecturer.

Situation 2.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

An employee who has been working in a company for some time now asks his/her manager/ess at work with whom s/he gets on well to cover for him/her for an hour while s/he runs a few errands down town.

Situation 2.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

After work an employee and his/her manager/ess from work, with whom s/he gets on well, arranged to meet in a self-service coffee shop near work to have a coffee together. The employee arrives first and gets him/herself a coffee while waiting for his/her manager/ess. As soon as s/he is about to sit down and drink his/her coffee the manager/ess arrives. They start chatting away. In the middle of the conversation the employee accidentally spills coffee on the manager/ess' trousers. The employee speaks to his/her manager/ess.

Situation 3.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

An employee who has been working for a company for some time now and who has as one of his/her duties to answer the phone asks a new trainee to answer the phone while s/he pops out for a few minutes to get some things.

Situation 3.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

An employee who has been working for a company for some time now and who has as one of his/her duties to answer the phone asked a new trainee to answer the phone while s/he pops out for a few minutes to get some things. S/he comes back an hour and a half later. The employee speaks to the new trainee.

Situation 4.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

Two friends are in a car, one is the driver and the other one the passenger. They both need to get to X street. The passenger was given a map with directions which s/he gave to the driver just before leaving the house. They are now lost and the driver hasn't got the map the passenger gave him/her. Suddenly the driver sees a pedestrian at the end of the road and asks the passenger to ask him/her for directions.

Situation 4.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

Two friends are in a car, one is the driver and the other one the passenger. They both need to get to X street. The passenger was given a map with directions which s/he gave to the driver just before leaving the house. They are now lost and the driver hasn't got the map the passenger gave him/her. Suddenly the driver sees a pedestrian and asks the passenger to ask him/her for directions. After the passenger had asked the pedestrian for directions the driver realises that there was no need since the map was in one of his/her pockets. The driver speaks to the passenger.

Situation 5.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

A neighbour (A) asks another neighbour (B) whom s/he doesn't know very well to help him/her move out some things of his/her flat with B's car since A hasn't got a car and s/he hasn't got anyone else to ask since everyone A knows appears to be on holiday and A has no money either to hire someone who can help or to arrange transport. A sees B on the street and talks to him/her.

Situation 5.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

Neighbour B has agreed to help neighbour A to move some things out of A's flat. Once in B's car, A notices how clean and spotless B's car is. While turning round a bend a bottle of oil which was amongst A's belongings falls onto the back seat and its contents are spilt all over the seat. They both notice it. A talks to B.

Situation 6.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

A's car has just broken down and s/he needs to collect someone from the airport urgently and there is no other means of getting there other than by car. A asks his/her manager/ess at work, with whom s/he gets on well for his/her car.

Situation 6.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

A's manager/ess has agreed to lend A his/her car to collect someone from the airport urgently. On the way back from the airport A had a small road accident which results in broken headlight and a bent bumper. A goes to his/her manager/ess' office to return the keys and talks to him/her.

Situation 7 (answer all questions: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

A has been put in charge of a very important project at work. His/her colleague has already booked a ticket to go on holiday. A realises s/he will be needing all members of staff to finish the project on time and thus A asks his/her colleague to come to his/her office to break the news.

Situation 8.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

A has been in charge of a project at work. S/he asks a colleague to type a few letters for him/her.

Situation 8.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

A has been in charge of a project at work. S/he asks a colleague to type a few letters for him/her. Once the letters have been typed A realises s/he gave his/her colleague the wrong wording. A talks to his/her colleague.

Situation 9.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

A and B are friends. A has a house in the countryside. B wants to go on holiday somewhere relaxing for a week and s/he knows nobody is going to be in A's house for at least two weeks. B meets A in a pub and asks him/her to stay in his/her country house for a week.

Situation 9.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

A and B are friends. A has lent his/her house in the countryside for a week to B for him/her to have a holiday. During his/her stay s/he dropped black ink on a very expensive carpet and could not get rid of it. As arranged, B goes to A's house to return the keys of the country house. B talks to A.

Situation 10.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

A is on a bus with a child. There are plenty of seats on the bus but there aren't any for two people together. A asks a passenger who is sitting on his/her own on a two seater to change seats with him/her so that s/he can sit next to the child.

Situation 10.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

A is on a bus with a child. There are plenty of seats on the bus but there aren't any for two people together. A asks a passenger who is sitting on his/her own on a two seater to change seats with him/her so that s/he can sit next to the child. While changing seats with the passenger A steps on the passenger's toes. A talks to the passenger.

Situation 11.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

A has received a lot of house bills which are due for payment. S/he hasn't got any money. S/he can't ask his/her friends since s/he has a reputation of never paying back. The company where A works won't give him/her a cash advance since the last time s/he asked for one they said it would the last time. A desperately needs to pay the bills or otherwise s/he won't have any electricity, gas or telephone. A goes to the office of the recently appointed manager/ess and asks him/her for the money.

Situation 11.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

The recently appointed manager/ess at work has lent A some money for him/her to pay some bills. A promised the manager/ess s/he would give the money back in one week's time. It has now been three weeks since the manager/ess lent A the money. A goes to the manager/ess's office to return the money and speaks to him/her.

Situation 12.1. (answer questions: 1, 2, 3)

A has been working for a company for some time now. One of the new trainees has brought his/her brand new laptop computer to work. A asks the new trainee to use his/her laptop for a while.

Situation 12.2. (answer questions: 4, 5, 6, 7)

The new trainee has lent his/her brand new laptop computer to A for him/her to use it for a while. Accidentally while trying to answer the phone A drops it on the floor and smashes part of the screen. A talks to the new trainee.

PLEASE FILL IN THE FORM ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

**II) Could you please fill in the blanks or put a tick (✓) next to the correct answer.
PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY.**

Age: 18-25 26-40 41-60

Sex: F M

Place of birth: _____

Place of residence: _____

(If you have resided in different places, please write the name of the place in which you have resided for the longest period of time)

How many years have you lived there?

Up to 2 3-10 Over 10

Occupation/Profession: _____

Education

of mother:	Primary School	Yes	No
	Secondary School	Yes	No
	University	Yes	No

What is/was your mother's main occupation? _____

Education

of father:	Primary School	Yes	No
	Secondary School	Yes	No
	University	Yes	No

What is/was your father's main occupation? _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

QUESTIONS

	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	5.1	5.2	6.1	6.2	7	8.1	8.2	9.1	9.2	10.1	10.2	11.1	11.2	12.1	12.2
1. The participants are:																							
a. strangers	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. acquaintances	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. friends	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. intimates	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
2. In this situation:																							
a. the speaker has higher status than the hearer	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. the hearer has higher status than the speaker	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. the speaker and the hearer have equal status	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
3. The speaker is asking for something which is:																							
a. very high cost	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. high cost	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. low cost	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. no cost	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
4. Is the offence:																							
a. very serious	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. serious	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. not serious	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. no offense at all	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
5. Has the offender got:																							
a. very high obligation to apologise	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. high obligation to apologise	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. low obligation to apologise	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. no obligation to apologise	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
6. The likelihood for the offender to apologise is:																							
a. very high	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. high	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. low	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. nil	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
7. What are the hearer's expectation of receiving an apology:																							
a. very high	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. high	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. low	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. nil	<input type="checkbox"/>																						

APPENDIX IV

LIBRILLO

I) En este librito se describen una serie de situaciones las que agradecería contestara con lo que a Ud. le parece es la respuesta más apropiada.

- **Cada situación está numerada (1.1., 1.2., 2.1, 2.2., etc.) y hay un casillero correspondiente para cada situación donde Ud. deberá poner un tick (✓) en la opción que le parezca más apropiada**
- **Al lado de cada situación descrita en el librito están los números de las preguntas entre paréntesis que debe Ud. contestar**
- **Finalmente mucho le agradecería completara el formulario al final de este librito.**

Situación 1.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

Un estudiante universitario necesita un libro de la biblioteca para terminar un trabajo en tiempo. La biblioteca está cerrada y el estudiante sólo sabe de una persona que tiene el libro que necesita: uno de sus profesores universitarios. Camino a la sala de profesores el estudiante se encuentra con el/la profesor/a que tiene el libro en el pasillo y se lo pide prestado.

Situación 1.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

El/la profesor/a le prestó el libro al estudiante. El/ella prometió devolvérselo hoy. El/la estudiante se encuentra con el/la profesor/a en el pasillo y se da cuenta que se olvidó de traerlo. El/la estudiante le habla a el/la profesor/a.

Situación 2.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

Un/a empleado/a que trabaja para una compañía hace ya un tiempo va a la oficina del/a gerente, con quien se lleva bien, y le pide que le cubra su trabajo por una hora mientras el/ella va al centro a hacer unos mandados.

Situación 2.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

Después del trabajo un/a empleado/a, que trabaja para una compañía hace ya un tiempo, arregló con su gerente, con quien se lleva bien, de encontrarse en café auto-service. El/la empleado/a y el/ la gerente están tomando un café y charlando. En el medio de la conversación el/la empleado/a accidentalmente vuelca su café sobre los pantalones del/la gerente. El/la empleado/a le habla al/a gerente.

Situación 3.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

Un/a empleado/a de una compañía para la cual trabaja hace ya bastante tiempo, tiene entre sus tareas atender el teléfono. El/la empleado/a se acerca al escritorio de un/a aprendiz y le pide que atienda el teléfono mientras el/ella sale unos minutos a buscar unas cosas. El/la empleado/a le habla al/a aprendiz.

Situación 3.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

Un/a empleado/a de una compañía para la cual trabaja hace ya bastante tiempo, tiene entre sus tareas atender el teléfono. El/la empleado/a le pidió a un/a aprendiz que atienda el teléfono mientras el/ella salía unos minutos a buscar unas cosas. El/la empleado/a vuelve a la oficina una hora y media más tarde. El/la empleado/a le habla al/a aprendiz.

Situación 4.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

Dos amigos/as están en un coche, uno/a de ellos/as está manejando. Los/as dos necesitan ir a la calle X. Al pasajero le fue dado un mapa con instrucciones para llegar a la calle X y el/ella se lo entregó al conductor antes de salir. Ahora están los/las dos perdidos/as y el conductor no tiene el mapa que el pasajero le dió. De repente el conductor ve a un peatón al final de la calle y le pide al pasajero que le pregunte al peatón cómo llegar a la calle X.

Situación 4.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

Luego de haberle pedido al pasajero que le pregunte a un peatón cómo llegar a la calle X, el conductor se da cuenta que no hubiese sido necesario ya que tenía el mapa en uno de sus bolsillos. El conductor le habla al pasajero.

Situación 5.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

Un/a vecino/a (A) le pide a un/a vecino/a (B) a quien no conoce muy bien que lo/la ayude a trasladar algunas cosas de su departamento con su coche. A no tiene coche y tampoco tiene a quien pedirle que lo/la ayude dado que toda la gente que conoce está de vacaciones y tampoco tiene plata ni para alquilar un coche ni para contratar un servicio de transporte. A le habla a B.

Situación 5.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

El/la vecino/a (A) acordó ayudar al/a vecino/a (B) a trasladar algunas cosas de su departamento en su coche. Una vez adentro del coche, B nota que el mismo está impecable. Al dar la vuelta en una esquina una botella de aceite, que estaba en el asiento de atrás junto con otras pertenencias de B se cae y el contenido de la misma es volcado sobre el asiento de atrás. Los/las dos se dan cuenta. B le habla a A.

Situación 6.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

A (A) se le acaba de romper el coche y necesita ir a buscar a alguien al aeropuerto con urgencia. No hay otra forma de llegar al aeropuerto que en coche. A va a la oficina de su gerente, con quien se lleva bien, y le pide prestado el coche.

Situación 6.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

El/la gerente le prestó su coche a A para que el/ella vaya a buscar a alguien al aeropuerto con urgencia. En el camino de regreso A tuvo un accidente en el cual se rompieron las luces delanteras y el paragolpes se abolló. A regresa a la oficina y le habla al/a gerente.

Situación 7 (contestar todas las preguntas: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 y 7)

A (A) lo/la han puesto a cargo de un proyecto muy importante en su trabajo. Un/a colega del trabajo reservó un ticket para irse de vacaciones. A va a necesitar de todo el personal para terminar el proyecto a tiempo. A llama al/a colega que está por irse de vacaciones a su oficina y le pide que se quede.

Situación 8.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

A (A) lo han puesto a cargo de un proyecto en el trabajo. A se acerca al escritorio de un/a colega (B) y le pide que le escriba unas cartas a máquina.

Situación 8.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

El/la colega (B) va a la oficina de A para entregarle las cartas que pasó a máquina. Cuando se las entrega, A se da cuenta que le dió la redacción equivocada. A le habla a B.

Situación 9.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

A y B son amigos/as. B tiene una casa en el interior. A quiere irse de vacaciones a un lugar tranquilo donde pueda descansar y sabe que no habrá nadie en la casa de B por lo menos por dos semanas. A y B se encuentran en un bar y A le pide a B para quedarse en su casa por una semana.

Situación 9.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

B le prestó su casa en el interior a su amigo/a A por una semana para que el/ella tome unas vacaciones. Durante su estadía a A se le cayó tinta negra encima de una alfombra muy cara y no pudo sacar la mancha. Como fuese acordado, A va a la casa de B para devolverle las llaves. A le habla a B.

Situación 10.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

A está en un ómnibus con un niño. Hay suficientes asientos disponibles pero no queda ninguno para que dos personas se sienten juntas. A le pide a un/a pasajero que está sentado/a solo/a en un asiento para dos que le cambie el asiento así se puede sentar junto al niño.

Situación 10.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

El/la pasajero acordó cambiar asientos con A para que el/ella pueda sentarse junto a un niño. Mientras el/la pasajero se levanta para cambiar asientos, A accidentalmente le pisa el pie. A le habla al/a pasajero.

Situación 11.1. (contestar preguntas 1, 2, 3)

A recibió una cantidad de cuentas de su casa que deberá pagar con urgencia ya que de lo contrario se quedará sin agua, sin gas y sin teléfono. A no tiene plata y no le puede pedir a ninguno de sus amigos/as ya que tiene fama de mal pagador/a. La compañía donde A trabaja no le va a dar un adelanto de sueldo dado que la última vez que A les pidió un adelanto le dijeron que era la última vez que le adelantaban el sueldo. A va a la oficina del/a nuevo/a gerente y le pide a el/ella que le preste plata.

Situación 11.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

El/la nuevo/a gerente le prestó plata a A para que el/ella pueda pagar las cuentas. A prometió devolverle el préstamo en una semana. Han pasado tres semanas desde que el/la gerente le prestó la plata. A va a la oficina del/a gerente a devolverle el dinero. A le habla a el/la gerente.

Situación 12.1. (contestar preguntas: 1, 2, 3)

A es empleado/a de una compañía. Ya hace un tiempo que trabaja para la misma. Uno/a de los/as nuevos/as aprendices trajo al trabajo su nueva computadora portátil. A le pide la computadora prestada.

Situación 12.2. (contestar preguntas: 4, 5, 6, 7)

El/la nuevo/a aprendiz le prestó su nueva computadora portátil a A por un rato. Al A intentar atender el teléfono accidentalmente se le cayó la computadora al piso y se rompió la pantalla de la misma. A le habla al/a aprendiz.

POR FAVOR COMPLETE LOS DATOS EN LA PAGINA SIGUIENTE

II) Le agradecería completase el siguiente cuestionario. Llene los espacios o ponga un tick (✓) al lado de la respuesta correcta.

Edad: 18-25 26-40 41-60

Sexo: Femenino Masculino

Lugar de nacimiento: _____

Lugar donde reside: _____

(De haber residido en distintos lugares, escriba el lugar donde residió por más tiempo)

Hace cuántos años vive allí?

Hasta 2 3-10 Más de 10

Ocupación: _____

Educación de
su madre: Primaria Sí No
 Secundaria Sí No
 Universidad Sí No

Cuál es/era la principal ocupación de su madre?: _____

Educación de
su padre: Primaria Sí No
 Secundaria Sí No
 Universidad Sí No

Cuál es/era la principal ocupación de su padre?: _____

GRACIAS POR SU COOPERACION

QUESTIONS

	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	5.1	5.2	6.1	6.2	7	8.1	8.2	9.1	9.2	10.1	10.2	11.1	11.2	12.1	12.2
1. The participants are:																							
a. strangers	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. acquaintances	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. friends	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. intimates	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
2. In this situation:																							
a. the speaker has higher status than the hearer	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. the hearer has higher status than the speaker	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. the speaker and the hearer have equal status	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
3. The speaker is asking for something which is:																							
a. very high cost	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. high cost	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. low cost	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. no cost	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
4. Is the offence:																							
a. very serious	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. serious	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. not serious	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. no offense at all	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
5. Has the offender got:																							
a. very high obligation to apologise	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. high obligation to apologise	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. low obligation to apologise	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. no obligation to apologise	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
6. The likelihood for the offender to apologise is:																							
a. very high	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. high	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. low	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. nil	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
7. What are the hearer's expectation of receiving an apology:																							
a. very high	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
b. high	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
c. low	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
d. nil	<input type="checkbox"/>																						