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FACULTY OF CLASSICAL AND MODERN PHILOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH STUDIES

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POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN CONTEMPORARY SPANISH

A PhD Dissertation Summary for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

Professional field 2.1. Philology
Field of Study: Romance Languages – The Syntax and Pragmatics of Spanish
Supervisor: Prof. Milena Borisova Popova, PhD

Sofia
2025

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Introduction

The introduction highlights the relevance of the dissertation topic, presents the object of analysis, and defines the aims and objectives that shape the structure of the dissertation. It outlines the theoretical framework of the research, justifies the choice of empirical material and research methodology, and describes the structure of the dissertation.

The **object** of analysis in the dissertation is the use of politeness strategies in contemporary Spanish, as observed across different types of speech acts, according to G. Leech's classification: collaborative speech acts, which are inherently polite, and competitive speech acts, which are essentially impolite and in conflict with politeness. A separate chapter presents the impoliteness strategies characteristic of conflictive speech acts, based on the same classification. Clearly defining the focus of this study and situating it within the broader field of pragmatics is essential, given the increasing scholarly attention to politeness and the abundance of diverse literature on the topic. On the one hand, politeness is of interest to disciplines such as sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, ethnography of communication, discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, and others. On the other hand, the dynamic interaction between pragmatics and these disciplines, along with the delineation of their shared fields of study, has led to the emergence of new pragmatic subfields: sociopragmatics, cognitive pragmatics, cross-cultural pragmatics, among others.

The possibility for numerous research approaches is determined by the multilayered and multidimensional nature of politeness. The latter encompasses phenomena such as social deixis, indirect speech acts, stereotypical social formulas, various types of strategies, and others. In real-life communication, these aspects interact and complement each other. However, in different research approaches, attention is focused only on some of these aspects, depending on the criteria and level of analysis, as well as the chosen methodology and terminological framework.

In this context, the relevance of the dissertation lies in building upon the classical frameworks of T. A. van Dijk (1983, 2005), G. Leech (1983, 2014), and P. Brown and S. Levinson (1987), by incorporating the achievements of conversation analysis and cross-cultural pragmatics. The study aims to develop an integrated research approach that adequately reflects the functioning of politeness strategies at the utterance level, depending on the pragmatic context. Within the Hispanic Studies in Bulgaria the aforementioned issues and research approaches remain insufficiently explored and applied. It is worth noting the role of the academic journal *Journal of*

Politeness Research, established in 2005, as an interdisciplinary forum aimed at fostering constructive collaboration among scholars from various disciplines, research fields, and cultures, and at promoting integral and holistic approaches to the analysis of politeness.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the dissertation is to analyse and systematise the use of politeness strategies in contemporary Spanish by developing an analytical research model that captures the full complexity and diversity of the functioning of these strategies in relation to the pragmatic context. This aim entails the fulfilment of the following objectives:

- To construct a theoretical core, a methodological framework, and a conceptual apparatus for the analysis of the empirical material.
- To analyse and systematise the formal and communicative characteristics of politeness strategies across different types of speech acts.
- To examine internal and external modifiers, as well as the various types of extensions that influence the illocutionary force of the speech act.
- To identify politeness strategies in the context of dialogic interaction.
- To investigate the interaction between explicit and implicit information within dialogue.
- To analyse the specific characteristics of impoliteness strategies.

Primary Sources

The empirical material comprises examples drawn from theatrical plays, literary fiction, and TV interviews. This variety serves to demonstrate the implementation of politeness strategies across a range of communicative contexts.

Methodology

The study employs a communicative, holistic, and interdisciplinary approach that combines both inductive and deductive methods of investigation. This complex epistemological framework allows for an adequate exploration of the multifaceted nature of the research object, in which different characteristics complement and enrich each other. It also provides the opportunity not only to illustrate the main achievements of modern pragmatic theory but also to generate new ideas that contribute to a deeper understanding of politeness strategies.

In the analysis of speech acts, the study adopts the methodology for segmenting and codifying speech acts (House & Kádár 2021), which examines modifiers of the illocutionary force of utterances. From the conceptual framework of conversation analysis, notions such as adjacency pair, stimulus-response, first and second pair parts, types of extensions, and others are incorporated.

Chapter One – Theoretical Framework

The first section of this chapter (1.1) briefly presents the origins and development of pragmatic theory, tracing its connection to rhetoric and the philosophy of language. Pragmatics is considered to have originated from rhetoric, which emerged in Ancient Greece as a means of influencing public opinion. Later, the Sophists contributed to the development of rhetoric by emphasizing the role of argumentation and interpretation in the formation of opinions and decision-making.

Aristotle draws an analogy between dialectics and rhetoric on the basis that both disciplines are connected to the process of argumentation. However, while dialectical arguments are aimed at proving the truth of a proposition, rhetorical arguments are concerned with its persuasiveness. The Greek philosopher distinguishes three primary modes of persuasion: *logos – through the argument itself*, *ethos –through the character of the speaker*, and *pathos – through the emotions of the hearer* (see Rapp 2023).

With regard to the influence of the philosophy of language, the study presents the ideas of L. Wittgenstein and J. Austin, whose concepts significantly shape the development of pragmatics. Wittgenstein views language as a “form of life” and emphasises that the meaning of words is determined by their use in various communicative activities, which he refers to as “language games” (Wittgenstein, cited in Popova 2012: 24). Influenced by him, Austin rehabilitates the role of everyday spoken language and includes it within the scope of linguistic analysis. In his triad — the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act — he distinguishes the utterance itself, the intention behind it, and the effect on the interlocutor. Furthermore, Austin classifies speech acts into several categories (verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives), thus laying the foundations for the further development of speech act theory by J. Searle (Austin 1962). On the basis of these concepts, pragmatics turns towards the study of linguistic functioning in real communicative situations.

The second section (1.2) highlights the distinction between traditional linguistics and pragmatics, and argues for the necessity of a pragmatic approach to language communication. The analysis shows that the development of linguistics in the 20th century moves from structural models, focused on the internal relations of the language system, to more dynamic and functional approaches that take into account the role of context and communicative intentions. Traditional linguistics focuses on the structure of the language system, while pragmatics examines its functioning based on the dynamic interaction between text and context, the relationship between implicit and explicit information, and the main pragmatic principles governing communicative exchange. The need for a pragmatic approach proves essential in the study of such phenomena as the non-conventional meanings of linguistic elements, the thematic–rhematic distribution of information in the utterance, and deixis. The analysis of language in use leads to an expansion of the field of linguistic inquiry with new research perspectives and models of analysis.

The third section (1.3) presents several relevant pragmatic concepts and ideas. The analysis is based on the assumption that different pragmatic theories are connected to particular interpretations of three core notions: communicative intention, pragmatic information, and social distance. Communicative intention is the focus of study in Searle's *Speech Act Theory*. The theoretical principles outlined therein are of particular relevance to this dissertation and are therefore analysed in detail in section 2.1 of the work.

With regard to the pragmatic information shared between interlocutors, two research frameworks focused on the transmission of information are discussed (section 1.4). First, the contributions of H.P. Grice (1975) are presented. The study examines the *Cooperative Principle*, which is based on four maxims — those of quantity, quality, relation, and manner — which ensure the most adequate and effective exchange of information. Grice also analyses the types of implicatures, broadly dividing them into *conventional*, which stem from linguistic meaning, and *non-conventional,* which depend on context. The latter includes *conversational* implicatures (associated with the violation of the maxims) and *non-conversational* implicatures (linked to the violation of certain social and cultural norms). The functioning of implicatures is closely tied to the construction of politeness strategies.

The second framework concerned with the successful transmission of information is the *Relevance Theory*, developed by D. Sperber and D. Wilson (1995). This theory approaches communication through the lens of two models: the encoding/decoding model and the ostensive-

inferential model. Within the latter, the information received is interpreted on the basis of the interaction between an ostensive signal and the cognitive-pragmatic context of communication. This interaction is traced through a series of inferential processes.

Regarding theories that focus on social distance, the first chapter briefly outlines the works of P. Brown, S. Levinson, and G. Leech. Due to their central importance in the analysis of politeness strategies, these theories are examined separately and in detail in Chapter Three (see sections 3.1 and 3.2).

It is important to note that Chapter One provides an overview of the evolution of key strands within pragmatic theory, emphasizing that as pragmatics has developed, research approaches have expanded and integrated new theoretical and methodological perspectives. Attention has gradually shifted toward the cognitive and cultural aspects of communication.

Section 1.4 explores several relevant ideas drawn from the works of M.V. Escandell Vidal and T. van Dijk, which offer theoretical and methodological perspectives that shape the conceptual core of the dissertation. First and foremost, the focus is on the model of communication proposed by Escandell Vidal, developed within the framework of cognitive pragmatics (Escandell Vidal 2005:27–42). This model draws upon the core principles of Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory. In Bulgarian scientific literature this model has been systematised and translated by M. Popova (2012: 33–37). The Spanish researcher's model includes three categories: material elements (sender, signal, receiver), cognitive representations (channel, situation, social distance, communicative goal), and pragmatic processes ("encoding/decoding" and "ostensive use/interpretation"). Escandell Vidal subdivides the pragmatic processes into *primary processes*, which clarify the reference of deictic elements, and *secondary processes*, which require complex inferential procedures for extracting implicit meanings. Escandell Vidal's ideas are particularly valuable to this study. On the one hand, she uses the interaction of cognitive representations of diverse aspects of the communicative situation to analyse the relationship between relevance and politeness (see Chapter Three). On the other hand, her research approach convincingly demonstrates the specificity of communicative analysis, in which formal, semantic, and pragmatic factors are examined on an equal analytical footing in order to adequately reflect real-life communication.

Secondly, several ideas from T. van Dijk are presented. The author examines coherence in the so-called macrostructures from both semantic and pragmatic perspectives, using a dialogic text

as an example to demonstrate how the head speech act (a "request") is realised through a series of subordinate acts that construct the logical sequence of the text and condition the successful fulfilment of the illocutionary goal. Van Dijk describes in detail the sequence of speech acts subordinated to the head act and connected to its presuppositional basis, as well as to the felicity conditions and the additional motivation of the interlocutor. The analysis of speech acts extends beyond the boundaries of individual utterances and is systematised within the framework of dialogic discourse (van Dijk 1983).

The study also presents Van Dijk's concept of context models and contextual knowledge (van Dijk 2005). The scholar distinguishes six types of knowledge: personal, interpersonal, group, institutional or organizational, national, and cultural (Ibid., pp. 77–81). In his opinion, context models stored in episodic memory determine how participants interpret and adapt their communication according to the situation, roles, and social norms. Van Dijk's idea of mental models and their influence on the structuring and functioning of individual utterances in discourse is key to the present study, as it allows us to uncover the underlying mechanisms and factors that shape, model, and unfold specific politeness strategies oriented towards achieving specific communicative goals.

Chapter Two – The Notion of Speech Act in Contemporary Pragmatic Theory

This chapter begins by examining the ideas of Searle. According to him, language use is not merely a means of conveying information but also a form of participation in an activity governed by specific rules (Searle 1969). He views speech acts as comprising three main components: *the locutionary act* (the actual utterance), *the propositional act* (reference and predication), and *the illocutionary act* (such as a command, question, promise, etc.). Searle also introduces the concept of the *perlocutionary act*, which relates to the effect that speech has on interlocutors. The perlocutionary speech act is associated with classical rhetoric as well as with strategies of persuasive communication.

Section 2.1 of this chapter explores the felicity conditions for successful speech acts, which include the condition for expressing propositional content, preparatory conditions, the sincerity condition, and the essential condition. Together, they ensure the meaning, feasibility, speaker's intention, and actual performance of the speech act (Searle 1969).

Searle's classification of speech acts is also outlined, comprising *assertives, directives, commissives, expressives,* and *declarations.* Each type is characterised by the communicative goal with which the speaker uses language, as well as by the direction of fit between words and reality. Another key element in Searle's concept is the distinction between direct and indirect speech acts, which is directly related to the development of politeness strategies.

Section 2.2 of this chapter analyses various classifications of speech acts, based on the criteria established within differing theoretical frameworks. A key classification for this study is that of Leech, which is based on the criteria of *cost* and *benefit* with respect to the participants in communication (Leech 1983). This classification also takes into account the types of goals involved: illocutionary and social. Based on these two types of criteria, the researcher identifies four types of speech acts (Leech 2014: 89): *collaborative* (neutral with regard to politeness), *convivial* (supporting politeness), *competitive* (contradicting politeness), and *conflictive* (incompatible with politeness). It is precisely on the basis of this classification that the empirical part of the study is structured.

Section 2.3 outlines the main concepts in cross-cultural pragmatics relevant to the analysis of speech acts and politeness strategies. It also presents House and Kádár's (2021) classification of speech acts, which distinguishes between two broad categories: *substantive acts*, part of the conventional structure of communication, and *ritual acts*, used at the beginning and end of interactions (Ibid 2021)

The methodology for coding and segmenting speech acts, as employed by House and Kádár, is of central importance to this study. According to this methodology, the analysis of a given speech act begins with identifying the head speech act, followed by a focus on various types of modifiers – external and internal (House & Kádár 2021). The latter may be syntactic or lexical. An example of a syntactic modifier is the sentence type – such as interrogative or declarative. On the other hand, a lexical modifier could be the use of adverbs that help the speaker minimize the imposition on the hearer in order to facilitate the success of the request (*understaters*), e.g., *"Could you lend me a bit of salt?".*

There are also external modifiers – additional utterances that either soften or intensify the illocutionary force of the speech act (supportive moves). For example, with the phrase *"I want to ask you something,"* the speaker draws the hearer's attention and prepares them for the upcoming utterance (a *want statement*).

These modifiers play a key role in the empirical analysis, as they enable a more in-depth understanding of the structuring and functioning of politeness strategies in various types of speech acts. The use of internal and external modifiers is determined both by the degree of inherent politeness or impoliteness of the respective speech act and by the parameters of the communicative context. Supportive moves can modify the illocutionary force of the speech act, neutralize or amplify its perlocutionary effect, and contribute to the successful achievement of communicative goals.

The final section (2.4) presents several concepts from Conversation Analysis (CA), which are essential for the analysis of the empirical material in this dissertation.

One of the core concepts in CA is adjacency pair (Schegloff 2007). These are two utterances that are closely linked and mutually dependent, such as question/answer, greeting/greeting, accusation/apology, and others. Studies on adjacency pairs show that they can be accompanied by additional utterances (*expansions*) that clarify, prepare, or influence the interaction between interlocutors.

The study presents Schegloff's concept of expansions, which may precede (*pre-expansions*), be inserted into (*insert expansions*), or follow (*post-expansions*) the main adjacency pair. For instance, pre-expansions often serve to prepare the interlocutor for an upcoming speech act and are aimed at avoiding a potentially undesirable reaction to it (Ibid, 2007). An example would be the use of questions such as *"What are you doing?"* or *"Are you busy tonight?"* before making a suggestion or an invitation. A signal that the hearer interprets such a question as a prelude to an invitation is the response *"Why are you asking?"* – with which the addressee encourages the speaker to proceed with the invitation or suggestion.

The conceptualisation of the main principles of Conversation Analysis is essential for the present study, as it supports the argument for a broader interpretation of adjacency pairs and highlights the interaction and mutual dependency of speech acts within the textual framework. Schegloff's ideas are particularly relevant to this dissertation, as they highlight the interplay between implicit and explicit information both within the core adjacency pair and in the utterances found in its expansions.

Chapter Three – The Concept of Politeness in Contemporary Pragmatic Theory

The third chapter of the dissertation is dedicated to research on politeness. The analysis of theoretical conceptions relevant to this study begins with an overview of Leech's ideas. In Section 3.1, Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (GSP) is presented, according to which *"to be polite, S expresses or implies meanings that associate a favorable value with what pertains to O or associates an unfavorable value with what pertains to S (S = self, speaker)"* (Leech 2014: 90). This strategy includes ten maxims, each containing two sub-maxims: one oriented toward the speaker and the other toward the hearer/other, and these are illustrated through specific speech acts. These maxims exemplify the use of politeness in maintaining harmonious relationships and avoiding potential conflict, offense, and misunderstanding.

Another essential element of Leech's work is his classification of speech acts, presented earlier, which is based on the notions of *cost* and *benefit* for the participants in communication. These notions are visualised by the author in two tables that illustrate the correlation of the aforementioned elements of the communicative situation. Leech notes that the greater the harm to the hearer, the less polite the utterance. Conversely, the greater the benefit to the hearer, the more polite the statement is. He also proposes a scale that links politeness to the indirectness of speech acts. According to this scale, the more indirect the utterance, the more polite it is, as it provides the hearer with greater freedom of response. This scale shows that politeness is intensified not only through the content of the speech act, but also through its degree of indirectness, with the most polite forms being both indirect and oriented toward the hearer's benefit.

Politeness is also examined in Brown and Levinson's influential work *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (Brown & Levinson 1987) (Section 3.2). The authors introduce the concepts of *rationality* and *face*. The latter has two types: *positive face*, which reflects the individual's desire to be liked, approved of, and well received by others, and *negative face*, which expresses the need for autonomy and freedom of action.

Brown and Levinson point out that certain actions (verbal or non-verbal) can threaten either the speaker's or the hearer's positive or negative face. For example, actions that threaten the hearer's negative face typically signal that the speaker does not intend to avoid intruding on the hearer's personal space (e.g., commands, requests, advice, threats, etc.). Conversely, speech acts that signal a disregard for the hearer's positive face include expressing aggressive emotions, mentioning taboo topics, delivering bad news, and so on (Brown & Levinson 1987: 66).

In such a context, the social face of the interlocutors is vulnerable, which is why they strive to avoid actions that could threaten it and to employ strategies that minimize potential threats. Brown and Levinson propose five types of strategies (Brown & Levinson 1987: 68–70): 1) a bald on-record strategy, 2) an on-record strategy with positive politeness, 3) an on-record strategy with negative politeness, 4) an off-record (implicit) strategy, and 5) to avoid doing the face-threatening act.

The authors also introduce three key variables in the analysis of politeness: *power, distance,* and *rank of imposition*. These variables determine the level of politeness required in a given communicative situation (Brown & Levinson 1987: 76–77). Power refers to the social hierarchy between speaker and hearer; distance relates to the degree of social closeness or familiarity; and the rank of imposition is determined by how desirable the act is and the amount of effort the hearer is expected to invest.

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is among the most frequently cited frameworks in the field of pragmatics. Nevertheless, it has been subject to criticism, particularly with regard to its claims of universality. Critics argue that the notions of face and politeness strategies are culturally variable. Despite such critiques, the above-mentioned theory remains a foundational reference for the study of politeness in communicative interaction.

Section 3.3 presents the ideas of M. V. Escandell Vidal, who argues that politeness is a matter of *social adequacy* – that is, behaviour deemed suitable within a given culture. Drawing on Relevance Theory, Escandell Vidal analyses politeness as a cognitive process, in which social norms and expectations influence the interpretation of utterances. Polite expressions are understood in relation to the notion of an internal cognitive context, which encompasses both cognitive representations of external social and pragmatic factors and internal cognitive representations of certain sociocultural norms acquired through the process of socialisation. According to this approach, information in politeness strategies is processed in the same way as other utterances – within the ostensive-inferential model of communication.

The penultimate section (3.4) focuses on impoliteness. While politeness aims to preserve social harmony and maintain a courteous tone in communication, impoliteness is characterised by a deliberate intention to provoke conflict or disrupt communication.

The section presents the ideas of J. Culpeper (Culpeper 1996), who develops his own impoliteness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's politeness model (Brown & Levinson

1987). However, his approach takes an opposite orientation, as the strategies he proposes are aimed not at supporting the hearer's social face, but at attacking it (Culpeper 1996). These strategies include:

1. bald on-record impoliteness – direct threats to the social face,
2. positive impoliteness – strategies such as ignoring, excluding, insulting,
3. negative impoliteness – strategies such as threatening, mocking, displaying condescension,
4. sarcasm or mock politeness – seemingly polite expressions with offensive undertones,
5. withholding politeness when it is expected.

Building on Culpeper's concept, Leech extends and complements his politeness maxims with a set of impoliteness maxims (Leech 2014: 220), reinterpreting them as opposites of his politeness maxims. For example, impoliteness maxims include belittling the hearer's qualities, desires, or opinions, among others.

The last section of the chapter (3.5) reviews studies in cross-cultural pragmatics that focus on politeness and impoliteness, with a particular emphasis on politeness markers and their roles in different cultural contexts. These markers are used to indicate expressions that signal a specific speech act and are referred to as *Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices* (IFIDs).

Chapter Four – Speech Acts with Optional Politeness Strategies

This chapter analyses politeness strategies employed in speech acts that are inherently polite and intrinsically support politeness. These acts entail a cost to the speaker and a benefit to the hearer; consequently, the use of politeness strategies in such instances is optional rather than obligatory. This type of speech acts is oriented toward maintaining the hearer's social face and mitigating potential threats to that face.

The analysis focuses on compliments, apologies, and expressions of gratitude, examining them together with the responses to these acts within the framework of dialogic exchange.

Section 4.1 outlines the main characteristics of compliments and the various types of responses to them. Compliments are characterised by their function of affirming the hearer's positive face and fostering positive interpersonal relationships. They are viewed as a standard social formula, since they are frequently used in stereotypical moments of interaction, such as at the beginning of a conversation or after a greeting. Compliments most often focus on appearance,

personal qualities, or achievements of the interlocutor, and they may be formally expressed through the use of epithets, positive comparisons, exclamatory expressions, and so on.

Compliments can also function as supportive speech acts in a dialogue, aiming to win the hearer's favour and positive disposition. When used in this way, they often precede requests or questions aimed at obtaining personal information. For example:

1) *(1) AB: –A pesar de tu aspecto de malote, del que vamos a hablar. Déjame que te diga que, bueno, a mí siempre me ha gustado lo que haces. Yo lo que decía, lo que intentaba decir, es que cada vez que sales en pantalla, ya sea en la posición de juego que sea, captas la atención. Eso es mucho. Pero luego es que estuve en Galicia este verano viendo un concierto en O Grove, en el Náutico y vi un diario ¨Zahera hace un monólogo y cuenta su vida¨ y digo, bueno, a mí no me la ha contado nunca. ¿Cómo es eso? Tampoco tenemos relación, eh, bueno, pero...*

   (2) LZ: –Bueno, pero, podríamos tenerla, podríamos tenerla perfectamente.

   (3) AB: –Bueno, pues, cuéntame tu vida, cuéntame tu vida.

   (4) LZ: –Pues, mira, mi vida, mi monólogo se basa prácticamente en que yo, eh, eh no hago películas de morrear (...)

In utterance (1), the host A. Buenafuente (AB) expresses high appreciation for the artistic achievements of his interlocutor, L. Zaera (LZ), in order to predispose him and prepare him for the question at the end of the utterance. In this case, the compliment functions as a preparatory move intended to create a positive atmosphere. Since AB does not achieve the desired effect, he needs to clarify his question with an inserted expansion in utterance (3). A distinctive feature of this journalist is the inclusion of humorous comments and personal touches as additional supportive moves. The response by L. Zaera in utterance (4) shows that the combination of moves was successful.

As previously mentioned, compliments can function as preparatory moves for other speech acts. This use is motivated by their positive connotations, which contribute to successful communicative interaction. The analysis also showed that compliments are frequently combined with other speech acts. For example, a greeting followed by a compliment: *¡Hola, chica! ¡Qué guapa estás hoy!* ("Hello, girl! You look so pretty today!") It is important to note that their role in politeness strategies is dynamic and influenced by the pragmatic context.

Section 4.2 focuses on the examination of apologies. The conditions for their successful realisation, possible modifiers, and types of reactions to them are presented. The speech act of apology generally involves the speaker taking responsibility for their intentional or accidental actions or words that have caused or are causing harm to their interlocutor (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984). In these situations, the purpose of the apology is to maintain the good tone of communication and to restore social equilibrium. The apology may serve as the head speech act within the interaction, with other speech acts in the dialogue subordinated to it and functioning to support, reinforce its illocutionary force, provide explanations, or mitigate the harm caused.

On the other hand, the apology can serve as a supporting speech act and combine with other speech acts such as questions, requests, etc., to reduce the threat to the interlocutor's social image. When formulating an apology, the speaker may offer justifications or accept responsibility for the harm caused, potentially proposing compensation or assuring that the inconvenience will not be repeated. A combination of these strategies is observed in the following example:

2) *(1) A. –¿Qué pasa con el aire acondicionado? ¿Está averiado?*
(2) B. –¿Perdón? – la voz es agradable y muy masculina. (…)
(3) A. –Preguntaba que si se ha roto el aire acondicionado.
(4) B. –Disculpe señora, disculpe las molestias, pero en dos horas volverá a funcionar de nuevo. Es un incidente lamentable y rogamos disculpe la molestia. Si es de su interés, el bar y el restaurante disponen de aire acondicionado. La descompostura ha sido en la tercera y cuarta plantas no más, y si lo desea, mientras…
(5) A. –Vale, vale, vale. Gracias. Al fin y al cabo, dos horas no es tanto tiempo. Muchas gracias.

(Rico-Godoy 1998: 128-129)

The apology expressed in utterance (4) is a response to the implicit reproach contained in the questions from utterance (1). In fact, the main adjacency pair in this sequence is composed precisely of utterances (1) and (4). Within this adjacency pair, utterances (2) and (3) are inserted, serving to clarify the information necessary for a clear understanding of the situation. The expression *"perdón"* in utterance (2) is a formulaic apology that does not express regret but rather reflects the fact that the speaker did not hear something. The response to the questions includes an apology in which an attempt is made to minimise the damage caused by offering a solution to the

problem and suggesting an alternative. This apology is repeated several times, and in one instance is made explicit through the performative verb *"rogamos"*. As a result of these strategies used by (B), the negative impact of the damage is mitigated, and mutual understanding is achieved. The empathy shown by (A) in the utterance *"dos horas no es tanto tiempo"* and the expression of gratitude demonstrate that (B)'s efforts were successful, positively received, and contributed to maintaining a respectful tone. The final utterance also serves as a response to the apology's reception and closes the adjacency pair.

The analysis of politeness strategies in the entire sequence of speech acts highlights the underlying logic in the construction of the dialogue, driven by the need to maintain social harmony. It becomes evident that politeness is not a static concept, as it depends on the dynamics of the conversation, the reactions of the addressee, and is aimed at preserving the social face of the interlocutors.

The final speech act examined in this chapter is the expression of gratitude (in section 4.3). Gratitude is a speech act through which the speaker expresses appreciation for a received service, attention, or gesture. In addition to functioning as a politeness marker, gratitude contributes to the maintenance of social harmony and the regulation of interpersonal relations.

In the dissertation, the expression of gratitude is explored on the one hand, as a stereotypical social formula —such as part of the professional or social obligations of the addressee (Leech 2014). The mere utterance of *"thank you"* or similar expressions is considered a social obligation in certain situations.

On the other hand, in communication, expressions of gratitude help maintain the flow of dialogue. It often appears as a response to an action taken by the interlocutor, thereby serving as a closing act for the sequence or functioning as a supportive speech act. In this context, it may be viewed as an element playing a significant role in the coherence of the conversation. The study analyses examples in which gratitude is combined with other speech acts such as requests, refusals, compliments, and more. In a similar way, in the following example, gratitude is part of a politeness strategy for the polite refusal of an offer:

3) *A: –Ahora tengo que ir al Congreso y después preparar una cena en casa para unos amigos. ¿Por qué no vienes?*

B: –Me encantaría, muchas gracias. Pero yo sí voy a los toros y luego hemos quedado con unos amigos a cenar. Te lo agradezco.

(Rico-Godoy 1997: 168)

This example illustrates the use of gratitude not only as an expression of appreciation but also as a strategic tool for maintaining social harmony and balance in communication.

The conducted analysis shows that, within compliments, apologies, and expressions of gratitude, the use of extensions or modifiers is not common and remains optional. Speech acts that are inherently polite can function without additional politeness strategies. On the other hand, these types of speech acts often serve as supportive conversational moves, which can be explained by their positive connotation. This characteristic is key to maintaining good relationships, which accounts for the tendency toward their stereotypical use in the course of communication.

Responses to compliments typically fall into three categories: acceptance, rejection, or minimisation of the compliment. As for apologies, reactions usually involve acceptance or rejection but may also include minimising the speaker's guilt. In the case of gratitude, the response may be another expression of thanks, or a downplaying of the favour done. In these instances, minimising one's own efforts and expressing modesty are important for preserving the social image of the participants in the communication.

Chapter Five – Speech Acts Requiring Obligatory Politeness Strategies

This part of the study focuses on the analysis of politeness strategies used in the third type of speech acts from Leech's classification (*competitive*). In these acts, the illocutionary goal is in conflict with the social goal, as they imply some form of imposition or harm to the listener and benefit to the speaker – since the latter uses language to get the interlocutor to perform a certain action. In these speech acts, the use of politeness strategies is particularly crucial, as they serve to balance the social interaction: positive politeness is oriented toward cooperation and solidarity, while negative politeness aims to respect the interlocutor's personal space.

Section 5.1 examines requests for help or favours, focusing on the conditions necessary for their successful realisation and the formal ways in which such requests can be expressed. The analysis also considers (1) the internal and external modifiers used in these requests, and (2) the pre-strategies that help mitigate the illocutionary force of the speech act.

The study indicates that a request can be softened through various modifiers, as illustrated in the following example:

4) *Paca. –A ver si me <u>podía</u> usted dar un <u>poco</u> de sal.*
(2) Generosa. –¿De mesa o de la gorda?
(3) Paca. –De la gorda. Es para el guisado. (Generosa se mete. Paca, alzando la voz.) <u>Un puñadito nada más</u>… (Generosa vuelve con un papelillo). Gracias, mujer.
(4) Generosa. –De nada.

*(*Buero Vallejo 1997: 70)

In this dialogue, the request is formulated using a conditional sentence, which reduces the pressure on the interlocutor, the past tense of the verb *poder*, and the quantifier *"poco"*, which minimizes the effort required from the addressee. Turns (2) and (3) function as an inserted expansion, expressed through a question-answer adjacency pair, which serves to obtain additional information necessary for the successful execution of the speech act. In turn (3), *Paca* again emphasises that fulfilling the request will require minimal effort on part of *Generosa* by using the quantifier *"un puñado"* (a handful), which indicates a small quantity, and the diminutive suffix *"-ito"* – both functioning as internal modifiers. Such expressions, which limit and minimize the state of affairs in the proposition of the request, are referred to as *delimiters* (Ru & Zhang 2008). The dialogic exchange concludes with the exchange of stereotypical formulas for expressing and accepting gratitude.

The examples analysed in this subsection (5.1.1) demonstrate that there are different types of internal modifiers that reduce the degree of imposition of the action. For instance, the use of verbs such as *importar* and *molestar* in questions is typical of indirect strategies with negative politeness, whereby the speaker signals that they do not wish to impose their will on the interlocutor's actions. These verbs are often conjugated in the past tense, which also functions as an internal modifier—referred to as *alejamiento de cortesía* (politeness distancing).

The examples examined in this subsection also illustrate the use of some external modifiers, such as justifications and explanations introduced by expressions like *es que*, which House and Kádár define as *grounders*. An example of such usage is the following utterance: *¿Te*

molestaría mucho ir tú? Es que yo, mira a esa hora tengo una firma en el notario (Rico-Godoy 1997: 64).

Another frequently used modifier involves phrases such as *hazme el favor* or *¿podrías hacerme el favor?*, which House and Kádár refer to as getting a pre-commitment. Through these expressions, the speaker attempts to engage and prepare the interlocutor before making the actual request, thereby aiming to pre-empt a possible refusal. In the following example, this phrase is immediately followed by a justification and an explanation of why the requested effort is necessary:

5) *DON ROSARIO. Hágame el favor, don Dionisio. A mí me es imposible agacharme más, por causa de la cintura… ¿Quiere usted ir a coger la bota?*
(2) DIONISIO. Déjela usted, don Rosario…Si a mí no me molesta… Yo enseguida me voy a acostar, y no le hago caso…
(3) DON ROSARIO. Yo no podría dormir tranquilo si supiese que debajo de la cama hay una bota… Llamaré ahora mismo a una criada.
(Saca una campanilla del bolsillo y hace sonar.)
(4) DIONISIO. No. No toque más. Yo iré por ella. (Mete parte del cuerpo debajo de la cama.) Ya está. Ya la he cogido. (Sale con la bota.)

(Mihura 1986: 40-41)

In the cited example, Don Rosario's justification is related to a physical inability to perform the requested action. The request here is formulated using the verb *querer*. Dionisio's response in utterance (2) is an indirect refusal of the request, accompanied by appropriate explanations. This is followed by the so-called inserted expansion, in which Don Rosario adds further justification and mentions that he will call another person. As a result of the argumentation, Dionisio ultimately fulfils the request.

Furthermore, this subsection (5.1.1) highlights the explicit expression of some of the felicity conditions for the speech act "request". One example of this is when the speaker explains why they are turning to the interlocutor for help. Typically, the interlocutor is evaluated as the most competent and capable of performing the action, which reflects Searle's rule that a request must be directed to someone who is able to carry it out.

The requests are analysed together with the responses to them, which, on the one hand, may be positive – due to the minimisation of the effort required from the addressee or the fulfilment

of a certain condition. On the other hand, the response may involve a shift in focus, expression of hesitation, or a direct or indirect refusal of the request. In addition, requests may prompt reactions involving clarification utterances, which function as inserted expansions. In such cases, the dialogic exchange extends beyond the minimal dialogic pair, and the final result is often positive—namely, the acceptance of the request.

In the following subsection (5.1.2), requests are analysed within a broader sequence, highlighting the preceding expansions and preparatory strategies necessary for their successful realisation. Let us examine the following example:

6) *(1) Samuel. (...) Tú puedes sacarme del apuro. Es curioso cómo esas viejas amistades dejan raigones. ¿Qué tenemos de común tú y yo? ¿La edad? Quizá haya algo en el aire del año… o de los años en que nace uno.*
(...)
(2) IGNACIO. Bueno, ¿qué quieres?
(3) SAMUEL. Que me escondas.
(4) IGNACIO. Así andas.
(5) SAMUEL. Nadie sabe que estoy aquí. O, vamos, así lo creo. Voy a embarcar para América. No sé cuándo pero muy pronto, muy pronto. Hasta ese momento, ¿quieres tenerme en casa? Aquí no vendrán nunca a buscarme

(Aub 1970: 26–27)

In this case, the speaker prepares the interlocutor for the request and creates the conditions for it to be received with understanding and willingness. What is interesting here is that, based on the introductory remarks, the addressee deduces the speaker's true intention and directly asks, "What do you want?".

It is important to note that in some situations, strategies of indirect politeness may fail to achieve the intended effect, as their success depends not only on the speaker but also on the addressee. One way to avoid complying with an indirectly expressed request is to respond to the

literal meaning of the utterance. In the following humorous dialogue[1], this strategy is repeated many times:

7) *(1) A: –Perdona, ¿sabes si hay alguna panadería cerca de aquí?*
(2) B: –Eh…sí.
(3) A: –¿Te importaría decirme dónde está?
(4) B: –No, no me importaría.
(5) A: –Pues, ¿por qué no me lo dices?
(6) B: –Que sí, que sí, que yo te lo quiero decir.
(7) A: –Bueno, entonces ¿por qué no me lo quieres decir?
(8) B: –Que sí que quiero, ¡y dale!
(9) A: –Pues dímelo...

The first utterance in the dialogue is an indirect request for obtaining specific information, expressed through a question. One of the conditions for acquiring this information is to ask the question to someone who possesses it. In this case, the preparatory condition replaces the speech act of the question itself – the part stands for the whole. On the next level of interpretation, the interrogative construction is understood as an indirect request. The implicit content of the phrase "Do you know if there is a bakery nearby?" is "Can you tell me where there is a bakery nearby?" Since the interlocutor responds to the literal meaning of the question with the laconic answer "Well, yes," the speaker is forced to reformulate their request again, even more politely, using the verb *importar* in the *Condicional Simple* – modifiers characteristic of indirect negative politeness. However, the interlocutor deliberately and purposefully continues to respond according to the literal meaning of the utterances, in order to enhance the humorous effect of the sketch.

In this subsection (5.1.2), commands are also presented and are discussed alongside requests, as the analysis is based on Leech's idea that both types of speech acts exist on a continuum depending on the degree of obligation imposed on the interlocutor. The speaker changes their strategy depending on the interlocutor's response and the context. The interaction is shaped

[1] The scene is from the television show *Splunge* (2005), which features short sketches offering a humorous take on everyday situations. The title of the show originates from a sketch in *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, in which the comedic explanation of the word *splunge* is "neither good, nor bad, nor an expression of indecision."

by a continuous process of adaptation, in which the participants in communication balance between politeness and their communicative intention.

Depending on the degree of imposition, the formulation of the action may be expressed more directly and categorically. The following example illustrates how the speaker moves to a more strict command after the initial indirect formulation proves ineffective.

8) *(1) –Noelia, los cafés que ibas a traer ¿son para este año o para el próximo? (...)*
(2) –Perdona, se me ha olvidado. Está aquí el tassista.
(3) –Pásale a mi despacho, y tráenos los cafés de una puta vez.
(4) –Vale.

(Rico-Godoy 1999:76)

The reverse shift – from a command to a more indirect request – can be used as a strategy for restoring social balance or maintaining harmony in the conversation.

This chapter also examines requests for permission (section 5.2), analysing them as both primary and supportive speech acts. Requests for permission differ from requests for help or favour in that, unlike the latter, which aim to provoke an action on the part of the hearer, in requests for permission the speaker seeks the hearer's consent in order to perform the action themselves. In the following dialogue, in utterance (5), the speaker makes an indirect request for permission addressed to the interlocutor, related to the speaker's desire to give them a gift:

9) *(1) EL ODIOSO SEÑOR. ¿De qué color tiene usted las ligas, señorita?*
(2) PAULA. Azules.
(3) EL ODIOSO SEÑOR. ¿Azul claro o azul oscuro?
(4) PAULA. Azul oscuro.
(5) EL ODIOSO SEÑOR. (Sacando un par de ligas de un bolsillo.) ¿Me permite usted que le regale un par de azul claro? El elástico es del mejor. (Las estira y se las da.)
(6) PAULA. (Tomándolas.) Muchas gracias. ¿Para qué se ha molestado?
(7) EL ODIOSO SEÑOR. No vale la pena. En casa tengo más…

(Mihura 1986: 69-70)

The utterances preceding the request serve as preparatory turns necessary for clarifying specific details related to the upcoming gift. Paula's response (6), in turn, includes an expression

of gratitude ("Muchas gracias"), followed by a rhetorical question, which is a stereotypical social formula ("¿Para qué se ha molestado?"). Here, by using the verb *molestar*, Paula acknowledges the effort involved in giving a gift and presents it as something not obligatory, so as not to threaten the interlocutor's social image. The response in turn (7) ("No vale la pena. En casa tengo más…") continues this line of minimising the effort made and displaying modesty, which is an expression of mutual politeness and goodwill.

Requests for permission have also been studied as supportive speech acts within dialogue. This category includes requests that use typical formulations for asking permission but perform a different function. For example, the use of the phrase *¿Me permite?* in some cases does not seek prior approval but rather creates a smooth transition to the action itself. It serves as a politeness strategy that reduces the risk of a negative reaction.

Chapter Six – Speech Acts Involving Impoliteness Strategies

This chapter examines speech acts that are incompatible with politeness, with a focus on impoliteness strategies and their role in communication. The analysis acknowledges that, regardless of the participants' efforts to maintain a polite tone, manifestations of impoliteness inevitably occur.

Impoliteness can be either unintentional or deliberate, and the analysis explores both spontaneous and intentional instances of impolite behaviour. First, the chapter analyses unintentional expressions of impoliteness. The examples show that certain speech behaviour can be perceived as impolite due to a misinterpretation of the utterance - for instance, when jokes are misunderstood or in cases of excessive honesty, which is typical of children.

This section examines a situation in which the use of humour – typically seen as a politeness strategy – fails to achieve its intended effect. In the following example, the host, A. Buenafuente, and the guest, M. Casas, discuss the actor's work, noting that he tends to immerse himself deeply in the characters he plays and often annoys directors with questions and requests for guidance. The host decides to make a joke about his guest by telling a story that one of the directors the actor worked with used to hide from him.

10) *AB: –Oye, me han dicho que eres un currante exagerado y que hay como una unanimidad. (...)¿Sabes que dicen esto de ti? (...) ¿Es la verdad? ¿Pero hasta que limite? ¿No eres pesado?*

MC: –Soy un poco pesado.

AB: –Vaya, hombre. (…) Hay un director, que no diremos el nombre, que es un buenazo y nos ha dicho ¨Yo llegó un momento que me escondía un poquito en el rodaje¨. (se ríe)

MC: –¿Quién?

AB: –No te lo voy a decir.

MC: –No será Álex de la Iglesia, Álex de la Iglesia imposible.

AB: –Pero lo decía con cariño y con humor y decía ¨Es que ya no sabía qué matiz más darle¨ y me parece que lo explica muy bien. Es una obsesión sana de ¨Tío, cómo es esto ¨.

From the guest's brief silence, we understand that he does not perceive the joke as such and tries to figure out who made such a comment about him. To reduce the negative effect of the awkward joke, Buenafuente clarifies that the director was merely joking about his professionalism. In this case, the impoliteness results from a so-called *faux pas* – an unintentional mistake or unintended impolite remark.

In other instances, impoliteness serves to express disagreement or to provoke a specific reaction. It can be deliberate, employing either indirect or direct strategies of impoliteness. Impoliteness may be used to express criticism, disagreement, disdain, or to belittle the interlocutor's opinion, thus violating Leech's maxims. As a response, the interlocutor may attempt to defend themselves, ignore the insult, or counterattack, as seen in the following example. In it, we observe a combination of various strategies:

11) –Si vas a dar un portazo recuerda que es TU COCHE.

–Dime una cosa, Antonio, ¿por qué me tienes que tocar siempre los cojones de esa manera?

–Siempre me gustó tu manera de hablar delicada y suave, tan femenina.

–¿A ti qué te importa si tengo el período o no?

–Está demostrado que cuando os llega el período estáis más sensibilizadas, más irascibles y perdéis los nervios con más facilidad. Y eso, aunque tú te empeñes en negarlo, es un hecho. No hay por qué ocultarlo ni ofenderse de esa manera. Si tienes el período, pues lo comprenderé y seré más prudente. Aunque en tu caso, Carmencita, no es necesario que te venga para que te salgas de madre sin razón aparente.

–O sea, que además soy una histérica.

–Yo no he dicho que seas una histérica. Lo que he dicho es que de repente pierdes el control y te pones agresiva sin razón.

*(*Rico-Godoy *1997: 18-19)*

Provoked by Antonio's initial comment about the slamming of the door, Carmen replies with a question expressing her displeasure: *"¿A ti qué te importa…?"*. This type of question is what Culpeper (2016: 437) refers to as an *unpalatable question* – a discomforting or awkward question that carries an implicitly negative assertion. In response to this question, Antonio makes a sarcastic remark about Carmen's manner of expression. Sarcasm is one of the impoliteness strategies in Culpeper's taxonomy (Culpeper 1996: 356). In response, Carmen highlights the inappropriateness of Antonio's previous remark within the given conversational context. To defend his point of view, Antonio lists arguments that he deems relevant, related to Carmen's behaviour, and insists that his words are not meant to offend. In reality, however, he hints that Carmen's behaviour is irrational and unjustified. His use of the diminutive "Carmencita" can be interpreted as an expression of condescension, associated with an indirect negative impoliteness strategy (Culpeper 2016: 425). On the other hand, his belittling of Carmen's emotions and feelings violates Leech's maxim of sympathy (Leech 2014: 91). Antonio's intention to portray her as hysterical in an indirect – yet equally offensive – way can be seen as an attempt to undermine her emotions and feelings, once again violating Leech's maxim of sympathy.

The analysis shows that impoliteness in communication can manifest through a variety of strategies, such as direct attacks, sarcasm, ignoring the other speaker, and undermining the interlocutor's authority. These strategies can affect both the positive and negative face of the participants, leading to tension escalation and conflict. Often, impoliteness serves not only to express dissatisfaction but also as a means to challenge authority, defend one's own position, or assert control over the interaction.

Conclusion

The dissertation titled *"Politeness Strategies in Contemporary Spanish"* is dedicated to the analysis of the strategies used by participants in communication to express politeness in various types of speech acts.

The theoretical framework of the study is based on the classical theories of politeness developed by G. Leech, P. Brown, and S. Levinson. First and foremost, attention is focused on Leech's classification of speech acts in relation to politeness. This classification is based on the

criteria of cost and benefit for the participants in communication. According to it, speech acts are characterized as: 1) neutral with respect to politeness, 2) supportive of politeness, 3) conflicting with politeness, and 4) incompatible with politeness. It is important to note that the analysis in the dissertation focuses on three of these types of speech acts (types 2, 3, and 4), emphasizing the idea that politeness strategies are obligatory only for the third type – those that are intrinsically impolite.

Secondly, according to Brown and Levinson, politeness strategies can be: direct, indirect with positive politeness, indirect with negative politeness, and off-record (implicit). In speech acts where politeness is inherent, the use of these strategies is optional; in those that conflict with politeness, the use of politeness strategies is mandatory; and in speech acts incompatible with politeness, such strategies are irrelevant. In these latter cases, the impoliteness strategies proposed by J. Culpeper are applied. It is important to emphasise that the study also includes and analyses impoliteness strategies as opposites of politeness strategies in order to more fully highlight the specific functioning of both types.

Of central importance to this study are the ideas of Conversation Analysis, which maintain that speech acts should be examined within dialogic sequences – such as adjacency pairs – based on their mutual dependency and interrelation. The thesis proposed by E. Schegloff is confirmed – that within the text, the adjacency pair can be expanded in various ways: with pre-expansions, insert expansions, and post-expansions. During the analysis, it was established that these expansions can be related to both explicit and implicit information expressed in either the first or the second turn of speech, and that the occurrence of such expansions depends on the pragmatic features of the context.

The research approach and methodology in the dissertation are derived from cross-cultural pragmatics, which studies the structure of the speech act, as well as the external and internal modifiers that contribute to its successful execution and determine the logical connection and sequence of utterances in dialogue. The authors of this concept, House and Kádár, compare the structure of utterances and the corresponding modifiers used in the realisation of the same speech acts in English, Chinese, and German. Although the current study does not include a comparative analysis between different languages, the conceptual framework and methods of cross-cultural pragmatics prove to be both relevant and suitable for the analysis of politeness strategies within the different types of speech acts in a single language.

The dissertation also pays special attention to the ideas of T. van Dijk concerning context, contextual models, and the interaction between speech acts within the boundaries of a text. Particularly significant for the research is the cognitive-pragmatic model of communication developed by Escandell Vidal, which foregrounds the role of cognitive representations and shared background knowledge. Attention is also given to the relationship between politeness and relevance.

The theoretical framework outlined thus far serves as the foundation for the empirical analysis and encompasses such concepts as: types of speech acts in relation to politeness, maxims and strategies of politeness/impoliteness, social face, positive and negative politeness, adjacency pairs, head act and supporting moves, types of expansions of the adjacency pair, among others. The analysis of politeness strategies is conducted at the utterance level in close interaction with the communicative context.

The inclusion of key principles from contemporary pragmatic theory enables the development of a multifaceted, holistic model for studying pragmatic politeness strategies – one that closely reflects their dynamic and multidimensional functioning in real-life communication. Within such communication, the formal, semantic, and sociopragmatic aspects of linguistic elements complement and influence one another. The communicative approach presupposes the analysis and modelling of this interaction at a unified level, as well as the identification of the main features and patterns that characterise such interaction.

Politeness strategies in Spanish were examined within three types of speech acts: convivial, competitive, and conflictive speech acts (those that support politeness, those that contradict it, and those that are incompatible with it). The results of the analysis show that the examined types of speech acts can function either as primary speech acts or as supportive moves, depending on their degree of politeness and the parameters of the communicative context.

The illocutionary force of a speech act can be modified through the use of internal and external modifiers. Internal modifiers are of two types: lexical and syntactic. External modifiers are speech acts that exist outside the head speech act and function as supportive moves. These are often related to the presuppositional basis of the head act, to its felicity conditions, to its preparation and motivation, or to modifying the potential perlocutionary effect, among others. It is important to note that in this study, the analysis of politeness strategies goes beyond the boundaries of the

dialogic unit; the dynamic selection of appropriate means by the interlocutors and the sequence of utterances are interpreted within a broader context.

Within the convivial speech acts (the speech acts for which politeness is inherently present), we examined compliments, apologies, and expressions of gratitude. Based on the conducted analysis, it was established that their usage often leads to the emergence of stereotypical social formulas. When functioning as primary speech acts, they are frequently accompanied by optional external modifiers. For example, in compliments – additional comparisons with positive connotations; in apologies – justifications, explanations, etc. The study also focused on the responses to these respective speech acts within the adjacency pair. The reply utterances revealed a general tendency toward acceptance and minimisation – of the compliment, the interlocutor's efforts, the provided favour, or the other person's guilt. This type of strategy is associated with maintaining social face and communicative balance. Other possible responses include rejection of the compliment with an ironic remark or returning the compliment. In rare cases, the respective speech act may be ignored through conversational redirection.

The analysis also illustrated that convivial speech acts are frequently used as expansions to other speech acts within various adjacency pairs. There are instances of stereotypical combinations of speech acts such as greeting and compliment. Gratitude, as a speech act, often appears in combination with a request or refusal, as it helps mitigate the negative effect of the respective speech act.

The second part of the empirical study focuses on the analysis of competitive speech acts (speech acts that contradict politeness). For these, the use of politeness strategies is mandatory in order to achieve the communicative goals of the participants. In such cases, the use of appropriate modifiers of the illocutionary force of the speech act is key to the structuring of utterances. The dissertation analyses requests for help, favours, and permission, as well as commands.

The analysed examples show that the different types of requests are characterised by specific features. Requests for help and favours presuppose a greater degree of cooperation from the interlocutor and, therefore, include more strategic moves – for instance, providing additional explanations aimed at mitigating potential imposition or incorporating modifiers that reduce the speaker's pressure on the interlocutor's actions. Requests for permission are characterised by the fact that the benefit is for the speaker but depends on the interlocutor; thus, they include modifiers aimed at eliciting consent. One type of internal modifier in these cases is the use of past tense or

interrogative constructions with the verbs *importar* or *molestar*, which are typical of indirect strategies involving negative politeness. External modifiers often consist of expressions through which the speaker attempts to engage and prepare the interlocutor before issuing the request, as well as to prevent a potential refusal. Some of the preparatory strategies may include the felicity conditions for a successful request.

Commands are analysed alongside requests, as the analysis draws on Leech's idea that the difference between commands and requests lies in the varying degree of obligation associated with the expected action (*terms of optionality*). The examples highlight the dynamic nature of conversation, demonstrating how speakers adjust their strategies depending on the interlocutor's response and the context. In certain situations, shifts occur from indirect to more direct requests, and vice versa. Interaction is presented as a continuous process of adaptation, in which communicative participants negotiate between politeness and their communicative intention.

The dissertation also focuses on responses to different types of requests, as these responses partially reflect the effectiveness of the politeness strategies used in the initial utterances. Accepting a request is associated with expressing solidarity or negotiating certain conditions, while refusals are typically mitigated through justifications or topic redirection in an effort to maintain social harmony. Requests that elicit positive responses and cooperation usually contain fewer modifiers and expansions, as in these cases the addressee perceives the requested favour as an activity that does not require significant effort. In situations where the interlocutor is not inclined to cooperate and seeks a reason to decline, the speaker is compelled to employ more persuasion and politeness strategies to achieve their goal. When a request is refused, external modifiers such as justifications, explanations, apologies, and the like are often used.

Last but not least, the analysis draws attention to speech acts that contradict politeness, as politeness and impoliteness are two sides of the same coin. In this type of speech acts, strategies operate that are based on Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies, but with a reversed orientation. They can be direct, aiming at a clear and unambiguous expression of the speech act, but are often associated with the inferential models of language – namely, with indirect attacks on the interlocutor's social image. Impoliteness strategies are also examined within a broader dialogic context, where various types of responses emerge, including rejection of the impolite behaviour, attempts at defence, and counterattacks. The analysis also identifies humorous effects in some instances.

The analysed examples show that speech acts which contradict politeness involve a greater number of modifiers and preceding or embedded expansions compared to inherently polite speech acts, where the use of such linguistic elements is optional. When expressing speech acts that may have a negative impact on the interlocutor, expansions and modifiers are a mandatory part of the politeness strategy. Speech acts that are incompatible with politeness can also include modifiers that reinforce their illocutionary force, in which case these expressions intensify the negative effect on the interlocutor.

The conducted analysis further confirms the thesis that speech acts are not used in isolation within dialogue. Depending on the context, they may function as primary or supporting speech acts, with internally polite acts often serving as supportive moves for speech acts that contradict politeness. The latter, in turn, may function in support of speech acts aimed at terminating communication. The choice and functioning of appropriate politeness strategies are closely tied to the pragmatic context, which makes dynamic interaction and adequate interpretation possible.

Based on the results of the study, the following **scientific contributions** can be highlighted:

1. For the first time in Bulgarian Hispanic studies, politeness strategies in various types of speech acts in contemporary Spanish are examined in the light of the latest achievements in pragmatic theory. The analysis is conducted within the framework of the communicative approach – at the level of utterance and in conditions of real communication.

2. During the course of the research, an analytical and integrative model was developed, based on a multi-faceted and holistic approach to politeness strategies. These are analysed in terms of their internal structure, external modifiers, within the adjacency pair, and in the context of the entire dialogue.

3. The results of the analysis contribute to a deeper understanding of the use of speech acts depending on the communicative context. Two types of functioning are distinguished: as a primary speech act and as a supporting act, which is part of the preparatory conditions for the successful realisation of another speech act.

4. Regarding the supporting role of speech acts, it is important to note that the analysis revealed that internally polite communicative actions support those that are inherently incompatible with politeness. The latter, in turn, are often used in support of speech acts aimed at interrupting communication.

5. Within the framework of this dissertation, for the first time in Bulgarian Hispanic studies, the relationship between implicit and explicit information in the unfolding of politeness strategies is examined. The analysis demonstrates that supporting speech acts explicate part of the presuppositional foundation of the main utterance and are often related to the felicity conditions of the respective speech act.

6. The focus on the functioning of politeness strategies not only in the adjacency pair but also within a broader dialogic context allows for the systematisation of certain specific features of their use: standardised and stereotypical use of speech acts in certain social formulas, as well as in fixed combinations of speech acts.

7. Also of contributive nature are the conclusions related to the correlation between the internal potential of a given speech act and its use within a particular strategy. In speech acts that contradict politeness, expansions and modifiers are more frequently encountered, as they serve to mitigate the illocutionary force of the utterance. In speech acts that are polite by nature, the use of such linguistic devices is optional.

8. In the dissertation, the sequential and logical organisation of utterances in dialogue is analysed in the context of the complex and dynamic interaction between speech acts. The choice of appropriate politeness strategies is interpreted in relation to the parameters of the communicative situation and the interlocutors' reactions. This approach enriches pragmatic theory related to the study of dialogic texts.

9. Special attention is given to the interpretive aspects of the functioning of politeness strategies depending on the pragmatic context. The proposed model can also be applied to research on the influence of the sociocultural parameters of context on these strategies in different languages, thereby expanding the field and perspectives of analysis.

10. From a practical point of view, the results of the dissertation can be used in Spanish language teaching, as mastery of politeness strategies contributes to successful social interaction in communication. In addition to a solid knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, learners of Spanish must also be able to express themselves appropriately in various communicative situations, balance different interests, and achieve their goals through communicative cooperation.

List of Publications Related to the Topic of the Dissertation

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