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POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: WAYS OF
EXPRESSING POLITENESS IN THE EFL TEXTBOOKS

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PREFACE

Politeness has always been and will be a large part of the world, different cultures, and plays an important role in people's lives. Every person would like to be respected and expects from other people a respectful and polite attitude towards themselves. Politeness is the foundation of any language. Since the English language is full of niceties and formalities, ignoring them makes come across as rude and unprofessional. Politeness helps to deal with other people easily and smoothly. Politeness ensures conflict-free and respectful communication with other people and shows good manners, intelligence, and the ability to conduct a conversation. There are many subtleties and peculiarities in the strategies of expressing politeness, which, unfortunately, people often forget or do not know at all. And given the fact that intercultural communication plays an important role in the modern world, knowledge and the ability to communicate politely are essential.

This research aims to define what politeness is; explain the difference between positive and negative politeness; analyze strategies for expressing politeness in English textbooks for the English learning class.

The structure of the paper is the following: the Introduction, Chapter I *What is politeness*, Chapter II *Analysis and results*, and the Conclusion. The introduction provides an overview of the topic and its importance. Chapter I is the theoretical part of the paper; it defines what politeness is and explains the difference between positive and negative politeness. Chapter II contains analyses of strategies of expressing politeness provided by the textbooks for the English learning class. The Conclusion summarizes the paper, gives comments on the hypothesis.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English is one of the most popular languages in the world. Approximately 2 billion people speak English, and about 1 billion are studying it. English is international common tongue. In many countries, English language is the one offered in schools as an additional language for learning. Even people who have never had to learn English still know and understand the most basic phrases in this language. This means that English allows people born in different countries to find a common language and have at least basic conversations (Naved 2022).

In addition to this English is considered to be the language of education. English is considered to be one of the main languages in the sciences and research. Majority of the famous studies and books are written in English. Different Universities and Colleges offer education around the world in English. A thousand literary works of great and world-famous authors, such as Emily Dickinson, are written in English. Some of the most popular film and music studios, like Hollywood and Sony Music Entertainment, release and produce movies and songs in English. (Naved 2022). English is everywhere and has covered all aspects of human life: science, media, study, work, and leisure. In the modern world, life without knowledge of the English language is hard.

Whilst speaking another language, in this case, English, learners do not communicate with people who speak the same language as them. It means that English culture may be unfamiliar (Storozhilova 2017).

The Definition of Communication

Communication is "the creation and exchange of meaning." It is the process of sending and receiving messages in different ways: writing or speaking, signs, signals, and behavior (Nordquist 2019).

Communication is a crucial skill that plays a huge role not only in personal relationships but studying and the workplace. Among many benefits good communication skills will help/give to a person:

- form closer relationships,
- bring unity to class,

- take on leadership roles,
- various career and live opportunities,
- the ability to quickly adapt to a new society,
- good credibility and reputation among people.

No matter how the communication takes place, orally or in written form, effective and productive communication undoubtedly involves the participation of all participants in communication, not one-way communication (Lancaster 2021).

According to the National curricula of Estonia (2017), appendix 2: foreign language states that the subject field of foreign languages contains language competences, *culture* (value judgements and conduct), and learning skills. Cultural and value competence is developed by guiding students to:

- to value human relations and actions from the perspective of generally applicable moral standards and ethics;
- to value the cultural heritage of their own country and other countries, current cultural events, human and cultural diversity;
- to value generally accepted human and social values, incl. tolerance and cooperation, thereby acknowledging their values

Thereby, intercultural communication concentrates on the recognition and respect of cultural differences, supports the growth of intercultural sensitivity on the part of different individuals to enable empathic understanding and respectful attitude between different cultures. Language is just one of the requirements for successful communication. In addition to the language, it is important to know the culture of the people, their traditions, values, their view of the world. According to Milton (2013), communication is much more than just an elementary transmission of information: it is the mutual creation of meaning. In itself, information is not meaningful; but when a person interpreters and puts own beliefs, and feelings, only then do information attains value. Each person belongs to different groups that limit them to certain boundaries. These boundaries differentiate one group of people from another group. Within one group, people communicate with each other completely different than with people outside the group. A distinction may or may not include the use of another language, but it always involves diverse kinds of conventions of meaning and action.

What about classroom communication? Classroom communication is the main point of teaching, it is like a description of it. Communication between the student and the teacher based on mutual respect and the desire to learn and understand new things together is the example of effective classroom communication (Rise Vision Blog 2021).

Within the classroom, the teacher is not the only one who should be responsible for good communication. Of course, the teacher has to be the founder of it, show desirable behavior, and contribute to the atmosphere (Rise Vision Blog 2021).

Respectful classroom communication is the basis of good educational outcomes and happens when both teacher and student work together on making classroom a safe space.

Communication in the classroom can occur in a lot of ways. Traditional classroom communication is formed from verbal and non-verbal communication- writing on whiteboards and chalkboards, asking written or spoken questions. Many different aids can be used to establish pleasant communication between teacher and students/student and student. Often teamwork comes to the rescue, they help to establish contact, to get to know each other better, and make friends with each other. Watching and discussing videos or movies also helps break the ice and start a discussion. When everyone in class knows each other at least a little, it helps students to relax, feel better about expressing ones opinion. When everyone is familiar with each other communication goes easier (Rise Vision Blog 2021).

The Notion of Politeness

Politeness is one of the most important parts of any language. Etiquette, or politeness, originated in France in the 1700s. The concept of etiquette appeared during the reign of King Louis XIV. Initially, etiquette was a set of written rules that the king used to remind visitors to the palace about the rules of conduct in it. Such rules included where to walk, sit, or what to wear when visiting the palace. These rules pleased the noble visitors of the palace to their liking and spread throughout Europe. Consequently, in the 18th century, noble people actively used etiquette to indicate their status. And just like that, by the 19th-century etiquette comprised a set of rules for the behavior of people with each other and covered all aspects of human life (Russell 2020).

The words *polite* and *politeness* are related to such words as cleanliness or polished, planned, civilized, or courtly activity. The English word *polite* is derived from the Latinate verb *polire* which is *politus*, meaning *polished* or *smoothed*. The word *courtesy*, in French *courtoisie*, refers back to its original root, meaning to polite or planned behavior in the court (Indiana University Bloomington n.d.)

In modern online dictionaries, the word polite is defined as:

1. of, relating to, or having the characteristics of advanced culture

2. marked by refined cultural interests and pursuits, especially in arts and essays

3. showing or characterized by correct social usage

4. marked by an appearance of consideration, tact, deference, or courtesy

5. marked by a lack of roughness or crudities (Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia n.d.)

Etymology dictionary, showed word polite as:

- polite (adj.)

Late 14th century, "polished, burnished" (mid-13century as a surname). The literal sense is obsolete in English; the sense of "elegant, cultured" (of literature, arts, etc.) is from c. 1500; of persons, "refined or cultivated in speech, manner, or behavior," by 1620s. The meaning "behaving courteously, showing consideration for others" is by 1748 (implied in politely). Related: Politeness (Online Etymology Dictionary n.d.)

In the present days, politeness refers to the ability to communicate with respect and tact. People who start communication with others need to be considerate and courteous with another person- otherwise, they may face misunderstandings. Politeness is about knowing etiquette and expressing good manners. Sean Dowdall (2017) talks about how politeness affects communication. He points out that:

- Politeness attracts positive attention. People notice good manners and attitudes and immediately try to conform, to behave in a friendly and polite manner. For instance, seeing a smile makes people smile too.
- Politeness gives inconvenient situations a chance to be resolved. When something bad happens, such as an unpleasant situation with another person, usually apologizing

and accepting the mistake can help resolve the conflict and leave both parties satisfied.

- Politeness helps to clearly express wants and receive the desired response to them. The ability to politely convey personal wants will help others understand it accurately.

Politeness is evidence that a person treats other people with sensitivity and respect (Davis 2021). Every language and culture of this world has its own unique concept of politeness. People tend to use different ways of expressing politeness in both behavior and language. What seems polite to a person from one country may seem improper to a person from another country. In some languages, it is more than enough to say a simple *please* to be polite, in another you need to use particular vocabulary and use specific grammar depending on the situation.

For instance, David Bailey (2016), a British emigrant, compares the British and Estonian ways of communicating. In Britain smiling and actively expressing feelings is a way of acting polite, in comparison with Estonia, where people tend to be succinct and to the point. For British people this appears too direct and is considered rude, but in Estonian people do not show many emotions and trying to avoid small talk. Talking a lot and being the center is considered indecent and disrespectful in Estonia. Besides, in Estonia it is not customary to interrupt the interlocutor. All participants in the dialogue wait for one to finish speaking or wait for a question to be asked. Estonians don't talk much about private life and value private space. If in Britain hugging a person at the first meeting is considered normal, in Estonia is acceptable shaking hands.

When learning a foreign language, it is essential to pay attention to linguistic ways of expressing politeness in the specific language.

Politeness is about keeping good relations with your interlocutor, whether in writing or orally. There are two types of politeness (Online Cambridge Dictionary n,d):

– first shows the listener or reader that they are valued and respected;

– second consist of changing or softening expressions not to appear too direct or forceful.

Politeness has attracted the attention of linguists several times except on a deeper level. The foundations of the theory of politeness were recognized in the work of Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson *Politeness: some universals on language usage*. The authors base their

theory of politeness on the concept of "face" suggested by E. Goffman and differentiate between "negative" and "positive" faces.

Although politeness is a considerable part of communication and language learning, which includes different strategies and theories, the topic of this research has not been yet studied by Estonian students. The closest found research on the topic of politeness is conducted by Alupere Mari-Liis (2014) on the topic of *Tu/Vous absence in English: teaching compensatory politeness strategies for EFL-ESL learners with various backgrounds*. Alupere (2014) focused on the importance of teaching intercultural communicative competence. One of her works main focuses is the compensatory politeness strategies for EFL and ESL learners with various backgrounds.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to define what politeness is; explain the difference between positive and negative politeness; analyze strategies of expressing politeness in the textbooks for English as Foreign Language students.

The hypothesis of the research is that although the topic of politeness is presented in the English textbooks in question, they do not include a variety of strategies.

 The research questions are:

1) What is politeness?

2) What is the difference between positive and negative politeness?

3) What strategies of expressing politeness are used in the English learning class?

CHAPTER I THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Teaching Politeness in the EFL classroom

1.1.1 Definition of EFL

In the beginning, it is important to define the term EFL which is mentioned in the name of the research and throughout it. EFL or English as a Foreign Language classroom implies being in a country where English is not the widely spoken language. In the EFL classroom, students share one culture and native language, and the teacher is the only English speaker (Oxford University Press ELT 2011).

1.1.2 Teaching EFL classroom

Students from English Foreign Language classes especially need (Oxford University Press 2011):

- A lot of practice, especially speaking. The teacher aims to help the students to speak more English; to use and practice it outside the classroom; to encourage them in every possible way for their courage.
- To be familiar with English not only as a list of rules but to hear and be familiar with "living English".
- The teacher must support the desire of students to learn the language. Learning a new language can be an exceedingly challenging task, especially when you are learning that language while living in a different language environment.

The question that often arises among teachers of English as a foreign language is whether it is necessary to give students at least some cultural background. In compliance with Susan Verner (n.d.), culture always finds its way into the classroom. Culture is an integral part of a person, how a person behaves, feels, and thinks. The task of English teachers is that when students learn a foreign language, they also need to familiarize themselves and learn about foreign culture. Acquaintance with culture can occur in unusual ways - watching movies, reading books, and even listening to music. Any of the methods are good when they evoke a desire for knowledge in students and bring them positive emotions. That being the case, culture needs to be a substantial part of the curriculum, at school or at a university (Castro and Bohórquez 2006). Without a minimum knowledge of the culture, it is difficult to understand and be polite in another language.

Teaching politeness to the students who are learning English as a foreign language is not easy. Teaching is the process of attending to people's needs, experiences, and feelings, and making specific interventions to help them learn particular things (Smith 2016). Therefore, it is important to start teaching politeness with historical background. When teaching English for the EFL students, teachers need to recognize and take into account differences between the cultures of students and English-speaking culture. It is a clever idea to make a few activities where students get a chance to discuss politeness in their culture and contrast/compare it to English.

1.2 The Politeness Theory of Brown and Levinson

Politeness repeatedly attracted the attention of many famous linguists. In the field of linguistics, there are many works on the topic of the theory of politeness- Robin Lakoff's Theory of Politeness, Geoffrey Leech's Theory of Politeness, Bruce Frasher, and William Nolen's Theory of Politeness, and so on. One of the most well-known and influential works in the field of politeness studies is the work of Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson. In 1987 they released the book "Politeness: Some universals in language usage." In the book, Brown and Levinson specified that the concept of politeness is the ability to apply the right strategies in the communication process so that all the communicants feel comfortable. The theory of politeness is based on the concept of "face"- a person's self-image. So, a positive face is the desire of the person to be liked, their desire to be appreciated and approved. A negative face is the desire to be untouched, to be independent (Brown and Levinson 1987: 61).

1.2.1 Positive Politeness

Positive politeness is the reassurance of the listener that they are a valuable person. Positive politeness is aimed at eliminating the distance between communicants. Positive politeness strategies are intended to avoid giving offense by highlighting friendliness.

As specified by Brown and Levinson (1987: 101-129), there are different strategies for expressing positive politeness that needs to be emitted:

Strategy 1. Attending interests, wants, and needs of the interlocutor.

This strategy assumes that the speaker should focus attention on the change or on something that the hearer would like the speaker to pay attention to/get approval for.

Example: *What a great new shirt you have! When did you buy it?* or *Your new hair color is amazing! ... May I ask a favor of you?*

This strategy also includes turning possibly awkward moments into something completely normal (for example, by turning everything into a joke).

Strategy 2. Exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy.

Exaggerated intonation, stress, expression, intonation, and flow.

Example: *What an incredible new house you bought!*

Strategy 3. Claim common ground.

In-group identity makers. Using in-group identity makers helps the speaker claim common ground with the hearer. These include in-group usages of address forms, of language or dialect, of jargon or slang, and ellipsis.

In group identity makers include such generic names, as "mate, buddy, honey, dear, babe, brother, sister, sweetheart" and so on.

Example: *let's go, honey!*

Safe topics. An additional way to claim common ground is to choose safe topics on which the speaker can agree with the hearer. This will satisfy the hearer's need to be right/ listened to.

Strategy 4. Seek agreement.

Repetition. Means repeating what the speaker has said, in a conversation, to show agreement. This will make the speaker feel heard and better about their positive face.

Strategy 5. Joke. Joking is a basic positive-politeness technique. It helps break the ice and put communicants at ease.

1.2.2 Negative Politeness

Negative politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987) takes into account the desire of the interlocutor to be independent, to have the right to freedom of action. While positive

politeness is free-ranging, negative politeness is specific and focused. Negative politeness strategies, or distancing strategies, are aimed at making communication with as little pressure on the interlocutor as possible. Negative politeness does not include attempts to please each other, excessive friendliness and are not aimed at the rapprochement of interlocutors.

Negative politeness strategies include (Brown and Levinson 1987: 129-211):

Strategy 1. Be conventionally indirect.

This strategy implies realizing that the hearer might not want to be involved in the dialogue. Taking that into consideration, the use

of phrases and sentences that have contextually unequivocal meanings which are different from their literal meanings, can assist communication.

Strategy 2. Question, hedge.

In linguistics, a verbal hedge is a word or phrase that makes a statement less forceful or assertive (Nordquist 2020). Adding "maybe," "sort of," "suppose" in a sentence.

Example: *I think/ suppose/ assume/ believe that...*

Strategy 3. Minimize the imposition.

The speaker usually resorts to this strategy to propose that what they say should not be taken too seriously.

Minimizing the imposition can be achieved with the phrases like:

I just want to ask you if you could give me a little advice.

Strategy 4. Give deference.

Giving deference, in this case, means that the speaker puts the hearer above themselves. The speaker praises the hearer. This, again, minimizes the pressure.

Example: *I'm so grateful for being able to work with you!*

Despite being popular and known, The Politeness Theory of Brown and Levinson theory faced some critique. The main problem was that the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson

is directed only at Western culture. So the strategies that Brown and Levinson present in their theory can differ and be received differently from culture to culture (LuMing 1993).

1.3 Additional Ways of Expressing Politeness

In English, there are different ways to express courtesy and gratitude. The English language is known for its wide variety of politeness phrases.

For example, in English, there are many ways to express gratitude (English with Kim n.d.):

• the neutral and most used *thank you* or *thanks*. The British and Americans are known for their politeness and the excessive use of the word *thank you*.

To say thank you is to show your gratitude. Such a simple sign means that the person understands and respects that the other person spent their time, offered help, paid attention.

• phrases with added emphasis/expressiveness: *I appreciate it, thank you very much, I`m grateful*

Suffix *-ish* is additional way of making speech less direct, adding it makes saying not so factual. Example: We are going there at fifth-ish.

1.3.1 Modal expressions and modal verbs

Modal expressions are also a way of expressing politeness. Using certain modal verbs, like *could, might, should, would*, etc., can make speech more polite. Adding a modal verb acts as a softener for a strong opinion or request. Modal verbs will make the listener more receptive to saying (English with Kim n.d.)

Modal verbs are not used independently but only in combination with the infinitive of a semantic verb. They denote the possibility, ability, likelihood, the need to perform an action expressed by a semantic verb.

Each modal verb has a unique meaning. For instance, the verb should, according to Online Cambridge Dictionary (n. d.) is used

• to give advice and/or make suggestions (*She should tell him what she saw*)

• to talk about what is likely to happen (*There should be so many people at the mall*)

- to talk about what is the ideal or best thing to do in a situation (*There should be more dog parks in the city*)

The verb *should* also act as a more formal alternative to *would*.

1.3.2 Softening Words

Other way of making speech politer is to make expressions less direct. So-called "softening words" or hedges are non-judgmental words and phrases, added words like *a bit, quite, please, etc.* For example, instead of saying *Turn the lights off* it is better to say *Would you mind turning the lights off, please?* (OET 2018).

This also connects with using questions instead of statements. It will make speech sound polite, and a person more considerate.

1.3.3 Hedges

Hedges are a significant part of polite conversation and make saying less direct. Hedges contain modal expressions including modal verbs and adverbs, vague language, and some verbs. Hedges are commonly used in writing, especially in academic writing. For example, It has been generally agreed that (Online Cambridge Dictionary n.d.)

Online Cambridge Dictionary (n.d) denotes that vague language is mostly used in oral communication and implies adding words like *about, kind of, sort of*, to make statements less factual. Vague language can be used in different situations. When name of something is unknown vague questions and phrases like *stuff, type, it's a kind of ..., it's a sort of ...* . Example: *Where is the thing for brushing teeth.*

1.3.4 Names and Titles.

Someone's title is a word such as *Mr., Mrs.,* which is used before their name in order to show their status or profession (Collins Online Dictionary n.d.) Last names and titles are considered the more formal and polite way of addressing someone (Duffin n.d.). For example, if a person is unknown, the appropriate way of addressing them would be *Ms./Mr./Professor* and the last name (optional).

Male titles *Mr.* or *Mister* as well can be used when person is older, not well known, not a doctor or a professor. If name is unknown title *Sir* can be used. The title *Mr.* used regardless of if the man is married, single, divorced, or widowed.

Female titles *Mrs., Ms., Miss*.

Mrs. is a female title, which is already outdated by this time and is not used so widely. However, *Mrs.* comes from the word *Mistress*, and indicated that the woman is "owned" by her husband.

Ms. is not a marital status indication. Used in relation to any unfamiliar woman.

Miss is used for unmarried women and can be used for girls under 18 years old.

Title *Professor* is used when someone is professor. Usually used with the name following the status. Example: *Professor Ben*.

Title *Doctor* is the same as the professor (Duffin n.d.)

CHAPTER II ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

2.1 Methodology

The theoretical part of the thesis covered the research questions such as what politeness is, and what strategies of expressing politeness are used in the English learning class, explained the difference between positive and negative politeness. And that leads to the practical part of the paper.

Chapter II aims to analyze strategies for expressing politeness given to the students in the present time in the English learning class. Considering that politeness is an integral part of communication between people, this study is necessary in order to see and understand how politeness is taught. How much attention is paid to politeness in textbooks, how it is presented, and what techniques for expressing politeness can be found in textbooks.

In order to achieve this, the qualitative method was chosen- discourse analysis and introspection: analyzing the ways of expressing politeness in the English as a Foreign Language textbooks (A2-B2 level).

The first book being the *English in Use* textbook by Cambridge University Press. This textbook has been first published in the year 1997 and was last reissued in 2017. The version of the textbook selected for analysis was released in 2017 and is suitable for teaching children from pre-intermediate (A2) to intermediate (B1) levels of English knowledge. According to the Cambridge University Press (2017), a present textbook contains approximately 2,000 new words and phrases and is based on common everyday topics and involves units on different aspects of language. It can be used for working in class or for self-study for learners at the pre-intermediate (A2) to intermediate (B1) on the Council of Europe scale (Cambridge University Press 2017).

The second textbook is *Destination B2. Grammar & Vocabulary.* Published by Macmillan Publishers Limited in the year 2008. This textbook is suitable for students who are preparing to take the B2 exam and has been specially designed for all English learners. Contains the latest program and consists of 28 variable grammar and vocabulary units (Macmillan Publishers Limited 2008).

The third textbook is *English for Everyone* - Intermediate level. The authors of this textbook are Gill Johnson, Tim Bowen, and Professor Susan Barduhn who are authors, trainers for teachers, conference speakers, and English teachers. English for Everyone is suitable for teaching in class or a self-study. This textbook covers the core skills such as grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and contains topics like describing and sharing experiences, relationships, problem-solving, etc (Dorling Kindersley Limited 2016).

The fourth book is *Oxford Practice Grammar* for Intermediate level published by Oxford University Press in 2006. Each unit of the textbooks starts with explanation of the grammar and is followed by exercises. Special attention is given to the grammar topic that are often a problem (Oxford University Press 2006).

Four different textbooks aimed at three different levels of English proficiency were taken to see the extent to which politeness is studied at different levels. The choice of textbooks was based on their language level - from level A1 to B2, in order to track what techniques for expressing politeness are offered to English Foreign Language students at different stages of learning. In addition, selected textbooks were published from 2006 to 2017, which makes them not out of date and relevant. Since no recommended list of textbooks for English Foreign Language learners in Estonia was found, textbooks were selected based on recommendations and ratings on the Internet. According to the Oxford University Press (n.d) website, the *Oxford Practice Grammar* textbook is the perfect balance of grammar explanation and practice and got a 4.6/5 star rating on Goodreads and Amazon. *English for Everyone, Destination B2. Grammar & Vocabulary, English in Use* are all with 4.5-4.7/5 star ratings and good reviews.

In addition, Oxford and Cambridge are the two leading providers of textbooks for learning English and their textbooks are used in Estonian schools.

2.2 Analysis

For the analysis of the textbooks, several criteria will be used. Those criteria will be based on different strategies for expressing politeness. Thus, the following points/topics should be identified in each textbook: phrases with added emphasis/expressiveness- *showing emotions* (*I appreciate it, thank you very much, I`m grateful*); modal verbs and modal expressions; softening words and expressions. The search for these topics will be made in different parts of textbooks- contents and study units.

2.2.1 English Vocabulary in Use - Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate

After looking at all the unit names in contents, several were found that fit the theme of politeness. Majority of them are under the entitlement *Functional Language*: unit 65 apologies, excuses and thanks; unit 66 requests, permission and suggestions.

Looking deeper into these units, such ways of expressing politeness can be found:

• Unit 65 Apologies, Excuses and Thanks

Unit 65 talks about how people can apologize in many ways. Many various phrases and words in English can help make an apology more sincere and honest. For example, adding words terribly or really in front of sorry can make an apology sound sorrier, or how *I beg your pardon* is a formal apology, often used if accidentally walking into someone. *Excuse me* is explained simply as a phrase said when in need to leave (Cambridge University Press 2017). For example, according to the Britannica Online Dictionary (n.d) saying *excuse me* is a polite way of starting a conversation. The phrase *excuse me* can be especially used when needed to start a little chat with someone unknown, trying to get attention from a person, or disagreeing with someone. It is also used as a polite apology for a minor inconvenience, fault, or offense. The given phrase also acts as a polite way of asking someone to repeat something.

In this unit, the cases in which saying thank you is needed are not explained, but phrases that can be used to express gratitude are given. For example, *cheers* (informal), *no problem* (informal), *that's very kind of you* (polite and formal) (Cambridge University Press 2017).

• Unit 66 Requests, Permission and Suggestions

Unit 66 focuses on useful phrases for asking requests, asking permission, and making suggestions. The only explanation this unit provides is when the request becomes more substantial it is only right to use longer phrases that sound more polite. For example, *I was wondering if you could lend me some money until tomorrow* (Cambridge University Press 2017).

Making requests longer and less direct is actually a sign of negative politeness and another way of making speech politer. According to Online Cambridge Dictionary (n.d), there are multiple ways of asking for something- a polite and indirect way is what usually used, for

example, using *can, could, would you mind if* and *may* (words can and will are more informal). Adding *please* to the request is also great way of making request sound polite.

In addition, in this textbook non-grammatical ways of making speech polite can be found as well. For instance, on page 26 in Unit 10 *describing appearance*, described how to talk about a person's appearance. When describing a person's look, it is rude to say that someone is ugly, using a world *ordinary* instead is more polite. Instead of saying that someone is fat, it is right and more polite to say that someone is overweight.

2.2.2 Oxford Practice Grammar- Intermediate

- Unit 50 Asking People To Do Things

Firs part of unit 50 talks about the importance of polite requests. It points out that *could* is more polite than *can*. In the request, not using phrases like *would you mind* or *could you* can make the request sound too abrupt and demanding.

Second part of unit is about the imperative. Polite expression are very needed when using an imperative. Even people in authority use polite phrases and *please* when giving orders.

Third part focuses on asking for things. When asking for something it is possible to not use polite phrases like *Can I/ Could I* but is necessary to add *please* (Oxford University Press 2006).

Overall, units 50 to 52 are based on modal verbs and modal phrases. Modal verbs are so-called softeners for making suggestions or requests.

2.2.3 English for Everyone- Intermediate

English for Everyone coursebook contains many different units suitable for the theme of politeness

- Unit 44 Polite Requests

This unit focuses on verbs *can, may*, and *could* for asking permission or a favor.

Unit 44 explains that verb *can* is mostly used in informal situations. To make request more formal it is better to use verb *could* or *may*. In this way, verb *can* is for asking request from a friend or a well-known person, *could* or *may* for a bussiness or a stranger.

In addition, this unit of textbook points out that informal answers also use *can*. Example *Can I borrow your book? Yes, you can*. And for making negative answers to request politer phrases "*Im sorry/ Im afraid*" can be added. Example *Excuse me, may I ask for your phone number? Im afraid i do not give out my number to strangers.*

- Unit 75 Polite Questions

Like in the Destination B2 Grammar & Vocabulary textbook, this unit is based on indirect questions. Indirect questions usually start with an opening polite phrase *do you know..., could you tell me...* (Dorling Kindersley Limited 2016).

2.2.4 Destination B2 Grammar & Vocabulary

In the Destination B2 Grammar & Vocabulary textbook, only a few units attract attention.

• Unit 13 Modals: Ability, Permission, Advice, Criticism, Obligation and Necessity, Degrees of Certainty

The only mention of politeness strategies is found in the section modals: permission. This section explains the use of such modal verbs as *may, could, and can*. Modal verbs *may/could/can* are used when asking or giving permission. Important to remember, that may is more polite than could, but could is more polite than can (Macmillan Publishers Limited 2008).

Matt Ellis (2021) explains that modal verbs are a type of so-called helper verbs or auxiliary verbs, which means that modal verbs are used with main verbs to change their meaning slightly. Acording to India Amos (n.d.), modal verbs are a major part of English grammar. Modal verbs are very versatile and can be used in many different situations. Modal verbs can be especially helpful in making speech more polite. However, it is good to not use to many modal verbs in one conversation because it might give the impression of being unsure about personal wants.

• Unit 19 Indirect Questions

Unlike direct questions, indirect questions are a more polite way to ask for information or make requests. Indirect questions are used when asking a question from an unknown person or asking for a favor from a friend. In the second case, indirect questions help to avoid sounding too demanding (Everyday Grammar 2018).

Indirect questions are formed from introductory phrase or question followed by clause with standard word order. Introductory phrases and question for forming indirect questions are *can/could you tell me...; could you let me know...?; I wonder if you could tell me...; I would like to know... .* So, the example of an indirect question would be *Excuse me, could you tell me when next bus arrives?*

When asking for the favor that requires a lot of effort, indirect questions help your opponent know that you recognize that this favor requires a lot of dedication (Everyday Grammar 2018). Thereby, for example, question *Can you help me write my final essay*? will turn into politer and considerate *Would it be possible for you to help me write my final essay?*

2.3 Results

The aim of the present paper was to analyze strategies for expressing politeness provided to the students in the modern time in the English learning class. As stated in appendix 2: foreign languages in the National Curricula of Estonia (2017), textbooks need to include rules of politeness and good conduct, formation of value judgements, tolerant attitudes, etc., but there are no recommended norms. In this way, the results of the analysis of textbooks allow the conclusion that the topic of politeness is presented in chosen textbooks for English as Foreign Language students, but the strategies for expressing politeness presented in them are of the same type.

First textbook *English Vocabulary in Use* for Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate level students, brings awareness to useful phrases for asking requests, asking permission, and making suggestions. Given textbook lacks deeper explanations, everything is touched on superficially and in some cases, a formal/informal mark is added in brackets next to the word.

The *Oxford Practice Grammar- Intermediate* and *English for Everyone- Intermedi*ate both include only topics of polite requests and questions. They bring a lot of attention to importance of modal phrases in polite speech and provide examples.

The *Destination B2. Grammar & Vocabulary* positions itself as a textbook for learning English at the Upper-Intermediate level and describes more substantial strategies for making a speech politer. The textbook for the Upper-Intermediate level covers the topic of indirect questions well, explains how they are formed from introductory phrases or questions followed by clauses with standard word order, and gives examples.

Thus, textbooks for levels A2-B1 mainly include topics for making requests, asking permission, and making a suggestion. The textbook for more advanced B2 level also only brings attention to indirect questions. Although politeness is considered an important part of communication between people and is counted as a core communication skill, textbooks for students that learn English as a Foreign Language do not pay awaited attention to it. All textbooks contain only the strategy of indirect questions or modal expressions. But even so, units do not provide a proper explanation. Everything is affected superficially.

CONCLUSION

The present research aimed to define what politeness is; explain the difference between positive and negative politeness; analyze strategies for expressing politeness in English textbooks for the English learning class.

Chapter I *What is Politeness* included a description of the concept of the EFL classroom and was focused on the features of teaching these classes. Thereby, EFL or English as a Foreign Language classroom means studying in a country where English is not the widely spoken language. Usually, students in the English as Foreign Language classrooms share one culture and native language, the teacher is the only one who knows English or English is their native language. Furthermore, Chapter I also focused on *the Politeness Theory of Brown and Levinson*. Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson are two well-known linguists in the field of politeness. Their work is based on the concept of "face"- a person's self-image and is divided into two main politeness- positive and negative politeness. At the end of the first chapter, additional strategies for expressing politeness are discussed: modal expressions and verbs, indirect questions, hedges, vague language, names, and titles.

Chapter II was focused on the analysis of four English textbooks- *the English in Use* textbook for learners at the pre-intermediate (A2) to intermediate (B1) by Cambridge University Press, *Destination B2. Grammar & Vocabulary* for Upper-Intermediate level by Macmillan Publishers Limited, *Oxford Practice Grammar- Intermediate* by Oxford University Press and *English for Everyone- Intermediate* by Dorling Kindersley Limited.

The results of the analysis conducted in Chapter II showed that the topic of politeness is presented but is not broadly covered in the textbook for English learners. The topic of politeness includes various strategies and ways of expressing and making speech more polite. Those strategies start from basic excuse me and end with adding suffixes.

All things considered, in the future politeness needs to be taken into account more so that English learners might learn about different ways of expressing politeness in both behavior and language to avoid misunderstanding in intercultural communication.

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Selle bakalauruse töö pealkiri on Politeness strategies in the English Language: ways of expressing politeness in the EFL textbooks. Käesoleva bakalaurusetöö eesmärk oli defineerida, mis on viisakus; selgitada positiivse ja negatiivse viisakuse erinevust; analüüsida inglise keele õppetunnis viisakuse väljendamise strateegiaid inglise keele õpikutes.

Esimene peatükk *Mis on viisakus* sisaldas EFL-klassiruumi kontseptsiooni kirjeldust ja keskendus nende tundide õpetamise funktsioonidele. Seega tähendab EFL või inglise keele kui võõrkeele klassiruum õppimist riigis, kus inglise keel ei ole laialt levinud. Tavaliselt jagavad inglise keele kui võõrkeele klassiruumi õpilased ühte kultuuri ja emakeelt, õpetaja on ainus, kes oskab inglise keelt või inglise keel on õpetajal emakeel. Lisaks keskendub esimene peatükk ka Browni ja Levinsoni viisakuseteooriale. Penelope Brown ja Stephen Levinson on kaks viisakuse vallas tuntud keeleteadlast. Nende töö põhineb kontseptsioonil "nägu" - inimese minapilt ja jaguneb kaheks peamiseks viisakuseks - positiivne ja negatiivne viisakus. Esimese peatüki lõpus käsitletakse täiendavaid viisakuse väljendamise strateegiaid.

Teine peatükk keskendus nelja inglise keele õpiku analüüsile – *the English in Use* textbook eelkesktaseme (A2) kuni kesktaseme (B1) õppijatele (autor on Cambridge University Press) ja *Destination 2 Grammar & Vocabulary* ülem-kesktaseme (B2) (autor on Macmillan Publishers Limited), *Oxford Practice Grammar* (B1, Oxford University Press) ja *English for Everyone* (B1, Dorling Kindersley Limited).

Teises peatükis tehtud analüüsi tulemused näitasid, et viisakuse teemat inglise keele õppijatele mõeldud õpikus on olemas, vaid laiemalt ei käsitleta. Viisakuse teema hõlmab erinevaid strateegiaid ja viise kõne väljendamiseks ja viisakamaks muutmiseks. Need strateegiad algavad lihtsast vabandust ja lõpevad järelliidete lisamisega.

Kõike arvesse võttes tuleb edaspidi viisakusega rohkem arvestada, et inglise keele õppijad õpiksid tundma erinevaid viisakuse väljendamise viise nii käitumises kui ka keeles, et vältida arusaamatusi kultuuridevahelises suhtluses.

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