

Expressing Politeness in Business Correspondence

Petra Bilíková

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Charakteristické rysy obchodní korespondence.

Vyjadřování zdvořilosti v obchodní korespondenci.

Praktická část

Vytvoření korpusu obchodní korespondence.

Analýza zkoumaných vzorků s ohledem na vyjadřování zdvořilosti.

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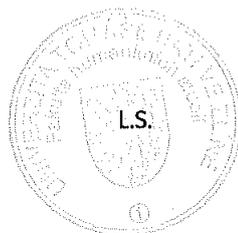
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prof. PhDr. Vlastimil Švec, CSc.
děkan



doc. Ing. Anežka Lengálová, Ph.D.
vedoucí katedry

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ABSTRAKT

Bakalářská práce se zabývá výskytem zdvořilých frází v obchodní korespondenci. Bakalářská práce je rozdělena do dvou částí. Cílem teoretické části je popis a rozdělení obchodní korespondence se zaměřením na zdvořilost. Praktická část obsahuje korpus zahraniční a české obchodní korespondence, na které zkoumá zdvořilost a znázorňuje četnost zdvořilých frází pomocí grafů, tabulek a příkladů.

Klíčová slova: obchodní korespondence, obchodní komunikace, obchodní dopis, email, zdvořilost, modální slovesa, nepřímá řeč.

ABSTRACT

The bachelor thesis deals with the presence of polite phrases in business correspondence. The thesis is divided into two parts. The aim of the theoretical part is a description and division of business correspondence with regard to the politeness. The practical part consists of the corpus of foreign and Czech business correspondence which politeness is analyzed in and it illustrates the amount of polite phrases by charts, tables and examples.

Keywords: business correspondence, business communication, business letter, email, politeness, modal verbs, indirect speech act.

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INTRODUCTION

The bachelor thesis focuses on the presence of politeness in business correspondence written by native and non-native speakers with the aim to find out whether business correspondence signals politeness or not.

The main reason for choosing this topic was my interest in business correspondence because it is supposed to be the best and modern way of business communication among business parties and it is important in professional life with the aim to prove or disprove whether polite phrases are used in present business correspondence or not. The important point of my topic was the collection of real samples of business letters and emails from different Czech and foreign companies.

My bachelor thesis is divided into a theoretical and a practical part. In the theoretical part my attention is paid to the characteristic features and division of business correspondence. Furthermore, it provides a description and division of politeness. The theoretical part deals with studying literature concentrated on rules and theory of politeness in business correspondence. The practical part of the work is based on the analysis of the corpus of collected samples of business correspondence with the aim to detect the features described in the theoretical part. The analysis investigates all aspects of business correspondence to prove whether it contains some polite phrases and signals politeness or not. The results of the findings are illustrated by examples, tables and charts to demonstrate the theoretical knowledge in a practical way.

Finally, I will prove or disprove the assumptions from the practical part whether business correspondence will comply with the rules from the theoretical part and whether it will contain all required information and also whether business correspondence will be written politely.

I. THEORY

1 BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

According to Lesikar (Lesikar, Flatley and Rentz 2008), business communication is important in business. It involves an oral and especially a written communication. Most of the oral communication which is a part of business is informal e.g. face-to-face conversation. However, the oral communication is also formal at some occasions such as conferences, group discussions and committee meetings. It is also formal in phone calls, dictations, speeches and oral reports. Lesikar points out that the business communication falls into three categories: the internal operational, external operational and personal ones. The internal operational communication is conducted within a business company. This business communication includes giving orders, assembling reports and writing emails which are typical for business correspondence. The external operational communication is a work-related communication with people and groups outside the business. Lesikar points out that this communication is with suppliers, service companies, customers, government agencies, the general public, etc. This communication includes descriptive brochures, telephone callbacks, advertising e.g. in newspapers, magazines, websites, then product placement and radio and television messages. Both communications are vital to business success. The last business communication is personal communication which is inevitable and important in business. Lesikar claims that this communication tries to build up and to keep the relationships upon which business depends. Personal communication improves internal and external business communication. This communication supports and influences employee attitudes.

1.1 The Business Communication Process

In the following Figure 1 a model of business communication, according to Lesikar is structured.

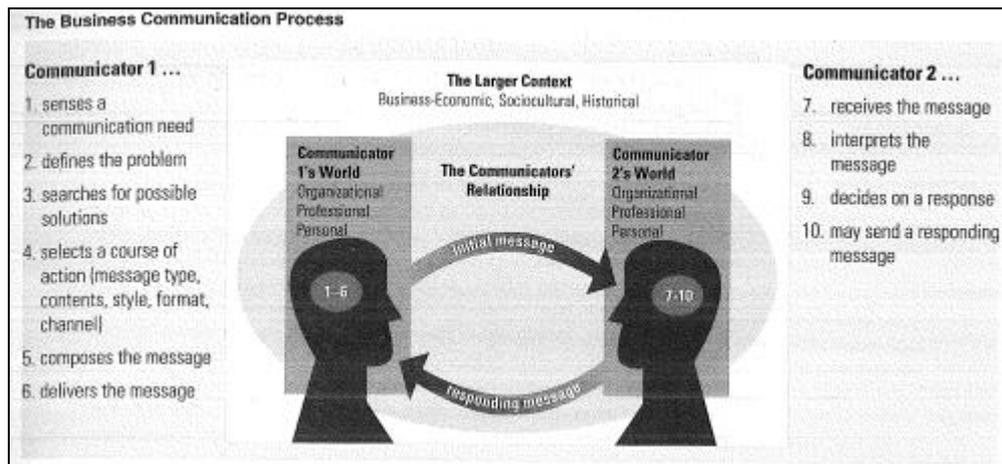


Figure 1: Model of Business Communication (Lesikar 2008, 11)

This business communication model shows what happens when someone intentionally communicates with someone else to achieve particular business-related goals. The communicators are described, according to Lesikar, as “Communicator 1” and “Communicator 2” instead of “Sender” and “Receiver”. This model describes a situation like a real-time conversation where both communicators try to reach mutual understanding. Another situation, which falls into this model, is where a communicator tries to deliver a carefully prepared message e.g. a letter, report and oral presentation to the recipient.

1.2 Types of Business Communication

According to Seely (Seely 1998), a lot of forms of business communication are available. The most typical forms of business communication are:

- *face-to-face conversation*
- *telephone conversation*
- *email*
- *letter*

Ashley (Ashley 2003) agrees with Seely that there are several areas of business communication. However, in addition she points out that business correspondence is the most suitable and traditional form of business communication.

2 CHANGES IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

2.1 History of Business Correspondence

People in a business community did not have a lot of possibilities what to use in business correspondence in past. Business letters were mostly used in business correspondence. Old-fashioned phrases and long sentences were used in business letters. It was uncomfortable because a business letter was delivered to a recipient via a post office, which was time consuming. An urgent message was impossible to send quickly because it took a long time.

2.2 Present Day of Business Correspondence

According to Theodore Greer (Article-niche.com), a lot of innovations, practical techniques and technological advancements are typical for a highly modernized era where people live nowadays. A business community has highly developed, compared with the past. Nowadays, the business community is the prime aspect which benefits from the revival in the science and technology.

The computer era influenced the whole world of communication. It caused changes in the methods of business correspondence. Modern business companies have access to many more different means of communication than business companies used to have in the past. People from business community thought that the development of computers will eliminate paper when it comes to business correspondence. However, paper is still used in business correspondence because writing a business letter signals respect between a sender and a recipient who do not know well.

A good business communication leads to a successful business partnership. In an effective writing a business letter it is important to use a concise language and a conversational tone. Politeness and sincerity are important in writing a business letter.

3 BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE AS A WAY OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Business correspondence is an effective way of business communication through the exchange of a business letter, an email message, a fax message and a memo. Generally, business correspondence is a very important factor in the business community. Business correspondence enables to exchange information among business parties. This type of business communication is still evolving nowadays. Business correspondence is powerful in business agreements and other business deals. (livingstone2009calendar.com)

3.1 Division of Business Correspondence

According to Seely (Seely 1998), there is a great range of different forms of business correspondence.

The following types of business correspondence are used in business communication – a business letter, an email message, a fax message and a memo.

3.1.1 Business Letter

A business letter is placed before other types of business correspondence because it is used longer than other business correspondence. A business letter, according to Seely, is traditional and symbolic. Writing a business letter symbolizes a particular relationship among people in business community. A purpose and a recipient are considered before writing the letter. Seely points out that two important things in the business letter are to know how to structure the body of the letter and to use the right tone. The business letter is written to people who a writer has a business relationship with rather than a personal one. However Seely says that this type of business communication is outdated, expensive and rather time-consuming.

3.1.2 Email

An email, according to Ashley (Ashley 2003), is a way of sending information between computers. In addition, Seely points out that the email is increasingly used in a modernized business communication instead of letters or faxes. The email is characterized as short and informal. Seely also claims that the email is a cheap, quick and effective way of communication. It is easy to reply to an email message and the email message can be copied to others and redirected. It is also possible to attach computer files to the email message. On the other hand, Ashley claims that the major disadvantage of the email is the

lack of privacy and security. Another drawback, according to Ashley, includes technical problems which can cause an unreadable form of attachments or an unexpected non-delivery of email messages.

3.1.3 Fax Message

According to Ashley (Ashley 2003), the word fax comes from facsimile, which means reproduction. Seely (Seely 1998) points out that the fax message is transformed from one person to another. In addition, Ashley points out that a fax message is useful when a recipient does not have an email and speed is urgent. The fax message can be sent quickly to a lot of recipients at the same time. Ashley also points out that the fax message containing confidential information is inappropriate to send because it is available to outsiders. The fax message is similar to the business letter in style. However, according to Ashley, the fax message is shorter and directness is used in the language.

3.1.4 Memo

Ashley (Ashley 2003) points out that a memo is an internal communications in company which is written for different occasions. The topics of the memo, according to Ashley, can be various, from announcing important administrative or structural changes in the company to informing the staff of a retirement. The memo is impersonal and formal in style. The memo is sent to an individual or to a group of people within a company. Ashley also claims that this type of business correspondence is not appropriate for confidential communication.

3.2 Types of Business Letters

A business letter is still used in business correspondence although it is outdated business communication, as Seely says (Seely 1998). On the other hand, a business letter builds up a relationship between a writer and a recipient, which enables them a future cooperation.

There are different types of business letters and they all have to be constructed differently according to their purposes. The following types of business letters are generally used for business matters.

3.2.1 Letter of Enquiry

According to Babáková (Babáková 1999), an enquiry is a type of a letter which asks for details about goods, terms, price lists, delivery dates and also for names and addresses of potential suppliers, customers, distributors or licenses. In addition to it, Ashley points out that the enquiry is sent by an email message, a fax message or a business letter. Ashley also claims that the enquiry's content depends on three basic things which are: how well known is a supplier, whether the supplier is from his/her country or abroad and what type of goods or services are asked about.

3.2.2 Letter of Offer

A letter of offer, according to Babáková, is followed by a letter of enquiry where a seller sent the requested information to a customer (Babáková 1999). The letter of offer contains a list of certain goods which are sold at certain prices and on certain terms, samples, printed materials and illustrations are added. Babáková also points out that the letter of offer falls into two categories. There exist a solicited offer (reply to enquiry) and an unsolicited offer. Other types of the offer are a firm offer (on an appropriate time) and an offer without engagement (change of a price without notice).

3.2.3 Letter of Order

Babáková (Babáková 1999) points out that a letter of order is realized by a buyer's own initiative but mostly is realized by the response to an offer. The order is placed by the buyer if the seller accepts the offer. There are three kinds of orders: a firm order (placed on time) or an order without engagement. The last order is a trial order for a small quantity and for testing purposes.

3.2.4 Letter of Acknowledgement

A letter of acknowledgement, according to Babáková (Babáková 1999), is sent to the buyer when an order is received. There exists a contract between a seller and a buyer which is typical for a firm order. However, another type of an order requires a letter of acknowledgement which means an official acceptance of the buyer's order by the seller. According to Ashley (Ashley 2003), the acknowledgement is performed by a business letter or an email message as soon as possible. The letter of acknowledgement also confirms terms of payment, discounts, delivery and packing.

3.2.5 Letter of Complaint and Adjustment

Babáková claims that a buyer sends a complaint to a seller (Babáková 1999). A letter of complaint and adjustment is formed when the buyer is dissatisfied. The wrong goods, quality, quantity of the goods and also the damaged condition of the goods are typical reasons for the buyer's complaint. According to Ashley (Ashley 2003), a serious complaint is sent by a business letter but the complaint with a small mistake in the payment or in the quantity of goods is sent by a fax or an email message.

3.2.6 Letter of Application

A letter of application, according to Babáková (Babáková 1999), is written when an applicant applies for a job. The purpose of this letter is to attract the employer's attention and to present what the applicant offers. Babáková also divided the letter of application into two categories. There are solicited and unsolicited applications. The solicited application is written on reaction to an advertisement. The unsolicited application is written to a firm whether they have a free working place. The letter of application usually contains the curriculum vitae of the applicant.

3.3 Layout of a Business Letter

A business letter has a certain layout. A well structured business letter presents the writer and enables the recipient to understand the concrete matter from the letter. It also prevents a misunderstanding between the sender and the recipient. The appropriate layout of the business letter, according to Ashley, is shown in Figure 2.

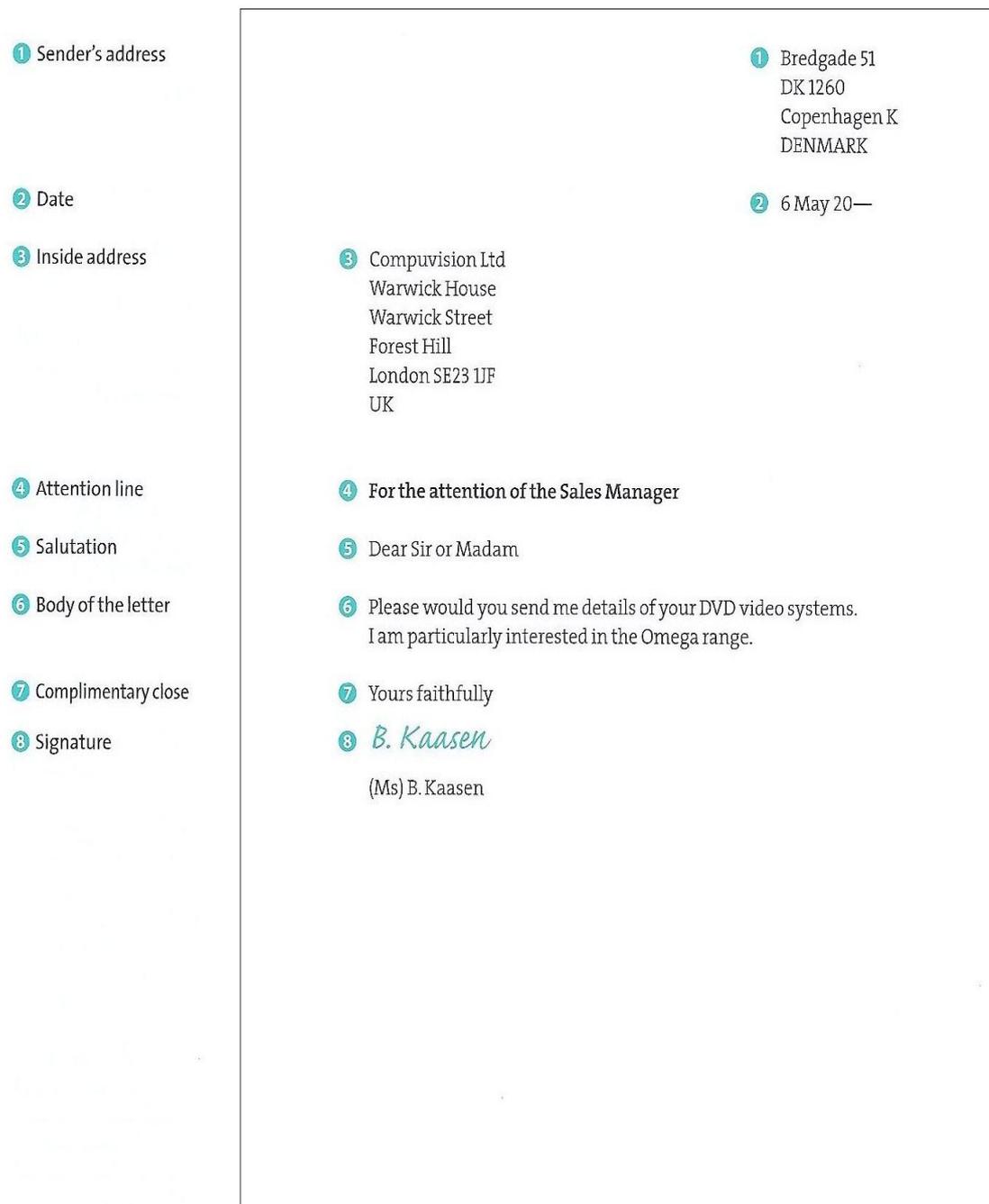


Figure 2: Layout of a Business Letter (Ashley 2003, 9)

According to Ashley's layout of the business letter, there is the sender's address which is placed in the top right-hand corner of the page. On the right side, below the sender's address the date is placed, separated from it by a little space. Ashley points out that the inside address is placed below the sender's address on the left-hand side of the page. She also claims that another important part in the business layout is the attention line that informs the recipient about a concrete matter. Consequently, the salutation follows. There are courtesy salutations which are used in the business letter for a man (Mr), for a married woman (Mrs), for an unmarried woman (Miss) and for both married and unmarried women (Ms). Other salutations are used for a man whose name is unknown (Sir) and for a woman whose name is also unknown (Madam). The body of the letter follows the salutation and it is the most important part of the letter. This part explains the concrete matter of the business letter to the recipient. Leaving a line space between paragraphs is typical for the business letter. At the end of the letter, according to Ashley, there must be a complimentary close that is usually placed on the left, under the body of the letter. There are typical complimentary closes which indicate a known person (Yours sincerely) or indicate an unknown person (Yours faithfully). Finally, the letter is concluded by the signature. The handwritten signature of the sender and also a typed signature are typical. If the sender's name and also the title are omitted, then the recipient is not able to identify the sender's sex and the title.

4 POLITENESS

Watts (Watts 2003) points out that the first thing which is typical for first thinking about politeness is social behaviour and moral, like opening doors for others to enter or exit, offering a seat to an older person at a bus, holding a hand in front of a mouth when coughing, taking off a hat in a room etc. Watts also claims that this meaning of politeness is culturally specific.

According to France (In: Watts 2003), politeness is always learned to understand and to assimilate to people within a specific group. However Kasper (In: Walkinshaw 2009) claims that politeness is understood as right social behaviour of people and tactful thinking of other people. In addition to it, Watts claims that politeness is deduced from social order and social identity because it is connected with social values. But on the other hand, LoCastro (In: Walkinshaw 2009) says that politeness is often connected with terms such as 'etiquette' and 'manners'. Walkinshaw (Walkinshaw 2009) points out that politeness is a specific strategy to build up and to keep good relations with people for a long time, which are achieved due to a speaker's goal. Marmaridou (Marmaridou, Nikiforidou and Antonopoulou 2005) claims that politeness is a communicative phenomenon and has an emotive function. It means that a speaker does not try to avoid negative feelings but to emphasize positive ones towards an addressee. Politeness, according to Brown and Levinson (In: Walkinshaw 2009), is rooted in people's need to keep face and it represents the fear of losing face and unwillingness to evoke face-loss in others. Leech (In: Watts 2003) adds to politeness that it means the goal of achieving maximum benefits and minimum cost for a speaker and a hearer and also the goal of creating and keeping a concord. According to Watts (In: Walkinshaw 2009), politeness will always change through time.

Politeness is important in spoken and written language. It is necessary to know what way can be something said to somebody and how can something be expressed to sound politely.

In general terms, according to Watts, politeness is positive and impoliteness is negative but in fact politeness is not always interpreted positively. Marmaridou claims that an expression is realised as a polite act by using an indirect rather than a direct speech act, using modal verbs, (*e.g. maybe, might, could, would, should*) and conditionals.

4.1 Indirect Speech Act as an Indicator of Politeness

Searle (Searle 1979) points out that an indirect speech act is important because it is the main indicator of politeness. In addition to it, Watts points out that using of indirect speech act in English is interpreted as negative politeness (Watts 2003).

Indirect speech, according to Parrott (Parrott 2000), conveys information. Indirect speech act is reporting an utterance which was said earlier. Later the speaker's original words are transformed by changing words. Eastwood (Eastwood 2005) points out that the meaning of the utterance can be reported with someone's own point of view and own words.

According to Searle (Searle 1979), the area of directives makes the utterance impolite by using imperative sentences (e.g. *“Leave the room.”*) or explicit performatives (e.g. *“I order you to leave the room.”*), but the utterance is polite with indirect possibilities (e.g. *“I wonder if you would mind leaving the room.”*). Politeness is the main signal for indirectness in directives.

Walkinshaw (Walkinshaw 2009) points out that indirectness is often used at certain situations for expressing politeness. However, an utterance in an indirect speech act is harder to compile rather than the utterance in a direct speech. Indirectness is used at other situations, to avoid a taboo word or hurting someone else. The usage of indirectness is appropriate in a sense to prevent inconveniences while achieving speaker's goals.

On the other hand, an utterance which is expressed with an indirect speech act, is costly and risky. Walkinshaw claims that the indirect utterance is costly because a speaker and a hearer need a long time to produce and to process it. It is risky because the hearer does not need to understand the speaker's correct sense of the indirect utterance. On the other hand, Searle (Searle 1979) argues that the hearer knows what the speaker intends to say. In other words, Searle also claims that the hearer knows what to do when the speaker asks him about his ability to do it by the indirect question. It is generally supposed that this sort of the indirect question is a request to him to do it. According to Searle, it is obviously known e.g. from the example *“Can you pass the salt?”* that the speaker asks the hearer to pass him the salt because it is a request to him to do it. It is supposed that the hearer and the speaker know this sort of questions and understand rules of indirect speech acts.

4.2 Modality as an Indicator of Politeness

Modality is an indicator of expressing politeness. In a formal situation modal verbs especially *can/could*, *will/would* are useful in making recommendations, suggestions, in giving advice and also in describing future possibility and probability (Australianetwork.com). It means, according to Parrott (Parrott 2000), that modal verbs do not have only one meaning or function but more. It is shown by Eastwood on example of the modal verb “*can*” in Table 1.

Use	Example
Ability	I can play the piano.
Opportunity	We can watch TV in the evenings.
Request	Can you help me, please?
Offer of help	Can I help you?
Permission	You can go now.
Asking permission	Can I ask a question?
General possibility	Maths can be fun.
Impossibility	The story can't be true.

Table 1: Meanings + Functions of the Modal Verb “can” (Eastwood 2005, 119)

According to Quirk (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartik 1972) modal verbs denote future reference in their present and past forms. The past form of the modal verb in the present tense has different meaning from the present form of the modal verb in the present tense. Below is example of the modal verb “*can*” which is used in the present form and the past form in the present tense.

present form: **Can** you recommend a good book?

past form: **Could** you recommend a good book?

Quirk points out that past form “*could*” of the modal verb “*can*” does not imply past time but consideration, politeness, or tentativeness rather than the modal verb in present forms.

Parrott claims that modal meaning is expressed not only trough modal verbs but also by adjectives (possible), nouns (necessity) and adverbs (perhaps).

Direct statements with yes/no tag questions, wh-interrogatives and declarative statements and also with a rising intonation are more polite because they are less direct. Uncertainty and directness is indicated through the resources of modality. According to Halliday (In: Togher, Hand 1998), modal verbs, modal adjuncts and comment adjuncts belong among modality which emphasize politeness in the expression and they are shown in Table 2.

Politeness Marker	Examples
Finite modal verbs	Will, would, could, should, might, must
Modal adjuncts	Probably, possibly, just
Comment adjuncts	I think
Yes/no tags	He's gone overseas, hasn't he?

Table 2: Politeness Markers According to Halliday (In: Togher, Hand 1998, 760)

According to Searle (Searle 1979), the exemplary sentences are used with the most typical modal phrases, which can also be used in business correspondence. Other indirect requests and other directives in the performance of orders are expressed by means of these modal phrases. Below the exemplary sentences with modal phrases are directly according to Searle (Searle 1979, 36-39).

Can you (reach the salt?)

Could you (be a little more quiet?)

I would like (you to go now.)

I would/should appreciate it if you would/could (do it for me.)

I would rather you did not (do that any more.)

I wish you would not (do that.)

Would you (kindly get off my foot?)

Would you be willing (to write a letter of recommendation for me?)

Would you mind (not making so much noise?)

You ought (to be more polite to your mother.)

You should (leave immediately.)

It would be better for you if you would (leave the room.)

Might I ask you (to take off your hat?)

I would appreciate it if you could (make less noise.)

Indirect requests are performed by modal phrases and Searle also points out that the request with a word *please* is more polite. Watts points out that the word *please* is always related to a request or an offer.

4.3 Indirect Questions as an Indicator of Politeness

According to Eastwood (Eastwood 2005), a question can be asked indirectly when it begins with a question word or with *if/whether* in a sub-clause.

Indirect question forms are more formal and are used for expressing politeness rather than direct questions (Slideshare.net).

According to Parrott (Parrott 2000), direct speech is usually used in an informal conversation.

There is a following example to compare with a direct and an indirect question.

Direct question: *Are you driving a car?*

Indirect question: *Could you tell me if you are driving a car?*

The indirect question is polite because it is expressed by means of modality. Below there are two types of indirect questions which are used for polite expression.

4.3.1 Indirect Questions Using Wh-Words

Indirect question forms which use wh-words are formed by an introductory phrase followed by a question word such as *what, when, where, why, which, who, whose, how*. Then they are followed by a subordinate clause which is a positive sentence structure. Below there is an example to compare with a direct and an indirect question. The indirect form is expressed in a polite way by using a modal phrase. (Slideshare.net)

Direct question: *Where can I find a bank?*

Indirect question: *Could you tell me where I can find a bank?*



Introductory phrase question word subordinate clause

4.3.2 Indirect Questions with Yes/No Questions

An indirect question with yes/no questions is structured with an introductory phrase, followed by *if/whether* and then followed by a subordinate clause. Below there is an example to compare with a direct and an indirect question. From the example it is obvious that by using the indirect speech act the utterance is more polite than by using the direct speech act. Modality signals politeness in the indirect question. (Slideshare.net)

Direct question:	<i>Are you travelling by bus?</i>		
Indirect question:	<i>Could you tell me</i>	<i>if/whether</i>	<i>you are travelling by bus?</i>
	↓	↓	↓
	Introductory phrase	if/whether	subordinate clause

The most common phrases with *if clause* and with a question word are mentioned below. These phrases are used for asking indirect questions. Polite phrases are shown in exemplary sentences but they can be used with other types of sentences. There are a lot of possibilities how the question can be expressed.

If clauses:

Do you know if (John likes flying?)

Can/could you tell me if (you like flying?)

I wonder/was wondering if (you like flying.)

I wonder if you would mind telling me if (you like flying.)

Would you mind telling me if (you like flying?)

Can I ask you if (you like flying?)

May I ask you if (you like flying?)

I would like to know if (you like flying?)

(Slideshare.net)

Wh question words are shown by Eastwood in the examples below (Eastwood 2005, 26).

WH Question Words:

We need to know what/where/when/who/why/whose/how...

Can/could you tell me what/where/when/who/why/whose/how...

Do you know what/where/when/who/why/whose/how...

4.4 Linguistic Expressions as Indicators of Politeness

Kasper and House (In: Watts 2003, 183-184) suggested linguistic expressions which signal politeness. According to them, these linguistic expressions are divided into the following structural categories.

- Politeness markers – show respect to an addressee, e.g. *please, if you wouldn't/don't mind*, tag questions with modal verbs *will/would*.

- Play downs – mean lowering the perlocutionary effect (what a speaker intends in an utterance to achieve in an addressee) in an utterance which has impact on the addressee. They are used e.g. in the past tense (*I wonder if..., I thought you might...*), past tense with progressive aspect (*I was wondering whether..., I was thinking you might...*), an interrogative with the use of modal verbs (*would it be a good idea..., could we...*), a negative interrogative with the use of modal verbs (*wouldn't it be a good idea if..., couldn't you...*).
- Consultative devices – are structures which try to involve the addressee for the purpose of addressee's cooperation, e.g. *Would you mind* or *Could you*.
- Hedges – are understood as structures which try to avoid an accurate content and there is no option to impose the addressee's intent, e.g. *kind of, sort of, somehow, more or less, rather and what have you*.
- Understaters – represent the utterance with a phrase which has a function as an adverbial modifier or an adverb itself, e.g. *a bit, a little bit, a second, a moment, briefly*.
- Downtoners – mean to adjust the impact of the speaker's utterance, e.g. *just, simply, possibly, perhaps, really*.
- Committers – mean turning down the degree of the speaker's commitment to the content of the utterance, e.g. *I think, I believe, I guess, in my opinion*.
- Forewarning – is realised by different structures such as to pay a compliment or invoke a generally accepted principle which is disdained, e.g. *far be it from me to criticise, but..., you may find this a bit boring, but..., you're good at solving computer problems*.
- Hesitators – are pauses which contain non-lexical phonetic material, e.g. *er, uhh, ah*.
- Scope-staters – which mean a personal opinion which is connected with affairs related to the issue, e.g. *I'm afraid you're in my seat, I'm disappointed that you couldn't..., it was a shame you didn't...*
- Agent avoiders – mean utterances in which the agent is suppressed and then the criticism from the addressee is deflected to a generalised agent, e.g. *people don't do..., or passive structures*.

5 NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE POLITENESS

Brown and Levinson (In: Watts 2003) are known for the “face-saving” theory of politeness which they built up. The notion of face is related to politeness. They point out two types of face which every individual has. The first one is a positive face which means the individual desire for appreciation in social interaction. The second one is a negative face which denotes a desire for freedom. It is individual's freedom of action and freedom from imposition. These types of face are defined as positive politeness and negative politeness.

Brown and Levinson (In: Walkinshaw 2009) also point out that an appropriate degree of politeness needs to be chosen if any kind of linguistic act, which has a relational function, is inherently face-threatening.

They determine possible strategies for performing an FTA (face-threatening-act). The appropriate strategy is chosen according to the importance of the FTA, which is estimated by a speaker. The speaker's estimation is based on the values of power, social distance and ranking of imposition. The value of power means disparity between the speaker and hearer, the value of social distance is a symmetric relationship between the speaker and the hearer and the last one is the ranking of imposition in the particular culture.

5.1 Face-threatening Acts (FTAs)

According to Brown and Levinson's strategies (In: Walkinshaw 2009), a speaker can avoid or minimise the potential face-threat. The possible strategies for doing FTAs are shown in Figure 3 below.

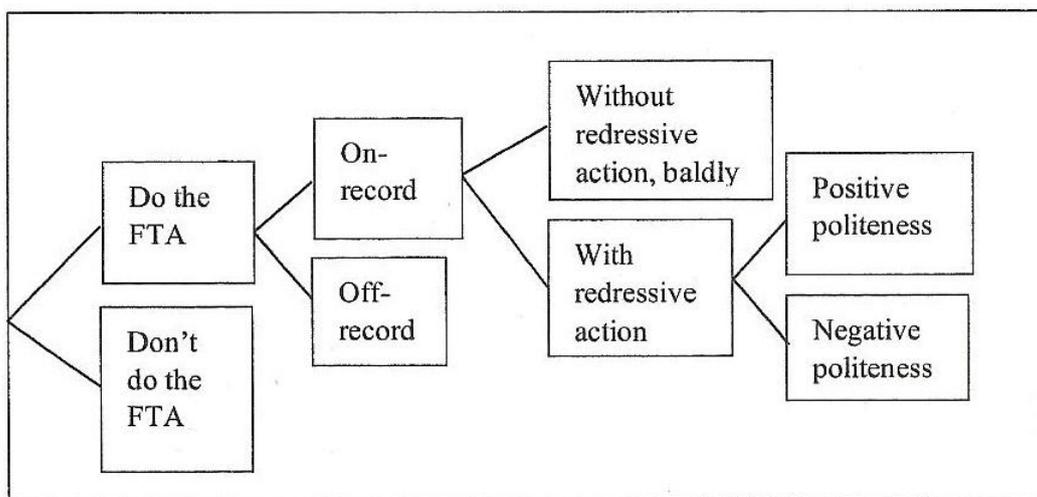


Figure 3: Brown and Levinson's Possible Strategies for Doing FTAs

(In: Walkinshaw 2009, 49)

The speaker either avoids the FTA completely or uses it. Using the FTA is divided into “on-record” and “off-record”. An on-record strategy means that both participants are aware of a clear intention from communication. On the other hand, an off-record strategy means that the speaker is not committed to one clear intention because more than one possible interpretation is typical for this strategy. The on-record FTA strategy is performed either “without redressive action” or “with redressive action”. “Without redressive action” performs an act “in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible” (In: Walkinshaw 2009, 49). “With redressive action” includes two forms of politeness strategy which reduce the weight of the FTA. The forms of politeness strategies are positive politeness strategies and negative politeness strategies. The positive politeness strategy indicates a close relationship between the speaker and the hearer. The negative politeness strategy is based on the speaker's respect for hearer's freedom of action and freedom from imposition.

II. ANALYSIS

6 PROCESS ANALYSIS

Firstly, the analysis will focus on what type of business correspondence is preferred in companies and prove or disprove whether emails are increasing and business letters declining. Secondly, the analysis will focus on the right structure of business letters and emails. Thirdly, it will be focused on the comparative analysis of business correspondence written by native and non-native speakers and the differences between them. The last part of the analysis will be focused on politeness in business correspondence. I will also compare the analysis with the rules mentioned in the theoretical part.

I suppose that the analysis will prove rules which were mentioned in the theoretical part. The analysis will try to prove that business letters are still used in business community because they signal tradition and also the respect between a sender and a recipient who do not know each other. The analysis should also prove that polite phrases are still used in business letters because the sender should write a business letter to the recipient in a polite way because of decency. Then the analysis should prove that emails are not so polite as business letters because of their briefness and quick way of communication.

In my analysis I will concentrate on all information in business letters and emails which I received from business companies. The results of each chapter which I find out will be presented in the charts provided with description of findings in business correspondence. Each chart will be identified with a horizontal and a vertical axis. The horizontal axis will represent the names of companies where business letters and emails are from. On the vertical axis there will be the amount of business letters or emails.

Some of business letters and emails analyzed are without names and other confidential information because of privacy concerns for clients and employees of companies. One sample of business letters and emails from each company is shown in appendices. However, all the collected business letters and emails are enclosed on the CD.

7 CORPUS OF BUSINESS LETTERS AND E-MAILS

I collected letters and emails from 6 companies. I had a big problem to find some company which was willing to give me this sort of business correspondence. Mostly, business letters and emails were strictly confidential, which was the reason why most of companies were not willing to provide it for me. I was successful when I was abroad. Canada, where I spent last summer, was my chance to find some companies that would provide for me some business letters and emails. I had to say that Canadian companies were much more willing to give me business letters and emails than Czech companies.

7.1 Description of Companies

I received 45 business letters and 6 emails related to business from the Canadian companies and 39 emails related to business from the Czech companies. I received 11 business letters from CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) which is the national public radio and television broadcaster in Toronto in the Canadian province of Ontario. Another company was FMC (Financial Models Company Inc). It is an exporter of comprehensive investment management systems and services. FMC is situated in Mississauga in the Canadian province of Ontario. I got 20 business letters from this company. Another company was MCSS (The Ministry of Community and Social Services) which is responsible for social services such as welfare, disability insurance and community service program which include homelessness prevention program, domestic violence, adoption disclosure, etc. MCSS is situated in Ottawa in the Canadian province of Ontario. I received 14 business letters which were sent via email from this company. I received 6 emails from BDO (Canadian Bankruptcy Department) which is an accounting services firm which provides insurance, accounting and taxation services. Then I received 23 emails from IBM (International Business Machines) which sells computer hardware and software and offers consulting services in the computer branch. IBM is situated in the Czech Republic. The Czech company Industria AC s.r.o. gave me 12 emails and specialises in the realisation of electro assembly in energetic industry. Finally, I received 4 emails from PILANA Wood s.r.o. which is the Czech company and one of the biggest producers of tools in Europe.

Business letters and emails from Canada were written by native speakers and emails from the Czech Republic were written by non-native speakers in English.

8 BUSINESS LETTERS VERSUS EMAILS

Generally, it is known that business letters and emails are mostly used in the business correspondence. I gained only business letters and emails from companies for my corpus of business correspondence. Chart No. 1 presents the quantity of business letters and emails out of collected 90 samples of business correspondence.

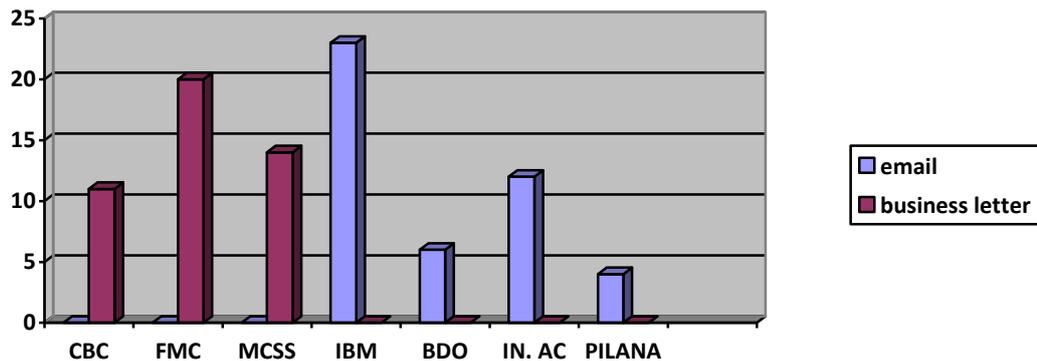


Chart No. 1 - The Number of Business Letters vs. Emails

CBC – Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

FMC – Financial Models Company Inc.

MCSS – Ministry of Community and Social Services

IBM – International Business Machines

BDO – Canadian Bankruptcy Department

IN. AC – Industria AC s.r.o.

PILANA – PILANA Wood s.r.o.

Chart No. 1 shows the number of business correspondence gained from each company. It is obvious that business letters are still used in business companies and also in present-day business correspondence because of confidential information which is sent via post service directly to a recipient. It prevents acquiring this information by someone else.

8.1 Structure of Business Letters and Emails

8.1.1 Structure of Business Letters

The structure of business letters is analyzed in this part. Each business letter is written according to the layout and a well structured business letter according to Ashley's layout (see Appendix P I). Each business letter is analyzed whether it contains all parts according

to the layout. The analysis of each business letter from Canadian companies is shown in Chart No. 2.

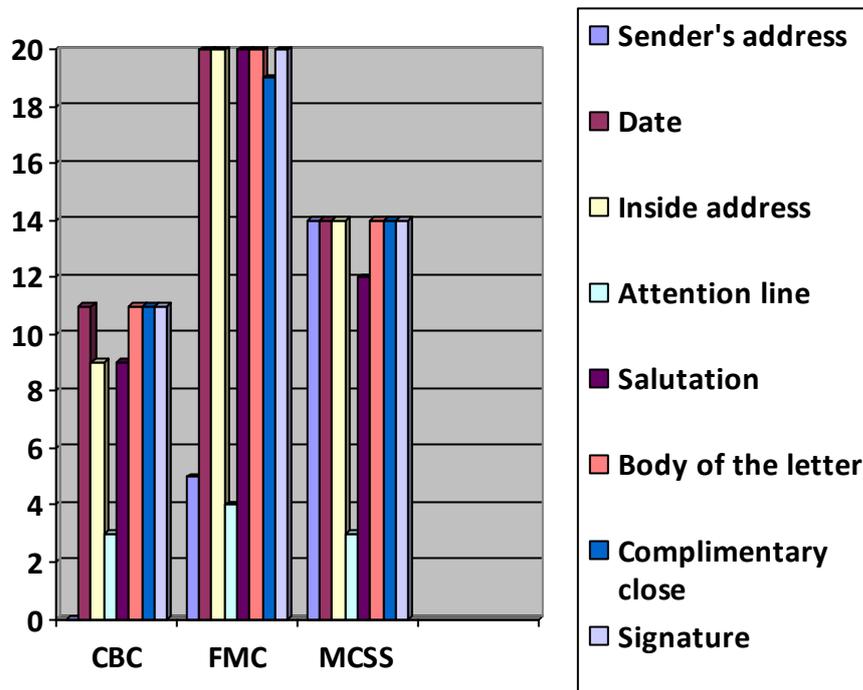


Chart No. 2 - Structure of Business Letters

Chart No. 2 proves that 2 business letters out of 14 business letters, which are from MCSS, were without “*Salutation*”. “*Attention line*” occurred only in 3 business letters but remaining parts of business letters, according to the layout, were included in business letters. A sample of a MCSS business letter, according to the layout, is attached in Appendix P II.

Only 5 FMC business letters had “*Sender's address*” and 4 business letters had “*Attention line*” out of 20 business letters but remaining parts were contained in all business letters. The Appendix P III presents a sample of a FMC business letter which contains all parts and a correct structure.

11 business letters were from CBC and all of them were without “*Sender's address*” and only 3 business letters had “*Attention line*”. In 2 business letters “*Inside address*” and in other 2 business letters “*Salutation*” were missing but the remaining parts were contained in all business letters. A sample of a CBC business letter with a correct structure and containing almost all parts is presented in Appendix P IV.

8.1.2 Structure of Emails

Emails are also structured but differently than business letters because emails are a brief and quick way of communication. In this analysis there will be shown how emails are structured. In the following Chart No. 3 it is possible to see all the parts which emails under analysis contain.

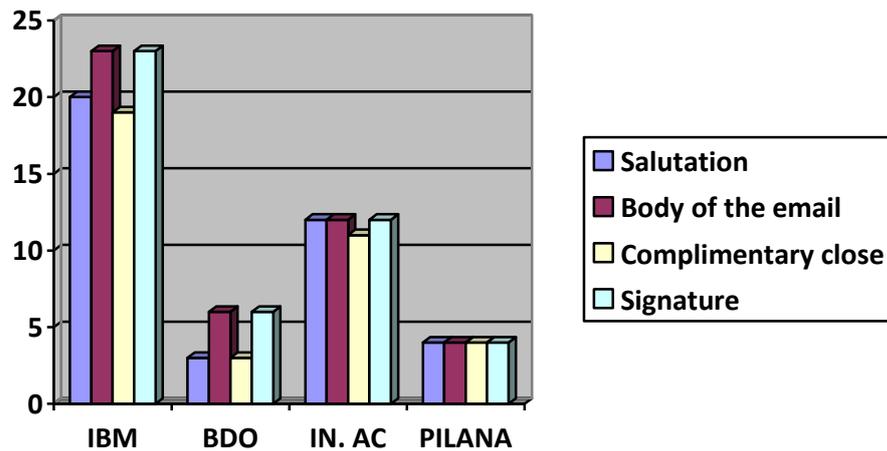


Chart No. 3 - Structure of Emails

Chart No. 3 proves that all the analyzed parts, i.e. “*Salutation*”, “*Body of the email*”, “*Complimentary close*” and “*Signature*” were contained in the analyzed emails. All 4 emails from PILANA Wood s.r.o. included all parts. 3 IBM emails out of 23 emails did not include “*Salutation*” and 4 IBM emails did not have “*Complimentary close*”. 3 BDO emails out of 6 emails under the analysis did not contain “*Salutation*” and “*Complimentary Close*”. Only 1 Industria email out of 11 emails under analysis did not include “*Complimentary close*” but all remaining parts were contained. In Appendices P V, VI, VII, VIII there are samples of emails from each company.

9 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS LETTERS AND EMAILS WRITTEN BY NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS

The analysis will focus on salutation phrases and complimentary closes in this part. Firstly, the analysis will try to find all possible salutation phrases in business letters and emails written by native speakers and then it will be compared with salutation phrases from emails written by non-native speakers. Secondly, the analysis will focus on all complimentary closes in business letters and emails written by native speakers and then it will focus on complimentary closes in emails written by non-native speakers.

9.1 Salutation Phrases

Chart No. 4 presents salutations which were used in the business correspondence written by native speakers. In Chart No. 4, 52 salutations from English business correspondence are analyzed.

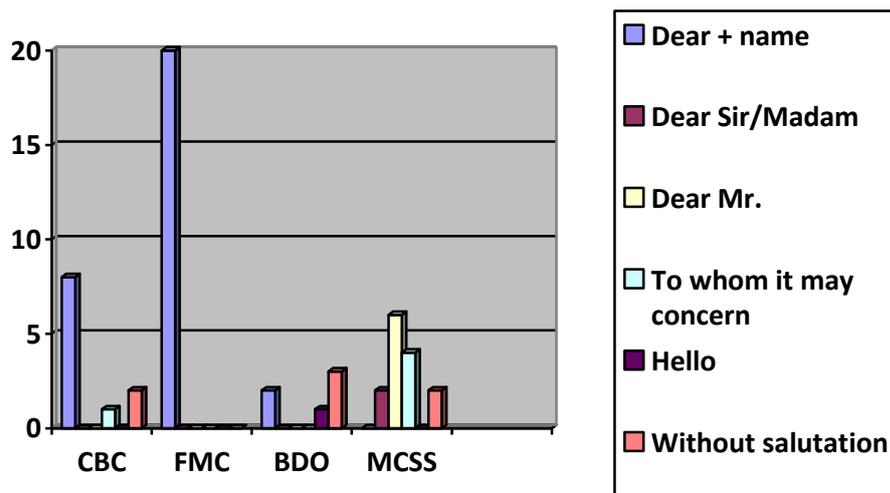


Chart No. 4 - Salutation Phrases in Business Correspondence Written by Native Speakers

Chart No. 4 shows that the salutation “*Dear + name*” was mostly used in business correspondence written by native speakers. It is important to point out that this salutation, which was found in the analyzed business correspondence written by native speakers, was without courtesy salutations (*i.e. Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Sir, Madam*). This salutation was used in 28 business letters and only in 2 emails. Other salutations containing courtesy salutations were “*Dear Sir/Madam*” and “*Dear Mr.*” and they were found only in 8 business letters. Another salutation “*To whom it may concern*” was found in 5 business letters.

The salutation “*Hello*” occurred only in one email. 2 business letters and 5 emails were without any salutation.

Salutation phrases were also compared with the business correspondence written by non-native speakers. The most used salutations are shown below in Chart No. 5.

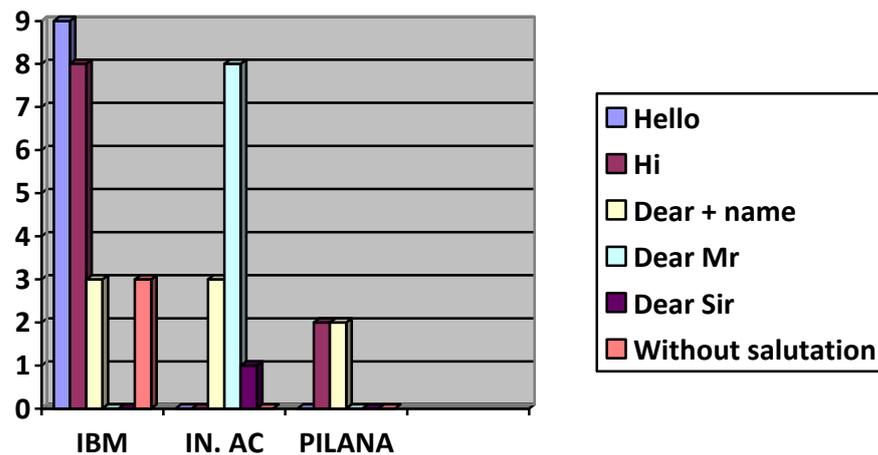


Chart No. 5 - Salutation Phrases in Business Correspondence Written by Non-native Speakers

The most common salutation phrases from Chart No. 5 were “*Hi*” in 10 emails and “*Hello*” in 9 emails. These salutation phrases proved the closeness between a sender and a recipient but they did not signal politeness. However, other salutations “*Dear + name*”, “*Dear Mr*” occurred only in 8 emails and “*Dear Sir*” occurred only in 1 email which signalled politeness. Finally, there were 3 emails which were without any salutation or the recipient was directly addressed with just “*Team*”.

9.2 Complimentary Closes

The complimentary close is the next important part of a business letter and an email. The sender concludes the letter or email with the complimentary close. Chart No. 6 below shows the occurrence of complimentary closes in business letters and emails written by native speakers.

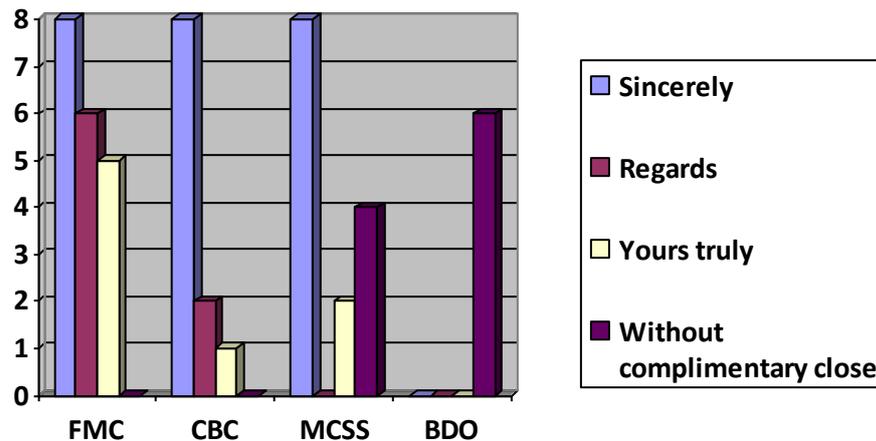


Chart No. 6 - Complimentary Closes in Business Correspondence Written by Native Speakers

From Chart No. 6 it is clear that the most common complimentary close was “*Sincerely*”. It appeared in 24 business letters. Other complimentary closes were “*Regards*” and “*Yours truly*” in 8 business letters. 6 emails and 4 business letters were without any complimentary close and 3 emails and 4 business letters of them were finished with “*Thank you*” in the form such as (*e.g. Thanks for your cooperation., Thank you for your patience and understanding while this work is being done., Thank you for your time in advance.*).

Chart No. 7 below shows the analysis of complimentary closes which were found in emails written by non-native speakers.

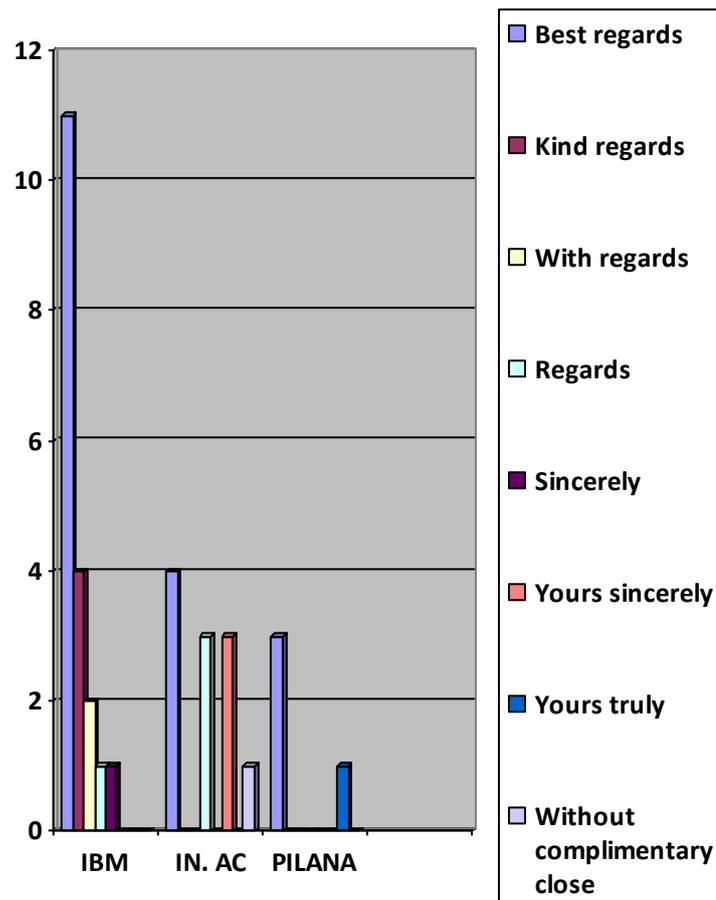


Chart No. 7 - Complimentary Closes in Business Correspondence Written by Non-native Speakers

The most common complimentary closes were “*Best regards*” in 18 emails, “*Kind regards*” and “*Regards*” in 4 emails and finally “*With regards*” in 2 emails and they are less formal complimentary closes which are used when a sender and a recipient have a close relation.

Other complimentary closes were “*Yours sincerely*” which occurred in 3 analyzed emails, “*Sincerely*” and “*Yours truly*” in only 1 email and they are formal complimentary closes.

10 STYLISTIC AND LEXICAL COMPARISON

Firstly, the analysis will concentrate on expressing politeness in business letters. Secondly, the analysis will focus on expressing politeness in business emails. The analysis will try to prove whether polite phrases and lexemes are still used in business letters and emails.

10.1 Politeness Markers in Business Letters

10.1.1 Politeness in Business Letters from MCSS

Chart No. 8 shows analysis of politeness markers in business letters from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS).

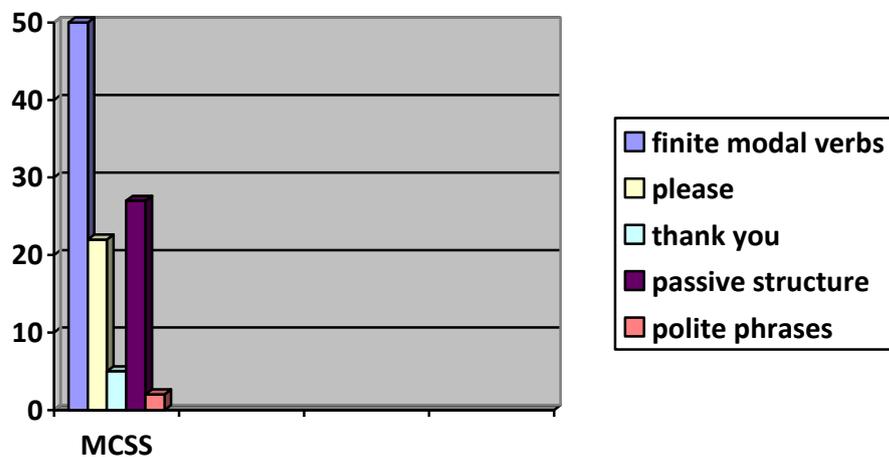


Chart No. 8 - Politeness Markers in MCSS Letters

The results of this analysis show that business letters from MCSS contained 50 finite modal verbs in 14 business letters which emphasized politeness in expressions and are shown below in Table 3 with examples from the analyzed business letters.

Finite Modal Verbs	MCSS Letters
must	“Your request for an internal review must be received by this office, in writing, by ...”
may	“You may not appeal to the Social Benefits Tribunal until your internal review has been completed.”
can	“If you have any questions, you can call (number).”
could	“...that could help in the review of the decision.”
should	“...the client should be directed to apply for funding to the Assistive Devices Program for a new mobility aid.”
would	“ Would you please verify the amounts ...”
will	“Payment will be made to you directly by the Minister of Finance.”

Table 3: Finite Modal Verbs with Examples from MCSS Letters

Table 3 shows finite modal verbs which were found in the analyzed business letters “*must*” in 8 cases, “*may*” in 15 cases, “*can*” in 9 cases, “*could*” in 2 cases, “*should*” in 13 cases, “*would*” in 2 cases and “*will*” in 13 cases. The most used were “*may*”, “*will*” and “*should*” but the least used were “*could*” and “*would*”. From Table 3 it is possible to see the finite modal verb “*would*” which had another function in that exemplary sentence from the analyzed business letter (*Would you please verify the amounts which the above noted person is receiving and the breakdown of eligibility amounts since the effective date?*). It is an indirect request using a modal phrase at the beginning of the request. Another polite modal phrase was contained in the following sentence from the analyzed business letter (*We would like to further advise you that an overpayment in the amount of (number) is outstanding, which we are required to recover.*). It has a modal phrase at the beginning of the sentence.

In the analysis 27 passive structures which are linguistic expressions that signal politeness were found. Passive structures are shown in 2 examples from MCSS letters (e.g. *In June 2006, a letter will be sent to you requesting the necessary documents to allow us to review this benefit., Eligibility must be maintained during this 12 month period.*).

Another politeness marker is the lexeme *please* which was found in 22 cases. There are 3 examples with this polite lexeme from the analyzed business letters (e.g. *Please be aware that you are responsible to report change in circumstances, in the usual manner., Please*

call this office to arrange mutually agreeable repayment plan., Enclosed **please** find a cheque in the amount of (price).). This lexeme was found mostly at the end of the analyzed business letters but in 2 cases it was found at the beginning of the analyzed business letters. The lexeme *please* was mostly placed at the beginning of a sentence.

Thank you signalled politeness in 5 analyzed business letters and there are 2 examples of them (e.g. **Thank you** for your time in advance., **Thank you** for your cooperation.). This polite lexeme was found at the end of the analyzed business letters.

10.1.2 Politeness in Business Letters from FMC

Chart No. 9 shows markers which signal politeness in business letters from the Financial Models Company (FMC).

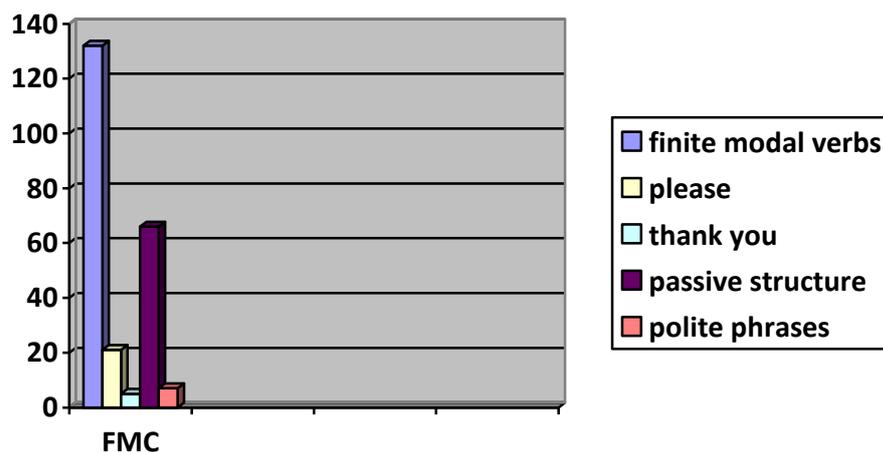


Chart No. 9 - Politeness Markers in FMC Letters

Politeness was most signalled by finite modal verbs and passive structures in these analyzed business letters. 132 finite modal verbs and 66 passive structures were found in 20 business letters. 3 examples of passive structures are (*The (price) per month charge for the bond summary report **would be dropped** since this report **is produced** from a VERTEX database., A surcharge for additional users above 6 will apply but **will be eliminated** as the number of users decline.*). There are examples of finite modal verbs which are shown below in Table 4.

Finite Modal Verbs	FMC Letters
can	“The installation can be done by December of this year.”
could	“In this regard, could you please forward me the appropriate corporate names and addresses for both parties?”
should	“This should again substantially decrease our CSP usage.”
would	“FMC would be prepared to offer Maritime a 30 day evaluation agreement for any software which Maritime would be interested in trying.”
must	“...the price increase must be fair and reasonable within general fee revision guidelines within the BMO Group of Companies.”
might	“...our observations and potential options or revisions you might consider with respect to the current proposal.”
may	“This Schedule may be signed in any number of counterparts, ...”
will	“FMC will invoice the Client at the rates indicated in the Schedule.”

Table 4: Finite Modal Verbs with Examples from FMC Letters

Table 4 shows that the most used finite modal verbs which were found in analyzed business letters were “*can*” in 9 cases, “*could*” in 1 case, “*should*” in 8 cases, “*would*” in 35 cases, “*must*” in 3 cases, “*might*” in 3 cases, “*may*” in 4 cases and “*will*” in 59 cases. The most used was “*will*” but the least used was “*could*”. There are also shown 3 polite modal phrases which were found in FMC business letters. These polite modal phrases are contained with finite modal verbs from Table 4 (*In this regard, **could you please** forward me the appropriate corporate names and addresses for both parties?, I **would like to thank you** and Juanita for taking the time to come to Toronto to meet with us regarding the FMC system., ...**we would** certainly **like** that to continue for many years to come.*).

Another politeness marker, which was occurred in FMC business letters, was the lexeme *please* and it is shown in 3 examples (*e.g. If you have any questions, **please** do not hesitate to contact me., **Please** confirm to me that this is agreeable to you., **Please** sign below to signify your agreement with the above.*). This polite marker was found in FMC business letters in 21 cases and it was found at the beginning of business letters in 2 cases but it was

mostly used at the end of business letters. The position of *please* was at the beginning of a sentence in 13 cases.

Another polite lexeme which was appeared in these business letters was *thank you* which was found in 5 FMC business letters and there are 3 examples from these business letters (e.g. **Thank you** for your consideration on this matter., **Thank you** again for your continued use of FMC systems., **Thank you** again for your interest in our systems.). *Thank you* was found at the beginning of a business letter in 1 case.

4 polite phrases were found in FMC business letters (*I am writing to let you know **how pleased** Robyn and I were with the work FMC..., We, of course, continue to **be very pleased** with our ongoing support from the client service team led by (name) and **look forward to** many more years of good relations with our partners at FMC., **It is** always **pleasure** to do business with you!, **I am pleased** to provide you with the following price quotations.*)

10.1.3 Politeness in Business Letters from CBC

Chart No. 10 shows the analysis of markers which signals politeness in business letters from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

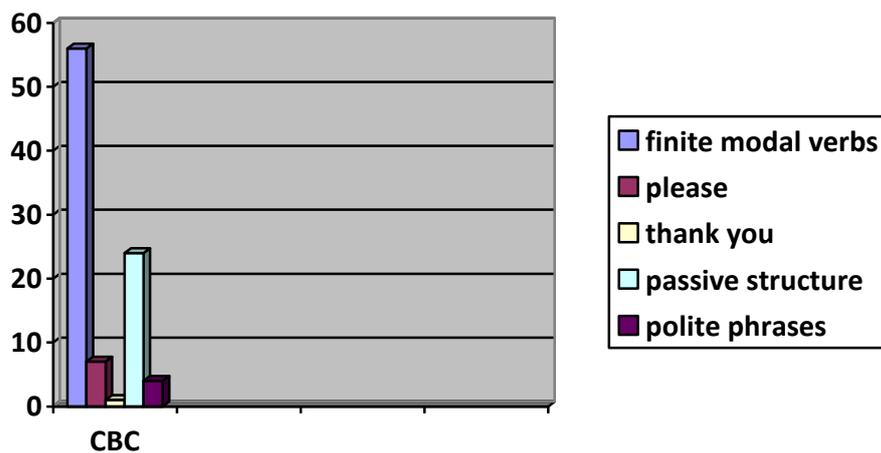


Chart No. 10 - Politeness Markers in CBC Letters

From Chart No. 10 it is possible to see that business letters contained mostly finite modal verbs in 56 cases. Table 5 below shows finite modal verbs with examples directly from business letters.

Finite Modal Verbs	CBC Letters
may	“These rights may afford you protection against lay-off.”
should	“ Should you require additional information, please contact (number).”
will	“You will remain on the payroll for...”

Table 5: Finite Modal Verbs with Examples from CBC Letters

Finite modal verbs “*may*” in 2 cases, “*should*” in 3 cases and “*will*” in 49 cases were found in CBC Letters and the most frequently “*will*” was used.

Another politeness marker was passive structure in CBC letters and there are shown 2 examples out of 24 passive structures (*e.g. Your salary **will be reviewed** on a yearly basis in conjunction with our annual salary review., Each of these areas are areas in which better performance **is required** so as to meet the duties, responsibilities and requirements of your job.*).

The lexeme *please* was another politeness marker and there are 3 examples directly from CBC letters (*e.g. If you have any questions, **please** do not hesitate to contact me at (phone number)., Should you require additional information, **please** do not hesitate to contact me., **Please** contact me if you need any additional information.*). This lexeme was found in 7 analyzed business letters and it was found at the beginning of a business letter in 2 cases and at the end of a business letter in 5 cases.

4 polite phrases were found at the beginning of these business letters and they are (***I regret to inform you** that the position that you occupy has been declared redundant., **It is my pleasure** to confirm our offer of a temporary assignment in the job classification of (job title) in (department)., **I am pleased to inform you** of the results of the (year) Salary Review., **I am extremely pleased to formally offer you** the position of Media Relations English Communications...*). Only 1 polite phrase “*I regret to inform you...*” had negative meaning but others had positive one.

The last polite marker was the lexeme *thank you* which was found only in one CBC business letter (*I want to take this opportunity to **thank you** very much for your contribution in your new role to date.*).

10.2 Politeness Markers in Emails

10.2.1 Politeness in Emails Written by Native Speakers from BDO

The politeness markers from the emails of the Canadian Bankruptcy Department (BDO) are shown in Chart No. 11.

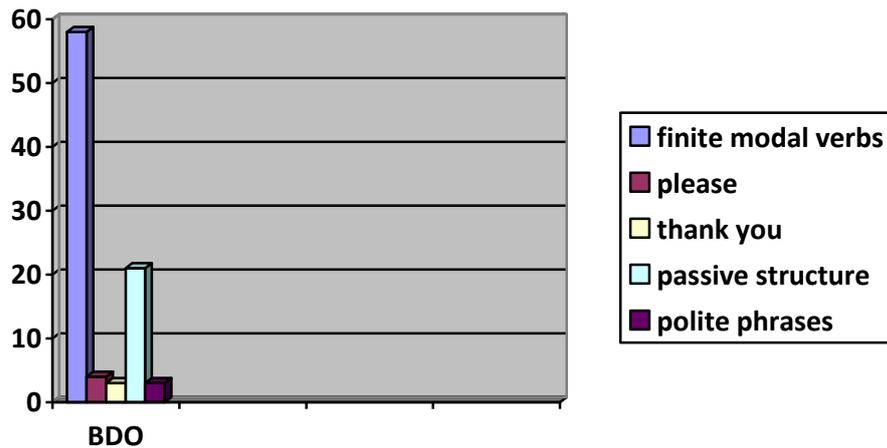


Chart No. 11 - Politeness Markers in BDO Emails

Chart No. 11 shows that finite modal verbs were the most used polite markers which were found in BDO emails in 58 cases. Finite modal verbs with examples from BDO emails are shown below in Table 6.

Finite Modal Verbs	BDO Emails
can	“If you can ’t attend one of those, you can sign onto another one.”
could	“...if there could be other areas to place the new lateral files, ...”
would	“Do you or your staff have an idea for a project that would benefit your community?”
might	“It might be a project to teach autistic children to swim.”
may	“...which may affect users, in its next planned release, ...”
will	“There will also be some surplus furniture noted below.”

Table 6: Finite Modal Verbs with Examples from BDO Emails

Finite modal verbs which were occurred in the BDO emails were “*can*” in 7 cases, “*could*” in 1 case, “*would*” in 5 cases, “*might*” in 2 cases, “*may*” in 1 case and “*will*” in 42 cases. The most frequently “*will*” was used but the least used were “*could*” and “*may*”. The linguistic expression was passive structure which was found in the BDO emails in 21 cases and there are shown 2 cases directly from BDO emails (*These changes **will** also **be communicated** to trustees' software providers., Before a Certificate of Discharge **can be filed** to an estate.*).

Other politeness markers were *please* and *thank you*. The lexeme *please* was discovered in BDO emails in 4 cases and 2 examples of them are (*e.g. **Please** be advised that starting on Friday (date), Enbridge Consumers Gas will be performing work out on Station Street., **Please** review the attached plans to see how the space might work.*). The lexeme *thank you* was occurred in BDO emails in 3 cases and there is shown in 2 cases (*e.g. **Thank you** for your patience and understanding while this work is being done., **Thanks** for your cooperation.*). However, the shorten lexeme *thanks* from the previous example was informal and it was found in 1 BDO email.

3 polite modal phrases (*e.g. We **would like to thank you** in advance for your patience and co-operation during this project., If you **would like to be considered**, please send a 150-word summary of your volunteer activities., Your Oxford Management Team **would like to inform you** that starting Monday November 23, 2009 at 8:00AM roofing contractors will be commencing work on the canopy roof area located above the main lobby of the building.*) were found in these BDO emails.

10.2.2 Politeness in Emails Written by Non-native Speakers from IBM

Chart No. 12 shows the analysis of politeness markers in emails from the company International Business Machines (IBM).

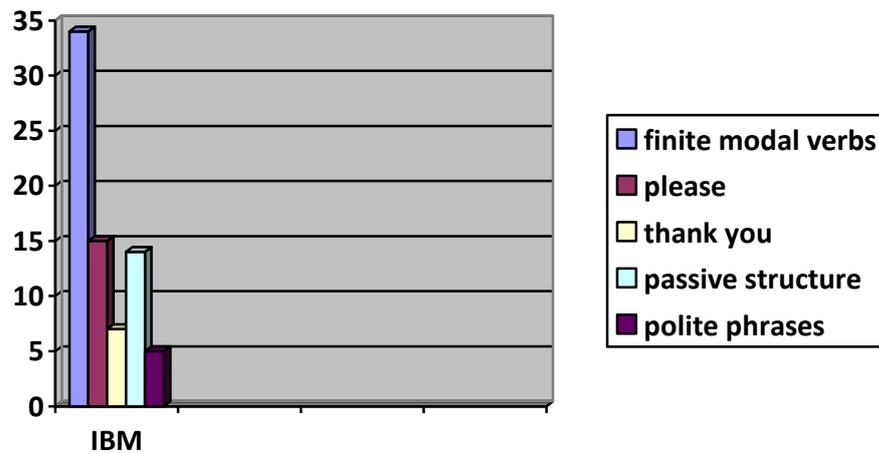


Chart No. 12 - Politeness Markers in IBM Emails

The analysis of emails from this company shows that finite modal verbs were mostly used. 34 modal verbs were found in 23 emails and below there are examples of finite modal verbs from the IBM emails in Table 7.

Finite Modal Verbs	IBM Emails
can	“...all of the backed up data can be deleted from the server.”
could	“ Could one of you check these questions?”
may	“...agents may not be able to pick up...”
maybe	“...but maybe the line should be tested again.”
must	“But in both cases there must be HR process followed...”
should	“...they should receive new extension.”
would	“...if this call would be recorded completely...”
will	“...it will be deleted automatically...”

Table 7: Finite Modal Verbs with Examples from IBM Emails

Finite modal verbs which were mostly found in the IBM emails were “can” in 13 cases, “could” in 2 cases, “may” in 1 case, “maybe” in 1 case, “must” in 2 cases, “should” in 3 cases, “would” in 2 cases and “will” in 10 cases. The most used was “can” and the least used were “may” and “maybe”. 5 polite questions which were expressed by finite modal verbs “can”, “could” were found in the IBM emails and here are 3 of them (*Can you*

please provide us with the below?, *Could one of you check these questions?*, *Can you cancel these for me please?*). The question with a finite modal verb “could” is more polite than one with the finite modal verb “can”.

Another one was the polite lexeme *please*. It was found in IBM emails in 15 cases and there are 3 examples of them (e.g. *Can you cancel these for me please.*, *Please be aware that Shiftplan freeze is in place for August since tomorrow (date).*, *Please approve my request.*). This lexeme was discovered at the beginning of IBM emails in 4 cases but others were at the end of IBM emails. The lexeme *please* was placed at the beginning of a sentence in 8 cases.

The linguistic expression was passive structure in IBM emails and was found in 14 cases. 4 out of 14 passive structures are shown in the following examples (*This is just a reminder your TSM client will not be deactivated!*, *The second call which was done by agent was not recorded, because there was already call being recorded which has not ended.*).

The lexeme *thank you* was another politeness marker and it was found in 7 emails. There are 3 examples of this polite lexeme which were found in IBM emails (e.g. *Thank you in advance for your cooperation.*, *Thank you in advance.*, or just *Thank you.*). The following 2 examples of the lexeme *thank you* from IBM emails were informal because of their shortened form (e.g. *Thanks in advance for your cooperation.*, *Thx a lot.*). The lexeme *thanks* was appeared in 3 IBM emails and *thx* in 1 email.

10.2.3 Politeness in Emails Written by Non-native Speakers from Industria AC s.r.o.

Chart No. 13 shows markers which signal politeness in emails from the company Industria AC s.r.o.

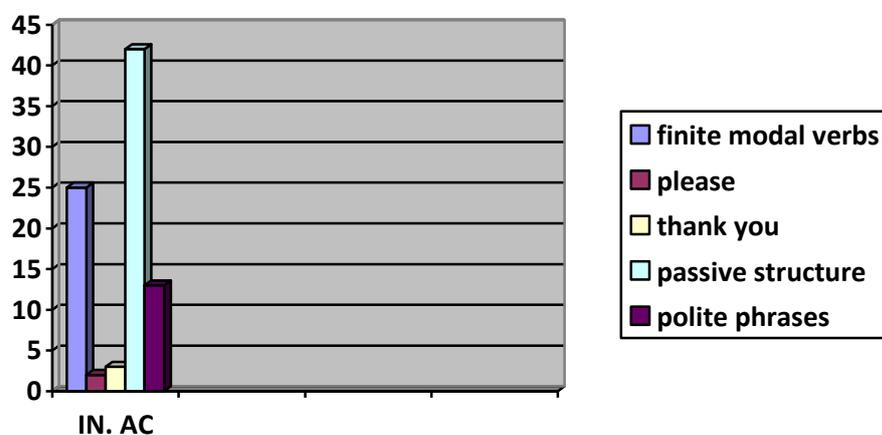


Chart No. 13 - Politeness Markers in Industria AC s.r.o. Emails

The most used politeness markers were passive structures which were found in Industria AC s.r.o. emails in 42 cases and 2 cases of them are shown here (*As agreed, on receipt of payment 2 containers **will be transferred** to..., The situation around communication between us **is very complicated.***). After passive structures mostly used were finite modal verbs which were found in 25 cases. Table 8 show finite modal verbs which were found in these emails.

Finite Modal Verbs	Industria AC s.r.o. Emails
can	"I cannot solve the problem with delivery of one container..."
could	"...and therefore could not have expected any answers."
would	"The cargo would have been in storage at great expense for..."
may	"...this extra delay may cause further problems with delivery."
must	"...so we must have quicker and clearer communication."
will	"...they will be paid till the end of November 09."

Table 8: Finite Modal Verbs with Examples from Industria AC s.r.o. Emails

Finite modal verbs which were found in Industria emails were "can" in 6 cases, "could" in 1 case, "would" in 2 cases, "may" in 2 cases, "must" in 5 cases and "will" in 9 cases. The most used was "will" and the least used was "could". Finite modal verb "can" had another function in the following exemplary sentence from 1 email (***Can you** arrange this meeting?*). It is an indirect request using a polite modal phrase at the beginning of the request.

Other polite lexemes were *please* and *thank you*. The lexeme *please* was appeared in 2 emails (*Call me **pls** back or send me email., **Please** inform your customer, Mr... of this urgency.*). The lexeme *pls* was informal because of a shortened form. It was probably addressed to a recipient who a sender knew. The lexeme *thank you* was found in 3 emails and there are shown 2 of them (***Thank you** for replay., **Thank you** for the update.*). This lexeme was appeared at the beginning of emails in 2 cases and at the end of email in 1 case. 12 polite phrases were found in these emails and 3 polite phrases out of 12 are shown here (***We would like to** negotiate the details for the delivery of this order for your project., **We are looking forward to** talking with you again soon., **We wish to inform you** that 4000*

solar modules are being shipped to Czech Republic and are due to arrive on 11 January 2010.).

10.2.4 Politeness in Emails Written by Non-native Speakers from PILANA Wood

s.r.o.

From Chart No. 14 it is possible to see the most used politeness markers in emails from PILANA Wood s.r.o.

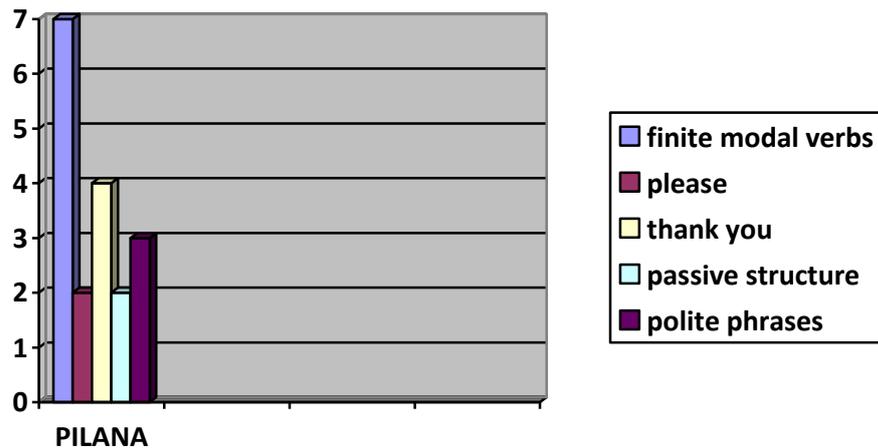


Chart No. 14 - Politeness Markers in PILANA Wood s.r.o. Emails

This analysis shows that mostly used were finite modal verbs in 7 cases. Finite modal verbs which were found in these emails are shown below in Table 9.

Finite Modal Verbs	PILANA Wood s.r.o. Emails
can	“I was wondering whether we can possibly enter business...”
would	“I would really like to have the opportunity.”
might	“As you might know there are 4 companies within Pilana and...”
will	“...and you will be more than welcomed to visit us at our stand...”

Table 9: Finite Modal Verbs with Examples from PILANA Wood s.r.o. Emails

From Table 9 it is obvious that mostly discovered finite modal verbs were “can” in 2 cases, “would” in 2 cases, “might” in 1 case and “will” in 2 cases. In the PILANA emails 3 polite phrases which were contained with finite modal verbs were found in these emails (*Can you let me know whether you started a new business on your own or joined someone*

else?, I was wondering if you would need someone to promote your products in the province?, I was wondering whether we can possibly enter business relations as you are with Pilana Knives if our product range matches your business interests.). These polite phrases are used for asking indirect questions.

Other polite markers were *please*, *passive structures* and *thank you* which were found in the PILANA emails. The lexeme *please* appeared in 2 cases (***Please*** find our invitation in the attachment of this email., ***Please*** see our detailed description of our product range at...). The position of *please* was at the beginning of an email in both cases. *Passive structures* appeared also in 2 cases and there is shown 1 example of passive structure from PILANA email (***I was given*** your contact details by (name), sales person at Pilana Knives who has recently paid visit to your company.). The lexeme *thank you* was found in analyzed emails in 4 cases and there are shown 2 examples out of 4 (***Thank you*** for your interest in our products., ***Thank you*** and looking forward to seeing you in Milano.).

11 THE SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS

The analysis proved that 3 companies out of 7 preferred to write business letters which were gained only from foreign companies. Other 4 companies preferred to use emails which were gained from 1 foreign company and 3 Czech companies. It means that emails were mostly used by Czech companies and more preferred than business letters because it is a modern, cheap and quick way of communication as Seely (Seely 1998) says in the theoretical part.

The investigation detected that well structured business letters were from MCSS but “*Sender's address*” and “*Date*” were placed on the left side instead of the right side, according to Ashley's layout (Ashley 2003). The well structured emails were from PILANA Wood s.r.o.

The salutation phrase “*Dear + name*” was mostly used in the business correspondence written by native speakers in 30 cases out of 4 companies under investigation. According to Neumayer (Neumayer 2006), “*Dear + name*” is less formal because it is without a courtesy salutation. The least used was “*Hello*” which was found in 1 email written by native speakers. However, “*Hi*” in 10 cases and “*Hello*” in 9 cases were used mostly salutation phrases in the business correspondence written by non-native speakers. “*Dear Sir*” was used least and was found in 1 case. Neumayer says that the salutation phrases “*Hi*”, “*Hello*” are informal for using among friends and partners but “*Dear Sir*” is a formal salutation phrase. From the analysis it is obvious that informal salutations were mostly found in both business correspondence written by native speakers and non-native speakers.

The most used complimentary close was “*Sincerely*” in 24 cases out of 51 samples of business correspondence written by native speakers. The least was used “*Regards*” and “*Yours truly*” each in 8 cases. However, in business correspondence written by non-native speakers, mostly “*Best regards*” in 18 cases out of 39 emails and “*Yours truly*” and “*Sincerely*” were found and used least each in 1 case. Neumayer claims that “*Sincerely*”, “*Yours truly*” are formal complimentary closes and typical for Americans but “*Regards*” and “*Best regards*” are informal complimentary closes which are characterized by close relation with a business partner. The analysis proved that formal complimentary closes were used in business correspondence written by native speakers and informal complimentary closes were used in business correspondence written by non-native speakers.

Finite modal verbs in 238 cases were found mostly from the analyzed politeness markers in 45 business letters. These politeness markers finite modal verbs were also found mostly in 33 emails out of 3 companies (BDO, IBM, PILANA) in 99 cases. I expected that I find much more polite phrases, which Searle points out in the theoretical part, or some indirect questions, which signal politeness, in the analyzed business letters and emails. However, the analysis proved that polite phrases were found only in 13 cases out of 45 analyzed business letters and in 12 cases out of 33 analyzed emails which is a poor result. Only one company Industria AC s.r.o. was different with results from others. The most used were passive structures as a politeness marker in 42 cases but the politeness marker *please* was found least in 2 cases out of 12 emails written by non-native speakers.

Politeness markers were found more in business letters than emails because the analysis proved that politeness markers (finite modal verbs, please, thank you, passive structures, polite phrases) were found in 429 cases in business letters but in 268 cases in emails although emails were gained from 4 companies and business letters only from 3 companies. The reason was that emails were written directly to the topic and mostly they were really short just about 2 or 3 sentences but there were 2 emails from BDO which were approximately 1 page and even 5 emails from Industria AC s.r.o. were approximately 2 pages long. However, these emails were full of important information and data but only with 7 polite phrases. Writing emails is a quick way of communication and there is not time to prepare or think about it. According to me, this is why a writer leaves from traditional polite phrases. On the other hand business letters were longer, approximately 1 or 2 pages long and it was easier to find politeness markers because the writer had time for preparation.

CONCLUSION

The bachelor thesis was dealing with politeness in business correspondence and it was divided into two parts, the theoretical part and the practical one.

The theoretical part explained the characteristic features and the division of business correspondence and it also focused on the description and the division of politeness. The theory also described the division of business letters. In this part some examples from studying literature of politeness in business correspondence were shown.

The practical part of the work was based on the analysis of the corpus business correspondence that proved the features described in the theoretical part by investigating business letters and emails. The analysis found out that the business correspondence written by native speakers was more polite than the business correspondence written by non-native speakers because business letters, which were written by native speakers, were much more polite than emails. The analysis discovered a significant amount of politeness markers in business letters and emails under analysis and some of them were shown in the practical part by examples, tables and charts. I hope that the practical part clearly described all the features which were found out in business letters and emails.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

E.g.	For example
Etc	And so on
i.e.	That is
Vs.	Versus
Mr	Mister
Mrs	Mistress
FTA	Face threatening act
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
IBM	International Business Machines
FMC	Financial Models Company Inc.
MCSS	Ministry of Community and Social Services
BDO	Bankruptcy Department
IN.AC	Industria AC s.r.o.

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APPENDIX P I: BUSINESS LETTER ACCORDING TO ASHLEY'S LAYOUT

25 Westbound Road
Borehamwood
Herts
WD6 1DX

18 June 20—

Mrs J. Hastings
Personnel Officer
International Computing Services plc
City Road
London EC3 4HJ

Your Ref: KH 305/9

Dear Mrs Hastings

I would like to apply for the vacancy advertised in the *Guardian* on 16 June for a Personal Assistant to the Sales Director.

As you will see from my CV, I am currently Personal Assistant to the Sales Manager of a small engineering company. In addition to the day-to-day administration work, I represent the Sales Manager on some occasions and am delegated to take certain policy decisions in his absence.

I speak good French and Italian, and use both languages in the course of my work.

I am particularly interested in this post as I would like to become more involved with an IT organization and am very familiar with many of your software products.

If there is any further information you require, please contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Carol Brice

Carol Brice (Ms)

APPENDIX P II: SAMPLE OF MCSS BUSINESS LETTER

Ministry of Community and Social Services	Ministère des Services sociaux et communautaires	
Ministry of Children's Services	Ministère des Services à l'enfance	
		Eastern Region / Région de l'Est 10, rue Rideau Street Ottawa ON (Ontario) K1N 9J1 Switchboard / Réception centrale : (613) 234-1188 Fax / Télécopieur : (613) 787-3298 Toll Free / Sans Frais: 1-800-267-5111 Website / Site web www.cfcs.gov.on.ca
<u>December 03, 2009</u>		
Man O'Mann 351 Preston Street Ottawa ON K1S 2T7		
ODSP Member & File No.: 000 111 000/ OMANN010110		
Dear Mr. O'Mann:		
This is in reference to the allowance you are receiving under the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).		
We have reviewed your eligibility, as per the ODSP regulations, sections 44(1) and 45(1), due to the fact that your income exceeds your budgetary requirements. Due to the amount of your high health costs, we have granted you the Extended Health Benefit, effective July 01, 2006 . This benefit has been approved for a 12 month period. In June 2006 , a letter will be sent to you requesting the necessary documents to allow us to review this benefit. The change in your eligibility also affects the benefits available to you.		
Eligibility must be maintained during this 12 month period. Please be aware that you are responsible to report changes in circumstances, in the usual manner.		
We would like to further advise you that an overpayment in the amount of \$660.09 is outstanding, which we are required to recover. Please call this office to arrange a mutually agreeable repayment plan.		
If you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact Team #5 at (613) 234-1188.		
Yours truly,		
Andrew Navratil Client Service Representative Ontario Disability Support Program Team #5 Fax #: (613) 787-3298		

APPENDIX P III: SAMPLE OF FMC BUSINESS LETTER



FINANCIAL MODELS COMPANY INC.
5255 Orbitor Drive
Mississauga, Ontario L4W 5M6
tel: 905•629•8000 fax: 905•629•0022

March 19, 2004

Ms
McLean Budden.
145 King Street West
Suite 2525
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 1J8

Re: Letter of Engagement for professional services to customize two reports in FMCRecon

Dear

This is to confirm that McLean Budden has engaged Financial Models Company Inc. ("FMC") to perform the tasks listed in the attached schedule ("Schedule").

This engagement is expected to begin on March 24, 2004. The start date, duration and commitment of FMC resources are contingent upon FMC receiving a signed copy of this Letter of Engagement by March 23, 2004.

FMC will invoice Client for the activities outlined, at the rates indicated, in the Schedule. All invoices are payable within 30 days of receipt of the invoice.

Sincerely,


Relationship Manager


Director, Consulting
Authorized Signing Officer

By signing below, Client agrees to the terms and conditions of this letter and the attached Schedule.

SIGNATURE

DATE

NAME

TITLE

www.fmco.com

APPENDIX P IV: SAMPLE OF CBC BUSINESS LETTER

[Date]

[Name]
[Department]

RE: Confirmation of Conversion to Permanent Status (Contract # _____)

Dear [Name],

As per our discussion on [Date], this letter, when fully executed, will confirm that you will be converting your contract employment relationship to a permanent full-time staff status, effective [Date]. Accordingly, the above-noted contract is terminated effective [Date] and the termination provisions set out in Clause ___ are waived.

Your continuous service date will remain the beginning of your last unbroken continuous term of service. Your title, pay band, and compensation will remain unchanged.

You will continue to contribute to the pension plan.

You will earn annual leave on a monthly basis as a permanent employee, which is different from how you are currently credited with annual leave. Accordingly, your leave entitlement as per your contract will be pro-rated for the period [Date] to [Date].

You will not be subject to a probationary period.

Please acknowledge your acceptance of this offer and the amendment to the above noted contract by signing below and returning this letter to me.

Sincerely,

[Manager's Name]
[Title]
[Department]

Employee Name

Date

APPENDIX P V: SAMPLE OF BDO EMAIL

Dear Tenants,

Your Oxford Management Team would like to inform you that starting Monday November 23, 2009 at 8:00AM roofing contractors will be commencing work on the canopy roof area located above the main lobby of the building.

This project is scheduled to last for approximately 4 weeks weather permitting. Side walk protection will be erected along the Front Street portion of the walkway, above the north revolving door and swing door entrances to the building so that entering and exiting through these areas will be maintained.

We would like to thank you in advance for your patience and co-operation during this project.

Oxford Properties Group

Citigroup Place Management Office

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APPENDIX P VI: SAMPLE OF IBM EMAIL

From: IDC01 domain <nobody@idc01.brno-centrum.cz.ibm.com>
To: Michal Kubis2/Czech Republic/AT&T/IDE@IBMCZ
Date: 07.09.2009 18:17
Subject: Action Required: IDC01 reminder

Dear Michal Kubis

Your user account ZKUB05 hasn't been active on IDC01 domain in Brno in the last 103 days.

This user account is used for log on to the windows (on domain computer).

If you do not use the domain computer (therefore you do not need domain account) any more, delete it via ASO (<http://asoweb.ehningen.de.ibm.com>).

In case your account will not be active for 90 days, it will be deleted automatically and therefore your data on H drive will be lost.

You can use ASO also if you need to reset your domain password or your domain account has been locked.

If you need further assistance please contact the IBM Help Desk:
<http://w3.ibm.com/help/>

Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Best regards,
your IGA IDC01 domain team

This note has been created automatically, please do not answer via REPLY.

APPENDIX P VII: SAMPLE OF INDUSTRIA AC S.R.O. EMAIL

Dear Mr. ...

I tried to call you today at 8.00 CET about our visit in Sunlink.
But your mobile (handy) phone was not available.

We would like to visit Sunlink plant as soon as possible,
to see production line and (expecially) quality control system
+ measurement laboratory.

Date of visit: 12 – 16.September + - 2 days (depends of fly tickets)

3 people from company.

Call me pls back or send me email.

Can you arrange this meeting ?

Thank you for your replay.

Brgds

APPENDIX P VIII: SAMPLE OF PILANA WOOD S.R.O. EMAIL

-----Original Message-----

From: Bergman Vladimír
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2010 9:05 AM
To: 'alnroux65@hotmail.com'
Cc: 'alnroux65@hotmail.com'
Subject: Pilana Tools

Hi Alain,

Thank you for your interest in our products. My colleague Vera who is in charge of industrial knives will let you know about her products, I´m in charge of TCT saw blades, band saws, PCD tools and metal cutting circular saw blades with TCT and Cermet tips.

Kindly let me know whether there is room to cooperate in this segment.

Can you also let me know whether you started a new business on your own or joined someone else?

Thank you Vladimír

Best regards
Vladimír Bergman
Export Sales Manager

PILANA TOOLS Wood Saws s.r.o.
Nadrazni 804, 768 24 Hulin,
CZECH REPUBLIC

tel: +420 573 328 261
fax: +420 573 328 564
cell: +420 606 623 073

mailto: bergman@pilana.cz, www.pilana.com

For wood cutting applications we offer TCT circular saw blades, narrow band saws up to 50 mm width and PCD circular saw blades for panel sizing. For metal cutting applications we offer TCT and cermet tipped circular saw blades.

Pilana Wood Saws on YOUTUBE! Check out our promotional video at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWMWzsIuyqs>