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The Linguistics of Gratitude and Courtesy in Indian and Sri Lankan English

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Content

1. Introduction.....	1 - 2
2. Theoretical Framework.....	2
2.1 Historical Background: English in India.....	2 - 4
2.2 Historical Background: English in Sri Lanka.....	5 - 7
2.3 The Current Status and Characteristics of South Asian English....	7 - 9
2.4 Schneider's Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes.....	9 - 11
2.5 Kachru's Three Circles Model.....	11
2.6 Defining Linguistic Politeness.....	12 - 17
2.7 Previous Research.....	17 - 21
2.8 Research Questions and Hypothesis.....	21 - 22
3. Methodology.....	23 - 25
4. Results.....	25 - 36
5.1 Discussion: Answering the Research Questions.....	36 - 41
5.2 Discussion: Comparing the Results to the Hypothesis.....	42 - 43
5.3 Discussion: Possible Future Research.....	43 - 44
6. Conclusion.....	45
7. References.....	46

1. Introduction

Language is a complex matter. Speakers around the world use languages to communicate with each other in various different settings and contexts. One aspect of language is the concept of being polite. Politeness has many facets, including obvious things like saying “thanks” and “thank you” when appropriate. But when exactly are these phrases appropriate? There is no simple answer to that, especially when considering that different speech communities have different views on politeness.

Politeness is a subject that is studied in the linguistic field of pragmatics, as Jonathan Culpeper summarizes: “Politeness [...] involves “polite” behaviors. What those behaviors, linguistic and non-linguistic, consist of, how they vary in context, and why they are considered “polite” are some of the key areas of politeness study” (Culpeper 2011: 394). A significant problem in the field of linguistic politeness is however, that there is no commonly agreed definition of politeness. Despite this, there are several approaches to improve the understanding of linguistic politeness. Since this thesis focuses on the Indian and Sri Lankan varieties of English, Bruce Fraser's socio-cultural view in particular is noteworthy, because it “assumes that each society has a particular set of social norms consisting of more or less explicit rules that prescribe a certain behavior, a state of affairs, or a way of thinking in context” (Culpeper 2011: 395). This is very significant, because Indians learn English as a second language and therefore that language is acquired within the socio-cultural and intellectual contexts of India instead of “the Anglo-European, Judeo-Christian socio-cultural and intellectual milieu of the native varieties of English” (Kachru 1987: 97). The same applies to other non-native varieties (Kachru 1987: 98), and therefore it also applies to Sri Lankan English.

Despite a significant increase in empirical studies of politeness phenomena information, there are some gaps in certain settings, like in South Asian Englishes (Brown 2017: 393-394). This thesis aims to fill some of these gaps by investigating common linguistic politeness constructions like “I appreciate it”, “many thanks” and “thank you very much” in the Indian and Sri Lankan English varieties with the International Corpus of English.

Following this introduction, the theoretical framework will be discussed to put the research of this thesis in perspective. The first parts of the theory section will display the historical development of the Indian and Sri Lankan English varieties, from the first contact with the East India Company to the achievement of independence. The current status and characteristics of South Asian English will be discussed, too. Considering the focus on South Asian English varieties, Schneider's Dynamic Model and Kachru's Three Circles Model will also be presented. In the last parts of the theoretical framework, approaches to linguistic politeness will be defined and previous research on gratitude is presented. The methodology section will go into the details of the extracted data set from the International Corpus of English. The results are then presented and discussed in terms of previously formulated research questions. All works cited in this thesis can be found in the reference section.

2. Theoretical Framework

This section of this thesis will discuss the theoretical framework. First, the Indian and Sri Lankan English varieties are presented, as well as some general information about the status and characteristics of South Asian Englishes. This thesis focuses on different varieties of English, which is the reason why looking at Schneider's Dynamic Model and Kachru's Three Circles Model is sensible. After this, approaches to politeness as part of the linguistic subfield “pragmatics”, but also problems that come along with it, are discussed. Then, previous research studies regarding linguistic politeness and gratitude, will be presented. At the end, research questions and a hypothesis are formulated.

2.1 Historical Background: English in India

The first part of the theoretical framework discusses the historical background of the Indian English variety. Edgar W. Schneider divides the history of Indian English into

different phases. The first phase lasted from 1600 to 1757 and started with a charter from Queen Elizabeth I to guarantee a trade monopoly to the East India Company, resulting in the import of the English language in India through sailors and traders (Schneider 2007: 162). Besides trading posts, missionaries were another great influence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, since their established schools were usually run in English (Schneider 2007: 162-163). Aside from the missionaries, the initial English immigrants were mostly uneducated merchants, sailors, or soldiers. During most of the first phase, English spread in India was slow, only accelerating during the second half of the eighteenth century. During this time, the focus on economic interests shifted more to a strive for political authority, influenced by the British rule and their Company in the India Act of 1784. Furthermore, Schneider notes: “Bilingualism with English spread slowly in the local populations, and some missionaries acquired some knowledge in indigenous languages.”

The time frame of the second phase is harder to determine, but Schneider assumes it to be roughly between 1757 and 1905. The second phase is characterized as “a stable colonial status with exonormative orientation.” The East India Company's victory over the last independent Nawab of Bengal in 1757 changed the organization from an economic to a political power. With the help of the British Crown, the EIC expanded further and secured most of the Indian subcontinent in the following decades (Schneider 2007: 163). Following the Indian mutiny in 1858, the British dissolved the EIC and instead assumed direct-rule authority. The increasing political British influence in India and growing number of English teaching schools boosted the spread of the English language, as well as bilingualism. Schneider considers the abandonment of Sanskrit schools a very significant event for the second phase, because it was essentially a request for English to be taught to the Indian command and the possibility to Western teachings and sciences. The consequence was “a debate between “Orientalists,” who wanted Indians to be educated in their own languages and traditions, and “Anglicists,” who favored the introduction of an English-based education system.” The debate ended in favor of the Anglicists by adopting Macaulay's “Minute” in 1835, a document which called for English education to be established in India. During the nineteenth century, this policy led to systematic and widespread bilingual education in India, which was

important for the stable foundation of the English language in the country (Schneider 2007: 164). At the begin of the twentieth century, English became a subject taught in many schools, and the foundation of universities and colleges from 1857 onwards, further institutionalized the language in India (Schneider 2007: 164-165). The nineteenth century saw a lot of contact between English and indigenous languages, as well as a fast growing bilingualism spread within the Indian population. Despite being related to social class, knowledge of English was not limited to the upper classes. In the early twentieth century, middle and lower classes were also included in the spread of the English language. Schneider also mentions that during this phase, many lexical items were borrowed from Indian languages into English, especially words of fauna and flora (mango, bandicoot), but also of indigenous culture or lifestyles (calico, curry).

According to Schneider, the third phase started in 1905, although this is disputed among scientists. After achieving independence, India intended to get away from English as a part of colonial heritage. However, instead, Indian English spread further and progressed into the process of nativization during the twentieth century (Schneider 2007: 165). Schneider describes the situation of English during the time after the independence as follows: “The language which formerly had been viewed as superimposed by the colonial power now became officially recognized in the Indian Constitution, if only for a transition period, until 1965.” Since it proved to be inconvenient to replace English with Hindi, English became a co-official language because of the *Official Languages Act* in 1967. The following *three language system*, consisting of English, Hindi, and a major regional language, however, failed due to the unwillingness of the population to learn Hindi or a Darvidian language. This gave English a special uncontested status in the official domain. Surprisingly, the nativization of English accelerated after native speakers left India after independence in 1947 (Schneider 2007:166).

2.2 Historical Background: English in Sri Lanka

Having discussed the historical background of Indian English, this section will now elaborate on English in Sri Lanka. According to Tobias Bernaisch, Sri Lanka first came into contact with the English language in 1796 due to the East India Company and their interest in cinnamon trade. Initial language contact between English settlers and indigenous people was limited to basic communication, which means that it is likely that only toponymic lexical items were adopted at that time. The territories of the East India Company were integrated into the British Crown Colony of Sri Lanka in 1802, giving the British control over the entire island, with the exception of Kandy. As a result, the English language gained a significant boost in influence and prestige in Sri Lanka.

As soon as the EIC had made contact with Sri Lanka in 1796, English was used for communications in higher-level domains like education, the legal system, administration and trade. Regarding the early years of English in Sri Lanka, Bernaisch explains: “The language was taught to the locals as a variety of BrE – and English seminary founded [...] in 1799 was one of the earliest English-medium institutions established to teach the British variety of English” (Bernaisch 2015: 24).

In 1815, the British eventually managed to annex Kandy, giving them complete control over the whole island. From this point on, English was used for all official business, strengthening the status of the English language. During this time, the British began relocating Tamils to Sri Lanka. This and the new teaching facilities by American protestant missionaries made the linguistic situation in Sri Lanka increasingly complex. American influence on Sri Lankan English is described by Bernaisch as follows: “It has been claimed that some phonetic features of American English, which are said to find their origin in these teaching facilities, can be attested in the present-day English of Sri Lankan speakers” (Bernaisch 2015: 25).

American and British missionaries were responsible for the English language being used as the primary language in teaching institutions, as well as becoming unofficially the medium of instruction, strengthening minority bilingualism in the 1830s. Soon the *Colebrooke-Cameron Commission* successfully suggested to make

English the official medium of instruction. Another effect was the introduction of English as the language of administration and education. A reason for this shift in attitude was the fact that the British administration was not able to communicate in indigenous languages, so an English speaking population was beneficial (Bernaisch 2015: 26). However, this also introduced problems. The ability to learn English was mostly limited to the upper classes, and indigenous languages like Tamil and Sinhalese started to lose significance. Resistance against British rule, specifically against language policies, began to rise in the population. Views on English in Sri Lanka were divided, as Bernaisch explains: “On the one hand, English was seen as granting access to modern (Western) ways of thinking and technical innovations from Europa [...]. On the other hand, [...] officially promoting English to the extend described above naturally finds reflection in the depreciation of the other languages of the respective speech community.” A noteworthy aspect of the British influence on Sri Lankan culture are the British missionary schools, that did not only teach locals the English language, but also spread christian beliefs and values (Bernaisch 2015: 27).

In addition to public English and bilingual schools, free vernacular schools for basic education were also established in order to combat the aforementioned inequality in the population. However, Bernaisch adds that “there is ample proof that not education in general, but a certain degree of proficiency in English and a corresponding westernized lifestyle were a ticket to elite circles in Sri Lanka in the second half of the 19th century.” Another interesting fact are the different attitudes towards English in the Tamil and Sinhalese population. The Sinhalese embraced both the English language and the lifestyle. The Tamils on the other hand rejected the European ways of living, despite being willing to learn the language (Bernaisch 2015: 28). In the early 20th century, the British rule was opposed by a rising number of nationalists, most of which were Tamils (Bernaisch 2015: 28-29). This led eventually to the *Swabhasha* movement in the 1920s, with the intention to replace English with Sinhalese and Tamil as official languages, possibly due to the very low proficiency rate in the population at that time. Over time, the situation for the English language improved as education in teaching facilities began to reach all classes (Bernaisch 2015: 29). However, only a few years before Sri Lanka achieved independence in 1948, a resolution was introduced to replace English with

Sinhalese and Tamil as official languages of the country. To enable a smooth replacement, a ten-year program was issued to make Sinhala and Tamil suitable to be used in the public sector (Bernaisch 2015: 30). In 1943, education was declared free which improved its availability to the majority of the population. Unlike in India and other South Asian countries, the transfer of power in Sri Lanka was carried out peacefully as a result of adequate preparations (Bernaisch 2015: 31).

2.3 The Current Status and Characteristics of South Asian English

Having discussed the historical development of Indian and Sri Lankan English, this section will focus on the current status and characteristics in South Asian Englishes. According to Yamuna Kachru and Cecil L. Nelson, the English language became more and more important, until it finally became a part of South Asia. This happened also due to the Indian success of gaining independence in 1947 and because of the increasing literacy in the country. Modern South Asian English (SAE) is defined by B. Kachru as “the educated variety of South Asian English’ with [...] ‘varieties within this variety’.” Every other major variety of English is defined in the exact same way. British English does not describe the collection of geographical or social dialects, but the educated variety codified in dictionaries and grammars. The same applies to American English, which refers to the educated or standard variety, instead of, for example, Chicano English or African-American.

The authors state, that due to the passage of the *Official Languages Act*, English became co-equal with Hindi for official political matters (Kachru, Nelson 2006: 155). Over time, English fortified its status in the South Asian linguistic landscape: “Of the seven major uses of ‘superposed languages in South Asia, English is a significant participant in six, as a lingua franca, in government, education, literature, influence, and development.” Influence is described as the language’s impact on the local languages in terms of the linguistic structure and vocabulary. Development means the language’s uses in management, technical access or governmental services. However, English is not a participant in religion, which is limited exclusively to Sanskrit.

Kachru and Nelson explain that English has the advantage of providing neutralization in the tense religious landscape in South Asia. Despite its original Christian identification, English has much more neutral affective associations than the other languages. The authors state: “Choosing a given code in a multilingual context asserts one or more identities, for example, of religion, caste, and educational attainment, in addition to signaling the message. Since English is outside the traditional indigenous array of codes, it is released from these responsibilities.” The same applies to pan-regional news and commentary, which is the reason why English is widely used in Indian and Sri Lankan media (Kachru, Nelson 2006: 156).

Regarding the characteristics of South Asian English, Kachru and Nelson explain, that English in South Asia has both internal and international purposes, which is the case with every recognizable English variety. They elaborate further on why SAE is special: “It is SAE's historical status as, initially, a foreign language and later as a learned second language that causes the question of influence of any Inner-Circle variety even to arise.” Because of the importance of SAE for internal purposes, the language adjusted itself to the circumstances, in which these speakers of the language find themselves.

The authors provide information about outstanding characteristics of SAE in phonology, grammar, and lexicon, based on B. Kachru's research. Starting with phonology, they explain that SAE possesses various distinctive qualities. Examples for these are: The absence of aspiration of initial voiceless plosives *p*, *t* and *k*; the pronunciation of the fricatives *f*, *θ*, *ð* as *p^h*, *t^h*, *d* respectively; and both *v* and *w* are pronounced as [w]. Some distinct characteristics of subvarieties are also discussed. In certain subvarieties, there is no distinction between tense and lax vowels, like *deep* compared to *dip*. Some subvarieties, on the other hand, have glides that precede initial vowels (open is pronounced as [wopən] (Kachru, Nelson 2005: 157).

Regarding grammar, Kachru and Nelson present various examples, including: “Reduplication is common for emphasis: *Cut it into small small pieces*. [...] The use of prepositions is different from that in BrE or AmE. [...] Idioms and metaphors are transferred from South Asian languages, such as Kannada, *In olden times, woman just worked like a bullock*” (Kachru, Nelson 2005: 157-158).

Furthermore, the authors focus on lexicon. As a result of travel literature and government language registers, South Asian lexical items have entered the English language. Examples, that are mentioned, include *tiffin* as a word for 'snack' or *buggy* for 'carriage'. Despite being English formations and collocations, some instances are only valid locally, like *botheration* which means 'inconvenience'. Other examples are common in BrE and AmE, like *pundit* or *mantra*. There are some lexical items that are simple words, like bungalow for 'one-storeyed house'; while others consist of at least two terms where English and another language are mixed, like *lathi charge* for 'baton charge'.

According to Kachru and Nelson, “in discourse, SAE follows the conventions of conversational interaction and politeness characteristics of South Asian languages. [...] For instance, cases where both partial agreement-disagreements are expressed are more acceptable if the sequence of expression is *yes, but ...*. It is unexpected in other Englishes to have a sequence such as *no, ... but yeah*, which also occurs in Indian English data” (Kachru, Nelson 2005: 158).

2.4 Schneider's Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes

As discussed in the previous sections, India and Sri Lanka were colonized by Great Britain, who introduced the English language to these countries. The adoption process of a variety to become a new independent variety is displayed in Edgar W. Schneider's *Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes*. Schneider's model consists of five phases: Foundation, exonormative stabilization, nativization, endonormative stabilization, differentiation. As the Indian and Sri Lankan English varieties are currently in the process of nativization, this section will point out the characteristics of the first three phases in both varieties.

In the foundation phase, English is brought to a non English speaking country by a group of settlers (Schneider 2007: 33). In terms of linguistic effects during this phase, koinéization, incipient pidginization and toponymic borrowing are noteworthy processes (Schneider 2007: 35). Interestingly, koinéization (a new language consisting of a mix of

two existing languages) did not occur in India at the beginning due to the small settler community, but there was still limited dialect contact and an exchange of place names (Schneider 2007: 163). The situation in Sri Lanka was very similar in the early years, with only basic communication between the two groups, mostly limited to the exchange of toponymic lexical items (Bernaisch 2015: 24).

The phase of exonormative stabilization is characterized by the establishment of (mostly) British political control over the the colonized country. English is used as the official language of administration, education and the legal system (Schneider 2007: 36). During this phase, the East India Company was dissolved in India and the British Crown started to directly control the colony, strengthening their political power. Indians started to request English teaching schools in order to gain scientific advantages. As a result of these events, the English language continued to spread (Schneider 2007: 164). The *Colebrooke-Cameron Commission* is regarded to have started this phase in Sri Lanka. As already mentioned in the previous section, this commission successfully suggested to make English the official medium of instruction, which helped solidifying the status of the language in Sri Lanka (Bernaisch 2015: 26).

Nativization is the third and most important phase. Both Indian and Sri Lankan English are currently in this phase. In nativization the relations between the settlers and the indigenous population usually deteriorate. The indigenous population starts to strive for independence, sometimes successfully (Schneider 2007: 40-41). Linguistically, many significant changes occur. The most notable ones are on a organization level, like morphology and syntax, as the respective country develops new constructions (Schneider 2007: 44). A clear sociopolitical key event in the phase of nativization in India was the achievement of independence from British rule in 1947. At that point, English was already a second language and the language had become so important, that even the independence movement used it in public (Schneider 2007: 166). Sri Lanka gained independence only a year after India. A clear sign of deteriorating relations to their former British rulers, is the replacement of the English language with Tamil and Sinhala, but the transfer of power was overall more peaceful than in India (Bernaisch 2015: 30-31).

Schneider's *Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes* shows in great detail how

the development of an English variety is influenced by several sociopolitical factors. Simple linguistic constructions of politeness like “Thank you” or “thanks” may have been adopted rather early, but it is important to note that these utterances are directly connected to a culture's understanding of courtesy. It is not unlikely that India's and Sri Lanka's view on politeness might have been influenced by the British colonial rule. At the same time, their own native South Asian cultures certainly had an impact on their respective English variety as well. As both varieties will reach the phases of endonormative stabilization and differentiation, Indian English and Sri Lankan English will continue to change for the foreseeable future.

2.5 Kachru's Three Circles Model

This section will briefly present Braj Kachru's Three Circles Model to give an overview of the different kinds of English varieties. The three circles are the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle. The inner circle includes countries that use English as a primary language, like the UK, USA, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. The outer circle includes former British and American colonies, where English was adopted as an additional language to be used in administration, education or the legal system. This includes countries, like India, Sri Lanka, Singapore or Nigeria. The last circle to be discussed is the expanding circle. This circle includes regions like Europe, China or the Middle East. Countries of this circle use the English language as a medium of international communication (Kachru 2008: 4).

For this thesis, the inner and the outer circle are the most important ones. The inner circle includes Great Britain, which was the country that brought the English language to India and Sri Lanka through colonization. As former colonies, India and Sri Lanka are part of the outer circle.

2.6 Defining Linguistic Politeness

In this part of the theory section, approaches to defining linguistic politeness will be discussed. Penelope Brown explains in *The Oxford Handbook of Pragmatics* that politeness can have various different meanings. In superficial terms it relates to speech and behavior that is considered socially correct or appropriate, but its core sense is a subject that focuses on speech and behavior that deals with the feelings and expectations of the people that are interacted with to enable a smooth social interaction. The purpose of politeness is to prevent offense by anticipating and balancing out the possibilities for offense. Brown lists various terms that can express politeness: “Manners, courtesy, tact, deference, sensibility, poise, rapport, urbanity, civility, graciousness.” Terms for opposite behavior are: “rudeness, gaucheness, social gaffes, insults – and their consequences, from embarrassment or humiliation to conflict and even warfare.” All forms of politeness matter in every culture in all social interactions (Brown 2017: 383).

According to the author, scientists have focused on politeness in linguistic pragmatics since the 1970s in order to analyze routinized formulaic utterances. The scientific study of politeness as a linguistic phenomenon started with a paper by Robin Lakoff in 1973 with the help of a Gricean framework in order to understand linguistic politeness. Brown explains: “A broader view of politeness considers it to be an intrinsic aspect of social interaction, crucial to the construction and maintenance of social relationships [...] and hence bearing on human cooperation and universals in human interaction.” Considering this, politeness in communication is a fundamental part of social life and interaction. Brown assumes it might even be necessary for human cooperation in general. Furthermore, language use is very important to express and negotiate this cooperation, while politeness is the most notable feature of language use to show the nature of human sociality as expressed in speech (Brown 2017: 384). There are three distinct approaches to analyze linguistic politeness:

- *Politeness as social rules or norms,*
- *Politeness as adherence to Politeness Maxims,*
- *Politeness as strategic face management.*

This section will discuss these approaches in more detail. Regarding *Politeness as*

social rules or norms, Brown explains that “to the layman, politeness is a concept designating 'proper' social conduct, rules for speech and behavior stemming generally from high-status individuals or groups.” In educated societies these rules are usually formulated in etiquette books, that include polite phrases as *thank you* and *please*, the forms of greetings and farewells, as well as more complex routines like table manners. Politeness in this view is usually bound to certain linguistic forms and formulaic expressions. These may be taught specifically to children and can vary depending on the culture and language. Brown also mentions that “some analytical approaches to politeness are formulated in terms of the same sorts of culture-specific rules for doing what is socially acceptable.” She mentions among others Ide's work on Japanese politeness as social indexing as an example where politeness is an issue of social norms. It is also mentioned that this approach is most suitable for fixed facets of language use, like the necessary social marking of comparatively unchangeable social categories and social actions.

The second approach *Politeness as adherence to Politeness Maxims* understands politeness as a group of social conventions that are coordinated with Grice's *Cooperative Principle* to achieve the most efficient information transmission with the four maxims Quality, Quantity, Relevance and Manner. According to the author, “Lakoff (1973) suggested that three 'rules of rapport' underlie the choice of linguistic expression, rules which can account for how speakers deviate from directly expressing meanings.” These three rules are 'Don't impose'; 'Give options' and 'Be friendly' and they enable distinct communicative styles. Lakoff argues that politeness is a system of interpersonal relations with the aim to make interaction easier by reducing the risk for conflict present in all human interaction (Brown 2017: 385).

The third and last approach that is discussed is *Politeness as strategic face management*, which focuses on so-called 'face work'. This approach is considered the most influential one (Jautz 2013: 72). Sociologist Ervin Goffman thought politeness to be a part of interpersonal ritual, which is essential to public order. Brown explains: “He [Goffman] defined face as an individual's publicly manifest self-esteem, and proposed that social members have two kinds of face requirements: positive face, or the want for approval from others, and negative face, or the want not to offend others.” Goffman

formulated the working assumption that appropriate forms of politeness are needed to modify every interactional act with a social-relational dimension, because of their inherent face-threatening nature.

Brown and Levinson based their own findings on Goffman's analysis. They focused on the detailed similarities in the construction of polite utterances across greatly different languages and cultures, while arguing that universal principles form the basis of the construction of these polite utterances. They discovered two sorts of cross-linguistic parallels: "How the polite expression of utterances is modified in relation to social characteristics of the interlocutors and the situation, and how polite utterances are linguistically constructed." Furthermore the author explains, that at least three social factors are involved in the decision of how to be polite: First, a person tends to be more polite to social superiors. In this case politeness usually goes one way upwards, meaning the inferior is more polite to the superior than vice versa. Second, a person tends to be more polite to people he/she doesn't know. In this case, the exchange is usually symmetrical. Third, the degree of imposition, which varies in different cultures. In this case a person is usually more polite for more serious impositions.

Brown notes, that there are linguistic structures for realizing certain kinds of politeness, which are exceptionally similar across languages. She elaborates further on this: "The politeness of solidarity is characterized, for example, by the use of intensifiers, in-group identity markers and address forms, exaggerated intonation patterns, and forms for seeking or emphasizing agreement and avoiding disagreement." Avoidance-based politeness on the other hand is defined by restraint, formality, self-effacement, deference, hedges, honorifics, indirect speech acts, impersonalizing mechanisms like pluralizing pronouns, nominalization, and passive constructions.

To explain these detailed parallels across languages and cultures in terms of cross-cultural patterns, it is necessary to find out what people generally are trying to do when being polite (Brown 2017: 386). For this purpose, Brown and Levinson proposed an abstract model of politeness, in which the two essential attributes *face* and *rationality* are assigned to human actors. The author explains that *face* consists of positive and negative face. Positive face means the desire to be admired or liked, while negative face means the desire to be unhindered in one's actions. The second attribute *rationality*

provides for the ability to use linguistic means to achieve communicative goals. Brown and Levinson created a model based on both of these attributes, including the assumption that all speakers are aware that all interlocutors have these attributes. This model deals with the issue of how speakers build polite utterances in different contexts based on assessments of three social factors. According to Brown these factors are: “The relative power (P) of speaker and addressee in the context, their social distance (D), and the intrinsic ranking (R) of the face-threateningness of an imposition.” These three factors are considered abstract social dimensions that catalog types of social relationship (P, D) and cultural values and definitions of impositions or face threats (R).

Five types of strategies of politeness are distinguished by Brown and Levinson. These range from the avoidance of a face-threatening act (FTA) to performing them indirectly. The author continues: “On-record realization of an FTA can be done without any redressive action at all ('baldly'). It may be carried out with positive redress, which is essentially approach-based, addressing the hearer's positive face wants by emphasizing closeness and solidarity.” It is also possible to perform politeness with negative redress. In this case, it is an approach-based way of addressing the hearer's positive face desire for deference, distance and freedom from unexpected impositions. People are expected to choose the linguistic framing of their utterance based on these strategies depending on the weightiness of the FTA. The weightiness is measured considering the three contextually dependent social factors P, D and R. Positive politeness is most suitable and cost-effective for low levels of FTA threat, while negative politeness is more appropriate for high levels of FTA. Indirectness is the best option for the highest FTA threats.

Brown then summarizes the content as follows: “The argument is that there are universal dimensions to cultural values and social structures, which can be abstracted from the variety of individual societies and compared – that underlying the variety, in all societies people recognize degrees of social distance, degrees of (vertical) social hierarchy, and degrees of impositions which can be made to their universally recognized desires to maintain 'face', and that universal pragmatic principles produce cross-linguistic parallels in the ways in which people linguistically encode their speech acts in different contexts.” Cross-cultural variability in politeness can be credited to social

structure, cultural meaning and cultural value. The same principles apply to diverse societies resulting in equivalent ways of communicative styles in relatively equivalent situations (Brown 2017: 387). Regardless of the various different kinds of social relationship and type of face threat, pan-cultural social dimensions (P, D, R) are the basis of them. These result in the strategic language choice and that is why it is possible to derive the cross-cultural similarities in selection of linguistic realizations of politeness strategies (Brown 2017: 388).

It should be noted that Brown and Levinson's politeness theory about strategic face management was challenged and criticized in the early 2000s, most notably by Gino Eelen in his work *A Critique of Politeness Theories* in 2001. This was due to the progress made since the 1970s in science regarding communication and social and interpersonal interaction. Jonathan Culpeper presents these criticisms in *Pragmatics of Society*:

- Brown and Levinson ignore the lay person's understanding of politeness, by postulating a facework theory as a politeness theory.
- They claim that their theory is universal, which is problematic because the conception of “face” may not be applicable across diverse cultures.
- Their model is based on an inadequate pragmatic model, that is biased towards the speaker and the language production, ignoring key aspects in which politeness is understood.
- They are unable to formulate an appropriate conception of context, although context is highly important for judgments of politeness (Culpeper 2011: 409).

Penelope Brown admits that their original model of politeness needs revision. She explains: “The approach of Brown and Levinson, as anthropologists, was both empirically founded and comparative [...]. The cross-linguistic, cross-cultural parallels are patently observable; the problem is to account for them in a way consonant with modern linguistic and anthropological theorizing.” A possible solution, proposed by Claudia Strauss, would be the inclusion of a cultural stance-taking model. According to Strauss, a speaker's expression of an opinion on a topic should display the cultural standing of that view in the appropriate opinion community (Brown 2017: 392). She argues that “cultural standing considerations affect speakers' judgments about what

would be considered a possible FTA in the expression of opinions, and negative and positive politeness strategies for mitigating FTAs, while politeness considerations help explain why cultural standing is marked in discourse” (Brown 2017: 393).

2.7 Previous Research

Despite a significant increase in empirical studies of politeness phenomena information and the resulting increased knowledge about language use and social interactional styles in various contexts and societies, there are some gaps in certain settings. Therefore, there is barely any literature on politeness in South Asia (Brown 2017: 393-394). In spite of this, this chapter aims to show a selection of existing research on the matter. The first example to be discussed is the research study *A Corpus-Based Approach to the Study of Speech Act of Thanking* by Stephanie W. Cheng. Unlike this thesis, Cheng's study focuses on American English and British English, which means she compares two Englishes of the inner circle. However, her approach is still noteworthy, because it is applicable to any variety and offers possibilities for interesting comparisons.

In *A Corpus-Based Approach to the Study of Speech Act of Thanking*, Cheng investigates the performance of the speech act of thanking while using the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE), consisting of 1.7 million words and the spoken part of the British National Corpus (BNC), consisting of 4 million words (Cheng 2010: 261). The study differentiates the discourse functions of various forms of thanking. Thanking expressions are categorized into these categories:

- Thanking: This strategy consists of two subcategories “simple thanking”, and “elaborated thanking” where intensifiers, reasons or both are added to the thanking phrase. Table 2 shows the distribution of these categories in more detail.
- Appreciation: This strategy focuses on the phrases where “appreciate” and “appreciated” are used as appreciation phrases.
- Non-gratitude: The non gratitude strategy consists of the subcategories “showing relief”, “rejecting an offer” and “showing politeness, greeting and conversation

ending”

- Combinations of different strategies
- Thanking a 3rd person
- Formal speech: This strategy uses overt subjects, like “I” or “we”, in formal thanking expressions (Cheng 2010: 262-265).

The distribution of these categories in the MICASE and BNC corpora is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of major categories of expressions of gratitude

Strategy	MICASE	BNC	Total
Thanking	110 (76.39%)	147 (74.24%)	257 (75.15%)
Appreciation	7 (4.86%)	0 (0.00%)	7 (2.05%)
Non-gratitude	15 (10.42%)	47 (23.74%)	62 (18.13%)
Combinations	3 (2.08%)	4 (2.02%)	7 (2.05%)
Thanking a 3 rd person	5 (3.47%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (1.46%)
Formal speech	4 (2.78%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (1.17%)
Total	144 (100.00%)	198 (100.00%)	342 (100.00%)

Source: Cheng, Stephanie W. (2010). “Table 1. Frequency of major categories of expressions of gratitude.” A Corpus-Based Approach to the Study of Speech Act Thanking in *Concentric: Studies in Linguistics* 36.2. 266

Regarding the overall use of strategies in table 1, Cheng notes that the most frequent strategy is the thanking strategy with 75.15 %, followed by the non-gratitude strategy with 18.3 %. The other strategies are used much less often, as they constitute merely 6.73 % of the total occurrences (Cheng 2010: 266). Table 2 goes into more detail regarding the Thanking category and its subcategories “simple thanking” and “elaborate thanking”.

Table 2. Frequency of subcategories of the thanking strategy

Thanking strategy	MICASE	BNC	Total
Simple thanking			
<i>thank you</i>	66 (60.00%)	105 (71.43%)	171 (66.54%)
<i>thanks</i>	10 (9.09%)	6 (4.08%)	16 (6.23%)
Elaborated thanking			
thanking + intensifier	25 (22.73%)	31 (21.09%)	56 (21.79%)
thanking + intensifier + intensifier	0 (0.00%)	4 (2.72%)	4 (1.56%)
thanking + <i>for</i> (reason)	4 (3.64%)	1 (0.68%)	5 (1.95%)
thanking + intensifier + <i>for</i> (reason)	5 (4.55%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (1.95%)
Total	110 (100.00%)	147 (100.00%)	257 (100.00%)

Source: Cheng, Stephanie W. (2010). "Table 2. Frequency of subcategories of the thanking strategy" A Corpus-Based Approach to the Study of Speech Act Thanking in *Concentric: Studies in Linguistics* 36.2. 267

Cheng concludes, that her findings confirm that "thank you" is the most frequently used strategy in both corpora (MICASE: 60 %; BNC: 71.43 %). The simple "thanks" strategy, on the other hand, is used less often with only 9.09 % in the MICASE corpus and 4.08 % in the BNC. Regarding elaborated thanking, "thanking + intensifier" is the most frequently used strategy in both corpora (MICASE: 22.73 %; BNC: 21.09 %). The most used intensifiers are "very much" (mostly with "thank you") and "a lot" (with "thanks"). The use of two intensifiers is very rare with only four cases in the BNC. The intensifiers, that were used, are "very much + indeed/much obliged". Overall, Cheng explains that the MICASE corpus displayed more varieties of strategies, like appreciation and formal speech, which were not found in the BNC (Cheng 2010: 267).

Another interesting linguistic study regarding gratitude is *Thanking Formulae in English: Exploration Across Varieties*, in which Sabine Jautz investigated and discussed thanking constructions in British and New Zealand English using the spoken parts of the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Wellington Corpus of Spoken New Zealand English (WSC) (Jautz 2013: 81). Table 3 shows the frequencies of different thanking formulae in Jautz' study.

Table 3: Overall frequencies of thanking formulae in BNC and WSC and in total

thanking formulae	BNC	WSC	Σ
<i>thank</i>	311 (66.17%)	219 (52.52%)	530 (59.75%)
<i>thanks</i>	116 (24.68%)	151 (36.21%)	267 (30.10%)
<i>thankful</i>	3 (0.64%)	1 (0.24%)	4 (0.45%)
<i>thankfully</i>	1 (0.21%)	1 (0.24%)	2 (0.23%)
<i>thanking</i>	1 (0.21%)	–	1 (0.11%)
<i>appreciate</i>	9 (1.91%)	15 (3.60%)	24 (2.71%)
<i>appreciated</i>	1 (0.21%)	2 (0.48%)	3 (0.34%)
<i>appreciative</i>	1 (0.21%)	–	1 (0.11%)
<i>cheers</i>	6 (1.28%)	4 (0.96%)	10 (1.13%)
<i>gratitude</i>	–	–	–
<i>grateful</i>	10 (2.13%)	–	10 (1.13%)
<i>I'm an ingrate</i>	–	–	–
<i>obliged</i>	–	–	–
<i>ta</i>	–	6 (1.44%)	6 (0.68%)
<i>{that's/that is/was} good</i>	4 (0.85%)	6 (1.44%)	10 (1.13%)
<i>{that's/that is/was} great</i>	3 (0.64%)	8 (1.92%)	11 (1.24%)
<i>{that's/that is/was} kind</i>	1 (0.21%)	1 (0.24%)	2 (0.23%)
<i>{that's/that is/was} lovely</i>	2 (0.43%)	3 (0.72%)	5 (0.56%)
<i>{that's/that is/was} nice</i>	1 (0.21%)	–	1 (0.11%)
Σ	470 (100.00%) [= 52.99% of total]	417 (100.00%) [= 47.01% of total]	887 (100.00%)

Source: Jautz, Sabine (2013). “Table 4.1 Overall frequencies of thanking formulae in BNC and WSC and in total” *Thanking formulae in English: Explorations across varieties and genres*. 84

These findings show that the thanking expressions in the British data set are more numerous and versatile than the New Zealand corpus. Both corpora have in common that “thank” (BNC: 66.17 %; WSC: 52.52 %) is the most frequently used expression, followed by “thanks” (BNC: 24.68 %; WSC: 36.21 %). As these results show, “thank” is more frequent in British English, while “thanks” is more frequent in New Zealand English. With a total of 89.85 %, these two formulae make up the vast majority of all expressions. Additional formulae of interest are “grateful” and “ta”. “Grateful” only appears in the BNC, whereas “ta” is only used in the WSC (Jautz 2013: 83-84). Jautz goes into more detail regarding her findings by investigating benefactors, intensifiers and reasons, similarly to Cheng in the previously discussed study. Table 4 shows the use of intensifiers across thanking formulae in the BNC and WSC.

Table 4: Using intensifiers across thanking formulae in BNC and WSC and in total

intensifier/thanking formulae	BNC	WSC	Σ
<i>very much</i>	n = 61	n = 59	n = 120
<i>thank</i>	50 (81.97%)	38 (64.41%)	88 (73.33%)
<i>thanks</i>	11 (18.03%)	20 (33.90%)	31 (25.83%)
others	0 (0.00%)	1 (1.70%)	1 (0.83%)
<i>very much indeed</i>	n = 42	n = 2	n = 44
<i>thank</i>	38 (90.48%)	1 (50.00%)	39 (88.64%)
<i>thanks</i>	4 (9.52%)	1 (50.00%)	5 (11.36%)
others	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
<i>a lot</i>	n = 16	n = 17	n = 33
<i>thank</i>	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
<i>thanks</i>	16 (100.00%)	17 (100.00%)	33 (100.00%)
others	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
other intensifier	n = 24	n = 14	n = 38
<i>thank</i>	1 (4.17%)	5 (35.71%)	6 (15.79%)
<i>thanks</i>	8 (33.33%)	4 (28.57%)	12 (31.58%)
others	15 (62.5%)	5 (35.71%)	20 (52.63%)

Source: Jautz, Sabine (2013). “Table 4.1 Overall frequencies of thanking formulae in BNC and WSC and in total” *Thanking formulae in English: Explorations across varieties and genres*. 92

Jautz proves with the results shown in table 4 that intensifiers are used more often in British English than in New Zealand English. “Very much” is the most frequent intensifier. It is used almost equally in both varieties (BNC: 13.15 %; WSC: 14.50 %), usually with “thank (you)”. The same applies to “a lot”, which is also almost equally used in British and New Zealand English (BNC: 3.45 %; WSC: 3.66 %). However, “a lot” is used considerably less often than “very much.” The only notable difference between the two varieties can be seen in the use of “very much indeed”. It constitutes 9.05 % of all formulae found in the BNC data set, while the WSC corpus shows only 0.49 % instances (Jautz 2013: 91).

2.8 Research Questions and Hypothesis

In this section, the research questions and the hypothesis will be presented and discussed. The conducted research for this thesis will enable answering the research questions in the upcoming sections. The research questions are:

1. How do the varieties differ in terms of frequency of thanking strategies?
2. What types of thanking strategies and formulae are used in each variety?
3. How do dialogues and monologues differ in terms of thanking strategies?
4. How do the results of this thesis differ from previous research?

To answer the first research question, making comparisons between the varieties is necessary. This thesis may focus on Indian and Sri Lankan English, but since both varieties emerged in British colonies, it is sensible to investigate British English as well. To achieve adequately comparable values for each corpus, it is necessary to normalize the results. The second research question requires to go into more detail, in order to investigate how each frequency is made up in terms of formulae and strategies. While normalized frequencies are useful for comparing different corpora, this research question requires to look at proportions and therefore percentage based values are more insightful. The same applies to the third research question that asks in what way thanking strategies are influenced by the type of communication. To answer the last research question, the results of this thesis need to be compared to studies, that were already conducted in this field of linguistics. As mentioned before, empirical research on South Asian politeness is lacking, so existing research is mostly limited to other varieties, like the previously discussed studies regarding New Zealand English (Jautz), American English (Cheng), or British English (Jautz, Cheng).

Having discussed the research questions, it is time to take a closer look at the hypothesis. India and Sri Lanka have a similar history, as both were under British colonial rule during mostly the same time period. While there are some notable differences, like the influence of American missionaries in Sri Lanka, it can be safely assumed that India and Sri Lanka as South Asian countries are culturally more similar to each other than to Great Britain. As Kachru explains, Indians and Sri Lankans learn English as a second language and therefore that language is acquired within the socio-cultural and intellectual contexts of their country instead of “the Anglo-European, Judeo-Christian socio-cultural and intellectual milieu of the native varieties of English” (Kachru 1987: 97). As a result, the following hypothesis can be formulated: Results from the ICE-IND and ICE-SL corpora tend to differ less from each other than from the ICE-GB corpus.

3. Methodology

After having discussed the theoretical framework of linguistic gratitude, this part of the thesis displays how the research data was extracted. The corpus, its sub-corpora, and the analysis software are presented in more detail.

For this thesis, the spoken parts of the International Corpus of English (ICE) were used. This corpus consists of several sub-corpora of different varieties. The research at hand was conducted by using the sub-corpora of the Indian, Sri Lankan and British varieties. The sizes of each corpora are as follows: ICE-India with 1,055,580 words; ICE-Sri Lanka with 1,150,301 words and ICE-Great Britain with 713,785 words. Not only are these corpora similar in size, they also share the same design, making them well suited for comparisons. The following table shows the corpus design and codes of the spoken part of the ICE. It is divided into various genres, that are marked with individual codes. Genres that are marked with S1 are dialogues and the ones with S2 are monologues.

ICE CORPUS DESIGN & CODES

Genre	Number of texts
Face-to-face conversations (S1A1)	90
Telephone conversations (S1A2)	10
Classroom lessons (S1B1)	20
Broadcast discussions (S1B2)	20
Broadcast interviews (S1B3)	10
Parliamentary debates (S1B4)	10
Legal cross-examinations (S1B5)	10
Business transactions (S1B6)	10
Spontaneous commentaries (S2A1)	20
Unscripted speeches (S2A2)	30
Demonstrations (S2A3)	10
Legal presentations (S2A4)	10
Broadcast news (S2B1)	20
Broadcast talks (S2B2)	20
Speeches (not broadcast) (S2B3)	10
TOTAL	300

Having established the corpus, the procedure of data extraction will now be discussed. The data extraction software of choice was the corpus analysis toolkit Antconc (Windows 64-bit version 3.5.9). While politeness certainly plays a role in every speech action, the social context differs greatly in monologues and dialogues. For this reason, each sub-corpus was divided into monologues and dialogues. The codes mentioned before made this very easy to do. This is especially useful when investigating different thanking strategies, like formal speech. After this, each corpus was searched for various expressions of gratitude. The searched terms were “thanks”, “thank”, “appreciate”, “appreciated”, “cheers”, “grateful”, “ta”, “thankful” and “thankfully”. The findings were then copied to a spreadsheet to make further investigation easier.

The next step was the elimination of false positive hits. This included hits where the phrase “thanks” was used as a synonym for “because of” or “due to”, as in the following example:

Thanks largely to the communication satellite and other electronic aids available in common to all. (ICE-IND, S1a-015)

Similarly to Cheng's study, instances where the phrase of gratitude does not have an illocutionary force or appears in indirect speech were also considered false positives, like these examples:

The committee accepted the trophy and cash prize endowment with thanks. (ICE-IND, S1b-073)

Say thank you punchi. (ICE-SL: S1A1-024 tr2 ma2 17-12-22)

The philosophy behind this that all of us have strengths that must be appreciated. (ICE-SL, S1B4-058 tr2 ma2 18-01-09)

Further investigation shifted the focus to “thanks” and “thank”, since both formulae are by far the most commonly used in each of the three variety. These two phrases are categorized into different strategies: “Thanking”, “expression of relief” and “formal speech”. For the study of these strategies, monologues and dialogues were also taken into account.

The “thanking” strategy was investigated further in terms of simple and elaborated thanking strategies. Simple thanking strategies merely consist of the phrase itself, while elaborated thanking strategies extend these phrases through added

intensifiers, reasons or both.

The sizes of all corpora, that were used, are as follows:

ICE-India: 1,055,580

ICE-India: (Dialogues): 684,040

ICE-India: (Monologues): 371,540

ICE-Sri Lanka: 1,150,301

ICE-Sri Lanka: (Dialogues): 759,007

ICE-Sri Lanka: (Monologues): 391,294

ICE-Great Britain: 713,785

ICE-Great Britain: (Dialogues): 432,652

ICE-Great Britain: (Monologues): 281,133

All normalization was conducted per 1,000,000 words.

4. Results

In this section, tables and diagrams will present the results of the study. When comparing frequencies of the different varieties, normalized values are used. Total hits and percentage numbers are used when looking at the distribution of strategies and formulae. In addition, selected examples from the ICE-IND, ICE-SL and ICE-GB corpora are shown for more clarity. This chapter is structured in a way that the first parts focus on more general and broader results, while the later parts go into more detail of more specific aspects.

Table 5: Frequencies of all Thanking Formulae (Normalized)

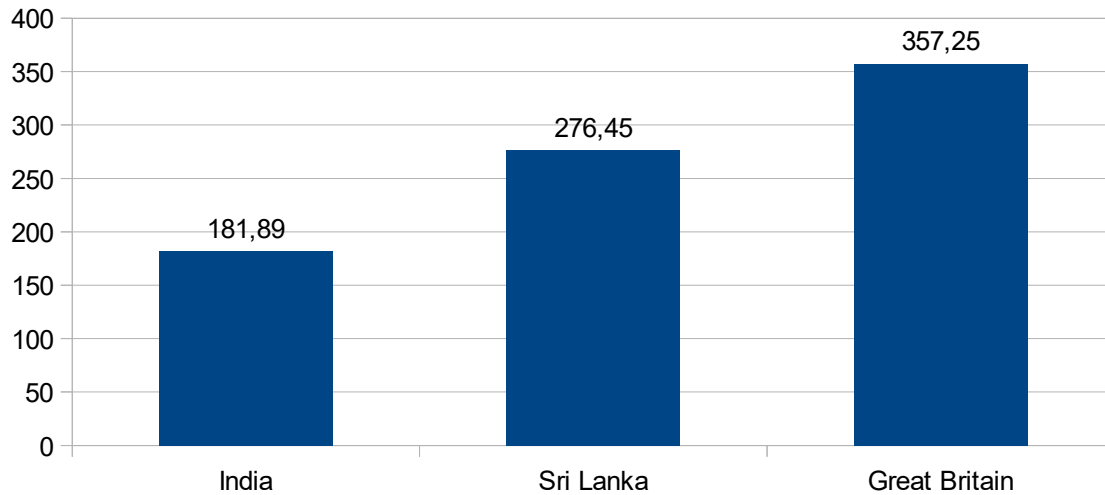


Table 5 presents the differences between the frequencies of all thanking formulae that were investigated (see table 6 for more details) in the varieties. It shows that Great Britain has by far the highest normalized frequency with a value of 357.25, followed by the Sri Lankan variety with 276.45, and finally India with the lowest value of 181.89.

Table 6: Distribution of all Thanking Formulae

Thanking Formulae	India	Sri Lanka	Great Britain
Thank	164 (85.42 %)	254 (79.87 %)	168 (65.88 %)
Thanks	11 (5.73 %)	48 (15.09 %)	53 (20.78 %)
Thankful	4 (2.08 %)	2 (0.63 %)	-
Thankfully	1 (0.52 %)	1 (0.31 %)	2 (0.78 %)
Appreciate(d)	5 (2.60 %)	8 (2.52 %)	7 (2.64 %)
Cheers	-	-	8 (3.14 %)
Grateful	7 (3.65 %)	5 (1.57 %)	16 (6.27 %)
Ta	-	-	1 (0.39 %)
Total	192 (100%)	318 (100 %)	255 (100 %)

Table 6 shows in greater detail which thanking formulae were used by the three varieties. This table reveals, that the most used formulae across all varieties is “thank”

(ICE-IND: 85.42 %; ICE-SL: 79.87 %; ICE-GB: 65.88 %), followed by “thanks” (ICE-IND: 5.73 %; ICE-SL: 79.87 %; ICE-GB: 65.88 %). Indian English has a notably higher relative frequency of “thank” than Great Britain. For “thanks” the opposite is true, since in this case Great Britain has a much higher value than India. Other phrases are much less common, proven by the low number of hits. The rarest phrase according to this study is “ta”, which has no hits in the Indian and Sri Lankan corpora and only one hit in the Great Britain corpus. “Cheers” is equally interesting, because it only occurs in the ICE-GB corpus as well.

Examples of various thanking formulae:

Thank:

“At first I like to thank you all very much for giving me such a warm welcome (ICE-IND, S1b-071)

It should be noted that “thank” includes a wide range of linguistic constructions, like “thank you” or expressions of relief like “thank god”. This example shows a formal speech strategy, which is characterized by an overt subject (in this case “I”). Besides this, there is also an intensifier (“very much”) and a reason (“for giving me such a warm welcome”) present. This is proof of how many features are contained in a seemingly simple statement of gratitude. Reasons, intensifiers and formal speech strategy will be discussed later in more detail.

Thanks:

Well the surface is what shows <unclear-words> <laughter> <,,> but uh <,> it's been splendid and very many thanks (ICE-GB, s1b-078).

This example for “thanks” shows that some statements include more than one intensifier. In this case there are two: “Very” and “many”. It is noteworthy, that a vast majority of intensifiers in combination with “thanks” is usually “a lot”. “Very many thanks” is a unique exception, at least in the ICE corpora. All of the other examples

have a much lower frequency than “thank” and “thanks”. Nevertheless, they still possess the ability to occur in combination with intensifiers, like “I’m so thankful” in the next example.

Thankful:

<[>Ahh</[></{> <{1><[1><w>I’m</w> so</[1> thankful coz <w>I’m</w> sick of <{2><[2>like ditching it (ICE-SL, S1A1-020 tr2 ma2 17-12-22).

Thankfully:

Uh has been put in a wrong account and you know thankfully that was sorted out quite quickly (ICE-SL, S1A2-092 tr2 ma2 18-01-08).

Appreciate:

I appreciate your honesty (ICE-SL, S1A1-058 tr2 ma2 18-01-30).

Cheers

Speaker A: Uhm who hasn't got some gravy? Have some gravy Rob <,,>

Speaker B: Cheers <,,> (ICE-GB, S1a-012).

Grateful

Sir <,,> I am very grateful to all the honourable members <,,> who have taken part <,,> in <,,> this debate (ICE-IND, S1b-054).

Ta

Right <,,> OK ta very much (ICE-GB, S1a-074).

Thanking, Expressions of Relief, Formal Speech

So far, the results show that “Thanks” and “Thank” are the most used phrases of gratitude. While the other formulae are indeed existent to varying degrees in the

investigated corpora, their frequencies are generally very low. Therefore, all upcoming results will be based on “Thanks” and “Thank”, which are much more representative due to their more common nature. This next section will discuss thanking strategies, which are distinguished into three groups:

Thanking: This strategy consists of “Thanks” and “Thank you”. This strategy will be looked at in the next section in more detail by investigating simple and elaborated thanking strategies.

Example 1: *Thanks a lot for the compliment* (ICE-IND, S1a-062)

Example 2: *Very well thank you for that uh excellent question* (ICE-SL, S1B5-064 tr2 ma2 18-07-26 n)

Relief: This strategy is used when the speaker expresses relief in combination with “thank”, like “thank god” or “thank goodness”

Example 1: *No thank heavens* (ICE-GB, s1a-041)

Example 2: *Thank the Lord there is [</=> </>] going to be no clapping and singing tonight* (ICE-GB, s1a-068)

Example 3: *Thank God he didn't come out with something so brilliant* (ICE-IND, s1a-040)

Formal speech: A formal speech strategy is characterized by using an overt subject, like I or We.

Example 1: *Let me also take this opportunity to thank my cabinet colleague <,> honourable <@Thomas/@> <@Samarathunga/@> <O>inhale</O> <,> for choosing this historic <,> Republic building <,> as the venue <,> <O>inhale</O> for this historic meeting <,>* (ICE-SL, S2B2-025 tr2 ma2 17-11-27)

Example 2: *But I would like to thank <,> Sir Nicholas very much for agreeing to be my chairman* (ICE-GB, S2a-039)

Example 3: *I'm </w> extremely happy <,> to greet <,> and thank <,> all the Asian countries <,> <w> who've </w> come to participate <,> in the championship* (ICE-IND, S2a-010)

The following tables present the distribution of the three aforementioned strategies. The tables are divided into three columns. One shows the distribution for the entire variety, the others show the distribution for dialogues and monologues.

Table 7.1: Distribution of Thanking Strategies in India

Strategy	India	India Dialogues	India Monologues
Thanking	150 (85.71 %)	97 (89.81 %)	53 (79.10 %)
Relief	5 (2.86 %)	5 (4.63 %)	-
Formal Speech	20 (11.43 %)	6 (5.56 %)	14 (20.90 %)
Total	175 (100 %)	108 (100 %)	67 (100 %)

Table 7.2: Distribution of Thanking Strategies in Sri Lanka

Strategy	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka Dialogues	Sri Lanka Monologues
Thanking	263 (87.09 %)	172 (91.98 %)	91 (79.13 %)
Relief	11 (3.64 %)	10 (5.35 %)	1 (0.87 %)
Formal Speech	28 (9.27 %)	5 (2.67 %)	23 (20 %)
Total	302 (100 %)	187 (100 %)	115 (100 %)

Table 7.3: Distribution of Thanking Strategies in Great Britain

Strategy	Great Britain	Great Britain Dialogues	Great Britain Monologues
Thanking	197 (89.14 %)	173 (90.10 %)	24 (82.76 %)
Relief	15 (6.79 %)	14 (7.29 %)	1 (3.45 %)
Formal Speech	9 (4.07 %)	5 (2.60 %)	4 (13.79 %)
Total	221 (100 %)	192 (100 %)	29 (100 %)

The first strategy to be discussed is the thanking strategy, which is, as already explained, a collective term for “thanks” and “thank you” expressions. It is by far the most used strategy in all varieties, in both dialogues and monologues. Relative frequencies in

monologues (approx. 80 % on average) are slightly lower than in dialogues (approx. 90 % on average) in all varieties.

The results also reveal that formal speech strategies are predominantly used in monologues in all varieties. Formal speech also occurs in dialogue genres, although to a lesser extent. When looking at the individual varieties, it becomes clear that India and Sri Lanka have the highest relative proportion of formal speech in monologues with 20.90 % and 20 % respectively. Great Britain has a lower value of 13.79 %.

Expressions of relief on the other hand appear mostly in dialogues, while being almost absent in monologues. This applies to all three varieties, as both Sri Lanka and Great Britain have only one single hit, while India has no hits at all in monologues. Distribution regarding expressions of relief in dialogues are fairly even across all three varieties. ICE-GB has the highest relative amount with 7.29 % of investigated strategies being expressions of relief in dialogues. The second highest amount (5.35 %) can be found in the Sri Lankan corpus. Finally, the lowest value of 4.63 % can be found in the Indian corpus.

Focusing on “Thanks” and “Thank you”: Simple and Elaborated Strategies

As mentioned in the previous section, the thanking strategy (meaning “thanks and “thank you”) is the most dominant strategy and deserves to be investigated closer. For this purpose, “thanks” and “thank you” have been examined in terms of simple and elaborated strategies. Simple thanking strategies merely consist of the phrase itself, while elaborated thanking strategies extend these phrases through added intensifiers, reasons or both. The following shows a selection of examples for elaborated thanking strategies for clearer understanding.

Example for “Thanking + intensifier”:

Alright thanks a lot bro bye bye (ICE-SL, S1A2-091 tr2 ma2 18-01-08)

Example for “Thanking + intensifier + intensifier”

Thank you very much indeed (ICE-GB, s1b-063)

Example for “Thanking + reason”:

Thank you for the cup of tea Vicky (ICE-GB, s1a-040)

Example for “Thanking + intensifier + reason”

Thank you very much for my nice present (ICE-GB, s1a-057)

Example for “Thanking + intensifier + intensifier + reason”

Judith thanks very much indeed for coming in and giving evidence to us (ICE-GB, s1b-030)

Table 8: Frequencies of Simple / Elaborated Thanking Strategies (Normalized)

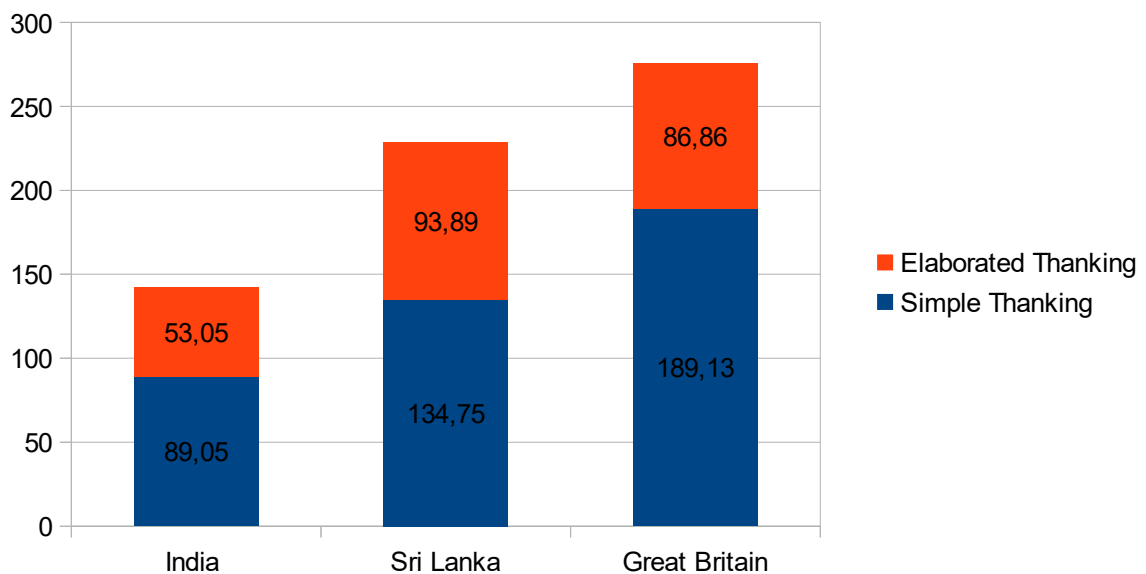


Table 8 shows the normalized frequencies of simple and elaborated thanking strategies. Similar to table 5, which shows the normalized frequencies of all thanking formulae, British English has again the highest frequency (275.99), followed by Sri Lankan

English (228.64) and finally Indian English (142.10). Interestingly, despite not having the highest total frequency, Sri Lanka has the highest frequency (93.89) of elaborated thanking in all varieties.

The table below shows the distribution of simple and elaborated thanking strategies in more detail.

Table 9: Distribution of Simple and Elaborated Thanking Strategies

Thanking Strategy	India	Sri Lanka	Great Britain
Simple Thanking			
Thank you	90 (60 %)	134 (50.95 %)	102 (51.78 %)
Thanks	4 (2.67 %)	21 (7.98 %)	33 (16.75 %)
Elaborated Thanking			
Thanking + Intensifier	34 (22.67 %)	54 (20.53 %)	43 (21.83 %)
Thanking + Intensifier + Intensifier	1 (0.67 %)	-	4 (2.03 %)
Thanking + Reason	7 (4.67 %)	31 (11.79 %)	6 (3.05 %)
Thanking + Intensifier + Reason	14 (9.33 %)	23 (8.75 %)	6 (3.05 %)
Thanking + Intensifier + Intensifier + Reason	-	-	3 (1.52 %)
Total	150 (100 %)	263 (100 %)	197 (100%)

Table 9 shows that the most frequently used strategy across all varieties is the simple form of “thank you”. India has the highest distribution of this strategy, with a relative frequency of 60 % compared to Sri Lanka's 50.95 % and Great Britain's 51.78 %. The relative frequency of the simple form “thanks”, on the other hand, varies a lot between the varieties. Great Britain has the highest relative frequency of this strategy with 16.75 %. Sri Lanka's relative frequency is only about half of this with 7.98 %. India has by far the lowest value of 2.67 %.

The results also reveal that the strategy of thanking in combination with one intensifier is the most frequently used elaborated thanking strategy in all varieties. Frequencies of this strategy are fairly even, with India having the highest value of 22.67

%, followed closely by Great Britain with 21.83 % and Sri Lanka with 20.53 %. The strategy of thanking with two intensifiers is much rarer with zero hits in Sri Lankan English and only 0.67 % in Indian English and 2.03 % in British English. Thanking in combination with a reason has a comparatively high relative frequency of 11.79 % in Sri Lanka, but is rather uncommon in India (4.67 %) and Great Britain (3.05 %). The strategy of intensification and giving a reason has the highest relative frequency of 9.33 % in the Indian corpus, 8.75 % in the Sri Lankan corpus, and only 3.05 % in the Great Britain corpus. Lastly, the strategy of using two intensifiers and a reason is exclusive to the ICE-GB corpus, although with a low relative frequency of 1.52 %.

Focusing on “Thanks” and “Thank you”: Investigating Intensifiers

As proven in the previous section, intensifiers are an important aspect of thanking strategies. They appear in every variety, sometimes on their own, sometimes in combination with reasons. This section will investigate intensifiers and their distribution in each variety in more detail.

Table 10: Frequencies of Intensifiers (Normalized)

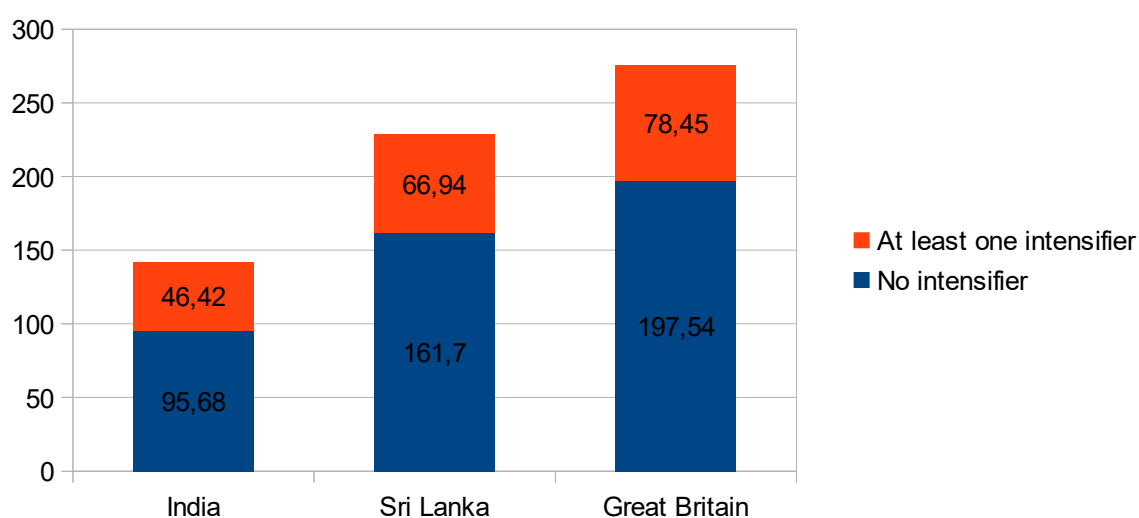


Table 10 shows the normalized frequencies of expressions with “thanks” and “thank you” that use either no or at least one intensifier. British English has the highest frequencies in thanking expressions with no intensifier (197.54) and at least one intensifier (78.45). Sri Lankan English comes second with frequencies of 161.7 for expressions with no intensifier and 66.94 for expressions with at least one intensifier. Indian English has again the lowest frequencies with only 95.68 for thanking expressions with no intensifier and 46.42 for expressions with at least one intensifier. The table below lists all intensifiers that were identified in combination with “thanks” and “thank you”.

Table 11: Distribution of Intensifiers

Intensifier / Strategy	India	Sri Lanka	Great Britain
Very much	42 (100 %)	47 (100 %)	40 (100 %)
Thanks	-	-	7 (17.50 %)
Thank you	42 (100 %)	47 (100 %)	33 (82.50 %)
A lot	3 (100 %)	22 (100 %)	9 (100 %)
Thanks	3 (100 %)	22 (100 %)	9 (100 %)
Thank you	-	-	-
Very much indeed	1 (100 %)	-	5 (100 %)
Thanks	-	-	1 (20 %)
Thank you	1 (100 %)	-	4 (80 %)
So much	3 (100 %)	8 (100 %)	-
Thanks	-	1 (12.50 %)	-
Thank you	3 (100 %)	7 (87.50 %)	-
Very many	-	-	1 (100 %)
Thanks	-	-	1 (100 %)
Thank you	-	-	-
Very very much	-	-	1 (100 %)
Thanks	-	-	-
Thank you	-	-	1 (100 %)

Table 11 shows that the overall most frequently used intensifier is “very much”, since it occurs in large numbers in every of the three varieties. In the Indian and Sri Lankan corpora, this intensifier is used exclusively in combination with “thank you”. In ICE-GB, on the other hand, it also occurs with the “thanks” strategy, but to a low extent (17.50 %). “A lot” is the second most used intensifier, which is used by all varieties only with the “thanks” strategy. Sri Lankan English has the most instances of this intensifier, followed by British English. Indian English uses the “a lot” intensifier much less frequently than the other two.

The remaining intensifiers occur less often. “Very much indeed” consists of two intensifiers and it occurs mostly with the “thank you” strategy in Great Britain (80 %). It has no hit in ICE-SL, and only one hit in the Indian corpus. “So much” has no occurrences in ICE-GB, only appearing in ICE-IND (only with “thank you”) and ICE-SL (87.50 % in “thank you” and 12.50 % in “thanks”). The last identifiers to be discussed are “very many” and “very very much”. Out of all intensifiers that were used with thanking strategies, these are by far the rarest. Both occur exclusively in the British corpus with only one hit.

5.1 Discussion: Answering the Research Questions

This section will revisit the research questions, that were formulated in the theory section. The results found in the study of this thesis enable answering these questions.

(1) How do the varieties differ in terms of frequency of thanking strategies and formulae?

The first research question requires to look at the normalized frequencies of thanking strategies in this study. Table 5 offers a broad overview of the total frequencies of all investigated thanking formulae that were used by the three varieties. These formulae are “thank”, “thanks”, “thankful”, “thankfully”, “appreciate”, “cheers”, “grateful” and “ta”. The results show that the Great Britain corpus has the highest frequency of 357.35. This

means that Great Britain uses expressions of gratitude more often than the other two varieties in the context of this study. The Sri Lankan corpus has the second highest frequency of 276.25 and the Indian corpus the lowest frequency of 181.89.

As mentioned before, “thanks” and “thank you” are the most used formulae that were used by the three varieties. Table 8 focuses on these two phrases by dividing them into simple thanking strategies and elaborated strategies. The order of the total frequencies is similar to Table 5, with ICE-GB again having the highest frequency (275.99), followed by ICE-SL (228.64), and ICE-IND with the lowest frequency (142.10). However, the frequency of elaborated strategies is highest in the Sri Lankan corpus (93.89) compared to Great Britain (86.86) and India (53.05).

A similar thing can be observed when looking at table 10 that shows the use of intensifiers. The ICE-GB is again the corpus with the highest frequency of expressions of gratitude with and without intensifiers, followed by ICE-SL and ICE-IND. The interesting detail here is, that it has been established earlier that the Sri Lankan corpus uses more elaborated thanking strategies than Britain despite having fewer instances of intensifiers. The explanation for this is, that Sri Lankan English has a lot of instances of elaborated thanking strategies with a reason, which will be discussed in more detail with regards to the second research question.

(2) What types of thanking strategies and formulae are used in each variety?

While the first research question focused on overall frequencies, the second research question explores how these frequencies are made up. Table 6 shows the distribution of all thanking formulae that were investigated. These formulae are “thank”, “thanks”, “thankful”, “thankfully”, “appreciate”, “appreciated”, “cheers”, “grateful” and “ta”. Indian and Sri Lankan English only use six types of these formulae, while British English uses seven. The ICE-IND and ICE-SL corpora have no instances of “cheers” and “ta”, while the ICE-GB corpus has no instances of “thankful”. The “thank” and “thanks” formulae are used the most in all three varieties. An exception for this is “thanks” in the Indian corpus with a relative frequency of only 5.73 %. Overall these results reveal that Indian English and Sri Lankan English are less diverse in terms of

thanking formulae than British English.

Regarding the different types of thanking strategies (see table 9), the results show the distribution of simple thanking strategies and elaborated strategies. Simple thanking strategies only consist of the phrase (“thanks” or “thank you”) itself. The simple “thank you” strategy is the most dominant strategy in all varieties, but it is especially prominent in the Indian English variety, where the relative frequency is about 10 % higher than in the Sri Lankan and British English varieties. On the other hand, the simple “thanks” strategy is barely present in the ICE-IND corpus with only 2.67 %, which is considerably less than in the ICE-SL (7.98 %) and ICE-GB (16.75%) corpora. Regarding elaborated thanking strategies, the “thanking + intensifier” strategy is the most used strategy in all varieties with an average distribution of about 20 %. The use of two intensifiers is much rarer. This strategy never occurs in the Sri Lankan variety and only to a small extent in the other two varieties. The use of reasons is another interesting aspect. The British variety barely uses reasons of any kind, while the other two varieties have comparatively high relative frequencies in this regard. The Sri Lankan variety has a notably high frequency of the “thanking + reason” and “thanking + intensifier + reason” strategies. The latter strategy is used a lot in the Indian variety, too. The Indian English variety tends to use simple “thank you”, elaborated “thanking + intensifier” and “thanking + intensifier + reason” strategies the most. Sri Lankan English seems to be the most diverse variety in this matter, as it uses simple “thank you” and “thanks”, elaborated “thanking + intensifier”, “thanking + reason” and “thanking + intensifier + reason” strategies. The British English variety focuses on simple “thank you” and “thanks”, and elaborated “thanking + intensifier” strategies.

Taking a closer look at intensifiers that occur with thanking strategies (see table 11), shows that “very much” is the most used intensifier in all three varieties. The ICE-IND and ICE-SL corpora only use this intensifier with “thank you”, but there are some instances where it occurs with “thanks” in the ICE-GB corpus. The “a lot” intensifier is used exclusively with “thanks” in all varieties. This intensifier is especially popular in the Sri Lankan and British varieties. “Very much indeed” is mostly used in the British variety, while “So much” is used in the Sri Lankan variety. “Very many” and “very very much” are much rarer intensifiers, both with only one hit in the British variety, which

can hardly be considered representative. Indian English can be considered least diverse variety in terms of intensifier use with thanking strategies, as the only intensifier with a high frequency in the ICE-IND corpus is “very much”. In contrast, the ICE-SL corpus shows usage of “very much”, “a lot” and to a lesser extent “so much”. The ICE-GB corpus shows that the British variety uses primarily “very much” and “a lot”, including minor occurrences of “very much indeed”.

(3) How do dialogues and monologues differ in terms of thanking strategies?

The third research question deals with the differences between dialogues and monologues within the varieties. The tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 show the distribution of thanking (“thanks” and “thank you”), expressions of relief (“thank god”, “thank goodness”) and formal speech (“I / We thank ...”) in the different varieties. Unlike the other results of this study, these frequencies are divided into dialogues and monologues, which provides valuable additional insight. The first and most obvious thing to notice is the fact, that thanking is the most used strategy in all varieties. It has the highest relative frequency in both dialogues and monologues, but it should be noted that the frequencies of thanking are a little lower in monologues (about 80 % in all varieties) compared to dialogues (about 90 % in all varieties). The reason for this is the relatively high amount of formal speech instances in monologues. This makes sense and was to be expected when looking at the genres that are associated with monologues in the ICE corpora. These are, among others, scripted and unscripted speeches, which are usually situations where formal speech seems most appropriate. Aside from this, the frequencies of formal speech are generally higher in ICE-IND (11.43 %) and ICE-SL (9.27 %) than in ICE-GB (4.07 %).

On the other hand, expressions of relief are much more common in dialogues in all varieties. Expressions of relief, like “thank goodness”, can be seen as more informal speech acts, that are more fitting to casual situations, that are usually associated with dialogues rather than monologues. The frequencies of expressions relief are higher in ICE-GB (6.79 %) than in ICE-IND (2.86 %) and ICE-SL (3.64 %).

(4) How do the results of this thesis differ from previous research?

The fourth research question requires to take a look at the studies by Cheng and Jautz that were presented previously in the theory section. These studies do not investigate South Asian Englishes, but British, New Zealand and American Englishes. These varieties are part of the inner circle of Kachru's Three Circles Model, unlike Indian and Sri Lankan English, which are part of the outer circle.

Jautz' study focused on spoken British and New Zealand English. In table 3, she shows the distribution of various thanking formulae, many of which were also examined in the study of this thesis. It should be noted, that the number of total hits in Jautz' study is considerably higher due to the size of BNC and WSC corpora compared to the ICE corpora. The first similarity to be discussed is the high frequency of “thank” and “thanks” in all corpora. Jautz shows in her study that these two formulae make up about 90 % in British and New Zealand English. The results from the ICE-corpora correspond to these findings with equally high frequencies. However, the WSC corpora shows a much higher relative frequency for “thanks” (36.21 %) than other corpora. This formula is used less often in Indian English (5.73 %) and Sri Lankan English (15.09 %). All varieties rarely use other formulae except “thank” and “thanks”. “Appreciate” and “grateful” stand out with slightly higher frequencies compared to the rest. “Appreciate” is more prevalent in New Zealand English than in other varieties with a relative frequency of 3.60 %. On the other hand, the WSC corpus has no instances of “grateful” which in turn is used in Great Britain (BNC: 2.13 %; ICE-GB: 6.27 %), Sri Lanka (1.57 %) and India (3.65 %). This comparison allows for the assumption, that linguistic diversity in terms of thanking formulae may possibly be promoted by the role of a certain language in a country. New Zealand is part of the inner circle and therefore uses English as a first language, which might lead to increased versatility, that may be lacking in countries that use English as a second language, like Sri Lanka or India.

Concerning simple and elaborated thanking strategies, Cheng provides insightful information, shown in table 2, that is based on results from the spoken parts of the MICASE corpus (American English) and the BNC corpus (British English). Due to Cheng's approach to exclude certain strategies, frequencies in her study are lower than

frequencies in this thesis. While this comparison focuses on the distribution of different strategies and not total frequencies, the reliability of this comparison might still be compromised because of this.

The simple “thank you” strategy is the most used strategy in all varieties, but results in Cheng's study show higher relative frequencies in the MICASE (60.00 %) and BNC (71.43 %) corpora, compared to ICE-IND (60 %), ICE-SL (50.95 %) and ICE-GB (51.78 %). Furthermore, frequencies regarding the simple “thanks” strategy vary. The BNC corpus shows a distribution of 6.23 % for “thanks”, while the ICE-GB corpus has a distribution of 16.75 %. The elaborated “thanking + intensifier” strategy is used equally in all varieties with relative frequencies of about 20 %. Therefore, this is the most used elaborated strategy. “Thanking + reason” is used a lot less in the BNC corpus (0.68 %) than in MICASE (3.64 %), ICE-IND (4.67 %), ICE-SL (11.79 %) and ICE-GB (3.05 %). In conclusion, the results show that the ICE corpora show a much higher use of elaborated thanking strategies than the BNC and MICASE corpora.

The last comparison to be discussed is the use of intensifiers in Jautz' study and this thesis. Both studies have in common that “very much” is the most used intensifier in all varieties. An interesting detail regarding this intensifier is, that India and Sri Lanka use it exclusively with “thank you”, while New Zealand and Great Britain occasionally use it with “thanks”. The highest relative frequency of “thanks very much” can be found in the WSC corpus with 33.90 %, followed by the BNC (18.03 %) and the ICE-GB corpus (17.50 %). “Very much indeed” is another intensifier with notable differences. In this thesis, it is barely used, as it has no hits in Sri Lankan English and only one hit in Indian English. According to Jautz, it used only once in the WSC corpus, but it has a high number of hits in the BNC corpus with 42 hits, making it the second most used intensifier of the British English variety. Lastly, the “a lot” intensifier is used in all four varieties, even though it has only three hits in the ICE-IND corpus.

5.2 Discussion: Comparing the Results to the Hypothesis

The hypothesis, that was formulated in the theory section, was: “Results from the ICE-IND and ICE-SL corpora tend to differ less from each other than from the ICE-GB corpus.” Since it is not possible to evaluate this hypothesis with distribution based results that include a lot of low-percentage values, this section focuses entirely on the normalized frequencies in this thesis.

Thanking formulae:

Table 5 shows that Indian English has the lowest normalized frequency of 181.89, while British English has the highest frequency of 357.25. Sri Lankan English has a value of 276.45. The frequency of the ICE-SL corpus lies quite evenly “in between” the other two varieties, but the difference to ICE-IND (94.56) is in fact a little larger than to ICE-GB (80.80). In this case, the hypothesis is not confirmed.

Simple and Elaborated Strategies:

Table 8 shows the normalized frequencies for simple vs elaborated thanking strategies.

Regarding normalized frequencies of elaborated thanking strategies, the difference between Sri Lankan English and British English is lower (7.03) than the difference between Sri Lankan English and Indian English (40.84). In this case, the hypothesis is not confirmed.

Regarding normalized frequencies of simple thanking strategies, the difference between Sri Lankan English and British English is higher (54.38) than the difference between Sri Lankan English and Indian English (45.70). In this case, the hypothesis is confirmed.

Intensifiers:

Table 10 shows the use intensifiers with expressions of gratitude. Once again, the British English variety has the highest frequencies and the Indian variety the lowest frequencies. As Sri Lankan English is again in between the two extremes, the differences between the ICE-SL corpus and each of the two other corpora reveal the validity of the hypothesis. Regarding the use of no intensifier, the difference between

Sri Lankan and British English is lower (35.84) than the difference between Sri Lankan and Indian English (66.02). In this case, the hypothesis is not confirmed.

Regarding the use of at least one intensifier, the difference between Sri Lankan and British English is lower (11.51) than the difference between Sri Lankan and Indian English (20.52). In this case, the hypothesis is not confirmed.

Overall, most of the results do not confirm the hypothesis. In terms of linguistic gratitude, Sri Lankan English is much more similar to British English than anticipated. While Sri Lankan English does not use quite as many expressions of gratitude as British English, it still has notably higher frequencies than Indian English.

5.3 Discussion: Possible Future Research

There are many detailed studies on politeness in English varieties of the inner circle as shown by Jautz and Cheng. These provide an excellent foundation for possible studies on less explored varieties. This thesis applied some approaches that were used by Jautz and Cheng, like distinguishing between simple and elaborated thanking strategies, investigating intensifiers and exploring formal speech expressions. However, there are some approaches in existing studies that were not included in this thesis. These could provide valuable additional insight. For instance, in *Thanking Formulae in English: Explorations Across Varieties and Genres* Jautz investigated the naming of benefactors in expressions of gratitude by using different categories. These categories include name, institution and endearment. Furthermore, her study dealt with positions across thanking formulae by investigating if an expression of gratitude occurs at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of conversations. She also explored different functions of thanking formulae by forming macro-functions, such as discourse organization, phatic communion or joking/irony.

Aside from this, future research on linguistic politeness in South Asian English could include demographic aspects like gender, age or social class. It would definitely be interesting to see how the characteristics of a speaker impact politeness. How do

these aspects affect expressions of gratitude in India and Sri Lanka?

As discussed in the theory section, Indian and Sri Lankan English is currently in the phase of nativization. As time goes on, it is inevitable that these varieties will eventually reach the phases of endonormative stabilization and differentiation. Consequently, these varieties will go through many changes in the next centuries, that will likely affect linguistic politeness and gratitude. These changes need to be documented and analyzed to get a better understanding of the development of these varieties. Maybe Indian English will adopt more vocabulary leading to a more diverse repertoire of thanking formulae. Maybe Sri Lankan English will increase its use of two intensifiers as elaborated thanking strategies. It is impossible to say for certain how these languages will evolve, which is the reason why the development and ongoing maintenance of corpora, such as the ICE corpora, is so important.

Future research on this topic would also benefit from including the other languages of India and Sri Lanka, like Tamil or Hindi. As explained by Yamuna Kachru, different cultures use different kinds of strategies of politeness. “The politeness strategies employed by his/her mother tongue or first language may be very different from those of the second or additional language used as a primary language.” (Kachru 2008: 42)

Conclusion

The colonization of India and Sri Lanka by Great Britain led to the introduction of the English language in these South Asian countries. Even after the achievement of independence, the English language continues to be used as second languages in both regions. Indians and Sri Lankans learn English within the socio-cultural and intellectual contexts of their home countries and not within the contexts of Western Great Britain. As each society has a particular set of social norms, intercultural studies regarding linguistic politeness, offer great potential for valuable knowledge. The study, that was conducted within this thesis, investigated various aspects of linguistic expressions of gratitude in the Indian, Sri Lankan and British English varieties in order to widen the limited existing research of this topic.

The results, that are presented in this thesis, give detailed insight into the usage of thanking formulae, thanking strategies, simple and elaborated thanking expressions, and intensification of these expressions. The study revealed that speakers in Great Britain use expressions of gratitude more often than speakers in India and Sri Lanka. This is true to the overall use of thanking formulae, simple thanking strategies and intensifiers. In stark contrast to this, English speakers in India use very few of these expressions, as proven by the low frequencies in all areas. Sri Lankan English speakers can be considered the middle ground as they use expressions of gratitude not quite as often as British English speakers, but at the same time their frequencies are considerably higher than India's.

However, distribution based results show that each variety uses distinct types of strategies. The use of “thanks” is barely used in Indian English, but is quite common in Sri Lanka and Great Britain. Formal speech acts and expressions of relief are used more often in India and Sri Lanka than in Great Britain. Sri Lankan English speakers favor elaborated thanking strategies that involve reasons, more than the other varieties do. Indian English speakers use four types of intensifiers with thanking expressions, while Sri Lankans only use three. As these South Asian English varieties are young and still in the process of nativization, these results should be understood as momentary records of our time, that will surely change in the future.

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