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Obligation, Face and Facework: An Empirical Study of the Communicative Act of Cancellation of an Obligation by Chinese, Danish and British Business Professionals in Both L1 and ELF Contexts

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Xia Zhang

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Doctoral School of Business and Management | **PhD Series 15.2019**

CBS COPENHAGEN BUSINESS SCHOOL
HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

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An empirical study of the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation by Chinese, Danish and British business professionals in both L1 and ELF contexts

Xia Zhang

April 2019

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Xia Zhang

April 2019, Frederiksberg, Denmark

Abstract

This study investigates an under-researched complex communicative act called "cancellation of an obligation", produced by Chinese, Danish and British business professionals in both L1 and ELF contexts. It is embedded in an implicitly meta-interactional context consisting of a speaker's request, a hearer's promise and the speaker's cancellation.

The data were extracted from the GEBCom speech production corpus, which used the closed role play method at the offices of Carlsberg Group in China, Denmark and the UK. The selected data comprise 354 oral responses by 121 respondents in one turn of telephone conversation in three social situations involving cancellation of an obligation (Moving Scenario, Meeting Scenario and Lunch Scenario).

Focusing on these three scenarios, I investigate the following research questions:

(1) What are the similarities and differences in the way in which Danish and Chinese business professionals keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony in the communicative situations of cancellation of an obligation in their respective L1s? Why do these similarities and differences occur?
(2) What are the similarities and differences in the way in which the non-native Danish and Chinese professional business ELF users keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony in the same communicative situations as compared with native British professionals? Why do these similarities and differences occur?
(3) To what extent are prototypical facework strategies transferred from L1 communication to ELF communication?

All the research questions are united under the overarching theme of exploring the communication challenges of using English as a lingua franca in the Danish-Chinese business communication context. An integrated discourse-pragmatic approach was adopted to analyse the data, focusing on the linguistic realisation patterns and the attitudes, as well as the meta-interactional context. A new integrated conceptual framework was developed.

The comparison of the L1 data showed both similarities and differences. In relation to face-keeping and harmony maintenance, major differences include (1) the priority given to relational-oriented strategies in the Chinese data in contrast to information-oriented strategies in

the Danish data; (2) the preference for apologizing strategies in the Chinese data versus the preference for thanking and option-giving strategies in the Danish data.

The comparison of the Chinese ELF data and the Danish ELF data showed a strong divergence of the prototypical way of doing facework in the Moving scenario, partial divergence in the Meeting scenario and relative convergence in the Lunch scenario. It indicates that the differences were more salient in the private context than in the institutional context. The comparison between the native British data and the Chinese ELF data showed similarities in the Meeting scenario, whereas the Danish ELF data exhibited similarity to the British data in the Moving scenario. Both Danish ELF data and Chinese ELF data were similar to the British data in the Lunch scenario.

Pragmatic transfer was found for both Danish ELF and Chinese ELF, especially in terms of the relative frequency of linguistic strategies, initial linguistic strategies, and the intensity of the apologetic attitude.

The findings point to fundamental cultural differences with respect to obligations and face orientation, though there was also a convergent trend as a result of the institutional context. This research contributes to the field of cross-cultural business communication, cross-cultural pragmatics, English as a lingua franca and second language acquisition. The findings can be instrumental in developing relevant cross-cultural business communication training programmes in business organizations and in improving students' pragmatic competence in English as a lingua franca at universities.

Dansk resumé

Denne afhandling undersøger en kompleks og forskningsmæssigt relativt uudforsket kommunikativ handling, kaldet ”tilbagekaldelse af en forpligtelse”, som udført af kinesiske, danske og britiske forretningsfolk, dels på deres modersmål, dels på engelsk som lingua franca. Handlingen har en implicit interaktionel kontekst, idet den hviler på en tidligere forespørgsel fra den talende, et løfte afgivet af adressaten, og den talendes efterfølgende tilbagekaldelse af aftalen.

Datamaterialet er udvalgt fra GEBCom-projektets talekorpus, tilvejebragt ved hjælp af lukket rollespilsmetode i Carlsberggruppens kontorer i Kina, Danmark og Storbritannien. Det udvalgte materiale omfatter 354 mundtlige svar, afgivet af 121 respondenter, som én telefonisk besked i tre sociale situationer, hver især omfattende en tilbagekaldelse af en forpligtelse (Flytte-scenariet, Møde-scenariet og Frokost-scenariet).

Ved at fokusere på disse tre scenarier undersøger jeg (1) hvordan den kommunikative handling realiseres på de respektive modersmål af kinesiske og danske forretningsfolk med særligt henblik på ’ansigt’ og opretholdelse af social harmoni; hvorfor danske og kinesiske forretningsfolk er ens eller forskellige; (3) hvordan den samme handling realiseres af indfødte engelsktalende og ikke-indfødte kinesiske og danske forretningsfolk på engelsk; hvorfor danske og kinesiske forretningsfolk er ens eller forskellige i ELF;og (3) om der er tale om pragmatisk overførsel af prototypiske ’ansigt’-opretholdende strategier fra førstesprog til lingua franca for både kinesere og danskere. De indfødte briter tjener som kontrolgruppe. Alle forskningsspørgsmålene er samlet under det overordnede tema omkring udforskningn af kommunikationsudfordringerne ved at bruge engelsk som lingua franca i den dansk-kinesiske forretningskommunikationskontekst.

En diskursiv-pragmatisk tilgang blev valgt til analyse af data med fokus på sproglige mønstre og holdninger såvel som den meta-interaktionelle kontekst. Hvad angår konteksten er centrale begreber fra Durst-Andersens strukturering af imperative rammer genfortolket, og der trækkes på Hymes’ SPEAKING-mønster for at uddybe kontekstforståelsen.

Sammenligning af førstesprog viste både ligheder og forskelle. Hvad angår ’ansigt’ og opretholdelse af social harmoni, er der større forskelle inden for (1) prioritering af relationelt orienterede strategier i de kinesiske data, over for informations-orienterede strategier i de danske data, og (2) tendens til undskyldende strategier i de kinesiske data, over for tendens til at takke og give valgmuligheder i de danske data.

Sammenligning af kinesiske og danske lingua franca-data viste stærk divergens i den prototypiske måde at bedrive ansigts-opretholdelse i Flytte-scenariet, delvis divergens i Møde-scenariet og relativ konvergens i Frokost-scenariet. Dette tyder på at forskellene er mere udtalte i privatsammenhæng end i institutionssammenhæng. I sammenligning med de britiske data udviste de kinesiske lingua franca-data ligheder i Møde-scenariet, mens det var de danske lingua franca-data der viste ligheder i Flytte-scenariet. I Frokost-scenariet viste begge lingua-franca sæt lighed med de britiske data.

Pragmatisk overførsel blev fundet i både kinesisk og dansk lingua franca, i særdeleshed hvor det gjaldt den relative hyppighed af lingvistiske strategier, ytringsinitialt strategivalg og den undskyldende holdningsdybde.

Resultaterne peger på en fundamental kulturforskel i opfattelsen af forpligtelse og orientering mod ansigt og harmoni selv om der også var en konvergerende tendens som følge af den institutionelle kontekst. Denne undersøgelse bidrager til felterne tværkulturel forretningskommunikation, interkulturel pragmatik, engelsk som fællessprog og fremmedsprogsindlæring. Resultaterne kan anvendes til at udvikle relevant tværkulturelt kursusmateriale for interkulturel forretningskommunikation i organisationer og til at forbedre universitetsstuderendes pragmatiske kompetencer inden for engelsk fremmedsprog.

List of abbreviations

CA	Conversation Analysis
CCSARP Project	Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
GEBCom project	Global English Business Communication project
IBC	The department of International Business Communication
IFs	Imperative Frames
IF	Imperative Frame
L1	Mother tongue; the first language
MSC	The department of Management, Society, and Communication
WDCT	Written Discourse Completion Test
S	Speaker
H	Hearer
O	Hearer, the other interlocutor

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1. Introduction

"Diligence is the path up the mountain of knowledge;

Hard work is the boat across the endless sea of learning."

- HAN Yu (768-824, a Chinese poet and philosopher)

1.1 Background

With the globalization of world economy, English has become the lingua franca of global business. It plays a significant role in international business and corporate communication due to its performative and communicative function in global business practice (Neeley, 2012; Ku & Zussman, 2010). However, studies show that the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in intercultural business communication may lead to various problems, such as false interpretations, ineffective teamwork and difficulties in concluding contracts (*Forbes Insight*, 2011). Other studies find that adopting English as the corporate language does not necessarily solve all communication problems within MNCs (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002; Marschan-Piekkari, Welch & Welch, 1999). Therefore, it is important to have a better understanding of the use of English as a lingua franca in the workplace.

Against this background the large-scale Danish-based research project Global English Business Communication (GEBCom) Project (2012-2019) was initiated by Professor Per Durst-Andersen to gain a better understanding of English communication by employees in the Carlsberg Group. The overarching research objective for the whole GEBCom project[1] is to investigate whether the culture-specific mental universe connected with the mother tongue

[1] The GEBCom project consists of four PhD research projects: Stine Mosekjær's project focusing on word association test (Mosekjær, 2016), Stine Evald Bentsen's project focusing on speech reception test (Bentsen, 2017), Olga Rykov Ibsen's project focusing on the sentence forms of directives produced by Russian, Danish and British employees (Ibsen, 2016) and the present project focusing on obligation, face and facework in the complex communicative act of cancellation of an obligation produced by Chinese, Danish and British employees (Zhang, 2019).

affects the speech production and the understanding of English by non-native English speakers – and if so, to identify which kinds of influence are manifested.

The present project is part of the GEBCom project and focuses on the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation by Chinese and Danish business professionals in both L1 and ELF contexts, with British business professionals as the comparison group.

1.2 Motivations

The object of research in the present study is the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation in both mother tongue and in ELF as produced by Chinese and Danish business people in the local offices of the Carlsberg Group, with British English, Chinese and Danish mother tongues as the baselines for comparisons. Empirically speaking, the topic is under-researched in the literature, both in terms of the specific communicative act, and in terms of a comparison of new pairs of languages. In the following I shall elaborate on the rationale for this choice from different perspectives.

1.2.1 The need for interdisciplinary synthesis

Until now, different disciplines have addressed the language and culture related issues by means of different approaches. Surveys from Cultural Studies show that people from different cultural backgrounds have different value dimensions (Hofstede, 1991; Trompenaars, 1993; House et al., 2004). However, sometimes what people think they will do is different from what they actually do (House et al., 2004). Researchers from Conversation Analysis and Business Communication backgrounds try to capture naturally-occurring intercultural communication episodes and analyse interactional details, including turns, intonation, etc., but it has been reported that it is very challenging to access problematic moments in organizational settings (e.g. Du-Babcock, 2013). In the literature of cross-cultural pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics, most scholars elaborate on the notion of universal linguistic politeness by eliciting a large amount of written discourse data and comparing different speech act realizations in different native languages and L2 English (e.g. Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989). Meanwhile, ELF scholars advocate that English as a lingua franca should be treated as an independent variety with equal status to that of native English (e.g. Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011). The main disadvantage of most of the cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics

literature is that the data have been collected in colleges, with college students taking on different hypothetical roles which they are not familiar with.

Although these different approaches provide us with an in-depth understanding of the different aspects of the intercultural communication issues involved in the use of English, what is lacking is empirical research which could integrate the advantages of different approaches (Spencer-Oatey, 2008; Jacobsen, 2014). One such methodological synthesis in the GEBCom speech production project is the access to company employees as respondents with closed role play as the data collection method, a method used in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics.

1.2.2 The significance of communication comparison in the Denmark-China context

My interest in investigating the similarities and differences of Danish-Chinese communication in ELF is prompted by three factors: the research gap, potential business implications and practical personal choices.

With regard to English as a lingua franca in a Danish-Chinese context, little comparative research has been conducted, especially within a business context (see however Søderberg & Worm 2011, with focus on narratives). At the empirical level, speech acts in the language pairs Chinese-English and Danish-English have rarely been discussed in the literature on cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics focusing on elicited data, or in the intercultural business communication literature focusing on naturally-occurring data. In other words, the study of the two different varieties of non-native English in the Denmark-China comparative context is under-addressed in the literature. At the same time there is an increasing need to investigate the communication challenges in the Denmark-China context, now that Danish companies are expand into the Chinese market and Chinese companies and Chinese tourists are coming to Denmark. However, the two countries differ a lot in their English proficiency, although both countries belong to the expanding circle in Kachru's (1992) three-circle model of World Englishes. According to the English training agency EF's English Proficiency Index (EPI) for companies in 2018, Denmark ranked the 5th place while China ranked the 47th place of all the 88 countries and regions.

Therefore, investigating the speech production of ELF by Danish and Chinese business professionals can not only fill a knowledge gap, but also show practical implications for the business world. In a sense, by investigating the speech acts produced by these two groups, we have the possibility to uncover evaluations that reflect different mental worlds and interactional principles that the other party should be aware of. In addition, other practical reasons include partly my own working and personal experiences and partly my involvement with the data in the GEBCom project.

1.2.3 On the choice of the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation

Speech acts are considered as the minimal unit of communication. It requires that the speaker has a knowledge of the rules of the specific society. Any inappropriateness will make people appear inconsiderate (or even rude) and damage the impressions people gain of others and rapport building, all of which are central to establishing trust and good relationships in intercultural business communication.

The act of cancellation of an obligation is a delicate face-sensitive communicative act. It presupposes an implicit interactional context: a request from the speaker's side, a promise from the hearer's side and a cancellation again from the speaker's side. It is much more complicated than the single-utterance based speech acts investigated in the literature, such as requests or apologies, because an obligation is involved. The obligation is understood as a kind of social contract[2] between people reflecting social and cultural norms in the specific country. The concept originates from Durst-Andersen's (1995, 2009) conceptual framework of imperative frames IFs). The obligation described in this framework is not the speaker's obligation, but the hearer's obligation, which is achieved through a promise.

All the utterances analysed in this communicative act have been elicited through the closed role play method in the telephone mode, which means that the data have both semi-experimental and semi-natural features. The utterances are multiple parallel business communication episodes with social interaction features, and it is assumed that a comparison can reflect systematic cross-cultural similarities and differences.

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[2] For a social contract view of language, see Durst-Andersen (2011, p. 116)

The study of this particular communicative act has great significance for investigating the Danish-Chinese communication similarities and differences. What can such a study do? In the first place, it shows that cancelling an obligation requires considerable cultural and linguistic expertise. Secondly, it can provide insights into social values, social-cultural norms and social relationships, especially people's attitude to responsibility, obligation and the calculation of benefits in the communicative situation itself. Thirdly, it can unveil the different interactional rituals and interpersonal relationships in different cultures. Fourthly, it has strong relevance to the business world, since in the business context, people in some cultures relatively often cancel deals or contracts without knowing the meaning behind it in some other cultures. Unlike the intense interest in refusals, few studies have investigated another kind of "no" in terms of cancellation of an obligation. Last but not least, the systematic comparative implementation of data collection and the employees in the same global company as participants in the GEBCom project make the data even more suitable to gain interdisciplinary insights. When it comes to the use of ELF, the complex nature of cross-cultural differences in this particular act will then make it even more challenging for non-native English speakers in Denmark and China.

Seen from these different perspectives, the selected data are systematic comparative data, which is a strength in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics; the participants are business people, which has the advantage of natural communication environments; and finally, the data represent one turn of social interaction, which has the advantage of enabling an cross-cultural comparison of the realization of a quasi-unscripted speech act. In this sense, the selected data reflect the features of the earlier mentioned interdisciplinary synthesis.

1.2.4 Theoretical relevance

"Face" is a central concern not only in pragmatics and politeness research, but also in social interactions. It is an abstract concept which has been discussed and tested extensively across different languages in linguistics and communication studies. Briefly speaking, the English word face corresponds to an emic Chinese concept which consists of two Chinese expressions, *mianzi* (social face) *and lian* (moral face).

At the conceptual level, scholars have always been interested in face and this interest has never stopped. Different conceptual papers on face by Chinese scholars provide a vivid and rich elaboration of the multiple meanings in the Chinese culture, including interpretations from an

anthropologist perspective (Hu, 1944), a psychologist perspective (Ho, 1976), a sociologist perspective (Hwang, 1987), and a linguistic pragmatics perspective (Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994). In the West an abstract concept of face, which incorporated both the social and moral aspects of Chinese emic face, was first introduced by Goffman (1955) as a sociological concept to explain the relational work involved in interactional rituals (defined by Goffman as "facework"). Later it became a sociolinguistic concept in Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) model of universal linguistic politeness, and was employed as the motivation for certain linguistic politeness forms, especially the use of indirectness in the requesting speech act.

For the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation, a theoretical puzzle emerged in the preliminary data analysis. The collected data do not necessarily include modal verb constructions, which were expected in the earlier research design based on imperative frames (Ibsen, 2016). Rather there were some extra polite components which seem to be relevant for the discussion of face and facework. Therefore, the data collected for this specific communicative act made it possible to engage in a face discussion by exploring how Chinese and Danish business professionals keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony in order to achieve the same communicative goal in the same social situations.

1.3 Research questions

Situated at the intersection between cross-cultural pragmatics, English as a lingua franca and business communication, this study will empirically focus on face and facework (or to be more precise, interpersonal harmony) in business people's verbal performance in the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation. The speakers studied are Danish and Chinese speakers of English, British native speakers of English, as well as native speakers of Danish and Chinese within the same company. Considering the importance of interpersonal relationships in the workplace, this project hopes to shed light on how face and interpersonal harmony are managed in practice in both mother tongue and in ELF. Against this background, the research questions have been formulated as follows:

(1) What are the similarities and differences in the way in which Danish and Chinese business professionals keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony in the communicative situations of cancellation of an obligation in their respective L1s? Why do these similarities and differences occur?

(2) What are the similarities and differences in the way in which the non-native Danish and Chinese professional business ELF users keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony in the same communicative situations as compared with native British professionals? Why do these similarities and differences occur?

(3) To what extent are prototypical facework strategies transferred from L1 communication to ELF communication?

All the research questions are united under the overarching theme of exploring the communication challenges of using English as a lingua franca in the Danish-Chinese business communication context. By concentrating on the comparative perspective, one practical goal is to detect and identify systematic potential communication challenges in the context where obligation and face are involved. Due to the exploratory nature of the project, an integrated discourse-pragmatic approach will be employed, which may reflect some features of a mixed method approach.

1.4 Structure of the dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation will be structured as follows. Chapter 2 introduces the GEBCom speech production corpus and the data collection method. The rationale for using the corpus will be given. Specific challenges will also be presented and discussed. Chapter 3 describes the theoretical backgrounds to the project and explains why and how the key concepts of obligation, imperative frame, and deontic modality are used in this study. In Chapter 4 elements of other theoretical frameworks are drawn upon with the aim of constructing an integrated conceptual framework that can explain the communicative act data and the meta-interactional context. The academic dispute about the concept of face will be discussed in detail. The distinction between facework and politeness will also be clarified. Chapter 5 deals with the specific methodological considerations, including the method for data categorization, the analytical focus, as well as the specific actions adopted to deal with the impact of culture during the data interpretation process. The detailed analyses of three case scenarios are presented in Chapter 6, including both realization patterns of the communicative act and the multi-layered understanding of the situational context and its meta-interactional background. Chapter 7 discusses obligation, face and facework based on the cross-scenario analysis. Finally, Chapter 8 summarizes the key findings, contributions, limitations, implications and the avenues for future research.

1.5 Scope of the study

Although the starting point of this study was a deontic-modality-focused semiotic linguistic investigation of the speech act of directives (Durst-Andersen, 2009; Ibsen, 2016), I ended up with a discourse-pragmatic approach with a focus on linguistic patterns in connection with a discussion of face and facework as the norm of social interaction, the reflected attitudes, as well as the in-depth understanding of the meta-interactional context. It is primarily concerned with cross-cultural similarities and differences at the discourse and communication levels. Due to the cross-cultural exploratory nature of the present study, the size of the corpus and the oral mode of the data, it is not my primary aim to investigate lexical items in each native language with its historical and cultural contexts from a semantic or ethnopragmatic perspective.

1.6 Clarification of some key terms

In this section I will clarify some of the key terms used in this thesis.

Obligation

The concept of obligation in this study originates from Durst-Andersen's (1995, 2009) conceptual framework of imperative frames. The imperative frame of obligation stresses what is made necessary for the hearer to carry out an act, yet the exact definition of obligation is not clearly defined in Durst-Andersen's (1995, 2009) articles. Based on the contextual analysis of the scenario descriptions and the concrete specification in Durst-Andersen's conceptual framework, the term "obligation" is understood as the hearer's promise in Durst-Andersen's conceptulisation. Further discussions of this concept will also be made in Chapter 3, Chapter 6 and Chatper 7.

Interpersonal harmony

In this study, the concept of interpersonal harmony is defined in a broad sense, referring to the balanced state of good interpersonal relationships. Other scholars refer to it with other terms such as "equilibrium" (Goffman's, 1955; Leech, 1983, 2014), "rapport" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008) or the Chinese equivalent character "*he*" (和) (Gu, 1990; Li, Zhu &Li, 2001) .

The notion of pragmatic transfer

The notion of pragmatic transfer is an important concept in interlanguage pragmatics, because the lack of adequate pragmatic competence in a second language often causes pragmatic

failure and intercultural miscommunication (Thomas, 1983). In this study Kasper's (1992) definition of pragmatic transfer has been adopted, i.e. "the influence exerted by learners' pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than L2 on the comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information." (p. 207).

Based on Leech's (1983) and Thomas' (1983) division of pragmatics, Kasper (1992) divides pragmatic transfer into *pragmalinguistic* transfer and *sociopragmatic* transfer. Pragmalinguistic transfer refers to "the process whereby the illocutionary force or politeness value assigned to particular linguistic material in L1 influences learners' perception and production of form-function mappings in L2" (Kasper, 1992, p. 209). Sociopragmatic transfer refers to "learners' perceptions of contextual factors" (ibid., p. 209).

In addition, Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993) made another distinction between *positive* pragmatic transfer and *negative* pragmatic transfer. In positive pragmatic transfer, the norms of L1 and L2 are identical, whereas in negative pragmatic transfer the L1 norms are transferred inappropriately to L2 communication, which requires another set of social norms in the target speech community.

In this study, whenever the respondents have interpreted the same scenario in the same way or in a relatively similar manner, there are opportunities to further explore the pragmalinguistic aspects of the data. When the same scenario is interpreted differently within the same group or between different groups, the concept of sociopragmatic competence will be invoked, because it is highly relevant to contextual assessment.

2. Data and Methods

2.1 A brief introduction to the GEBCom speech production corpus

2.1.1 Brief background

My PhD project is part of the large-scale Global English Business Communication (GEBCom) project. All the scenarios used for the GEBCom speech production test had been pre-designed by the group and had been used to collect data in the UK, Russia, and Denmark before I joined (cf. Ibsen, 2016). I decided to use the same scenarios to collect data in China in 2014 because of the overarching theoretical framework of communicative supertypes for the GEBCom project (Durst-Andersen, 2011).

The data collection of the GEBCom speech production test was carried out at local offices of the Carlsberg Group in Denmark, Russia, the UK and China. The GEBCom research group travelled across four countries to collect data during a time span of 1½ years (from January 2013 to July 2014), with three group members in each trip to ensure successful data collection.

The data collection method for the GEBCom speech production test is described by Ibsen (2016) as "closed role play" (p. 94). It was supplemented by semi-structured interviews[3] to gain insights into "the participants' views, beliefs, and opinions" (p. 91) after the closed role play. The collected data consist of directives in English based on the 17 different scenario descriptions by 25 Danish business people, 25 Russian business people and 25 Chinese business people and, with 24 British business people as the 'control group'.[4] In addition, a corresponding speech production test in three different native languages was also conducted with a different group of participants. The scenario descriptions were in English for the four English groups and in the respective native languages in the four native language groups.

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[3] Altogether there were three interview questions, which reflect the participants' impression of the scenario descriptions (cf. Ibsen, 2016, p. 248). The interview data were disregarded in Ibsen's main data analysis and discussion.

[4] The choice of British English as the comparison group will be discussed later in Section 2.4.4.

In order to be able to compare the two groups (those making directives in English and those in their native languages), several social variables in the choice of respondents were pre-determined, viz. gender, age, professional status, and proficiency in English. The ideal general criteria were stipulated to be (1) 25 participants from each country; (2) all should speak English on a regular basis; (3) all participants should be taken from the managerial or office staff; and (4) the participants should include men and women of all ages (cf. Ibsen, 2016; Bentsen, 2018). In reality, the employees we had access to have some variations on each dimension in different countries. Despite these differences, the total number of respondents is over 22 in each native language group and each English group in each country.

As argued in Ibsen (2016, pp. 92-93), the social variables of the respondents were deliberately selected to make up a heterogeneous mixed group. It was not her aim to investigate the correlations between requesting forms the social variables of the respondents. Her considerations included (1) the heterogeneous group could provide "a wide range and variation in data" (ibid., p. 93), and (2) the linguistic features observed in the mixed group could reflect "the picture of reality 'out there' in various companies and firms" (ibid., p. 93).

The total number of respondents for my research purpose is listed in Table 2.1. For an overview of the demographic information across the five groups, see Appendix D.

Groups	Number of respondents
Chinese L1 group	25
Chinese ELF group	25
Danish L1 group	22
Danish ELF group	25
British group	24
Total	121

Table 2.1. Number of respondents in the UK, China, and Denmark

2.1.2 Primary data in China

2.1.2.1 Access to the data in the Chinese business environment

It is widely acknowledged that collecting data in organizations can be challenging (Ly, 2016; Søderberg & Worm, 2011). Before I joined the group, building trust with the key Chinese

stakeholder was a difficulty for the data collection in the Chinese subsidiary of the Carlsberg Group. I identified two possible reasons for the problem. Firstly, there were different email communication styles between the university world and the business world. Secondly, there was a possible communication challenge caused by national cultural background. Specific actions were taken to solve the problem. I took over the main responsibility of email communication with the Chinese key stakeholder and made substantial email adaptations for the Chinese corporate context. Emails were shortened with explicit and precise requests in English, because I saw the tendency of using long academic sentences in English in the earlier correspondence. After the first couple of emails in English with the key stakeholder, the Chinese language was used to communicate with the local HR officers who took over the practical details.

During this process, my identity as a Chinese research assistant helped to create the in-group alignment with the key coordinator in the Chinese subsidiary and to reduce the face-threatening 'English proficiency test' assumption. Much effort was made to reduce the assumption that the Danish headquarters was sending a group of Danish researchers to test the English proficiency of Chinese employees in the Chinese subsidiary. Similar discussion of the investigating researchers' identity on data collection was also reported in Søderberg and Worm (2011):

> We are well aware of the fact that Danish expatriates may tend to construct an ad hoc national community with the Danish interviewers whereas the Chinese, even when interviewed in Mandarin, may have more reservations towards scholars from the country where the company headquarters was located. Despite the fact that we are independent scholars, not employed at headquarters, nor necessarily representing the Danish companies' perspectives on the subsidiary and its local managers and employees, our nationality might still have had an impact on the *social relations*. (Søderberg & Worm, 2011, pp. 60-61; emphasis added)

In my case, it was my Chinese cultural background and my professional identity as a junior scholar that cultivated a more harmonious social relation with the Chinese subsidiary, reducing their assumption of distrust from the headquarters on their English proficiency. The HR officers revealed that the company employed English for internal organizational email communication and Chinese for oral communication in the office among colleagues (except

with foreign expatriates), and that they had just finished an English training program before we arrived to collect data.

2.1.2.2 Data collection in China

As said earlier, the instruments are 17 pre-designed scenarios. The Chinese version of the scenario descriptions was translated by me, and edited and proofread by two other native Chinese speakers. In order to make the Chinese version of the GEBCom speech production test work well in the Chinese context, I replaced all the Western names and cultural items with Chinese equivalents. However, the English version for eliciting Chinese ELF data was kept unchanged in order to ensure cross-cultural comparability with ELF data from other countries. The underlying assumption for this decision was that business professionals who worked in the Carlsberg Group would have travelled a lot and also been exposed to foreign names and would be familiar with aspects that differed from Chinese culture. For instance, the description of peanut allergy in the Peanut scenario was kept unchanged, although the phenomenon is not as widely known in China as in Western countries.

The data collection procedure in China was as follows.

The fieldworkers had different duties: I was responsible for the reception of the respondents; one Danish colleague was responsible for reading the scenario descriptions in British English as the instructor, and another Danish colleague was responsible for technical support. At the reception desk my task included: (1) signing the consent form with each respondent; (2) introducing our respondents in Chinese to the project and the data collection procedure, and what they had to do; (3) small talk to establish a friendly relationship and answer questions to reduce the respondents' anxiety or concern. The respondent was then guided to a meeting room along with an instructor, where he/she was given 17 scenarios in which he/she was asked to perform a closed role play. The instructor read the scenario description aloud in British English for each respondent, accompanied by a cartoon. This was done to enable the respondent to easily visualize the situation and concentrate on the instruction itself. Each respondent was asked to produce a verbal response on the basis of the scenario descriptions, and after that the instructor gave a response that was would be natural in that particular scenario. To counter the anxiety effect, one practice scenario was added prior to the actual test situation, but

discarded in the data analysis. The instructor took great care to explain culture-specific items in the scenario description if the respondents had doubts about them.

For the collection of the Chinese mother tongue data, the same procedure was followed. The only difference was that I was the one who read the scenario descriptions in Chinese and one of my Danish colleagues was responsible for receiving the respondents with the local HR officer's support. The interactions during the role play interviews were all video-taped and audio-taped.

The original purpose of reading the scenario description aloud and using cartoons was to help respondents understand the scenario and to enter into the imagined scenario as quickly as possible, thus prompting a natural response. However, the neutral gender in the cartoon produced by the cartoonist may occasionally have been confusing for some of the Chinese respondents. For instance, Chinese respondent P165 opened by saying, "*So (I'm) [//] I'm this guy? Respondent points to the cartoon*".

2.2 Comparative data

In the present study, the data collected in China are considered as primary data whereas the data collected in Denmark and UK are considered as pre-existing secondary data. The Danish and British data sets are drawn upon for my comparative research purpose. The total length of the videos from China, UK and Denmark is approximately 37 hours. All the utterances were subsequently transcribed.[5]

The procedures for data collection with Danish and British respondents were largely the same as the data collection procedure in China, except that the primary data collector Ibsen was in the meeting room during the data collection. Her original purposes were firstly to demonstrate what the data collection process was like by role playing an example situation with the

[5] The transcriptions were conducted by Mary-Ann Smith McKerchar, Olga Ibsen and Xia Zhang. Mary-Ann Smith McKerchar conducted most of the data sets for the first round, including British English, Danish English, Danish mother tongue, and Chinese English. Xia Zhang was responsible for transcribing the Chinese mother tongue data set and editing the Chinese English transcriptions for the second round. Olga Ibsen was responsible for transcribing the two Russian data sets and organising the transcriptions in a systematic manner.

instructor, and secondly to observe the respondents' verbal performance and to conduct a follow-up interview about how they felt about the scenarios (for more detail, see Ibsen, 2016).

2.2.1 Rationale for also using secondary data

Secondary data analysis is defined as "analysis of existing data which were originally collected for other purposes" (Glaser, 1963). The key features in this definition are "existing data" and "other purposes". Both features captured the unique characteristics of my PhD journey. First, the instrument already existed before I joined the group. Second, I have an earlier working background with business English communication and wished to focus on business professionals' performance as close to real-life performance as possible. The GEBCom project adopts a philosophical linguistic and philosophical logic approach to understanding speech act production by business professionals in general, with scenarios in both business settings and private settings. From these scenarios, I selected the business scenarios to focus on exploring the business perspective, in Andrews et al.'s (2012) words, "using old data to generate new ideas" and "exploring data from a different perspective". In addition, focusing both on primary and secondary data analysis has helped me both to make "a link between individual and team research" (Graser, 1963) and to differentiate my PhD project from Ibsen's PhD study, which shared two sets of data (the English and the Danish) but had a Russian focus. Finally, using secondary data in the same research group has helped me save time and money for the project,[6] and concentrate on exploring new perspectives in the elicited oral data with the best possible approximation to authentic oral discourse. It is normally considered beyond the scope of any independent researcher to collect a large amount of data across multiple countries. For example, the famous Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) was an international collaboration among scholars from seven countries.

[6] As a member of the GEBCom research group, I also made contributions to other GEBCom PhD projects (cf. Mosekjær, 2016; Bentsen, 2018), in terms of gaining access to the Chinese data for the GEBCom reception test and association test at a Chinese university in Shanghai, as well as providing insights into the Chinese data interpretation.

2.3 Rationale for scenario selection

2.3.1 Consideration from the theoretical perspective

The communicative act of cancellation of an obligation is a complex speech act, which was designed according to Durst-Andersen's (2009, 2011) imperative frame of cancellation of an obligation. The three scenarios involving this imperative frame are the Lunch scenario, the Meeting scenario and the Moving scenario. In these three scenarios, the imperative frame of cancellation of an obligation was systematically implemented in the research design phase, with social variation in power, distance and formality. Therefore, the data in these three scenarios are in theory very promising to show consistent systematic patterns and interesting comparable results.

It is also important to note here that the Lunch scenario and the Meeting scenario have business set-ups and involve colleague-colleague and subordinate-superior relationships, while the Moving scenario involves a friend-friend relationship. The business set-up of the Lunch scenario and the Meeting scenario suited my research purpose well. The reason for including the Moving scenario is that close colleagues will often become friends, and thus have the possibility to help each other with a practical task. All three scenarios are common situations people might encounter every day in their workplace. The data, therefore, reflect what business professionals are most likely to say in these natural authentic situations.

Theoretically speaking, the key to the IF involving cancellation of an obligation is the speaker's *thought* that "[the hearer] feels that he/she is obliged to do something" in accordance with Durst-Andersen's (2009, p. 332) conceptual framework for IFs. In the Moving scenario the hearer feels obliged to help move because of friendship. In the Meeting scenario the hearer feels obliged to attend the meeting because of the role obligation of his professional status in the organization. In the Lunch scenario, the hearer feels obliged to wait for lunch because of their close colleague relationship and their earlier practice of having lunch together. Across all three scenarios there is a request from the speaker's side and a promise from the hearer's side beforehand and a new situation afterwards. So the common denominator of the three scenario descriptions is that they create a sense of obligation by the hearer having promised or agreed to do something as a response to the speaker's request and emphasize the state of unnecessity after a newly occurred situation.

This requires a complex response, which has rarely been reported in the literature. It is ideal for my initial research purpose of conducting a cross-cultural comparative study in the Danish-Chinese communication context, because the scenarios are complex social situations with some interpersonal meta-interactional elements.

2.3.2 Scenario selection process

The choice of the three scenarios was made after a long reduction process. Table 2.2 illustrates an overview of the 17 scenarios. Although I had an initial intention to focus on the business perspective, the 37 hours of audio/video data had to be transcribed and reviewed first in order to make the final choice of scenarios.

Of the 17 scenarios, eight scenarios had either an informal business set-up or business relationship in the situation, whereas the other nine scenarios had an everyday private set-up with either a parent-child relationship, a friend-friend relationship, or a stranger-stranger relationship. For details of the research design, see Table 2.2.

Scenarios	Imperative Frame	Social context	Relationship	Social Distance	Social power Speaker / Hearer
Copy-machine Scenario	Permission	Informal	colleague – colleague	-SD	- / -
Ice-cream-Scenario	Permission	Private	parent – child	+SD	+ / -
Trolley Scenario	Permission	Formal	boss – subordinate	+SD	- / +
Seat Scenario	Permission	Public	passenger – passenger	+SD	+ / -
Chit-chat Scenario	Obligation	Informal	colleague – colleague	-SD	- / -
Birthday Scenario	Obligation	Private	child – mother	+SD	- / +
Bus Scenario	Obligation	Public	stranger – stranger	-SD	- / -
Bank Scenario	Obligation	Formal	parent – child	+SD	+ / -
Poison Scenario	Prohibition	Private	friend – friend	-SD	- / -

Resignation-Scenario	Prohibition	Informal	colleague – colleague	-SD	- / -
Window Scenario	Prohibition	Formal	boss – subordinate	+SD	- / +
Peanuts Scenario	Prohibition	Public	parent – child	+SD	+ / -
Moving-Senario	Cancellation of an obligation	Private	friend – friend	-SD	- / -
Lunch Scenario	Cancellation of an obligation	Informal	colleague – colleague	-SD	- / -
Meeting Scenario	Cancellation of an obligation	Formal	Subordinate –Superior	+SD	- / +
Train-station Scenario	Cancellation of obligation	Public	stranger – stranger	+SD	- / +
Library Scenario	Impossibility / request	Public	stranger – stranger	-SD	- / -

Table 2.2. An overview of the scenario design (adapted from Ibsen 2016)

The scenario selection was based on two criteria: naturalness of the scenarios, and interpretations of the scenarios. In the data collected from China, several issues arise with regard to the naturalness of the scenarios. The first issue is the conflict between real-life roles and the imagined roles. In the actual data collection process, it was very challenging for the young and unmarried participants in the Chinese ELF group to take on the imagined role of parents in some of the scenarios. Similar experiences have been documented in earlier literature (Wildner-Bassett, 1989; Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Therefore, all three scenarios involving parent-child relationships (the Ice-cream-scenario [permission]; the Birthday-scenario [obligation]; the Bank-scenario [obligation]) were excluded from the data analysis. The second issue was the problems caused by culture-specific items in the scenario description. The unfamiliar culture-specific items, such as quiet compartments in the train, square rat poison like cheese, peanut allergy, or going to the platform without buying a train ticket, caused a lot of confusion among the Chinese participants and made participants start long discussions with the instructor in English. These culture-specific items worked better with Chinese mother tongue participants, because I could explain them in their native language or replace them with similar Chinese items. So the three scenarios (the Poison scenario [prohibition]; the Peanut scenario [prohibition]; the Train station scenario [cancellation of an obligation]) were removed.

At the same time, problems of comparability occurred due to different interpretations of the scenarios, especially radically different attitudes among the respondents across the three countries. In the preliminary data analysis, the data in some scenarios involving prohibition and permission reveal totally different perceptions of the same situation due to different world views. Take the Resignation scenario for example: most of the Danish respondents do not fear that the gossipy John will spread the news before they can hand in their letter of resignation, while Chinese respondents adopt white lies and in-group solidarity strategies to avoid the embarrassment. Similarly, Ibsen (2016) also reported the mismatch between the data and what the conceptual framework of imperative frames expects in the Window scenario, a scenario involving prohibition.

Altogether, the reduction process of scenario selection left only the three scenarios involving cancellation of an obligation valid for my purpose.

2.3.3 Consideration from the perspective of data collection methods

In the field of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics, there is no such thing as the ideal and perfect data instrument for collecting speech act performance data. Generally speaking, there are three major methods for collecting speech production data in the literature: written discourse completion test (WDCT), ethnographic observation, and role plays, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. To date, the discussions of their strengths and weaknesses have centred on the following key issues: (1) access to the research site; (2) time and money involved in the data collection process; (3) whether or not the selected method can collect a sufficient amount of the focal speech act realization; (3) degree of contextual control of the method; (4) degree of interaction of the data; (5) degree of naturalness of the data. The choice of different data collection methods is usually determined by the research questions and the researchers' practical resources in the projects. In the following I will explain why the GEBCom data were suitable for my research purpose by giving a brief review of each data collection method, notably the advantages, disadvantages, applicable areas, and typical features as regard to the data and the analysis.

2.3.3.1 Written discourse completion tests

Written discourse completion tests (WDCT) have been extensively used in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics. The main advantage of WDCT is the ability to manipulate

contextual variables and its efficiency in collecting a large amount of data which focus on the intended speech act realization (Cohen, 1996; Schauer, 2009). Comparing natural speech act data and questionnaire data, Beebe and Cummings (1996) summarize the strength of WDCT as follows:

1) Gathering a large amount of data quickly;
2) Creating an initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that are likely to occur in natural speech;
3) Studying the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a socially appropriate response;
4) Gaining insight into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance; and
5) Ascertaining the canonical shape of speech acts in the minds of speakers of that language.

At the same time, WDCT has also been heavily criticized. In Kasper and Dahl's (1991) continuum of production tasks used to collect data, WDCT is rated at the lower end. The major critique is centred on the issues of representativeness of the data and validity of the method: whether this method suits the research purpose. The written data have been reported to lack features of natural oral speech, especially in terms of the length of responses, lack of interaction, and typical features of oral mode data, such as hesitations, pauses, and repetitions (Beebe & Cummings, 1996; Rintell & Mitchell, 1989; Yuan, 2001). Thus a frequent criticism of data collected by WDCT is that they reflect people's intuition rather than their actual language use (Trosborg, 1995, p. 56).

In addition, the validity of asking college students to take on hypothetical roles (e.g. as business persons) in hypothetical scenarios in order to investigate natural communicative behaviour may also be questioned (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999).

Despite its disadvantages, the WDCT is still preferred by researchers who are interested in investigating a particular speech act realization. The relatively strong control of contextual variables enables a systematic and comparable analysis of such speech acts across languages.

2.3.3.2 Ethnographic observation

According to Kasper and Dahl's (1991) continuum of production tasks used to collect data, authentic data are rated at the higher end. Ethnographic observation captures authentic,

naturally occurring data with interactional features. Such data are the ideal for studying actual language use in context, especially the interactional details. It is thus widely used to study business discourse, intercultural communication, and discursive pragmatics.

However, collecting authentic interactional natural data can also be problematic. First, access to the research site for collecting authentic discourse is not always an easy task (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Because of confidentiality or commercially-sensitive or face-sensitive issues, access to authentic data in organizations is always a difficult issue. Second, it is considered extremely time-consuming and inefficient for collecting a sufficient number of focused speech acts (Cohen, 1996; Rintell & Mitchell, 1989). Third, researchers have no possibility to control all the contextual variables (Cohen, 1996, p. 24; Mitchell & Rintell, 1989, p. 250; Beebe & Cummings, 1996, pp. 67-80). As Beebe and Cummings put it, "[natural speech does] not give us situational control, despite the fact that situation is known to be one of the most influential variables in speech act performance" (1996, p. 80). Last but not least, it is impossible to conduct comparative research because of the unsystematic nature of the data itself, the unstructured data collection process, the lack of systematic control over context and the lack of control over sample population (Schauer, 2009, pp. 65-66; Beebe & Cummings, 1996, pp. 67-80). Therefore, the interactional episode-like data yielded by this method are not suitable for conducting a systematic cross-cultural comparison across languages.

2.3.3.3 Role plays

The role-play method has been defined as "a social or human activity in which participants 'take on' and 'act out' specified 'roles', often within a predefined social framework or situational blueprint (a 'scenario')" (Crookall & Saunders, 1989, pp. 15-16; quoted from Kasper, 2008, p. 288). It is regarded as "a semi-ethnographic research instrument" (cf. Cohen, 1996). It is rated by Kasper and Dahl (1991) as being in the middle of the above-mentioned continuum, in between WDCT and authentic discourse. With reference to the length of the data, it is argued that while WDCT data are the shortest and least complex, and the authentic data the longest and most complex, role-play data come in between (Kasper & Dahl, 1991).

Two types of role play have been developed which differ according to the degree of interaction and the degree of naturalness of the participant's involvement in the role (Kasper, 2008).

Closed role plays and open role plays

With regard to the degree of the interaction, closed and open role plays have been distinguished (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). According to the definition in *Methods in Pragmatics* (Jucker, Schneider & Bublitz, 2018), "[c]losed role plays (also called Oral Discourse Completion Tests [DCT]) elicit one-turn responses in reaction to a situational prompt with an initiating or reacting speech act. While there are different types of closed role-play formats, they are characterized by oral data in non-face-to-face interaction" (Felix-Brasdefer, 2018, p. 307).

While WDCTs are sometimes criticized for yielding data that are too different from actual spoken language use (Golato, 2003), closed role plays yield oral production data which contain hesitations, silences, and negotiation of meaning just as non-elicited data do (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). In comparison with naturally occurring data, closed role plays allow researchers to control for a number of contextual variables (cf. Cohen, 1996; Beebe & Cummings, 1996; Shauer, 2009; Ly, 2016a). These built-in contextual variables in the scenario descriptions provide the researchers with the best opportunities to elicit the intended speech/communicative act in the oral mode.

In open role plays, two respondents act according to the role description and the data are usually conversations with many turns. Compared with WDCT, the advantage is that this method generates natural and spontaneous speech acts (Gass & Houck, 1996, pp. 47-57). However, some researchers are still concerned about the naturalness of open role play data, because open role plays are still "motivated by the researcher's goals rather than those of the interactants" (Kasper, 2000, p. 318).

Another disadvantage of the oral role play data is that the different number of turn-takings with different informants makes it unsuitable for a cross-cultural comparative study. As Ogiermann (2009) points out, "[a]lthough the interactive character of open role plays allows for studying speech acts in a broader discourse context than do closed role plays or written DCTs, researchers using this method rarely include features of conversational management in the analysis" (p. 77). Rather, the focus is still on "total frequencies of strategies per role play (see e.g. Trosborg 1995, Marquez Reiter, 2000)" (ibid, p. 77)

Role playing and role enactment

With regard to the naturalness of the role, a further distinction has been made between role playing and role enactment based on whether the respondents need a lot of imagination to carry out the role (McDonough, 1981, p. 80, quoted from Trosborg, 1995, p. 144). Role playing refers to "pretending to react as if one were someone else in a different situation"; role enactment refers to "performing a role that is part of one's normal life or personality" (Trosborg, 1995, p. 144).

It is recognized that role enactment can capture some features of authentic discourse by making respondents take on their familiar roles and perform in their familiar social situations. Compared with role-playing with taking on roles, role enactment has the advantage of activating the participants' social experience (Kasper, 2008; Ly, 2016a). In the literature of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics, it is mostly university students that take on different social roles which they have no social experience of, whereas only a few studies take on role enactment in university context (Trosborg, 1995) and in the workplace context (Bill & Olaison, 2009; Ly, 2016).

Reviewing the validity of the role play data, Kasper (2018) points out that "the validity of role play does not hinge on an exact match between a person's action in simulated and authentic contexts" (Kasper, 2008, p. 290) by introducing Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz's (1982: 11) discussion of simulated discourse in interactional linguistics, i.e.

> Experience with a wide range of natural situations can serve as the basis for recreating *socially realistic experimental conditions* where individuals are asked to reenact events such as job interviews with which they have become familiar in everyday life. If these naturalistic situations are skilfully constructed and not too carefully predetermined, *rhetorical strategies will emerge automatically without conscious planning, as such strategies are so deeply imbedded in the participants' practice.* Since it is these rhetorical devices we want to analyse, *eliciting such constructed texts does not necessarily entail a loss of validity*. (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 1982, p. 11, quoted from Kasper 2008, p. 290; emphasis added)

In short, closed role plays elicit a more controlled amount of comparative data than free answers in open role play (Gass & Neu, 1996); role enactment produces more natural data than role-playing by people with little social experience of the designated role. Besides, role enactment also makes it possible to gain access to the language data in the workplace.

2.3.3.4 Summary of the appropriateness of the selected data

The GEBCom speech production data, which are generated by "closed role play" (Ibsen, 2016), have both semi-experimental and semi-ethnographic features. The data in the three selected scenarios reflect some features of role enactment, as the participants act out the roles in internal business situations within the organization which they are familiar with and encounter often. I wanted to make sure that the three scenarios chosen did not contain data that would provide difficulties for the participants' imagination, thus increasing the degree of external validity. In addition, the collected data in the three "cancellation of an obligation" scenarios have some interactional features of social interaction because of their complex scenario descriptions (request – promise - cancellation). Besides, the systematic data collection of one-turn oral data made it possible to conduct cross-cultural comparisons.

In this sense, the present study has the following special features: business participants, business situations and one-turn oral data with a meta-interactional context. All these features fit in with my initial research intention of investigating in a systematic manner the potential communication challenges of Danes and the Chinese in the business setups. In conclusion, the choice of the three scenarios involving cancellation of an obligation is a logical and natural decision made on the basis of theoretical and methodological considerations.

2.4 Reflections on the GEBCom speech production corpus

In this section I will provide some reflections on the GEBCom corpus, particularly the nature of the corpus, the nature of my selected data, and the understanding of English in the GEBCom project.

2.4.1 Nature of the GEBCom speech production corpus

The GEBCom speech production corpus is among the very limited number of studies that has chosen closed role play as data collection method (Walter, 1980; Rintell & Mitchell, 1989; Mitchell, 1989). Furthermore, it is also among the very few corpora to have gained access

to the workplace as the research site with a focus on the realisation of speech acts. As far as I know, there is one other study with a focus on speech act realisation in the workplace, i.e. Ly's (2016b) study on internal email communication, in which she used role enactment to elicit internal emails containing requests, criticism and disagreement produced by Western employees and explored the perception of these speech act production by the Asian employees. Most of the studies focusing on workplace communication have either interview data or recorded naturally-occurring interaction data.

No data and no data collection methods are perfect. This also applies to the GEBCom speech production corpus. Strictly speaking, the closed role play data are not observations of naturally-occurring interactional episodes. Neither are they purely written discourse completion data, which suffer from the disadvantage of lacking interaction and oral features. The data collected by the closed role play method have features that seem to indicate that the speaker produces communication that could be located on a sliding scale between written features and oral features. The data are more "written" than open role-play data, since the speakers produced oral utterances to fill in one missing turn (without natural social interaction). At the same time, the data are more "oral" than the data obtained by written discourse completion tests, with pauses, repetitions and false starts. Therefore, the use of closed role plays as data collection method in the GEBCom project could be seen as "a compromise between naturally occurring data and [written] DCTs" (Ogiermann, 2009, p. 76).

2.4.2 Nature of the selected data: closed role enactment data

In a similar manner, the nature of the data selected for my own study is also in between oral features and written features. If one looks at the data without considering its context, the data in my selected scenarios can be considered as entirely monological. However, if we consider the context in the scenario descriptions, there are also certain dialogical features, because the data are part of an ongoing telephone conversation with a previous telephone conversation consisting of the key elements of request and promise. In this broad sense, the data are the first turn of a new telephone conversation after the previous telephone conversation. The scenario descriptions have the oral mode of leaving a slot to be filled, the only way to trigger the intended communicative act of cancellation of an obligation. Further, the respondents have another interactant on the other side of the phone in mind. Admittedly, the oral features of my data are not the same as the chatty mode of a natural telephone conversation. However, the

data reflect the most important components which the respondents think should be included in a natural "chatting" telephone conversation. The oral mode of the one interlocutor telephone conversation in the three scenarios can be said to be similar to leaving messages on the telephone.

The merits of the systematic data collection method for the GEBCom speech production corpus include: (1) the use of employees of the same multinational company as respondents; (2) the systematic implementation of the same clear prompt for the entire data collection. For the Meeting Scenario and the Lunch Scenario, the respondents (Carlsberg employees) took on the roles they are familiar with and could activate their social experiences with meeting and lunch cancellations in the organisational context. As Kasper (2008) maintains "[a] critical condition for researchers to consider, then, is whether the simulated activity is grounded in participants' social experience. When this condition obtains, simulations fall under the category of ideographic role plays (Kern 1991), the type of role paly recommended for its good validity in behavioural assessment research" (p. 291). In addition, the data in these two business scenarios may also reflect "the participants' orientation to the institutional activity" (Bardovi-Harlig & Harford 2005b; Kerekes 2007; quoted from Kasper, 2008, p. 283). Similarly, Ly (2016a) argues that role enactment is a favourable method for generating "reliable and representative" (p. 63) language data in the workplace in comparison with naturally occurring data and interviews. As for the Moving Scenario, it has to be acknowledged that it is private personal experiences that may have been enacted.

One of the limitations of the Chinese ELF data is the experimental effects. During the on-site data collection process in China, the respondents sometimes reacted slightly differently. Not all respondents treated the session completely as role plays. Some respondents used their right hand as a fake telephone, which indicated good imagination and performing skills. Other respondents deliberately clarified why they said what they said and uttered what they thought the other hearer on the phone might feel.[7] A few respondents did not really take on the telephone

[7] Such unexpected clarification utterances in the oral mode reveal the participants' meta-reflections of the scenarios. More detail can be found in Chapter 5.

mode, because they did not use telephone openings[8] to address the hearer. A few other respondents needed clarifications from our native-speaking English instructor before taking on the role and saying something. Despite all these experimental effects, the selected scenarios were originally designed to be "*realistic* situations that are directly relevant to the participants' everyday life and the social roles they normally take on" (cf. Fukushima, 2000; Bonikowska, 1988; cited from Ibsen 2016, p. 89). In order to address the limitations of the GEBCom speech production data, additional measures were taken during the data analysis and data interpretation process which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

2.4.3 On the understanding of English in the GEBCom project

English can be conceptualized as English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a lingua franca (ELF). English as a foreign language is defined as "English seen in the context of countries where it is not the mother tongue and has no special status" (Crystal, 2003, p. 108). Its status has often been visualised in Kachru's (1992) model of three concentric circles, which categorizes speakers of English into first, second and foreign language speakers on the basis of geography and the history of the spread of the English language. The conceptualization of EFL has an underlying assumption of the superiority of native English speakers and stresses the learner's status, because any deviations from the native norms are considered as language deficiencies (Jenkins, 2015, p. 11).

English as a lingua franca is conceptualized by Jenkins (2015a, p. 143) as "a contact language among speakers from different first languages", and by Seidlhofer (2011, p. 7) as "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option". Both definitions emphasize the actual use of English in intercultural communication. The ELF perspective treats differences as a "crucial bilingual pragmatic resource" rather than "signs of incompetence" (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011, p. 284). ELF scholars (Jenkins, 2015b) divide ELF research into three phases – ELF phase 1, ELF phase 2, and ELF phase 3. "ELF phase 1" focuses on identifying ELF

[8] The manner to address the hearer in non-telephone mode is referred as "attention-getter" in the CCSARP project and "tuner" in Ibsen's (2016) thesis. The telephone opening is not regarded as the key category of my data analysis section due to the inconsistency issues in the different groups of data.

features and patterns, especially in terms of the lexicogrammatical, pronunciation and pragmatic features (Jenkins, 2015b, p. 94). "ELF phase 2" focuses on the "inherent fluidity of ELF" (Seidlhofer, 2009, p. 240) and its communicative functions (Jenkins et al., 2011). The emphasis on fluidity is a reflection of the paradigm shift in the social sciences which emphasizes fluidity, negotiation and co-construction. "ELF phase 3" highlights multilingual nature of ELF communication ((Jenkins, 2015b, p. 73). It seems to me, though, the boundary between ELF phase 2 and ELF phase 3 is blurred. At the empirical level, some studies have found that ELF is a fully functioning communication means and that ELF communication in most cases is successful, because people tend to employ "let it is pass" strategies (Firth, 1996) or have a "to get the job done" attitude (Bjørnman, 2009, p. 225). By contrast, other studies have revealed that there are challenges for native English speakers in accommodating to other non-native English varieties in international business communication (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002; Sweeney & Zhu, 2010). Further reflections on ELF and EFL in the GEBCom project will be made in Chapter 2.

According to the contemporary ELF literature, the two concepts of EFL and ELF mean two totally different research paradigms – "the SLA paradigm" and "the ELF paradigm" (Jenkins, 2015b). According to Jenkins' (2015b) elaboration, with regard to the status of non-native English speakers, the SLA paradigm emphasizes non-native English speakers' learner status, whereas the ELF paradigm highlights the user status in intercultural communication. In terms of the goal, the SLA paradigm stresses the learning goal of approaching the native English norm, whereas the ELF paradigm stresses the communicative goal of mutual intelligibility (Crystal, 2003) and getting the things done (Bjørnman, 2009). In terms of the relationship between native and non-native English speakers, the SLA paradigm emphasizes the superiority of native English speakers, while the ELF paradigm emphasizes the equal status. For the ELF scholars, non-native English speakers are legitimate owners of English, and multilingual speakers who have multilingual resources at their disposal. In addition, the ELF paradigm replaces the concept of "speech community" with "communities of practices", which stresses three basic criteria of "mutual engagement in shared practices, taking part in some jointly negotiated enterprise, and making use of members' shared repertoire" (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 87). According to Ehrenreich's (2009) elaboration, "mutual engagement" refers to the fact that "the members need to get together, interacting with each other and thus building relationships" (p.

131). As for "joint enterprise", it refers to "some kind of goal or purpose which is defined explicitly or implicitly and shaped by the participants creating among them 'relations of mutual accountability'" (p. 132) and "shared repertoire" means "linguistic, symbolic or material etc., over time, as a resource for the negotiation of meaning within the community". (p.133).

Put briefly, how English is conceptualized may imply different ideological positioning. However, the ELF scholars' conceptual emphasis of the native-English speaker's ownership of English may not be in line with non-native English speakers' own attitudes to English (Li, 2009), probably due to better job opportunities and income in connection with native-like English proficiency. Further, some scholars (e.g. Swoden, 2012) have also raised concerns that a radical interpretation of the ideological stance of "owning" ELF (Jenkins, 2015b, p. 96) and overemphasis of "an ELF core [based on the findings in pronunciation]" (Jenkins, 2005) may reflect a monolithic approach to English and can cause potential problems in English language teaching. Cogo (2012) refuted this critique by arguing that "[t]he reality is that ELF communication can both show characteristics that localize it and make it a typical of a certain region, but it can also be fluid and realized in transnational, or international, networks and movements. Therefore, what is certain is that ELF is not monolithic or a single variety because cultural and linguistic resources are inevitably transformed as they are locally appropriated" (p. 98). In other words, ELF is pluricentric, rather than monolithic. Similarly, House (2010) emphasizes also the multiplicity of voices. As she puts it, "ELF is a language for communication, a medium that can be given substance with different national, regional, local and individual cultural identities" (p. 365). The different voices may be applicable not only in non-native English varieties, but also in the native English varieties in Kachru's (1992) model. She (House, 2010) argues further that ELF is open to absorbing and forming new or hybrid forms or norms in the actual interaction process, because creativity, hybridity, fluidity, negotiability, and variability have been found to be the typical ELF features in interactional data (House, 2010; Seidlhofer, 2009; Jenkins, 2015a).

Then how is English understood in the GEBCom project? According to Bentsen's (2018) reflections on the use of "Global English" in the GEBCom project, the understanding of English in the GEBCom project seems to exhibit features of both EFL and ELF. According to her, no clear definition of "Global English" was adopted when the overall GEBCom project started. For instance, no space was devoted to the conceptual discussion of ELF/EFL in the previous

GEBCom speech production project (Ibsen, 2016). All the GEBCom PhD projects involve native/non-native English groups. For instance, Ibsen's (2016) study focuses on Danish and Russian speakers of English, native British speakers of English, as well as native speakers of Danish and Russian. Mosekjær's (2016) study involves two groups of non-native (Japanese and Chinese) speakers of ELF and native British speakers of English. And Bentsen's (2018) study compares three groups of non-native (Chinese, Japanese and Russian) speakers of ELF and native British speakers of English.

Based on the division into native/non-native groups and the use of the terms speech production and reception, it seems that the umbrella GEBCom project embraces the SLA paradigm, yet its overarching goal is to look for (nuanced) differences. As Bentsen (2018, p. 19) puts it, "returning to the aim of both my own project, as well as the overall GEBCom project, our interest was never to look for right or wrong in terms of comprehension (or in the case of the overall GEBCom project – speech act production or word associations), but rather to investigate possible differences in comprehension. Simply classifying these differences as wrong, or as a lack of proficiency, does not help us understand these differences." She argues further that "the overall aim of the total GEBCom Project is to gain new insight into English as a common means of communication for non-native speakers of English, i.e. very much along the lines of the ELF conceptualisation of English" (Bentsen, 2018, p. 29).

In my view, the aim of looking for the (nuanced) differences seems to be consistent with the goal of the early ELF research, or what Jenkins (2015b) defines as "ELF phase 1", where the focus is on identifying ELF features and patterns and the purpose is to "describe and possibly codify ELF varieties" in search of regularities (Jenkins, 2015b, pp. 54-55).

Similarly, the mixed EFL and ELF features can also be observed in my project. The SLA-based EFL perspective is reflected in the way the data were collected and the research design setup involving native and non-native English varieties. The reflections on the choice of British English as the control group will be commented on in the next section (cf. Section 2.4.4).

At the same time, the ELF feature during the data collection process is reflected partly by the fact that all the data in the selected scenarios have an implicit interactional situational context and a specific imagined hearer on the other side of the telephone, and partly by the fact that an instructor speaking with a British accent was present to read all the scenario descriptions

in English and interact with respondents when clarifications or explanations were needed. Further, we emphasized repeatedly that we were not testing the respondents' language proficiency before they signed the consent form. In this sense, the data are *de facto* ELF data with interaction elements.

In addition, the respondents are professional business ELF users who use English as a means of communication in the workplace. They are "mutually engaged" (Ehrenreich, 2009, p. 131) for the internal organizational communication across national borders, a special community of practice for business purposes. However, they did not necessarily engage with the "jointly negotiated enterprise" (Ehrenreich, 2009, p. 132) in our data collection mode. The SLA-inspired research method may have meant that the community was treated as a "speech community". Therefore, the distinction between EFL and ELF is not clear-cut in the GEBCom project.

In my project, the non-clear-cut ideological positionality of English in the GEBCom speech production corpus makes it necessary to emphasize both the ELF elements and the EFL elements. From the ELF perspective, I want to highlight the status of my respondents as professional business ELF users and the meta-interactional elements on the phone in the scenario description, because the data reflect business people's social experience in the same multinational company. In addition, I want to stress the overall GEBCom goal of looking for nuanced different features, a goal which is identical to the "ELF phase 1" goal of searching for regularities among ELF varieties.

At the same time, I am aware that the adoption of the term "interlanguage pragmatics" may imply that I still regard British English as the standard idealized native norm. However, that is not my attitude and intention. I embrace the ideological stance that the power status of native English speakers and non-native English speakers should be equal. My aim is to explore the differences in the way ELF speakers keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony in the selected scenarios.

In my view, it is the multiple identities of the non-native English respondents in the same multinational company that make it difficult to make a clear ideological positioning of English in relation to SLA paradigm and ELF paradigm. The respondents are professional business ELF users who use English for the business goal for the same multinational company. At the same time, they are also non-native speakers of English. As non-native speakers of English, they are

offered opportunities by the company to improve their language competences. This is reflected by the Chinese HR officer's comment that all employees just finished one round of an English training course. Similarly, the reason that I am writing this thesis in English is to communicate my research to other scholars in the academic community because of my professional identity as a PhD fellow (a junior academic position[9]). In this logic, the English in this thesis is English as a lingua franca for the scientific communication purpose because of both my professional identity and my communicative goal. At the same time, I am also a Chinese non-native speaker (and learner) of English and a doctoral student. I have been trained to, and in fact, I must conform to the academic English writing conventions which are mostly prescribed by the norms in native English-speaking countries. In this sense, it is not contradictory at all that all the hotly debated concepts in connection with the conceptualisation of English could be embodied within a single English user, because the person can bear multiple English identities in the same situation viewed from different perspectives.

From the perspective of the data, it is necessary to use concepts which the academic community of pragmatics is familiar with, because I focus on the pragmatic aspect of ELF in this study. In order to avoid terminological confusion and highlight the unique features in the GEBCom speech production corpus, the technical terms will be clarified here. Briefly speaking, the specific uses of the concepts in my study are for different purposes. My purpose of using ELF is to indicate the language "ideological" point of view (Jenkins, 2015b, p. 72) with specific references to the *differences* found in the ELF data and the *user status* of the employee respondents. What I want to suggest here is that I approach my data with an open ELF lens – to look for differences which may hinder intercultural communication, rather than making judgements on the differences between professional business ELF users. My purpose of using concepts within the field of pragmatics is to provide subheadings to describe the pairs of languages being compared.

[9] What is in particular in the Danish education system is that a PhD fellow in Denmark has two identities: a junior academic member of the staff with teaching and research obligations, and a doctoral student identity with the final goal of conducting an independent piece of research (cf. Lønsmann, 2016).

*L1 and ELF***.** "L1 and ELF" are used as a pair of terms to highlight the features of ELF data (rather than employing NNS and NS as a pair) because of the status of the respondents and the overarching research goal of understanding the nature of ELF in the umbrella GEBCom project . In total, the study involves five groups of data, the Chinese L1 group, the Chinese ELF group, the Danish L1 group, the Danish ELF group, and the British English group.

Cross-cultural comparison. In Chapter 6, the subheading of "cross-cultural comparison" refers to the data comparison between Chinese L1 and Danish L1.

*Intralanguage comparison***.** In Chapter 6**,** the subheading of "intralanguage comparison" refers to the comparison between Chinese L1 and Chinese ELF, and the comparison between Danish L1 and Danish ELF.

Interlanguage comparison. In chapter 6, the subheading of "interlanguage comparison" refers specifically to the comparison between Chinese ELF, Danish ELF and British English. British English is used as a benchmark for comparison with the data produced by Chinese ELF users and Danish ELF users. I define this type of comparison as interlanguage comparison, but my use of the term is not related to Selinker's (1969) interlanguage theory.

A similar approach is also found in the book *Pragmatics across Languages and Cultures* edited by Trosborg (2010), where the papers with different ideological stances on English were also found under the same categorical section of "Interlanguage Pragmatics". House's article on "the pragmatics of English as a lingua franca" is categorized, together with other interlanguage pragmatics papers, under the section of interlanguage pragmatics. The reason is perhaps that pragmatics is primarily concerned with how language is used in contexts, rather than the ideological stance towards the language of English. Although the status of the speaker and the final goal of communication are perceived differently in different traditions, the ideological stance does not change the manner analysts categorize the data. The impact of the language ideological stance is how analysts perceive the differences, as "errors" or as "legitimate" differences. In short, my data are pragmatic data, irrespective of the manner how one conceptualizes English, be it L2 pragmatics, or ELF pragmatics.

Admittedly, the goal for looking for differences (or regular patterns) in the GEBCom project is different from the focus on "ELF processes and fluidity" in the "ELF phase 2" (cf.

Jenkins, 2015a, 2015b). According to the attitudes in the "ELF phase 2", even the use of native English speaker could become problematic, because the native English speaker is "an ill-defined and imaginary …baseline" (Baker, 2016, p. 78). Indeed, since Seidlhofer (2007) identified the problem with focus on ELF features (primarily in pronunciation and lexicogrammar), much empirical research has shifted its focus to discursive intercultural communication data using ELF among non-native English speakers with or without native English speakers present.

In a sense, the selected GEBCom speech production data fit in with the exploratory nature of this study. Although Chinese and Danish respondents of ELF were previously in the learning mode, it is natural to assume that they will have learnt a set of fixed words and expressions which reflect native interactional norms and which enable mutual intelligibility among English users despite the geographical and cultural distances. At the same time, as multilingual speakers, the Chinese and Danish respondents also have multiple linguacultural resources at their disposal (Jenkins, 2015b). This means that they can borrow the linguistic means and interactional patterns from their mother tongues. Does it mean that ELF speakers will only adapt the interactional norm of their mother tongue? Or does it mean that ELF speakers will adapt the interactional norm prescribed in the native English mode? To what extent do the Chinese and Danish ELF speakers adapt to the native British interactional norm? To what extent do they preserve the interactional norm associated with their mother tongue? This is worth further research when it comes to the comparative language pairs that the present study focuses on. Such kind of priori-mode knowledge is as important as the description of an intercultural encounter episode in the fluid mode of ELF.

From my point of view, contrastive analysis in pragmatics is a field which has not been fully explored before ELF-related research shifted from "ELF phase 1" to "ELF phase 2", especially when it comes to language pairs which have not been investigated before. Such a contrastive analysis is an important source of priori-knowledge for ensuring successful intercultural communication. By examining the analysis of the comparative data we can gain the baseline to investigate the "creativity" and "hybridity" in the "fluid" ELF interaction.

To sum up, in this study I look at the interlanguage comparison without imposing the verbal behaviour of native British speakers as the only *right (native)* norm. At the same time, I look at pragmatic transfer by doing intralanguage comparison, which inherently accepts the idea

of EFL and reflects an SLA perspective. This means that I acknowledge the influence of both ELF and EFL simultaneously with the aim of gaining insights into the speech production by business professionals in the workplace.

2.4.4 On the choice of British English as the comparison group

In the following I shall explain my choice of British English as the comparison group and reflect on why British English was chosen as the 'control group' in the umbrella GEBCom project and how I understand the concept of control group.

In this study, my consideration to use British English data is, first and foremost, to set up a benchmark for comparison with ELF data. What was interesting for me initially was to look for the group differences in the prototypical realization patterns, which was the overall goal of the GEBCom speech production project. So I needed a native English variety for my comparison purpose. British English data were already collected and ready for use when I joined the group.

Using the British English group as the benchmark for comparison with other non-native ELF groups does not imply that I expect Chinese and Danish speakers of ELF will perform in the same manner as the British English group. I am aware that there is no homogeneous and unified native or non-native English performance group. In the inner circle of native English-speaking countries in Kachru's (1992) model, countries such as the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand may also have nuanced cultural differences in terms of communication patterns (Goddard, 2012). As equal representatives in the inner circle, British English is not regarded as superior to other native English varieties.

Another consideration is, from the perspective of pragmatics, that using British English data as a comparison group will shed light on the possible nuanced differences beyond the simplistic East-West dichotomy between the Chinese ELF data and the British English data as a pair, or between the Chinese ELF data and the Danish ELF data as a pair. The comparison between the Danish ELF data and the British native English data may also reflect nuanced differences, although, as reflections of a Scandinavian way of communication and an Anglo-Saxon way of communication, they are categorized under the same superordinate term of 'the Western cultures'. Such a comparison between the three English language groups makes it

possible for my research to contribute to the broad academic communities in different countries at the same time.

Further, despite the fact that I do not assume any superiority of British English according to the ELF ideological stance, it should also be noted that linguistic examples in British English have been influential in the academic discourse and academic history of pragmatics and politeness research (Austin, 1955; Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987; Leech, 1983, 2007, 2014).

In the umbrella GEBCom project, the choice of British English as the 'control group' is primarily the result of practical-economic reasons such as geography and travel expenses. The UK is geographically close to Denmark and it is thus relatively more convenient to collect native British English data than other native English varieties, such as American English or Australian English, both of which also belong to the inner circle of native English in Kachru's (1992) model of World Englishes. As the data collection procedure always required (minimum) three research group members to be present, the travel cost was also more reasonable if the UK was chosen.

In addition, although there are some salient differences in terms of pronunciation and lexicogrammar among different native English varieties, there are more elements which are stable and shared in the written language. For instance, Goddard (2012) observes that the Anglo native English varieties have a lot in common, "including in their pragmatics, as well as lexis, phonology, and grammar" (p. 1038), despite the fact that he attempts to capture the cultural differences between American English, Australian English and "English English" (British English). Last but not least, given the high-profile status of British educational publishers in developing English language teaching materials worldwide[10] and their influence on the English language education systems in non-native English speaking countries, British English data could

[10] British educational publishers have played an important role in language teaching materials worldwide. With the influence of the social media and digitization, the reading and listening resources for English education are quite diversified nowadays. However, when it comes to language textbooks, it is necessary to acknowledge the influence of teaching materials from British educational publishers in non-native English speaking countries.

indeed be considered as a rational choice for comparison when the umbrella GEBCom project started.

Concerning the use of 'control group' for British English data in the umbrella GEBCom project, some clarifications should be made here in connection with the possibility of different interpretations viewed from different perspectives. According to the online Collins dictionary, the term "control group" refers to "a group that serves as the control in a scientific experiment; specif., such a group that does not receive the substance, drug, treatment, etc. being tested". In other words, a control group is a group which is not exposed to any experimental treatment. Normally the research purpose is to test the relationship between an independent variable (experimental treatment) and a dependent variable in different experimental groups. For instance, in an experiment which focuses on the impact of teaching intervention on speech act performance, there might be two groups: an experimental group of students who receive teaching intervention and a group of students who do not receive any teaching intervention. In a typical interlanguage pragmatic research design, three groups will normally be studied - an L1 (control) group, an L2 English (experimental) group and a native English (experimental) group. The experimental intervention is the scenario description. The L2 English group and the native English group will read or hear the scenario description in English and the L1 group will read or hear the scenario description in their mother tongue.

In the umbrella GEBCom project, the term of control group can be open to different interpretations. The initial goal was to highlight the significance of the mother tongue and to explore how mother tongue influences the speech production, speech reception and the understanding of English words by non-native English speakers. From this perspective, the British English group is a control group for the ELF groups, with the "manipulated" variable being L1 vs. L2. In Durst-Andersen's (2019) words, "the British English group is the control group whereas the ELF groups are the experimental groups, because the controlled variable is the possible inference from one's mother tongue" (personal communication).

However, viewed from the tradition of interlanguage pragmatics with three groups of data, the British English group can also be regarded as the experimental group, because the British English participants *were exposed to* the same treatment as the other ELF groups, i.e. hearing the scenario description in English and looking at the cartoon picture for

visualization/imagination simultaneously. From this perspective, it means that the British English group and the two ELF groups are experimental groups, whereas the real control groups are the L1 groups who heard the scenario descriptions in their respective mother tongue (Chinese, Danish and Russia) while seeing the same cartoons.

In my view, the term "comparison group" is perhaps a better term than the "control group" if reservations have to be made in connection with the meaning of control group as a group which does not receive experimental treatment, because the British English respondents received the same audio and visual treatment as the ELF respondents when doing closed role plays during the data collection period.

2.5 The cultural dimension of the GEBCom speech production corpus

In an earlier section (cf. Section 2.3.1) I touched briefly upon the influence of culture during the scenario selection process. In the following I shall reflect on the underlying assumption of culture in the research design in the GEBCom speech production project and explain how I understand the concept of culture in my study.

2.5.1 Culture and research design: reflections on the GEBCom speech production project

According to Eelen (2001), the dominant ways of defining culture in the field of pragmatics and politeness research are in terms of language (Brown &Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983; Gu, 1990; Blum-kulka, 1982, 1987), speech community (Lakoff & Tannen, 1979) or (geo-) political boundaries (Lakoff, 1979; Blum-Kulka, 1990; Watts, 1992). As Ogiermann (2009) points out, "in most studies [of pragmatics], culture is merely treated as a variable responsible for differences in the realization and distribution of speech act strategies" (p. 23). In Brown and Levinson's (1987) discussion of "cultural variation" (p. 242), the terms "culture", "language" and "society" are used interchangeably. Probably such use of interchangeable or equivalent terms makes sense because the informants in most empirical studies in pragmatics are college students. By equating language with culture, it becomes relatively convenient to study the language comparison between groups at the national cultural level.

However, culture is more than language, society, or national culture. Culture can be defined in terms of other characteristics as well. Eelen (2001, pp. 158-165) provides a

comprehensive categorization of culture-defining characteristics, including language, speech community, ethnic group, (geo-)political boundaries, religion, social class, and the historical-temporal dimension. Spencer-Oatey (2009, p. 46) argues further that "people are simultaneously members of many different cultural [or subcultural] groups". For the purpose of better understanding international business communication, Jameson's (2007) proposes a pie chart model of cultural identity, emphasizing the importance of a broad conception of cultural identity. He argues that " [a] broad conception of cultural identity should not privilege nationality but instead should balance components related to vocation, class, geography, language and the social aspects of biology" (p. 199). According to him, "[t]he proportion of each component may vary at different times and in different situations, but the total always equals 100%" (Jameson, 2007, p. 210).

In Ibsen's (2016) study, the underlying assumption is the equivalence between language and culture. In her research design, employees were chosen as respondents, but she did not elaborate on her understanding of culture and the possible impact of the institutional context as one manifestation of organisational culture. The reason was probably that organisational culture seemed irrelevant for her selected scenarios. [11]

In my study, using the five groups of linguistic data means that I follow the same underlying assumption. However, I am also aware that there may be a possible influence of organizational culture or institutitional context. It is important to take it into account for two reasons. First, all the respondents are employees who might be under the influence of the same organizational culture (at least in their key values and vision statement). The groups of respondents can be categorized from the perspective of native languages, nationalities, and organizations. From the perspective of the same organization, all the data are empirical materials collected in one multinational company - closely resembling a case study approach.

Secondly, in two of the three selected scenarios in my study, the scenarios are designed within an institutional context. In short, the particular professional status of the respondents (as educated and competent employees) and the institutional setting (employees functioning in a

[11] Her selected scenarios were the Trolley scenario, the Window scenario, and the Library scenario.

specific MNC and the business setup in the scenario descriptions) in my study are the most important features which represent the relevance of business in the GEBCom project. From this perspective, the understanding of culture in my study includes both national culture and organizational culture. With the semi-experimental setup in the organizational context, it is quite possible that national culture might blend with organizational culture, influencing the respondents' linguistic behaviour. While it is highly unlikely that there is a rigorous norm for addressing colleagues in the company, the organizational culture might have an influence on the way they behave in the scenarios within the institutional context. For instance, the respondents are very likely to take account of the working procedures, especially how to cancel a meeting, or how to cancel a lunch agreement. Further, there might also be some shared understandings of the priority of the organizational tasks and the organizational goals, such as finishing a report on time in the Lunch Scenario.

2.5.2 The understanding of culture in this study

Then what is culture? The concept of culture is notoriously difficult to define. In cultural studies, the positivist and social-constructivist approaches to the study of culture raise disputes and discussions. It is beyond the scope of this study to review all the literature in Cultural Studies here. Briefly, the key difference is how culture is conceptualized and what kind of methodology is used. In the positivist approach, culture is conceptualized as pre-existing, such as Hofstede's conceptualization of "programming of human mind" and his emphasis on cultural value dimensions. In contrast, in the social-constructivist approach, culture is conceptualized as co-constructed as meaning-making. For instance, Geertz (1973) defines culture as meaning-making.

> Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun. I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law, but an interpretive one in search of meaning. (Geertz, 1973, p. 5)

A similar division of the definitions of culture can also be found in pragmatics and politeness research. Spencer-Oatey (2008) makes her definition of culture as follows, stressing the regularities shared by a group.

> Culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural conventions, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and each member's interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour. (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 3)

Janney and Arndt (1992) define culture in terms of social interaction aspect of cultural learning:

> By interacting with other members of the culture in different situations throughout their lives, people acquire broad frameworks of common knowledge, experience, expectations, and beliefs that enable them to be tactful. (Janney & Arndt, p. 1992 p. 30)

At the ending phase of the GEBCom project, Durst-Andersen (2018) also gives his definition of culture as follows, emphasizing the relatedness between culture and language and the sharedness within a community:

> Culture is a specific mindset shared by members of a community in a society that consists of ideas, values and symbols embedded in a common language and of an interrelated set of traditions, norms and rules for verbal and non-verbal behaviour at various places in private and public spheres of life at a specific point of time in that society. (Durst-Andersen, 2018, lecture slides)

In spite of the differences, it is generally accepted that there are a number of important characteristics of culture:

- Culture is manifested through different types of regularities, some of which are more explicit than others.
- Culture is associated with social groups, but no two individuals within a group share exactly the same cultural characteristics.
- Culture affects people's behaviour and interpretations of behaviour.
- Culture is acquired and/or constructed through interaction with others.

(quoted from Spencer-Oatey, 2009, p. 15)

In addition, two key problems have been mentioned in relation to culture: "(1) overemphasizing consistency within the cultural group and (2) not attempting to understand culture" (Sarangi, 1995, p. 24; cited from Fukushima, 2003, p. 107).

Thus culture can be viewed from different perspectives. On the component dimension, culture has both stable components and variable components (Jameson, p. 219). In this sense, there are cultural regularities which can be observed at a group level. At the same time, there are also cultural variations which are open to change in social interactions with others.

On the time dimension, there are some cultural elements which may change over time and some cultural elements which are relatively stable during the course of history. The transmission of traditional cultural heritages and the impact of globalization are relevant when we discuss national cultures.

It is known that China has undergone rapid economic and polititical change during the past 70 years. The influence on Chinese culture comes from different sources, including religions (i.e., Buddism and Taoism), political change (i.e., Marxism, Maoism, Deng's opening-up policy), traditional Confucianism and globalization. Since Deng XiaoPing's opening-up policy in 1979, some features of the Western cultural values can also be observed in the younger generations and in the business community in China (Faure & Fang, 2008).

Faure and Fang (2008) describe the co-existence of the traditional culture and westernized cultural trends as "paradoxes" of cultural values, a phenomenon which could be viewed from the Ying-Yang perspective. Leung (2008) argues, "[t]o understand the behavior of Chinese people, it is important to examine the interplay between the contemporary social forces and traditional values and beliefs. Materialistic achievement may be more relevant for economic behavior, whereas the social behavior of Chinese is still guided by traditional values and beliefs." (p. 184).

The same paradox is also observed in Danish culture in the globalizing world. Selmer and Lauring (2013), for instance, discuss the Danish paradox of being open-minded while ethnocentric in the Danish international management practice. The younger Danish generations are also regarded as more individualistic than the older generations. No national culture is homogeneous. Even within a society, the cultural values may vary because of the sub-cultural

differences. What is important for analysts is to examine which cultural values are relevant for the investigated data or phenomena and at what level.

With specific reference to the speech act realisation within the context of the selected scenrios, it would appear that it is irrelevant to explore the impact of political ideological influence and religious influence. But over and over, the earlier-mentioned possible impact of organisational culture and the influence of Confucianism is relevant for interpreting Chinese respondents' verbal behaviour. In my study, it is relevant to explore the perception of the promise, and the perception of face in the context of interpersonal relationship managment in Chinese culture.

The influence of Confucianism on people's verbal behaviour in contemporay China is manifested in the following two ways. First, a large part of Confucian doctrine is embodied in the fixed expressions and proverbs which Chinese people use in their everyday life. Second, some selections of short texts from Confucianist classics are still mandatory in the Chinese language education system and should be learnt by heart. It is considered as a way to inherit the classic Chinese wisdom in modern times of social change and westernization, and a means to keep the cultural identity and to transit the cultural heritage.

The comparative data do not allow me to explore how cultures change over time. Further, similar to Ibsen (2016), language, rather than national culture, is also the object of the study in my project. What is emphasized in this study is the link between language on the one hand and society (including cultural values or interactional norms) on the other (Leech, 1983, 2014; Brown & Levinson, 1987).

With reference to the contrast between the positivist approach and social-constructivist approach to culture in contemporary culture literature, it is necessary to acknowledge the underlying positivist cultural assumption in the previous research design. For my study, it means that the prototypical data may in one way or another still reflect the cultural value dimensions as most of the speech act literature does. It also means that it requires further future research to fully explain the irregularities in each group of the data. Using the data in the GEBCom speech production corpus does not suggest that I embrace a monolithic attitude towards culture on purpose. I do not assume or expect that all the linguistic data in one cultural/language group is the same or homogeneous.

I agree with Sarangi (1995) that there are internal variations within the same group. I am aware that highlighting the patterns or regularities in the groups of my data has the risk of reinforcing stereotypes and overemphasizing the consistency of the data. However, this is not my intention. Constrained by the type of data I have, I am interested in discovering the patterns while acknowledging that there are also variations within each group.

What I want to do in this study (cf. Chapter 6) is to look at the how culture is manifested in the statistical tendencies of the frequency of linguistic strategies used in each group. The purpose of finding out the prototypical patterns is to help identify the norms or appropriateness of social expectations in the social situations (cf. Schneider, 2012), which could be useful to avoid pitfalls in intercultural communication, or which might simply cause interpersonal discomfort.

2.5.3 Clarification of cultural terms

In the following I shall clarify some of the cultural terms.

East-West

The terms "East", "West", or "East-West divide" can be found in much of the pragmatics literature (e.g. Leech, 1983, 2014; Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994). However, caution should be taken because Danish and British English are two languages which represent two different Western cultures. It is potentially risky to use the East-West dichotomy to explain the differences found in my five groups of data representing three cultures. In my study, in order to avoid confusion, I shall refer to the data by means of the specific language groups.

Individualism versus Collectivism

The terms "individualism" and "collectivism" have been influential in the speech act literature. They are defined by Hofstede (1980) as follows.

> Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which

> throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. (Hofstede, 1980, p. 51)

Other scholars (Kim et al., 1994) also make similar further comments on the basis of Hofstede's interpretation.

> According to Hofstede (1980), individualist societies emphasize "I" consciousness, autonomy, emotional independence, individual initiative, right to privacy, pleasure seeking, financial security, need for specific friendship, and universalism. Collectivist societies, on the other hand, stress "we" consciousness, collective identity, emotional dependence group solidarity, sharing, duties and obligations, need for stable and predetermined friendship, group decision, and particularism. (Kim, et al, 1994, p. 2)

Hofstede's cultural value dimensions tend to be regarded as simplistic and criticisms have often been made regarding the generalizability of his data and his methodology (e.g. McSweeney, 2002). As a response to the critique, Hofstede (1991) points out that "the usefulness of the country scores is not for describing individuals, but for describing the social systems these individuals are likely to have built. Social systems are not made for the exceptional individual, but they have to take account of the dominant values of the majority from the people involved" (pp. 253-254).

The research following Hofstede has built on his work and made various adjustments. For instance, the GLOBE project makes a distinction between individualism and collectivism at multiple levels, including the societal level, the organizational level, and the individual level. Triandis (1994) finds that the individualistic and collectivistic tendencies coexist. As he puts in, "… individual-level factor analyses suggest that the two can coexist and are simply emphasized more or less in each culture, depending on the situation." (p. 42).

In my study, it is relevant to mention the individualism-collectivism cultural value dimension, because a person's language use may reflect certain cultural values. At the same time, it is also important to avoid a simplistic attitude towards the dichotomy of individualism and collectivism, because it is not sufficient to label the British and Danish language groups as "individualistic cultures" and Chinese language groups as a "collectivistic culture". It is also by

no means clear whether the respondents will exhibit the individualistic and collectivist traits when they speak their mother tongue as compared with ELF. What an analyst needs to do is to keep an open mind and see what people are really doing with their words.

2.6 Summary

To sum up, the GEBCom speech production corpus has both strengths and limitations. The limitations have constrained my research process to some extent. However, the corpus is also uniquely rich. With the possibilities that I have, it turned out that I could find three scenarios which are valuable and suitable for my research purposes in the broad cross-cultural comparative context of intercultural business communication with the use of English as a lingua franca. Accordingly, I was able to conduct an independent and original piece of study based on this corpus.

In the following chapters, I will show the richness and the beauty of the data by constructively dealing with the limitations. With regard to the possible cultural bias during my data interpretation process, my efforts to avoid bias will be discussed in Chapter 5.

3. Theoretical Background

Durst-Andersen's conceptual frameworks of communicative supertypes (2011) and imperative frames (1995, 2009) are the theoretical backgrounds for generating the GEBCom production data. In this section I will give a brief introduction to them and elaborate on how key theoretical concepts such as deontic modality and imperative frame are used in my study.

3.1 On the theoretical framework of communicative supertypes

The theoretical background for the overall GEBCom project is Durst-Andersen's (2011) theoretical framework of communicative supertypes, in which he places all languages in three communicative supertypes according to how they, grammatically speaking, relate to what he calls reality: 1) Reality-oriented languages like Chinese, Russian, and Hindi talk about reality through the speaker's and the hearer's mutual understanding of it; 2) Speaker-oriented languages such as Japanese, Spanish, and Turkish talk about reality through the speaker's experience of it; and 3) Hearer-oriented languages such as English, Danish, and Swedish speak about reality through the hearer's experience of it. The construction of the theory is composed of elements from cognition, semiotics, semantics and linguistic supertypes. It has the ambition to categorize all languages according to their distinctive grammar features. It was against this background or theoretical foundation that the GEBCom speech production test included the Chinese data, including both Chinese L1 and Chinese ELF. At the same time, the theory itself did not have any predictive intention for the Chinese data. On the contrary, my Chinese L1 data have helped to change the categorization of Chinese from a reality-oriented language to a speaker-oriented language in the new categorization of the communicative supertypes (Durst-Andersen, 2016). The criterion for this change was the prototypical message sequence in the Chinese L1 data.[12] Due to the complexity of my comparative data, and the parallel timing between Durst-Andersen's (2016, 2018) new theoretical development and the present PhD study, the concrete categorization of linguistic supertypes itself is not adopted as the main analytical method in my data analysis process. However, the semiotic perspective embodied in

[12] I hope that more details about the criteria will be provided in Durst-Andersen's future publications.

the theory of communicative supertypes was adopted in my preliminary analysis to explore the relationship between different linguistic strategies (cf. section 6.1.1.2).

3.2 On the conceptual framework of imperative frames

3.2.1 A brief introduction

Inspired by von Wright's (1968) sharp distinction between the alethic and deontic modalities, Durst-Andersen (2009, 2011) has put forward eight imperative frames (IFs) ,[13] which are hypothesized as universal cognitive structures that underlie the choice of linguistic forms in different languages. Among these eight IFs, four are descriptive frames, which are based on the alethic modality (the knowledge of laws of nature), while the remaining four IFs are prescriptive frames, which are based on the deontic modality (the knowledge of laws of society). The descriptive frames include (physical) possibility and impossibility, as well as (internal) necessity and non-necessity. The prescriptive frames include permission (what is made possible), prohibition (what is made impossible), obligation (what is made necessary), and cancellation of an obligation (what is made unnecessary) (cf. von Wright, 1968; Durst-Andersen, 1995, 2011). Alethic modality is derived from Durst-Andersen's mental model of events (1995), a mental model originally developed to explain the use of the perfect aspect in the Russian language, whereas deontic modality is derived from Durst-Andersen's mental model of processes, another mental model originally developed to explain the use of the imperfect aspect in the Russian language (Durst-Andersen, 1995, pp. 616-617). The conceptual framework of IFs has been used to explain why people from three different linguistic communities choose three distinctive linguistic forms, including perfective and imperfective aspects in Russian, indirect speech acts in English, and modal particles in Danish (Durst-Andersen, 1995).

The eight IFs were presented as cognitive analyses of the speaker's thought process to make the hearer do or not do something, including situational source (the motive of the action), need (the speaker's desire), presumption (the speaker's presumption), thought (the speaker's thought), motivation (the cause of linguistic resource), direction of fit (in Searle's terminology), the satisfaction condition (precondition for performing a directive), and obedience conditions

[13] In Durst-Andersen (1995) there were seven imperative frames.

(postcondition for performing a directive, especially in terms of consequences). In the cognitive analyses for the reasons that people issue directives to change the world or to preserve the world as it is (in Durst-Andersen's terminology), the speaker's thought is considered as the key to the IF itself (Durst-Andersen, 2009). In the present study, I define the directives to change the world as *positive directives*, whereas the directives to preserve the world as it is as *negative directives*, in the light of Searle's definition of directives and Mey's (1993) distinction between positive request and negative request.

Table 3.1 illustrates the cognitive structures of the IFs involving both obligation and cancellation of an obligation. With reference to cancellation of an obligation, the key is the speaker's thought that the hearer feels that he/she is obliged to do something (Durst-Andersen, 2009, p. 332). With respect to obligation, the key is the speaker's thought that the hearer does not want the state [of the obligation]. Such thoughts reveal naturally the theorist's conceptual starting point: the Danish cultural interpretation towards obligations and cancellation of an obligation.

Imperative Frame	**THOUGHT /OBSTACLE**	**SATISFACTION CONDITION**	**OBEDIENCE CONDITION**	**POLITENESS DEGREE**
Obligation	H doesn't want the state	S issues an obligation in order to remove the obstacle	S attempts to secure obedience by promising a penalty	Impolite in direct as well as indirect uses
Cancellation of an obligation	H feels that he/she is obliged to do something	S cancels H's feeling of obligation which is an obstacle for S	S attempts to secure obedience by pointing out non-necessity	Neutral in direct as well as indirect uses.

Table 3.1. Imperative frame of obligation and cancellation of an obligation (quoted from Durst-Andersen, 2009, p. 332)

3.2.2 Imperative frames as a new methodology

The conceptual framework of IFs was employed as the guiding methodology for the GEBCom speech production data (Arnsberg & Bentsen, 2009; Ibsen, 2016). In GEBCom's pilot study (Arnsberg & Bentsen, 2009) the scenarios were designed on the basis of both the alethic modality and the deontic modality. The conceptual framework of IFs was adopted to illustrate the respondents' train of thought in the utterances, and the researchers' data analysis focused on politeness and cultural values in Spanish English vs. Danish English. For Ibsen (2016) scenarios were designed primarily on the basis of deontic modality and her specific aim was to "[design] the scenarios in a way that would trigger utterances containing a VP with a modal verb" (p. 102). The reason for the concentrated focus on deontic modality in Ibsen (2016) was that Arnsberg and Bentsen (2009) found no big difference in the Spanish English and Danish English in the scenarios based on alethic modality. The applications of IFs in these two studies had a cognitive process focus on train of thought and a form focus on modal verb constructions.

It follows that the foci and boundaries set by the conceptual frameworks of IFs make the scenarios in the GEBCom corpus different from that reported in the literature of speech acts, the former focusing on sentence forms of issuing both positive directives and negative directives in the IFs involving deontic modality, while the latter focuses only on sentence forms of request-making (e.g. *can you pass the salt?; sit down; please sit down; won't you sit down?*, etc).

When the GEBCom scenarios were used to collect data in China in 2014, the etic focus of IFs was met with emic rebellions, both in terms of the attitude differences, and in terms of other ways of speaking, which did not reflect the modal-verb focus in the original design.

It appears that the IFs were developed from a cognitive-linguistic perspective to explain the psychological process for issuing directives. The underlying cognitive analyses of the speaker's thought process designated by IFs were operationalized in the scenarios, which created a context to prompt the speakers to make any directives.

It should, however, be noted here that the cognitive analysis of the speaker's thought process may be culturally framed. Such cross-cultural differences in the rules of society, especially the potential challenges of normativity and agency issues, have also been discussed in deontic logic in the online *Standard Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (McNamara, 2014). In terms

of normativity, different societies have different norms with regard to what things are considered obligatory, permitted, and forbidden. As von Wright (1951) acknowledged, his discussion on deontic modality in modern logic is based on "our intuitive notion of obligation and permission" (p. 14) and it might be subject to different norms in different societies.

With regard to agency in the deontic context, major cultural variations also exist. For instance, permission and prohibition, as a pair of acts, reflect the normative rules of a society, and agency issues arise with regard to who has the authority to give permission or issue prohibition, and the consequences or punishment associated with them. Beyond the discussion of obligation and cancellation of an obligation, we also need to know who or what makes something obligatory, and who has the right to release someone from an obligation.

In the GEBCom corpus, such sociocultural differences occur in quite a few scenarios in the Chinese data. Take the Resignation scenario with the IF involving prohibition, where the respondent is required to ask his/her colleague John not to spread the resignation news before he/she hands in the resignation letter. In this scenario, most respondents in the Danish L1 group adopt a prohibition form containing the Danish modal verb *må ikke* (must not) whereas the majority of respondents in the Chinese L1 group use a request (e.g. "*can you*….?") or white lies (e.g. "*I am joking with my wife*"), which shows that the Chinese speakers do not have sociality rights to issue an prohibition in this context. In the Ice-cream scenario with the IF involving permission, the majority of the Danish L1 group use permission (e.g. "*du må gerne tage en lille portion mere*") while their counterparts in the Chinese L1 group tend to ask the child's willingness in linguistic form. Therefore, the conceptual framework of IFs is re-evaluated and re-interpreted in the present study.

3.3 Reinterpretation of the key theoretical concepts

In order to use the original conceptual framework of imperative frames in a constructive manner and to acknowledge its impact on the scenario design and data generation, I have reinterpreted some key theoretical concepts, including deontic modality, imperative frames, and the notion of obligation.

Deontic modality

Deontic modality is normally defined as "a linguistic modality that indicates how the world ought to be according to certain norms, expectations, speaker desire, etc" (Loos et al., 2009). It is traditionally investigated in semantics, especially in connection with grammar-relevant modal verbs. The original purpose of incorporating it into the scenario design of the GEBCom corpus was to identify cross-cultural differences in societal rules. In the present study deontic modality is interpreted as a part of sociocultural contexts (He, 2013) in the sense that deontic modality refers to obligation and permission. It is closely linked with concepts such as "moral order" and "scripted expectation" (Kadar & Haugh, 2013) in the literature of politeness research.

Imperative frames

Imperative frames are reinterpreted as "performative frames with communicative intentions". The IFs are regarded as performative frames to stimulate respondents to act verbally in order to achieve the defined communicative intentions in the described scenarios. I consider each IF as a reflection of the communicative intention that the researcher wants to trigger or prompt in the specific communicative situation. It is a functional interpretation of the original conceptual framework. People with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds use different linguistic forms to achieve the same communicative effect, which is a sign of different cultural mind-sets. In order to achieve the same researcher-defined communicative intention involving deontic modality, i.e., the rules of society, the Danish and Chinese participants may use structurally different linguistic forms in their native languages.

From this perspective, the conceptual framework of IFs provides a good starting point to systematically investigate the cultural and linguistic differences, especially in terms of the rules of the given society. Such comparative and contrasting knowledge cannot be obtained by any single intercultural communication episode, because we cannot generalize from one individual's behaviour to behaviour patterns in a specific linguistic community. However, this knowledge can be obtained systematically by using the closed role enactment method of the present study.

The notion of obligation

In addition to the emphasis on obligation in Durst-Andersen's conceptual framework of IFs, the notion of obligation is also connected with Spencer-Oatey's (2008, p. 15) concept of "sociality rights and obligations" in intercultural interaction. According to her, the sociality

rights and obligations are based on factors such as contractual/legal agreements and requirements, conceptualization of roles and positions, and behavioural conventions (ibid., p. 15). Therefore, in this study, the notion of obligation will be interpreted in terms of the obligation in a promise and the specific role obligations in different contexts.

Unlike the methods of interlanguage pragmatics, where contextual variables are tested on a survey before conducting discourse completion tests, the present study embraces the contextual differences as they actually occur in reality. Considering the close link between deontic modality and norms and expectations, I believe that it will reveal systematic comparative knowledge of normative language usage and scripted expectations in communication in different linguistic communities.

3.4 Summary

In the present study three key theoretical concepts have been reinterpreted to enable understanding of the comparative data from the sociocultural perspective. The IFs are regarded as performative frames to stimulate respondents to act verbally in order to achieve the defined communicative intentions in the described scenarios. It is against this background that other theoretical frameworks will be drawn upon in the next chapter.

4. Theoretical Frameworks

In this chapter, an integrated conceptual framework will be developed for the purpose of interpreting the comparative data at hand. In order to do so, different components of other theoretical frameworks will be presented and integrated for analytical and interpretive purposes. This chapter will be arranged in the following order. First, Dell Hymes' SPEAKING framework in the ethnography of speaking will be introduced and drawn upon to understand the situational context, i.e. the communicative events as a whole communication process. Secondly, clarifications will be made of the concepts of face, politeness, and facework, including the similarities and differences between the Chinese perspective of face, Brown and Levinson's concept of face, and Goffman's concept of face, as well as the relationship between politeness and facework. Thus a multi-dimensional interpretation of face will be presented. In addition, the Chinese understanding of face in a meta-interactional context will be presented to illustrate the rationale of doing facework in the meta-interpersonal interaction. Finally, the integrated conceptual framework will be discussed.

4.1 Ethnography of speaking

4.1.1 Speech act and speech event

Dell Hymes' ethnography of speaking (1962) (now called ethnography of communication) is considered as one of the important theoretical frameworks in intercultural discourse and communication. It was developed to highlight 'communicative competence' in the age of Chomsky's focus on linguistic competence. The ethnography of communication aims to uncover communication patterns and the focus is on *speech events* rather than *speech acts*. According to Hymes (1962, 1972), a speech event refers to a unified set of components throughout, including the same purpose of communication, the same topic, the same participants, and the same language variety; whereas a speech act is an utterance with a performative function. He clarifies further, "[t]he term speech event will be restricted to activities, or aspects of activities, that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech. An event may consist of a single speech act, but will often comprise several" (Hymes, 1972, p. 56). In this study, it is necessary to point out that I use "communicative act" and

“communicative event” because data are composed of multiple speech-act components and the scenario description contains more than one speech event.

4.1.2 Hymes’ SPEAKING framework

The SPEAKING framework (Hymes, 1974) was developed as an etic framework to compare the ways of speaking in the same or similar speech events. It attempts to understand language use in context and uncover the norms of interaction.

The SPEAKING framework is drawn upon in this study, because the comparative oral data have strong features of a complex communicative event. They have the same purpose of communication, the same topic, the same participants, and the same previous telephone dialogue as their meta-interactional context. More specifically, there is a shared systematic pattern in the scenario descriptions. The content analysis of scenario descriptions in the light of the SPEAKING framework enables the researcher to identify the relationship between the semi-natural elicited oral data and the context, or the relationship between speech act and speech event. It is beneficial to understand what is going on in the context. As Terkourafi (2012, p. 617) points out, while the decontextualized speaker-focused single-utterance orientation of speech act studies have been increasingly criticized, academic attention has been shifted to the understanding of the complex context in which speech acts take place and towards a broader agenda of explaining the constitution and manipulation of social relationships through language by borrowing notions from other neighbouring disciplines.

In the scenario descriptions certain patterns are covered by the SPEAKING framework: the setting (place), interpersonal relationship between the Speaker and the Hearer (participants), the problem of a three-step act sequence in cancellation (what is happening; act sequence), communicative intentions for the social situations involving a problem (ends), and instrumentalities (mode of communication). For a more detailed contextual analysis, see section 6.1.1.2.

S	Setting and scene (where and when does it happen?)
P	Participants (who is taking part?)
E	Ends (what do the participants want to achieve?)
A	Act sequence (what is said and done?)
K	Key (what is the emotional tone, for example serious, sorrowful, light-hearted?)
I	Instrumentalities (what are the 'channels'?)
N	Norms of interaction and interpretation (why 'should' people act like this?)
G	Genre (what kind of speech event is it?)

Table 4.1. SPEAKING framework (quoted from Goddard & Wierzbicka, 1997, p. 232)

It is vital to notice that in this case, the three acts in sequence are particularly important to understand the implicit interactional context. Each scenario in the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation is composed of three acts a request (by the Speaker), a promise (by the Hearer), and a cancellation (by the Speaker), even if the first two utterances are not on record. In a strict sense, the first two acts form an imagined dialogue and the act of cancellation presupposes a previous telephone dialogue. Such in-depth beyond-utterance level analysis can be used to uncover the meta-interactional discursive context, especially the relationship between the utterances, which is specially emphasized in the post-2000 research on politeness (Kadar & Haugh, 2013, p. 28).

Goddad and Wierzbicka (1997) points out that the drawback of the SPEAKING framework is "the lack of a principled method for describing cultural norms" (p. 213). With respect to this point, in this study I regard statistical tendencies or prototypical realizations in the corpus data as reflections of aspects of the norms of interaction, as "informants are seldom unanimous" (Eelen, 2001, p. 178) and there is almost no *unified* norm of interaction in speech events.

4.2 A review of the face literature

Face is a multifaceted concept with its roots in Chinese culture and with rich explanatory value in various disciplines. In China, face is a predominantly emic concept used by ordinary Chinese people. It is found in many conventionalized Chinese expressions, such as *diulian* (lose face), *mei mianzi* (have no face), *gei mianzi* (give face to someone), *liu mianzi* (save someone's face), etc. The expression 'to lose face' in English was borrowed by the British missionaries in the 1830s and has been used since in the West, yet the expression 'to give face', 'to maintain face', 'or threaten face' are not common terms among ordinary people in the West. However, face has become an interesting etic notion in academia, which has been used by researchers from various disciplines as an explanatory theoretical construct to account for typical Chinese behaviour (Hu, 1944; Yang, 1945; Ho, 1976; Hwang, 1987), interactional ritual (Goffman, 1955, 1967), linguistic politeness (Brown & Levinson , 1978, 1987), negotiation and conflict management (Ting-Toomey, 1988, 1994), etc.

In the field of pragmatics, Haugh (2013) argues that the theoretical notion of politeness is often interwoven with the notion of face and facework. According to him, distinctions should be made among face, politeness, and facework. Briefly speaking, it is generally concluded that the scope of facework is broader than Brown and Levinson's theoretical concept of politeness (e.g. Watts, 2003, p. 130; O'Driscoll, 2011), and the notion of face is still a concept that "underpins the study of facework" (Haugh, 2013, p. 52).

In the politeness literature, it is widely acknowledged (Mills, 2014; Holmes, 2012) that the study of politeness is divided into a traditional approach dominated by Brown and Levinson's seminal theory of politeness (1978, 1987) and a postmodern discursive approach (e.g. Watts, 2003). In the traditional approach to the study of politeness, Brown and Levinson's theory has triggered conceptual debates on the content of face (especially negative face) in the 1990s (Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994; Lim & Bowers, 1991), followed by vast empirical cross-cultural pragmatics research to test the universality claim of linguistic politeness. The empirical studies in the traditional approach are typically speech act realization data following the CCSARP coding scheme or a modified version of it. In the postmodern discursive approach, the data are dialogic and the emphasis is on understanding politeness in context with conversation analysis (CA) as its primary analytical tool. It seems that the two different approaches are incompatible due to the nature of the data.

In the research focusing on face, different attempts have also been made to improve the understanding of face in a broad social context, including relational work (Locher & Watts, 2005), rapport management (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, 2008), or face constituting (Arundale, 1999, 2006, 2010). The methods they use are either a CA approach to dialogue data (Arundale, 2010), or an ethnographic approach to interview data (Spencer-Oatey, 2007). At the same time, some scholars (e.g. Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003) advocate a return back to the Goffmanian concept of face, because face has become "a term that can be used by scholars from all over the world to denote the same concept whatever their origin or specifics of their empirical application of it" (O'Driscoll, 2011, p. 23). Another alternative to the understanding of face and politeness is a metalinguistic approach to deconstructing face and politeness (Haugh & Hinze, 2003), although it does not really address the normative prescriptive aspect of face.

However, these new face theories are not suitable for the present study because of the unique features of my data. To be more specific, I do not have conversational data to employ the face constituting theory, or the discursive approach to politeness. As for the rapport management model by Spencer-Oatey (2000, 2008), with the three notions of interactional goals, sociality rights and obligations and face-sensitiveness, provide good inspiration for my data analysis. However, the detailed classification of face into quality face and identity face (Spencer-Oatey, 2000) is not suitable for my Chinese data. In addition, her emphasis of interactional goals does not reflect the unique focus of the conceptual framework of IFs and the distinction between the research-defined communicative intention and the informants' priority of interactional goals in my data. The conceptual variables embedded in the scenario descriptions make it beneficial for the current study to engage with the notion of obligation (cf. Chapter 3) and the notion of face.

The Chinese scholars' voices on face (Hu, 1944; Yang, 1945; Ho, 1976; Hwang, 1987) which have been spread across various disciplines and across different periods of time, have rarely been adequately highlighted as a cluster on their own merits in comparison with either Goffman's or Brown and Levinson's conceptualization of face in the discussion of pragmatics research. Further, Haugh (2013) points out that first-order (emic) face plays an important role in the development of second-order (etic) face. Therefore, literature by the representative Chinese scholars as both cultural insiders and scholars is in this study considered of vital importance in understanding the meaning of face when it comes to our understanding of language use in context. It may also inspire the understanding of face in non-Chinese contexts.

As far as the research scope and the comparative data are concerned, it is necessary to clarify the relationship between the Chinese concept of face, the Goffmanian concept of face, and Brown and Levinson's concept of face during the 'translation process' (St.Andre, 2013) between languages and across disciplines. So in this section, the review of face literature will be divided into four major parts: the pre-Goffmanian period, the Goffmanian period, the Brown and Levinson period, and the new period with indigenous research findings by Chinese social scientists. For each period, I will briefly introduce the main researchers, their claims, academic influence on the subsequent researchers, and the main academic controversies and disputes. In addition, the distinction between facework and politeness, and the difference between *lian* and *mianzi* in Chinese face will be clarified.

The purpose of such a chronological review is twofold: (1) to clarify the relationship between the Chinese concept of face, Goffmanian concept of face and Brown and Levinson's concept of face; and (2) to develop and propose a deconstructed 'operational' understanding of face, which is suitable to interpret the comparative data.

4.2.1 The Pre-Goffmanian period

The pre-Goffmanian period is featured by Chinese scholars' anthropological description of the meaning of Chinese face as cultural insiders (Lin, 1935; Hu, 1944; Yang, 1945). Their studies capture different aspects of face in Chinese culture, in the form of criteria for privilege (Hu, 1944), in the form of village conflict cause and prevention (Yang, 1945), and as a governing principle of interpersonal interactional norms (Lin, 1935).

4.2.1.1 Lin's (1935) elaboration on Chinese face

Lin Yutang, a popular Chinese writer in the US, made his attempt to define the psychology of 'face' in his book *My country and my people* (1935), where he tried to illustrate this Chinese concept to the American readers.

> Interesting as the Chinese physiological face is, the psychological face makes a still more fascinating study. It is not a face that can be washed or shaved, but a face that can be "granted" and "lost" and "fought for" and "presented as a gift". Here we arrive at the most curious point of Chinese social psychology. *Abstract and*

intangible, it is yet the most delicate standard by which Chinese social intercourse is regulated. (Lin, 1935, p. 190; emphasis added).

It is interesting to note that in Lin's definition, face is the governing code of conduct in Chinese social interaction connected to people's psychology. Believing in the importance of face in Chinese culture, Lin (1935) even combines the concept of 'face' with the two concepts of 'favour' and 'privilege' as "the three Muses" that govern China. This metaphor illustrates the close link between the three concepts: according to Chinese usage, to do somebody a favour is to give face to the person (*gei mianzi*); to feel privileged is described metaphorically as 'having face' (*you mianzi*).

4.2.1.2 Hu's (1944) distinction of Chinese face: *lian* (lien) and *mianzi* (mien-tzu)

In academic discourse one of the earliest definitions of face is given by Hu's (1944) article in the *American Anthropologist*. In order to illustrate the Chinese way to pursue prestige, a notion claimed to be universal in every human society, she made a detailed anthropological description of two terms of face in Chinese, *lian (lien)* and *mianzi (mien-tzu)*, as "two sets of criteria for prestige". According to Hu, *mianzi* refers to

> the kind of prestige that is emphasized in this country [USA]: a reputation achieved through getting on in life, through success and ostentation. This is prestige that is accumulated by means of personal effort or clever manoeuvring. For this kind of recognition ego is dependent at all times on his external environment. … *Mien [mianzi]* had acquired a figurative meaning referring to the relation between ego and society as early as the fourth century. (Hu, 1944, p. 45)

On the other hand, *lian (lien)* stands for

> the respect of the group for a man with a good moral reputation: the man who will fulfil his obligations regardless of the hardships involved, who under all circumstances shows himself a decent human being. It represents the confidence of a society in the integrity of ego's moral character, the loss of which makes it impossible for him to function properly within the community. Lien [liǎn] is both a social sanction for enforcing moral standards and an internalized sanction. (Hu, 1944, p. 45)

Put differently, *mianzi (mien-tzu)* is a kind of exterior social face, which reflects the relation between ego and society while *lian (lien)* is a kind of interior moral face, which is associated with the moral code of society. In the definition of *lian*, the notion of obligation is closely related to the moral code of society.

Therefore, in her conceptualization, face is closely related to the ego/self-others distinction in Chinese culture, just as the popular Chinese saying goes "*mianzi* [social face] is given by others, and *lian* [moral face] is gained by yourself." Although Hu has made a clear distinction between *lian* and *mianzi* based on the distinction between the loss of *lian* and *mianzi*, some Chinese scholars argue that the two terms are sometimes interchangeable in certain contexts (Ho, 1976).

4.2.1.3 Yang (1945)'s definition of face with reference to village conflicts

One year after Hu's (1944) article, Martin Yang, in his ethnographic study (1945) of his native village, described how hurting somebody's face often causes village conflicts and how face is used as a means to solve village conflicts. Moreover, he listed seven detailed factors involved in losing or gaining face, with three factors involving internal personal factors (a person's sensibility, the consciousness of one's own social prestige, and age) and four factors involving external social factors (social relationship, the presence of a witness, equality of social status, inequality of social status, and social value or social sanction) (pp.167-170). According to Yang (1945), the definition of face is as follows:

> When we say in Chinese that one loses face, we mean that he [or she] has been insulted or has been made to feel embarrassment before a group. When we say that a man wants a face, we mean that he wants to be given honor, prestige, praise, flattery, or concession, whether or not these are merited. *Face is really a personal psychological satisfaction, a social esteem accorded by others*. (Yang, 1945, p. 167, emphasis added)

Yang's definition of face echoes Lin's (1935) description of face as the delicate standard in social interaction in Chinese people's social life. The only difference is that Yang specifies that the concept of face is closely related to conflicts: a motivating factor for causing conflicts and for solving conflicts. In other words, the richness of the role of face in conflict-causing and

conflict resolution in Chinese social intercourse is fully elaborated, capturing both the psychological and social aspects of face in village conflicts.

These studies have strongly influenced subsequent scholars with different academic backgrounds. Goffman (1967), for example, acknowledges the influence of the Chinese usage of face in his footnote when he provides his definition of face, where both Hu's and Yang's works are cited. Similarly, Brown and Levinson comment on Yang's seven factors [in fact, there are eight] involved in losing or gaining face as "each of which seems entirely in line with our own cultural assumptions, down to the same facial metaphor" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 13). At the same time, Hu's (1944) distinction of *lian* and *mianzi* is cited within the discipline of linguistic pragmatics to criticize Brown and Levinson's conceptualization of the notion of face and their theory of universal politeness (Mao, 1994).

4.2.2 The Goffmanian period

4.2.2.1 Goffman's (1967) definition of face

Inspired by ethnographic studies of the emic concept of face in Chinese culture (eg., Hu, 1944; Macgowan, 1912; Smith, 1894; Yang, 1945), Goffman (1967) conceptualizes face as a sociological notion within the sociological framework to explain interactional ritual in society, or the condition for interpersonal interaction (p. 12). He defines face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self, delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (Goffman, 1967, p. 213). According to him, a "line" is "a pattern of verbal and non-verbal acts by which he expresses his evaluation of the participants, especially himself " (ibid, p. 213).

4.2.2.2 Features of Chinese interpretation of face in Goffman's work

Goffman's definition of face is very close to the Chinese notion of face in the sense that the interdependent nature of face and the relationship between ego and society are reflected in his definition of face, capturing the nature of Hu's (1944) social face *mianzi*. It should also be pointed out that the two distinct terms for face in Chinese identified by Hu (1944) are incorporated into one English term 'face' in Goffman (1967). However, it seems as if Goffman has discussed both Hu's interior moral face and exterior social face at the same time in his article on facework.

An explanation of moral face is found in at least two places. The first is when he explains the meaning of "to lose face" as "in wrong face, to be out of face, or to be shamefaced" (ibid, p. 9) and the meaning of "to save face" as "the process by which the person sustains an impression for others that he has not lost face" (ibid, p. 9). A word-for-word translation of the Chinese expression '*diu lian'* is "to lose face" and equivalent to *lian*, the moral face, which associates with "good moral reputation" and is felt internally (Hu, 1944, p. 45). The second place is in the description of how a person should save face. Expressions such as "live up to it [face]" and "show self-respect" clearly indicate face as the impact of the moral standard of a society on an individual and thus have a prescriptive function.

Similarly, the discussions of social face are also visible in several places. The first instance is the way he describes the origin of face. Goffman (1967) states that "while his social face can be his most personal possession and the centre of his security and pleasure, it is only on loan to him from society" (p. 10). Another obvious instance is the explanation of the Chinese expression "to give face". Goffman puts it, "[f]ollowing Chinese usage, one can say that "to give face" is to arrange for another to take a better line than he might otherwise have been able to take, the other thereby gets face given him, this being one way in which he can gain face" (p. 9). Goffman's definitions of the expressions "to lose face" and "to save face" are clearly different from "to give face" . According to Chinese usage, the meaning of face in 'to give face' is equivalent to the exterior social face *mianzi*; the meaning of face in 'to lose face' is more similar to interior moral face *lian*; and the meaning of face in 'to save face' is similar to exterior social face *mianzi* in Chinese.

Although incorporating two terms into one, Goffman manages to distinguish the two concepts by linking moral face and social face with "moral rules" and "sets of rules in the ritual organization of social encounters". As he puts it,

> Universal human nature is not a very human thing. By acquiring it, the person becomes a kind of construct, built up not from inner psychic propensities but from *moral rules that are impressed upon him from without*. These rules, when followed, determine the evaluation he will make of himself and of his fellow-participants in the encounter, the distribution of his feelings, and the kinds of practices he will *employ to maintain a specified and obligatory kind of ritual*

> *equilibrium*. The general capacity to be bound by moral rules may well belong to the individual, but the particular set of rules which transforms him into a human being derives from requirements established in *the ritual organization of social encounters*. (Goffman, 1967, p. 45; emphasis added)

The emphasis on the judgment of others in Goffman's definition of face echoes the Chinese notion of face (*mianzi*) embedded in *guanxi*-networks (Ho, 1976; Hwang, 1987). In line with Hu (1944), Goffman also emphasizes the role of self and the relation between face and social relationships, and deliberately includes them as subtitles for the article.

4.2.2.3 Goffman's definition of facework

Capturing the social function of face in village conflicts as described by Yang (1945), Goffman coined the new word "facework", which by his definition designates "the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face. Facework serves to counteract 'incidents' - that is, events whose effective symbolic implications threaten face" (Goffman, 1967, p. 12). He categorizes facework into two kinds, the avoidance process [or avoidance facework] and the corrective process [corrective facework]. "Avoidance facework" refers to the efforts to avoid negative impressions and prevent threats to self's or other's face; "corrective facework" involves individuals' attempts to correct undesired identities or to minimize the damage after an attack or threat to one's face. One key term is emphasized throughout the paper, 'equilibrium', either termed "ritual disequilibrium" (p. 24), "re-establishment of ritual equilibrium" (p. 19) or "delicate balance" (p. 40). From this perspective, proper facework is seen by Goffman as the means to achieve ritual equilibrium.

4.2.2.4 Goffman's impact on Brown and Levinson's work

Goffman's concepts of face and facework have had an impact on Brown and Levinson's concept of face and their theoretical development of politeness. One such is that the measures used in the avoidance process in Goffman's facework are similar to Brown and Levinson's off-record politeness strategy, which corresponds mostly to the speech act of requests. Also, his descriptions of phases of the corrective process involving challenge, offering, acceptance and thanks may have influenced Brown and Levinson's choice of the speech act of apologies and thanks in their book. Moreover, in Goffman (1955) he also discusses the nature of the ritual order, where he uses several concepts such as "schoolboy model", and "universal human

nature", which seem to have had a strong influence on Brown and Levinson's model of politeness, especially expressions like "the model person", "means-ends analysis" and "universal politeness".

4.2.2.5 Short summary

Goffman's (1967) work carries the heritage of Hu's (1944) and Yang's (1945) work further within the sociological framework, unites the two terms of Chinese face for the first time, and conceptualizes face under one English umbrella word, face, as a theoretical etic concept in social interaction. His approach to face and facework has explanatory value in interpersonal interaction, as an aspect of micro-sociology. Also, it has further influenced later communication studies on face and facework, such as situated identity theory (Alexander & Rudd, 1981), and impression management theory (Tedeschi & Riess, 1981). In other words, in this period we have gained a theoretical etic notion of face in academia, which is adopted to account for the interactional phenomenon in Western countries (or non-Chinese countries) and which has the potential to be a concept for "universal human nature" (Goffman, 1967, p. 45). However, at the same time we have also lost something: when the distinction between *lian* and *mianzi* was incorporated into one English word 'face', we lost the cognitive concepts that facilitate our understanding of the Chinese culture, especially its mind-sets and the interactional norms attached with the fixed conventionalized expressions in Chinese.

With reference to the notion of obligation, Goffman also emphasized obligation and reciprocity. Goffman stated that

> The combined effect of the rule of self-respect and the rule of considerateness is that the person tends to conduct himself during an encounter so as to maintain both his own face and the face of the other participants. … This kind of mutual acceptance seems to be a basic structural feature of interaction, especially the interaction of face-to-face talk. (Goffman, 1967, p. 11) – and

> It seems to be a characteristic obligation of many social relationships that each of the members guarantees to support a given face for the other members in a given situation. To prevent disruption of these relationships, it is therefore necessary for each member to avoid destroying the others' face. (Goffman, 1967, p. 42)

However, he added that "[b]ecause obligations involve a constraint to act in a particular way, we sometimes picture them as burdensome or irksome things, to be fulfilled, if at all, by gritting one's teeth in conscious determination" (Goffman, 1967, p. 49). This statement reveals a negative perception of obligation from the perspective of an individualistic culture. This is the point where the meaning of 'face' shifts its focus on obligation in a typical Chinese collectivist culture to the focus on obligation in an individualist culture.

4.2.3 The Brown and Levinson's period

Brown and Levinson's seminal model of politeness (1978, 1987) has been regarded as "the classic treatment of politeness in communication" (Gumperz's preface, p. xiii) and has triggered subsequent discussions and criticisms against their conceptualization of face and universality claim of politeness (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994). In this model Brown and Levinson propose an abstract theoretical framework, which adopts the social concept of face as the intrinsic mechanism to explain the specific politeness strategies in language use, the most popular discussion being on the indirectness of requests in Western languages. The central idea of the framework is based on a Model Person's rationality and his sensitivity to 'face', the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself.

They claim that the notion of 'face' in their framework is derived from that of Goffman (1967) and from the English folk term, which ties face up with notions of being embarrassed or humiliated, or 'losing face' (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 61). They make a distinction between two types of face in terms of individuals' wants, viz. negative face (the want to be unimpeded by others) and positive face (the want to be desirable to others). Their basic assumption is that all competent members of a society have the above-mentioned dual 'face'. In line with Goffman, they maintain that "face is something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction. In general, people cooperate (and assume each other's cooperation) in maintaining face in interaction, such cooperation being based on the mutual vulnerability of face" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). However, overall only "face-threatening" acts are emphasized. Therefore, politeness is considered as a face-redressing means of softening acts which threaten the face of interactants. According to this face-saving view, they isolate three main strategies of politeness in accordance with the face concerns, viz. positive politeness (roughly, the expression of solidarity), negative politeness (roughly the expression of restraint) and off-record (roughly,

the avoidance of unequivocal impositions). At the same time, they make two kinds of distinctions of intrinsic face-threatening acts, the first being negative vs. positive face threats, the second threats to H's face versus threats to S's face (ibid., pp. 64-66).

4.2.3.1 Strength of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness based on face

In essence, Brown and Levinson provide a very comprehensive and explicit model of linguistic politeness. Their model combines abstract sociological concepts and specific linguistic details of verbal behaviour. As they themselves put it, "we see the endeavours as performing an explanatory role in the linking of social structure to behaviour patterns in a way that participants themselves do" (ibid., p. 242). To be more specific, the face concept in the model explains the underlying reasons for most of the linguistic features in most of the Western languages, especially the indirect speech act. Further, identification of the three factors (Power, Distance, and Degree of imposition) increases the model's predictive value in people's polite verbal behaviour. In other words, the "interrelation between grammar and face redress" (ibid., p. 255) in the model and its identification of the three factors in choosing politeness strategies was ground-breaking at that particular historical moment. With its simplicity and its descriptive and explanatory value, Brown and Levinson's model was widely adopted and tested systematically in various empirical studies, especially with cross-linguistic and cross-cultural data (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989; Kasper, 1990).

4.2.3.2 Criticisms within the discipline of linguistic pragmatics

However, their universal model of politeness and the conceptualization of face have been criticized by various scholars within the disciplines of linguistic pragmatics and communication studies.

One line of criticisms in the discipline of linguistic pragmatics is centred on the conceptualization of face, the key notion in their model of politeness, and the universal claim of politeness. When it comes to the universal claim of politeness, the individualistic value embedded in the model with its emphasis on personal wants is frequently criticized by scholars from non-Anglo-Saxon cultures. Among them, Wierzbicka is the pioneering scholar to challenge Brown and Levinson's model of the "pan-cultural interpretability of politeness phenomena" (1978, p. 288), especially when it concerns negative politeness:

> English seems to have developed a particularly rich system of devices reflecting a characteristically Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition: a tradition which places special emphasis on the rights and on the autonomy of every individual, which abhors interference in other people's affairs (It is none of my business), which is tolerant of individual idiosyncrasies and peculiarities, which respects everyone's privacy, which approves of compromises and disapproves of dogmatism of any kind. The heavy restrictions on the use of the imperative and the wide range of use of interrogative forms in performing acts other than questions, constitute striking linguistic reflexes of this socio-cultural attitude. (Wierzbicka, 1985, p. 150)

Thus she argues that the Anglo-Western bias in the conceptualization of politeness (and the traditionally Western-dominant pragmatics paradigm) influences the applicability of Brown and Levinson's model (and Leech's maxim of politeness as well) to explain cross-cultural pragmatic phenomena in other cultures with different social-cultural values. Instead she maintains that politeness is governed "by norms which are culture-specific and which reflect cultural values cherished by a particular society" (Wierzbicka, 2003, p. v)

Consonant with her culture-relativist critique, a few Asian scholars also question the applicability of the claimed 'universal' principle of politeness to Asian cultures (Matsumoto, 1988; Ide, 1989; Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994). These scholars maintain that the individualist focus in Brown and Levinson's model is not able to account for the politeness phenomenon in collectivist cultures, such as those of China and Japan. They examine what face and politeness means in their respective cultures and provide linguistic evidence to illustrate politeness in their respective languages.

Gu (1990) argues that *limao*, the Chinese equivalent concept of politeness, is prescriptive. It is linked with moral societal norms, which "endorse normative constraints on each individual" (p. 242). By reviewing the historical origin of *li* in the anecdotes of Confucius and *Li Ji (On Li*), Gu points out that in ancient Chinese language, speech had to be used appropriately in accordance with the user's status in the social hierarchy while in modern China the function of *limao* is to "enhance social harmony and to defuse interpersonal tension or conflict" (ibid, p. 239). Gu points out further, "denigrating self and respecting other remain at

the core of the modern conception of *lǐmào"* (p. 238). He also proposes four maxims to explain the Chinese conceptualization of politeness, viz. the self-denigration maxim, the address maxim, the tact maxim, and the generosity maxim (p. 245).

Similarly, the Japanese scholar Ide also argues the prescriptive aspect of Japanese linguistic politeness, *wakimae* (discernment): Japanese speakers use different formal forms to show their sense of place or role in a given situation according to social conventions rather than interactional strategy (Ide, 1989, p. 230). Thus face is not the motivating factor for the Japanese to use politeness strategies, especially where honorifics are concerned (Matsumoto, 1988; Ide, 1989).

These criticisms from Chinese and Japanese scholars indicate that there is large cross-cultural variation in the content of politeness between East and West, especially in terms of individualism and collectivism. As Leech (2014, p. 84) summarizes it, in the West "the individual has rights and wants that need to be respected and indulged, and the individual is entitled to assert those rights and wants, unless they interfere too much with others"; while in the East, "ethos of identifying with the group is emphasized, in which each person has a place defined by obligations and rights in relation to superiors and inferiors, in-group and out-group members." Moreover, the above-mentioned observations seem to reveal that the languages and cultures in Asian countries have to a greater or lesser extent been influenced by Confucianism.

With regard to the conceptualization of face, both Gu (1990) and Mao (1994) criticize the negative face in Brown and Levinson's model. Gu (1990) maintains that the Chinese negative face is not threatened by the hearer's want to be unimpeded by others. Rather it is threatened when self cannot live up to what he/she has claimed, or when what the self has done is likely to incur ill fame or reputation (p. 242). In a similar vein, Mao (1994) further criticizes the conceptualization of Brown and Levinson's face, in the light of Goffman's definition of face and Hu's (1944) binary distinction of Chinese face (*mianzi* and *lian*). Mao's critique is centred on two major points: the overall conceptualization of face and the content of face. In comparison with Goffman's conceptualization of face as "a public, interpersonal image", Mao points out that Brown and Levinson's face is an individualistic, 'self'-oriented image (Mao, 1994, p. 445). To put it differently, Goffman's conceptualization of face is not purely personal wants that are

"lodged in or on his body", but rather an image that has strong connections with other people's evaluation/judgement or the values held by society.

With reference to the content of face, Mao maintains that Chinese moral face *lian* bears some resemblance to positive face, while Chinese social face *mianzi* is totally different from negative face. Both terms for Chinese face have different cultural origins in Chinese culture: on the one hand, *mianzi* echoes the Confucian tradition, which emphasizes "subordinating the individual to the group or the community and regards self-cultivation as an act of communicating with, and sharing in, an ever-expanding circle of human relatedness" (Tu, 1985, p. 249, quoted from Mao, 1994, p. 460); on the other hand, the distinctive moral overtone of *lian* is not found in the content of positive face, and *lian* is more socially situated than positive face with special reference to the socially endorsed code of conduct (Mao, 1994, pp. 461-462). Mao illustrates the meaning of *lian* and *mianzi* in Chinese culture with evidence from Chinese invitation discourse. Besides, Mao also emphasizes the reciprocity of face-(*mianzi*-)work on the basis of Ho's (1976) conceptual paper on face, and the priority of maintaining and enhancing each other's face in order to achieve social harmony in interpersonal relationships in Chinese discourse, which bears resemblance to the function of *limao* proposed by Gu (1990, p. 239).

Based on the critique of Brown and Levinson's face and illustrative interactional Chinese invitation discourse, Mao (1994) puts forward the "relative face orientation" construct, a construct based "on the assumption that face is a public image that every individual member wishes to claim for him-or herself, and it suggests that such an image embodies an underlying direction that either emulates an ideal social identity or aspires toward an ideal individual autonomy" (p. 472).

On the whole, Mao's critique of Brown and Levinson's conceptualization of face is thorough and detailed, yet his new construct has had little academic influence in the field of linguistic pragmatics and the new construct has seldom been tested in empirical data.

4.2.3.3 Criticisms within the discipline of communication studies

During the same period of time, another parallel line of criticism of Brown and Levinson's model of politeness is found in the discipline of communication studies, summarized by Tracy (1990) as follows:

> (1) Basing their theory on speech acts had problems; (2) the politeness ranking of their strategies will not always hold; (3) there are probably more factors that affect the perceived face-treat of an act than power, distance, and rank; (4) politeness as conceived in the theory may be culturally biased; (5) positive and negative politeness may be different in kind, rather than higher and lower amount of global politeness. (Tracy, 1990, p. 213)

These five criticisms are largely in accordance with the criticisms in the discipline of linguistic pragmatics, especially point (4) about cultural bias and point (5) about classification of negative and positive politeness in relation to positive face and negative face.

As a response to Brown and Levinson's model, two approaches are found in communication studies. Some communication scholars tried to amend Brown and Levinson's model and conceptualize new classifications of face and facework, either to account for the Eastern culture characteristics (Lim & Bowers, 1991) or to explain the different conflict resolution styles by different facework typologies (Ting-Toomey, 1994). Lim and Bowers' classification of face is interesting to note here, because they add another type of "fellowship face" to account for the in-group concern in collective cultures on the basis of Brown and Levinson's positive and negative face, and they also link Leech's maxim as the respective facework strategies for their three basic types of face[14]. At the same time, there is also another group of researchers who advocate abandoning Brown and Levinson's model of politeness entirely (Tracy, 1990), because it "decontextualizes utterances" and takes a static approach to face linked with certain linguistic devices (discourse markers) and cannot help us understand "what is going on interactionally in the particular situation, thereby neglecting the situated nature of facework" (Tracy & Baratz, 1994, p. 290).

The severe criticism from both disciplines challenges Brown and Levinson's conceptualization of face and hence their universal claim of politeness. On the whole there seems to be convergence from all the criticisms from pragmatics and communication studies

[14] The three types of face are autonomy, fellowship, and competence according to Lim and Bowers, 1991.

that efforts should be made to address the interpersonal and interactional aspect of face and facework in the specific situation.

4.2.4 The new period with indigenous research on face by Chinese social scientists

After Goffman's reinsertion of face into academic discourse, much more indigenous research of *mianzi* has been conducted by Chinese scholars in social sciences (Ho, 1974, 1976; King, 1980; Hwang, 1987; Chang & Holt, 1994; Chen, 2012). Ho (1974) links the concept of face with social expectations and conflict avoidance (1974, pp. 240-251). He points out that questions of face arise from perceived significant discrepancies between expectations placed upon the individual and his actual social performance. According to him, the function of "giving face" is to avoid conflict, "a basic orientation in Chinese social processes rooted in the Confucian model of society based on the maintenance of harmony in interpersonal relations" (Ho, 1974, p. 248). In his conceptual paper on face, Ho (1976) defines face further as follows:

> Face is the respectability and/or deference which a person can claim for himself from others, by virtue of the relative position he occupies in his social network and the degree to which he is judged to have functioned adequately in that position as well as acceptability in his general conduct; the face extended to a person by others is a function of the degree of congruence between judgements of his total condition in life, including his actions as well as those of persons closely associated with him, and the social expectations the others have placed upon him. *Face is the reciprocated compliance, respect, and/or deference that each party expects from, and extends to, the other party*. (Ho, 1976, p. 883; emphasis added)

In this definition, Ho's (1976) conceptualization of face is dynamic and instructional. The close relationship between face and other Chinese key cultural concepts such as *renqing*[15] and *guanxi* (social networks) is emphasized. As Ho (1976, p. 867) puts it, "reciprocity is inherent in face behaviour, wherein a mutually restrictive, even coercive, power is exerted upon each member of the social network".

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[15] The definition of *renqing* is listed in the glossary. In this study I have translated *renqing* in three ways in different contexts, including (1) relational human emotion; (2) relation-based social debt; (3) reciprocity of mutual obligations.

Such a close relationship between face and other key cultural concepts with strong social normative functions is further elaborated within the field of psychology. A few Chinese scholars have made efforts to understand the characteristics of the Chinese social system by digging into key cultural terms. The Taiwan scholar Hwang (1987), for instance, develops a conceptual framework involving the four major indigenous Chinese concepts (*renqing*, *mianzi*, *guanxi and bao*) to describe the process of social interaction in Chinese society. Based on social exchange theory, Hwang (1987) illustrates the social mechanism of *renqing* (favour, relational human emotion) and *mianzi* and their function in Chinese relation (*guanxi*)-oriented society and demonstrates the dynamic relationships among them, especially how this social mechanism influences Chinese people's social behaviour, which has traditionally been explained by abstract conceptual concepts such as Confucianism, social orientation or collectivism (Yang, 2012, p. 227). According to Hwang (1987), *renqing* and *mianzi* are two important methods to influence *the people outside the family circle*, and the rules of social interaction in Chinese society differ a great deal from that of Western societies. He illustrates the inherent relationship between *renqing* (relational human emotion, favour), *mianzi* (face), *guanxi* (social network) and *bao* (reciprocity) in the following:

> In the playing out of *renqing*, obligations of reciprocity are heavily shaped by the hierarchically structured network of *guanxi* in which one is involved, by the long time period over which these relations are expected to last, and by the public nature of the obligations incurred in continuing exchanges…. These obligations are always being negotiated through facework (i.e., enhancing, losing, and saving face) and the kinds of accepted and rejected pleas that enhance and weaken social relations. (Hwang, 1987, p. 968)

Such an interactive mechanism of how face works together with other key cultural concepts even make sense to ordinary people's ears in China. In a similar vein, King (1980) also asserts the intrinsic link between *mianzi* and *renqing*. According to King (1980), what we call *qingmian*[16] is *mianzi* with *renqing* characteristics. *Renqing* is how we relate to others, or the manners of interpersonal interaction. It is a systematic social norm in Chinese society. In

[16] *Qingmian* is a superordinate Chinese term composed of both *renqing* and *mianzi*.

interpersonal interaction, it is one's moral obligation to save or repay the other's face within the *guanxi* network; it is unforgivably offending behaviour to damage the other's face or to not give face to others (Chen, 2012, p. 134). Here the sense of obligation is another important concept that is emphasized in Confucian social theory (Qian, 2012, p. 16). Echoing Hwang and King, Chang and Holt (1994) contend that face (*mianzi*) is the means through which interactants express their *renqing* concern towards each other according to the strength of their relationship in the *guanxi* network, and that the size of *mianzi* is dependent on the social position and "the depth of a given relationship".

Among the literature by Chinese social scientists, Ho's (1976) and Hwang's (1987) conceptual research is the most representative and influential work on the meaning of Chinese face from both the psychological and sociological perspectives. A synthesis of their research reveals not only the mechanism of how face functions in relation to other key Chinese cultural terms, but also the social function of *mianzi* with reference to social expectation and conflict avoidance. Moreover, their account also fits an ordinary Chinese person's native understanding of face, in a similar way as the Chinese folk discourse on face. Their research has been cited in the conceptual development papers on face and interpersonal relationship in the field of pragmatics (Haugh & Hinze, 2003; Ran, 2018). However, a synthesis of their conceptual research has rarely been employed in empirical linguistic data.[17] For the empirical data in the present study, a synthesis of their conceptual research has important explanatory value for describing what is going on between the interlocutors in the meta-interactional context. It illustrates the social-psychological concerns at each particular step in the meta-interactional communication process from the Chinese perspective.

4.2.5 An illustration of the Chinese face dynamics in the meta-interactional context

In contrast to previous decontextualized approaches to face and politeness (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), this section intends to re-construct the situational context for the collected oral responses and explore the role of face in interpersonal interaction in the meta-interactional context with reference to Chinese face (as one way of facework interpretation). Such re-

[17] Mao (1994) only refers to Ho (1976) to emphasize the reciprocal nature of face and facework.

constructions help us understand the situated nature of facework, especially "what is going on interactionally in the particular situation" (Tracy & Baratz, 1994, pp. 290-293) between the two interlocutors on the phone. I'll take the Moving scenario as an example.

In the Moving scenario, if we apply Brown and Levinson's abstract concept of face in their model of politeness to the decontextualized utterances, request-making will only be regarded as face-threatening to the hearer's negative face, and the apologizing and the thanking will be interpreted as face-threatening to the speaker's positive face. Such interpretations disregard the importance of context and can only reflect the value of Brown and Levinson's abstract concept of face as a static theoretical construct. When it comes to complicated communicative acts with more than one speech act, Brown and Levinson's approach to face is problematic because it fails to recognise the dynamic multiple face concerns in interaction rituals.

On the basis of the face literature by Chinese scholars (Gu, 1990; Ho, 1976; Hwang, 1987), the Chinese folk expressions on face and native intuition, I will show that the Chinese concept of face can be seen as a guiding code of conduct in interpersonal interaction in the Chinese culture. It contains the missing interactional aspect of face in Brown and Levinson's work, and reflects the "abstract and intangible…yet the most delicate standard by which Chinese social intercourse is regulated" (Lin, 1935, p. 190). Such an approach not only deepens our understanding of the role of face in interpersonal communication in the Chinese context, but also provides a possibility of understanding the dynamic and interactive nature of facework in general.

In step 1, request-making puts *both* interlocutors' face*(-mianzi)* at risk. On the one hand, the requester puts his social face *mianzi* at stake. The requester's expectation of the requestee is that the requestee accepts the request based on the requester's judgment of the good relationship between them, or the responsibility the requester thinks that the requestee should take in the given situation. On the other hand, it is also face-threatening for the requestee to give an answer to the request, because he/she has to evaluate the potential effects of his/her act, either giving face to the requester or potentially offending the requester. This evaluation can be based on the difficulty of the task (or favour in this scenario) and the interpersonal relationship between them (or in Chinese terms, the degree of their *renqing*, the strength of their *guanxi*), etc. Usually the

requestee's expectation is that the request should be within the requestee's capacity and role requirements. An inappropriate request from the requester can put the requestee in an embarrassing situation, since positive compliance to requests is the preferred option. The requestee may experience the emotion of embarrassment and the feeling of face-threat by an inappropriate request. Given the equal status between the requester and the requestee, it is the requester's obligation to issue a request that is most likely to get a positive answer in the Moving scenario.

In step 2, a positive compliance to the request is the preferred answer, because it meets the requester's expectation of the requestee's response according to the social convention of harmony in interpersonal relationships. This is described as *gei mianzi* (to give face to somebody). As Gu (1990) puts it, "*qianrenqing* [owing *renqing* debt] primarily refers to situations where impositives and commissives are involved" (p. 255). In the scenario description, the speaker's initial request is an impositive. The hearer's positive compliance to the request functions as a commissive by the requestee to the requester. The requester will feel enhanced in social status and elevated in self-esteem if the request is granted, according to Hwang (1987).

The Chinese expression "to give face to someone" has two underlying meanings in the communication process of requesting and promising (or positive compliance). Firstly, the requestee's actual performance is in line with the requester' expectation, and secondly the requestee gives a *renqing* (favour-based social debt) to the requester in the same process.

For the requester, it is his/her obligation to pay back the face and *renqing* given by the requestee in the future. As Goffman (1967, p. 49) puts it, "what is one man's obligation will often be another's expectation" when he describes the rules of conduct in interactional ritual. For the requestee, it is his/her expectation that the requester acknowledges this debt by thanking expressions or other linguistic means and it is also his/her expectation that the requester understands that they have a good interpersonal relationship and that at some point the requester will return similar favours to the requestee when he/she needs it in the future. The more *renqing* debt a person gains in his account, the stronger *guanxi* network he can use in the future. The more *renqing* debts one owes in his account, the more obliged he will be to pay them back in the

future. As Hwang (1987) points out, according to the rule of *renqing*[18], the requester has a reciprocal obligation to appreciate and reciprocate the favour done by the requestee when his face is honoured. Only in such a way can all the interactants have their own face *mianzi*. Such a principle of reciprocity is emphasized by both Hwang (1987) and Ho (1974, 1976).

At the same time, if the requestee refuses the request, the requester will feel a loss of social face *mianzi*, or be offended in terms of moral face *lian*. It is described as "*mianzi shang bu hao kan"* in Chinese (English meaning: the event will make somebody look bad on his *mianzi*). There will thus no *renqing* (reciprocity of mutual obligations) involved between the two interactants in this interpersonal encounter and the requester, based on this encounter, will conclude that the *guanxi* between requester and requestee is weak. Mature adults with good social skills normally calculate their relationship (in terms of both *renqing* and *guanxi*) before making a request so that they can get the preferred positive answer. If they foresee a negative answer, they will not make the request at all. Such a preference structure of request-making is quite relevant to being polite in Chinese. This is why people are reluctant to refuse others or to give negative answers, because that will lead to a loss of face (in terms both *of mianzi and lian*), which damages the interpersonal harmony.

In step 3 the new situation of cancellation is face-threatening for both interlocutors. The requester makes a new request, a negative request to make the requestee refrain from carrying out the agreed obligations. This will potentially lead to inharmonious social relations, and requires highly competent social skills to do proper facework.

The requestee will be offended when the requester cancels an agreement that requires a lot of effort on the requestee's part. So when he/she needs to cancel an agreement which has a presupposition of a request, he/she has to address the first debt incurred during the request-making process and the second debt incurred during the cancelling process.

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[18] Hwang (1987) points out the unique subjectivity of the calculation of *renqing*. As the Chinese proverb goes, "whereas a cash debt is easily repaid, it is almost impossible to repay the debt of *renqing*".

The *renqing* debt, as I mentioned in the first communicative event of requesting and promising, has already existed out there when the requestee accepts the obligation. When the obligation is cancelled, the speaker feels a strong degree of embarrassment. By using different apologetic expressions in Chinese, the requester not only protects the requestee's face, but also saves his/her own face, thereby re-establishing interpersonal harmony between the two interlocutors.

The step-by-step process illustrates how face is considered by the interlocutors in the meta-interactional communication process in the Chinese context. Table 4.2 illustrates an overview of the Chinese facework interpretation process.

The meta-interactional communication process	**Facework interpretation from the Chinese perspective**
The communicative act of requesting by the Speaker	A face-threatening process for both interlocutors
The communicative act of promising by the Hearer	The Hearer's face-giving process and the Speaker's face-gaining process
The communicative act of cancellation of an obligation by the Speaker	A face-threatening process for both interlocutors

Table 4.2. Chinese facework interpretation in the on-going meta-interactional communication process

Interestingly, Goffman also emphasizes the concern of mutual face in the interaction ritual. Other pragmatic scholars (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003) call for returning to the Goffmanian concept of face. Leech (2014), for instance, touches upon the dual face concern of request-making in a way that is similar to the Chinese interpretation described above. He argues that "a request is an FTA [face-threatening act] because it means making demands on H: if H refuses the request, this shows (to an extent) H's low evaluation of S's wants (therefore of S), and hence S will lose face by being 'turned down'" (p. 110).

It is necessary to highlight that I do not argue that the Chinese facework interpretation in the meta-interactional step-by-step communication process can be applied in the same manner for the Danish and British data, yet the Chinese interpretation functions as a starting point to

further understand the step-by-step process in the Western context. From the theoretical perspective, the principle of reciprocity is also emphasized in social exchange theory, a Western theory Hwang (1987) draws upon when developing his indigenous understanding of the Chinese face. It could be hypothesized that the underlying spirit or the principle of reciprocity is similar in the pan-cultural (including the British and Danish contexts) concern of good interpersonal relationships, yet people may not have the same interpretation of reciprocity in the same social situations. In Section 5.3.3, a more detailed discussion will be provided to illustrate my conscientious attempt to explore the role of face in interpersonal relationships in the meta-interactional context from a balanced cultural perspective. In Chapter 7, I will return to the possible (contrasting) facework interpretations of the meta-interactional communication process from a balanced cultural perspective.

Summing up, by drawing on the Chinese perspectives on face, I have shown how face is manifested in Chinese language usage in the dynamic interpersonal interaction, especially the step-by-step process illustrating how face is considered by each interlocutor in the meta-interactional process. I hope this illustration will shed light in our understanding of the relational and interactive aspects of face at the beyond-utterance level. In other words, it shows why, how and where facework is enacted in the meta-interactional communication process.

4.2.6 My position with regard to the relationship between *lian* and *mianzi*

My position with regard to the distinction between *lian* and *mianzi* is in line with that of St. André (2013, p. 72): the two terms have "slightly overlapping but largely complementary meanings". Seen from the traditional Chinese perspective of *Yin Yang* (holistic, dynamic, and dialectical) philosophical thinking (Fang, 2014), *lian* and *mianzi* are not exclusively opposites, but interdependent opposites. *Lian* is linked with the image/identity of the ideal gentleman (*junzi*) in Chinese society as advocated in Confucianism. It has prescriptive functions in terms of the society's moral ethics and encourages each individual to restore the ideal social order. The notion of *lian* plays an important role at the personal level. Meanwhile, *mianzi* functions both at the personal and interpersonal levels. Its primary focus is on the interactional level, as it is considered as the interacting rule between people. When it works at the personal level, *mianzi* is connected with a person's social status or identity. The two terms coexist and together constitute the meaning of Chinese face. When it comes to the severity of an offence, the loss of interior face *lian* will lead to the loss of exterior face *mianzi*; depending on the severity of an offence

and a person's sensitivity, the loss of exterior face *mianzi* may cause the loss of interior face *lian* on some occasions, yet it may not have the same effect on other occasions. As Hu (1944, p. 45) argues, "to lose *lian*" is a condemnation by the community for socially distasteful or immoral behaviour or judgment; while "to lose *mianzi*" is only a loss of reputation or prestige. With regard to the nature of *lian* and *mianzi*, *mianzi* is something that can be given, borrowed, sold, increased, deceased or decorated, while *liǎn* is something that you either possess or don't possess (Chen, 2012, p. 154). To put it differently, a person has only one *lian* but different *mianzi* in different situations with different interpersonal relationships. To provide an overview of the slight differences between the loss of *mianzi* and loss of *lian*, Gao's (2009, p. 180) summary based on Chinese respondents' narratives is quoted in Table 4.1.

Dimensions	Loss of *mianzi*	Loss of *lian*
Breadth	broad spectrum of events	issues of significance
Intensity	low	high
Nature	trivial matters	matters of principle
Morality	absent	present
Agency	self or other provoked	self provoked
Time/Space	temporal, situational	permanent, fixed
Visibility	less	more

Table 4.3. Differences between loss of *mianzi* and loss of *lian* (Gao, 2009, p.180)

4.2.7 Summary: Comparison of the Chinese concept of face, Goffman's concept of face and Brown and Levinson's concept of face

Based on the above description and comparison, we can see that the three concepts of face differ in terms of the classification of sub-meanings, the perception of self, the interaction between self and others, the goal, and the obligation dimension. On the classification of face, the Chinese classification covers both a moral prescriptive aspect *(lian)* and an interactional interpersonal aspect (*mianzi*). Similarly, Brown and Levinson's classification of positive face

and negative face covers a self-presentation aspect and an interactional aspect of non-imposition and self-autonomy. However, the two sets of interactional rules are totally different in the Chinese concept of face, with the Chinese concept focusing on *mianzi*-and-*renqing* rules in the *guanxi* network and Brown and Levinson's concept focusing on non-imposition, self-autonomy and option-giving (core content of negative face). It appears that the emphasis in both concepts is close to the Goffmanian focus on "sets of rules in the ritual organization of social encounter" (Goffman, 1955).

In terms of the dimension of self-presentation, the Chinese concept of face presents a self in the interdependent *guanxi* network while Brown and Levinson's concept of face emphasizes independent self-want. The Goffmanian concept of face once again stays in the middle, covering both the individual aspect and interdependent aspect as impression management of self in the eyes of others in each encounter.

With regard to the goals, the objectives for the Chinese concept of face and the Goffmanian concept of face appear to be similar and both of them are in contrast with the goals in Brown and Levinson's concept of face. While the Chinese concept of face and the Goffmanian concept of face emphasize harmony and equilibrium respectively, Brown and Levinson's concept of face focuses on an individual wants to be liked or to be self-reliant and self-autonomous. A detailed look at the concept of harmony and equilibrium will reveal that the underlying assumptions in order to achieve the goal in the Chinese concept of face and the Goffmanian concept of face might be different. In the Chinese culture hierarchical order is accepted as part of the meaning of harmony and politeness (Gu, 1990), whereas in the Goffmanian concept of face the word equilibrium presupposes a more equal interpersonal relationship in social interaction. Despite their subtle differences, both the term of harmony and the term of equilibrium refer to a balanced state of good interpersonal relationships.

When it comes to the obligation dimension, differences are also observed in the different definitions of face. In Chinese culture the harmony focus presupposes an interpersonal dimension with mutual obligation to each other. According to the Confucius tradition, different social expectations and obligations are involved in different role relationships. The compliance with these social expectations and obligations in role relationships form the moral aspect of face (Hu, 1944) and the normative aspect of Chinese politeness behaviour (Gu, 1990). There is a

clear indication of the connection between obligation and *junzi* (the ideal or decent human being) in Chinese culture (Hu, 1944; Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994). In other words, the notion of obligation tends to be perceived as something positive, which is closely relevant to the normative societal prescription of training oneself to become a decent human being in society. In Goffman (1967), the notion of reciprocity and obligation is also mentioned. However, the perception of obligations is changed into a set of "burdensome or irksome things" (Goffman, 1967, p. 49), or an obstacle to an individual's rights for freedom and self-autonomy.

It is worth pointing out that I do not wish to imply a clear-cut dichotomy of individualism and collectivism with reference to obligation. In reality, we see typical individualistic behaviour (e.g. *GaoKao*, the Chinese national entrance examination to universities) in collectivist cultures such as China and typical collectivistic behaviour (e.g. teamwork and collaboration in football matches) in individualist cultures. The purpose of mentioning the cultural value dimension of individualism and collectivism is to highlight the meaning loss process.

To summarize, the three concepts are not only different from each other, but also interconnected with each other. While Goffman's conceptualization of face resembles the multifaceted meaning of the Chinese concept of face to some extent, Brown and Levinson's conceptualization of face differs from that of Goffman and hence departs further from the elaboration of the Chinese concept of face. The distance between the meaning of the Chinese concept of face and that of Brown and Levinson is large, whereas the meaning of the Goffmanian concept of face is closer to both of them.

4.3 Theoretical positions in this study

4.3.1 Applicability of Brown and Levinson's concept of face and their politeness theory

In this section I will explain how I use Brown and Levinson's concept of face and their politeness theory in this study, including which parts I found useful and which parts were found to be inadequate.

4.3.1.1 The useful parts

In my study, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is not used to generate a hypothesis and the data were not elicited with a specific aim to test their theory empirically. In the literature most empirical studies use their classification of politeness strategies to discuss the universality of indirectness or the universality of linguistic politeness. Very few studies have attempted to make a link between the empirical data with a key theoretical concept of face.

What is important in this study is to explore and understand why the respondents said what they said by making a closer interpretive link between the concept of face and the empirical data. The face-relevant interpretations of requests, apologies and promises in Brown and Levinson's politeness theory are still found helpful to understand the underlying logic for the linguistic behaviours in the British and Danish datasets. For instance, it is found in the preliminary data analysis that Danish native speakers highly prioritise option-giving strategies as described in terms of Brown and Levinson's negative face. If a researcher starts with his/her own native understanding of an interpersonal ritual in terms of politeness, Brown and Levinson's etic politeness theory may reflect in essence the emic interpretation of politeness and face concerns in Anglo-Saxon cultures (or at least, in the UK and the US).

4.3.1.2 The inadequate parts

Lacking explanatory power for the Chinese data

The discussion of Chinese face by Chinese scholars, or the insider account of insiders' behaviour, has demonstrated the multifaceted meanings of Chinese face, including the prescriptive moral dimension (Hu, 1944; Gu, 1990), the psychological self-presentational dimension (Hu, 1944; Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994), and the social relational and interactional dimension (Lin, 1935; Yang, 1945; Ho, 1974, 1976; Hwang, 1987). The different conceptualizations of face in the literature demonstrate a process of de-construction and reinterpretation from the Eastern context to the Western context. We witness a reduction process of meaning loss from the perspective of Chinese culture and a process of meaning gain from the perspective of Western academia.

In other words, we have gained one abstract sociological notion of face to explain the interactional ritual, and one sociolinguistic notion of face to account for linguistic politeness in

Anglo-Saxon languages. As Morisaki and Gudykunst (1944, p. 52) point out, while Western scholars conceptualize face as an independent phenomenon, Chinese scholars (Hu, 1944; Ho, 1976) conceptualize face as an interdependent phenomenon. In the different conceptualizations of face by Western scholars, the rich and multifaceted meaning of face in Chinese culture is lost: the two aspects of face in terms of moral concern and relational concern in interaction are lost, and the governing role of face as dominant codes of conduct in Chinese interpersonal interaction has vanished, especially its close ties with the other two key concepts in Chinese culture, *renqing* and *guanxi*. Therefore, when we try to apply Brown and Levinson's universal notion of face to explain language use in the Chinese context, it has less explanatory value.

Lacking interpretation for the face dynamics

I acknowledge the importance of Brown and Levinson's theory and its importance in the pragmatics literature. However, Brown and Levinson's concept of face is not sufficient to fully explain the interpersonal face dynamics in the on-going communication process of firstly establishing an obligation and then cancelling the obligation. For instance, why is it necessary to do so much facework in the scenarios? Why and how is facework enacted? Has facework already been enacted right at the very beginning when the first request was made?

Admittedly, this is not to indicate that there is no chance for a non-Chinese analyst who is mainly familiar with Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to categorize the linguistic strategies according to the classification of politeness types. Rather, my point here is that the face dynamics is an importance starting point to fully understand the elicited oral role play data. It is an attempt to understand the communicative act data in the context of communicative events. Such an interpretation of the face dynamics can be gained from both Chinese understanding of face as an important aspect in the interpersonal relationship maintenance as well as Goffman's more elaborated account of facework as an interactional process.

4.3.2 Limitations of Chinese face-relevant concepts for the Danish and British English data

In this study, the following key Chinese concepts are found useful for interpreting the Chinese data. The first sets of concepts are the distinction between moral face *lian* and social

face *mianzi*. The reason is that the two terms illustrate that face operates at both the personal and interpersonal relational dimensions. At the personal dimension, the societal prescriptive moral values have an impact on one's personal wants of positive self-image. The second sets of concepts are the interconnected concepts of *mianzi*, *renqing* and *guanxi*, which tell us how Chinese face plays an important role in connection with emotion, reciprocity and *guanxi*-network in the context of interpersonal meta-interactions. However, the cultural-specificity of these Chinese notions is not fully suitable to explain the Western languages, such as the preference of option-giving strategies in the Danish and British English datasets..

What is important is, therefore, to look for something different, which could unite both systems of face concepts. Situated in the two dilemmas, it seems that Goffman's concepts of face and facework provide this possibility and are a good option to deal with the two different systems of face concepts, because Goffman's conceptualization is close to both the Chinese perspective on face and the Brown and Levinson's concept of face. In the following section I will explain why and how Goffman's concepts, with a little modification, could be used to interpret the communicative act data and its meta-interactional context in my study.

4.3.3 Facework and politeness

Compared with the concept of politeness, facework is a concept which is broader than politeness (Haugh, 2013; Watts, 2003; O'Driscoll, 2011). Politeness is only one kind of facework. There has been a fallacy in the field of linguistic pragmatics that Goffman's notion of facework is almost equivalent to linguistic politeness (cf. Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003, p. 1463). However, as Bargiela-Chiappini points out (ibid., p. 1464), there is a big difference in that facework focuses on "self-presentation in social encounters, which is dynamically realized in the interactional order… and thus it is relevant to the social norms, conventions and expectations, which often go beyond the linguistic and para-linguistic politeness".

In this study I choose to study *facework*, rather than *politeness*, based on the following considerations. Firstly, Goffman's concept of *facework*, as a general metalanguage term, offers a more balanced view being positioned between the Chinese perspectives on face and Brown and Levinson's concept of face. The different or similar ways of doing facework in the data reveal the respondents' interpretation of the socially appropriate behaviour in the social situations described in the scenarios, which may reveal cultural-specific or shared values and interactional

norms. Secondly, despite the fact that Brown and Levinson's politeness theory intends to make a link between the linguistic use and the underlying social relations, the scientific term *politeness* carries strong normative connotations which become judgemental in the normal sense, whereas *facework* bears less subjective opinions. Thirdly, the emphasis of the relational aspect in Goffman's work is closer to Chinese interpretation of face in interpersonal relationship maintenance. Digging into the connection between Goffman's concept of face and the Chinese concept of face, it is found that Goffman also elaborates on face-giving, obligation and social relationships. He states that "[i]t seems to be a characteristic obligation of many social relationships that each of the members guarantees to support a given face for the other members in given situation. To prevent disruption of these relationships, it is therefore necessary for each member to avoid destroying the other's face." (Goffman, 1967, p. 42). Moreover, Goffman (1967) points out that "[m]aintenance of face is a condition of interaction, not is objective" (p. 12). It allows room for acknowledging the interactional goals, especially the researcher-defined prompt embedded in original conceptual framework. Finally, the use of facework is more suitable to address the nature of my data with an unuttered prior dialogue in the scenario description, as the use of politeness for cross-cultural and cross-linguistic data will automatically indicate single utterance speech act realisation.

It is necessary to point out the use of the term facework in this study does not exclude the inspiration gained from the politeness research literature. The relational and emotional focus has been the threshold in the broad politeness literature (Locher & Watts, 2005; Spencer-Oatey, 2000, 2009; Chang & Haugh, 2011). Facework in this study is used as a meta-linguistic/-cultural construct to include features of the Chinese concept of face, which is not the starting point in Brown and Levinson's concept of face and their politeness theory. Facework, as the 'traffic rule for interactional ritual' might play a fundamental role in people's interaction in different cultures, although people's understanding of the meaning of face may vary from culture to culture.

At the empirical level, despite all the conceptual differences, there is also a strong need to see how people really maintain face in practice, especially how people deal with the interpersonal dimension of harmony in social interaction. As Ho puts it,

> The study of face, therefore, gives us insight into not only the nuances of social interaction, but also the kinds of values that are upheld in a given society, particularly those values which are deemed to be prerequisites for all its adult members […]
>
> It reflects two fundamentally different orientations in viewing human behaviour: the Western orientation, with its preoccupation with the individual, and the Chinese orientation, which places the accent on the reciprocity of obligations, dependence, and esteem protection. *These two orientations need not, and should not, be regarded as mutually exclusive. Rather, they are complementary*. (Ho, 1976, p. 875, p. 883; emphasis added)

4.3.4 Face interpretation: a deconstructed multi-dimensional approach

Adopting Goffman's term facework enables the possibility to interpret the meta-interactional element in the scenarios as an ongoing interpersonal communication process. It means that there has been a prior relationship between the interlocutors, and they have already been engaged in facework. However, how can Goffman's concept of face be used? The original definition of Goffman's concept of face is found not suitable to approach the linguistic data. However, the comparison between Goffman's concept of face, Brown and Levinson's concept of face, and the Chinese perspective on face indicate that there are some overlapping areas at different dimensions (cf. Section 4.2.7).

By proposing a deconstructed face interpretation at multiple dimensions, I want to increase the cultural and contextual sensitivity in my study and to shed light on the interpretive link between the prototypical linguistic realisation in the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic data with the concept of face. Such an attempt is lacking in cross-cultural speech act realisation research, which primarily engages in the universality discussion of politeness.

Figure 4.1 below illustrates my multi-dimensional interpretation of face and its relationship with Brown and Levinson's concept of face and the Chinese concept of face. I replace a binary or dichotomous distinction of faces (positive and negative face, *lian* and *mianzi*) with a threefold distinction, including the prescriptive value dimension, self-presentation dimension and interpersonal relational dimension.

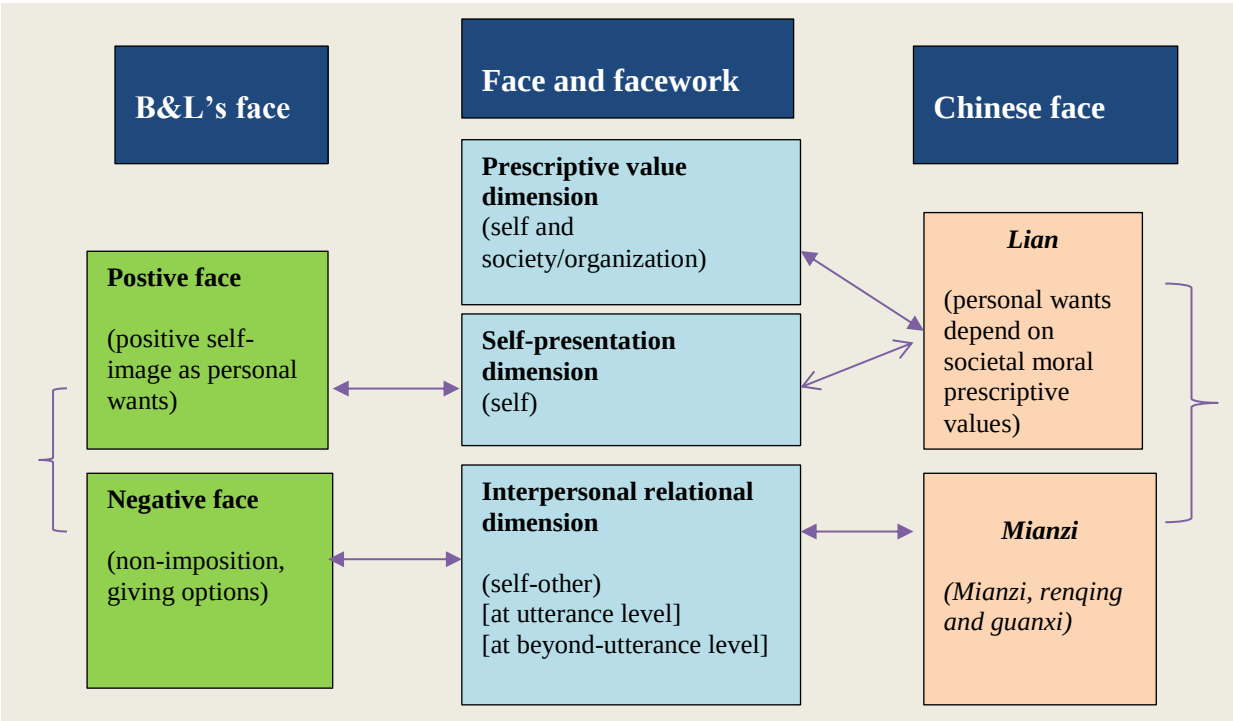

Figure 4.1. The multi-dimensional interpretations of face

The added dimension is the prescriptive value dimension, which is borrowed from the moral prescriptive focus in the Chinese face and the societal focus in Goffman's work. As Goffman (1956) points out, "[t]he rules of conduct which bind the actor and the recipient together are the bindings of society (p. 90).

In this study, the added dimension refers to the prescriptive dominant values imposed by the society, organisation or other collective communities. The addition of the prescriptive dimension has the potential to enhance sensitivity to the typical Chinese and Danish cultural characteristics and the possible influence of the organizational context on interpersonal interaction. The self-presentation and the self-other interpersonal relational dimension are two aspects which are central in interpersonal interaction and interpersonal relationship.

It is necessary to point out the interpersonal relational dimension operates at two levels, at the static utterance level (communicative act data) and at the dynamic beyond-utterance level (communicative events). The understanding of the relational dimension at the beyond-utterance

level is to explore the relationship between face and interpersonal relationship in the meta-interactional (meta-dialogical) context in the scenario descriptions.

The threefold distinction is partially based on the detailed analysis of the relationship between Chinese perspectives on face, Goffman's concept of face and Brown and Levinson's concept of face, and partially based on the deconstructed approach in the few articles on interpreting Chinese face (Haugh & Hinze, 2003; Kinnison, 2017). For instance, in Haugh and Hinze's (2003) metalinguistic analysis, face is interpreted as "what I think you think of me". In this interpretation, the societal moral influence on "what I think of myself" is missing. The disentanglement on Chinese face into integrity, power and mask (Kinnison, 2017) also reflects such a three dimensional way of thinking. "Integrity" refers to the societal prescriptive moral dimension. "Power" refers to the self-other interpersonal dimension and "mask" is similar to Goffman's positive self-image, the self-presentation dimension.

The deconstructed multi-dimensional interpretation of face will shed light on our understanding of social relations or social structures, in terms of the relationship between self, other and the collective community in general (including the possible influences of both society and organization). It is important for approaching cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communicative act data at hand, because it provides interpretive perspectives to look at the social structure or prototypical social relations underlying the linguistic data and how the previous dialogue influences the way the informants keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony at the moment of cancellation, which reflects further the role face plays in interpersonal relationships during on-going communication. Interestingly, the focus of the underlying "social relations" or "social structures" is also a return to the original purpose of Brown and Levinson's theory, i.e. "linking abstract concepts of social structure (whether these are analyst's concepts or member's concepts) to behavioural facts", and "(providing) a useful ethnographic tool for the fine-grained analysis of the quality of social relations" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 283).

To increase reader-friendliness of the main body of data analysis and discussion, I will mostly use the dimensional interpretation in the discussion part in Chapter 7 and partially use it the discussion part in Chatper 6. In addition, in Chapter 6 the Chinese face concepts will be still used to explain why certain linguistic strategies are preferred in the Chinese data, and Brown

and Levinson's face concepts will still be used to explain why certain linguistic strategies are more frequently or less frequently used in the Danish and British English data sets.

4.4 Development of a new integrated conceptual framework

By drawing on elements from different theoretical frameworks, I propose an integrated conceptual framework (see Figure 4.2) as the theoretical lens to approach the communicative act data in the context of communicative events. The integrated conceptual framework has been developed specifically to understand and make sense of the communicative act data, which were generated by the conceptual framework of imperative frames.

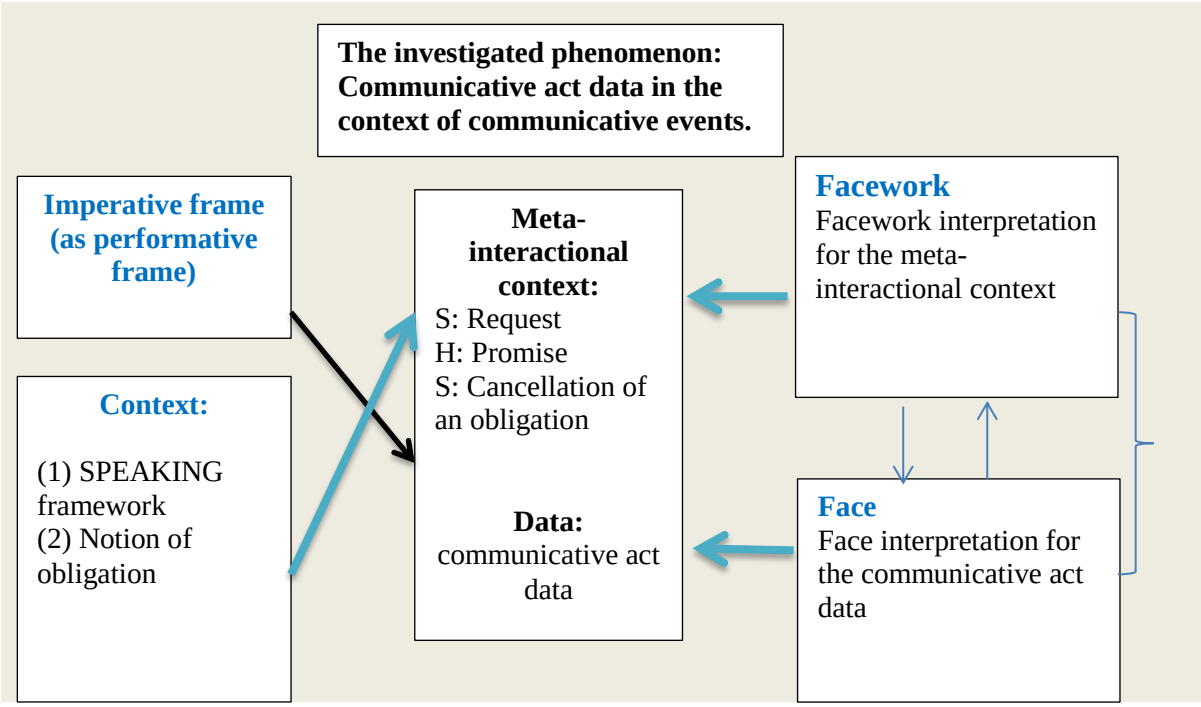

Figure 4.2. The integrated conceptual framework

The theoretical components from the four different boxes on both the left side and the right side are drawn upon to understand the communicative act data in the context of communicative events. The box with a black arrow is the original conceptual framework, which was incorporated in the research design to trigger the data. The other boxes with blue arrows are the new theoretical components which have been drawn upon to understand and interpret the data in the meta-interactional context. Each theoretical component is important in developing a

holistic understanding of the communicative events as a continuous interpersonal communication process. Durst-Andersen's (2009, 2011) deontic-modality-based conceptual framework of IFs is re-defined as performative frames with communicative intentions in socio-cultural contexts. The notion of obligation is proposed to include both role obligations in different relationships and the obligation in a promise. It is a way to compensate for the linguistic differences reflected in the Chinese data and to make sense of the impact of the original conceptual framework on the data. With reference to the notion of obligation, Spencer-Oatey's (2008) distinction between role obligations and contractual obligations is also borrowed to conduct the contextual analysis in the scenario descriptions.

The SPEAKING framework (Hymes, 1974) is drawn upon to further understand the communicative events, especially the unuttered dialogue which is composed of the key elements of requesting and promising in the scenario descriptions. Hymes's SPEAKING framework has been adopted as "the grammar of context" in intercultural communication (Scollon, Scollon & Jones, 2012) or as "the grammar of politeness" for Chinese discursive data (Pan, 2011). The decontextualized three-step process also makes it possible to explore the *implicit relational perspective* for the data composed of only one turn.

The in-depth analysis of the situational context is indispensable when it comes to understanding the comparative data in the light of communicative events, or looking at the tree against the background of the forest, as the Chinese proverb goes. It provides an opportunity to provide insights into the role of face in interpersonal interaction from a broadly-speaking meta-turn-taking perspective and enable a beyond-utterance level contextual analysis, which reflects the *situated* nature of doing facework. Interestingly, this attempt is accidentally concurrent with Blum-Kulka's emphasis on "the importance of the more general notion of speech events in determining politeness" (Eelen, 2001, p. 13).

Drawing on the broad literature of face, politeness and facework in linguistics and communication studies, the Chinese concept of face and the Brown and Levinson's concept of face are incorporated under Goffman's concept of facework as the umbrella, with my deconstructed multi-dimensional interpretations of face.

My underlying assumptions in this integrated conceptual framework is that there is a universal concern for good and harmonious interpersonal relationships and that all the

informants are trying to be polite in their own cultural system while achieving the researcher-designed communicative intention of cancellation of an obligation.

The purpose of developing this integrated conceptual framework offers a culturally context-sensitive framework to approach the contextualised comparative communicative act data in problem-embedded scenarios. My aim is to account for the possible similarities or differences of the prototypical communication patterns in the linguistic data. The integrated conceptual framework helps to uncover the cultural norm or scripts of communicative act realization in the context of communicative events, which reflect the interaction ritual of doing facework (Goffman, 1967).

To sum up, my integrated conceptual framework brings different theoretical components together to explain and interpret the obligation, face and facework involved for the communicative act data in the context of communicative events. The concrete purposes are to (1) clarify the relationships at different levels, including the relationship between the original conceptual framework of imperative frames and the complex data, the relationship between face, politeness and facework, and the relationship between communicative events and communicative act data; (2) to explain why people said what they said, using face as an interpretive link between the prototypical linguistic realisation with the social structure or social relations in the different speech communities.

5. Methodological Considerations

In this chapter I will introduce the methods for data categorization, considerations for the data analysis process, the impact of culture on the data interpretation process, as well as how I deal with the emic/etic challenge and the paradigmatic challenge.

5.1 Methods for data categorization

As mentioned earlier, the three selected scenarios are situations which happen quite often in both informal and formal settings. They could be considered as different 'speech events' in different cultures. The speech production data for cancellation of an obligation are rather complex. Each response is not a single sentence-based speech act, but a communicative act comprising multiple semantic components of different speech acts, including apologizing, negative directive (cancelling), thanking, and requesting. In that sense, the collected data for this communicative act did not meet the expectations of conceptual frame of IFs in the original research design. Therefore, a new coding scheme was needed to analyse the data.

5.1.1 The process of developing the new coding scheme

As few coding schemes are reported for the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation in the literature[19], the data collected from the five different groups were coded using *semantic formula* as the unit of analysis according to a modification of the CCSARP coding scheme, as well as the *thematic analysis* method in qualitative research to develop new codes to meet the demand of the new data. Initial coding was conducted on the mini-thematic level in order to identify patterns across the five data sets. In addition, earlier literature on apologizing, thanking and requesting (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Blum-Kulka, et al., 1989; Aijmer, 1996) was taken into account following the semantic component analysis tradition in cross-cultural speech act analysis.

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[19] The coding scheme in GEBCom's pilot study (Arnsberg & Bentsen, 2009) was found not applicable to my data, because my comparative data are much more complex than the English data produced by Spanish and Danish speakers of English in their study, including many extra components such as apologizing expressions, thanking expressions and future moves.

The development of the coding scheme has undergone several rounds. In the first round of data engagement, the software for qualitative research Nvivo played an important role in identifying the key features in the data. Multiple semantic components of different speech acts, such as apologizing, accounting, thanking, and explicit cancelling, were identified as a group of shared components across scenarios. The term "strategy" in the field of pragmatics is used as a "code" in Nvivo. The preliminary data analysis indicated that the data are very complex communicative acts. Explicit cancellation is directly related to the methodological conceptual frame of IFs, but thanking and apologizing belong to the expressive acts, as they express the speaker's psychological state towards a state of affairs or a person (Searle, 1976, p.12).

In the second round of data engagement, a paper-based coding technique was adopted. All the codes (strategies) were then typed into an Excel document in order to find patterns. The decision to adopt this technique is that it is difficult to see the message sequence of linguistic strategies in Nvivo 11. During the second round, more scenario-specific components were identified for each case scenario. The relationship between different components was explored and the cultural-specific salient scripts in the case scenarios were identified.

5.1.2 A taxonomy of linguistic realization strategies

In the following, a detailed description of each category strategy will be provided. The first four strategies are generally shared across the three scenarios, and the remaining seven strategies are scenario-specific. The sequence of different strategies is arranged randomly.

It is important to point out that in the critiques of the CCSARP classificatory scheme (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, pp. 273-293), Leech (2014, pp. 267-268) emphasized in particular that "the categories are distinguished on the basis of different linguistic levels: a modifier category such as 'past tense' is grammatically defined, a category such as 'willingness' or 'permission' is semantically defined, and a category like 'suggestory formula' is pragmatically defined."

In order to avoid potentially similar problems, the categorization of linguistic strategies in the present coding scheme was conducted according to the following three criteria: the first priority is given to semantic formulas according to the tradition of cross-cultural pragmatics. When specific strategies could be found for different semantic formulas in the speech acts literature and there was a match between the semantic formula and its pragmatic function, the

semantic formula was prioritized. When no strategy was available in the literature, new strategies were coined to capture the meaning or mini-theme of the semantic components. When various semantic formulas or sentence forms were found for the same slot for the same pragmatic function, the pragmatic function was prioritized as the guiding criterion for categorization. For instance, the Chinese expression *麻烦你了* (*mafan ni le)*, literally means "(this event) having troubled you", yet pragmatically speaking it is a conventionalized fixed statement to thank somebody by acknowledging a debt of gratitude through inconveniencing expressions (e.g. *thank you for taking the trouble to help me*).

Strategy 1: Apologizing

This strategy refers to conventionalized formulaic apologetic expressions, which have been framed as the illocutionary force indicating devices (IFIDs) for the speech act of apologizing (Searle, 1969, p. 64).

Table 6 shows the cross-linguistic variations of apologizing expressions in the data. Most of the apology speech act literature adopts Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) classification of apology IFID: expressions for apology, expressions for regret and expressions for asking for forgiveness. In a more recent study Ogiermann (2009) includes a full range of formulae, including performative, offer of apology, request for forgiveness, expression of regret, conciliatory expression, and disarming softener for her empirical data. Because of its highly frequent usage in the Danish data in the Meeting scenario, the Danish disarming softener *desværre* (unfortunately) is listed here. More transparent discussions will follow in connection with the comparative attitude section (cf. section 6.2.3) in the Meeting scenario.

	Performative		**Expression of regret**	**Disarming softener**
Chinese	*duibuqi*	*Buhaoyisi*	*Baoqian*	
Danish	*undskylde*	*beklage*	*være ked af*	*desværre*
British English	*apologize*		*sorry* *I am sorry* *my apologies*	*unfortunately*

Table 5.1. Cross-linguistic variation of apologizing expressions

Within the category of apologizing expressions, some differences might be salient in terms of degree of regret, degree of admittance of wrong-doing, or degree of showing empathy. The differences are not clear-cut and can be quite slippery when expressions are used in different contexts. Each sub-category can presuppose an earlier category. For instance, the meaning of 'something bad happens' can presuppose the meaning of 'out of expectation', regret can presuppose the meaning of 'something bad happens' and apology can presuppose the meaning of regret. As Leech (2014) puts it, "the apologetic meaning of such formulae is easy to recover from their form, and they still retain some of the pragmatic value of politeness markers" (p. 124).

It should also be noted that apologies can be used both in a retrospective sense as a type of speech act, but also in an anticipatory sense as 'disarming apologies' (Aijmer, 1996) or 'strategic disarmers' (Trosborg, 1995). Based on the London-Lund corpus, Aijmer (1996) listed four detailed functions of apologies: as ritual "for trivial offences, as a disarmer or softener, as an attention-getter, and as a phatic act establishing a harmonious relationship with the hearer" (p. 97).

In addition, studies have shown that people in different cultures have different understandings of an apology, with an Anglo-Saxon focus on responsibility and culpability and an Asian (typically Japanese and Chinese) focus on remorse (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 1997, p. 237; Maddux, Kim, Okumura, & Brett, 2011; Maddux et al., 2012). Goddard and Wierzbicka (1997, p. 237) point out that the English term 'apology' contains a component like "I did something bad to you", whereas the Japanese apology contains a component like "If something bad happens to someone because of me, … I feel something bad because of this ". In Maddux et al.'s (2011) study on cultural differences in the function and meaning of apologies, they find that apologies are considered as analytic mechanisms for assigning blame and re-establishing personal credibility in individual-agency cultures (such as the US), while apologies in collective-agency cultures are regarded as general expressions of remorse rather than a means to assign culpability. Maddux et al. (2012) further paraphrase the function of an apology as "I am the one who is responsible" in the US, whereas "It is unfortunate that this happened" (or "the larger consequences of the transgression") in Japan and China. All three studies indicate that an English apology implies first-degree direct responsibility for an offence (in the legal sense), while an East-Asian apology also contains secondary-degree indirect responsibility for a bad

consequence, harm or inconvenience (in the moral sense) (cf. Villadsen, 2014). Therefore, the term 'apologizing strategy' is used as a metapragmatic concept to include all the subtle meaning differences across cultures.

Due to the scope of the present study on intercultural pragmatics and the large amount of data across the five data sets, the present study does not approach the apologizing expressions in the tradition of ethnopragmatics (Goddard, 2006). Instead, a brief discussion of the apologizing expressions in different language systems will be made in the next section (cf. section 5.1.2) when all the linguistic strategies have been introduced. The reasons for doing this include (1) the consideration of the structural balance for the information on all the strategies; and (2) the importance of different apologetic expressions in different language systems as a means to indicate different levels of expressive attitude.

Strategy 2: Account

This strategy is adopted from the literature of the speech act set for apologies (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Blum-Kulka, et al., 1989). The strategy "covers any external (+/- human) mitigating circumstances offered by the speaker, i.e., 'objective' reasons for the violation at hand" (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 293). In the data the function of the account strategy is to introduce the unexpected new information which is described in the scenarios. Typical examples include "*but my family has just arrived.*"; "*men min familie er lige kommet forbi.*" (*but my family has just dropped by*); "*我的家人过来了*" (*My family has just come over*), *etc.*

The word choice of 'account' instead of 'explanation' is because of its position in the utterance. The account strategy is often located after the thanking or apologizing strategy. In the Danish L1 data and the British English data, the conjunction word *men* (but) and *but* is frequently used in connection with the account strategy, which indicates that the information after *but* is the opposite of the speaker's expectation.

Sometimes the account strategy is also located at the beginning of the utterances. In such cases, it is not an explanation, but a description of the new situation. The Danish disarming softener *desværre* (unfortunately) is often located in the middle of the account strategy.

Strategy 3: Thanking

This strategy refers to conventionalized formulaic thanking expressions, which are similar to the IFIDs for the speech act of thanking (Searle, 1969, p. 64). Based on Aijmer's (1996, p. 37) categorization of eight thanking strategies in the London-Lund Corpus data, four of them were observed cross-linguistically in the British English, Danish and Chinese in the GEBCom speech production corpus (see Table 5.2).

The thanking expressions in Chinese, Danish and English are semantically similar under the first category in Table 5.2 below. Under the second and the third categories, the Danish and English expressions are similar. A new category of "expressing explicitly the inconvenience, trouble and hard work the addressee has caused for the speaker in the previous communicative event" was coined tentatively to capture the unique feature of the Chinese statements of *mafan ni le* (troubled you) and *xinku ni le* (tired you). These two statements are polite expressions to express gratitude to others, which reflects Gu's (1990) self-denigration maxim in Chinese polite verbal behaviour. It is important to point out that these two statements verbalise explicitly the speaker's assumption of the hearer's possible thought or feeling of inconvenience or hard work. It is also considered as a Chinese way to verbalize the speaker's sense of gratitude debt to the hearer, which is functionally similar to the English expression "*I owe a debt of gratitude to…*" under the fourth category. It seems that among the Danish thanking expressions there is no explicit verbalizaiton of "debt".

(1) thanking somebody explicitly	*e.g. thank you, thanks, thank you (very much)/thanks for…*
	e.g. Tusind/mange tak (1000 /many thanks), tak / Tusind tak for (thanks /1000 thank for…)
	e.g. (非常/太)谢谢你 (feichang /tai)xiexie ni ([very much]thank you)
(2) expressing gratitude	*e.g. I am grateful, I really do appreciate, I appreciate …(your offer to help)*
	e.g. Jeg er/bliver glad for din hjælp (I am/become very glad for your help)
(3) expressing appreciation of the addressee	*e.g. that's kind of you, that's nice (of you)*
	e.g. det var sødt af dig (it was nice of you to…)

(4) acknowledging a debt of gratitude	*e.g. I owe a debt of gratitude to…*
(5) expressing explicitly the inconvenience, trouble and hard work the addressee has done for the speaker in the previous communicative event	*e.g. xinku ni le (辛苦你了)* *Word-for-word translation:[the earlier event]has tired you, i.e. "thank you for making the effort to help me".*
	e.g. mafan ni le (麻烦你了) *Word-for-word translation:[the earlier event] has troubled/ inconvenienced you], i.e. "thank you for taking the trouble to help me".*

Table 5.2. Cross-linguistic variation of thanking strategy and its subcategories

With reference to the function of thanking expressions, Brown and Levinson (1987) define thanking as face-threatening to the speaker's negative face, as the speaker acknowledges a debt to the hearer. Leech (2014) argues that the function of thanking speech acts is to "restore the equilibrium", because "the imbalance is due to a favour or good turn that *O[ther]* has done for *S[peaker]*" (p. 197). In the present data, the main function is to acknowledge a major favour (Aijmer, 1996, p. 53) and to restore the social harmony between the interlocutors (Goffman, 1976, p. 79).

Strategy 4: Explicit cancellation

This strategy is coined according to the major feature of the present data, which would be called 'head act' in the CCASRP coding scheme. According to the theoretical framework of IFs, the typical response should explicitly state the hearer's non-necessity to come. The argument for including "explicit cancellation" is that many respondents do not verbalize an explicit cancellation. Instead they use other linguistic strategies to cancel the agreement implicitly. In addition, statements containing the speakers' incapacity to fulfil the agreement are also considered as explicit cancellation due to the shared theme of cancellation.

Therefore, typical examples of explicit expression of a cancellation are categorized into the following two types:

(1) Speaker-oriented statement. E.g. *"I can't make it."; "Jeg kan simpelthen ikke nå det i dag."(I can simply not make it today);*

(2) Hearer-oriented statement. E.g. *"You don't need to come."; "Du behøves ikke at komme alligevel."(you don't need to come after all) ; "你不用过来了"(You don't need to come over).*

Strategy 5: Solution

This strategy is coined to capture the situational need in the Lunch scenario. According to the original conceptual framework of IFs, the cancellation of the hearer's obligation is to point out the non-necessity to wait longer in the Lunch scenario. However, the responses reflect a practical concern that Anna go ahead and have lunch. Based on this contextual background, all the utterances containing this meaning, regardless of their linguistic forms, are considered as 'solution strategy'. The linguistic forms have variations which may be categorized further into requests, suggestions or recommendations. Typical examples include

(1) Request in the form of imperatives. "*Please go ahead and have your lunch*".

(2) Strong obligation statement with *blive nødt til* ("have to"). E.g. "*du bliver nødt til at gå til frokost selv*" *(you will have to go for lunch alone).*

(3) Possibility statement with *can.* E.g. "*you can just have your lunch first".*

(4) Recommendation statement with Chinese sentence final particular *"ba",* such as "你先去吃午饭吧" (*ni xianqu chi wufan ba /It is better that you go first and have your lunch*). This is a typical feature in the Chinese L1 data.

Strategy 6: Option-giving

The strategy of option-giving has been adopted to capture the choice-giving situation to the hearer in the Moving scenario. The expression "giving options" was first mentioned in Lakoff's (1973, 1975) interpretation of politeness. It is similar to Brown and Levinson's notion of "don't coerce the hearer" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 172), a form of negative face which emphasizes independence, autonomy and non-imposition.

The specific sentence forms normally contain one or two 'if….' clauses, which gives the hearer the right to make his/her own decision. Typical examples include "*If you wanna come*

you know I will be really happy, but if you don't it's OK."; "It's up to you to decide if you will come and help or not."; "Du er selvfølgelig velkommen hvis du skulle have lyst" (you are of course welcome if you should feel like it).

Strategy 7: Wrapping-up future move

This strategy is coined to capture the features for the end of the discourse for the responses across all the three scenarios. Four subcategories are distinguished according to the scenario-specific features.

Sub-strategy 1: Compensation

This sub-strategy is similar to the strategy of 'offer of repair' in the apology coding scheme set, yet in the data it is much more concerned with compensation for the hearer's offer of help. Its pragmatic function is to mitigate the impact of the act of cancellation by compensating the hearer. It occurs primarily in the Moving scenario and the Lunch scenario.

Typical examples include "*I will buy you a cup of coffee"; "Vi tager en flytteøl sammen en anden dag" (we can drink a moving beer together another day) ; "下次再请你吃饭" (next time I will invite you for lunch).*

A sociocultural difference can be observed in sentences with the compensation strategy: the Chinese preference for lunch or dinner, the Danish and British preference for coffee, and the Danish preference for beer.

Sub-strategy 2: Rescheduling future move

This sub-strategy has been coined to meet the particular features of the data in the Meeting scenario. This strategy is defined by its pragmatic function rather than linguistic forms. Normally, it occurs at the end of an utterance and its pragmatic function is to restore the potentially affected interpersonal relationship after cancellation. It can be considered as a tentative facework strategy to keep the interpersonal relationship between interlocutors on a good footing and to pave the way for further requests of rescheduling or future interaction.

Typical examples are categorized into the following two types:

(1) A direct request for rescheduling in the form of an interrogative sentence, such as *"Could we arrange it another time?*";

(2) An indirect request or a tentative wish for rescheduling in the form of a declarative sentence, such as *"We can still catch up if you are still available"; " I'd still appreciate some time to catch up on the project"; " I'm more than happy to go through it with you another time whenever suitable for you if that's OK" ; "men jeg håber virkelig at du vil være til stede hvis det skulle komme op og køre en anden dag" (but I really hope that you will be present if the meeting is going forward another day).*

Sub-category 3: Lunch future move

This sub-strategy has been coined to meet the particular features of the data in the Lunch scenario. Typical examples include the following two types:

(1) Speakers' natural continuation of future action, such as *"I will grab a sandwich afterwards"; "så kommer jeg hvis jeg kan nå det" (Then I will come if I can make it); "我过会儿做完了再去吃" (I will go and eat later after I have finished my task).*

(2) A new request for take-away, such as "bring me some take-away if you can", "顺便帮我打包！" (*Please help me bring a take-away on your convenient trip to the canteen.)* These examples are quite typical in the Chinese data sets.

These seven major strategies were used for data analysis in the three scenarios. In addition, there are three other categories of semantic components which occur randomly in the data. Due to the present study's particular focus on the realization of a complex communicative act, these categories will only receive brief comments in the data analysis section.

Strategy 8: Telephone opening

Due to the oral mode of the data collection method and the oral mode of a telephone conversation in the scenario descriptions, some responses contain a feature for the beginning of a telephone conversation, such as "*this is… speaking*", "*Hi, John*", "*Øhm Martin nu skal du høre*" *(Martin, now listen to this)* , etc.

Strategy 9: Statement of empathy

The name of this strategy is borrowed from the speech act of refusal (Beebe et al., 1990). It is a description of the hearer's offer of help or time. It usually comes right before a 'but'-led construction in which a few British respondents introduce the new information that the meeting is cancelled. Typical examples include *"I know it was uh difficult for you to make the meeting, but…."; "I know you've put a lot of things aside to be able to attend this meeting, but …"*

It is necessary to note that the earlier mentioned Chinese expression *mafan ni le* (troubled you) and *xinku ni le* (tired you) is similar to the British statements of empathy to some degree, yet they are conventionalized fixed expressions to show gratitude in Chinese rather than a statement.

Strategy 10: Positive statement

This strategy was coined to meet the features of the data in the Meeting scenario. It refers to the statements with the content on the positive impact of the cancellation on the hearer. It is located after the strategy of explicit cancellation and it occurs in both the Danish L1 and the Danish ELF data sets. Typical examples include *"[ahem so your presence is not needed.] I hope that you are pleased with that."; "but maybe that's ok, because you didn't have too much time to begin with."*

Summing up, I have coded the ten strategies above for my analytical purpose after reviewing all the data in the three scenarios. Apologizing, account, thanking and explicit cancellation can be classified as the major strategies for the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation across the scenarios.

5.1.3.1 Cross-linguistic variation in apologizing expressions

With reference to the function of apologies, scholars have diverse views according to their different frameworks. While Searle was interested in illustrating the three conditions (preparatory condition, sincerity condition and essential condition) for the speaker to utter an apology from a philosophical perspective, later sociology and pragmatics scholars have been interested in the social and interpersonal functions of issuing an apology. According to Goffman (1971, p. 140), apologizing is a negative, remedial ritual in social interaction. In

Brown and Levinson's framework of politeness, apologies are regarded as negative politeness strategies, as apologies damage S's positive face, i.e. "S indicates that he regrets doing a prior FTA [face-threatening act], thereby damaging his own face to some degree" (p. 68). However, in Leech's principles of politeness, apologies are considered as positive politeness, as they are a "bid to change the balance-sheet of the relationship between *s* and *h*" and thereby to "restore equilibrium" (Leech, 1983, p. 125). In other words, an apology achieves the communicative effect of restoring equilibrium by acknowledging the imbalance. For Chinese culture, Gu (1990) claims that it is problematic to say that apologetic expressions and thanking expressions are acts threatening to H's negative face according to Brown and Levinson's framework. He proposes instead a new maxim of self-denigration (denigrate self and elevate other) as a kind of Chinese politeness phenomenon in the Chinese culture (p. 241). Hence Meier (1995, p. 383) summarizes the different views according to different perspectives: From the speaker's perspective, apologies are negative politeness strategies to the speaker himself/herself, yet from the hearer's perspective, apologies are used to elevate the hearer's value. Therefore, a combination of different perspectives is presented in Leech's (2014) new maxim of obligation: apologies give "high prominence to S's fault and obligation to O" (p. 96).

In the following section the apologizing expressions in Danish, Chinese and English will be briefly discussed.

Apologizing expressions in Chinese

Both *duibuqi* and *baoqian* are polite formulas to express an apology. The former can be used as a performative verb to apologize while the latter is an expressive adjective to convey apologetic feelings. In particular *duibuqi* is connected with wrongdoing and responsibility.

In the online *Xinhua dictionary*, *buhaoyisi* has two meanings: (1) can only do this/that or cannot do this/that because of *qingmian* (*renqing* and *mianzi*) considerations; (2) shy, embarrassed. However, the first meaning in relation to *renqing* and *mianzi* is often neglected in the English translation of *buhaoyisi* as embarrassment. In Chang and Haugh's (2011) study on intercultural apology, *buhaoyisi* is coded as "expression of embarrassment", whereas most literature written in Chinese maintains that *buhaoyisi* is used for minor offences or minor mistakes, indicating "the lowest degree of apology" (Ren & Woodfield, 2016, p. 94).

In the Chinese L1 data, the location and function of *buhaoyisi* is similar to that of *duibuqi* and *baoqian.* It occurs at the beginning of the utterances and is employed to disarm the face-threatening effect of the information of cancellation in the contexts that the hearer has given a *renqing* /favour to the speaker (promised to help/wait). Therefore, *buhaoyisi* is categorized as the apologizing strategy in the present study. Because of its close connection with the Chinese concept of face, I paraphrase here that the driving reason for using *buhaoyisi* as "because I didn't live up to what you expect of me in the interconnected reciprocal *renqing* and *mianzi* rule society". In Chinese culture, using *buhaoyisi* will show feeling of both embarrassment and regret when the speaker introduces a bad or uncomfortable notice to the hearer that will potentially offend the hearer's face according to the *renqing* and *mianzi* rule of the Chinese society. By using *buhaoyisi* the speaker mitigates such an offence beforehand and avoids the hearer's negative feelings about the speaker or even accusation "why don't you keep the appointment?" The expression *buhaoyisi* is used to express the speaker's inner feeling towards the offence that may have damaged the hearer's face. In this sense, *buhaoyisi* is a conventional unmarked expression that can smooth the personal relationship between the speaker and hearer and that mirrors the face concern in Chinese interpersonal communication. It demonstrates the microscopic interaction of face (*mianzi*) concern and *renqing* harmony in the Chinese society.

Apologizing expressions in Danish

Both *undskylde* and *beklage (apologize, regret)* are performative verbs used in a formal context. It is worth noting that *beklage* is often used to perform an apology without taking full responsibility for the fault in Danish political discourse (Villadsen, 2014). In a sense, it is used to conduct a mental action without any connection to the admittance of wrong-doing. The degree of sincerity and personal involvement is low. *Være ked af (be sorry)* is an expressive phrase that conveys sympathetic regretful feelings. It indicates a high degree of sincerity and personal involvement in the potential offence.

According to the Danish dictionary *ordnet.dk*, *desværre* is used as a formal politeness marker to give a refusal or an uncomforable notice (my translation, original explanation "*bruges for at udtrykke beklagelse: bruges i formelle høflighedsudtryk for at give et afslag eller en anden ubehagelig meddelelse*"). It is an adverb that modifies the situation and it functions as a kind of disarming softener in the data. On the formality level, the word *desværre* is also found in the

data as informal usage and expresses the least degree of regret. For more elaborate and transparent discussions in the context, see section 6.2.3.

The location of apologetic expressions in Danish is different. In the Danish L1 data, *være ked af* occurs at the beginning of the utterances and before the account strategy, whereas *beklage* and *undskylde* occur at the end of the utterances. In two instances, *beklage* is also used before the account strategy. In the Danish L1 data the disarming softener *desværre* is used in connection with another apologizing expression or another thanking expression.

Apologizing expressions in English

In English usage, *apologize* is a performative verb while *sorry* is an expressive adjective. The meaning of *sorry* is quite broad as compared with its counterparts in Danish and Chinese. According to the *Collins English Dictionary*, *sorry* means "(usually postpositive) feeling or expressing pity, sympathy, remorse, grief, or regret". In other words, the spectrum of its meaning ranges from deep apology or regret to surface level pity or sympathy. Typical examples in the data include *"I am sad/sorry that/to…", "I am sorry, but…", or "I am really sorry".* Similar to the earlier apology literature (Chang & Haugh, 2011; Robinson, 2004; Trosborg, 1987), the conventional formula *I am sorry* is the most frequently used form in English across all three scenarios involving different degrees of offence and power relations. *My apologies* is an idiom to express excuses or regrets. It is seldom reported in the apology speech act literature. There are only two instances of it in the British data, such as *"so-eh my sincere apologies. I'm really sorry it's been cancelled."* The performative verb *apologize* occurs only once in the British English data.

5.2 Considerations during data analysis process

5.2.1 The need for an unconventional analytical approach

The analytical methods in cross-cultural pragmatics are normally divided into: (1) a pragmalinguistic investigation focusing on a specific speech act realization, more specifically the linguistic forms of an utterance-based speech act occurring in the same hypothetical situation, which is perceived as somewhat similar across countries (mostly in terms of external contextual variables); (2) a sociopragmatic study employing surveys to evaluate some example utterance items in terms of appropriateness or politeness, as well as to understand people's

assessment of the context in the social situation. Both pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics are concerned with the first-wave approach to politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983), though in different ways. Leech (2014, p. 13) regards this distinction as "linguistic realizations of politeness" vs. "social or cultural determinants of politeness". Such a distinction is similar to the distinction in linguistics "between *context-free* and *context-sensitive*, or between *form* and *function*" (ibid., p. 13). In other words, the research focus of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics is of different phases of the same communication process with reference to politeness. The former focuses on speech production, whereas the latter focuses on speech reception with an awareness of the impact of the context.

Meanwhile, discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used, which makes a bridge between the form and the function, between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. It is widely used in analysing institutional discourse and professional discourse in organizations. In addition, the second-wave approach to politeness (e.g. Watts, 2003; Locher & Watts, 2005; Kadar & Haugh, 2013) usually employs conversation analysis as the analytical tool for discursive data.

My selected data in the GEBCom speech production corpus are completely different from the speech act literature due to the deontic-modality-focused conceptual framework of IFs in the scenario descriptions. Firstly, interviews were used to assess the applicability of scenarios after the oral data collection (Ibsen, 2016), instead of the surveys before the collection of speech production in the CCSARP project. Secondly, unlike the discursive data, my data are composed of one turn of the oral data in an imagined telephone conversation within a meta-interaction context. These unique features call for an unconventional analytical approach.

5.2.2 Rationale for excluding referential statistics

It should, however, be acknowledged that there is a tradition of doing referential statistical tests for cross-cultural speech act realization data in the field of cross-cultural pragmatics. In the following I will list the reasons for not employing referential statistics.

(1) All the data are oral qualitative data. Referential statistics is preferred for large amounts of written data by the method of written discourse completion tests. Such written data are collected based on the prior condition that surveys of contextual assessment have been made

beforehand to ensure the cross-cultural comparability of the situations as prompts or stimuli for the experiment.

However, my data are oral closed role play data and it is unclear whether the same scenario is perceived in the same manner in different cultural contexts. So it is important to examine whether the respondents' attitude to the same scenarios differs. As discussed earlier, the researcher's designed communicative intention in each imperative frame may not be perceived as socially appropriate in the Chinese cultural context.

(2) The sample of the oral data is relatively small. The total number of respondents in each group is small, ranging from 20 to 25. A few responses are also invalid for technical reasons. There is no ambition to generalize the findings to the whole population in each country, as the data were collected within one company. The present research is exploratory. The primary intention is to describe the language use situation in the workplace and explore the similarities and differences.

(3) The application of referential statistical tests does "not reflect what is actually going on in those interactions" (Kadar & Haugh, 2013, p. 32), as my data are highly contextualized data with a prior meta-interaction. With reference to the interaction, it is important to highlight that one turn data does not allow conversational analysis as the analytical tool. However, there is an element of meta-interactional context as the discursive context.

(4) It seemed pointless to ask the employees to take part in a survey focusing on contextual assessments two years after the speech production data were collected, partly because of memory issues, and partly because some employees had changed jobs during the two years.

Therefore, I argue that descriptive statistical analysis is adequate for the linguistic data in this study.

5.2.3 Rational for disregarding gender in the data discussion

Gender has also been shown to exhibit differences in politeness research (eg. Mills, 2003). However, the main focus in the original research design was not gender. In this study I exclude gender from the data discussion in Chapter 6 based on the following considerations.

(1) *Respondents.* The number of female and male respondents in each group is not the same due to the difficulty in gaining access to the company as the research site for empirical investigation. To be able to focus on the impact of gender on politeness, it would be necessary to strictly control the sample of each group.

(2) *Research design.* The empirical research which intends to focus on the relationship between gender and politeness normally needs another concrete dependent variable, either in terms of the use of apology or in terms of the use of indirectness at the linguistic form level. The GEBCom speech production test had a fairly complex design, which included many social variables in the prompting scenarios. Adding gender to this already quite complex design is simply not feasible with this number of respondents. Further, when the concrete linguistic realization of the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation is unknown beforehand, it will also be difficult to investigate the correlation relationship between gender and the specific linguistic form of politeness in a systematic manner.

(3) *Preliminary data analysis*. In a partial preliminary data analysis, I didn't observe any significant differences in terms of gender with reference to the use of apologetic expressions. For instance, in the Danish L1 data for the Meeting Scenario, the Danish examples with the most formal apologetic expressions are uttered by two male informants. This may be completely coincidental due to the small sample. In the Danish L1 data for the Lunch Scenario there are three females versus two males who use apologetic expressions. In the Chinese ELF data for the Meeting Scenario, there are 13 male respondents versus 11 female respondents who use apologetic expressions. The only informant who does not use apologetic expressions is a female informant. In the Chinese ELF data for the Lunch Scenario, there are nine female informants versus eight informants who use apologetic expressions. In the Danish ELF data for the Meeting Scenario, there are eight male informants versus four female informants who use apologetic expressions. Similarly, the gender tendencies are not systematic in the Chinese L1 data and the British English data. Therefore, it was decided not to further investigate the relationship between gender and any other linguistic component in the data discussion in Chapter 6.

5.2.4 The integrated discourse-pragmatic approach

The present study adopts an integrated discourse-pragmatic approach. Besides the quantitative data categorization following the speech act realisation tradition, there is a special

focus on people's attitudes and understanding of context, and the impact of the presupposed prior meta-interaction on the data. The areas that were selected for data analysis were the following.

Firstly, I counted the number of respondents using different strategies (especially apologetic strategies) in the data sets in order to evaluate the severity of an offence as perceived by the respondents in each group. The apologetic expressions indicate people's attitudes towards the situations; they can be seen as a symptom of people's feelings. The specific use of different apologetic expressions points to the degree of regret or apology they feel for the unexpected new situation and the subsequent cancellation. It also indicates the degree of responsibility the respondents take for a cancellation caused by external factors. Such an analysis reflects the societal expectations or societal norms in this kind of social interaction. This first step aims to answer the question "whether the respondents have understood the scenario in a similar manner?"

Secondly, attention has been paid to the message sequence or the sequential ordering of linguistic strategies. As indicated in Arnsberg and Bentsen's (2009) application of IFs in their research, message sequence reflects "the speaker's train of thought". In the present study, I assume that the prototypical message sequence reveals the cultural scripts of doing facework and the respective face orientations in the different scenarios.

Thirdly, an attempt is made to reconcile the first-wave approach and the second-wave approach to politeness, exploring both the oral communicative-act data and its interactional context. Deliberate efforts have been made to explore the role of face in the meta-interactional context and the impact of previous interaction on the investigated communicative act. The exploration of the meta-interactional context belongs to what Kecskes (2014) terms the "pragma-discourse" approach, where the relationship between pragmatics and discourse analysis is in focus.

Summing up, my data analysis of all the responses takes a discourse-pragmatic approach, because it has some features of discourse analysis, pragmalinguistic analysis and sociopragmatic analysis. At the same time it differs from the traditional analytical procedure in each method. In the data analysis process, I use a combination of quantitative analysis with descriptive statistics and qualitative interpretive analysis. Descriptive statistics is used to give an

overview of the linguistic strategies, in terms of both relative frequency and sequential ordering. A qualitative interpretive analysis is undertaken between the discourse and the context. Special attention has been paid to the qualitative contextual analysis.

The major contribution of such an integrated discourse-pragmatic analytical approach is that it creates a bridge between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, and investigates the understanding of contexts by looking beyond linguistic forms.

5.2.5 Towards an interparadigmatic attempt

Most research in social sciences has witnessed a change from positivism to constructivism (Silverman, 2006). Kasper (2008) points to the paradigmatic assumption in different approaches to politeness, and a similar paradigmatic shift has also been observed in the study of ELF (Jenkins, 2015b). Currently, the concepts of "politeness", "face", and "ELF" are all regarded as emergent, interactionally constituted, and co-constructed by the respondents in social practice in the respective sub-field of linguistics.

Due to the double nature of the selected data, the integrated discourse-pragmatic analytical approach also reflects an interparadigmatic attempt. On the one hand, a post-positivist approach will be adopted to analyse the comparative data. Its aim is to explore how people maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships through their understanding of face and how cultural norms or cultural scripts in these situations are reflected as statistical tendencies rather than *the* homogeneous cultural norm or script. On the other hand, situational context will be reconstructed to understand the interactional context between the interlocutors. The purpose is to *understand* why the respondents said what they said. In addition, an interpretive approach will be adopted to interpret the prototypical patterns in the data and the interpretations will probably still reflect functionalist elements.

As Martin and Nakayama (1999) point out, the interparadigmatic approach "moves us beyond paradigmatic constraints and permits more dynamic thinking" (p. 13). By breaking the paradigmatic boundaries, we can gain a better understanding of the systematic cross-cultural data. It opens a new possibility to integrate elements of the different approaches in the two waves of politeness and pragmatic research. It is specifically geared to the contextualized data in approximate real-life scenarios in the selected GEBCom speech production data.

5.3 Culture and data interpretation process

As illustrated in the critical reflections of Durst-Andersen's conceptual framework of imperative frames (cf. Section 3.2.2), the researchers' own cultural attitude plays an important role during the research process. It may work as the starting point of any scientific investigation but may also cause cultural bias. I am aware that my own cultural background may also have an influence on my data interpretation process. When approaching the five groups of data, I felt a strong need to obtain native insights for the Danish and native English data.

5.3.1 Attitude puzzle: participants' meta-reflection utterances

During the preliminary data analysis process, an unexpected observation emerged, namely that the data sets revealed that there are a small number of unexpected oral utterances which reflect the participants' own attitude, their guess of the hearer's attitude, and also the possible arguments for these attitudes. Such meta-reflection utterances to some extent reveal the participants' views and their understanding of the scenario. For instance, in the Moving Scenario, none of the Danes use apologetic expressions in Danish and one of the Danish respondents said that *"Det tror jeg Martin vil være glad for" (I think Martin will be pleased about that [hearing the news of cancellation]".* More examples of such responses will be discussed in Chapter 6. From the perspective of data collection method, it is not surprising that the oral mode of closed role plays provided an opportunity for the respondents to say more than they would have done in the written discourse completion tests.

These responses surprised me as an analyst and triggered the need for consulting native insights for the native Danish and English data to counterbalance the influence of my own cultural background. According to Spencer-Oatey's (2008, p. 328) emphasis on 'decentring', one possible way is to have an international collaborator. Being part of the GEBCom research team, the input from Danish colleagues provided this opportunity. In addition, I also felt it necessary to conduct native consultation interviews with a few more native speakers in each speech community in order to make sure that our native intuitions could be reflected as a shared understanding in the specific speech community.

5.3.2 Supportive informal interviews to gain native insights

After the five groups of data had been quantitatively categorized, some complementary informal interviews were conducted with the purpose of obtaining native-speaker insights into the data. The informants included five Chinese native speakers, five English native speakers, and 20 Danish native speakers. The language choices of the interviews were Chinese for native Chinese speakers and English for native English speakers. For the Danish native speakers, most of the interviews were conducted in Danish, with three exceptions in English. These informal interviews varied from 10 to 60 minutes and could be categorized into two types according to the specific purpose.

The first type is Danish native-speaker consultation interviews with the purpose of better understanding the meaning of three Danish apologetic expressions. The reason for conducting these interviews is that some differences emerge in the frequency of apologetic expressions. As a non-native speaker of Danish, my interview questions were concerned with the differences between *desværre*, *ked af*, *beklage* and *undskylde*. These interviews were conducted between April 2016 and June 2016 with local Danish colleagues during lunch breaks and with a rhetoric specialist[20] at the University of Copenhagen. My specific interview questions focused on evaluation of the degree of formality, sincerity and responsibility for the three Danish words. In order to clarify the word differences, some informants were helpful in providing relevant social situations in which they would use the words. Through the interviews I hoped to obtain a more complete and nuanced understanding of the meaning of the three Danish words, because the initial interviews with several native Danish speakers indicated quite different attitudes, particularly towards the meaning of *desværre*.

The second type of informal interview is semi-structured interviews, which are conducted to acquire a better contextual understanding of the scenarios and native interpretations of the prototypical (positive versus negative) attitudes in the data. The starting point for conducting these interviews was my Chinese native insights into the deconstructed meta-interactional context, as well as the puzzles in the Danish data.

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[20] I am grateful to Lisa Villadsen from University of Copenhagen for her input and her references to the relevant apology literature.

These interviews were conducted between September 2016 and March 2017. The informants were selected on the basis of convenience. Most informants were within my own personal network, including family members, friends and their extended family members, as well as colleagues. The number of native speakers in each speech community for the second type of interviews is five. In addition, the reactions towards the prototypical attitudes of cancellation in the data were also obtained with a broad international community during conferences and seminars, including scholars from Sweden, New Zealand, Germany, Australia, and Ireland. These reactions further reduce the simplistic binary cultural distinction of the attitudes in the data as being either Chinese or Danish.

For the convenience of the informants, the first type of informal interviews (with the Danish native speakers) were mostly conducted at social gatherings such as lunch breaks, whereas the second type of interviews (with the native speakers of Chinese, Danish, and English, as well as the scholars at conferences) were mostly conducted on an individual basis. During these informal interviews, no recordings were made. Instead, field notes were made immediately after each interview.

The specific questions were concerned with the step-by-step contextual understanding of the scenarios (see Appendix E for further information) and native insights into the prototypical attitudes in the data. The original aim of conducting the second type of informal interviews with other groups of non-participant native speakers was to develop suitable questions for conducting a survey as a follow-up study. In addition, after the preliminary data analysis, I realized the importance of going back to the context. Contextual understanding is a way to compensate for the drawback of lacking contextual evaluation of the scenarios beforehand in the GEBCom speech production data according to the CCSARP research process.

In the end, the follow-up survey was not carried out due to the following considerations. Firstly, the complexity of my selected data meant my study shifted focus at the theoretical level. To be able to provide some explanations for my data, I needed more time to solve the theoretical puzzle (mismatch between the empirical data and the original conceptual framework of IFs). This means that I need to focus on the broad theoretical literature of face and facework in the disciplines of lingusitics and communication, as well as the literture on obligation in the

disciplines of philosophy and logic, where Durst-Andersen's concetpual framework originates from.

Secondly, I found that the informal interviews provided valuable and informative insights into native interpretations of the prototypical attitudes in the data and the step-by-step contextual understanding. In these informal interviews I could ask open-ended questions so that the informants had the chance to elaborate on their ideas and opinions, whereas in survey questionairs the questions will be relatively closed-ended. An additional concern is that it is not feasible to conduct another follow-up survey from the time management perspective.

I am aware that most empirical research focusing exclusively on contextual ratings (e.g. Tanaka, Spencer-Oatey & Cray, 2008) use surveys. If interviews are used, the interviews should be recorded in a more rigid manner than what I did, in accordance with the social science tradition. In that way, it is possible to analyse and present all the interview data systematically. However, in this study, my primary focus was on the five comparative data sets. It is vital to stress that all the informal interviews function as support for my interpretation of the comparative data, especially the native insights into the Danish and the British English data. As Kasper (2008) points out, a multi-method approach is "a means to offset inherent instrument or observer bias" and "[m]aterial collected by means of complementary methods and from different sources allows triangulation, which may be necessary or desirable in order to increase the validity and reliability of a study" (p. 300). This is exactly the purpose of the informal interviews.

To sum up, I have made substantial effort to overcome "the potentially biasing effect" (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009, p. 269) of my own cultural background. The quantitative component analysis of the communicative act realisation according to the CCSARP tradition provides an overview which is relatively objective and functions as the starting point for further qualitative interpretation. However, when it comes to the data interpretation process, it is clearly an iterative process, from the Chinese native insights to the native Danish and English insights. The insights from native speakers of Chinese, Danish and English are equally important during the data interpretation process. Further, these native insights help me to engage in further reflections at the theoretical level. It is important to stress, though, that my underlying assumption for conducting informal interviews with another group of non-participant native

speakers is that national culture is shared by its members and it has patterned regularities, which can be recognized by in-group members of the same national culture. I am aware that this assumption reflects a positivist approach towards culture, a particular perspective which is often criticized by the current social-constructivist approach to culture and which is contestable in the contemporary literature. Further, it means that I see the emic understanding as the cultural insiders' understanding, or to be more exact, the understanding of native speakers from the same cultural background.

5.3.3 Bridging the emic-etic dichotomy

Scholars have different attitudes to the distinction between first-order politeness and second-order politeness. Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992, 2005) argue that first-order politeness and second-order politeness are totally different. They define first-order politeness as "the various ways in which polite behaviour is perceived and talked about by members of socio-cultural groups" (p.3); and second-order politeness on the other hand as "a theoretical construct, a term within a theory of social behaviour and language usage". (p. 3). According to their definition, the emic interpretation will typically be made by members of the same socio-cultural groups, which is similar to my underlying assumption for conducting informal interviews with native speakers.

Other scholars are against the binary and dichotomous relationship between first-order and second-order politeness (Haugh, 2012). Haugh points out in particular that the emic perception of face and politeness should be regarded the inspiring source for etic conceptual development. He argues that "… rather than treating the first-second order distinction as a simplistic dichotomy, it is much more productive to deploy the multiple loci of the first-second order distinction in clarifying the various focal points for analysis and theorization in face and politeness research." (Haugh, 2012, p. 1)

Figure 5.1 illustrates Haugh's (2009, 2012) classification of first-order and second-order politeness. According to this deconstructed distinction, the first-order politeness is composed of a participant's understanding and a non-participant's understanding. Following his logic, the unexpected meta-reflection utterances in my data may reflect the participants' (emic) understanding, whereas the non-participant native speaker's interpretation in my informal interviews may be considered as 'etc'. This means that Haugh's understanding of the emic

interpretation is only limited to the participants' understanding, which is more narrow than the "members of social-cultural groups" in Watts et al's interpretation.

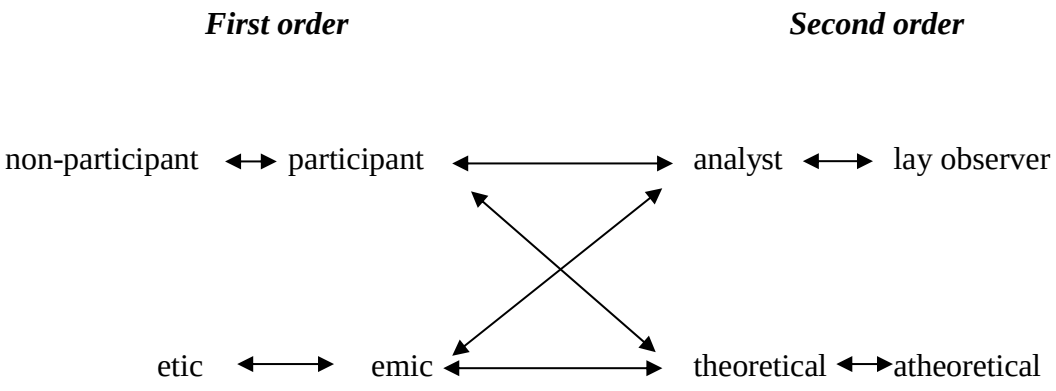

Figure 5.1. Deconstructing the first-second order distinction (Haugh, 2012, p. 9; 2009, p. 5)

Further following Haugh' logic, any researcher or analyst who investigates comparative data sets in more than one language will automatically reflect an analyst second-order (etic) perspective and the non-participant first-order ('etic') perspective in her/his own national culture.

In relation to my study, I agree with the Haugh's position of bridging the distinction between first-second order perspectives, and I agree with the detailed classification of participant and non-participant within the same sociocultural group for analysing discursive data. However, for the GEBCom corpus data in my study, I don't think it is relevant to continue using the emic-etic distinction within the same sociocultural group. There are some shared cultural values, beliefs and attitudes between the participant' perspective and the non-participant's perspective. Any analyst or theorist may start with an understanding which reflects his/her own cultural background.

In my case, the positionality of me, as a PhD researcher, a native speaker of Chinese, and a non-native speaker of Danish in a Danish international research environment with both native Danes and other native English speaking professionals makes it possible to supplement my comparative study with the native cultural insights from different perspectives. The undue emphasis of cross-cultural comparison research as an etic approach without taking advantage of

the cultural insider's native insights in an international research team at an international environment would be like to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

Figures 5.2 and 5.3 below illustrate my data analysis process for both the communicative act and the role of face in the context of communicative events. They illustrate a non-rigid sense of triangulation in the data interpretation process. It is necessary to acknowledge that the non-participants' interpretation is limited to the attitudes in the prototypical utterances.

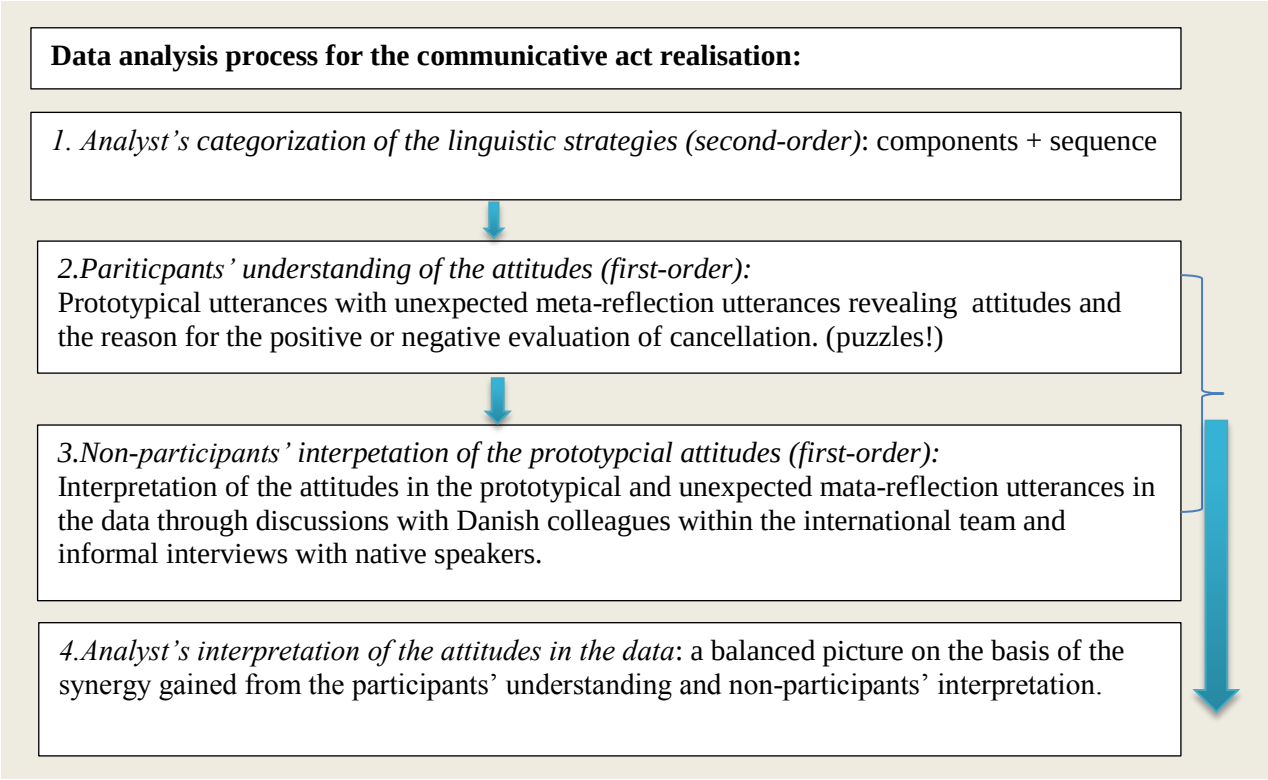

Figure 5.2. Data analysis process for the communicative act realisation

Figure 5.2 illustrates how the analyst's analysis of the communicative act realisation can benefit from the synergy created by incorporating the participants' understanding and non-participants' interpretation of attitudes. Regarding the communicative act data, the agreement between participants' understanding and non-participants' interpretation of the attitudes reflected in the prototypical utterances provide a foundation for the analyst's interpretation of the attitudes in the data, forming a balanced synergy.

Figure 5.3 shows how a balanced account of native insights can push the analyst's reflection at the theoretical level. The balanced account of native insights stimulates the progress

of the research process and countereffects the potential bias becasue of the researcher's own national cultuarl background.

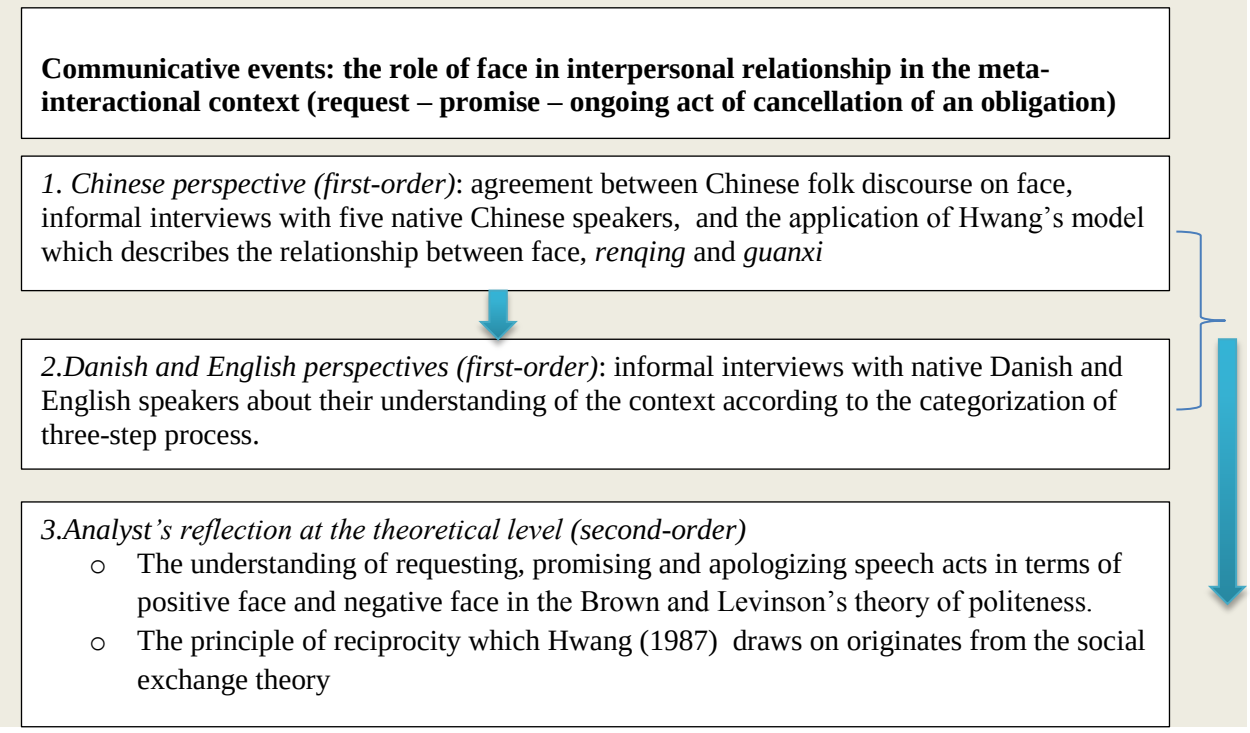

Figure 5.3. Interpretation process for the communiative events (meta-interactional context)

The theoretical reflections suggest that the underlying principle of reciprocity in interpersonal relationship may be similar for the following two reasons. Firstly, the emphasis of reciprocity can also be found in Goffman's (1955, 1967) work and Leech's (1983, 2014) work. Secondly, Hwang's (1987) work is based on the inspiration of the social exchange theory. I will return to the possible contrasting or similar facework interpretations for the Danish and British data in Chapter 7.

To sum up, the perspectives from non-participant native speakers with the same cultural backgrounds during the data interpretation process provide an opportunity for increasing the synergy between the first-order and second-order perspectives. It is considered as an alternative way to deal with the potential cultural bias of the analyst.

6. Data Analysis

As stated in Chapter 2 I will focus on three scenarios involving the IF of cancellation of an obligation. All three exhibit a systematic implementation of the same IF in the scenario design and share similar features in the comparative data. These three scenarios are the Moving scenario, the Meeting scenario and the Lunch scenario. The sequential organization of the case scenario analysis is based on the degree of difference found in the comparison of mother tongue data.

In the initial data analysis it was found that respondents do not necessarily use the negative imperative forms, such as *"you do not need to…", "du behøver ikke at..." or "不用 buyong…"*, which are embedded as the modal-verb focused understanding of deontic modality in the starting phase of the original research resign (Ibsen, 2016). Instead, respondents use more polite expressions (such as apologies and thanking expressions) and components of multiple speech acts (further requests, compensational future move) to achieve the same communicative goal. It seems that people say things not only in a different way, but also in a nicer way. These extra polite components make the data even more interesting to look at in detail, because they reflect the rule of social interaction in these social communicative situations and mirror the respective social-cultural norms, especially the norms of keeping face and maintaining interpersonal harmony in each of the societies. Inspired by Spencer-Oatey's (2000) focus on interactional goals in her rapport management model, it seems that there are also two goals in my data, viz.:

(1) The transactional goal (or communicative intention) defined by the IF of cancellation of an obligation (e.g. *you don't need to come to the meeting/your help is not necessary/you don't need to wait any longer*).
(2) The relational goal to maintain a harmonious interpersonal relationship (facework strategies).

Therefore, an in-depth contextual analysis is needed to understand what is going on in the context and possibly explain the contextualized utterances in these situations.

6.1 The Moving scenario

6.1.1 A multi-layered interpretation of the context

In this section I will explore the multi-layered interpretation of the situational context in the scenario description of the Moving scenario (see scenario description below). The notion of obligation will be discussed in the scenario description. Hymes' SPEAKING framework and his concept of 'speech event' will be drawn upon to understand the implicit interactional context.

scenario	Imperative Frame	Social context	Relationship	Social Distance	Power (S/H)
Moving Scenario	Cancellation of an obligation	Private	friend – friend	-SD	- / -
You are at home You have asked your good friend, John, to help you move into a new apartment tomorrow. He has happily agreed to do so and even taken the day off from work. But then your family surprises you by arriving to help you move. This now makes John's help unnecessary, so you have to call him and say:					

6.1.1.1 Re-interpretation of the obligation in the scenario description

To understand what the cancellation implies, the prior obligation on the hearer should be made clear. In the Moving scenario the hearer's sense of obligation is acquired in two ways. On the one hand, obligation is embedded in the hearer's promise or agreement to help the speaker – "He has happily agreed to do so and even taken the day off from work". It is a promise of a favour-based obligation. I interpret the positive answer as a promise, because the hearer commits himself to a future action for the benefit of the other person (the initial requester). On the other hand, the hearer's sense of obligation is also defined by the role requirement in an equal and close interpersonal relationship (friendship).

According to the online *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Habib, 2018), there are two important features of promises that make them interesting for scholars across disciplines. First, promises are often considered to "impose moral obligations". Second, promises produce trust among interlocutors, thereby "facilitating social coordination and cooperation" (Habib, 2018).

In the Moving scenario, the equal and close interpersonal relationship guarantees that a promise between friends is taken seriously and therefore has a higher possibility to be carried

out. Therefore, it is argued that the hearer's sense of obligation is achieved by a promise of favour-based obligation between close friends.

6.1.1.2 Understanding the context: two communicative events in sequence

Since the IF of cancellation of an obligation presupposes a kind of obligation established beforehand, a detailed content analysis of the scenario description is conducted to reinterpret the context following Hymes' (1974) SPEAKING framework and his concept of speech event in the ethnography of speaking.

Interestingly, the scenario description contains information similar to the SPEAKING framework. For a detailed illustration, see Table 6.1. What is uttered in these scenarios may therefore be considered as socially appropriate ways (facework strategies) to tackle the potential problem that might influence interpersonal relations in the new situation. The prototypical utterances in each linguistic community may be considered as cultural scripts, which reflect the norms of interaction. With special reference to the notion of obligation, the comparative data could also reflect how different cultural groups construct their sense of obligation and face in the case scenarios.

Setting and scene	You are at home.
Participants (Interpersonal relationship between S and H)	You and your good friend, John
Ends (interactional goal for this social situation)	This now makes John's help unnecessary, so you have to call him and say:
Act sequence (What is happening? What is the meta-interaction process before speech production?)	Step 1: you have asked ask him if he could help you move into a new apartment tomorrow (request) Step 2: He has happily agreed to do so and even taken the day off from work (request granted, obligation incurred) Step 3: It makes John's help unnecessary when your family surprises you by arriving to help you move (cancellation)
Instrumentalities (mode of communication)	One turn of telephone conversation
What is uttered?	The utterance reflects features of ingroup

(speech production)	communication

Table 6.1. Understanding the context in Moving Scenario

Based on Hymes' concept of "speech event", Searle's precondition for the speech act of thanking and promise, as well as Aijmer's (1996) and Trosborg's (1995) description of the disarming function of the apology, I reconstruct the scenario description into a meta-interaction process composed of three logical steps as follows:

Communicative event 1: Establishment of an obligation
- Step 1: making a request
- Step 2: positive compliance to the request / promise
Communicative event 2: Cancellation of an obligation
- Step 3: cancellation, which requires that the speaker has knowledge of the interactional norm, the hearer's expectation and speakers' obligation in this context, and the appropriate facework strategies to maintain a harmonious interpersonal relationship

Table 6.2. The three logical steps in the meta-interactional process

Following the interconnected logic in Hymes' concepts between "speech event" and "speech act", I use the terms "communicative event" and "communicative act" to refer to the complex situational context and the complex linguistic data respectively. From the speaker's perspective, he/she has to address two communicative events with two communicative tasks in this deconstructed interaction process: the first communicative task of having established an obligation, and the second communicative task of cancelling the obligation.

I shall argue below that looking at these conversational data from the perspective of facework strategies provides us with systematic insights into the interactional norms and face concerns in different linguistic communities. Compared with the findings in naturally-occurring episodes or open role-play data, such systematic insights in the data are more likely to show prototypical behavioural tendencies of people in a specific linguistic community.

With the two communicative events identified, it becomes easier to find the pattern of the earlier mentioned coding scheme. If we put different strategies in the different locations of the three obligatory communication participants: the situation, the speaker and the hearer (cf. Buhler, 1934; Durst-Andersen, 2009), the pattern of the coding scheme also emerges. Apologizing and thanking fulfil the language's expressive function for the speaker with

reference to the second communicative event (cancellation) and the first communicative event (request and promise) respectively. Accounting fulfils the language's representative function with reference to the second communicative event. Explicit cancellation, suggested solutions, and option-giving are all signals to the hearer to do something, fulfilling the language's signalling function. The wrapping-up future move is concerned with the speaker's possible future actions.

6.1.2 Cross-cultural comparison

6.1.2.1 Message construction

Message construction on the utterance level is also an important source for understanding cross-cultural differences. It is believed that patterns of message construction, or "ways of putting things" reflects "the very stuff that social relationships are made of" and is "the key locus of the interface of language and society" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, pp. 55-56).

Table 6.3 shows the overall pattern of the message construction in the five data sets in the Moving scenario. The first four strategies are shared and the last two are scenario-specific strategies. From a discourse perspective, all these six strategies could also be divided into two parts. The first part is composed of the first four strategies, which are centred on the manner in which the negative directive of cancellation should be introduced to the hearer, while the second part is composed of the last two strategies, which are oriented towards the future after cancellation, with one focusing on the hearer and the other focusing on the speaker. Among these six strategies, apologizing, thanking, option-giving and compensation are key facework strategies in this scenario.

- Strategy 1: Apologizing
- Strategy 2: Thanking
- Strategy 3: Account
- Strategy 4: Explicit cancellation
- Strategy 5: Option-giving
- Strategy 6: Compensation

Table 6.3. Linguistic strategies in Moving Scenario

It is important to point out that not only the number of instances, but also the percentage of respondents using apologizing and thanking expressions are calculated in the present study,

which is inspired by Olshtain's (1989) research on apologies. The rationale for such a way of counting is to obtain cross-cultural comparable results across the different language data sets. The investigation of the percentage of respondents who use an apologizing strategy and thanking strategy in each group can give insights into the cultural differences of how people have understood and defined the situations across different cultures. As Silverman (2006) points out, some simple counting can give a full picture of the qualitative data and reveal patterns. Besides, it can also be argued that the counting of frequencies of apologizing expressions and thanking expressions is misleading, as the total frequency in each group is not the same. For example, one respondent might use up to three apologetic expressions, either due to the motivation to express his/her indebtedness or due to language deficiency (searching for the right words, self-correction or hesitation).

In order to compare features of Chinese ELF and Danish ELF in the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation, it is necessary to establish a baseline for cross-cultural norms in the two non-native English-speaking countries.

Strategies	**Chinese L1 group (n=25)**	**Danish L1 group (n=21)**
apologizing	48 % (12)	0
thanking	28 % (7)	52% (11)
account	92 % (23)	100 % (21)
explicit cancellation	84 % (21)	71 % (15)
option-giving	8 % (2)	29% (6)
compensation	8 % (2)	10 % (2)

Table 6.4. Numbers and percentages of respondents using different strategies in each L1 group in Moving Scenario

Table 6.4 presents the percentages of respondents employing different strategies in the respective mother tongue data. It could also be described as the relative frequency of the linguistic strategies. One response in the Danish L1 data is invalid and has therefore been excluded from the analysis.

The first striking finding is that none of the Danish L1 group use the apologizing strategy whereas 48% of the Chinese L1 respondents use it. Such a contrast indicates whether any kind of offence is involved in the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation. It reveals the degree of the severity of offence perceived by the respondents in each group.

In the Chinese L1 group, the total frequency of apologetic expressions is 12 (see Figure 6.1). The number of the informal apologetic expression *buhaoyisi* is four times as many as that of formal apologetic expressions (such as *duibuqi* and *baoqian*). It indicates that there are also internal variations as to the degree of offence within the Chinese L1 group, but the prototypical preference is *buhaoyisi* with the embedded connotation of face concern. In the Danish L1 group, the lack of apology points to an unwritten norm that there is no need for apology or regret in this social communicative situation among friends.

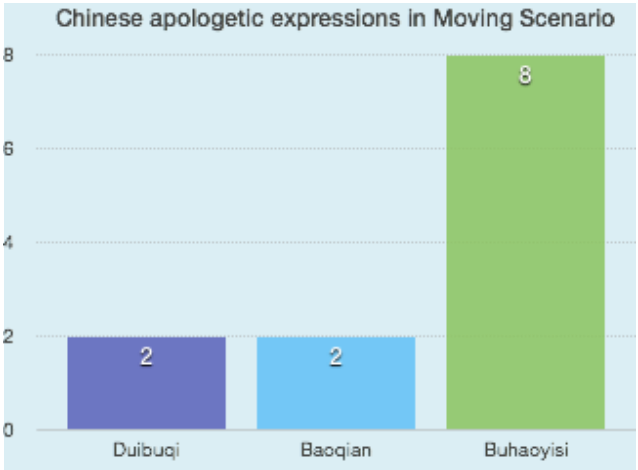

Figure 6.1. Frequency of the Chinese apologetic expressions in Moving Scenario

It is also interesting to note that the Danish L1 group shows a higher preference for the thanking strategy than for the apologizing strategy. In the Danish L1 group over half of respondents (52 %) adopt the thanking strategy. In contrast, the Chinese L1 group shows a mixed preference for both apologizing and thanking strategies. According to the earlier reconstructed double communicative events, it can be argued that the Danish L1 group has only oriented to the first communicative event of promising to help upon the first request, while the Chinese L1 group has referred to both communicative events, with a focus on both the hearer's earlier promise and the speaker's current behaviour of cancellation. No fixed pattern of gender differences on the strategic use of apologizing and thanking expressions is found in either group.

In terms of the option-giving strategy, two respondents (8%) in the Chinese L1 group use it, whereas six respondents (29%) in the Danish L1 group use it. As the option-giving strategy shows concern for the hearer's negative face, the data indicate that the Danish L1 respondents exhibit more concern for the hearer's negative face than the Chinese L1 respondents. It seems that the Danish respondents tend to give the hearer the right for self-autonomy of his/her plans for the day.

In terms of the strategy of explicit cancellation, the Chinese L1 group shows a higher preference than the Danish L1 group. It appears that the cancellation is a piece of important information that the majority of the Chinese L1 speakers want the hearer to know. For the account strategy, the two groups show a similar preference, whereas the use of the compensation strategy is quite limited, with two respondents in each group.

To sum up briefly, the Chinese L1 group and the Danish L1 group share similar concerns for giving the account of the new situation, yet the two groups differ from each other in terms of the appropriate facework strategies, including the use of the apologizing strategy, the thanking strategy, the explicit cancellation strategy and the option-giving strategy.

6.1.2.2 Dual attitudes towards cancellation: good news or bad news?

The quantitative analysis of message construction across three linguistic communities indicates significant attitude differences in the way people perceive the same scenario, especially in terms of (1) the perceived severity of the offence of cancellation and (2) the degree of the speaker's obligation to apologize in this context. Based on the contrasting number of respondents in each group that chose the apologizing strategy, we can infer the double nature of cancellation of an obligation itself: (1) a piece of good news with little imposition by almost all the respondents in Danish L1 group; (2) a piece of bad news with double impositions by 48% respondents in Chinese L1 group.

In the Danish L1 data, it would appear that the respondents do not have the perception of a strong face threat or face loss as a result of the act of cancellation itself. Therefore, none of the Danish L1 respondents adopt an apologizing strategy. Instead, Danish respondents tend to start the utterance with either the thanking strategy or the account strategy. In example [1] below neither apologizing nor thanking is used. It is composed of an account and option-giving. Such a

pattern with the focus on the account strategy at the beginning is employed by 11 respondents (52%) in the Danish L1 group.

[1]

*P76: hej Martin .
*P76: min familie er lige kommet forbi .
*P76: de kan godt hjælpe med at flytte .
*P76: &øh så du behøves ikkk hjælpe mig alligevel .
*P76: det kommer an på: om du gerne vil .
*P76: ellers kan du bare komme forbi .
*P76: (Hi, Martin, my family just turned up, they can help me move. So you don't have to help me after all. It depends on whether you want to, otherwise, you can just drop by.)

In a typical Danish example [2] with the thanking strategy, the hearer's positive face is elevated with the only reference to the first communicative event, i.e. that the hearer agreed to help and even took one day off.

[2]

*P95: &øh (..) ved du hvad.
*P95: tusind tak for du ville hjælpe .
*P95: men min familie er kommet .
*P95: så: (..) · &øh (..) det er ikke nødvendigt alligevel .
*P95: men tusind tak fordi du ville .
*P95: (&eh (..) you know what? thanks so much for wanting to help, but my family have come over, so: (..) . &eh (..) your help's not needed after all, but thank you so much for volunteering .)

In general, it seems that Danish respondents have a tendency to see the original request as the speaker imposing on the hearer an obligation to help friends. When the speaker cancels this imposition, the hearer will be likely to feel released from this imposition. In other words, it is a positive thing to stay free without imposition from anyone. Several Danish native speakers also commented that they would not feel embarrassed at all to cancel appointments in informal interviews. Therefore, the cancellation is most likely to be perceived by the Danish L1 respondents as a negative request and thus the total calculation of imposition becomes zero.

A particular utterance to illustrate this point is a comment by a Danish respondent uttered immediately after the role play in example [3] – "*Det jeg tror Martin vil være glad for" (I think Martin will be glad of that*). In this utterance, the respondent verbalised explicitly his assumption of the hearer's positive reaction towards cancellation. Such a positive attitude is also conveyed in example [4], viz. "*der' sket noget godt"* (*something nice has happened*).

[3]

*P90: hej Martin .
*P90: virkelig mange gange tak for du gad at hjælpe i dag .
*P90: men min er familie trådt til .
*P90: så du <behøvers> [/] behøver ikke at komme og hjælpe alligevel .
(The respondent commented afterwards **Det jeg tror Martin vil være glad for."**)
*P90: (Hi, Martin, thanks so much for offering to help today, but my family have stepped in . So you <need> [/] don't really need to come and help. ***"I think Martin will be glad of that")***

[4]

*P93: Martin !
*P93: nu ska' du høre .
*P93: **der' sket noget godt .**
*P93: hele familien er kommet og de vil gerne hjælpe .
*P93: så du ka' faktisk slippe for at hjælpe mig i dag .
*P93: hvis du har andre planer <du ka:'> [/] du ka' gå ud at lave .
*P93: men tusind tak for hjælpen .
*P93: (Martin! listen ! **Positive development**. The whole family have arrived to help me, so you can actually get out of helping me today. If you've planned something <you want:> [/] you want to do, but thanks a lot for the offer .)

The similar positive attitude towards cancellation can also be observed in the Danish ELF data. In example [5], the Danish ELF respondent verbalizes explicitly that *"you now have a day off to do something else"*. In example [6], "good news" is highlighted at the beginning.

[5]

*P60: John .
*P60: thank you so [!] much for offering to help me move today .
*P60: and I know you took the time off from work .
*P60: &ahem but the thing is my family is here now .
*P60: they can give me a hand .
*P60: **&so: you now have a day off to do something else .**
*P60: but thanks so much .

[6]

*P63: **good news [laughs] .**
*P63: you can go to work anyway [laughs] .
*P63: my family <would help me> [//] will help me .

During my informal interviews with non-participant native Danish speakers, the Danish native speakers commented that they would not feel embarrassed at all to cancel this appointment. Their typical comments include (1) "*In this situation cancellation is to let the hearer get off the hook*." and (2) "*Why should we apologize in this situation?*"

In the Chinese L1 data, in contrast, Chinese respondents have a tendency to regard a request asking for help as a trouble/an inconvenience (*mafan)* for the hearer, and the cancellation is another imposition to the hearer, because he/she has already taken one day off to help. The hearer has given the speaker face by accepting the heavy request. Therefore, the act of cancellation itself is not only a loss of face on the speaker's side, but will also threaten the hearer's face (or make the hearer lose face). So it is likely that most Chinese L1 group members perceive the situation as a double imposition.[21] Consequently, the Chinese L1 respondents take more responsibility for the hearer's potential face loss in the act of cancellation.

In example [7], the Chinese respondent used the informal apologetic expression *buhaoyisi* to mitigate the face treat of the account of the new situation and *keneng (maybe)* to soften the explicit cancellation. He commented further on his future compensation plan, "*In*

[21] It is also partially based on my native intuition as a cultural insider.

*order to show my deep apology, I will next time invite him for dinner and make an apology. After all I have troubled him. (*为表歉意，我还是下次请他吃饭，做个赔罪，毕竟还是麻烦到他了*)"* In this comment, he connected the regretful feeling of *qianyi* (the feeling of apology) and the apologizing intention *peizui* (to apologize) with the compensation of inviting the hearer for dinner. And the reason for the apology and compensation was verbalised as *mafan*, which refers to the first communicative event of requesting for help and the promise to help.

[7]

> CN207: 不好意思 *(buhaoyisi)*
>
> CN207: 亲戚朋友过来帮我搬家*(qinqi pengyou guolai bangwo banjia)*
>
> CN207: 然后,可能就不需要你了 *(ranhou, keneng jiu bu xuyao ni le)*
>
> CN207: (I'm sorry. My family and friends have come to help me move. After that, maybe, there is no need for you anymore.)

The informal interviews with non-participant native Chinese speakers confirmed that the attitude and reason given by the non-participant Chinese native speaker were identical to this respondent (CN207). In addition, a judgemental comment was also made by one native Chinese speaker when I told her the pattern in the Danish data - "*I don't know Danes are so rude. Why don't they apologize in this scenario*?". It is necessary to stress, from an analyst point of view, that both the Danes and the Chinese were being polite according to their own cultural norm in the GEBCom corpus.

For a simplified contrasting overview of the good news and bad news interpretations, see Table 6.5. It is also worth mentioning that the reason for the speaker's act of cancellation itself is the external situation that his/her family has arrived to help, which the speaker had not expected. In such a situation, the Chinese L1 respondents are still more likely to apologize for the act of cancellation even though unexpected events are caused by secondary-degree external reasons. By contrast, the Danish L1 respondents do not feel the obligation to apologize for the act of cancellation, because the unexpected event was not caused by first-degree relevant internal wilfulness.

Cancellation as a piece of bad news (prototypical feature in the Chinese L1 group)	
Communicative event 1:	+ request [to come]
Communicative event 2:	+ negative request [to stay away]
Cancellation of an obligation:	=**Double impositions**
Cancellation as a piece of good news (prototypical feature in the Danish L1 group)	
Communicative event 1:	+ request
Communicative event 2:	- negative request (release the hearer of an obligation; freedom/possibility to do something else)
Cancellation of an obligation:	**=Cancelled imposition**

Table 6.5. Interpretation of the imposition in Moving Scenario

These prototypical answers in each L1 group, in turn, reflect how the majority of each group with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds construct their sense of obligation and their sense of face in the act of cancellation. They reflect how people make use of linguistic resources to maintain interpersonal harmony when the potential face-threatening situation of cancellation occurs. It appears that the thanking strategy is the obligatory component according to the Danish cultural norm in this particular situation whereas the apologizing strategy is the obligatory component in the Chinese cultural norm in this situation. It is important to note that such cultural differences are observed on the group level (the prototypical feature of each group). There are still inter-individual differences in each group.

The answer from a Chinese female ELF respondent in example [8] illustrates the double nature of the cancellation in terms of a cost-benefit analysis (in terms of Leech's terminology):

[8]

*P170: I would like to tell you a bad news and good news.
*P170: Which one would you like to hear first? (laughing)

From the examples above, it can be argued that the cancellation itself has a dual effect on the hearer: either as inconveniencing the hearer by making him/her commit to something, or as releasing the hearer from an earlier obligation.

6.1.3 Discussions

6.1.3.1 Cost-benefit analysis of the cancellation of the obligation

A cost-benefit analysis of cancellation, especially in terms of the relationship between promise and obligation or expectation, is worth emphasizing here. The cross-cultural data indicate that there are two ways to interpret the hearer's promise to help: a unidirectional interpretation and a bidirectional interpretation.

In the interpretation with the smaller degree of imposition by the majority of the Danish L1 group, the hearer is committed by his/her promise. Hence the speaker gets the expectation that the hearer will carry out the promise in the future. Therefore, the speaker thinks that the speaker's cancelling the hearer's obligation to carry out the promise is perceived as a positive sign by the hearer; the hearer is the one that gets the benefit of such a cancellation; thus the speaker has no obligation to apologize. In this interpretation, the understanding of promise goes only in a one-way direction. The cost-benefit analysis shows that the hearer is the beneficiary from such a cancellation. It indicates freedom of imposition and the possibility to do something else.

In the bad news interpretation by 48% respondents in the Chinese L1 group, the hearer's promise also has a binding effect for the speaker, because the speaker has inconvenienced the hearer to do something as a symptom of their good relationship. In this way, the hearer's promise to the first request turns into *an agreement* that has a binding effect on both the speaker and the hearer. So the speaker has an obligation to make the hearer's promise happen as it was first planned, and it is also the hearer's expectation that his/her promise will be fulfilled. The unexpected incident on the speaker's side becomes an obstacle for the hearer to carry out the promise. Therefore, the speaker has an obligation to apologize. In this interpretation, the cost-benefit analysis shows that the hearer becomes the one who suffers from the mismatch of expectations. The bidirectional interpretation of the promise can be regarded as an illustration of the reciprocal nature of Chinese face behaviour, "wherein a mutually restrictive, even coercive, power is exerted upon each member of the social network" (Ho, 1976, p. 867).

6.1.3.2 Relationship between obligation and face

As there is little power distance and social distance between the interlocutors in the Moving scenario, all the utterances also reflect communication styles between in-group members. The total absence of apology among respondents in Danish L1 data in the Moving scenario implies that the Danish speakers feel that it is not necessary to apologize. It seems that it is not normative for the Danish respondents to denigrate their own position. In Brown and Levinson's terms, there is a tendency to avoid damaging the speaker's positive face in the Danish L1 data, so if the speaker uses apologizing expressions, it will also in turn embarrass the hearer. In simple words, the respondents seem to express the idea that "you and I are equals, and good friends. So I know that you don't hold it against me that I have inconvenienced you; you don't think it is a big deal. But thank you anyway."

In contrast, the use of apologizing expressions by 12 respondents (48 %) in the Chinese L1 group suggests that the debt imbalance incurred in the first request and then a cancellation makes the Chinese speakers feel a strong sense of obligation to apologize. The result indicates an interdependent relationship between the interlocutors. The Chinese L1 respondents seem to be saying "even if we are friends, I am aware that I have inconvenienced you twice and owe double *renqing*-debts[22] to you. With my apologies, I show that I am aware that I have not lived up to your expectations of me in this situation and hope that you will forgive me so that we both look good again and that we are still friends with a harmonious relationship". In this line of thought, there is a stronger sense of moral and reciprocal obligation between the interlocutors. It should be pointed out that the paraphrases used in this section aim at illustrating typical Chinese and Danish lines of thought in the Moving scenario and that they are not carried out according to the ethnopragmatic tradition.

On the basis of the demonstrated difference, I argue that the speaker's considerations of face reflected in the Moving scenario are closely related to the different cultural values. This different emphasis of cultural values in the meaning of face refute Brown and Levinson's universal claim of politeness and its abstract concept of face. The emphasis on the apologizing

[22] In this scenario, *renqing* means a favour-based social debt which needs to be reciprocated in the interpersonal relationship.

strategy in the Chinese L1 data and the emphasis on the thanking strategy in the Danish L1 data confirms, to some extent, that there is a distinction of the "East-and-West divide"[23] in the perception of the meaning of face in this situation.

6.1.4 Interlanguage and intralanguage comparisons

In the previous section the mother tongue comparison shows different orientations of Danish and Chinese face concerns. Will Chinese speakers of English and Danish speakers of English be influenced by such face orientations and exhibit pragmatic transfer of the same facework rules in their mother tongue?

In this section I will compare the ELF data with the native British English data (comparison group) first, and then compare the ELF data with the respective L1 data. Instead of regarding any deviation of ELF from the native norm as a sociopragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983), I regard all features of the two ELFs as legitimate usage from the ELF perspective (Jenkins, 2014; Mauranen, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2011). Furthermore, I view some of these prototypical features as reflections of their own cultural background or the mixed influence of both the local cultural norm and the available native English linguistic repertoire.

6.1.4.1 Comparison between Chinese ELF, Danish ELF and British English

Table 6.6 shows the percentages of respondents using different strategies in the three English-language groups. There is one invalid response in both the Chinese ELF group and the Danish ELF group, which are excluded from the analysis.

Strategies	British English group (n=24)	Chinese ELF group (n=24)	Danish ELF group (n=23)
apologizing	21 % (5)	13 % (3)	9 % (2)
thanking	42 % (10)	92 % (22)	35 % (8)
compensation	0	21 % (5)	0
account	96 % (23)	88 % (21)	74 % (17)

[23] This expression is adopted from Leech's (2007) article "Politeness: is there an East-West divide?"

explicit cancellation	38 % (9)	46 % (11)	46 % (11)
option-giving	71 % (17)	4 % (1)	63 % (15)

Table 6.6. Numbers and percentages of respondents using different strategies in each English group in Moving Scenario

What is in common feature in the three English-language groups is that the account strategy is favoured by a majority of respondents in each group. It is important to point out that, in terms of message sequence, the account strategy is preferred at the beginning of the utterances by Danish ELF respondents (44%) and native British respondents (46%), in contrast to 21% of the Chinese ELF respondents. The British prototypical pattern is similar to the Danish pattern composed of 'account strategy + option-giving strategy', such as example [9] below.

[9]

*P109: John .
*P109: unexpectedly (.) eh family's turned up to help .
*P109: obviously if you still wanna help I'm quite happy for you to do so .
*P109: but don't feel you need to
*P109: and if you need to go to work then do so .

In terms of prototypical facework strategies, the thanking strategy is preferred more frequently by the Chinese ELF group than the Danish ELF group and British English group. The percentage of respondents using thanking in the Chinese ELF group is over twice as high as that in the Danish ELF group and the British English group. This result is in line with the different degree of obligation in the mother tongue comparison between the Danish and the Chinese respondents. In the use of the option-giving strategy, the Danish ELF group is more similar to the British English group than the Chinese ELF group. It indicates that the Danish ELF speakers and native British speakers are alike in giving priority of the hearer's negative face.

At the same time, the use of the apologizing strategy is quite limited in all three English-language groups. It is interesting to mention, though, that the few British responses with the apologizing strategy also demonstrate the attitude that the hearer is released from the previous obligation. In examples [10] and [11], the concern of the previous obligation is illustrated, either as "*so don't feel obliged*" or "*it is OK you can officially stand down from duties*".

[10]

*P107: ehm (.) I know that we were supposed to do the move together today .
*P107: but-eh my family've turned up and they want to help .
*P107: but I mean if you still wanna come you're more than welcome .
*P107: but I know you've got things to do today **so don't feel obliged .**

[11]

*P117: John .
*P117: I'm so sorry .
*P117: but mama and papa have just arrived .
*P117: and so (..) I am so grateful but (.) .
*P117: **it's ok you can officially stand down from duties .**
*P117: but a million thank yous and I owe you a beer .
*P117: and go and have an amazing day off .

In terms of compensation, a total of five Chinese ELF respondents use it, in sharp contrast to zero usage in both the Danish ELF group and the British English group. The three groups are relatively similar in the use of an explicit cancellation strategy.

To summarize briefly, the Chinese ELF group and the Danish ELF group differ from each other in the use of thanking, compensation, and option-giving strategies, yet they are relatively similar in the use of apologizing, accounting and explicit cancellation strategies. As to facework strategies, both the Chinese ELF group and the Danish ELF group are similar to the British English group in the use of the apologizing strategy. For the option-giving strategy, the Danish ELF group is much more similar to the British English group than the Chinese ELF group.

6.1.4.2 Comparison between Chinese L1 and Chinese ELF

The news of cancellation is considered as offensive by both of the Chinese groups. It can also be seen from the fact that the strategy of explicit cancellation is avoided right at the beginning of the utterances, with only two respondents starting with it in Chinese L1 and one in

Chinese ELF. Instead, explicit cancellation usually comes at the end of the utterances, with 11 respondents (44%) employing it in Chinese L1 and 10 respondents (42%) employing it in Chinese ELF.

At the beginning of utterances appropriate facework strategy seems to be required, either in terms of thanking or apologizing. In the Chinese L1 group, 12 respondents (48%) start with the apologizing strategy, whereas 15 respondents (60 %) start with the thanking strategy in the Chinese ELF group. The most frequently employed combination is 'apologizing + account' in the L1 group and 'thanking + account' in the ELF group. It appears that there is a shift of focus from the apologizing strategy in the L1 group to the thanking strategy in the ELF group. The shift of focus indicates that at the group level the native facework norm reflected in Chinese L1 is not transferred directly to Chinese ELF.

At the group level, the percentage of respondents using the thanking strategy increases dramatically from the Chinese L1 group to the Chinese ELF group (28% vs. 92%). At the same time, there is a considerable decrease in the percentage of respondents using the apologizing strategy from the L1 group to the ELF group (48% vs. 13%). I suggest that the abundant use of the thanking strategy in the Chinese ELF data is a creative way to compensate for the internal emotion of indebtedness (*renqing* debt) formed in the prior interaction of requesting and promising. Chinese ELF speakers seem to need to compensate for their inner indebtedness by using the thanking strategy in English rather than the unmarked apologizing expressions in their mother tongue, because the available "I'm sorry" constructions in English do not carry the *renqing* and *mianzi* concern ("*you have been troubled*") embedded in Chinese apologetic expressions, with *buhaoyisi* in particular.

In the Chinese ELF data, a total of seven respondents employed double thanking expressions. Such repetitions intensified the thanking emotions in connection with the *renqing* debt incurred in the hearer's promise to help. Example [12] illustrates elaborate hearer-oriented facework composed of two thanking expressions and an empathetic statement *"I know that you have a lot of work to do".* This kind of sympathy illustrates the speaker's consciousness of the hearer's need.

[12]

*P154: <I'm very glad that you (..) ehmm> [//] **I'm very glad that**
<you> [/] you are willing to &eh help me to (.) move my department
[*] [: apartment] .
*P154: and &eh that <I have> [//] **I know that you have a lot of work to do**
and &eh my parents just get here to help me .
*P154: **so (.) I think if you <&ha> [//] really have a lot of work to do .**
*P154: **you just leave here** .
*P154: forget me .
*P154: and after you finish your job we can have a dinner with my family together .
*P154: **thank you**

In addition, the compensation to buy meal in the Chinese ELF data is also observed as pragmatic transfer of doing facework in the mother tongue, as a way to compensate for the hearer's potential face loss. Examples [13] and [14] below illustrate that the compensation could be used in combination with either apologizing or thanking. As Pan (2000) describes it, "the exchange of gifts, favors, banquets, and visits embodies the social support and sentimental attachment to *guanxi*" (p. 27). In other words, the compensation strategy reflects the interdependent mutual obligation between the interlocutors.

[13]

*P164: **sorry** John .
*P164: it's +// .
*P164: <my> [/] my family is coming to help me (.) to move my house .
*P164: &eh (.) <I am> [/] I am sorry <for> [/] for calling for (.) your help .
*P164: <but is not> [//] but now it is not needed .
*P164: **maybe I can buy you dinner for this** .
*P164: **sorry** .

[14]

*P179: John .
*P179: my family's just &eh came by to <help my> [/] help my (.)
moving to [*] [:into] the new apartment .
*P179: **thank you very much** .
*P179: **and (.) just have a lunch (.) when other time .**

To sum up, it is observed that Chinese ELF data exhibit some evidence of pragmatic transfer of facework strategies from Chinese L1. The format of such transfer is not one-directional fixed transfer. Sometimes, it is a direct transfer from the mother tongue (e.g. in the employment of the compensation strategy). At other times, the pragmatic transfer is shown in a creative or hybrid form at the message sequence level (e.g. shift of a preference for thanking strategy over apologizing strategy).

6.1.4.3 Comparison between Danish L1 and Danish ELF

Danish L1 respondents tend to start their utterances with either the thanking strategy or the account strategy. In the L1 data, there are six respondents (29%) starting with the thanking and 11 respondents (52%) starting with accounts. The same trend is also found in the ELF data, with seven respondents (30%) starting with the thanking strategy and 10 respondents (44%) starting with the account strategy. These two patterns indicate that the Danish respondents in both groups give priority to (1) the information of the unexpected new situation which leads to cancellation; and (2) the facework strategy which attends to the hearer's positive face.

Whereas not a single speaker in the Danish L1 group apologizes, there are two respondents in the Danish ELF group who employ the apologizing strategy. It appears that the sense of non-obligation to apologize is also true in the Danish ELF group, with only a few individual differences within the group.

The tendency to release the hearer from the earlier established obligation and to give the hearer the option to make a choice is reflected in the prototypical Danish pattern composed of 'account strategy + option-giving strategy'. Examples [15] and [16] illustrate the pragmatic transfer of message sequence with this kind of prototypical pattern. In these two examples it is not necessary to do facework beforehand. Instead, attention is given to the new information and the hearer's negative face. In addition, at the group level, the percentages of respondents using option-giving also increases substantially from the Danish L1 group to the Danish ELF group (29% vs. 63%). If we count the responses which start with the account strategy and the explicit cancellation strategy together, there are altogether 13 instances (57%) in Danish ELF data and 13 instances (62%) in Danish L1 data.

[15]

*P70: John .
*P70: my whole family has showed up now .
*P70: &so if you wanna come &you_know .
*P70: I'll be really happy .
*P70: but if you don't .
*P70: it's ok .

[16]

*P76: hej Martin .
*P76: min familie er lige kommet forbi .
*P76: de kan godt hjælpe med at flytte .
*P76: &øh så du behøves ikke hjælpe mig alligevel .
*P76: det kommer an på: om du gerne vil .
*P76: ellers kan du bare komme forbi .
*P76: (Hi Martin, my family just dropped by, they can help me move, so you don't have to help me after all, it depends if you feel like it, so you can just drop by.)

'Thanking + account + explicit cancellation' is also a prototypical pattern in both Danish L1 and Danish ELF. It is used by seven ELF respondents and six L1 respondents. In examples [17] and [18] the thanking strategy is used to elevate the hearer's positive face. What follows afterwards is option-giving, a concern for the hearer's negative face. It is interesting to note that in example [18], the option-giving strategy is used as a kind of additional facework to mitigate the potential offence of "*your presence is not required*".

[17]

*P90: hej Martin .
*P90: **virkelig mange gange tak for** du gad at hjælpe i dag .
*P90: men min er familie trådt til .
*P90: så du <behøvers> [/] behøver ikk' at komme og hjælpe alligevel .
P90:* (hi Martin, **thank you very much indeed for your offer to help today, but my family has stepped in, so you don't need to come and help after all)

[18]

*P73: &ahem Johnny .
*P73: **I'm so happy that** you have offered to help me move .
*P73: my family will be here to help me .
*P73: &so (.) · your presence is not required .
*P73: but you are still very welcome .
*P73: if you would like to come and help me .

To sum up, cancellation of a future obligation in the Danish data sets is not perceived as severely offensive, and apologizing is not an obligatory component in the Danish context. Instead, Danish respondents' priority is to deliver the account of the new situation and to elevate the hearer's positive face with reference to the hearer's willingness to help in the context. This is true for both L1 and EFL.

6.1.5 Discussion: degree of obligation, facework strategies and pragmatic transfer

When the number of respondents using apologizing and thanking are added together, the data also demonstrate cultural variation in the maxim of obligation (Leech, 2014). According to Leech, the maxim of obligation is an S-oriented maxim, which gives a high value to S's (speaker's) obligation to O (other) and could be used to explain apology and thanking speech acts (ibid., p. 91).

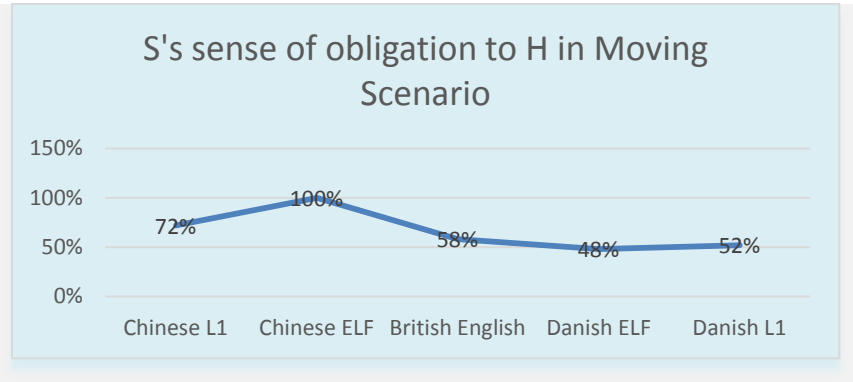

Figure 6.2. *S*'s sense of obligation to *H* in Moving Scenario

It is important to point out that those respondents who use a combination of thanking and apologizing or a combination of thanking strategies is only counted once and they are mostly

from the Chinese ELF group. It can be inferred that the speaker's sense of obligation to the hearer is felt by more respondents in the Chinese groups than the Danish groups.

From a cross-cultural perspective, the comparison of mother tongue data demonstrates a culture-specific way of being polite. It sheds light on language use differences in different social and cultural systems: to whom one says sorry or thank you, why one apologizes or shows gratitude, the setting in which apologizing and thanking expressions are expected and can disarm interpersonal offence or impoliteness, the sources for potential interpersonal conflict and how people use linguistic resources strategically to solve potential interpersonal conflict (Aijmer, 1996).

From a pragmatic perspective, both thanking expressions and apologizing expressions tune in the hearer (cf. "tuner", Ibsen, 2016) to be prepared for receiving the unexpected new information, and thus soften the potential offence. At the same time, they can also be regarded as facework strategies on the micro-social interactional level. In her article on "politeness and language", Penelope Brown (2015) argues that "Politeness is essentially a matter of taking into account the feelings of others as to how they should be interactionally treated, including behaving in a manner that demonstrates appropriate concern for interactors' social status and their social relationship" (p. 326).

In Brown and Levinson's terms, both the Danish L1 data and the British data highlight the strong concern for the hearer's negative face, while the Chinese L1 data indicate another way of doing facework: much more relational work is involved in saving the other's face by using apologizing to indicate the face and *renqing* concern. The use of apologizing expressions in the Chinese case is both face-saving for the speaker and for the hearer. In the Chinese native sense, by apologizing, the speaker saves the hearer's face, which in turn saves his/her own face; it is in this way that relational work is done in the communicative situation.

However, such fundamental attitude differences are not salient when comparing the ELF data alone, because Chinese ELF speakers share similarities with the Danish ELF speakers in their preference for the thanking strategy. As Leech (2014) states, "[a] thank you is *O*-oriented, presupposing a (usually previous) action by the other person; whereas an apology is *S*-oriented, presupposing a (usually previous) action by the speaker" (p. 121). It is through the highly

frequent use of thanking, apologies and compensation strategies that we notice that there is something special that differentiates Chinese ELF from both Danish ELF and British English.

6.1.6 Summary of the Moving Scenario

In summary, it could be concluded that the Chinese groups and the Danish groups have interpreted the Moving scenario in a remarkably different manner and have thus adopted different facework strategies.

In the two ELF groups, it is found that the Chinese ELF group shows a stronger sense of obligation than the Danish ELF group. Compared with British English, it is found that the Danish ELF group is more similar to the British English group than the Chinese ELF group.

The differences observed in the ELF data are influenced by the prototypical facework strategies they employ in their respective mother tongues. The contrastive use of apologizing and thanking expressions in the Chinese and Danish mother tongues provides linguistic evidence for the "East-West divide" in the perception of the content of face, which partially confirms the different self-other relationship and the different associated meanings of obligation in the theoretical debate on the notion of face.

6.2 The Meeting scenario

In the first case scenario I concentrated on the different face assessments; in the following case, I shall explore the notion of obligation, and go directly to the cross-cultural, interlanguage and intralanguage comparisons. Discussions will be centred on the degree of responsibility or personal involvement for the meeting cancellation, as well as the related face concerns demonstrated in the data in maintaining interpersonal harmony in the institutional context.

6.2.1 Exploring the situational context

The Meeting scenario is designed with a formal relationship between the subordinate and the superior in the institutional context (see scenario description below). Similar to the earlier contextual analysis, the scenario description has an implicit interactional context composed of three communicative acts, viz. (1) S's favour-requesting, (2) H's promise-making, and (3) S's

cancellation. The semi-intercultural nature is reflected in the role relationship between the interlocutors. The nationality of the Carlsberg IT manager was designed as British when the data were collected in China and Denmark, but the nationality was changed into Danish when the data were collected in the UK.

Scenario	Imperative Frame	Social context	Relationship	Social Distance	Power (S/H)
Meeting-scenario	Cancellation of an obligation	Formal	Subordinate – Superior	+SD	- / +
You are at work The manager of the Carlsberg IT department in England, Mr. Johnson, has arrived at your work this morning. You would like his opinion on a project and ask him if he could possibly attend your meeting this afternoon. The time does not suit him too well, but he agrees to come anyway. Unexpectedly, the meeting is cancelled. You have to call Mr. Johnson on his mobile to inform him about the situation, so you say:					

With reference to the notion of obligation, the hearer's sense of obligation might be acquired on the following two levels: (1) the institutional obligation: the job obligations involved in a subordinate–superior relationship; (2) the obligation created by the promise to attend the meeting. In this sense, the speaker is not first-degree directly responsible for the cancellation, but he/she is responsible for setting up the meeting appointment with the IT manager. Therefore, it can be considered as a secondary responsibility for the cancellation.

6.2.2 Message construction

Table 6.7 shows the seven linguistic strategies, which are used across the five data sets in the Meeting scenario. The first four strategies are shared with the other two case scenarios, whereas the last three are scenario-specific strategies. The thanking and apologizing strategies are polite expressions, which reflect the speaker's attitudes towards the two communicative events in the meta-interactional context. "Positive statement" reflects the speaker's positive evaluation of the impact of cancellation on the hearer. "Rescheduling future move" is oriented towards the potential future interaction and its intention is to restore or to renew the harmonious interpersonal relationship by solving the time issue.

- Strategy 1: Apologizing
- Strategy 2: Thanking
- Strategy 3: Account
- Strategy 4: Explicit cancellation
- Strategy 5: Statement of empathy
- Strategy 6: Positive statement
- Strategy 7: Rescheduling future move

Table 6.7. Linguistic strategies used in Meeting Scenario

In the data the most frequently used linguistic strategies are apologizing, thanking, accounts, explicit cancellation, and rescheduling future move strategy. Each linguistic strategy reveals different facework strategies in the interactional context. The thanking attends to the positive face of the hearer. The future move projects the speaker's willingness to continue and maintain the harmonious interpersonal relationship. As for the apologizing, it is face-threatening to the speaker's positive face and face-saving for the hearer in Brown and Levinson's terms, yet it is face-saving for both interlocutors in the Chinese perspective of face.

6.2.3 Cross-cultural comparison

In this section baselines will be made in the mother tongue comparison with a specific focus on the relative frequency of strategies, prototypical message sequence, degree of formality, and the attitude towards cancellation of an obligation.

Relative frequency of strategies

Table 6.8 illustrates percentages of respondents using different linguistic strategies in each L1 group. In the Chinese L1 group one response was invalid and thus was excluded in the data analysis.

Strategies	Chinese L1 group (n=24)	Danish L1 group (n=22)
Apologizing	96% (23)	86% (19) / 59%(13)
Account	100 % (24)	96 % (21)
Thanking	42% (10)	32% (7)
Explicit cancellation	29% (7)	36 % (9)
Future move	25 % (6)	36 % (8)

Statement of empathy	0	0
Positive statement	0	5% (1)

Table 6.8. Number and Percentage of respondents using strategies in each L1 group in Meeting Scenario

As shown in the table, there are two similarities. First, both groups are similar in their use of the account strategy, which indicates that the account of the meeting cancellation is a piece of important factual information for the hearer to know. Secondly, an explicit cancellation strategy such as "*you don't need to attend the meeting*" is not preferred. A possible explanation could be that the content in the account strategy (i.e. *"the meeting is cancelled"*) contains the underlying implicit information, thus making any explicit cancellation of attendance redundant.

The interesting finding is that Danish L1 respondents use less apologizing than the Chinese L1 respondents in the formal institutional context, in the same way as in the informal context in the Moving scenario. It seems that the Chinese L1 respondents are quite unanimous about the high severity of offence in the meeting cancellation, whereas the Danish L1 respondents are divided in their attitude. More details on the use of the apologizing strategy will be given in the attitude section below.

Meanwhile, slight differences are found in the use of thanking and rescheduling future-move strategies. In terms of thanking, the Chinese L1 group contains 10% more than the Danish L1 group. The use of rescheduling future moves is limited, with six instances (25 %) in the Chinese L1 group, and eight instances (36%) in the Danish L1 group respectively.

Message sequence

At the group level, there are some prototypical patterns in terms of message sequence, i.e. the sequential ordering of strategies. In the Chinese L1 data, as many as 18 respondents (75%) start with apologizing before accounting. A typical Chinese response tends to start with apologizing, followed by accounting and ending with a thanking strategy, such as example [19]:

[19]

CN182: 约翰逊先生，真的对不起

(yuehanxun xiansheng, ***zhende duibuqi****)*

CN182: 今天临时有事，取消今天的会议

(jintian linshi youshi, quxiao jintian de huiyi)

CN182: 谢谢你!

(xiexie ni)

CN182: (Mr. Johnsen, **I really need to apologize**.The meeting is cancelled due to temporarily announced reasons. **Thank you!)**

In this example, the Chinese formal apologetic expression *duibuqi* not only refers to the present on-going action of cancellation, but also points to the inconvenience caused by the earlier request in the first place.

Compared with the preference for apologizing expressions in the Chinese L1 data, the Danish L1 group shows more variation in the manner in which the unexpected new situation is introduced. The first salient pattern is to start with the account strategy, with apologizing or explicit cancellation afterwards. In the Danish L1 data there are 10 respondents (46%) who start with the account strategy. Among them six respondents use accounting with the Danish disarming softener *desværre* (unfortunately), such as "*mødet er desværre blevet aflyst*" (unfortunately the meeting has been cancelled). The second salient type is a first-person perspective apologizing strategy with the 'men'(but)-led account strategy, such as "*Jeg er ked af det, men mødet er aflyst*" (I am sorry, but the meeting has been cancelled). It is used by nine respondents (41%) with intensifiers. The third pattern is a thanking strategy with accounts, such as "*jeg var meget glad for du kunne deltage i vores møde, men det er desværre blevet aflyst*" (I am very glad that you could participate in our meeting, but unfortunately it has been cancelled). It is used by three respondents (14%). It seems that the prototypical Danish way of doing facework is to start with accounting and apologizing. The almost equal preference for accounting and apologizing indicates that there is a split of the cultural expectation in the Danish context. The pattern of the account strategy at the beginning indicates the priority of the transactional goal of information over proper facework beforehand, while the pattern of apologizing at the beginning suggests the priority of the relational goal of maintaining interpersonal harmony before delivering information.

With reference to the thanking strategy, it is interesting to note the difference of its positon in Danish and in Chinese. The thanking usually occurs before the accounting in Danish, whereas it occurs after the accounting in Chinese. Example [20] illustrates the Danish way as compared with the earlier Chinese example [19]. In example [19], the thanking strategy is used in connection with an intensified formal apology performative *duibuqi*, which is consistent with the Chinese politeness maxim of self-denigration (Gu, 1990). In example [20], thanking is used to elevate the hearer's face.

[20]

*P78: **jeg var meget glad for** du ku' deltage i vores møde .
*P78: men det er desværre blevet [/] blevet aflyst .
*P78: så: [/] så det er ikk' aktuelt alligevel .
*P78: (**I was really pleased that** you could attend our meeting, but unfortunately, it has been [/] cancelled . so: [/] so it's not relevant after all .)

Attitude difference

The use of the apologizing strategy can index attitude differences at the group level and indicate the degree of severity of offence towards cancellation. In the Meeting scenario, the amount of formal usage such as *duibuqi* and *baoqian* is twice as high as the informal usage (see Figure 6.3 below). It indicates that the Chinese respondents tend to take on more serious responsibility for the cancellation itself with all these formal expressions and ask for forgiveness at the same time. Meanwhile, the less formal expression *buhaoyisi* is used to indicate that what is happening was beyond the speaker's expectation and that the speaker has acknowledged what is happening is against the *renqing* and *mianzi* rules in Chinese social interaction. However, it is worth noting that in mainland China the use of *buhaoyisi* is increasingly adopted by the younger generation and has a sociolinguistic tendency to function in the same way as *duibuqi* in many social contexts. These three Chinese apologetic expressions occupy the same slot – at the beginning of the utterances. The frequency and semantic meaning of these different lexical choices in Chinese indicate that the degree of offence was felt to be relatively.

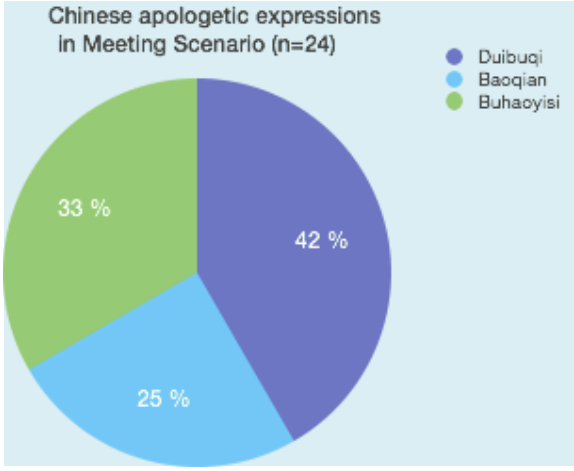

Figure 6.3. Frequency of Chinese apologetic expressions

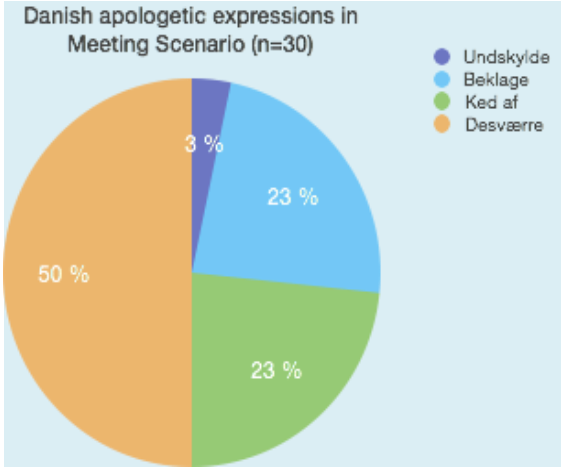

Figure 6.4. Frequency of Danish apologetic expressions

For the Danish data, Figure 6.4 illustrates the absolute frequency of Danish apologetic expressions. The disarming softener *desværre (*unfortunately*)* occupies half. In terms of the number of respondents using it (or relative frequency), the counting of apologizing instances therefore differs markedly depending on whether or not *desværre* is counted as an apologizing strategy. The total number is 19 (86%) if it is included whereas the total number is 13 (59%) if it is excluded. It seems that *desværre* may be a formal third-person perspective option for delivering disappointing information in the institutional context. The word normally occurs in the account strategy or explicit cancellation strategy. There are six respondents who use this disarming softener alone, while there are eight who use *desværre* together with other first-person perspective apologetic expressions such as *"beklage"* (apologize) / *"det er jeg virkelig ked af"* (I am really sorry) / *"beklage ulejlighed"* (apologize for the inconvenience). In such cases, it has only been counted as one respondent per apologizing strategy.

Example [21] illustrates how apologizing expressions are used together with the disarming softener *desværre*. In this example, *desværre* refers to the factual information of cancellation with institutional regret. The performative verb *beklage* is used twice. In the first *beklage*, the speaker takes on a stronger personal apology for the situation by saying "*Det beklager jeg"*. In the second *beklage*, the speaker apologizes for the inconvenience because of the hearer's priority of time. In a sense, *beklage* is used as retrospective apology for the

inconvenience the speaker has caused for the hearer, but without admitting full responsibility and wrong-doing.

[21]

*P93: ved du hvad.
*P93: der er sket det at mødet desværre er blevet aflyst .
*P93: det beklager jeg .
*P93: jeg ved at du pressede det ind imellem andre ting .
*P93: og jeg beklager <at> [/] at det var til ulejlighed for dig .
*P93: (You know what, what is happening is that the meeting has unfortunately been cancelled. I apologize for that. I know that you have squeezed time for the meeting into your busy schedule, and I apologize that it was an inconvenience for you.)

When *desværre* is not used with other apologizing expressions, it is sometimes accompanied by thanking. Example [22] illustrates how appropriate Danish facework is formulated by using an account strategy with *desværre*, explicit cancellation and thanking:

[22]

*P76: hej Kenneth .
*P76: det bli'r desværre ikk' til noget det møde som jeg nævnte for dig tidligere i dag .
*P76: så: du behøves ikk' deltage alligevel .
*P76: men tak fordi du ellers tog dig tid til det .
*(*P76:* Hi Kenneth, the meeting I mentioned earlier today isn't going to happen, so: you needn't attend after all, but thanks anyway for taking the time .)

In the above two examples [21] and [22], it is apparent that the speaker's attitude is quite different. In example [21] the response is quite formal. It appears that the speaker is taking responsibility for the cancellation of the meeting. In example [22] the response is quite informal. It sounds as if they were equal friends.

In addition, an even more causal interpretation is illustrated when *desværre* is used alone, without any other apologizing or thanking expression in the same utterance. In example [23] the respondent uttered his assumption of the hearer's positive reaction "*but this must be*

positive, as he had difficulty in coming here". It is a note of explanation, which could only occur because the data collection method took place in the oral mode. This unexpected explanation indicates that the imposition of meeting cancellation in the formal institutional context is felt as quite weak by this respondent. The casual verbal behaviour may be influenced by the Danish cultural value of equality. It is also necessary to mention that examples [21] and [23] were uttered by Danish male respondents and example [22] was uttered by Danish female respondent. However, no gender bias is observed in the data as a whole.

[23]

*P91: mødet er desværre blevet aflyst .
*P91: *[&så_men: det må være positivt .*
*P91: *eftersom han havde svært ved at komme her .]*
*P91: jeg håber vi kan finde en anden dag der passer bedre .
*P91: (The meeting has unfortunately been cancelled
[***But this must be positive, as he had difficulty in coming here***] I hope we can find another day that suits better.)

The question as to whether or not to include *desværre* in the apologizing strategy has been challenging. Consultations with Danish native speakers indicate that they hold different opinions as to whether *desværre* expresses some kind of sincere regret or as an expression of half apology. If they do consider the communicative act of cancellation as highly face-threatening, they could have used *undskyld mig* or *jeg beklager*. The unexpected contrast, and surprise for me, is that such a large number of native Danish respondents adopt *desværre*, which does not indicate severe offence, in contrast with the Chinese preference for the formal performative verb *duibuqi*, which indicates responsibility for the fault and high severity of offence. In the literature, though, *desværre* has rarely been counted as an apology IFID (Trosborg, 1995; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983).

Consequently, I maintain that *desværre* is a disarming softener whose primary function is to introduce the factual information in the data, because, as a third-person perspective softener, it involves less degree of responsibility and personal responsibility than *ked af* or *beklage*. The preference for *desværre* suggests that Danish L1 speakers attempt to downgrade personal responsibility for the (low severity) offence in the institutional context.

Degree of formality

It seems that the attitude difference is closely related to the respondents' perception of power distance between interlocutors, which can be shown in the way the respondents address the hearer in the telephone mode in the institutional context.

In the Chinese L1 data, as many as 18 respondents (75%) use *yuehanxun xiansheng* (the translated version of "Mr. Johnson"). In the Danish L1 data, there are four instances of *kære IT chef*[24], three instances of "*hej+first name*" (Hi + first name) and three instances of *ved du hvad* (you know what). The latter two ways to address the hearer indicate that the perception of the interpersonal relationship between interlocutors is much more casual and equal, and in addition, there are 12 Danish responses without any forms of address. This indicates internal variation among the Danish L1 respondents about the degree of formality in this scenario. It is worth mentioning that *ved du hvad* was also found in Ibsen (2016) as an informal attention-getter (the Library scenario) and she interpreted it as a relatively casual perception of the situation by Danish respondents.

Summing up, in terms of the relative frequency for the use of strategies, the Chinese L1 group and the Danish L1 group are different in the use of key facework strategies, including apologizing, thanking and rescheduling future move strategies. They are similar in terms of accounting and explicit cancellation strategies. At the message sequence level, the two groups also have culture-specific scripts for introducing the unexpected information of meeting cancellation: the Chinese preference for apologizing contrasts with the split preference for accounting and apologizing in the Danish data. These prototypical starting scripts point to the situated culture-specific preferences for proper facework norms. In terms of apologetic expressions, the Danish and Chinese languages have different repertoires, with different illocutionary forces addressing different formality levels. Thus the comparison shows differences in terms of the degree of responsibility for the offence, sincerity or personal involvement. These are the baselines we obtain from a cross-cultural comparison of mother tongue data.

[24] This was caused by the Danish version of the scenario description, as the hearer's name was not specified in the Danish scenario description.

6.2.4 Interlanguage comparison

In the following I shall compare the two groups of ELF data with the British English data. Discussions will be concentrated on three levels, viz. the relative frequency of strategies, message sequence, and the apologetic expressions in English.

Relative frequency of strategies

Table 6.9 gives a quick overview of the percentages of respondents employing different strategies in the three English-language groups. They are similar in terms of account strategy, which is also in line with the finding in the earlier mother tongue comparison. Major differences are found in explicit cancellation, apologizing, and thanking strategies.

With respect to explicit cancellation, the Chinese ELF respondents use it far less frequently than the Danish ELF and British respondents. It indicates that the severity of offence may be assessed as quite high by the Chinese ELF respondents.

Strategies	British English group (n=24)	Chinese ELF group (n=25)	Danish ELF group (n=25)
apologizing	83% (20)	72 % (18)	48 % (12)
account	96% (23)	92 % (23)	100 % (25)
thanking	29 % (7)	60 % (15)	48 % (12)
explicit cancellation	33 % (8)	12 % (3)	48 % (12)
future move	54% (13)	28 % (7)	32 % (8)
Statement of empathy	21 % (5)	4 % (1)	20 % (5)
positive statement	4 % (1)	4 % (1)	16 % (4)

Table 6.9. Numbers and Percentages of respondents using different strategies in each English group in Meeting Scenario

In terms of the apologizing strategy, a majority of the Chinese ELF respondents (72%) and the British respondents (83%) employ it, whereas only about half of the Danish ELF respondents (56%) employ it. The contrast in the use of apologizing by the Danish ELF

respondents and Chinese ELF respondents is interesting, because it is consistent with results in mother tongue comparisons, especially when Danish L1 responses with disarming softeners alone are not counted as instances of the apologizing strategy. Thus there appears to be a pattern here.

Besides, the similar frequent use of the apologizing strategy with the Chinese ELF respondents and the British respondents is interesting and unexpected, because normally we would expect to see more similarities between the British and Danish respondents due to their cultural similarity and location in Europe. It seems that the three groups differ in their assessment of the imposition of cancellation. It appears that the Chinese ELF respondents and the British respondents regard the cancellation as face-threatening, whereas the Danish ELF respondents may still have a split attitude about it when speaking a foreign language. The specific linguistic means for realizing apologizing strategies will be discussed below.

Compared with British English, the more frequent use of thanking in the two groups of ELF data suggests that the non-native English speakers exhibit a tendency to adopt a play-it-safe strategy (Hulstijn & Marchena, 1989). A possible explanation could be that the fixed polite expressions in English (such as *sorry* and *thank you*) are linguistic repertoire which is taught at school and which is easy to pick up when non-native English speakers use English in communication.

The use of the rescheduling future move strategy is quite limited in the three English groups, yet the content shows little variation in terms of style. Some respondents express rescheduling in a tentative manner, such as "*I hope that I can invite you for the next meeting*". Others express rescheduling in a direct request, which is expressed in a more business-oriented professional manner, such as *"can we make a new date?", or "would it be OK for me to invite you again through a conference or something"*. Due to the limited instances and individual differences, it is hard to make a generalization on the group level. However, there is a small tendency for the wish for rescheduling to be more prevalent in the Chinese ELF data whereas the direct request for rescheduling is preferred in the British English and the Danish ELF data. In addition, a short statement of appreciation or empathy is used before the direct request for rescheduling in the British English data, such as "*I'd still really value your input on the project*", or "*I know now you're on a tight schedule*". Such statements are defined as "grounders" in the

literature for requests (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984), and they are considered as appropriate facework strategies for making a new request after cancellation.

As to the positive statement, it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions on the group level because of the small number of instances, yet a small number of instances in the Danish ELF data seem to reflect the casual perception of the scenario by the Danish ELF respondents and the humorous impression they attempt to make, such as "…so your presence is not needed, *I hope that you are pleased with that.*" In addition, the importance of time is also highlighted in such positive statements, such as "… (I appreciate that you wanted to take the time,) *but you'll have some more time to do xxx work now*", and "…(so you don't have to meet anyway,) *you will have some extra time to the staff this afternoon*".

Message sequence

In the British English data, the prototypical facework is mostly done with a combination of apologizing at the beginning and wrapping-up future moves at the end. There are 19 respondents (79%) who start the utterance with apologizing, with a majority using intensifiers. As many as 13 respondents (54 %) end the discourse with a rescheduling future move. In a few instances, a statement of empathy is also used to do facework before accounts and rescheduling future moves. The future-move strategy could arguably demonstrate a self-image of professionalism and an attempt to restore the affected self-image in the act of cancellation itself. Example [24] illustrate all the typical facework features in the British data, including an apology with intensifiers at the beginning, a statement of empathy *(eg. "I know you've gone and squeezed it into your diary quite last minute"*), a rescheduling future move (eg. "*So could we arrange it another time"*), and a grounder or another facework strategy for rescheduling (e.g. "*but really still appreciate your input"*).

[24]

*P115: **I'm really sorry about this**

*P115: **I know you've gone and squeezed it into your diary (.) quite last minute .**

*P115: but unfortunately I've had to cancel the meeting through a number of people who no kind stand on.

*P115: I'm going to have to rearrange it.

*P115: **so I <u>am</u> really sorry.**

*P115: **but really still appreciate your input.**

*P115: **So could we arrange it another time?**

In the Chinese ELF data, the prototypical sequence is to start with apologizing, followed by accounts, and end with the thanking strategy and optional future moves. See example [25] for an illustration. At the group level, a total of 15 Chinese respondents (60%) start with apologizing, and 11 respondents (44%) end with thanking. It appears that in the prototypical Chinese ELF response the account of the meeting cancellation is wrapped by facework strategies which refer to both the ongoing communicative act of cancellation and to the communicative event of the hearer's promise. Seen from a corpus perspective, it appears that the combination of 'apologizing strategy + account strategy' is the prototypical pattern for both Chinese ELF and British English.

[25]

*P173: **sorry** Mr Johnson .

*P173: the meeting has been cancelled .

*P173: because of ..eh...the (...)

*P173: so &eh (.) **thank you for considerations to accept the meeting** and

we will arrange the meeting for another time.

In the Danish ELF data, the respondents are divided in their prototypical starting strategies, with 11 instances (44%) of apologizing strategy and six instances (24%) of thanking strategies. The two prototypical sequences are (1) 'apologizing strategy + account strategy + (optional explicit cancellation)"; and (2) 'thanking strategy + account strategy + (optional choice of explicit cancellation or rescheduling future move)'. Examples [26] and [27] illustrate these two prototypical sequences. The choice of the apologizing or thanking strategies as the initial

strategy refers to the two different communicative events in the situational context respectively. The use of explicit cancellation in these two examples (e.g. *there won't be any need for you to drop by; so you don't have to meet anyway*) signals, to some extent, a relatively weak perception of the degree of offence to the superior in the formal institutional context.

[26]

*P60: mr Johnson .

*P60: **I'm sorry to tell you .**

*P60: but the meeting we: talked about earlier today got cancelled .

*P60: **&so · &then therefore there won't be any need for you to drop by** .

*P60: I'm sure we'll have another meeting where I would appreciate

[!] if you would drop by .

[27]

*P73: &ahem **thank you very much for** taking the time to: meet with me this afternoon .

*P73: &ahem the meeting has been cancelled .

*P73: &**so: you don't have to meet anyway** .

*P73: **&so you will have · some extra time to the staff this afternoon .**

Apologetic expressions in English

Table 6.10 illustrates the absolute frequency of the apologetic expressions in the three English data sets. "*I am sorry*" constructions are the most frequently used across the three English groups, something that has also been observed in some earlier studies (Chang & Haugh, 2011; Robinson, 2004; Trosborg, 1995). At the surface level, Chinese ELF data and British English data exhibit similarity in the frequency of "*I am sorry*" constructions. British English

data and Danish ELF data exhibit similarity in the frequent use of disarming softeners. The prototypical construction in the Danish ELF data is "I'm sorry, but…." (six instances). Ogiermann (2009) argues that the *but*-clause introduces new information about the offence, yet the intention is to "make the speaker's behaviour appear less offensive" (p.113). It seems that the Danish ELF speakers' choice of apology in English echoes the Danish L1 speakers' choice of less offensive apologetic expressions in their mother tongue.

Meeting scenario	Chinese ELF	British English	Danish ELF
Sorry	8	1	2
I am sorry	17	23	12
Intensifier	7	20	7
Apologies for	0	2	0
Apologize	0	1	0
Unfortunately	1	6	6

Table 6.10. Frequency of the apologetic expressions in the three English data sets

The prototypical construction in the Chinese ELF data is "I am sorry to tell/inform you that …" (eight instances), such as "*I am very sorry to inform you that the meeting has been cancelled*". The *to*-infinitive construction following *sorry* suggests that the speaker is apologizing for his/her current behaviour (Leech, 2014, p. 133). It indicates personal involvement and personal responsibility for the cancellation in that it acknowledges the impact of the cancellation on the hearer. An alternative explanation could also be the impact of the last sentence in the scenario description – "You have to call Mr. Johnson on his mobile to inform him about the situation, so you say…"

However, *sorry* alone is also used frequently (eight instances) by Chinese ELF respondents. As a neutral apology, *sorry* is the unmarked form used for trivial offences. For non-native Chinese ELF speakers, *sorry* is probably the easiest and the quickest word in their linguistic repertoire to express apologetic feelings.

In comparison, the prototypical construction in the British data is "I am (intensifier) sorry + clause" and "I am sorry to…". The frequent use of apology intensifiers (20 instances) and the specification of the offence in *that*-clause and *to*-infinitive reveal the British respondents' assessment of the high severity of offence for the meeting cancellation.

Summing up, the three English data sets exhibit a similar range of strategies, yet they differ in terms of prototypical message sequence, and in the relative frequency for the use of facework strategies, especially the use of explicit cancellation, apologizing, and thanking. In connection with face and maintaining interpersonal harmony, differences are observed in the use of thanking and apologizing expressions. With reference to the face-relevant apologizing strategy, they differ in terms of the degree of feeling of regret or apology, and in terms of the percentage of respondents employing apologizing strategies. Intensifiers within the apologizing strategy illustrate sincere feeling and face concern for the hearer, whereas *sorry* alone is a conventional ritual expression which does not carry much sincere personal feeling.

6.2.5 Intralanguage comparisons

In the following section, more explorations will be made to illustrate where there is any kind of pragmatic transfer from the respective mother tongues. Discussion of pragmatic transfer will focus on the attitude difference reflected in the relative frequency of strategies and the use of apologetic expressions in English, as well as the prototypical message sequence.

6.2.5.1 Comparison between Chinese L1 and Chinese ELF

Overview

Figure 6.5 shows the percentage of respondents using different strategies in the two Chinese datasets. As shown in the figure, a similar range of strategies is adopted by the L1 and ELF groups. In both groups, the most frequently used strategies are apologizing, account and thanking strategies. The numbers of respondents who use apologizing and thanking strategies are slightly different. There is a slight decrease in the use of apologizing and a slight increase in the use of thanking strategy from L1 to ELF.

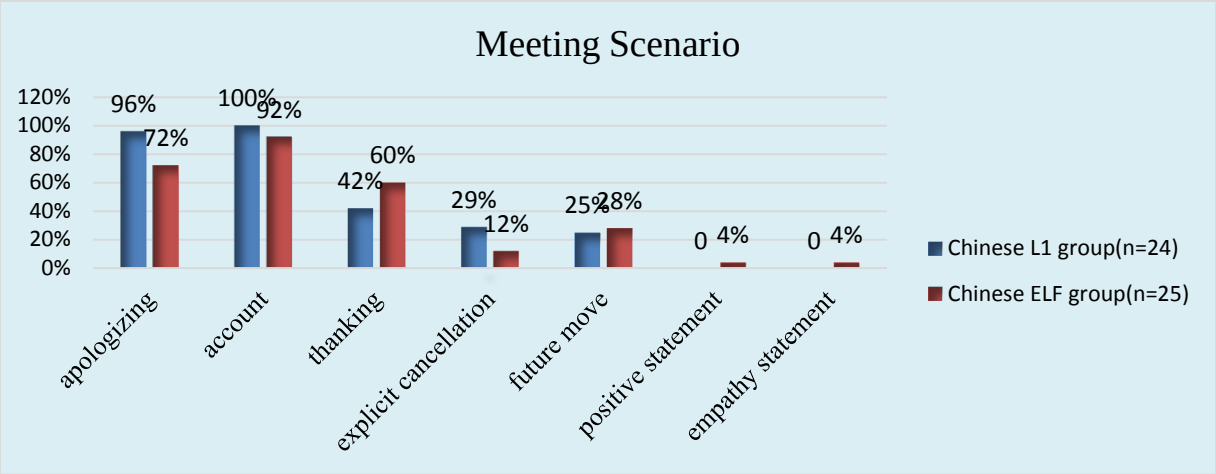

Figure 6.5. Percentages of respondents using different strategies in the Chinese data sets.

Message sequence

In terms of message sequence, the ELF group is similar to the L1 group in that apologizing is the most salient and almost obligatory component to start the utterance. A total of 18 Chinese L1 speakers (75%) start with the apologizing strategy whereas a total of 15 ELF speakers (60%) start with apologizing. In addition, none of the respondents in the L1 and ELF groups use the explicit cancellation strategy at the beginning of the utterances. It points to the high severity of the offence in this situation.

The perception of *mafan* (inconvenience) in terms of the hearer's help is salient in the Chinese L1 data. The expression *mafan* is used to acknowledge gratitude to the hearer in *mafan ni le* (([this event of the hearer committing to the promise] has inconvenienced/troubled you). In some cases it is also used as a politeness marker for requests, such as "can we trouble you again to attend the meeting when we next time hold it?" (麻烦你可不可以在我们下次开这个会议的时候来参加). In the Chinese ELF data there is no direct transfer of the word *mafan*. However, the culture-specific perception of *mafan* for the hearer is expressed by means of the repeated use of *sorry* and thanking expressions. Example [28] below illustrates profuse use of *sorry* constructions. The first two *I'm sorry* constructions refer to meeting cancellation and use of time, while the last expression combining *sorry and thank you* is a pragmatic transfer of conventionalized Chinese expressions *ma fan ni le, xiexie* (I have inconvenienced you. Thank you).

[28]

*P178: hello Johnson .
*P178: &eh **I'm sorry** that the meeting <&ha> [//] is cancelled &eh for some reason .
*P178: &ehm <I'm> [/] **I'm terribly sorry that** &eh I booked your time but can not make it .
*P178: so ehm (..) **sorry &eh and thank you .**
*P178: &=[laughing] .

Both groups show preference for the 'apologizing strategy + account strategy + thanking strategy' pattern. Such a pattern is used by 13 respondents (52%) in the Chinese ELF data. In the Chinese L1 data, a total of eight respondents (35%) use a combination of apologizing and thanking expressions. Such combined usage is not purely a transfer of the information sequence of saying things in the Chinese language, but a transfer which is influenced by the prototypical script of doing facework in Chinese.

The following pair of examples, [29] and [30], is used for illustration. In these two examples, the first apologetic attitude is oriented towards the speaker, whereas the second attitude is directed towards the hearer's help. In relation to face and maintaining interpersonal harmony, it appears that the speakers show high concern for *mianzi*, the hearer's social status as a superior.

[29]

CN182: 约翰逊先生，真的对不起
(yuehanxun xiansheng, zhende duibuqi)
CN182: 今天临时有事，取消今天的会议
(jintian linshi youshi, quxiao jintian de huiyi)
CN182: 谢谢你!
(xiexie ni)
CN182: (Mr. Johnsen, I really need to apologize, the meeting is cancelled due to temporarily announced reasons. **Thank you!)**

[30]

*P164: **oh sorry about that .**

*P164: &eh (be)cause my meeting is cancelled .

*P164: ***and thank you (.) for your (.) &eh support as well .***

The similar 'apologizing strategy + account strategy + thanking strategy' pattern in these two responses indicate a prototypical pattern of 'facework + situation + facework', which is in line with Scollon and Scollon's (1994) description of Chinese conversational patterns composed of 'facework + topic+ facework' (p. 135). Seen from Gu's maxim of self-denigration, such a prototypical pattern is to denigrate self and to elevate others. In Figure 6.6 I illustrate the change of social status for both the speaker and the hearer according to the maxim of self-denigration. The speaker's social status changes from S1 to S2 after employing the apologizing strategy. The hearer's social status changes from H1 to H2 after the speaker has employed the thanking strategy. As a result, the final social distance between interlocutors increases dramatically from Distance [S1-H1] to Distance [S2-H2].

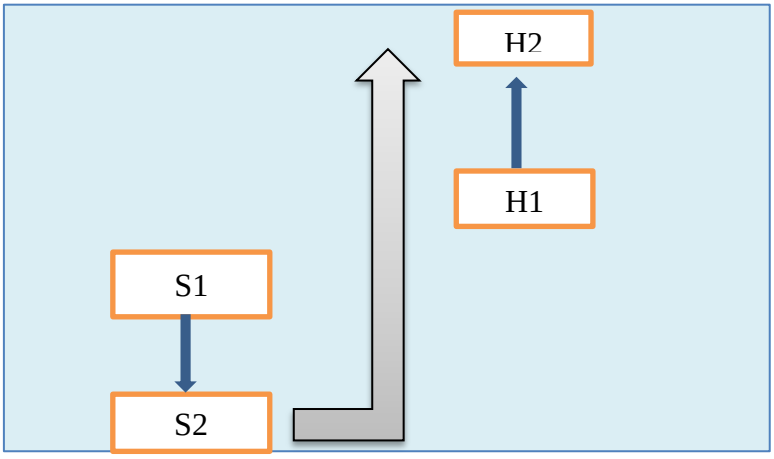

Figure 6.6. An illustration of the maxim of self-denigration in Chinese

Multiple use of apology expressions

Examples [31] and [32] illustrate the transfer of message sequence with intensification of apologetic feelings. In both examples, the speaker uses a formal apologetic performative verb first, and then uses another expression to indicate strong personal apology with intensifiers, thus showing the intention to take personal responsibility for the meeting cancellation. It seems that the first Chinese apologetic expression not only mitigates the message of the unexpected new

situation, but also carries the semantic meaning which reflects the speakers' evaluation of the amount of apologetic feeling, which is required to placate the hearer for the high severity of the offence.

[31]

CN181: 对不起，约翰逊先生

(*duibuqi*， *yuehanxun xiansheng*)

(I apologize, Mr. Johnson.)

CN181: 我们的会议因故取消了，就不开了

(*women de huiyi yingu quxiao le*， *jiu bu kai le*)

(Our meeting because of some reasons has been cancelled. It will not be held anymore.)

CN181: 非常抱歉!

(*feichang baoqian.*)

(**I am really sorry.)**

[32]

*P171: oh Mr. Johnson .

*P171: **I do apologise .**

*P171: eh looks like (.) the meeting we got scheduled this afternoon has been cancelled .

*P171: **I'm very sorry .**

*P171: ehh you can join another one .

*P171: I will let you know when next time is rescheduled .

To sum up, Chinese ELF data exhibit transfers at different levels. At the group level, the overwhelming use of apologetic strategies in ELF indicates that a similar attitude to cancellation of the obligation is transferred from L1. At the message sequence level, there is pragmatic transfer of using both apologizing and thanking strategies to do facework from the Chinese language, demonstrating the Chinese cognition of *mafan* to the addressee with higher social status.

6.2.5.2 Comparison between Danish L1 and Danish ELF

Figure 6.7 shows the percentage of respondents using different strategies in the Danish data sets. In comparison with the L1 group, there is an increase in the percentage of respondents in the ELF group who use the thanking strategy and the disarming statement. It appears that the respondents are more polite in the Danish ELF group than in the L1 group. Meanwhile, there is a decrease in the use of apologizing from L1 to ELF. The reason could be the influence of the Danish *desværre*. In the L1 group, the number of respondents using apologetic expressions without *desværre* is 13 (59%) and the number with *desværre* is 19 (86 %), whereas the number of respondents using apologetic expressions in the ELF group is 14 (56%).

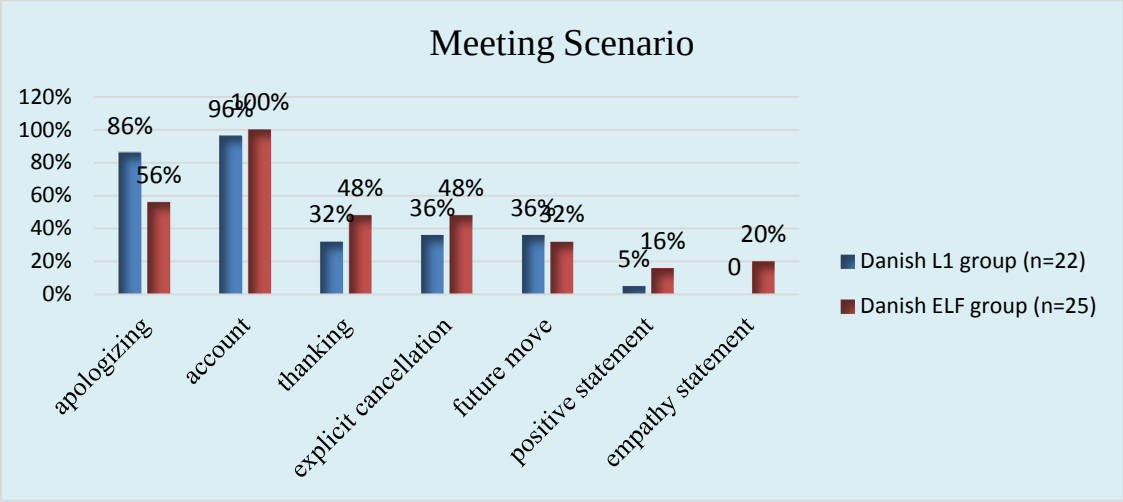

Figure 6.7. Percentages of respondents using different strategies in the Danish data sets

In terms of message sequence, there is a partial pragmatic transfer in terms of the initial apology in the Danish data. In L1 the prototypical pattern is to start with accounting (45%) and apologizing strategies (41%). In ELF the priority is changed to apologizing (44%) and thanking strategies (24%), both of which show strong empathy towards the hearer with reference to the two communicative events in the context. Comparing the attitude on a group basis, it is also shown that the willingness to use first-person perspective apologetic or regretful emotions is the same in both the L1 and the ELF groups.

In terms of the use of accounts at the beginning of the utterance, the frequency in the Danish ELF group is less than that in the L1 group, with four (16 %) and 11 (44%) respectively. This indicates that the salient pattern of using the account strategy at the beginning of the

utterance in Danish L1 is not carried over into ELF at the group level. Example [33], however, is one of the four instances influenced by the L1 pattern.

[33]

*P52: mr Johnson .

*P52: the meeting this afternoon has been cancelled .

*P52: so · (...) [yeah] so you should not come .

The possible reason for the less frequent use of accounting as the starting strategy in Danish ELF could be that the introduction of the meeting cancellation right at the beginning might be perceived as too offending and too direct in English. Such a change seems to be in line with the British English tendency, because only three British respondents start with the account strategy.

Summing up, the pragmatic transfer in the Danish data is found in a hybrid form. Instead of an equally dominant preference for apologizing and accounting as their starting facework norms in the L1 data, the main preference of the Danish ELF group is for apologizing and thanking. At the group level, there is attitude transfer with regard to the severity of offence.

6.2.6 Discussion

6.2.6.1 Degree of responsibility or personal involvement

Danish L1 speakers seem to be quite divided in their understanding of the degree of offence of a cancellation in the Meeting scenario. The responses with different apologetic expressions indicate a relational concern. Meanwhile, the choice of apologetic expressions indicates that the Danish L1 speakers seem to have a clear idea about the context of professional communication, because they tend to choose words that clearly define the rights and obligations involved in meeting cancellation.

It appears that using *ked af*, *desværre* or *beklage* is enough to restore harmony in the Danish context. There is no need to use the full-responsibility taking expressions such as *jeg undskylder mig* (I apologize).

If we go back to the situational context, it will be easier to understand the prototypical attitude conveyed in the Danish L1 responses. As discussed in my review of the conceptual framework of IFs, there is an understanding of the agency issue and normativity issue in the Meeting scenario. In the Danish context, the speaker, as a subordinate or contact person, does not have a legitimate authority to cancel the superior's obligation to attend the meeting. The unexpected new situation is also due to the temporary reason in the institution. In this sense, the speaker is not the first-degree responsible agent for cancellation. On the hearer's part, it is his/her job obligation to attend the meeting, but there is also an issue of allocation of his/her working time. The hearer as an IT manager can define what he wants to do in the institutional context.

What the Danish L1 speakers do is to inform the superior of the news of cancellation, rather than to cancel the hearer's obligation. So they choose words that can best safeguard their own face and define their own responsibilities. The lexical choices of apologetic expressions indicate that regret can be shown, but first-degree responsibility is avoided. Considering the hierarchical relationship in the institutional context, the reaction by the respondents in the Danish L1 group indicates further the Danish cultural value of equality and self-autonomy.

Seen from Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, the lexical choice of words in Danish indicates that the L1 respondents are reluctant to damage their own positive face. In other words, they try to avoid taking first-degree responsibility for the cancellation. A typical Danish example is "*øh jeg beklager hvis jeg har fået dig til at skubbe nogle ting, men det har ikke været noget jeg har været herre over*" (eh I am sorry if I have made you move some things, but it has been out of my hands). In this example, the speaker explicitly uses *beklage* to apologize for the use of the hearer's time, but does not take on any direct responsibility for the cancellation itself. As Goffman (1971) argues, an apology is regarded as "a gesture through which an individual splits himself into two parts, the part that is guilty of an offence and the part that dissociates itself from the delict and affirms a belief in the offended rule" (p. 113). The choice of Danish apologetic expressions shows empathy and personal involvement without implying fault.

In contrast, in the Chinese context, to inform the superior about the cancellation is face-threatening to both the hearer and the speaker. The frequent use of the performative verb

duibuqi (10 instances out of 24) indicates that the Chinese L1 respondents have a tendency to take responsibility for the cancellation, even though they are only secondarily responsible for it. The use of *buhaoyisi* still reveals the relational concern of the hearer's face and the use of *mafan* still reflects the mind-set of inconvenience of requesting help, even in the institutional context. It seems that the relational concern and face concern are still prevalent in the institutional context for the Chinese speakers. From the relational perspective, there is a tendency reflected in the Chinese data that the cancellation is perceived as highly offensive for a harmonious interpersonal relationship. Formal apologetic expressions with responsibility-taking and admittance of wrong-doing are needed to meet the social expectation in this context.

6.2.6.2 Self-presentation dimension of face

As in the Moving scenario discussed above, the use of apologizing strategies indicates double face concerns for speaker and hearer. Since in this case the focus is on responsibility and obligation (cf. 6.2.), the double concern merits more attention. It indicates (1) a concern for the hearer's face, especially sympathetic concern for the hearer's feelings about the cancellation (for example, "will the hearer be irritated or be pleased with the unexpected news?"), and (2) the self-presentation dimension of face. The speaker might have to consider a number of questions before he/she picks up the phone and speaks, such as "should I take responsibility for the cancelled meeting?", "will I be regarded as a highly responsible person if I take on the responsibility?", or "will I make a bad impression in the boss's eyes if I take on the responsibility for the cancellation in which someone else is at fault?"

In the literature, the use of apologies has been investigated not only from the perspective of face and politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), but also from the perspective of image restoration (Benoit, 1995), or impression management (Goffman, 1971). In her critique of politeness with a focus on others, Spencer-Oatey (2009) stresses the importance of the self-presentation aspect of face, forging a link between face, identity, and self. In my data, there is also a self-presentation element with regard to face, because promise is related to trust (Sheinman, 2011).

From the perspective of Chinese face, there is a concern with the speaker's moral face *lian* when cancellation is closely related to the earlier act of promise. As argued by Ho (1974), social face *mianzi* is closely related to social expectation and conflict avoidance. There is an

apparent discrepancy between the superior's expectations of the meeting and the speaker's personal involvement in setting up the meeting, since the speaker has no legitimate right to release the hearer from the institutional obligation. From a native Chinese point of view, the hearer may have the expectation to be respected and his opinions to be valued. Cancellation may imply disrespect to the hearer, because the speaker fails to confirm the meeting plan and consider different situations beforehand. So in an asymmetrical power relationship, it is necessary to show respect to the hearer's social face *mianzi* in order to avoid conflicts and keep harmony. This is defined by Scollon, Scollon and Jones (2012) as "hierarchical politeness". According to them, it is important to "show respect and deference to the addressee who has more power" in the Chinese context (Pan, 2000, p. 98). By doing that, the speaker also saves his/her moral face *lian*, because he/she takes moral responsibility for what is expected of him/her in the role relationship in the institutional context. The intention of using apology in the Chinese context is, therefore, to show respect to the superior's social face *mianzi* in terms of his social status and to exhibit the self-presentation of a trustworthy and responsible employee by taking responsibility for the cancellation. In other words, the function of apologetic expressions is firstly to restore the speaker's moral face *lian*, secondly to show respect and deference to the hearer's *mianzi* and thirdly to restore interpersonal harmony for the potential offence.

In the Danish context, the self-presentation element is mainly about professionalism. The priority given to the account strategy at the beginning indicates the importance of the transactional concern of information and getting things done. In the utterances with relational concerns, the adequate choice of apologetic expressions in the utterances presents a self-image of an independent employee who knows his/her own rights and obligations within the working domain. The assumption underlying the choice of apologetic expressions is that cancellation of the meeting is beyond the speaker's control and it is not the speaker's fault.

6.2.6.3 Pragmatic transfer and intercultural communication in ELF

When the prototypical cultural scripts of doing facework are different, mismatches of the cultural expectations may lead to potential intercultural misunderstandings (Boxer, 2002). In simple words, the sources of miscommunication are actually unmet expectations.

The data analysis of mother tongue data showed that the Danish divided preference for either the account strategy or the apologizing strategy at the beginning of utterances contrasts

with the Chinese and the British shared predominant preference for an apologizing strategy at the beginning. It indicates that it is culturally acceptable to transmit the message of explicit cancellation without prior elaborate facework in the Danish context. In contrast, in the Chinese and British mother tongue context it is important to express the speaker's sincere apologetic or regretful attitude before the account of the new situation. This could be a source for potential miscommunications and misperceptions. Take a Danish ELF response for instance, *"Mr Johnson, the meeting this afternoon has been cancelled. So you should not come".* For a Chinese ELF speaker or a native British speaker with the expectation that proper facework should be done beforehand, it might be perceived as impolite when this Danish ELF speaker introduces the information so abruptly. In a similar vein, if Danish speakers do not perceive cancellation as offensive news to the hearer, the overuse of apologizing expressions might be perceived by the group as unnecessary.

In addition, the linguistic expressions in English set limitations as to how non-native speakers can express their inner sincere feelings and attitudes. When non-native English speakers use *I am sorry* constructions, they are likely to have have different cultural associations with the same English word. The psychological world that the foreign English word triggers with ELF speakers is not the cultural association shared by native English speakers (Mosekjær, 2016). When attitudes and emotions are communicated in ELF in the institutional context, it seems that the attitude difference in the mother tongues, especially the degree of responsibility and sincerity, is lost. In such circumstances, the mother tongue data shed light on embedded cultural connotations. We cannot see the stronger tendency to take responsibility if we are not aware of the preference of the responsibility-taking performative *duibuqi* in the Chinese L1 data. In the Danish ELF data, it is hard to see the tendency to avoid using fault-admittance apologetic expressions without access to the Danish L1 data.

What we do see in the ELF data is the difference in the use of apology intensifiers, which distinguishes an unmarked ritual apology from a sincere apology. Apology intensifiers are used to emphasize "the speaker's feelings, empathy and concern for the hearer" (Vollmer & Olshtain 1989, p. 213) and it is normally considered as a kind of language deficiency from the SLA perspective. Adopting the ELF perspective, one cannot make any judgments about language proficiency. Instead I suggest that the use of apology intensifiers is closely related to the emotion-laden social-psychological dimension for the notion of face. Despite the academic

disputes on the universality or culture-specificity of the content of face, emotion is pointed out as the implicit thread linking major conceptualizations of face by Spencer-Oatey (2007). In Goffman's (1967) concept of face, the description of embarrassed and ashamed speakers occurs many times in connection with the Chinese expression of losing face. Brown and Levinson (1978) maintain that face is "something that is emotionally invested, and can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction" (p. 66).

Apology intensifiers in the data are closely related to people's sincere feelings, which are best accessible in one's mother tongue. According to Durst-Andersen (2011), it is our mother tongue that goes into our blood and brain and becomes internalized from a very early age, forming *the private voice* of a language, whereas we normally only get access to *the public voice* of a second language. When speaking a foreign language, non-native English speakers have less access to these face-loaded accurate emotional intensifiers than native speakers. It is not a matter of language skills, but a matter of the feelings or emotions towards different situations.

To sum up, mismatches of expected prototypical patterns for cancellation and the degree to which one expresses of one's apologetic feelings could be a source of intercultural miscommunication. These two areas are both related to the discussion of face and restoring harmony. The degree of intensification of apologetic feeling is closely related to the emotional and relational understanding of face, which clearly indicates one's attitudes towards the state of affairs for both promise and cancellation in the context.

6.2.7 Summary of the Meeting scenario

What is interesting about the Meeting scenario is that the specific asymmetrical power relationship between the interlocutors plays a more important role in the Chinese data sets than the Danish data sets. The interlanguage comparison of ELF data indicates that the attitudes as to whether it is necessary to express apology or regret is transferred at the group level, yet the intensity of such attitudes is not equally transferred.

The extent of pragmatic transfer is different in Chinese English and Danish English. From the perspective of sociopragmatics, there are different attitudes in terms of the severity of offence at the group level. In the Chinese ELF group, 72% of the speakers use apologizing strategies, whereas only about 48% of the Danish ELF speakers use apologizing strategies. The

attitude difference can be attributed to the cultural values embedded in the respective mother tongues.

At the level of message sequence, there are negative pragmatic transfers of the facework strategies in Chinese ELF. The speakers prefer to wrap or enclose the account of meeting cancellation with facework strategies, with apologizing beforehand and thanking afterwards, which is in line with the information sequencing in Chinese L.

The Danish ELF data exhibit partial negative pragmatic transfer. In Danish L1 accounting and thanking are used as the starting strategies, which indicate that the relational goal and transactional information goal are both important. In Danish ELF both apologizing and thanking are prioritized as the starting strategies, which is an illustration of relational concern. In the institutional context, the Danish tendency to avoid apologizing strategies at the beginning of the utterances is still observed as partially true in the Meeting scenario.

At the lexical level, the degree of apologetic feelings is not equally transferred. The Danish ELF speakers are better at using apology intensifiers than the Chinese ELF speakers, whereas the Chinese ELF speakers tend to adopt apologizing expressions multiple times to intensify the feelings. The Chinese feature may be regarded as language deficiency from the SLA perspective, yet I argue that it is a creative strategy to express the appropriate emotion for the purpose of maintaining interpersonal harmony.

If we compare the three English groups, the following features should be highlighted: with regard to the apologizing strategy, Chinese ELF is more similar to British English than Danish English. In terms of the use of intensifiers, Danish ELF and British English exhibit more frequent use than Chinese ELF. In terms of the use of the thanking strategy, both Chinese ELF and Danish ELF exhibit more frequent use than native British English.

6.3 The Lunch scenario

In the earlier sections it was found that the Danish and Chinese respondents have partially different interpretations of the same scenario in an institutional context with an asymmetrical relationship between interlocutors. These partially different interpretations were present in both mother tongue data and ELF data. How will they cancel the obligation in an informal institutional context, yet with an equal and close colleague relationship?

6.3.1 Exploring the situational context

The notion of obligation will be elaborated from the perspectives of both the hearer and the speaker. Similar to the earlier two scenarios, the hearer's sense of obligation can be obtained both by the role obligation in a lunch routine and the obligation of a promise. It is interesting to note that in this scenario, the obligation could also be seen from the speaker's perspective. He/she may also have a relational concern and a professional concern besides the overall interactional goal of cancellation of an obligation. The relational concern is defined by the close interpersonal relationship in the organizational context. The professional concern is defined by the job requirements: finishing the report on time as shown in scenario description below.

Scenario	Imperative Frame	Social context	Relationship	Social Distance	Power (S/H)
Lunch-scenario	Cancellation of an obligation	Informal	Colleague-colleague	-SD	- / -

You are at work
You are working on a report, and lunch break is soon. Usually, you eat with your colleague, Anna, but you realize, you will be delayed today. You call and ask her to wait for you, and she says okay. But 20 minutes later, you are still busy with the report, which has to be on your boss's table before 1pm. You do not want Anna to starve, so you call her again and say:

6.3.2 Message construction

An overview of the message construction is identified in the Lunch scenario. It appears that each utterance has some elements of the following five linguistic strategies:

- Strategy 1: Apologizing
- Strategy 2: Account
- Strategy 3: Explicit cancellation
- Strategy 4: Solution
- Strategy 5: Wrapping-up future move

Table 6.11. Linguistic strategies used in the Lunch Scenario

Among these five linguistic strategies, the apologizing and account strategies quite often form an implicit cancellation. The wrapping-up future move in this scenario includes three sub-categories such as a speaker's natural continuing future action ("*I'll grab a sandwich*

afterwards"), a compensation ("*I'll buy you lunch/coffee*"), or a new request ("*help me bring some take-away*").

6.3.3 Cross-cultural comparison

Table 6.12 illustrates percentages of respondents employing the strategies of each L1 group. It is necessary to point out that the strategy of explicit cancellation in the Lunch scenario is about the speaker's failure to carry out the agreed lunch appointment, which is slightly different from the content focus on the hearer's non-necessity in the previous two scenarios. The content of the solution strategy is that Anna go ahead and have lunch, although the meaning is realized by different sentence forms (see the discussion below). The solution strategy and future-move strategy reveal a strong concern for the lunch issue of both interlocutors, which is the immediate situational need. The speaker releases the hearer from a waiting state, while the speaker's future move is to eat afterwards.

As shown in Table 6.12, the solution strategy and the account strategy are the shared foci in the L1 groups. The preference for the solution strategy indicates that the majority of the respondents share similar concerns for Anna's lunch, which may be caused by the last prompt sentence in the scenario description. The Chinese L1 group is quite unanimous in this concern. In a similar vein, there is also a shared concern to point out the reason, i.e. the speaker's job obligation to hand in the report.

Strategies	Chinese L1 group (n=25)	Danish L1 group (n=22)
apologizing	36 % (9)	41% (9)
solution	100 % (25)	91 % (20)
account	68 % (17)	86 % (19)
explicit cancellation	20 % (5)	50 % (11)
future move	40 % (10)	23 (5)

Table 6.12. Numbers and percentages of respondents using different strategies in each L1 group in Lunch Scenario

Differences can also be found in the use of explicit cancellations and wrapping-up future moves. The percentage of respondents using explicit cancellation in the Danish L1 group is twice as high as that in the Chinese L1 group. It seems that the explicit cancellation strategy is so offensive that the respondents in the Chinese L1 group avoid using it.

With regard to the wrapping-up future move, the Chinese L1 respondents use it twice as much, or roughly, since the number of respondents in the Chinese L1 group is larger than in the Danish L1 group. It is necessary to point out that the wrapping-up future move is composed of the contents of a natural continuing future action, compensation, and a new request for take-away. The consideration for summing up these different contents is from the perspective of discourse structure: all three contents occupy the same slot and are located at the end of the utterances. Some respondents use one of them at the end of their utterance, and a few use two or three of them together in sequence. The main focus in the data is the speaker's natural continuing future action, which is adopted by six Chinese L1 respondents and five Danish L1 respondents. The compensation strategy is used by only one Chinese L1 respondent.

Another similarity between the Chinese L1 group and the Danish L1 group is the use of the apologizing strategy (see Figure 6.8 and Figure 6.9). In the Chinese data, it is adopted by nine respondents and the total frequency is nine, with three formal apologetic expressions *duibuqi* and six informal apologetic expressions *buhaoyisi*. In the Danish data, the apologizing strategy is also adopted by nine respondents. The total frequency is also nine, with eight informal apologetic expressions (four instances of *ked af* and four instances of *desværre*) and one formal apologetic expression *beklage*. The choice of the specific lexical items indicates that the degrees of informality in the context of the situation are perceived slightly differently in the Danish and the Chinese L1 data. The relatively small number of apologetic expressions may be attributed to the fact that the job obligation is more important than the moral obligation in the lunch appointment. So the use to apologize lies in the need to cancel the lunch appointment.

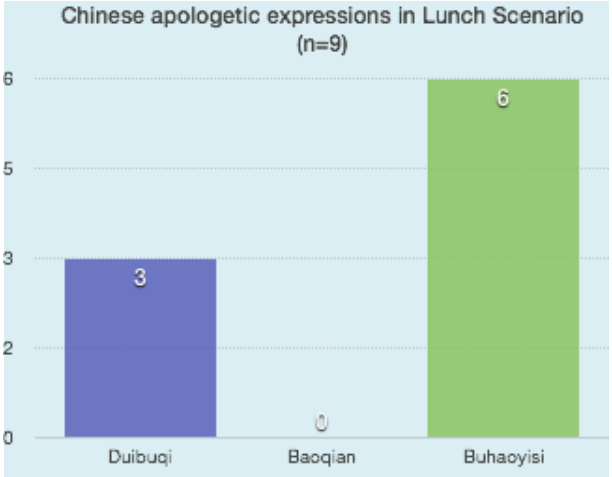

Figure 6.8. Frequency of Chinese apologetic expressions in Lunch Scenario

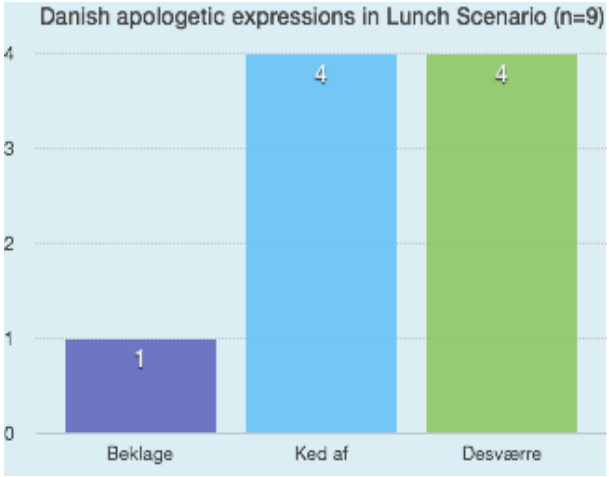

Figure 6.9. Frequency of Danish apologetic expressions in Lunch Scenario

Although there is a shared concern for the solution strategy, there are variations in the linguistic forms. It is realized predominantly by the advice/recommendation-giving lexical element *ba* in Chinese (such as "*你先去吃吧", you first go eat ba)*, whereas in Danish L1 the preferred form is an imperative with the Danish particle *bare* (such as "*gå du bare ned og spis", just go down and eat*) (6 instances), or a declarative sentence form starting with "*du bliver nødt til gå ned og spise selv" (you'll have to go down and eat by yourself*) (5 instances). The three typical sentences involve a slightly different illocutionary force, but fulfil the same communicative intention. The Chinese sentence final particle *ba* is a signal for advice or recommendation, which indicates the speaker's assumption of what best suits the hearer's interest. The Danish particle *bare* (just) indicates a permission from the speaker's side (Durst-Andersen, 2011). The Danish obligation statement *blive nødt til* (have to) indicates that the imposition lies outside the speaker's control.

Similarly, there are some attitude differences in the account strategy. The content of the account in the scenario description is that "you are still busy with the report, which has to be on your boss's table before 1pm". When it is verbalized in different mother tongues, respondents capture different aspects of it and express different attitudes. In the Chinese L1 data, the tone of most respondents is relatively neutral. The frequently used utterance is "我的报告还没写完" (My report has not been finished yet), in which 'my report' is in focus. In the Danish L1 data,

the typical utterances contain expressions such as "*trække ud" (drag out)* or "*jeg bliver nødt til…"*"(I have to), which index explicitly an attitude of secondary responsibility towards the cancellation of the lunch appointment. Typical utterances include *"det trækker ud det her" (this is dragging out), "men jeg bliver nødt til at få gjort det her arbejde færdig" (but I have to get this report finished).*

In terms of the message sequence, there are two types of salient prototypical Chinese cultural scripts. One type is composed of 'solution + (explicit cancellation/future)', such as "你先去吃，不用等我" (you can go and eat first. No need to wait for me) or "你先去吃, 不用等我" (you go and eat first. I will eat later). This salient type is used by 13 (52%) respondents in the Chinese L1 data. Another type is an 'apologizing strategy + solution strategy', such as "不好意思，你先去吃吧" (I am sorry. You can go and eat first). It is employed by nine respondents (36%) in the Chinese L1 data, with variations of an optional account strategy either before or after the solution. In the two Chinese scripts there is a strong focus on either the hearer's immediate needs of hunger or the hearer's potential feeling of offence. They indicate strong consciousness of the hearer's face. In the first Chinese script, the whole explanation is omitted and the speaker jumps to the solution directly, which reveals the other-oriented considerateness principle of Chinese politeness behaviour for in-group members.

The prototypical Danish response is to start with either the explicit cancellation strategy or the account strategy, such as "*Jeg ka' simpelthen ikk' nå det i dag. Du bli'r nødt til at gå alene* " (I simply can't make it today. You'll have to go on your own.) or "*Jeg har en rapport jeg ska' ha' gjort færdig. Du ka' bare gå til frokost hvis du er sulten*" (I've a report I need to finish. You go to lunch if you are hungry). The prototypical initial strategies of explicit cancellation and accounts are employed by 13 (59%) respondents in the Danish L1 group. The two prototypical initial strategies indicate a strong information focus at the beginning and function as the reason for the solution. It suggests a clear explicit reason for cancellation.

Summing up briefly, at the level of relative frequency, the Chinese L1 respondents and the Danish L1 respondents are similar in the use of apologizing, solution, and account strategies. They differ in the use of explicit cancellation and wrapping-up future moves. The linguistic forms for realizing solutions and accounts have some variations, which index attitude differences. At the level of message sequence, it is found that they prioritize different

components. For Chinese L1 speakers, the solution strategy is the priority, indicating the consciousness of the hearer's face and the considerateness principle. For Danish L1 speakers, the information and explicit reasoning is their priority.

6.3.4 Interlanguage and intralanguage comparisons

This section starts with the interlanguage comparison, to be followed by intra-language comparisons.

6.3.4.1 Comparison between Chinese ELF, Danish ELF and British English

Table 6.13 shows the distribution of different strategies by the numbers and percentages of respondents in each English group. There were three invalid responses in the Chinese ELF group and one invalid response in the Danish ELF group. The total numbers are thus reduced to 22 in the Chinese ELF group and 24 in the Danish ELF group.

Strategies	British English group (n=24)	Chinese ELF group (n=22)	Danish ELF group (n=24)
apologizing	71 % (17)	82 % (18)	75 % (18)
solution	71 % (17)	73 % (16)	79 % (19)
account	92 % (22)	73 % (16)	71 % (17)
explicit cancellation	42 % (10)	46 % (10)	42% (10)
future move	58% (14)	46 % (10)	21 % (5)

Table 6.13. Numbers and percentages of respondents using different strategies in each English group in Lunch Scenario

As illustrated in Table 6.13, the three English groups are relatively similar in the use of apologizing, solution, and explicit cancellation strategies. Slightly different frequencies are found in the use of accounts and future moves.

In terms of the solution strategy, it is interesting to note that a bare imperative form (10 instances) is preferred in the British English data. In Chinese ELF data statements with *you can* (10 instances) is preferred, e.g. *you can go first*, whereas in the Danish ELF data politeness marker *please* (8 instances) is preferred to "soften the impositive force" (Leech, 2014, p. 147).

At the message construction level, an interesting finding is that the main strategies in the three English groups are similar to the mother tongue data. The main difference among the three

English groups is the number of respondents adopting the future move strategy. There are three respondents who have adopted the compensation strategy in the Chinese ELF group, one in the British English group, and none in the Danish ELF group. If the compensational future-move strategy is understood as a kind of relationship-building strategy, it could be inferred that the few respondents in the Chinese ELF group are much more concerned with the compensation for the hearer.

With special reference to the apologizing strategy, it is used by similar numbers of respondents in the three English groups. An interesting similarity is that the apologizing strategy is adopted as the starting linguistic strategy by 16 respondents (73 %) in the Chinese ELF group, 16 respondents (67 %) in the Danish group and 14 respondents (58 %) in the British English group. Among the three English groups, there is a shared prototypical pattern, which is composed of 'apologizing strategy + account strategy + solution strategy'. It seems that the three groups of English speakers agree on the idea that explicit reasoning is needed for lunch cancellation and that the solution strategy is the best way to redress the face-threat and make the relationship good again. So it could be concluded that the three English groups are also quite similar in their use of apologizing as disarming softeners for the information of cancellation. No thanking strategy is adopted across the groups, because of the close relationship between interlocutors and the minor imposition of lunch cancellation.

A small difference, though, is demonstrated with the frequency of intensifiers (see Table 6.14 below). As discussed in the Meeting scenario, intensification can be used to distinguish ritual apology from sincere apology. As seen in table 6.14, the Danish ELF data exhibit more similarity with the British English data than the Chinese ELF data in terms of the frequency of intensifiers. By comparison, the Chinese ELF speakers tend to intensify the sincere feeling through more frequent use of *sorry/I am sorry* constructions rather than the linguistically 'demanding' use of intensifiers.

Lunch scenario	**Chinese ELF**	**British English**	**Danish ELF**
Sorry	8	7	3
I am sorry	18	17	15
Intensifier	7	16	12

Table 6.14. Frequency of apologizing expressions and intensifiers in Lunch Scenario

Summing up, it is found that the three English groups are quite similar, not only in terms of the relative frequency of linguistic strategies, but also in terms of the prototypical message sequence of strategies. As far as the use of ELF is concerned, a small difference is found in the frequency of apology intensifiers. With reference to face-keeping and maintaining harmony, the three groups are convergent in their way of doing facework with slightly different degrees of emotional intensity.

6.3.4.2. Comparison between Chinese L1 and the Chinese ELF

Overview

In the Chinese L1 data the most frequently used strategies are apologizing, solution, and account strategies. In the Chinese ELF data the preferred strategies are solution, apologizing, and account strategies. An interesting finding is that the L1 speakers and the ELF speakers differ a great deal in their employment of apologizing and solution. 46% more Chinese ELF speakers employ the apologizing strategy than the L1 speakers. At the same time, 17% more Chinese L1 speakers employ the solution strategy than the ELF speakers.

The number of respondents employing the explicit cancellation strategy in the Chinese ELF group is twice as many as that in the L1 group, with 10 respondents and five respondents respectively.

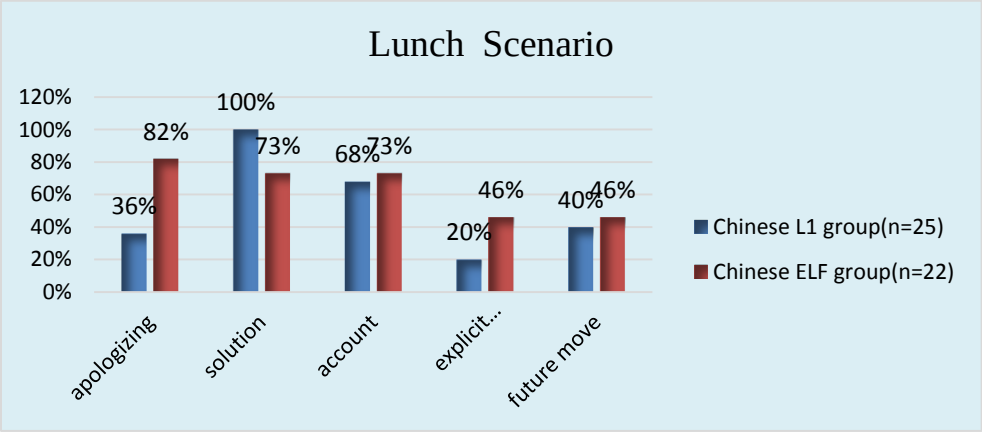

Figure 6.10. Percentages of respondents using different strategies in the Chinese data sets

Message sequence

The salient starting strategy is either solution or apologizing, which is adopted by 13 respondents (52%) and nine respondents (36 %) in the Chinese L1 group, whereas the ending strategies are quite diverse. A typical answer in Chinese starting with solution normally ends with “不用等我” (No need to wait for me) or “我等会儿再去吃” (I go and eat later).

Similar to the starting strategies in the Chinese L1 group, the main starting strategies are either apologizing or solution in Chinese ELF. However, the preference in the two groups is quite different. The apologizing strategy is adopted by nine respondents (36%) in the Chinese L1 group, yet by 16 respondents (73%) in the ELF group.

The solution strategy is adopted by 13 respondents (52%) as the initial strategy in the Chinese L1 group, but by four respondents (18%) in the ELF group. It appears that there is a shift of focus from the immediate solution to the hearer’s starving problem in Chinese L1 to the apologizing strategy as appropriate facework in Chinese ELF. Interestingly, though, the preference for apologizing as the starting strategy in Chinese ELF is similar to the preference in the British English data, in which 14 respondents (58%) start with apologizing.

Compared with the Chinese L1 group, the number of respondents adopting apologizing in the ELF group is twice as large as that in the L1 group. The respondents in the Chinese ELF group tend to choose many more *sorry* expressions (18 instances) combined with the compensation strategy (3 instances), whereas all the respondents in the Chinese L1 group focus on the solution strategy.

Solution strategy

The solution strategy is used by all 25 respondents in the Chinese L1 group. It indicates a strong concern for the hearer and must be said to be an obligatory component in the Chinese L1 data. The linguistic form is “你先去吃吧” (you first go eat + sentence final particle *ba*). As many as 21 respondents use the Chinese sentence final particle *ba* to realize the solution strategy. The final particle *ba* is an indicator of the speaker’s advice-/recommendation giving and speaker’s invitation of hearer’s approval of his/her suggestion (Durst-Andersen & Zhang, to appear). It indicates the speaker’s assessment of what suits the hearer’s best interest, which further reflects the speaker’s concern for the hearer’s face in the form of the hearer’s actual needs. It also reflects a considerate principle in the Chinese way of being polite (Holmes &

Wilson, 2017, p. 391). In addition, the overall focus on the solution strategy could also be the reason that the explicit cancellation is adopted only by five respondents in the Chinese L1 data. In the use of the solution strategy in Chinese ELF, a pragmalinguistic transfer is observed in the content. "*I think you can go first*" in Chinese ELF is influenced by Chinese L1 "你先去吃吧" (you first go eat *ba).* The word *xian* is translated as "first" in Chinese ELF. The Chinese ELF respondents try to express the sentence final particle *ba* with the combination of 'can' and 'first' because of the non-existence of equivalent sentence final particles in English.

Apologizing strategy

In the Chinese data the total frequency of apologizing expressions is nine by nine respondents, with three *duibuqi* and six *buhaoyisi*, i.e. twice as many informal *buhaoyisi* expressions as the formal *duibuqi*. This points to the informal context of the Lunch scenario.

In a close colleague relationship in the informal setting, when the respondents pay more attention to the hearer's actual needs, it seems to be less necessary to do facework with apologizing. It could also be for this reason that the frequency of the apologetic expressions in the Lunch scenario is not as large as that in the Moving scenario and the Meeting scenario in the Chinese L1 group.

6.3.4.3 Comparison between Danish L1 and Danish ELF

Overview

Figure 6.11 gives an overview of the percentages of respondents using different strategies in the Danish data sets. In the Danish L1 data the most frequent strategies are solution, account, and explicit cancellation strategies. In the Danish ELF data, the most frequently used strategies are solution, apology and account strategies. As indicated in the figure, there is a substantial increase in the use of the apologizing strategy from L1 to ELF.

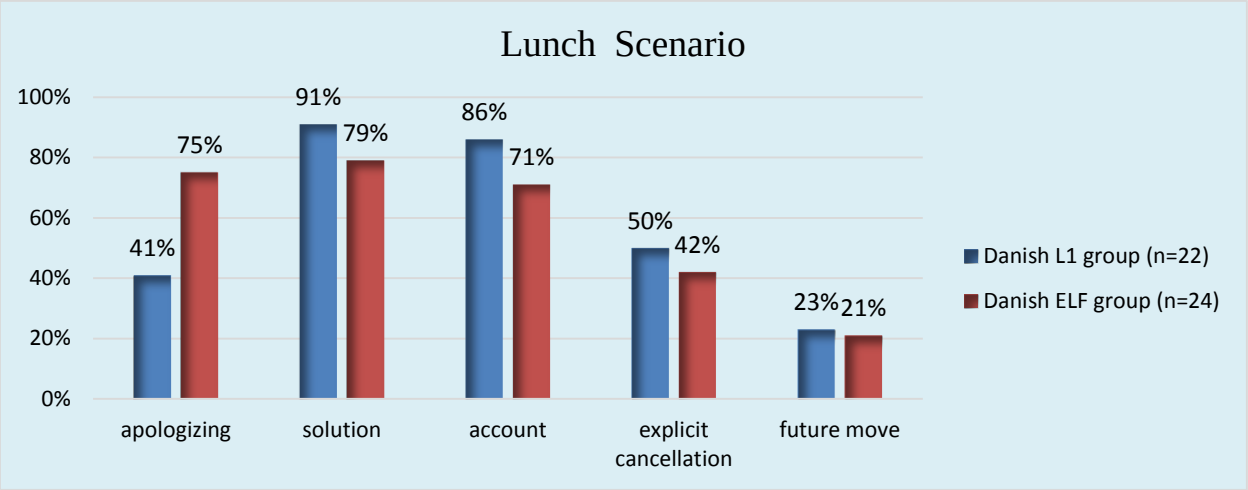

Figure 6.11. Percentages of respondents using different strategies in the Danish data sets

Starting linguistic strategy

In terms of the prototypical message sequence, the Danish L1 responses are quite diverse with respect to the starting linguistic strategy. The L1 speakers start with either an explicit cancellation (six instances), an account (seven instances), or apologizing (five instances). In comparison, the Danish ELF speakers start with apologizing (16 instances) or accounts (5 instances). It is apparent that there is a shift of focus from the diverse initial strategies in Danish L1 to a predominant tendency towards apologizing and accounting. If we categorize the explicit cancellation strategy and the account strategy together, it seems that there is an emphasis on factual information, and that in the Danish L1 context it is socially acceptable to deliver the factual information first without prior facework to placate the hearer. However, in the Danish ELF context, the tendency is changed into a focus on apologizing as the initial facework strategy.

Apologizing strategy

In terms of the apologizing strategy, nine Danish L1 speakers use it. The total frequency is nine, with four *ked af*, four *desværre* and one *beklage*. In this scenario, *desværre* is used together with the solution strategy or the account strategy. Examples include ”*du bliver altså desværre nødt til at gå til frokost uden mig*” (you’ll have to go for lunch without me, I’m afraid) or ”*det trækker desværre ud* ” (this is dragging out, I’m afraid). The typical construction with *ked af* is “*jeg er så ked af det, men…*”(I’m so sorry, but…). In the Danish ELF group, the number of respondents employing apologizing is twice as large as that in the L1 group. It

appears that Danish speakers are more likely to use polite expressions in English than they are in their mother tongue. Comparing with British English, the Danish ELF speakers' preference for apologizing is consistent with the native English norm, as there are 18 Danish ELF speakers and 17 British English speakers who use it.

Solution strategy

The linguistic form for the solution strategy varies in Danish L1. The preferred form is an imperative with the particle *bare* (just), (6 instances), or a declarative sentence form starting with "*du bliver nødt til…*"(you'll have to), (5 instances). Typical formulations include "*Gå du bare ned og spise*" (just you go and eat now) or "*du bliver nødt til at spise alene*" (you'll have to eat alone). The sentence with "*du bliver nødt til*" suggests that the reason to cancel the lunch appointment is due to external factors. This formulation also reflects an attitude of who should take responsibility for the cancellation - the delay was not expected by the speaker and the speaker is not directly responsible for it.

In the Danish ELF data, *du bliver nødt til* (you'll have to) is not observed as a salient transfer pattern, as there is only one respondent in the ELF group who says "you'll have to eat without me". Eight respondents (36%) make a request by using 'please'-led imperative sentences, such as "please go and have your lunch without me". Two respondents make a suggestion by using declarative sentences, such as "*I suggest that you go for lunch yourself*" or "*I think you should go*". It seems that Danish ELF speakers have not been strongly influenced by prototypical answers in their mother tongue.

In comparison with the attitude in the Danish L1 data, a similar attitude is found in ELF. Example [30] illustrates the respondent's attitude towards cancellation. In line 6 "*but the boss is waiting*", the speaker indicates that the job obligation is the direct external factor for the speaker's inability to keep his/her appointment. At the same time, in line 5 the speaker also shows that he is aware of the obligation to keep his/her appointment. It appears that the speaker refers to both the job obligation and the moral obligation in this response.

[34]

*P56: I can see this is getting [//] it's xxx .

*P56: it takes a little bit longer time than expected .

*P56: so · (.) for you to be able to get lunch and so .

*P56: I just think that you should go .

*P56: &ahem I real sorry that I ↓can't keep my appointment .

*P56: **but (..) the boss is waiting .**

*P56: **so you know how it is with bosses .**

6.3.5 Discussion: interactional goals, facework and positive pragmatic transfer

In the data the apologizing and solution strategies are identified as key facework strategies. Table 6.15 illustrates the distribution of these two strategies by the percentages of respondents across the five data sets. An interesting result is that both the Danish L1 group and the Chinese L1 group show a higher preference for solutions than apologizing. Based on the similar percentages of the apologizing strategy in the two L1 groups, it appears that the degree of imposition of cancellation is perceived in a similar manner. Besides, both groups also share a predominant concern for the solution strategy. Despite the earlier discussed linguistic form differences in the realization of the solution strategy, it seems that the respondents in both L1 groups are quite similar in their evaluation of the hearer's situational needs.

Lunch Scenario	apologizing strategy	solution strategy
Danish L1	41%	91 %
Danish EFL	75 %	79 %
British English	71 %	71 %
Chinese ELF	82 %	73 %
Chinese L1	40 %	100 %

Table 6.15. Percentages of respondents using apologizing and solution strategies in Lunch Scenario

In a similar vein, the adoption of apologizing and solution strategies is similar across the three English language groups. Interestingly, though, there is an increase in the use of apologizing strategy in both ELF groups as compared with the respective L1 groups. The increased use in the two ELF groups is much in agreement with the British English norms. Such similarities suggest that the pragmatic competences in the English groups are similar. It suggests that both Chinese and Danish ELF speakers have adapted the British norm. Accordingly, there might be less chance of potential miscommunication in this situation. In addition, the English convergence in this scenario also echoes Kankaanranta and Lu's (2013) interview study that there are signs of convergence trends in ELF communication in the workplace.

If we go back to the situational context, it will also be easier to understand why either the solution strategy or the apologizing strategy is prioritized. Although the IF of cancellation of an obligation is interpreted as the communicative intention in the scenario, the speakers' own choice of interactional goal is different from the researcher-defined communicative intention. This scenario is actually also an example of the emic rebellious interpretation of the embedded etic design of the communicative intentions. Each respondent has to consider the situational need at lunch time. Different from the focus on the hearer's sense of obligation in the Moving scenario and the Meeting scenario, there are also two levels of obligation on the speaker's side in the Lunch scenario, as discussed in section 6.3.1, including both the moral obligation in a lunch routine, and the institutional obligation to finish the report. In this situation, the speaker needs to prioritize his/her institutional obligation over the moral obligation in a lunch appointment. But the speaker needs to avoid making the hearer starve, which might damage the rapport between close colleagues. Consequently each respondent has two options. He/she can either choose to focus on the solution to an immediate situational need, or he/she can choose to express the apologizing emotion in the priority of two different obligations. So the solution strategy is a much more considerate facework strategy than the apologizing strategy, because it extends the relational concern by helping the hearer solve the lunch problem immediately. In this sense, the final interactional goal in the responses is not in the strict sense 'cancellation of an obligation', but the recommendation to have lunch on their own..

Given the fact that both Danish and Chinese respondents have shown extra politeness in the Lunch and Meeting scenarios, the Danish–Chinese difference in terms of compensatory future action in the Lunch scenario is also an interesting cultural phenomenon, which can give

insight into the lunch culture in the two subsidiaries of the same organization. Having lunch and meals together is an important part of both people's social life and professional business communication in China, as it is considered as the predominant means to build trust and sharing information among business people, establishing business relationships between companies and creating closer colleague-colleague relationships. Therefore people do spend time having lunch together, especially among colleagues and between business partners. In Denmark, many organizations tend to have only 30 minute lunch breaks and many people eat their lunch in front of their computer. The ways to socialize among colleagues and business partners tend to be coffee breaks and Friday beer bar instead of lunch breaks.

6.3.6 Summary and concluding remarks on the Lunch scenario

The most unexpected finding in the Lunch scenario is that the immediate solution to the hearer's situational needs is prioritized as the interactional goal by a majority of the respondents, rather than the cancellation of an obligation. Besides, the degree of imposition appears to be interpreted in a relatively similar manner in both L1 groups and both ELF groups based on the percentages of respondents adopting apologizing and solution strategies.

If we compare the two L1 groups, the numbers of respondents employing apologizing strategies are the same, yet the actual message sequence of the linguistic strategies is different. The Chinese L1 speakers tend to start with either solution or apologizing strategies, whereas the Danish L1 speakers tend to start with either explicit cancellation or account strategies.

Comparing the three English groups, a convergence of prototypical facework strategies is found in this situation. Both ELF groups are consistent with the British English group in the use of apologizing strategies. Over 70% of the respondents in the three English groups employ apologizing strategies and a majority of them use apologizing strategies at the beginning of the utterances. The increased usage of the apologizing strategy in Chinese and Danish ELF indicates that a majority of the Chinese ELF speakers and Danish ELF speakers have not been influenced by the prototypical cultural norms of doing facework in their mother tongue. Instead, both Chinese and Danish ELF speakers are approaching or adapting to the native British norm in this situation.

7. Revisiting Obligation, Face and Facework

The data analysis in the earlier chapter indicates that the Chinese and the Danes may have perceived the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation in a markedly different manner in the Moving scenario, in a partially different manner in the Meeting scenario, and in a relatively similar manner in the Lunch scenario. For an overview of the percentages of ELF respondents using apologizing strategies and thanking strategies across scenarios, see the two figures below. It indicates that the Chinese ELF speakers express a stronger sense of obligation to the hearer than the Danish ELF speakers across scenarios. This attitude difference in the ELF data is also consistent with the finding in the mother tongue data.

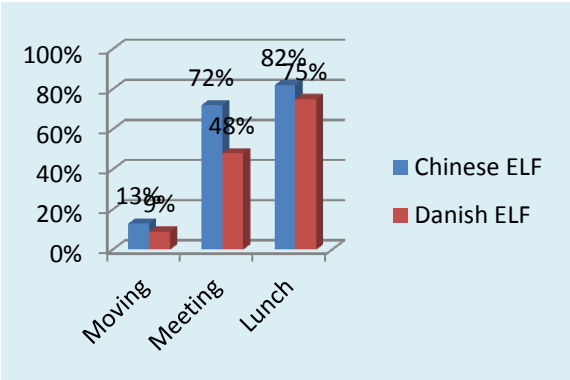

Figure 7.1. Percentage of respondents using apologizing strategies in ELF data sets

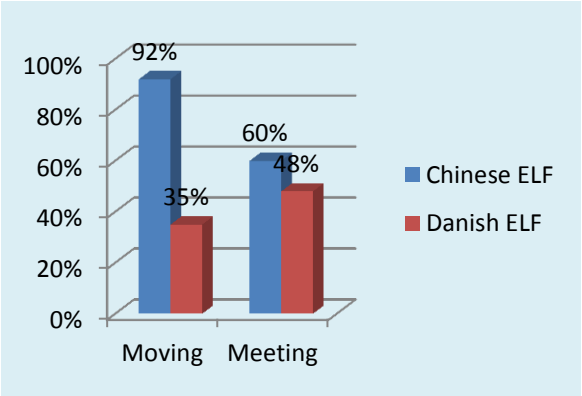

Figure 7.2. Percentage of respondents using thanking strategies in ELF data sets

Why do they communicate in different ways? What does it really mean for the Danes and for the Chinese to cancel an obligation? In this chapter I will anchor the cross-scenario discussion in the earlier theoretical discussions of obligation, face and facework. I will attempt to explain whether the observed linguistic differences are caused by attitude differences towards obligations, more specifically the hearer's promise in the interactional context. In addition, I will revisit the notions of face and facework. Features of the Chinese face system and Danish face system will be elaborated based on the mother tongue data.

7.1 Attitudes to obligations

In the three scenarios the notion of obligation has been explored in terms of the moral obligations involved in a promise, and role obligations in different relationships and in different contexts. In the Moving scenario, the promise imposes a moral obligation on the hearer in a friend-friend relationship. In the two business scenarios with institutional settings, the sources of obligation are complex, as there are both moral obligations in a promise and institutional obligations imposed by the organization in which both interlocutors work for. In the Meeting scenario, the institutional obligation with the hearer is the precondition that the moral obligation of a promise is possible to be generated. In the Lunch scenario, the institutional obligation with the speaker is the reason for cancelling the moral obligation in a promise of lunch appointment. What is in common across the three scenarios is the notion of obligation interpreted as the hearer's promise to the speaker. It is a kind of social contract, which reflects sociocultural norms.

If we look back to the cognitive processes described for the IF of obligation, it is apparent that the starting point for an obligation is the *thought* that "H doesn't want the state [of being obligated]" (Durst-Andersen, 2009, p. 332). Such a thought mirrors an underlying Danish assumption that an obligation is not something desirable.

In other words, in the Danish context, an obligation may be regarded as something negative. It is understandable, because a promise will lead to a constraint or a commitment to a person's future action. In Goffman's (1967) words, "we sometimes picture them [obligations] as burdensome or irksome things, to be fulfilled, if at all, by gritting one's teeth in conscious determination" (p. 49). In Brown and Levinson's terms, a promise is face-threatening to one's negative face. It is an impingement on a person's right to self-autonomy. In the prototypical Danish responses with positive interpretations for the cancellation, the underlying logic would be that the cancellation of the hearer's obligation is actually to release the hearer from the constraint and to give the hearer the freedom of self-autonomy in his or her future action.

In contrast, an obligation in the Chinese context may be regarded as something positive and desirable. If we go back to the literature on the Chinese perspectives on face, the positive association of obligations and Chinese moral face *lian* is explained in Hu's (1944) definition of *lian* – "the respect of the group for a man with a good moral reputation: the man who will fulfil

his obligations regardless of the hardships involved, who under all circumstances shows himself a decent human being" (p. 45). In this definition, living up to the obligations in different role relationships is closely related the societal moral codes. It seems that the more one lives up to one's obligations in difficult times, the more positive evaluations (quite often in terms of responsibility) one will get from peers and society. Similar emphasis is also pointed out by Gu (1990) as the normative aspect of Chinese politeness behaviour. Indeed, the sense of obligation is quite important in Confucianism (Liang, 1963, p. 201), because it is closely related to the image of the ideal gentleman (*junzi*) in the Confucian tradition. As a societal norm, one has to take responsibility for the obligations in all the interpersonal relationships around him or her (Liang, 1963, p. 90). Such practice shows the close interplay between relationship and obligation. As Yum (1988) puts it, "[the] practice of basing relationships on complementary obligations creates warm, lasting human relationships, but also the necessity to accept the obligations accompanying such relationships" (Yum, 1988, p. 379). In addition, the emphasis on the reciprocity of mutual obligations in the *guanxi* network in Ho's (1976) and Hwang's (1987) articles on face also illustrate the positive attitudes towards obligation.

Interestingly, prior literature has also shown that there are cultural differences in the perception of obligations. People in individualistic cultures tend to regard it as an "aversive psychological tension", or as "an uncomfortable state, made aversive by the restriction of behavioural autonomy and the amount of negative societal sanctions for choosing not to comply" (Goei & Boster, 2005, p. 285). By contrast, people in collectivistic cultures tend to have a positive perception of obligations, "showing smooth social functioning and expected social conformity" (Chang & Holt, 1994; Janoff-Bulman & Legaatt, 2002). Janoff-Bulman and Leggatt (2002), for instance, argue that obligations reflect and reinforce social relations. This view appears to be quite similar to the Chinese concept of *renqing*, which involves reciprocity of mutual obligations in interpersonal relations.

Similarly, when comparing the cultural variations in the content of politeness, Leech (2014) summarizes that in the West "the individual has rights and wants that need to be respected and indulged, and the individual is entitled to assert those rights and wants, unless they interfere too much with others" whereas in the East "ethos of identifying with the group is emphasised, in which each person has a place defined by obligations and rights in relation to superiors and inferiors, in-group and out-group members." (p. 84). A similar argument was also

made by Durst-Andersen (2017), who, based on formal logic and the data in the Moving scenario, observes that the Western societal logic is based on possibilities, whereas the Chinese societal logic is based on obligations.

Put briefly, if an obligation is interpreted as an imposition on self-autonomy, cancellation of an obligation means a release from the imposition. If an obligation is interpreted as a kind of social bond in different interpersonal relationships, cancellation of an obligation means the discontinuation or severance of the social bonds.

This attitude difference to the obligation reflects a fundamental cultural difference, yet it does not mean people will have the same attitude in all situations. There may still be variations in different contexts. In the Moving scenario when the interlocutors are friends, the above-mentioned attitude difference to obligation explains the cross-cultural linguistic differences in the way people cancel the obligation.

In the Meeting scenario, such attitude differences as a result of the dichotomy of individualism and collectivism is nuanced by the asymmetrical power relationship between the interlocutors in the institutional context. Moreover, there may be institutional expectations about how a meeting cancellation should be conducted. For instance, Drew and Heritage (1992) argue that institutional talk is "normally informed by *goal orientations* of a relatively restricted conventional form" (p. 22). So the national cultural differences in terms of the individualism and collectivism dichotomy, the asymmetrical power relationship in the institutional context and personal differences are interwoven with each other in the Meeting scenario, influencing the individuals' choices of linguistic means. In other words, the data suggest a need for a more nuanced view of culture (as not merely national culture) in interpreting such scenarios with institutional contexts.

An alternative explanation is that there may be two types of interpretation of the hearer's promise in the meta-interactional context. One type is the hearer's commitment of his or her time. Another type is the recognition of the importance of the interpersonal relationship between the interlocutors. If it is only about the hearer's time, it becomes a matter of time management. If it is about the interpersonal relationship between interlocutors, the speaker's concern is the reciprocity of a favour he or she received from the hearer. Then it becomes a matter of relationship management. In the Chinese context where social face *mianzi*, *renqing* and *guanxi*

interact, the good interpersonal relationship presupposes reciprocity of mutual obligation. At the same time, mutual obligation enhances and improves interpersonal relationships.

To sum up, the different linguistic realizations of the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation lies in culture-specific perceptions of the hearer's obligation in the interactional context, or more precisely, the hearer's promise on the basis of the speaker's request.

7.2 Revisiting the notion of face

At the conceptual level, scholars have shown continuous interest in the notion of face. Since Brown and Levinson's famous politeness theory, the theoretical discussion of face have never stopped and new conceptualizations have continuously been suggested. On the one hand, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory forges a link between linguistic forms and social structure based on a Model Person's rationality and his sensitivity to face. On the other hand, scholars from Asian countries (primarily China and Japan) challenge the universal notion of face and highlight the cultural specificity of the content of face (Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994). In addition, the identity aspect (Spencer-Oatey, 2013) and the relational and interactional aspects (Arundale, 2013) of face are highlighted in new face-based conceptual theories in the post-2000 literature on face and politeness.

Indeed, the multifaceted meanings of Chinese face make it impossible to come up with a unified definition. Due to its multifaceted meanings, I believe the best way to discuss it is by looking at how people use linguistic means to keep face and maintaining interpersonal harmony in practice.

All the respondents have in common that they are trying to be polite, yet they say things in different ways with different communicative patterns, reflecting different sets of rules in different face systems. Then, what are the face rules reflected in the Chinese empirical data? What are the face rules demonstrated in the Danish empirical data? In the following I shall summarize the face rules in the comparative mother tongue data, as the understanding of face is mostly connected with one's mother tongue. It is necessary to point out further that this summary also reflects to some extent my role as a Chinese cultural insider and a Danish cultural

outsider.[25] As Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009) noted, insiders can "help identify implicit meanings and feelings" and "offer rationales for behaviour that is difficult to interpret" (p. 288). Meanwhile outsiders are more likely to "notice behaviour that insiders simply 'take for granted' and 'challenge assumptions'" (ibid., p. 288).

7.2.1 Characteristics of the Chinese face system

Awareness of the hearer's feelings and needs (considerateness)

What is characteristic of the scenarios in the Chinese data is the use of the apologizing strategy at the beginning of utterances. There seems to be a strong need to apologize in order to maintain interpersonal harmony when cancelling an obligation. It reveals the highly face-threatening nature of cancellation in the Chinese context. The use of the apologizing strategy reflects (1) a strong concern for the hearer's face, including the hearer's possible feelings of irritation; (2) an awareness of the impact of one's own behaviour on the other person.

In the Chinese L1 data for the Moving scenario the prototypical pattern consists of 'apologizing + account + explicit cancellation'. In this scenario where the hearer is not negatively impacted by the cancellation, the use of the apologizing strategy again suggests the Chinese participants' awareness of the effect of their behaviour on the other person.

Furthermore, the priority of the solution strategy as the initial strategy in the Chinese L1 data for the Lunch scenario indicates a strong concern for the hearer's actual situational need. The rational logic behind the solution strategy is not verbalized, as it is the result of implicit social rules that members of a speech community have knowledge of. It reflects the speaker's considerateness.

Denigrating self and elevating others

In the Chinese L1 data for the Meeting scenario the prototypical communicative pattern consists of 'apologizing + account + thanking'. This pattern is in line with Gu's (1990) maxim of self-denigration in Chinese politeness behaviour. In addition, it provides a vivid illustration of

[25] To overcome the challenges of being a cultural insider and another cultural outsider at the same time, I am grateful to my Danish colleagues for valuable discussions, which have helped strengthen the comparative perspective.

the Chinese respondents' concern for mutual face and maintaining harmony. The preference of the apologizing strategy at the beginning of the utterances indicates the speaker's attitude tothe severity of the offence for the cancellation. The preference for the thanking strategy at the end suggests that it is also vital to recognize the hearer's effort to help. A combination of both the apologizing and thanking strategies points to the two sequential communicative events (promise to fulfil a request – cancellation) in the meta-interactional context at the same time, and reflect the speaker's double symptoms towards the unexpected new situation. In other words, the account of the new situation (a piece of factual information) is wrapped by the speaker's psychological feelings about himself/herself and about the hearer at the same time. Such an elaborate facework strategy seems to be required and expected to redress the highly offensive nature of cancellation in the Chinese context. This prototypical pattern in the Meeting Scenario is also in line with Scollon and Scollon's description (1994, p. 135) of the Asian conversational pattern composed of "facework + topic + facework".

The distinction between moral face lian and social face mianzi

It seems to me that there is a strong self-presentation element of moral face *lian* across the three scenarios, although a few scholars argue that the distinction between *lian* and *mianzi* is not always clear-cut (Ho, 1976). In the data, there is a meta-interactional context consisting of request and promise. With reference to promise, the Chinese notion of *xin* (trustworthiness), one of the five ideal ethics in Confucianism, is closely related to a mutual agreement based on the hearer's promise. The Chinese character *xin* (信， trustworthiness) composed of two parts "people + words". It means that a person who lives up to his/her own words is a trustworthy person (one of the characteristics of the ideal gentleman (*junzi*). In the native Chinese sense, the function of the apologizing strategy at the beginning across all three scenarios could be interpreted as the speaker's fulfilment of the moral obligation part he or she takes in the mutual agreement based on the hearer's promise. It exhibits a self-image of a trustworthy friend, a reliable employee and a considerate colleague, all of which refer to the moral face *lian* in connection with the fulfilment of obligations in different role relations.

At the same time, power distance plays an important role in the Chinese face system. Social face *mianzi* and showing deference are salient in the Meeting scenario. The cancellation can be regarded as face-threatening to the hearer's (IT manager's) *mianzi* in the Chinese context,

because the hearer may expect to be respected and his/her opinions to be valued. Cancellation may imply disrespect to the hearer, because the speaker fails to confirm the meeting plan and consider different situations beforehand. The extensive use of the formal apologizing performative *duibuqi* by the Chinese L1 speakers illustrates the *mianzi* concern for the IT manager, i.e. their sense of his/her expertise or importance defined by his/her social status. The prototypical choice of *duibuqi* illustrates a way to show respect and deference while taking on responsibility.

The importance of reciprocity

If we consider the meta-interactional context in the Chinese interpersonal interaction across the three scenarios, face never occurs alone. Chinese face often interacts with concepts such as favour, *renqing* and *guanxi*, forming a unique emotional dimension of Chinese face with social exchanges (Hwang, 1987). The hearer's promise to help the speaker is not only a favour, but also a recognition of the *renqing* or the strength of the interpersonal relationship. The obligation in the hearer's promise is not regarded as a constraint on the hearer's future actions, but as a kind of mutual obligation in the *guanxi* network, where reciprocity of mutual obligation is expected and preferred. The reciprocity of mutual obligation increases interpersonal bonds and establishes a safety net of interpersonal interdependence.

Going back to the meta-interactional context in the scenario descriptions, we witness the role of face as codes of conduct in the Chinese context. As discussed in the Moving scenario (cf. Section 6.1.3.3), the hearer's promise upon the speaker's initial request could be interpreted as giving face to the speaker. And the speaker's use of apologetic expressions for cancellation could be interpreted as saving both the speaker's face and the hearer's face. The regular expressions of '*giving face'* and '*saving face*' illustrate a concern for the other person and the relationship involved between interlocutors.

In connection with the interplay of giving face and saving face in the meta-interactional context, it is necessary to point out the notion of *mafan* (inconvenience) in Chinese. *Mafan* is claimed to be a reflection of negative face in the Chinese language by Ji (2000). At first sight, it seems to be right, as people see the event as an imposition/inconvenience to the hearer. However, if we go one step further and investigate the psychological consideration behind it, we can see differences. When Brown and Levinson propose negative face, the goal is to keep the

hearer autonomous and self-reliant, two key values in the Anglo-Saxon cultures. The Chinese *mafan* is used to express the pragmatic meaning of gratitude by adopting semantic expressions of apologizing, which refers to the *renqing* debt based on the hearer's promise. It points to the dynamic mechanism of face, favour, *renqing* debt, and *guanxi*, key cultural values that govern the Chinese society and the way people relate to each other and build harmonious interpersonal relationships.

It is because of the *renqing* concern that a lunch invitation to compensate for the relational damage for cancellation is used in the Moving and Lunch scenarios. Such a compensation strategy is used to reciprocate the favour the speaker receives from the hearer, making the *renqing* debt (relational debt) in balance again, as failure to fulfil reciprocal obligations may result in the loss of face. At the linguistic level, it is not mandatory that the *mafan* is expressed explicitly and frequently, but this particular face-relevant mind-set may be revealed by other linguistic means when Chinese speakers communicate in ELF, such as a compensation strategy, or an intensification of other thanking expressions, etc.

7.2.2 Characteristics of the Danish face system

Information is prioritized at the beginning of utterances

In the Danish context, new information is prioritized at the beginning of utterances. In the Moving scenario, a prototypical pattern is to start with the account strategy (52%) followed by the option-giving strategy. In the Meeting scenario, a prototypical pattern is to start with the account strategy (46%) first and then to do proper facework by using thanking or apologizing strategies afterwards. In the Lunch scenario, a prototypical pattern is to start with the account strategy (32%) or an explicit cancellation strategy (27%). When the two strategies are added together, they occupy 59% of the responses that favour the new information to the hearer.

It can be concluded that it is socially acceptable to introduce the cancellation without deliberate facework beforehand. It appears that priority is given to how the cancellation can be communicated efficiently rather than engaging in what in their culture represent unnecessary polite formulae, as there is less relational concern but more time concern to start with in the Danish context.

With the contrasting focus on face-sensitivity and information-rationality, it seems to confirm Scollon and Scollon's (1994) claim that "whereas Westerners believe we communicate primarily to exchange information, Chinese believe we communicate first to ratify our inherited social relationships, and within those relationships to transmit the knowledge of preceding generations" (p. 141).

Concern for the hearer's positive face and negative face

At the interactional level, there is a strong concern for the hearer's face, including both the hearer's positive face and negative face. The preference for the option-giving strategy in the Moving scenario indicates a strong concern for the hearer's negative face, i.e. the hearer's right to self-autonomy. At the same time, the preference for the thanking strategy in the Moving scenario suggests the tendency to elevate the hearer's positive face, i.e. prioritizing the positive aspect. These face concerns are closely related to the basic cultural value of independence and self-autonomy in Denmark.

The cultural value of equality and the speaker's negative face

Power distance plays a less important role in the Danish face system. In the Moving scenario no Danish respondents use apologetic expressions, including disarming softeners. In the Meeting scenario, only 41% of the Danish respondents start with an apologizing strategy for the meeting cancellation. Also, the preferred word choice is the softener *desværre*, which reveals situational regret rather than genuine personal regret or apology to a hearer with higher social status. This suggests that it is suitable to humble oneself and damage one's own positive face in the Danish context, both in a formal institutional situation with +P and in a private informal situation with –P. Interestingly, though, the reluctance to use apology is also reported in Trosborg's (1995) analysis of apology speech acts when Danish interlanguage English was compared with British English. It would seem then that it is actually a cultural phenomenon related to the basic cultural value of equality rather than a language issue. After all, apology is face-threatening to the speaker's positive face, in Brown and Levinson's terms.

7.2.3 Discussion

Based on the results of the L1 data, it seems that the East-West debate on face and politeness is a much more complex issue than the simple dichotomy itself would suggest. The

comparison of the groups in the empirical data reveals that although there is a universal concern for face in interpersonal relations across cultures, the interpretations of face vary.

Keeping face and maintaining interpersonal harmony is like building a house: the end goal is the same, but the bricks which people use are different. In the Moving scenario, the Chinese speakers have a preference for apologizing strategies in the Chinese L1 data and the Danish speakers have a preference for thanking and option-giving strategies in the Danish L1 data. Using Brown and Levinson's face terms, both the thanking and option-giving strategies are oriented towards maintaining the hearer's face (including both positive face and negative face), whereas the apologizing strategies are face-threatening to the speaker's own face in order to maintain the hearer's face, thereby restoring interpersonal harmony. However, using their terms to interpret the abundant use of the apologizing strategy in the Chinese L1 data will lose much face information, including the moral, interpersonal and interactional aspects of Chinese face interpretation.

The profuse use of apologizing strategies in the Chinese data across the three scenarios illustrates a concern for the moral face *lian*, which reflects the prescriptive societal value of trustworthiness originating in Confucianism (Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994). At the same time, it indicates the consideration of *renqing* and *mianzi* at the interpersonal relational level, as well as the willingness to restore harmony at the self-presentational level. In the Chinese scholar Ran's (2018) words, it reflects the underlying "the inter-relationship between face, emotion and relational work in communication, especially in regard to [potential] conflict" (p. 185).

The reluctance to use apologizing strategies in the Danish data for the Moving and Meeting scenarios suggests the impact of the cultural value of egalitarianism on the self-presentational dimension of face. Interestingly, in the Meeting scenario, this feature in the Danish data differs markedly from the rich use of apologetic expressions in the British data. In the Moving scenario, no Danish respondents use apologizing strategies whereas five British respondents use them. Such a difference between the British and the Danish data confirms that it is too simplistic to use the term East-West to explain all the differences at the group level. Consequently, it can be concluded that Brown and Levinson's politeness theory cannot fully account for the group-level linguistic differences caused by salient cultural values when it comes to languages from cultures other than Anglo cultures. The comparison in my study calls for a

special attention to the sensitivity to cultural values, i.e. the influence of key cultural values at the prescriptive societal dimension of face interpretation of the data in the Danish and the Chinese contexts.

In addition, the impact of the organizational culture is also something we should keep in mind at the prescriptive value dimension. According to the different conceptualizations of face by Eastern and Western scholars, it can be expected that the national culture plays a dominant role and that face in interpersonal relationships should be interpreted substantially differently across the three scenarios. However, the convergent trend in the results for the Meeting and Lunch Scenarios suggest that organizational culture may also play an important role in interpersonal interactions in institutional contexts. The shared understanding of the corporate goals, priorities, and role obligations may moderate the impact of national culture. Consequently, the face interpretation at the prescriptive value dimension in these two scenarios indicates the potential influence of organizational culture on the self-other relationship in the institutional context.

7.3. Revisiting facework in the meta-interactional communication process

Regarding facework, it is important to stress that there is a prior relationship (i.e. friends, colleagues) between the interlocutors in the scenarios. Viewed from the Chinese perspective, there is a relational and interactional aspect of face because of the meta-interactional context consisting of requesting, promising and cancellation. It shows that my data are contextualized data, which are slightly different from the decontextualized speech act data in the literature. In addition, I also consider it as one way of unfolding the dynamic process of doing facework, i.e. when, why and how facework is enacted in the social situations described in the scenarios. This is in line with Goffman's view that facework should be directed towards both interlocutors in the interpersonal encounter.

Based on the contrasting use of apologizing strategies in the Moving scenario, the face-relevant interpretations of requests, promises and apologies in Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, and the informal interviews with native speakers from different linguistic communities, it seems that there are different facework interpretations during the entire meta-interactional communication process in the Moving scenario (see Table 7.1). The reason for listing the contrasting facework interpretations in a table is to highlight the main differences in a typical

scenario in a more clear and logical manner. My purpose is not to claim that all Chinese people think according to *this* line of facework logic and that all the Danish people think in *that* line. Rather, my purpose is that the contrasting facework interpretations in Table 7.1 could function as a starting point for more reflections. For future studies, it would be interesting to investigate the participants' own face understanding during the three-step communication process in all three scenarios and to test whether the contrasting facework interpretations hold water in other social situations.

The meta-interactional communication process	Facework interpretation from the Chinese perspective	Facework interpretation according to Brown and Levinson's theory
The communicative act of requesting by the Speaker	A face-threatening process for both interlocutors	A face-threatening directive to the Hearer's negative face
The communicative act of promising by the Hearer	The Hearer's face-giving process and the Speaker's face-gaining process	A face-threatening commissive to the Hearer's negative face
The communicative act of cancellation of an obligation by the Speaker	A face-threatening process for both interlocutors	A release of the imposed negative face-threat on the Hearer.

Table 7.1. Contrasting facework interpretations for the meta-interactional communication process

7.4. Summary

The comparative data in my study show that face is an important aspect in interpersonal relationships. The prescriptive values imposed by society and the institutional context are important to understand the group differences and similarities in the GEBCom data from a sociopragmatic point of view. In the meta-interactional communication context, facework is interactional and dynamic.

The interpretative approach to face and facework for the communicative act data with a meta-interactional context in this study has made the following contributions.

(1) By highlighting the distinction between *lian* and *mianzi* (Hu, 1944; Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994) and the connection between of *mianzi*, *renqing* and *guanxi* (Hwang, 1987; King, 1980; Chang & Holt, 1994) by Chinese scholars, this study enriches the

understanding of the prescriptive moral, interactional, and interpersonal aspects of face for the Chinese data. Consequently, it provides a good starting point to interpret the comparative data;

(2) By proposing a deconstructed multi-dimensional face interpretation as an interpretive tool under Goffman's concept of facework, I make it possible to draw on the Chinese understanding of face and Brown and Levinson's classification of face in a complementary manner to approach the comparative linguistic data in the context of communicative events.

In relation to Brown and Levinson's concept of face and politeness theory, my integrated conceptual framework supplements Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and the broad empirical research within the literature on pragmatics in the following ways:

(1) A more careful consideration of the facework in the meta-interactional context, including when facework is enacted in the first place, and why facework is needed at the moment of cancellation.

(2) Returning to Brown and Levinson's central concern between language and social structure by making a closer interpretive link between the empirical data (at a group level) and the of the notion of face, rather than using and testing Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies in a categorical manner as most of the empirical literature does;

(3) A more careful consideration of the prescriptive cultural values in the Danish and Chinese contexts;

(4) A conscientious consideration of the possible impact of the institutional context in the scenarios, indicating the prescriptive values at the organizational cultural level;

(5) A focused attempt at incorporating emic insights through informal interviews with native speakers from different linguistic communities.

To sum up, the multi-dimensional deconstructed interpretations of face under Goffman's concept of facework is an attempt to answer Bargiela-Chiappini's (2003) call to return to Goffman with my comparative linguistic data. I consider it as a reconciliation strategy to deal with the seemingly opposing contrast between Brown and Levinson's concept of face

and Chinese concepts of face. The reconciliation strategy makes it possible to highlight the overlapping areas while acknowledging the differences.

8. Conclusion

"If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants."

- Isaac Newton

The present exploratory study has undertaken a systematic investigation of the under-researched face-sensitive communicative act of cancellation of an obligation produced by Chinese, Danish and British business professionals in the same multinational company in both L1 and ELF contexts. The data are closed role enactment data, consisting of 354 oral responses in three scenarios. It has investigated the following research questions:

(1) What are the similarities and differences in the way in which Danish and Chinese business professionals keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony in the communicative situations of cancellation of an obligation in their respective L1s? Why do these similarities and differences occur?

(2) What are the similarities and differences in the way in which the non-native Danish and Chinese professional business ELF users keep face and maintain interpersonal harmony in the same communicative situations as compared with native British professionals? Why do these similarities and differences occur?

(3) To what extent are prototypical facework strategies transferred from L1 communication to ELF communication?

The conceptual focus in this study includes obligation, face, and facework, which are also key elements of building trust and maintaining good interpersonal relations in international business settings.

It is necessary to reiterate that the initial conceptual framework of IFs had a strong influence on the design of the scenario descriptions. Although the pre-designed scenarios and pre-existing theoretical frameworks put certain limitations on this study, it has been possible to carry out a study which has generated new knowledge by providing a synthesis at both theoretical and methodological levels. In the following I shall summarize the findings, and point out the contributions and limitations of the study and give directions for future research.

8.1 Summary of the findings

This study is exploratory in nature. No hypotheses were set a priori, because this communicative act is an under-researched contextualized act and little research has been conducted previously on the differences between Chinese English and Danish English, or between the Chinese and Danish languages.

The data analyses suggest that the realisations for the communicative act of cancellations are influenced by the attitudes to obligations, face orientations, institutional or private context, interlocutors' interpretation and priority of the interactional goals, interlocutors' cost-benefit analysis of the unexpected new situation which causes cancellation, linguistic conventions for the use of thanking and apologizing expressions in the mother tongue (e.g. *buhaoyisi vs. desværre*), as well as the linguistic repertoire available in English for expressing emotions and maintaining harmony (e.g. thanking and apologizing expressions in English). It further shows that the social cultural norm of keeping face and maintaining harmony in the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation is context-bound and situation-bound.

It appears that there is always a two-step process: how to interpret the situations (sociopragmatic competence) and how to behave verbally in the situations (pragmalinguistic competence). The two steps are indispensable for analysing the GEBCom speech production data because of the unique conceptual focus on deontic modality-based imperative frames in the scenario descriptions.

From the viewpoint of sociopragmatics, in the context of using English as a lingua franca in intercultural communication, it is important to have a greater awareness of different attitudes to obligations, different face systems with different cultural and situational expectations, as well as of the possible impact of the institutional context. From the perspective of pragmalinguistics, the non-equivalence of the apologetic expressions in different mother tongues and in English may also have an impact on the way in which ELF speakers express their feelings, attitudes, and face considerations in interpersonal interaction. In the Chinese L1 data, for instance, the apologetic expression *buhaoyisi* ("I am sorry") and the thanking strategy of using the semantically debt-embedded apologetic statement *mafan ni le* (literatlly: "[this event of the hearer committing to the promise] has inconvenienced/troubled you") show that there are deeper internal feelings of debt, obligations and face considerations than surface in Chinese ELF. In

other words, the apologizing expressions in English do not necessarily tell us exactly how the respondents feel and do not reflect their detailed face concerns. Therefore, in order to fully understand the nature of ELF, especially the face consideration elements in ELF communication, it is crucial also to have knowledge of the mother tongue (a foreign language other than English) and the key cultural values and interactional norms underlying the mother tongue.

In the following I shall first summarize the key findings in the interlanguage, cross-cultural and intralanguage comparisons, with a special focus on the prototypical patterns of doing facework. Subsequently, the inferred situational assessment and sources of miscommunication will be pointed out.

8.1.1 The interlanguage results for three English-language groups

The British English group

The British speakers had a preference for the apologizing strategy and tended to use it at the beginning of the utterances in the Meeting and Lunch scenarios. In the Meeting scenario, the British speakers preferred to use the apologizing strategy with intensifiers at the beginning and the rescheduling future move strategy at the end. In the Lunch scenario, the apologizing strategy was preferred as the starting linguistic strategy before the introduction of the solution strategy. The combined preferences in these two scenarios indicate both a concern for the hearer's face and a practical concern to get things done in the institutional context.

In the Moving scenario, the British speakers preferred to use account as the starting strategy, followed by option-giving. Such a prototypical pattern suggests that the potential severity of offence is rated as relatively low. Rather, attention was given to the transmission of new information and the need to attend to the hearer's negative face.

The Chinese ELF group

The Chinese ELF data demonstrated a marked relational concern. Across scenarios, the Chinese ELF speakers exhibited a strong tendency to employ the thanking strategy in the Moving scenario, and the apologizing strategy in the Meeting and Lunch scenarios.

In the Moving scenario, an overwhelming majority of the Chinese ELF speakers preferred to use the thanking strategy and the compensation strategy, presumably in order to acknowledge the speaker's debt to the hearer and to compensate for the *renqing* debt to the hearer because of his/her promise to help. In the Meeting scenario, they preferred to enclose the account of the meeting cancellation with apologizing beforehand and thanking afterwards. In other words, facework strategies are needed to temper the highly face-threatening information of a meeting cancellation. The prototypical 'apologizing + account + thanking' facework pattern reflects a high concern for the hearer's face, and for the relational and emotional aspects of face. In the Lunch scenario, they preferred to use apologizing and solution as their key facework strategies, with the former showing concern for the hearer's feeling and the latter solving the hearer's immediate situational need.

The Danish ELF group

The Danish ELF speakers were relatively divided in their prototypical pattern of doing facework. In the Moving scenario, the prototypical pattern was to start with either the account strategy or the thanking strategy. It suggests that priority was given to the information or to the elevation of the hearer's positive face. In the Meeting scenarios, the prototypical pattern was to start with either apologizing or thanking. Both strategies reflect a relational concern. However, when the hearer had a higher social status, the preference for these two strategies at the group level indicates a divided attitude in terms of their assessment of the severity of the offence of cancellation. In the Lunch scenario, the Danish ELF data exhibited a similar preference for the apologizing strategy and the solution strategy, which is consistent with the British data and the Chinese ELF data.

8.1.2 The cross-cultural results for the L1 groups

The Chinese L1 group

Generally speaking, it was perceived as quite offensive and face-threatening to cancel the promise by the Chinese L1 speakers across the scenarios. It was not only revealed by the percentages of respondents using thanking and apologizing strategies, but also by the percentages of responses starting with these two strategies.

The Chinese L1 speakers had a preference for the apologizing strategy and they tended to use it at the beginning of the utterances across all three scenarios. It seems that apologizing is an obligatory component of doing proper facework in Chinese. A common prototypical pattern across the scenarios was an 'apologizing strategy + account strategy'. In the Moving scenario, about half of the respondents used apologizing expressions, with *buhaoyisi* as the prototypical expression indicating a strong *renqing* (reciprocity of mutual obligations) and *mianzi* (social face) concern. In the Meeting scenario, almost all the respondents used apologizing expressions, with the formal performative expression *duibuqi* as the prototypical expression to show respect and deference. The prototypical pattern is also to denigrate self by using the apologetic strategy and to elevate the other's face by using the thanking strategy. In the Lunch scenario, the second most frequently used starting strategy was apologizing, whereas the most frequently used was solution. This indicates the principle of considerateness in Chinese politeness, and a strong concern for the hearer's needs and feelings. When a situational need was perceived, it was prioritized over feelings. This means that the way the Chinese speakers reasoned before they arrived at their solution strategy was not explicitly verbalized.

The Danish L1 group

Compared with the Chinese L1 speakers, the Danish L1 speakers perceived cancellation of an obligation as less offensive, as demonstrated by the preference for accounting and explicit cancellation as the starting linguistic strategy across the scenarios. In both the Moving and Meeting scenarios, about half of responses started with the account strategy. In the Lunch scenario, 59% of the responses started with either the account strategy or the explicit cancellation strategy. I interpret such a tendency as the priority of the transactional informational goal over the relational goal. It indicates that cancellation of an obligation was relatively less face-threatening in the eyes of the Danes. As such, it is socially acceptable to deliver the information efficiently rather than showing relational concern at the beginning to mitigate the news of cancellation.

8.1.3 The intralanguage results for the Chinese and the Danes

The Danes

Both positive and negative pragmatic transfer was seen in the Danish data sets. In the Moving scenario, the prototypical pattern of using option-giving and thanking to do facework in

Danish L1 was transferred to Danish ELF. With reference to face and harmony maintenance, it means that the hearer's negative face and the hearer's positive face are important in this context. At the message sequence level, the Danish ELF speakers tended to start with either accounting or thanking in the Moving scenario. This is direct negative pragmatic transfer from Danish L1.

In the Meeting scenario, Danish ELF speakers showed a strong tendency to use either the apologizing or thanking strategies at the beginning, whereas Danish L1 speakers tended to start with either the account strategy or the apologizing strategy. This represents a partial pragmatic transfer from Danish L1. In terms of apologetic expressions, the Danish preference for the "I am sorry, but…" construction was in line with the attitudes reflected in Danish L1.

In the Lunch scenario, positive pragmatic transfer took place. In contrast to the priority of transactional informational strategies (account and explicit cancellation) at the beginning of utterances in Danish L1, the Danish ELF speakers here showed a preference for the apologizing strategy. Such a preference in Danish ELF was in line with the prototypical feature in British English.

The Chinese

Pragmatic transfer of facework strategies was found in the Chinese data sets, yet the directions of transfer and the degree of transfer were not fixed. In the Moving scenario, the pragmatic transfer was shown in a hybrid form. Instead of the prototypical preference for the apologizing strategy in Chinese L1, the Chinese ELF speakers compensated the inner *renqing* debt by using thanking and compensation strategies more frequently.

In the Meeting scenario, there was direct negative pragmatic transfer of facework. It emerged from the use of the prototypical message sequence of 'apologizing + account + thanking'. However, the strong degree of apologetic and regretful feeling was not transferred from Chinese to Chinese ELF due to the lack of apology intensifiers.

In the Lunch scenario, positive pragmatic transfer was observed. Chinese ELF data exhibited an increase in the use of the apologizing strategy at the beginning of utterances, as compared with the priority given to the solution strategy in Chinese L1. The shift of priority focus from solution in L1 to apologizing in ELF indicates that that the international mode of using English pushed the Chinese ELF speakers to more explicit expressions of rational

reasoning rather than applying the unspoken assumption of Chinese politeness or considerateness among close colleagues.

8.1.4 Attitudes to obligations

The data analysis suggests that the respondents have different priorities with respect to face concern when they cancel an obligation. A general tendency observed in the data is that the Chinese respondents demonstrated a stronger sense of obligation than the Danes in both the L1 context and the ELF context in the Moving and the Meeting scenarios. As discussed in section 7.1, the difference may be attributed to the fundamental cultural difference concerning obligations. An obligation tends to be perceived positively by the Chinese in connection with the fulfilment of the role obligation in interpersonal relationships, which is often embedded in mutual obligations in Chinese *guanxi* networks. In the Danish context, an obligation tends to be perceived negatively, because it constrains a person's self-autonomy in the future action. Therefore, cancellation of an obligation has both negative and positive perceptions, i.e. as double impositions and as a release. In different contexts, this attitude is moderated and interacts with other contextual factors. In the Meeting and Lunch scenarios, the institutional context and the immediate situational need may have impacted people's attitudes to obligation and cancellation of an obligation.

8.1.5 Practical implications for Danish-Chinese intercultural communication

The results of the semi-ethnographic and semi-experimental data in the three scenarios have implications for pointing out sources of potential communication pitfalls in the real world. Though extracted by role play, the verbal reactions are freely constructed by speakers and thus have some of the same value as naturally-occurring interactional data recorded in the workplace, or the reflective narrative data of people's intercultural experiences in the workplace.

The prototypical patterns found in the comparison of mother tongue data reflect different face orientations and prototypical scripts for doing facework in the specific situation. All the strategies can be classified into three types – relational-oriented strategies (thanking, apologizing, statement of empathy), information-oriented strategies (account, explicit cancellation), and situational redress-oriented strategies (rescheduling, solution, compensation).

The mismatch of expectations between information focus and relational focus, and the mismatch between the thanking and apologizing attitudes, may become sources of possible miscommunication, for a clash of expectations may occur if people act according to their native facework norms.

Comparing Chinese ELF and Danish ELF, both convergent and divergent prototypical facework strategies were found. Further, it emerged that the differences were more salient in the private than in the institutional context.

To sum up, the comparison of mother tongue data suggests systematic differences and reveals the sources of the potential for miscommunication, yet in the international mode the comparison of ELF data indicates that this is not always the case, as there are both direct transfers and linguistic strategies of compensation approaching the English native standard. This means that the influence of the communication pattern in mother tongue and the efforts to adapt to an international pattern coexist in the ELF data.

8.2 Contributions

To the best of my knowledge, this explorative study is the first systematic investigation to combine the notions of obligation, face, and facework in the Danish-Chinese comparative context with a focus on harmonious relation maintenance in the business context. The cross-cultural comparison of mother tongue data contributes to the field of cross-cultural pragmatics by linking this under-researched communicative act by a rarely compared language pair with the discussion of obligation, face, and facework. It adds to the discussion of the face literature by providing a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of face and facework with specific reference to obligation. The interlanguage and intralanguage comparisons contribute to the field of English as a lingua franca, SLA and intercultural communication, as it deepens the understanding of the mechanism of the use of ELF and its relevance to face and situated (common sense) politeness. In addition, the analyses of the closed role enactment data provide rich and valuable knowledge which resemble naturally-occurring data in the business context. This can also be considered as a contribution to the field of business communication and business ELF (often known as BELF) in general.

In terms of the overall GEBCom project, this study helps bring the GEBCom speech production corpus, to the attention of the international community interested in business communication, pragmatics, politeness, face, SLA, and ELF, and social interaction in a broad sense. For research on the realisation of speech acts, this study showcases a shift of studying speech acts alone to the study of speech act in the context of speech events. Greater efforts have been made to understand the ongoing meta-interactional communication process. It reveals a third way of looking at the data from the dichotomy of corpus-based contrastive pragmatics and discursive pragmatics.

8.2.1 Theoretical contributions

In terms of theoretical contributions, one original feature of this study is the innovative synthesis of different theoretical frameworks employed to investigate the communicative act data in the context of communicative events[26]. The integrated conceptual framework (Chapter 4) is an attempt, for the first time in the empirical speech act realisation literature, to contextualize communicative act data in the context of communicative events, which brings the conceptual notions of obligation, face, and facework together.

With reference to the meta-interactional context, I have drawn on Hymes's SPEAKING framework to deconstruct the scenario descriptions so as to be able to provide an explanatory framework for the composition of responses. The scenario descriptions were deconstructed into two sequential communicative events composed of three communicative acts (requesting-promising-cancelling), all of which turned out to be targets for the responses. With respect to the notion of obligation, it was seen to be composed of the obligation in a promise following Durst-Andersen's (1995, 2009) conceptual framework of IFs and role obligations in different role relationships, following Spencer-Oatey's (2008) notion of "sociality rights and obligation" (p.15). Such integration broadens the scope of data analysis from the linguistic study of

[26] I am grateful to Maribel Blasco for drawing my attention to Mills' (1980) article "On intellectual craftsmanship" and to Alvesson and Kärreman's (2007) article on dealing with empirical mystery and theory development after my first work-in-progress seminar.

communicative acts to an in-depth and multi-layered understanding of the context, forming a holistic picture of the situated nature of facework.

With reference to the notions of face and facework, I have (1) added the face literature by Chinese scholars to enhance our understanding of the interactional, interpersonal and prescriptive moral aspects of face reflected in the Chinese data with a complex meta-interactional context consisting of establishing an obligation and cancelling an obligation; (2) adopted Goffman's concept of facework and modified the conceptualization of face in a deconstructed manner, so that the Chinese perspective on face and Brown and Levinson's concept of face could be used separately in a complementary manner for the comparative data sets. I consider this as an endeavour to answer Bargiela-Chiappini's (2003) call to return to Goffman's concept of facework and for the first time to apply the concept of face in a deconstructed and interpretive manner to a comparative linguistic corpus, which involves the Chinese language and two Western languages.

With regard to the original conceptual framework of IFs, I have made the following contributions. Firstly, I have applied it to a Chinese context and have added a cultural aspect. The mismatches between the Chinese L1 data and Ibsen's interpretation of IFs as modal verb constructions show that the linguistic manifestation of IFs is culture-specific and language-specific. Secondly, I have added a functional aspect to the conceptual framework of IFs, as I have reinterpreted IFs as performative frames with communicative intentions. The emphasis on the performative functional perspective makes room for the cultural variations we observe in the data collected in China, with their different underlying cognitive processes.

In addition, the relationship between obligation and face has been further explored. In the original guiding conceptual framework (Durst-Andersen, 2009) for scenario design, the point of departure for the IF of obligation is the speaker's *thought* that "H doesn't want the state [of being obligated]" (p. 332). In the review of the face literature, obligations have positive connotations in Chinese conceptualizations of face (Hu, 1944; Ho, 1976; Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994), whereas obligations have negative connotations in Goffman's (1967) discussion of face.

The integration of obligation, face, and facework made it possible to make more sense of the contextualized GEBCom speech production data. It contributes to a better understanding of harmonious face maintenance under different sociocultural norms and expectations. It is

revealed that the notions of obligation and face are not culture-neutral universal concepts, but rather culture-specific and closely related to the prescriptive values upheld by a society (including the organisation).

8.2.2 Methodological contributions

The methodological contributions of this study lie in its methodological robustness. The major methodological contributions include (1) the integrated discourse-pragmatic analytical approach; and (2) the combined emic-etic approach as data triangulation during the data interpretation process.

The integrated discourse-pragmatic analytical approach

The integrated discourse-pragmatic analytical approach creates a link between sociopragmatics, pragmalingustics, and discourse analysis. The analytical procedures have some features of quantitative data categorization found in the semantic component analysis in Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) speech act realisation tradition, and some features of corpus-assisted discourse study with a focus on attitude and interactional context. The analyses of attitudes, face and facework with a context of communicative events are qualitative and interpretive. The entire data analysis process reflects features of mixed methods.

The integrated analytical method showed a new way to gain insights into (1) language use of scenario-based communication across cultures; (2) situational assessment of scenario-based communication across cultures. It demonstrated a new way to explore contextualized oral data, with a focus on both the communicative act and communicative events.

Data triangulation: the combined emic-etic approach during data interpretation process

The combined emic-etic approach during the data interpretation process crosses the boundary of the emic-etic dichotomy. The identification of the respondents' meta-reflection utterances in the data, the supportive informal interviews with native speakers from different linguistic communities to gain different native cultural insights triangulate with the data analysis of the comparative linguistic data sets. Further, it also enables a possibility to explore the possible facework interpretations in a balanced manner, which promotes the analyst's reflection at the theoretical level. Such a combined emic-etic approach is inspired by Kasper's (2008) call

for using a multi-method to "offset inherent instrument or observer bias" (p. 300) and Spencer-Oatey and Franklin's (2009) emphasis on "decentring" (p. 269).

Summing up, the methodological innovation is a substantial and innovative effort to move beyond some of the dichotomies in the field.

8.3 Business and pedagogical implications

8.3.1 Business implications

Situated against the contextual background of the use of global English as a lingua franca in business communication, the present study has investigated business people's pragmatic competence in ELF and respective mother tongues with special reference to obligation, face and facework. I hope it can provide a starting point for Danish and Chinese business people's real-life interpersonal communication in organizations and benefit the business community in general.

One of the most important business implications of the present study is the scenario-based communication involving deontic modality. The scenarios were designed according to the conceptual framework of IFs with deontic modality-oriented problems that are delicate to handle in everyday life. If we fail to deal with these situations correctly, we may upset each other or even have difficulty in understanding each other. So all the data generated by this method can be considered as "valuable baseline data" (Spencer-Oatey, 2009, p. 4) for experiential intercultural episodes in real life, as they are systematically organised. From this perspective, the conceptual framework of IFs has a potential for developing new and effective materials for intercultural communication training.

In addition, scenario-based communication could be used to improve business people's pragmatic competence or to develop cross-cultural or intercultural training programmes for employees (e.g. expatriates) in MNCs. They could also be used to improve business professionals' cultural intelligence (Livermore et al., 2015), especially CQ cognition and CQ action, which involves knowledge of the sociolinguistic differences and speech act realization differences. It can also be applied at business schools or universities in general as an integrated method to improve students' language and culture competence. To sum up, when deontic

modality is understood and implemented in a careful and systematic way in intercultural settings, the generated knowledge could also be enlightening for practical purposes.

8.3.2 Pedagogical implications

The findings of the present research also have implications for teaching English as a foreign language and for understanding the situated nature of face and (common sense) politeness when using English as a lingua franca. Instead of focusing on the unmarked polite formulas in English, it is also important to raise students' awareness of different situational contexts, especially when it comes to the different cultural perceptions of obligation and face. It is important to repeat that non-native English speakers' deviation from the native English norm should not be regarded as a language deficiency. Instead, more attention should be paid to appropriate formulations of sincere emotions in a foreign language, because the emotions reflect people's attitudes to states of affairs and they are closely related to people's psychological understanding of face in interpersonal interaction.

In addition, awareness of the potential offending nature of particular speech acts, such as cancellation, should be raised with Danish speakers. It is vital for Danish speakers to know the different perceptions of apologizing expressions in other cultural contexts. For Chinese speakers, knowledge should be provided of the less degree of offence in the Danish context should be introduced. It is necessary for the Chinese to understand that apologizing is perceived as culpability in the Danish context. For pedagogical purposes, it is vital to highlight sociopragmatic awareness and combine sociopragmatics with pragmalinguistics in language teaching and intercultural communication courses.

8.4 Limitations and some reservations

Experimental effect on the data

My five data sets consist of closed role enactment data in a semi-experimental mode. They reflect social experience in the organisational context of two business scenarios and private personal experience in the Moving scenario. Unfortunately, we could still see some experimental effects in the Chinese ELF data and in the Danish L1 data. A small number of Chinese ELF respondents did not necessarily use the openings and closings in the telephone mode. In the Danish version of the scenario transcription of the Meeting scenario, the IT

manager's name was omitted. As a result, some Danish respondents began the response with 'kære IT chef', which would never happen in a real-life situation.

Generalization of the findings

This exploratory study has a provided a systematic account of the (simulated) language use which reflect business people's real-life social experience in the different offices of Carlsberg Group in the UK, Denmark and China. Due to the semi-experimental setup of the original data collection procedure and the small number of respondents in each country, the findings may not be generalizable to other samples and other settings.

Some reservations

One of the primary purposes for data analyses is to uncover the normative expectations of being adequately polite in communicative situations. The data analysis section is concerned with the prototypical patterns in cross-cultural data sets. However, this does not mean that the specific prototypical pattern is only found in a specific language group. Rather, a small number of the prototypical Chinese examples could also be observed in the British and Danish data, and vice versa. Such intercultural variations within each group should be acknowledged so that we have an open mind and do not make too strong claims of fixed national cultural stereotypes. In real intercultural communication situations, the exact opposite could be the case, namely that the Chinese interlocutor utters a prototypical Danish or British utterance, whereas the Danish or British interlocutor utters a prototypical Chinese utterance.

8.5 Directions for future research

The present study has focused specifically on the speech production of the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation and has paid special attention to the importance of the meta-interactional context. From a discursive perspective, it would be interesting to explore the interaction between the speaker and the hearer in the same situation with the use of open role play methods. In this way, we can have access to the hearer's responses and have a full picture of the interpersonal interaction. From an intercultural perspective, it would also be interesting to investigate the impact of my findings in an experiment with a larger sample or in a focus group interview. For instance, how do the Chinese perceive the prototypical Danish responses? How do the Danes perceive the prototypical

Chinese responses? A focus group interview is good because it can shed light on diverse perspectives within a short period of time.

A new experiment with a larger sample will enhance the generalization power of the findings of the present study. That would provide us with a more in-depth understanding of the different prototypical communicative act realization patterns. In the future, an even more detailed study of conventional apologetic expressions in different language systems needs to be conducted with a larger corpus from the viewpoint of the semantic or ethnopragmatic traditions.

With the arrival of the two pandas in Denmark, the home of little mermaids, in April 2019, more and more Danish-Chinese intercultural communication will surely take place. Now that the systematic baselines have been established, it is perhaps time to describe and explore the discursive stories of not only intercultural miscommunication, but also stories of successful win-win intercultural collaboration which brings in-depth mutual understanding, profit, prosperity and mutual obligations to our common shared planet as a sustainable world.

9. References

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10. Glossary of Chinese terms

mianzi	面子	Social face
lian	脸	Moral face
renqing	人情	Meanings of *renqing* (King, 1980, quoted in Hwang, 1987): 1. Literal meaning: human emotions. Associated meaning: the ability to be empathetic, the manners of interpersonal interaction, the way we relate to other people 2. Interpersonal relations involving mutual obligation. 3. Favour
guanxi	关系	Connections
li	礼	propriety
diulian	丢脸	Lose face
junzi	君子	'Gentleman', an educated, polite, moral and good person in the Confucian tradition.
qingmian	情面	a superordinate term, which is composed of both *renqing and mianzi*

Appendix A - Scenario descriptions and cartoons

Moving Scenario

You are at home

You have asked your good friend, John, to help you move into a new apartment tomorrow. He has happily agreed to do so and even taken the day off from work. But then your family surprises you by arriving to help you move. This now makes John's help unnecessary, so you have to call him and say:

Meeting Scenario

You are at work

The manager of the Carlsberg IT department in England, Mr. Johnson, has arrived at your work this morning. You would like his opinion on a project and ask him if he could possibly attend your meeting this afternoon. The time does not suit him too well, but he agrees to come anyway. Unexpectedly, the meeting is cancelled. You have to call Mr. Johnson on his mobile to inform him about the situation, so you say:

Lunch scenario

You are at work

You are working on a report, and lunch break is soon. Usually, you eat with your colleague, Anna, but you realise, you will be delayed today. You call and ask her to wait for you, and she says okay. But 20 minutes later, you are still busy with the report, which has to be on your boss's table before 1pm. You do not want Anna to starve, so you call her and say:

Scenario descriptions: Danish version

Du er hjemme

Du har bedt din gode ven, Martin, om at hjælpe dig med at flytte ind i din nye lejlighed i morgen. Han har beredvilligt sagt ja og har endda taget fri fra arbejde for at hjælpe dig. Pludselig ankommer din familie som en overraskelse for at hjælpe dig med at flytte. Det betyder, at Martins hjælp er helt overflødig, så du bliver nødt til at ringe til ham og sige:

Du er på arbejde

IT-chefen for Carlsberg besøger din arbejdsplads her til morgen. Du spørger ham, om han ikke kunne deltage i dit møde i eftermiddag. Tidspunktet passer ham ikke synderligt, men han indvilliger dog i at komme. Af ukendte årsager bliver mødet pludseligt aflyst. Nu bliver du nødt til at fortælle ham om den nye situation, så du ringer ham op og siger:

Du er på arbejde

Du arbejder på en rapport, og der er snart frokostpause. Normalt går du til frokost med din kollega, Anna, men du kan se på det hele, at du bliver forsinket i dag. Du ringer til hende og beder hende om at vente på dig, og hun siger: ”Ja, det skal jeg nok”. Men 20 minutter senere sidder du stadigvæk og knokler med rapporten, som skal afleveres til din chef før kl. 13. Du vil ikke have at Anna skal dø af sult, så du ringer til hende igen og siger:

Scenario descriptions: Chinese version

假设你在家

你叫了好朋友王亮明天过来帮忙搬家。他愉快地答应了，甚至特意向公司请了一天的事假，特意过来帮忙。可是，你的家人突然从外地赶来帮忙，给了你一份惊喜。因此，明天就不太需要王亮的帮助了。所以，你现在得给王亮打电话，对王亮说：

假设你在上班

嘉士伯英国分公司 IT 技术部经理约翰逊先生今天上午抵达你的办公室。你想听听他对一个重大项目的看法，于是，你问他是否愿意来参加你们下午的部门会议。尽管时间上似乎有些不凑巧，但约翰逊先生还是答应了来参加会议。不巧的是，会议后来因为其他原因取消了。现在，你必须给约翰逊先生打电话，告诉他不来参加会议的消息。于是，你对约翰逊先生说：

假设你在公司

你正在写报告，马上就要到吃午餐的时间了。你平常和同事娜娜一起去餐厅吃午饭，但今天你得晚点才能去。你给娜娜打电话，让她等等你。她说可以。20 分钟过去了，你的报告还没写完，这份报告必须下午一点之前交给老板。你不想让娜娜挨饿，于是再次打电话给她，对娜娜说：

Appendix B – Consent form

CONSENT FORM: ENGLISH VERSION

Research group for Global English as international business language

Material gathered during this research will be treated as confidential and securely stored. In subsequent publications or use of these recordings your name will be removed where used and your comments made unattributable. Likewise, the name of the company you represent will be altered and details that might identify the company will be changed or left out, as will sensitive information about the company. You may at any point withdraw from participating in the data collection without giving any explanation.

By signing this consent form you agree to the activity you participate in being recorded and to these recordings being used for research purposes (in accordance with the conditions outlined above) by researchers at the Research group for Global English as international business language. Short clips may be used during research activities and conference presentations.

If you agree to participate in this research under the conditions outlined here and in the information sheet, please sign below. The principal researcher will countersign.

I, the respondent, agree to these conditions (please use capital letters):

Name: Email:

Position: Nationality:

Signature: Date:

I, the principal researcher, agree to these conditions:

Name:

Signature: Date:

Research group for Global English as international business language: The significance of the mother tongue for speech production, reception, and the formation of association

INFORMATION SHEET

General information concerning recordings

You are being asked to participate in the audio and/or visual recordings of a particular activity. This information sheet tells you about the study you are participating in, how the recordings will be carried out, and how the data will be used and stored after the recordings are completed.

The GEBCom Project: Global English as international business language

The GEBCom project is an international research team that has been established by researchers from Copenhagen Business School. The purpose of the GEBCom project is to investigate whether any given mother tongue influences one's production of requests in English, as well as comprehension of certain English texts and words.

Recordings are confidential and participation is anonymous and voluntary

All material gathered during the study will be treated as confidential and securely stored. Furthermore, participation in the project is anonymous. This means that in subsequent use of the material your name will be removed where used and if relevant your comments will be adjusted so they cannot be attributed to you. Likewise, the company you represent is also guaranteed change and/or removal of name and business details (cf. "Consent Form"). You may at any point withdraw from participating in the data collection without giving any explanation. In such a case, please contact Xia Zhang at xz.ibc@cbs.dk or +45 3815 3234.

What happens to the recorded material?

The audiovisual files will be archived and transcribed. Members of the GEBCom project will be able to use the material and the transcripts for research purposes and subsequent publication. Excerpts may be played to other bona fide researchers (e.g. at conferences), and anonymized screen shots (where video has been produced) used in publications. The material may also be used in seminars and workshops providing feedback to the workplaces involved in the research.

Feel free to contact Stine Mosekjær should you have any further questions at smm.ibc@cbs.dk or +45 3815 3234.

Research group for Global English as international business language: The significance of the mother tongue for speech production, reception, and the formation of association

CONSENT FORM: CHINESE VERSION

同意授权书

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“全球英语国际商务沟通研究课题组”

研究课题：母语对商务人士全球英语的使用、理解以及联想之重要意义

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（1）科研项目简介 ；

（2）录像如何进行；

（3）录像结束后，数据如何使用和保存。

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“全球英语国际商务沟通研究课题组”由丹麦哥本哈根商学院的国际化科研团队组成。课题研究的目的是考察母语对各国人士用英语来表达“请求”、以及对英语短篇和字词的理解和联想意义的不同，简言之，母语对全球英语使用者的影响及其对国际商务沟通研究的意义。

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Appendix C - An overview of the GEBCom data collection timeline

Time	Data Collection	Place
3-4 July 2014	Role play in Chinese ELF	Carlsberg China
7-8 July 2014	Role play in Chinese L1	Carlsberg China
25-27 November 2013	Role play in Danish ELF	Carlsberg Denmark
25-27 November 2013	Role play in Danish L1	Carlsberg Danmark
11-13 December 2013	Role play in British English	Carlsberg UK

Appendix D - An overview of the demographic information

	Danish ELF group (n=25)	Chinese ELF group (n=25)	British group (n=24)	Chinese L1 group (n=25)	Danish L1 group (n=22)
Gender:					
Female	14	12	10	11	8
Male	11	13	14	14	14
Age:					
20-24	0	3	3	1	4
25-29	2	7	3	4	4
30-34	5	10	4	2	2
35-39	5	5	4	4	5
40-49	8		6	8	6
50-59	4		4	6	1
60-69	1				

Appendix E – Informal interview questions

Informal interview questions for understanding the four Danish apologetic expressions

1. Evaluation of the Danish words (*desværre, ked af, beklage, undskylde*) in terms of the following criteria
- Degree of formality
- Degree of responsibility
- Degree of sincerity
2. Can you think of some social situations in which you will use these words?

Informal interview questions for native speakers

Example: Moving Scenario

1. What would you say in this social situation?
2. How would you feel when you ask your friend to help you move into a new apartment?
3. How would you feel when your friend John takes one day off to help? And what do you think your friend John will expect in this interaction or this interpersonal relationship?
4. How would you feel when you cancel the helping-to-move appointment and when John has taken one day off to help? How will John feel?
5. How far do you feel responsible for the unexpected new situation of cancellation?
6. How far do you feel embarrassed (or regretful) for the unexpected new situation of cancellation?

7. To the Chinese native speakers:
    - Why do you think it is necessary to apologize in this scenario?
    - What do you feel about the Danish response without any apologetic expressions?
8. To the Danish native speakers:
    - Why do you think one Danish respondent said that he thought that John would be pleased with cancellation?
    - What do you feel about the Chinese response with apologetic expressions?

Appendix F - Data transcriptions

The Moving Scenario (British English)

*P98: John .

*P98: ehm thanks for your offer of helping and I really do appreciate it .

*P98: ‘cos I know you’ve taken the day off .

*P98: but eh my family have come over and <they’ll> [//] they err (.) like wanting to help .

*P98: so I really do appreciate .

*P98: but there isn’t really no need to come on over (.) to our house today .

(I’d say more hands the better)

*P99: John .

*P99: my family have arrived and they’ve said they can help us move .

*P99: so (.) ehm (.) if you’d rather do something else we’ve probably got enough people here .

*P99: so you can spend your day off doing something fun .

*P99: but thank you anyway .

*P100: the family’s just turned up out of the blue .

*P100: more than happy for you to still come along .

*P100: but I just don’t want you to feel that you need to .

*P101: John .

*P101: ehm (.) just found out as a surprise my family have come down to help with the move .

*P101: ehm (.) feel free to come along if you like with .

*P101: your help could be useful you never know .

*P101: but I mean (.) if you'd like to take the (.) if you'd like to go back to work then feel free .

*P101: because you're not required .

*P102: eh (.) John .

*P102: I hope it's not too inconvenient .

*P102: but <I'm>[//] we've got enough people to help at the moment .

*P102: eh so if it's ok with you I'll get in touch with you over the weekend .

*P102: and (.) eh we'll get together .

*P103: John

*P103: my family've arrived to (.) eh(.) help me .

*P103: so if you'd prefer not to (.) you'll (.) feel free to go to work .

*P104: <I> [/] I'm sorry .

*P104: but (.) eh (.) I've been given some extra help I wasn't expecting .

*P104: and there's no need for you to come .

*P105: eh I'm really sorry .

*P105: there's been (.) eh (.) change of plan .

*P105: ehm (.) <we> [/] we've got more people to help .

*P105: eh (.) and we're not gonna <need eh> [//] need you (.) eh (.) anymore .

*P106: all the family have turned up .

*P106: do you want to still come or do you want to do something different today ?

*P107: ehm (.) I know that we were supposed to do the move together today .

*P107: but-eh my family've turned up and they want to help .

*P107: but I mean if you still wanna come you're more than welcome .

*P107: but I know you've got things to do today so don't feel obliged .

*P108: John .

*P108: just wanted to say (.)

*P108: eh (.) don't know whether you ¤ you can still go to work or not .

*P108: but (.) eh (.) I have a lot of support just arrived (.) eh from my family .

*P108: so if ¤ if you can go back to work I would like you not to waste your # day off .

*P108: eh but if you can't you're more than welcome to-eh join us and-eh help us in moving .

*P109: John .

*P109: unexpectedly (.) eh family's turned up to help .

*P109: obviously if you still wanna help I'm quite happy for you to do so .

*P109: but don't feel you need to

*P109: and if you need to go to work then do so .

*P110: John .

*P110: <don> [/] don't worry about today .

*P110: I'm really sorry .

*P110: we'll catch up over the weekend .

*P110: but my flat (.) you know (.) I've got some volunteers (.) already .

*P111: hi John .

*P111: I appreciate your offer for help

*P111: but-eh thankfully you can have the day to yourself now

*P111: ‘cos-eh the cavalry’s arrived, and you know, just go and share (?) thanks for help. I would pay you some time by your apartment.

*P112: ehm Johnny .

*P112: I’ve had some family come over <that’s helped > [//] that’s gonna help us move .

*P112: I appreciate you’ve taken the day off .

*P112: if you’d like to come over and help you still can .

*P112: but if you’d like to use your day for something else don’t feel you need to come over .

*P112: because we do have some additional help .

*P113: (I’d say-eh):

*P113: John .

*P113: I’ve got lots more support than I was expecting on moving day .

*P113: so feel free to come along and still help us out .

*P113: and we’ll buy you some dinner or something .

*P113: or if you want the day back to yourself to do some Christmas shopping then you can do that .

*P113: so thanks very much either way .

*P113: do whatever’s best for you .

*P114: John .

*P114: ehm I’m really sorry .

*P114: ehm (.) thank you very much <for> [/] for agreeing to help me with the apartment tomorrow .

*P114: but-e my family have (.) are now here .

*P114: so you can still come and help if you want to .

*P114: you know we can go out for (.) ehm something to eat afterwards cos

we’ll obviously finish earlier .

*P114: ‘or if you want to you can just keep ehm your day off or cancel it with your boss whatever

you wish .

*P114: I’m really really sorry .

*P114: ehm but-eh let me know what you think .

*P114: eh-he he (laughing)

*P115: oh thanks a lot for your offering to help .

*P115: we’ve actually got some family to help .

*P115: so more than happy for you to still come over and help .

*P115: but otherwise <you can sort of (.)> [//] you don’t need to worry .

*P115: you can not take the day off .

*P116: John .

*P116: thanks for the offer .

*P116: but we’re not going to need you today (.)

*P116: we’re sorted .

*P117: John .

*P117: I’m so sorry .

*P117: but mama and papa have just arrived .

*P117: and so (..) I am so grateful but (.) .

*P117: it’s ok you can officially stand down from duties .

*P117: but a million thank yous and I owe you a beer .

*P117: and go and have an amazing day off .

*P118: John !

*P118: Good neeews !

*P118: I don’t need you tomorrow .

*P118: my whole family have just turned up .

*P118: so there’ll probably be more people than we need .

*P118: so you can either go to work or you can have a day to yourself .

*P119: ehm John (.) ehm (..)

*P119: unexpectedly the family have just arrived .

*P119: they’re gonna help me .

*P119: so ehhh . . . yo ¤ you feel free to get back to work .

*P119: ehm if you want to help please come along .

*P120: John (.) ehm (…)

*P120: thank you so much for taking the day off to help me move .

*P120: but my family have actually just turned up .

*P120: and so (.) I don’t really need you anymore .

*P120: ehm be lovely to see you .

*P120: but if you’d rather (.) do something else go to work then .

*P120: that’s fine .

*P120: thank you .

*P120: and I’ll see you soon .

*P121: hi John .

*P121: eh I know you’ve taken the day off work .

*P121: and (.) I've managed to rope in some other helpers .

*P121: so (.) if you (.) eh need to go into the office then (.). eh I'm alright (.) for the (.) help moving house today (.) eh .

The Moving Scenario (Danish ELF)

*P51: hi John .

*P51: &ahem about today you don't have to: take your day off to help me moving .

*P51: &ahem my family will help me .

*P52: John .

*P52: I'm sorry .

*P52: but I didn't know my family was coming to help me .

*P52: and [/] · <and if you> (..) [//] you are welcome to: [/] to come .

*P52: but it is not needed (..) <anymore> .

*MA: <yeah> .

*P53: hi John !

*P53: &ahem (...) I don't know if you're already on your way .

*P53: · but if it's not too late .

*P53: I want you to know that <I've> [//] my family's <come here> [//] surprised me and I have a little · ekstra help .

*P53: so (.) if you: would rather spend your time doing something else .

*P53: you don't have to come by and help me move today .

*P53: · if you wanna come .

*P53: · it would still be very nice (.) of you .

*P53: and we will all have fun together .

*P54: &ahem (..) John !

*P54: &ahem (...) [exhales] &ahem (..) · I so much appreciate your help .

*P54: and suddenly my family has turned up .

*P54: and I know you have taken your day off .

*P54: so · &er let's meet another day .

*P54: my family can help me and <you can> [/] you can save your day +/.

*MA: <yes> .

*P54: +, <or work> .

*P55: &ahem hi John !

*P55: &ahem (...) regarding the: (.) what we talked about &you_know
with the new appartment .

*P55: &ahem · I was thinking that: (..) [exhales] instead of [/]
instead of you [!] coming and helping me with the apartment .

*P55: shouldn't we go out and have a beer maybe next week instead ?

*P55: plus &you_know there're so [!] many people that are gonna come and
help me anyway .

*P55: so what I thought it'd be nicer if you and I spent &you_know quality
time together instead of &you_know +//.

*P55: and you have that bad back as well .

*P56: I'm sorry !

*P56: but I didn't know until (..) &yeah two hours ago that they were coming .

*MA: yeah ·

*P56: it was a surprise .

*P56: but now that we're all here .

*P56: we will just finish soon and then &yeah won't be that long a day for all of us .

*P56: and we are all here to help .

*MA: yeah .

*P56: and I'm &yeah really sorry .

*P56: but I'm glad (.) that you took the day off .

*MA: right .

*P57: hey John .

*P57: my family has just surpriced me &er by coming by helping me move .

*P57: if you still want to join .

*P57: &ahem · please feel free to: [/] to stop by .

*P57: the more the merrier .

*P57: but if you have anything more important to do .

*P57: you can also feel free to stay away .

*P58: John .

*P58: I'm [/] I'm really [!] thankful of <your> [/] your help .

*P58: you're very [!] welcome to come and help us .

*P58: &so my family is there .

*P58: so we'll be a lot of people .

*P58: it'll be fun .

*P58: but &em (.) if you busy at work or: you: want to take a day off .

*P58: then go ahead .

*P58: we are · five people .

*P58: so: don’t worry about it .

*P59: hi John .

*P59: this is &er Klaus .

*P59: I’m really [!] sorry .

*P59: but &er I’m afraid that &er I have so [!] many: helpers here today .

*P59: that &er if you would like to: (..) · go to: your work instead .

*P59: <you can> [/] you can do that .

*P60: John .

*P60: thank you so [!] much for offering to help me move today .

*P60: and I know you took the time off from work .

*P60: &ahem but the thing is my family is here now .

*P60: they can give me a hand .

*P60: &so: · you now have a day off to do something else .

*P60: but thanks so much .

*P61: hi John .

*P61: the family just arrived .

*P61: if you still wanna help me out with the move .

*P61: it’s great .

*P61: but if not .

*P61: then feel free to stay out or: stay away .

*P62: you know what Johnny .

*P62: I actually [!] don’t need you tomorrow .

*P62: if you still would like to help me .

*P62: you’re more than welcome .

*P62: we might be able to do it faster then .

*P62: but it’s not needed .

*P62: if you have better things to do .

*P62: please [/] please I won’t <be> &er [/] · be mad .

*P63: good news [laughs] .

*P63: you can go to work anyway [laughs] .

*P63: my family <would help me> [//] will help me .

*P64: &you_know John .

*P64: I really appreciate that you would help me out .

*P64: but &er if you have other plans .

*P64: I’ve had some family to help now .

*P64: but &er I do appreciate your help .

*P64: so if you wanna come .

*P64: I’ll be glad .

*P64: and if you had anything else to do it’d be fine with me also .

*P65: Hi John !

*P65: &ahem listen &er my: family &act just showed up .

*P65: &ahem I didn’t know about that .

*P65: &so: · I know you have taken the day off .

*P65: &ermm [clicks the tongue] and you're very welcome to come and help as well .

*P65: but it might be a little bit &er too many people .

*P65: &so: · I'm sorry you've taken the day off .

*P65: but it's up to you to decide if you will come and help or not .

*P66: John .

*P66: if you're not interested in working today [laughs] to help me move .

*P66: then just stay home .

*P66: I have my family to help .

*P67: &ahem hi John .

*P67: &ahem th:e rest of the family suddenly showed up and wanted to help .

*P67: &ahem you're very welcome to (.) come and help .

*P67: &ahem · if you (.) have the available time .

*P67: but it's not (.) urgently needed anymore .

*P68: hey John .

*P68: my family arrived .

*P68: &ahem but if you still want to help .

*P68: you're more than welcome .

*P68: we can always use an extra hand .

*P69: John !

*P69: my family has (.) helped me out .

*P69: &so if you prefer .

*P69: you: don’t have to take day off .

*P69: you can go to work .

*P69: and we will manage by ourselves .

*P69: but I’m really [!] glad for your · (..) [/] your offer to help me out .

*P70: John .

*P70: my whole family has showed up now .

*P70: &so if you wanna come &you_know .

*P70: I’ll be really happy .

*P70: but if you don’t .

*P70: it’s ok .

*P71: Johnny I’m really [!] glad you offered to come .

*P71: but if you don’t [!] really have time .

*P71: my family has just shown up actually .

*P71: &so if it’s more convenient for you not to help me today .

*P71: then please go ahead and do whatever you want to .

*MA: right .

*P71: · but of course if you still have time .

*P71: it’s (.) the more the merrier .

*P71: &so: +/.

*MA: [laughs] .

*P71: +, come along if you want to .

*MA: yeah [/] right .

*P71: your help would be most appreciated in any case .

*P71: &so +...

*P72: hi John .

*P72: &ahem my family just arrived .

*P72: &ahem if you want <to:> [/] to get the day off and not help .

*P72: that's quite alright .

*P72: but you are of course more than welcome to come join in and help me move .

*P73: &ahem Johnny .

*P73: I'm so happy that you have offered to help me move .

*P73: my family will be here to help me .

*P73: &so (.) · you:r presence is not required .

*P73: but you are still very welcome .

*P73: if you would like to come and help me .

*P74: John .

*P74: &ahem I thought that you and I would do this alone .

*P74: but obviously my family turned up to help me .

*P74: so I really do[!] not need your help .

*P74: if you want to come .

*P74: then please come along .

*P74: then we can be more .

*P74: otherwise <just> [//] you can have a day off .

*P75: thank you so much for your offering your help .

*P75: · &ahem we would very much appreciate it if you came .

*P75: but it's actually not necessary .

*P75: you're of course invited · &er for: the house warming .

*P75: but if you'd rather go to work .

*P75: we understand completely .

The Moving Scenario (Chinese ELF)

*P153: hey John .

*P153: <&eh I'm (.)> [//] so many thanks for your help .

*P153: actually &eh today <I'ds (.) eh (.) > [//] I surprisedly found my (.) big family but is [*] [:has] come to help me .

*P153: so (..) I think you are free to go to your work .

*P153: Congratulations .

*P154: John .

*P154: <I'm very glad that you (..) ehmm> [//] I'm very glad that <you> [/] you are willing to &eh help me to (.) move my department [*] [: apartment] .

*P154: and &eh that <I have> [//] I know that you have a lot of work to do and &eh my parents just get here to help me .

*P154: so (.) I think if you <&ha> [//] really have a lot of work to do .

*P154: you just leave here .

*P154: forget me .

*P154: and after you finish your job we can have a dinner with my family together .

*P154: thank you

*P155: John .

*P155: Sorry .

*P155: thank you for your help .

*P155: but my family’s here .

*P155: I think we can handle it myself .

*P156: &ehmm John .

*P156: &eh <I> [/] I told you that you are going to help me with my (.) moving stuff .

*P156: but I have some families arrive and they’re gonna help me .

*P156: so ehmm (..) I’m gonna treat you dinner after this .

*P156: but thank you help again .

*P156: thank you .

*P157: hey John .

*P157: thank you so much .

*P157: but my family arrive and give me a hand .

*P157: <you> [/] you could take your time .

*P158: hi John .

*P158: &eh thank you for your help .

*P158: and &eh I think <it> [//] I can solute [*] [: solve] this (.) myself .

*P159: Corrupt file

*P160: thanks John .

*P160: but (.) I've (.) got my families to help .

*P161: I am not totally understand the story

*MAM: – discussion follows

*P161: hello John .

*P161: &ehm this is Lily .

*P161: and &ehm (.) it's very good my family will also come to

help me to move in the house .

*P161: I think it's also a good chance we can together to celebrate our (.) new house .

*P161: <and> [/] and I think today we will be more relaxed for you and

just come to us an[d] enjoy us .

*P161: then we just move <the> [/] the house and then have the dinner together .

*P162: &ehh .

*P162: do you mind repeat that .

*P162: &ehm (...) dear friend (&=laughs) .

*P162: &eh (..) <I &eh> [//] I'm (..) very friends for your help .

*P162: &ehm but (.) &eh (.) not (.) need (.) much people to (.) help me

(.) to (.) move . (&=laughs)

*P163: John .

*P163: <I'm> [//] I really appreciate that you wanna help .

*P163: but &eh my family just gave me a surprise .

*P163: and <they> [/] they arrived and helped me to move .

*P163: so &eh now <I> [/] I think you can now maybe spend the day &ehm

(.) have another arrangement .

*P163: <or> [/] or maybe <you> [/] you are free to come to (.) our &eh

new home <and> [/] and spend the time with us too .

*P164: sorry John .

*P164: it's +// .

*P164: <my> [/] my family is coming to help me (.) to move my house .

*P164: &eh (.) <I am> [/] I am sorry <for> [/] for calling for (.) your help .

*P164: <but is not> [//] but now it is not needed .

*P164: maybe I can buy you dinner for this .

*P164: sorry .

*P165: hello John .

*P165: &eh (.) thank you for <your (.) so kind> [//] your kindness (.)
offering help (.) &eh (.) for my moving <to> [/] to the new house .

*P165: &eh actually my family (.) finally they can solve the schedule
and can come to help me .

*P165: but anyway I thank you so much .

*P165: and let's dates some day in future and have (.) lunch .

*P166: John ehm (.) John .

*P166: thanks for (.) your helping in advance .

*P166: but (.) I have a good news for you (.)

*P166: that <my> [//] my brother [x2] and <my > [//] my brother's family
is going to help me to move in the new house .

*P166: so &eh so [x4] ehm (.) you don't really have to come tomorrow .

*P166: but anyway thanks for your help .

*P167: oh John .

*P167: <I have &ehh> [//] I would very appreciate your promise to help me .

*P167: but now (.) my families can help me to do this .

*P167: so you can (.) decide for yourself if you come or not come is welcome .

*P168: Corrupt file

*P169: <hi> [/] hi John .

*P169: thank you for your help .

*P169: but (.) my family's here .

*P169: so (.) &eh maybe &ehh (.) you (.) won't take a (.) day off in your work .

*P170: John ehm not sure where you are now .

%com: respondent uses imaginary 'phone' .

*P170: and &eh first of all thank you for taking one day off <for &eh>

[//] to help me .

*P170: but actually my family's here .

*P170: they are going to help me today .

*P170: so (.) <if you real[ly] > [//] ehm I mean you don't have to leave today .

*P170: 'cos if you need to go to work just go to work .

*P170: thank you .

*P171: eh well we're all covered .

*P171: we can handle them .

*P171: but thank you .

*P172: oh &ehh (.) oh John .

*P172: thank you .

*P172: <I &eh> [/] my friend has come to help me .

*P172: &eh so &eh if you still would like to help, welcome [&=laughing] .

*P173: ehmm (...) ok John you know what .

*P173: <my ehm> [/]my family's is just arrived here .

*P173: so they can help me to to [x4] ehh pack up other stuff here .

*P173: so ehm <this eh just> [//] I thank you for kindness .

*P173: eh (.) so ehh [x3] you just [don't] (.) need to help me for [x3] this

%com: MAM says: you DON'T need his help, is that what you are saying?

But on re-hearing this scenario, I think respondent means that he needs John's help to 'pack up . . . other stuff']

*P174: hi John .

*P174: first (.) many thanks for your <help to> [/] to help me to move to the new apartment .

*P174: however as our family come to help me .

*P174: so (.) &eh I am afraid to say .

*P174: you may continue your job .

*P174: and you need not to go to help me .

%com: Ehh(...) MAM asks respondent if he understands the

scenario, and he asks for it to be repeated

*P175: hey &eh John .

*P175: &eh[x3] <I know> [/] I know you ¤ you will take a day off to help

me (.) &eh to move &eh [x3] to help me to move <a new &eh> [/] a

new apartment .

*P175: &eh but &eh it is really a [x4] good things that surprise me (.) just now .

*P175: that <I ¤ my &compa ¤ my ¤ my family> [//] my family came and they

are helping me &eh[x3] move this .

*P175: so I think &eh (.) < I [x2] can get > [/] I can get enough help

&eh [x2] from them .

*P175: so <I have to &eh[x2] > [/] I have to call back you that .

*P175: and < thank you for your &eh [x2] > [/] thank you for your help .

*P175: I really appreciate that .

*P176: oh thanks John .

*P176: eh (.) but this time is &eh not very good (..) opportunity for you .

*P176: hehe (&=laughing) .

*P176: my family is here [help around?] or something .

*P176: goodbye .

*P177: Thank you so much .

*P177: And I will (.) eh invite him to (.) have lunch .

*P178: hey John .

*P178: <I [x4] am calling you to eh> [/] I'm calling you <for> [/]

for &eh not asking you to (.) come and help me .

*P178: &eh because <my I had> [//] I had eh reinforcement here .

*P178: so ehm (.) thank you for your help .

*P178: and let's go out for (.) dinner some time (&=laughs) .

*P179: John .

*P179: my family's just &eh came by to <help my> [/] help my (.)

moving to [*] [:into] the new apartment .

*P179: thank you very much .

*P179: and (.) just have a lunch (.) when other time .

The Moving Scenario (Danish L1)

*P76: hej Martin .

*P76: min familie er lige kommet forbi .

*P76: de kan godt hjælpe med at flytte .

*P76: &øh så du behøves ikk' hjælpe mig alligevel .

*P76: det kommer an på: om du gerne vil .

*P76: ellers ka' du bare komme forbi .

*P77: hej Martin .

*P77: ve' du hva' <det va' sku:> [//] det va' sødt af dig du ville hjælpe mig med at flytte .

*P77: me:n lige pludselig så dukkede hel [!] min familie op .

*P77: så der faktisk ikk' egentlig behøv for det .

*P77: så du sagtens tage på arbejde i stedet for .

*P77: <jeg vil selvfølgelig> [//] · altså du er også meget velkommen .

*P77: men jeg [/] jeg gi'r en kvajebajer .

*P77: det [/] det vidste jeg sku ikk' lige .

*P78: Martin .

*P78: du ska' bare vide at min familie er kommet for at overraske mig med hjælpe mig at flytte .

*P78: og jeg vil rigtig gerne ha' dig til at hjælpe mig stadigvæk .

*P78: men er du presset .

*P78: så behøves du ikk' .

*P79: hva' Martin .

*P79: du behøver ikk' at komme alligevel i dag .

*P79: det var ellers sødt af dig .

*P79: men min familie er kommet for at hjælpe .

*P80: &øhm Martin nu ska' du høre .

*P80: jeg blev da · positivt overrasket at hele [!] min familie dukkede op .

*P80: så: du behøver ikk' at komme .

*P80: men du er selvfølgelig velkommen .

*P80: hvis du sku' ha' lyst .

*P81: &øhm &men jeg er glad for din hjælp .

*P81: men: min familie <har> [/] har mulighed for at komme og hjælpe .

*P81: så jeg har faktisk ik' behov for din hjælp alligevel .

*P81: je:g [/] jeg gi'r en middag på et eller andet tidspunkt .

*P82: Martin &øh (..) din heldige son of a gun !

*P82: &øh jeg ha' fået hjælp fra familien .

*P82: så: &øh · hvis du ikk' ha' brug for: at komme over og: gå og hygge dig lidt med mig .

*P82: så er du velkommen til at ta' på arbejde .

*P82: men: omvendt så: kan jeg sagtens bruge din hjælp .

*P82: så: kom egentlig forbi .

*P82: hvis det stadig passer ind i dine planer .

*P83: Martin !

*P83: jeg ha' fået ekstra assistance .

*P83: &øh du: er (.) mere end velkommen til <at> [/] at komme og hjælpe til .

*P83: men [/] men (.) <det er desværre> [//] eller det ikk' nødvendigt .

*P83: dermed at jeg ha' hele familien stående her · og klar til at gi' en hånd med .

*P84: Martin !

*P84: jeg vil gerne <sætte> [//] sige mange tak fordi du har tilbudt din hjælp .

*P84: men min familie er lige kommet på besøg .

*P84: så: [/] så du ka' godt ta' på arbejde i stedet for at hjælpe mig .

*P84: men tak for hjælpen .

*P85: &øh Martin !

*P85: vi ha' en aftale om at du ska' hjælpe mig at flytte i dag .

*P85: du er stadigvæk rigtig rigtig velkommen .

*P85: · &øh jeg ha' lige fået besøg af: Peter hans kone og deres barn &og der også vil hjælpe .

*P85: så: · [/] så det går ikk' så hurtigt .

*P85: men kom hvis du har lyst .

*P85: or ellers så: [/] <så &semåjeg> [/] så finder jeg ud af det selv .

*P86: Martin .

*P86: der er kommet nogle fra min familie til at hjælpe .

*P86: så: du ka' slippe i dag .

*P86: men (..) tak for hjælpen .

*P87: [clicks his tongue] &øhj der er kommet nogle for at hjælpe mig .

*P87: &øh men (.) tusind tak for din hjælp .

*P87: du må selvfølgelig gerne komme stadigvæk .

*P88: Martin .

*P88: det er super fedt at du kommer .

*P88: mi:n [/] min familie er også kommet .

*P88: · &øh og de gi'r et nap med .

*P88: så der er ikk' behov for dig .

*P88: men jeg bli'r altså rigtig glad for at: du vil komme .

*P89: invalid answer!

*P90: hej Martin .

*P90: virkelig mange gange tak for du gad at hjælpe i dag .

*P90: men min er familie trådt til .

*P90: så du <behøvers> [/] behøver ikk' at komme og hjælpe alligevel .

Participants comment afterwards ” Det jeg tror Martin vil være glad for.”

*P91: hej Martin .

*P91: der er sket det heldige at du slipper for at slæbe kasser op og ned af trappen i dag .

*P91: fordi min familie er kommet at hjælpe .

*P91: så <du:> [/] du ka' slappe af og komme forbi med nogle øl til når [laughs] vi er færdige .

*P92: kære Martin .

*P92: mine forældre de er lige: +//.

*P92: eller min familie de er lige kommet forbi o:g tilbudt min hjælp .

*P92: så: · (...) hvis det er at du gerne vil tage på arbejde .

*P92: så synes jeg bare du ska' gøre det .

*P92: for jeg ha:' (.) rigelig med hjælp .

*P93: Martin !

*P93: nu ska' du høre .

*P93: der er sket noget godt .

*P93: hele familien er kommet og de vil gerne hjælpe .

*P93: så du ka' faktisk slippe for at hjælpe mig i dag .

*P93: hvis du ha' andre planer <du ka:'> [/] du ka' gå ud at lave .

*P93: men tusind tak for hjælpen .

*P94: Martin !

*P94: min: familie er kommet for at hjælpe mig uden at jeg vidste på forhånd .

*P94: så: (..) hvis du ha' lyst er du velkommen til at kigge over .

*P94: ellers <ka' du> (..) [/] ka' du godt få lov at blive hjemme .

*P94: så klarer vi det selv .

*P95: &øh (..) ve' du hva' .

*P95: tusind tak for du ville hjælpe .

*P95: men min familie er kommet .

*P95: så: (..) · &øh (..) det er ikk' nødvendigt alligevel .

*P95: men tusind tak fordi du ville .

*P96: <&øh min forældre har tilbudt at:> [//] <eller min familie hjælper mig med at> [//] <har tilbudt mig> [//] hjælpe mig med at flytte .

*P96: · så: (..) jeg ha' ikk' brug for din hjælp alligevel .

*P97: Martin .

*P97: jeg ha' fået hjælp med flytningen .

*P97: så: tusind tak .

*P97: vi ta'r en flytteøl sammen en anden dag .

The Moving Scenario (Chinese L1)

CN180

bào	qiàn						
抱	歉	，					
bú	yòng	nǐ	bāng	máng	le		
不	用	你	帮	忙	了	，	
wǒ	jiā	rén	guò	lái	bāng	máng	le
我	家	人	过	来	帮	忙	了 .

I am sorry. There is no need for your help any longer. My family has arrived to help.

CN181

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，
má fan nǐ le
麻 烦 你 了 ，
wǒ jiā rén yǐ jīng huí lái bāng máng gòu
我 家 人 已 经 回 来 帮 忙 ， 够
le
了 ，
nǐ jiù bú yòng qǐng jià le
你 就 不 用 请 假 了 。

Sorry. This [taking the day off] has troubled you. My family is already back to help. Enough people. You don't need to take the off any longer.

CN182

wángliàng duì bu qǐ
王 亮 ， 对 不 起 ，

wǒ de jiā rén yǐ jīng lái bāng wǒ le
我 的 家 人 已 经 来 帮 我 了 ，
míng tiān jiù zàn shí nǐ jiù máng nǐ de
明 天 就 ， 暂 时 你 就 忙 你 的
shì qing
事 情 。

Wangliang, apologies. My family has already come to help me. Tomorrow… temporarily you can do your own things.

CN183

wáng liàng bù hǎo yì sī ā
王 亮 ， 不 好 意 思 啊 ，
wǒ xiàn zài yǒu rén wǒ jiā lǐ miàn
(我 现 在 有 人 …) 我 家 里 面
yǒu rén gěi bāng wǒ bān jiā le ma
有 人 给 帮 我 搬 家 了 嘛 ，
míng tiān kě néng jiù bù xū yào nǐ le
明 天 可 能 就 不 需 要 你 了 ，

fēi cháng gǎn xiè nǐ le
非 常 感 谢 你 了 。

Wangliang, sorry. (I now have people….) My family has arrived to help me move. Tomorrow maybe no need for your help. Thank you very much.

CN184

wáng liàng
王 亮 ，
nǐ hái shì míng tiān bié qǐng jià le
你 还 是 明 天 别 请 假 了 ，
yīn wéi wǒ jiā rén huí lái le lái bāng
因 为 我 家 人 回 来 了 ， 来 帮
wǒ bān jiā le
我 搬 家 了 ！

Wangliang, you don't need to apply for absence and take a day off tomorrow, because my family is back. They come to help me move.

CN185

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，
wǒ jiā lǐ tou yǒu rén lái bāng máng le
我 家 里 头 有 人 来 帮 忙 了
，
bú yòng nǐ
不 用 你 ，
xiè xiè nǐ
谢 谢 你 ，
má fan nǐ le
麻 烦 你 了 ！

Sorry. My family has come to help. No need for your help. Thank you. This has troubled you [thank you for taking the inconvenience to help].

CN186

xiè xiè nǐ
谢 谢 你 ，
míng tiān bú yòng lái bāng wǒ bān jiā le
明 天 不 用 来 帮 我 搬 家 了 。

Thank you. Tomorrow no need to come and help me move.

CN189

míng tiān wǒ jiā lǐ rén huì bāng máng guò lái
明 天 我 家 里 人 会 帮 忙 过 来
bān jiā
搬 家 ，
suǒ yǐ jiù xiè xiè nǐ de bāng máng
所 以 ， 就 谢 谢 你 的 帮 忙 ，
xià cì qǐng nǐ chī fàn
下 次 请 你 吃 饭 。

Tomorrow my family will help come and help me move, so thank you for your help. Next time I will invite you for dinner.

CN190

wáng liàng
王 亮 ，
xiàn zài jiā lǐ rén lái le
现 在 家 里 人 来 了 ，
rú guǒ nǐ méi shí jiān nǐ jiù bú yòng
如 果 你 没 时 间 ， 你 就 不 用
guò lái le
过 来 了 。

Wangliang, now my family has arrived. If you don’t have time, you don’t need to come.

CN191

wáng liàng
王 亮 ，
xīn kǔ nǐ le
辛 苦 你 了 。
míng tiān wǒ men gòu rén shǒu le
明 天 我 们 够 人 手 了 ，
nǐ bú yòng guò lái le
你 不 用 过 来 了 。

Wangliang, thank you for making you tired to take a day off to help. Tomorrow we have enough people and enough hands. You don’t need to come.

CN192

wáng liàng duì bu qǐ
王 亮 ， 对 不 起 ，
jīn tiān wǒ men jiā yǒu qí tā rén bāng
今 天 我 们 家 有 其 他 人 帮

máng
忙 ，
nǐ gōng zuò máng
你 工 作 忙 ，
nǐ jiù bú yào guò lái le
你 就 不 要 过 来 了 。

Wangliang, apologies. Today there is help from some other people in my family. You must be quite busy at work. So you don’t need to come.

CN193

míng tiān nǐ kě yǐ bú yòng lái le
明 天 ， 你 可 以 不 用 来 了 ！

Tomorrow, you don’t need to come.

CN194

wǒ yǐ jīng yǒu jiā rén lái le
我 已 经 有 家 人 来 了 ，
dàn nǐ yuàn bú yuàn yì lái dōu kě yǐ
但 你 愿 不 愿 意 来 都 可 以 ！

My family has arrived. Both are OK if you want to come or if you don’t want to come.

CN195

wǒ jiā lǐ lái rén bāng wǒ bān dōng xī le
我 家 里 来 人 帮 我 搬 东 西 了
，
bú yòng nǐ bān le
不 用 你 搬 了 ，
xiè xiè nǐ
谢 谢 你 ！

Some people in my family have come to help me move the boxes. No need for you to move them. Thank you.

CN196

wáng liàng
王 亮 ，
míng tiān wǒ de qīn péng hǎo yǒu lái bāng wǒ
明 天 我 的 亲 朋 好 友 来 帮 我
，

nǐ méi kōng nǐ jiù jì xù shàng bān ba
你 没 空 ， 你 就 继 续 上 班 吧
！

Wangliang, tomorrow my family and friends will come and help me. If you don’t have time, you can still go to work.

CN198

wáng liàng
王 亮 ，
tài xiè xiè nǐ le hǎo gē men
太 谢 谢 你 了 ， 好 哥 们 。
dàn shì wǒ zhè biān de huà wǒ jiā
但 是 ， 我 这 边 的 话 ， 我 家
rén dōu guò lái le suǒ yǐ shuō míng
人 都 过 来 了 ， 所 以 说 ， 明
tiān bān jiā de huà wǒ men zì jǐ kě
天 搬 家 的 话 ， 我 们 自 己 可
yǐ le
以 了 ，
suǒ yǐ shuō hái shì fēi cháng gǎn xiè nǐ
所 以 说 ， 还 是 非 常 感 谢 你
！

Wangliang, thank you very much, my good friend. However, on my side, my family has arrived to help. So tomorrow, about the moving, we can handle it by ourselves. So still thank you very much.

CN199

wáng liàng bù hǎo yì sī
王 亮 ， 不 好 意 思 ，
wǒ zuó tiān shuō le yào bān jiā de shì
我 昨 天 说 了 要 搬 家 的 事 .
nǐ yào shi méi yǒu kōng wǒ jiù bù xū
你 要 是 没 有 空 ， 我 就 不 需
yào nǐ guò lái le
要 你 过 来 了 ！

Wangliang, sorry. I talked to you about the moving yesterday, if you don’t have time, there is no need to come.

CN200

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，

bào qiàn
抱 歉 ，
wǒ jiā rén xiànzài bān jiā yǒu rén shǒu
(我 家 人 …) 现 在 搬 家 有 人 手
le
了 ，
xiànzài zàn shí bú yào zhè ge bāngmán
现 在 暂 时 不 要 这 个 帮 忙 了 。

Sorry, I am really sorry. (my family) Now I have enough hands for the moving. Now temporarily there is no need for your help.

CN201

wángliàng bù hǎo yì sī
王 亮 ， 不 好 意 思 ，
zhèng hǎo wǒ qī zi tā men yǐ jīngguò lái le
正 好 我 妻 子 他 们 已 经 过 来 了 ，
è míngtiānbān jiā de huà jiǎ rú shuō
呃 ， 明 天 搬 家 的 话 ， 假 如 说 ，
nǐ yào shi yǒu shí jiān yě kě yǐ yì qǐ guò
你 要 是 有 时 间 ， 也 可 以 一 起 过
lái bāngmáng
来 帮 忙 ，
yào shi méi shí jiānde huà ne nǐ yě kě yǐ
要 是 没 时 间 的 话 呢 ， 你 也 可 以
bú yònglái
不 用 来 。

Wangliang, sorry. Accidentally my wife and her family have arrived. With regards to the moving tomorrow, if you have time, you can come along and help. If you don’t have time, no need for you to come.

CN202

wángliàng
王 亮 ，
wǒ jiā lǐ guò lái rén le
我 家 里 过 来 人 了 ，
nǐ míngtiān jiù bú yòngqǐngjià le
你 明 天 就 不 用 请 假 了 ，
nǐ hái shì shàngbān bù yǐngxiǎngnǐ gōngzuò
你 还 是 上 班 ， 不 影 响 你 工 作 。

Wangliang, my family has arrived. You don’t need to apply for absence and take a day off tomorrow. You can still go to work. It is not necessary to influence your work.

CN203

wáng liàng bù hǎo yì sī ā
王 亮 ， 不 好 意 思 啊 ，
xiàn zài wǒ zhè biān wǒ de jiā rén tū rán jiān jiù
现 在 我 这 边 ， 我 的 家 人 突 然 间 就
gěi le wǒ ge jīng xǐ huí lái bāng wǒ bān jiā
给 了 我 个 惊 喜 ， 回 来 帮 我 搬 家 ，
míng tiān jiù bú yòng má fan nǐ le
明 天 就 不 用 麻 烦 你 了 ！

Wangliang, sorry. Um, now on my side, my family suddenly gave me a surprise by coming back to help me move. So tomorrow no need to trouble and inconvenience you anymore.

CN204

wáng liàng bù hǎo yì sī
王 亮 ， 不 好 意 思 ，

běn lái xiǎng ràng nǐ bāng máng de
本 来 想 让 你 帮 忙 的 ，

dàn xiàn zài wǒ jiā rén guò lái le de
但 现 在 我 家 人 过 来 了 的 ，

nà nǐ jiù zì yóu ān pái hǎo le
那 你 就 自 由 安 排 好 了 ，

wǒ zhè biān nǐ jiù bú yòng guò lái le
我 这 边 你 就 不 用 过 来 了 。

Wangliang, sorry. I intended to ask for your help, but now my family has arrived, so you feel free to make arrangements. You don’t need to come to my place and help.

CN205

wángliàng ā
王 亮 啊 ，
wǒ de jiā rén guò lái bāng mángle
我 的 家 人 过 来 帮 忙 了 ，
jiù bú yòng má fan nǐ le
就 不 用 麻 烦 你 了 ，

nǐ míng tiān hái jì xù shàngbān ba
你 明 天 还 继 续 上 班 吧 ，
xiè xiè ò
谢 谢 哦 ！

Wangliang, my family has come to help. No need to trouble you anymore. Tomorrow you can still go to work. Thank you.

CN206

wáng liàng
王 亮 ，
xiè xiè nǐ dā ying míng tiān guò lái bāng wǒ bān
谢 谢 你 答 应 明 天 过 来 帮 我 搬
jiā
家 ，
dàn wǒ jiā lǐ rén yǐ jīng lái dào wǒ shēn biān
但 我 家 里 人 已 经 来 到 我 身 边 ，
rán hòu jiù bù xū yào nǐ guò lái le
然 后 就 不 需 要 你 过 来 了 ，
dàn hái shì fēi cháng gǎn xiè nǐ
但 还 是 非 常 感 谢 你 ！

Wangliang, thank you for promising to come and help tomorrow, but my family has already arrived and is now with me. So no need for you to come any longer, but still thank you very much.

CN207

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，

qīn qi péng you guò lái bāng wǒ bān jiā
亲 戚 朋 友 过 来 帮 我 搬 家 ，

rán hòu kě néng jiù bù xū yào nǐ le
然 后 ， 可 能 就 不 需 要 你 了 。

wéi biǎo qiàn yì wǒ hái shì xià cì qǐng tā chī
(为 表 歉 意 ， 我 还 是 下 次 请 他 吃
fàn zuò gè péi zuì bì jìng hái shì má fan dào
饭 ， 做 个 赔 罪 ， 毕 竟 还 是 麻 烦 到
tā le
他 了 ！)

Sorry. My family and friends have arrived to help me move. So maybe no need for your help. (In order to express my apologetic feelings, next time I will invite him to have dinner together and make an apology. After all I have troubled and inconvenienced him) .

The Meeting Scenario (British English)

*P98: ehm Mr . Jensen .

*P98: ehm (.) due to unforeseen circumstances this meeting has had to be cancelled .

*P98: I know now you're on a tight schedule .

*P98: as such (.) would it be possible to re-organise it for another time ?

*P99: I'm really sorry to mess you around .

*P99: but eh (.) the meeting we had scheduled this afternoon's been cancelled .

*P99: ehm (.) I'm more than happy to go through it with you (.) another time whenever suitable for you

*P99: if that's ok

*P100: I'm really sorry .

*P100: the meeting's unexpectedly been cancelled .

*P100: but I'd still appreciate some time to catch up on the project .

*P101: I'm really sorry Mr . Jensen .

*P101: but eh the meeting's actually been cancelled .

*P101: ehm (.) I'd like to say thank you for eh (.) going out of your way to (.) be willing to attend this meeting

*P101: but unfortunately (.) it won’t be (.) happening (.) I’m afraid .

*P102: eh, hello Mr . Jensen .

*P102: it’s Brian (.)

*P102: eh (.) I’m afraid to tell you

*P102: but the meeting’s been cancelled that we arranged for this afternoon .

*P102: eh (..) will it be possible to rearrange it sometime with you ?

*P103: hello Mr . Jensen .

*P103: I’m awfully sorry .

*P103: the (.) eh (.) meeting I’ve asked you to attend this afternoon has been (..) unavoidably cancelled .

*P103: so your attendance won’t be required .

*P104: I’m really sorry .

*P104: I know it was (.) eh (.) difficult for you <to> [/] to make the meeting .

*P104: but I’m afraid the meeting had to be cancelled .

*P105: eh (.) unfortunately the meeting’s been rescheduled .

*P105: and-eh (.) will no longer be happening today .

*P105: eh (.) sorry for any inconvenience .

*P106: I’m awfully sorry .

*P106: the meeting’s been (.) cancelled .

*P106: and we lose the opportunity to introduce you to the rest of the team .

*P106: perhaps another time .

*P107: hi Mr . Jensen .

*P107: I'm so so so [so so so is not hesitating here - it is a unit: so so so]sorry .

*P107: I know you've put (.) a lot of things aside to be able to attend this meeting .

*P107: but it unfortunately has been cancelled .

*P107: eh (.) if you are still available I'd love for you to attend (.)

*P107: eh (.) but I appreciate that (.) eh we've messed you about a little bit .

*P107: so-eh my sincere apologies .

*P107: I'm really sorry it's been cancelled .

*P108: Mr . Jensen .

*P108: eh first of all apologies-eh for trying to put you into this meeting even after you had it rescheduled .

*P108: but recently this meeting has been cancelled .

*P108: so-eh we no longer need you in the meeting .

*P108: eh but once again thank you for agreeing to come into the meeting even after (.) such a tight schedule .

*P109: eh I'm very sorry

*P109: unexpectedly the meeting's been cancelled due to other people not been able to make it .

*P109: I'm sorry to have troubled you .

*P109: but you don't need to come this afternoon

*P110: I'm really sorry the meeting's been cancelled .

*P110: but (.) we can still catch up if you are still available .

*P111: hi Mr . Jensen .

*P111: I’m really sorry to do this to you .

*P111: I know (.) it was putting you out to come to this meeting .

*P111: ehm (.) but unfortunately through (.) situations beyond my control the meeting’s been cancelled .

*P111: ehm (.) like I say again .

*P111: <I’m> [/] I’m really sorry to do this to you .

*P111: but-eh thank you very much for making the effort to[x3] find the time for the meeting anyway .

*P112: ehm I appreciate <thee> [//] your ability to be able to attend the meeting this afternoon at short notice .

*P112: unfortunately a couple of colleagues have had to pull out due to other work demands .

*P112: we’ve cancelled the meeting this afternoon .

*P112: and-e we will have the meeting at a later date .

*P112: I appreciate that you won’t be able to attend and we will run some ideas past you afterwards .

*P113: (I’d say-eh): alright Mr . Jensen .

*P113: it’s Scott .

*P113: I’m really sorry .

*P113: I know that you’ve changed your schedule today .

*P113: but-ehm (.) from some unconceived circumstances this meeting has changed .

*P113: I’m really really sorry .

*P113: I’d still value your ideas and your input into this process which is why I asked you attend .

*P113: so you can maybe spend some time to give me your thoughts at least that it’s not a total waste .

*P114: ehm hello Mr . Jensen .

*P114: I’m-eh really sorry that-eh I’m disturbing you in one of your meetings at the moment (.) ehm .

*P114: (‘because I imagine he must be)

*P114: but-e just let you know that the meeting later today has been cancelled (.) ehm .

*P114: (and then sort whether or not I’d still want his opinion on whatever

it is I ¤ I would say):

*P114: <If you still want it do you mind> [//] if you still want it that I come and find you for five minutes this afternoon .

*P114: [or I’d say:]

*P114: thank you for (.) agreeing to help me earlier .

*P114: <ehm if I ehm> [//] if possible (.) we rearrange or reschedule it .

*P114: ehm would it be ok for me to invite you again through a conference call or something ?

*P115: I’m really sorry about this

*P115: I know you’ve gone and squeezed it into your diary (.) quite last minute .

*P115: but unfortunately I’ve had to cancel the meeting through a number of people who no kind stand on.

*P115: I’m going to have to rearrange it.

*P115: so I <u>am</u> really sorry.

*P115: but really still appreciate your input.

*P115: So could we arrange it another time?

*P116: sorry .

*P116: but things have changed .

*P116: <the> [/] the meeting’s been cancelled .

*P116: I’m not gonna need you this afternoon .

*P117: Mr . Jensen .

*P117: I am (.) so sorry to disturb your afternoon .

*P117: however I want to notify you that the meeting has been cancelled .

*P117: however please do come and see me .

*P117: because I have a list of other items .

*P117: I would very much appreciate discussing with you starting with I haven't had Outlook for five days .

*P118: Mr . Jensen .

*P118: ehm I think this is good news .

*P118: it means you can probably get an earlier flight home .

*P118: thanks very much for agreeing to come to my meeting .

*P118: but-eh due to circumstances beyond our control it's been cancelled .

*P118: so thank you very much and have a good weekend .

*P119: I apologise profusely .

*P119: but the meeting has now been cancelled .

*P119: I'm really sorry we've wasted your time .

*P120: hi Mr . Jensen .

*P120: ehm I'm so sorry .

*P120: but the meeting's been cancelled .

*P120: so-eh we won' be going ahead .

*P120: thank you anyway for offering to attend .

*P121: eh good morning Mr . Jensen .

*P121: I'm terribly sorry (.) to-eh inconvenience you again .

*P121: but-eh I'm going to have to cancel today's meeting .

*P121: I'd still (.) really value your input on the project .

*P121: so if I email it (.) over to you could you-eh give me a response or we could arrange a more convenient time ?

The Meeting Scenario (Chinese ELF)

*P153: hey Johnson .

*P153: firstly I want to thank you for your coming to our meeting (.) this afternoon .

*P153: but (.) now I'm so sorry to tell you that the meeting has been accidentally cancelled .

*P153: but (.) so much thanks for your (..) attendance .

*P153: and (.) I'm sincerely sorry for it .

*P153: thank you .

*P154: hello Johnson .

*P154: this is Jason speaking .

*P154: <and &eh I'm very glad you> [//] and I'm very glad (.) that you will attend our meeting .

*P154: and &eh I know you have a lot of work to do .

*P154: but I am sorry to tell you that (.) the meeting is cancelled .

*P154: &ehmm (..) but thanks again <for your> [/] for your help to join us .

*P154: thank you very much .

*P155: &ehm I'm sorry Mr. Johnson

*P155: &eh our meeting was <&restr> [//] cancelled probably rescheduled

*P155: I'll call you back (..) when we have time .

*P156: &ehm hello Mr. Johnson .

*P156: the meeting's cancelled .

*P156: so (.) I'm sorry to inform you that .

*P156: but &ehm (..) <thank you for> [/] thank you for your cooperation .

*P156: so I'm really happy to work with you .

*P157: &exc I'm sorry .

*P157: <the> [/] the meeting has been cancelled .

*P157: you can &en &ah (..) just (...) &eh take your time .

*P158: I'm very very sorry Mr. Johnson .

*P158: and &eh (...) I'm sorry to disturb you for the meeting .

*P158: <and> [//] but the meeting (.) has cancelled (...) .

*P158: thanking for your coming .

*P159: Corrupt file

*P160: Mr Johnson .

*P160: I am sorry .

*P160: but &eh thank you for your help .

*P160: but the meeting &eh is cancelled .

*P161: &ehm hello Johnson .

*P161: &eh you know &eh originally we have a meeting today .

*P161: and it’s our pleasure to invite you together to have your opinions .

*P161: I think it will be very useful for our project .

*P161: &ehm but (.) unfortunately the meeting is cancelled due to blahblah blah blah any reason .

*P161: &ehm so maybe the meeting will be rescheduled .

*P161: &ehm but &eh I also appreciate (.) when I reschedule I also can invite you join in .

*P161: I think is [*] [:it] will be very &eh helpful for the meeting

*P162: &eh (...) do mind again?

MAM reads scenario again and respondent says:

*P162: I think (&=laughs) I would say eh .

*P162: Sir (&=laughs)

*P162: I’m sorry (&=laughs)

*P162: but the meeting already (&=aughs) cancelled (&=laughs)

*P163: Mr Johnson .

*P163: I’m very sorry to inform you that <the> [/] the meeting has been cancelled .

*P163: &ehm I really appreciate that <you> [/] you agreed <to> [/] to join .

*P163: but &eh since now the meeting is cancelled .

*P163: would you like to arrange the time for something else ?

*P163: maybe I can help .

*P164: oh sorry about that .

*P164: &eh (be)cause my meeting is cancelled .

*P164: and thank you (.) for your (.) &eh support as well .

*P165: &ehm hello &eh Mr Johnson .

*P165: &ehm <I> [/] I am sorry to tell you that the meeting (.) is cancelled .

*P165: &ehm but thank you for your time.

*P165: and &eh < i wo>[/] I would like to (.) schedule some time with you in future to have a talk about that .

*P166: Johnson .

*P166: the meeting in this afternoon has been cancelled .

*P166: so &eh <you don't> [/] you don't need to come .

*P166: thanks anyway .

*P167: &eh firstly I really appreciate &eh you're willing to help me .

*P167: &eh but I need to tell you the meeting has been rescheduled .

*P167: and I will inform you once confirm the date .

*P168: Corrupt file

*P169: &erh this man is Johnson (.) right ?

*MAM: Johnsen, ja .

*P169: hi (.) Johnson .

*P169: &eh thank you for your help .

*P169: but (.) the meeting's just cancelled .

*P169: so (.) thank you anyway .

*P170: hi John .

*P170: ehm (...) sorry <I &eh> [/] I've to tell you the meeting &eh <I>

[/] as I mentioned this morning ehm (.) was just em (.) call[ed]

off (.) for the time concrete .

*P170: so (.) &er <I> [/] I know it's very important <for> [/] for (.) us to have you in the meeting .

*P170: maybe &ehm <I can (.) ehm> [//] if I can have your (.) ehm support (.) later .

*P170: as long as I know the postponed time I will let you know .

*P170: sorry .

*P170: &ehm thank you so much for this .

*P171: oh Mr. Johnson .

*P171: I do apologise .

*P171: eh looks like (.) the meeting we got scheduled this afternoon has been cancelled .

*P171: I'm very sorry .

*P171: ehh you can join another one .

*P171: I will let you know when next time is resceduled .

*P172: Oh &eh Mr. Johnson .

*P172: I have &eh good news and &eh bad news for you [&=laughing] .

*P172: <what> [//] which one do you like to &eh hear first ? [&=laughing]

*P173: sorry Mr Johnson .

*P173: the meeting has been cancelled .

*P173: because of ..eh...the (...)

*P173: so &eh (.) thank you for considerations to accept the meeting and

we will arrange the meeting for another time.

*P174: hi Johnny

*P174: <I'm sorry to tell you that &ehm maybe> [/] I'm sorry to tell you that &ehh maybe we need to (.) cancel the appointment which we invited you to join our meeting .

*P175: &eh [x2] hello Johnson .

*P175: < eh [x2] this &eh[x3] the meet ¤ ehh ¤ my meeting > [//] my meeting was cancelled just now .

*P175: so I'm available now .

*P175: I'm not sure whether you are &eh available at this moment .

*P175: I think < if &eh [x2] eh ¤ whether &eh to see > [//] whether we can &eh put forward &eh the meeting to &eh [x2] earlier time .

*P176: sorry Mr John .

*P176: <the> [/] the meeting is cancelled .

*P176: I'm grate[*] [: grateful] for your help .

*P176: and sorry <for> [/] for your kindness .

*P177: The meeting's cancelled .

*P177: so sorry [yeah] .

*P178: hello Johnson .

*P178: &eh I'm sorry that the meeting <&ha> [//] is cancelled &eh for some reason .

*P178: &ehm <I'm> [/] I'm terribly sorry that &eh I booked your time but can not make it .

*P178: so ehm (..) sorry &eh and thank you .

*P178: &=[laughing] .

*P179: hi Mr. Johnson .

*P179: I’m very very sorry about the meeting is cancelled .

*P179: I’m (.) very thank you for your (.) help .

*P179: it is very helpful <&fo> [//] to us

*P179: and hope we can have a talk and <have eh> [/] have some
meals <after> [/] after today’s day off .

The Meeting Scenario (Danish ELF)

*P51: hi mr Johnson .

*P51: I'm very sorry .

*P51: but the meeting we have planned this afternoon <is>
&er [/] is cancelled .

*P51: so: (.) can we make a new date ?

*P52: mr Johnson .

*P52: the meeting this afternoon has been cancelled .

*P52: so · (...) [yeah] so you should not come .

*P53: hello sir ?

*P53: do you remember the meeting we talked about this morning ?

*P53: I'm terribly [!] · &er afraid to say that the meeting has been
cancelled · against my plans .

*P53: and (..) I just want you to know so you don't have to prioritise
your time · on attending this .

*P53: <and we will> [//] I'll book the meeting for another day .

*P53: <so we can> [//] hopefully you can join us for that .

*P54: · &ahem mr Johnson .

*P54: the meeting today has been cancelled .

*P54: and &er · we have to find another time where we can (.) discuss this
or <you can> [//] we can maybe do it on the phone instead of meeting
physically .

*P54: &and (..) · because I need your oppinion .

*P54: I really value your oppinion .

*P54: and let’s make an appointment .

*P55: &ahem sorry .

*P55: &er but the meeting today has been cancelled .

*P55: our CO could not make it .

*P55: &ahem so we gonna have to reschedule it and I’ll send you
a mail with a new date and time .

*P55: &ahem sorry about this .

*P55: I knew that: [/] that you: [/] you were really helpful here
and tried to get some room for us in your calendar .

*P55: but unfortunately the CO cannot make it .

*P55: so [/] so we gonna have to <reschedule> [//] maybe do it next week .

*P55: but I’ll get back to you .

*P56: [I would say] I don’t know why is it cancelled but it’s cancelled .

*P55: and I /+ .

*MA: yeah .

*P56: &so: (.) I know you have &yeah come here and you have set the time
off for this .

*P56: and · I’m really sorry .

*P56: but it’s cancelled .

*P56: and I don’t know why and I don’t know who did it .

*P56: but /+ .

*MA: no .

*P56: +, it’s cancelled .

*MA: yeah .

*P56: <laughs> .

*MA: <right> .

*P57: <thank you very much for: · [/] for:> (..) [/] thank you very much for your plan on turning to the meeting .

*P57: but it’s been cancelled .

*P57: &er so: <we don’t> [//] we are not going to need your assistance later on anyway .

*P57: but thanks a lot .

*P58: &well thank you so [!] <for>: [/] for wanting to: [/] to be present at the meeting .

*P58: but unfortunately we have to cancel it .

*P58: but could we just have a talk for five minutes .

*P58: so: I’ll get your points on [/] on a subject .

*P58: and then I [!] can bring it to the meeting next time .

*P59: mr Johnson .

*P59: I’m really [!] sorry .

*P59: but the situation has changed and the meeting has been cancelled .

*P59: &so · I have to inform you about that .

*P59: but thank [!] you so [!] much for: taking your time .

*P60: mr Johnson .

*P60: I’m sorry to tell you .

*P60: but the meeting we: talked about earlier today got cancelled .

*P60: &so · &then therefore there won’t be any need for you to drop by .

*P60: I’m sure we’ll have another meeting where I would appreciate

[!] if you would drop by .

*P61: hi Johnson .

*P61: the meeting was cancelled .

*P61: sorry for the inconvenience .

*P62: mr Johnson .

*P62: I’m <really> [!] [/] really [!] sorry .

*P62: I know you put yourself up there .

*P62: but the meeting has been cancelled .

*P62: I hope I can &er · use your help another time .

*P63: &ahem I’m really [!] sorry .

*P63: but the meeting has been cancelled .

*P64: &you know I appreciate so much that you took the time .

*P64: unfortunately things have escalated in the department .

*P64: so &you_know the meeting was postponed .

*P64: but we would really like <for> [//] your input later in this conversation .

*P64: so would it be possible to ?

*P65: [clicks her tongue] hello mr Johnson .

*P65: &ahem we had agreed that you would come to: my meeting this afternoon .

*P65: but unfortunately it has just been cancelled .

*P65: I'm very sorry for that .

*P65: but &er [yeah] · &er but thanks that you wanted to participate .

*P65: and I hope that I can invite you for: the next meeting .

*P66: &ahem hi mr Johnson .

*P66: I'm sorry to say that the meeting has been cancelled .

*P66: so your presence is not needed [smiles] .

*MA: right .

*P66: thank you .

*P67: mr Johnson [exhales] .

*P67: &ahem [exhales] I'm sorry .

*P67: but the meeting &er that I asked you to join has been &er cancelled .

*P67: &ahem so your presence is not needed .

*P67: I hope that you are (.) pleased with that .

*P68: &oh mr Johnson .

*P68: I'm really sorry .

*P68: the meeting &er was cancelled .

*P68: so we don't needed you anyway .

*P68: but (.) maybe that's ok .

*P68: because you didn't have too much time to begin with .

*P69: mr Johnson .

*P69: this is Life Storm .

*P69: I:'m sorry to interrupt you .

*P69: but the meeting is cancelled .

*P69: &so: · (..) we: [//] you don't have to come to building A4 to: this evening .

*P70: &ahem the meeting this afternoon has been cancelled .

*P70: &so you don't have to come anyways .

*P70: but I really [!] appreciate that you (.) were trying to find the time .

*P71: mr Johnson .

*P71: we: &er agreed that you could come to our meeting and explain
briefly your: view of this .

*P71: but (.) actually this meeting has now been cancelled .

*P71: &so: you don't have to come after all .

*P71: I'm really [!] glad that you volunteered to do it .

*P71: but &er · it is been cancelled .

*P71: but thank you a lot for your: offer .

*P72: hello [clears her throat] .

*P72: &ahem we have unfortunately have to cancel the meeting .

*P72: &ahem I appreciate that you wanted to take the time .

*P72: but you'll have some more time to do xxx work now .

*P73: &ahem thank you very much for taking the time to: meet with me this afternoon .

*P73: &ahem the meeting has been cancelled .

*P73: &so: you don't have to meet anyway .

*P73: &so you will have · some extra time to the staff this afternoon .

*P74: &ahem John !

*P74: thank you for: &er (..) <participating> xxx [//] telling me that you would participate in my meeting .

*P74: it would not be necessary this time .

*P74: because the meeting has been cancelled .

*P75: mr . Johnson .

*P75: thank you very much for your: &er flexibility in order to make our meeting this afternoon .

*P75: but unfortunately it’s been cancelled due · to some unforeseen issues .

*P75: &ahem please let me know when you will be in Copenhagen again .

*P75: and maybe we can reschedule the meeting .

*P75: or when we have the meeting .

The Meeting Scenario (Danish L1)

*P76: hej Kenneth .

*P76: det bli'r desværre ikk' til noget det møde som jeg nævnte for dig tidligere i dag .

*P76: så: du behøves ikk' deltage alligevel .

*P76: men tak fordi du ellers tog dig tid til det .

*P77: &øh hej .

*P77: jeg er virkelig ked af det .

*P77: men der er simpelthen sket det at: mødet blev aflyst .

*P77: så: &øh om vi ku' finde et andet tidspunkt ?

*P77: hvor det passer dig bedre .

*P78: jeg var meget glad for du ku' deltage i vores møde .

*P78: men det er desværre blevet [/] blevet aflyst .

*P78: så: [/] så det er ikk' aktuelt alligevel .

*P79: altså jeg er ked af at [/] at + ...

*P79: det var pænt af dig at du ville tage dig tid til os .

*P79: men vi bli'r desværre nødt til aflyse mødet .

*P80: &øh jeg er ked af at måtte aflyse efter at jeg har lige ha' indkaldt dig .

*P80: men der er desværre nogen der <har> [/] har meldt fra .

*P80: så vi er nødt til at flytte det .

*P81: &øhm det møde jeg: [/] jeg bad dig om at komme til her senere som du ville deltage i .

*P81: det er altså blevet aflyst .

*P81: &øh så håber jeg ikk' at det er <til:> [/] til gene for dig .

*P82: kære IT-chef .

*P82: jeg beklager meget .

*P82: men de:t møde som jeg har indkaldt dig til her på meget kort varslen [*] .

*P82: det er desværre lige blevet aflyst .

*P82: så: &øh på trods af: at du var villig til at hjælpe .

*P82: så: ha' jeg altså ikk' brug for: din hjælp alligevel .

*P83: jeg er frygtelig ked af det .

*P83: det møde som jeg ellers havde indvilliget dig i .

*P83: <er desværre blevet flyttet> [//] eller blev nødt til at bli'
flyttet eller skubbet .

*P83: ha' du muligehd på det her og det her tidspunkt i stedet for ?

*P84: &xxx chef [//] IT chef [var det det han var?] .

*MA: ja .

*P84: [ja]

*P84: &em ej !

*P84: jeg ha' <fundet ud af> [//] desværre fundet ud af at mødet er aflyst .

*P84: jeg: er meget glad for du ville deltage .

*P84: men [/] men det ka' desværre ikk' lade sig gøre .

*P84: så: undskyld ulejlighed .

*P85: &øh hej Peter .

*P85: det er Kirsten .

*P85: jeg ha:vde bedt dig om at komme ned til det her møde her senere .

*P85: men det er så blevet aflyst .

*P85: så: · ja .

*P85: så: [/] så vi finder et andet tidpunkt at indkalde til et møde .

*P85: og så: inviterer jeg dig .

*P85: ser om du har mulighed for at deltage der .

*P86: ve' du hva' .

*P86: jeg er glad for du godt ku' komme til mit møde i dag .

*P86: men det er desværre blevet aflyst på grund af bla bla bla .

*P86: så: <tak for> [//] jeg håber vi ka' lave et møde en anden dag .

*P87: jeg er ked af det .

*P87: men mødet er aflyst .

*P87: så: (.) det bli'r desværre ikk' til noget alligevel .

*P88: det var superdejligt du ville komme til det møde .

*P88: i mellemtiden der er det alstå blevet aflyst det her møde .

*P88: så: [/] så der bli'r ikk' nogen møde i dag .

*P88: man må indkalde dig en anden dag .

*P89: [jeg sig'r] vores møde det er desværre blevet aflyst af: en bestemt årsag .

*P89: og: vi ha' ikk' brug for [laughs] din tilstedeværelse alligevel .

*P89: jeg beklager .

*P90: hej IT chef .

*P90: &øh &hva'_hedder_det mødet blev aflyst .

*P90: &øh 0jeg beklager hvis jeg har (..) &øh fået dig til at skubbe nogle ting .

*P90: <men det> [/] men det har ikk' været noget jeg har været herre over .

*P91: mødet er desværre blevet aflyst .

*P91: &så_men: det må være positivt .

*P91: eftersom han havde svært ved at komme her .

*P91: jeg håber vi ka' finde en anden dag der passer bedre .

*P92: kære: [/] kære IT chef .

*P92: mødet det er desværre blevet aflyst .

*P92: jeg ka' ikk' li:ge gi' dig en begrundelse for hvorfor .

*P92: men jeg vil gerne vende tilbage når det er at jeg har et præcist svar .

*P93: ve' du hva' .

*P93: der er sket det at mødet desværre er blevet aflyst .

*P93: det beklager jeg .

*P93: jeg ved at du pressede det ind imellem andre ting .

*P93: og jeg beklager <at> [/] at det var til ulejlighed for dig .

*P94: jeg beklager virkelig meget .

*P94: og sætter pris på at du: (..) valgte at ta' med til mødet .

*P94: men (.) det er desværre blevet aflyst .

*P95: ve' du hva' .

*P95: mødet de:t er blevet rygget eller blevet aflyst .

*P95: &øh_så: · vi bli'r nødt til at flytte .

*P95: det håber du kan på det nye tidspunkt .

*P95: jeg beklager jeg måtte indkalde dig i dag (.) når det ikk' var nødvendigt .

*P96: jeg er virkelig ked af det .

*P96: men mødet i dag er blevet flyttet (..) eller aflyst

[var det vist [chuckles]] .

*MA: ja .

*P97: hej Lars .

*P97: jeg er virkelig ked af at jeg &er ulejligede dig .

*P97: men nu er &xxx mødet blevet aflyst .

*P97: men jeg håber virkelig at vil være til stede hvis det sku' komme op

og køre en anden dag .

The Meeting Scenario (Chinese L1)

CN180

bào qiàn
抱 歉 ，
huì yì qǔ xiāole
会 议 取 消 了 ，
dān wù nǐ shí jiānle
耽 误 你 时 间 了 。

I am sorry. The meeting has been cancelled. (sorry that) it has taken and delayed your time.

CN181

duì bu qǐ
对 不 起 ，
yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
wǒ men de huì yì yīn gù qǔ xiāole jiù bù kāi le
我 们 的 会 议 因 故 取 消 了 ， 就 不 开 了 ，
fēi chángbào qiàn
非 常 抱 歉 ！

I apologize, Mr. Johnson. Our meeting because some reasons has been cancelled. It will not be held anymore. I am very sorry.

CN182

yuē hàn xùn xiān sheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，

zhēn de duì bu qǐ
真 的 对 不 起 ，

jīn tiān lín shí yǒu shì
今 天 临 时 有 事 ，

qǔ xiāo jīn tiān de huì yì
取 消 今 天 的 会 议 ，

xiè xiè nǐ
谢 谢 你 ！

Mr. Johnson, really apologize for this. Because of temporary reasons today, the meeting has been cancelled. Thank you.

CN183 xiān sheng
先 生 ，

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，

wǒ men zhè yǒu yī diǎn shì qing
我 们 这 有 一 点 事 情 ，

zhè ge huì yì qǔ xiāo le
这 个 会 议 取 消 了 ，

è gēn nǐ zài gōng zuò zhōng zēng tiān le má
呃 ， 跟 你 在 工 作 中 增 添 了 麻
fan
烦 ，

gǎn xiè nǐ néng gòu zài diàn huà lǐ mià yǐ jīng dā
感 谢 你 能 够 在 电 话 里 面 已 经 答
ying le néng gòu lái cān jiā wǒ men zhè ge huì yì
应 了 能 够 来 参 加 我 们 这 个 会 议

Sir, sorry. Because we have some (unexpected) things, the meeting has been cancelled. , Um… it has added trouble/inconvenience to your work. Thank you for promising to attend our meeting on the phone before.

CN184 yuē hàn xùn xiān sheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
duì bu qǐ ò
对 不 起 哦 ，
yīn wéi huì yì lín shí yǒu shì qǔ xiāo l
因 为 会 议 临 时 有 事 取 消 了 ，
xiè xiè nǐ
谢 谢 你 ！

Mr. Johnson, I apologize. Because of temporary reasons, the meeting has been cancelled. Thank you.

CN185 duì bu qǐ
对 不 起 ，

wǒ men de nà gè huì yì qǔ xiāo le
我 们 的 那 个 会 议 取 消 了 ，
má fan nǐ lā
麻 烦 你 啦 。
wǒ men qǔ xiāo zhè ge huì yì yǐ hòu yào xià cì kāi
我 们 取 消 这 个 会 议 以 后 ， 要 下 次 开
de huà má fan nǐ kě bù kě yǐ zài wǒ men xià
的 话 ， 麻 烦 你 可 不 可 以 ， 在 我 们 下
cì kāi zhè ge huì yì de shí hòu lái cān jiā
次 开 这 个 会 议 的 时 候 来 参 加 ？

I apologize. Our meeting has been cancelled. Sorry for having troubled you (thank you for taking the inconvenience to help me). After this cancellation, if the meeting will be held again next time, can we trouble you again to attend the meeting when we next time hold it?

CN186

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，
huì yì qǔ xiāo le
会 议 取 消 了 。

I am sorry. The meeting has been cancelled.

CN189

wǒshuō yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
(我说 ）约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
duì bu qǐ
对 不 起 ，
yīn wéi wǒ men bù mén de mǒu xiē yuányī
因 为 我 们 部 门 的 某 些 原 因 ，
wǒ men jīn tiān bù kāi zhè ge huì yì
我 们 今 天 不 开 这 个 会 议 ，
xià cì qǐngnǐ zài lái qīn lín wǒ men de huì yì zhǐ
下 次 请 你 再 来 亲 临 我 们 的 会 议 指
dǎo yí xià
导 一 下 。

(I say) Mr Johnson, Apologies. Because of some reasons in our department, we are not going to hold this meeting today. Next time I would like to invite you again for guidance.

CN190

yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，

zhè ge huì yì yǒu biànla lín shí gèng biànle
这 个 会 议 有 变 啦 ， 临 时 更 变 了 ，
huì yì qǔ xiāole lín shí qǔ xiāo
会 议 取 消 了 ， 临 时 取 消 ，
xià cì zài yǒu zhè yàngde huà zài guò lái luo
下 次 再 有 这 样 的 话 再 过 来 啰 ！

Mr. Johnson, this meeting have been changed. The meeting is cancelled. It is a temporary cancellation. Next time you are welcome to come again.

CN191

yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
duì bu qǐ lā
对 不 起 啦 ，
wǒ men de huì yì yīn wéi bié de yuányīn qǔ xiāo
我 们 的 会 议 因 为 别 的 原 因 取 消
le
了 ，
qǐng nǐ jiàn liàng
请 你 见 谅 ！

Mr. Johnson sir, I apologize. Our meeting because of other reasons has been cancelled. Please forgive me.

CN192

zǒng cái
总 裁 ，
jīn tiān de nà gè huì yì qǔ xiāo le
今 天 的 那 个 会 议 取 消 了 ，
duì bu qǐ
对 不 起 ，
qǐng nǐ jiù bú yònglái cān jiā zhè ge huì le
请 你 就 不 用 来 参 加 这 个 会 了 。

Boss, the meeting today has been cancelled. I apologize. There is no need to attend the meeting anymore.

CN193

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，
huì yì qǔ xiāole
会 议 取 消 了 ，
hěn bào qiàn
很 抱 歉 。

Sorry, the meeting has been cancelled. I am very sorry.

CN194

duì bu qǐ
对 不 起 ，
zhè ge huì yì bù kāi le
这 个 会 议 不 开 了 ，
bú yòng lái cān jiā le
不 用 来 参 加 了 。

I apologize. This meeting will not be held anymore. No need to come and participate.

CN195

Invalid answer

CN196

huì yì qǔ xiāo le
会 议 取 消 了 ，

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，

dǎ rǎo nǐ le
打 扰 你 了 ！

The meeting has been cancelled. I am sorry. It has disturbed you.

CN198

yuē hàn xùn xiān sheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
shǒu xiān fēi chánggǎn xiè nǐ néng zài bǎi máng zhī zhōng
首 先 ， 非 常 感 谢 你 能 在 百 忙 之 中
lái cān jiā wǒ men zhè ge huì yì dàn shì hěn bú còu
来 参 加 我 们 这 个 会 议 ， 但 是 很 不 凑
qiǎo wǒ men zhè ge huì yì yào lín shí qǔ xiāo le
巧 ， 我 们 这 个 会 议 要 临 时 取 消 了 ，
suǒ yǐ shuō gēn nǐ shuō
所 以 说 ， 跟 你 说 ， say sorry.

Mr. Johnson, first thank you very much for being able to attend the meeting out of your busy schedules, but unexpectedly, the meeting will be cancelled due to temporary reasons, so I need to say to you, sorry.

CN199

yuē hàn xùn
约 翰 逊 ，
xià wǔ huì yì yǐ jīngqǔ xiāole
下 午 会 议 已 经 取 消 了 ，
bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ！

Johnson, the meeting this afternoon has been cancelled. I am sorry.

CN200

fēi chángbào qiàn
非 常 抱 歉 ，
yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
duì bu qǐ yīn wéi zhè cì huì yì bèi qǔ xiāo
对 不 起 ， 因 为 这 次 会 议 被 取 消
le
了 ，
è zàn shí bù xū yào nǐ lái cān jiā zhè ge
呃 ， 暂 时 不 需 要 你 来 参 加 这 个
huì jiù bù xū yào nǐ guò lái le
会 ， 就 不 需 要 你 过 来 了 。

I am very sorry, Mr. Johnson. Apologies. Because this meeting has been cancelled, temporary no need that you come to attend the meeting. You don’t need to come.

CN201

duì bu qǐ
对 不 起 ，
yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
yīn wéi zhè ge huì yì qǔ xiāole
因 为 这 个 会 议 取 消 了 ，
è suǒ yǐ yě bù néng zài tīngnǐ de zhè ge
呃 ， 所 以 ， 也 不 能 再 听 你 的 这 个
kàn fǎ děng xià cì yǒu jī huì wǒ men zài yuē dìng
看 法 ， 等 下 次 有 机 会 我 们 再 约 定
ba
吧 ！

Apologies. Mr. Johnson. Because this meeting is cancelled. Eh it is not possible to hear your opinion any longer. If there is another chance next time,

we can schedule another meeting appointment again.

CN202

yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，
nǐ de huì yì shí jiāngǎi le
你 的 会 议 时 间 改 了 ，
nǐ jiù bú yònggguò lái cān jiā le
你 就 不 用 过 来 参 加 了 ，
谢 谢 ！

Mr. Johnson, sorry. The time of your meeting has been changed. You don't need to come and attend. Thanks.

CN203

yuē hàn nǐ hǎo
约 翰 ， 你 好 ，
wǒ men zhè biānlín shí yǒu shì
我 们 这 边 临 时 有 事 ，
rán hòu huì yì qǔ xiāole
然 后 ， 会 议 取 消 了 ，
suǒ yǐ xià wǔ jiù bù kāi huì
所 以 ， 下 午 就 不 开 会 ，
tíngdùn nǐ rú guǒ nǐ yǒu shì de huà nǐ kě
(停 顿 ） 你 如 果 你 有 事 的 话 ， 你 可
yǐ jiù bú yònggguò lái le
以 就 不 用 过 来 了 ，
nǐ mángnǐ zì jǐ de shì rán hòu fēi chángbào
你 忙 你 自 己 的 事 ， 然 后 非 常 抱
qiàn
歉 。

John, hello, because of some temporary and unexpected reasons, the meeting is cancelled. So we will not hold any meeting this afternoon. If you have other things to do, you don't need to come over anymore. You can just work with your things. I am really sorry for the cancellation.

CN204

yuē hàn xùn xiān sheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，

fēi cháng bào qiàn
非 常 抱 歉 ，

wǒ men de huì yì gǎi qī le
我 们 的 会 议 改 期 了 。

è xià cì wǒ hái xiǎng qǐng nǐ yì qǐ lái
呃 ， 下 次 我 还 想 请 你 一 起 来
cān jiā wǒ men zhè ge huì yì xíng ma
参 加 我 们 这 个 会 议 ， 行 吗 ？

Mr. Johnson, I am really sorry. Our meeting has been rescheduled. Um…next time I still want to invite you to attend our meeting. Will that be OK?

CN205

bù hǎo yì sī ā
不 好 意 思 啊 ，
yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
wǒ men yīn wéi mǒu zhǒng yuán yīn
我 们 因 为 某 种 原 因 ，
jīn tiānzhè ge huì bù kāi le
今 天 这 个 会 不 开 了 ，
má fan nǐ le
麻 烦 你 了 ！

I am sorry, Mr. Johnson. Because of some reasons, this meeting today will not be held anymore. Sorry for having troubled you (thank you for taking the inconvenience to help me).

CN206

shǒuzuò dǎ diànhuà zhuàng
(手 做 打 电 话 状 ）
fēi chángbào qiàn
非 常 抱 歉 ，
yuē hàn xùn xiānsheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，
huì yì lín shí yīn wéi yǒu shì gěi dān g
会 议 临 时 因 为 有 事 给 耽 搁 了 ，
jīn tiānde huì kāi bù chéngle
今 天 的 会 开 不 成 了 ，
dàn shì è hái shì gǎn xiè nín bǎi mángzhī zhōng
但 是 ， 呃 ， 还 是 感 谢 您 百 忙 之 中
chōu kòng guò lái
抽 空 过 来 。

è xià cì huì yì de shí jiānwǒ men zài lìn wài
呃 ， 下 次 会 议 的 时 间 我 们 再 另 外
tōng zhī nín
通 知 您 ，
nín kàn shì fǒu fāng biàn zài guò lái
您 看 是 否 方 便 再 过 来 .
xiè xiè nín de bāng máng
谢 谢 您 的 帮 忙 ！

(Pretending to make a phone call with the right hand) I am really sorry, Mr. Johnson. The meeting has been delayed because of some unspecified temporary reasons. The meeting will not be held today. But thank you for squeezing your time to come in our office out of your busy schedule. Um, we will inform you the meeting next time and you can decide whether you are convenient to come or not. Thank you very much for your help.

CN207

yuē hàn xùn xiān sheng
约 翰 逊 先 生 ，

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，

yóu yú mǒu xiē yuán yīn huì yì qǔ xiāo le
由 于 某 些 原 因 ， 会 议 取 消 了

suǒ yǐ shuō nǐ jiù bú yòng lái le
所 以 说 ， 你 就 不 用 来 了 ，

fēi chánggǎn xiè nǐ duì wǒ men gōng zuò de zhī chí
非 常 感 谢 你 对 我 们 工 作 的 支 持
！

Mr. Johnsen, I am sorry. Because of some reasons, the meeting has been cancelled. So you don’t need to come.

Thank you very much for your support towards our work.

Lunch Scenario (British English)

*P98: Anna .

*P98: I know I said I'd be late .

*P98: work's just got worse and worse .

*P98: I really don't think I'll be able to come to lunch .

*P98: so I'm going to call it off for today .

*P98: and sorry for the delay as well .

*P98: sorry for wasting your time .

*P99: I'm still doing this stupid report .

*P99: you can go to lunch without me if you want .

*P100: Anna .

*P100: I'm really sorry .

*P100: I'm gonna have to give lunch a miss .

*P100: I'm really sorry for making you late but I've got a report I need to do .

*P100: I'll catch you later .

*P101: Anna .

*P101: I'm really sorry .

*P101: but I've been tied up I need to stay at the office and work .

*P101: eh (.) feel free to go for your lunch without me .

*P102: eh (.) Anna .

*P102: sorry .

*P102: I'm not going to be able to make it today .

*P102: I've got this report to finish .

*P102: eh (.) we'll have to meet up tomorrow for lunch .

*P103: Anna .

*P103: this is going to take me a bit longer than I thought .

*P103: so you better go and have your lunch .

*P103: and I'll have to have mine later .

*P104: I'm really sorry .

*P104: but (.) everything's (.) eh (.) got out of control .

*P104: I'm-eh not going to get there .

*P104: you carry on without me .

*P105: eh eh go to lunch without me .

*P105: I think I'm going to be here for a lot longer and I need to get this report done .

*P106: It looks like I'm not going to make lunch .

*P106: sorry .

*P107: I'm so sorry Anna .

*P107: but <I'm> [//] I don't know what time I'm gonna be finished between now and 1 .

*P107: if you go ahead without me and if I can make it .

*P107: I'll give you a call and meet you where you are .

*P108: I’m really sorry Anna .

*P108: today (.) eh I have to finish this report by 1 o’clock .

*P108: eh if you wouldn’t mind to have lunch on your own today .

*P108: but I can only apologise .

*P108: I’m really sorry (.) about it .

*P108: eh (.) we’ll catch up soon tomorrow .

*P109: Anna .

*P109: have lunch .

*P109: don’t worry about me .

*P109: I’ll get something later .

*P110: Anna .

*P110: <go> [/] go for lunch without me .

*P110: ‘cos I’m gonna be late .

*P110: and I’ll see you down there (.) if I can .

*P111: Anna .

*P111: look .

*P111: I’m really busy at work .

*P111: I’m (.) terribly sorry about this .

*P111: but (.) you go ahead and eat without me .

*P111: and (.) I’ll be home as soon as I can .

*P112: Anna .

*P112: sorry .

*P112: I’ve still not managed to finish the report I’m working on .

*P112: I need to get it finished before I have lunch .

*P112: so you carry on and have lunch .

*P112: and <I> [/] I’ll see you tomorrow .

*P113: (I’ say):

*P113: I’m sorry Anna .

*P113: I thought I was gonna be able to get this piece of work wrapped up .

*P113: ehm but I’ve got a deadline .

*P113: I’m just not able to make lunch today .

*P113: I’m really sorry I delayed you .

*P113: please go and have some lunch .

*P113: and I’ll catch up with you tomorrow .

*P113: I’ll get you a cup of coffee tomorrow .

*P114: I’m really sorry for holding you up earlier on .

*P114: but I’m not going to finish in time .

*P114: so can you just go ahead and eat without me please .

*P114: sorry again .

*P115: I’ve got too much on .

*P115: you’ll have to have lunch without me today .

*P115: I’m gonna have to skip it .

*P116: Anna .

*P116: I’m really sorry .

*P116: this is going to take more time than I thought .

*P116: please go ahead without me .

*P117: Anna .

*P117: I’m so sorry .

*P117: I can’t make lunch today .

*P117: go ahead without me .

*P117: I’m just stuck on a deadline and I’m just not physically going to be able to make it .

*P117: I’m really really sorry .

*P118: Anna .

*P118: I’m not going to make lunch today .

*P118: I’ve got to get this finished .

*P118: go on without me .

*P119: I’m really sorry .

*P119: <I> [/] I’ve got delayed with the report .

*P119: please start without me .

*P119: and I’ll be there as soon as I can .

*P120: Anna .

*P120: I’m so sorry .

*P120: I’ve (..) been delayed doing this report which has to be done before 1 o’clock (.)

*P120: ehm please go-o to lunch without me .

*P120: and I’ll see you tomorrow .

*P121: ehm sorry Anna .

*P121: but this (.) report's (..) ehm taking longer than I thought .

*P121: I'm gonna have to (.) cancel our lunch today .

*P121: and-eh (.) hopefully I'll be able to arrange one (.) with you later in the week

The Lunch Scenario (Danish ELF)

*P51: [clicks his tongue] hi Anna .

*P51: can we cancel our (..) meeting in the canteen today ?

*P51: &er (.) because I don't have time for it .

*P51: I have to write this report .

*P51: asap .

*P52: Anna I'm very sorry .

*P52: but I cannot make it today .

*P53: <about the thing> &er [//] I said about the twenty minutes for the lunch .

*P53: I [/] I just realised I'm not gonna make that .

*P53: so (..) you just go ahead without me .

*P53: and (.) I'm sorry if I made you miss lunch with the others .

*P54: Anna !

*P54: I'm so sorry .

*P54: I have to deliver this report to my boss .

*P54: and I [//] it’s not possible for me to meet you at lunch .

*P54: so just · [/] just ignore our (.) appointment [//] lunch appointment .

*P55: &ahem (.) could you just order ?

*P55: and you know (.) what I like .

*P55: so just order number &you_know sixteen from the menu card as you know I like and maybe a glass of water or [//] and a beer .

*P55: &ahem (..) I’m gonna be a little bit late .

*P55: but &you_know the boss wants this report done .

*P55: but I’m gonna do it as fast [!] as I can .

*P55: but I’m just gonna run a little bit late (.) maybe ten [!] minutes .

*P56: I can see this is getting [//] it’s xxx .

*P56: it takes a little bit longer time than expected .

*P56: so · (.) for you to be able to get lunch and so .

*P56: I just think that you should go .

*P56: &ahem I real sorry that I ↓can’t keep my appointment .

*P56: but (..) the boss is waiting .

*P56: so you know how it is with bosses .

*P57: Anna !

*P57: I’m going to be: much more xxx .

*P57: so: you please just go ahead for lunch .

*P57: and I will grab something later .

*P58: &well Anna [/] Anna !

*P58: I’m so [!] sorry .

*P58: I’m still working on this report .

*P58: it has to be done in twenty minutes .

*P58: so: · please [!] just go ahead and have your lunch .

*P58: and I’ll see: if I can get a sandwich afterwards .

*P59: Anna I’m really sorry .

*P59: but I’m afraid I have to stay here and finish the report .

*P59: &so: if you: still would like to eat now .

*P59: please go and have your lunch without me .

*P60: Anna I’m ↘terribly sorry .

*P60: but this report’s just taking up more time than I thought it would .

*P60: &so you just go ahead and have lunch without me .

*P60: and I’ll see you tomorrow .

*P61: Anna .

*P61: I’m still running late with this report .

*P61: &so you have to eat without me .

*P62: sorry Anna .

*P62: I can’t join you today .

*P63: I’m sorry .

*P63: &ahem just go to lunch .

*P63: I have to skip it .

*P64: Anna .

*P64: I’m so [!] sorry .

*P64: I’m gonna be: further delayed on this one .

*P64: &so: please go ahead and have your lunch .

*P65: hi Anna .

*P65: I need to call you again because <I’m not> & er [/] have not finalised the report yet .

*P65: and &er (..) · it seems that I need another 20 minutes .

*P65: &so: if you (.) want to go to lunch now .

*P65: then plea:se go ahead .

*P65: because [yeah] I’m not done yet (.) with that one .

*P66: please go ahead with luns [*] [:lunch] .

*P66: I’m [/] I’m gonna be busy for the next half hour .

*P66: don’t wait for me .

*P67: [clicks the tongue] hi Anna !

*P67: I’m sorry .

*P67: &ahem but I won’t be able &er to make it in time .

*P67: &so: please leave fo:r lu:nch without me .

*MA: ugu yeah .

*P67: you don’t need to wait .

*P68: &well it 0is taking longer than I expected !

*P68: you just go without me .

*P69: Anna I'm really sorry .

*P69: but I will not be able to join you fo:r lunch today .

*P69: · I have a report I need to finalise before one p .m .

*P70: Anna I'm so [!] sorry .

*P70: I can't make it .

*P70: I have to finish this report .

*P70: go ahead and eat without me .

*P71: hi Anna .

*P71: I'm really [!] sorry .

*P71: but I underestimated how much time I would need to finish this .

*P71: could you go for lunch alone ?

*P71: I'm really sorry I didn't call you before .

*P71: but · this is an emergency .

*P72: hi Anna .

*P72: I'm really sorry .

*P72: but I'm still under quite a pressure with the report .

*P72: so: · I suggest that you go for lunch yourself .

*P72: so you don't starve .

*P72: otherwise please wait until one o' clock when I have to turn in the report .

*MA: yeah .

*P73: Anna !

*P73: I’m sorry .

*P73: but I cannot make our lunch appointment .

*P73: because I have to finish this report .

*P73: and unfortunately I’m not done yet .

*P74: Anna .

*P74: sorry .

*P74: I’m still delayed I’ve not finished the report .

*P74: please go ahead and eat your lunch .

*P74: and I will &cat catch up with you later .

*P75: &ahem sorry (.) really .

*P75: I’m swot with this report .

*P75: I’ll just have to fix lunch after the report is handed in .

*P75: just go ahead without me .

The Lunch Scenario (Danish L1)

*P76: hej Anna .

*P76: jeg ka' se at det kommer altså ik' til at gå med vores fælles frokost i dag .

*P76: for jeg er helt hængt op med arbejde .

*P76: gå du bare ned og spis .

*P76: så kommer jeg hvis jeg kan nå det .

*MA: ja .

*P77: &øh hej Anna .

*P77: je:g [/] jeg bli'r simpelthen forhindret i at få frokost i dag .

*P77: &så:_hvis: du: er selvfølgelig [!] meget velkommen til at gå derned .

*P77: ellers jeg går derned efter at jeg har afleveret rapporten .

*P78: du bli'r altså desværre nødt til at gå til frokost uden mig .

*P78: jeg har travlt .

*P79: gå du bare til frokost uden mig .

*P79: for jeg når det ikk' i dag .

*P80: [clicks his tongue] ve' du hva' .

*P80: det trækker ud det her .

*P80: gå du bare til frokost .

*P81: &øh jeg er så ked af det .

*P81: men jeg bli’r nødt <til at:> [/] til at lave min rapport færdig .

*P81: du ka’ bare smutte til frokost .

*P81: du behøver ikk’ at vente på mig .

*P82: Anna .

*P82: frokost i dag det bli’r desværre uden din yndlings frokostkammerat .

*P82: da jeg lige ha' en presserende opgave .

*P82: det håber du forstår .

*P83: ve' du hva' .

*P83: det trækker desværre ud .

*P83: så: hvis din mave ikk' ka' holde til mere .

*P83: så (.) smut du bare ned og spis .

*P83: tak fordi du ventede .

*P83: vi ta'r den i morgen .

*P84: Anna .

*P84: jeg ha' en deadline kl 13.00 hvor min rapport skal være færdig .

*P84: og jeg ka' ikk' nå det hvis (.) [/] hvis det er vi går til frokost nu .

*P84: så du bli'r nødt til at gå til frokost selv .

*P84: og så må vi spise sammen i morgen i stedet for .

*P85: &øh jeg er altså rigtig ked af det .

*P85: men <den her> [//] jeg skal [!] ha' det her lavet til [/] til min chef inden klokken et .

*P85: · så du bli'r nødt til at gå og spise alene i dag .

*P86: Anna ve' du hva' .

*P86: det trækker lidt ud med den her rapport .

*P86: du spiser bare .

*P86: så: den tager vi en anden dag .

*P87: jeg ka' simpelthen ikk' nå det i dag .

*P87: du bli'r nødt til at gå alene .

*P88: jeg ved godt jeg bad dig om at vente .

*P88: men jeg når det altså ikk' her .

*P88: har du noget imod at spise alene ?

*P89: Anna .

*P89: jeg beklager .

*P89: jeg er nødt til at aflyse vores frokost i dag .

*P89: men: jeg ha' en deadline jeg ska' nå .

*P90: jeg er ked af det Anna .

*P90: men jeg bli'r nødt til at få gjort det her arbejde færdig .

*P90: &øhm hvis du har lyst .

*P90: så er jeg færdig klokken et .

*P90: så ka' vi gå sammen .

*P90: ellers så ska' du bare hoppe til frokost .

*P91: Anna .

*P91: jeg troede sgu jeg ku' bli' færdig .

*P91: me:n det ku' jeg ikk' .

*P91: så: [/] så der kommer til at gå lidt ekstra tid .

*P91: så: du må (.) enten selv gå derned .

*P91: eller vente noget længere .

*P92: kære Anna .

*P92: jeg ka' se at jeg: er presset med tid .

*P92: så: jeg synes det er en god ide du selv går ned og spiser .

*P93: jeg er ked af at vi lavede en aftale .

*P93: jeg bli'r alligevel endnu mere forsinkel .

*P93: så: skynd dig at gå til frokost .

*P93: jeg ka' ikk' komme til at nå det i dag .

*P94: [si'r] <jeg bli'r> [/] jeg bli'r nødt til at få færdiggjort det arbejde jeg sidder med nu her .

*P94: fordi jeg ska' overholde en deadline .

*P94: så: · [laughs] du bli'r desværre nødt til at gå til frokost alene i dag eller finde nogle andre at følges med .

*P95: &øh jeg når ikk' at gå til frokost nu .

*P95: jeg ska' lige lave det her færdig inden klokken et .

*P95: · så: (..) hvis du vil vente .

*P95: &øh ville det være super .

*P95: men hvis du er sulten .

*P95: er det også helt ok at du går til frokost nu .

*P96: jeg ha' en rapport jeg ska' ha' gjort færdig .

*P96: du ka' bare gå til frokost .

*P96: hvis: du er sulten .

*P97: Anna .

*P97: jeg bli'r altså så forsinket .

*P97: så jeg synes du ska' gå til frokost uden mig .

The Lunch Scenario (Chinese ELF)

*P153: hi Anna .

*P153: I'm so sorry <for keeping> [/] eh (.) for keeping you waiting <for so long> [//] <for a long time> [//] for such a long time .

*P153: but I (.) can not (.) ehm get away now .

*P153: I'm so sorry .

*P153: next time I will treat you a lunch .

*P153: for today I am so sorry .

*P153: eh maybe you can eat something yourself .

*P153: tomorrow maybe we can have a lunch again .

*P153: and my treat .

*P153: make a deal .

*P154: hi Ann[a] .

*P154: &eh I have a lot of work (.) which is very busy to do .

*P154: so could you wait me another minute ?

*P154: after &eh (.) 1 pm I will finish my work .

*P154: let's do lunch then .

*P155: &eh I'm sorry Anna .

*P155: I probably can't finish it .

*P155: you can go first .

*P156: oh Anna .

*P156: you can go to lunch by yourself today .

*P156: because I have some report <to> [/] to do .

*P156: so (.) &erh I'm gonna catch up with you later .

*P156: so (.) have fun with your lunch .

*P157: Oh just &eh leave .

*P157: &eh <you> [/] you can have by your own .

*P158: I am sorry .

*P158: <I am> I am still working for my report .

*P158: and this report is <some> a little urgent .

*P158: Eh, could you please <wait me for (..) &eh> [/] wait me for 20 minutes ?

*P159: Corrupt file

*P160: sorry Anna .

*P160: just go ahead and have lunch without me .

*P161: &eh excuse me Anna .

*P161: I think &ehm (.) because of a very busy schedule today .

*P161: maybe I can not attend &eh lunch (.) break .

*P161: &eh I think you can go first .

*P161: and maybe tomorrow I can together with you much more earlier ?

*P162: &ehm (&=laughs) .

*P162: <I'm> (&=laughs) I'm sorry .

*P162: and (.) that &th &eh the time is &s so (.) late (.) .

*P162: and &eh &ehm if <you are &eh> [//] you are ok &eh <I &ca> <I &wi > [//] I will contact you &eh tomorrow .

*P163: Anna .

*P163: please get lunch by yourself .

*P163: I am very sorry that I don't know when I can finish my task .

*P163: &eh but please (!) .

*P163: < I > [/] I will treat you another (.) lunch .

*P163: I am sorry to keep you waiting .

*P164: &eh (.) don't wait for me .

*P164: I'm (.) just working &eh with the work .

*P164: and (..) this work is very very urgent .

*P164: I have to deliver it on time (...) .

*P164: &ehm please have the meal yourself .

*P165: sorry Anna .

*P165: sorry to have kept you waiting .

*P165: &ehm I (.) am so sorry that that I have to finish (.) the task (.) and hand in to my boss before <1> [//] 1 o'clock .

*P165: so &eh <you> [/] you can go first .

*P166: Anna I'm sorry to tell that .

*P166: <I can't> [/] I can't have lunch with you (.) today .

*P166: &eh because <I need to> [//] I’m afraid I need to complete this work by 1 o’clock .

*P166: so I’m sorry (...) delay your time for 20 minutes .

*P166: please [x2] go [x2] for the lunch (.) by yourself .

*P167: Anna .

*P167: I have to say sorry .

*P167: because I have something to be done .

*P167: so I can not have &eh lunch with you today .

*P168: Corrupt file

*P169: hi .

*P169: <&eh it's just> [//] I’m really busy here .

*P169: maybe give me (.) ten or twenty minutes more .

*P170: Ahhh (..) can you repeat again?

*P170: sorry Anna .

*P170: <I &eh> [//] I’m afraid I can not (.) join you (.) for the lunch today .

*P170: ‘cos I have something very (.) rushing .

*P170: so (.) please (.) go for yourself .

*P170: sorry .

*P170: I’ll catch you up later .

*P171: I’m sorry darling .

*P171: I have to finish this before one .

*P171: eh do carry on with the lunch without me .

*P171: and bring me some take-away if you can .

*P172: Oh &eh Anna I'm very sorry about it .

*P172: I'm still in the office &eh to &eh busy with my reports .

*P172: I think I can not join the lunch with you &eh today .

*P172: &em i am sorry about it .

*P172: &eh <and &eh> [/] and I will pay you another lunch if you have time another day.

*P173: ehmm (...)

*P173: I'm sorry I'm still working on the report .

*P173: and that's a very important report <and I> [/] and I should finish it before 1 am to &eh hand it to my boss .

*P173: so sorry .

*P173: maybe I can't &eh have the dinner with you &ehm <this &eh > [/] this time .

*P174: sorry Anna .

*P174: I think today I can not go to the lunch with you .

*P174: because I am busy with the report and I promised my boss to send it before 1 o'clock .

*P174: hoping you can understand me .

*P175: Ehhh (.) Anna, right ?

*MAM:Ja .

*P175: hey Anna .

*P175: &ehh <I> [/] I know that you [x3] are still waiting for me to have

&eh [x2] lunches together .

*P175: but I'm really sorry that <I take> [/] I take a long time to prepare the report .

*P175: and <I have to &ehh I think I ¤ I don't have> [//] I don't think I have time to go outside .

*P175: because I need to &eh finish the report &ehh to hand in to my boss &eh after 20 minutes .

*P175: so &eh you can go first .

*P175: and (..) I'm sorry for that .

*P176: I'm sorry .

*P176: ehm maybe you should go for a lunch yourself .

*P177: sorry .

*P177: maybe I can't together with you .

*P177: so you can &eh &tr by yourself first [yeah] .

*P178: ehmm (..) hi Anna .

*P178: I'm sorry .

*P178: I still have &ehh my report to do and it will take &eh (..) a longer time .

*P178: so &eh [x3] leave me alone .

*P178: <you can> [/] you can yea (.) <go> [/] go first .

%com: Respondent asks for scenario to be repeated

*P179: So you [x4] can just have your lunch first .

*P179: then (.) I will (.) <catch up and> [//] catch up with you very soon .

The Lunch Scenario (Chinese L1)

CN180

nǐ xiān qù chī ba
你 先 去 吃 吧 ，
wǒ wǎn diǎn zài qù
我 晚 点 再 去 。

You go and eat first. I will go and eat later.

CN181

bù hǎo yì sī
不 好 意 思 ，
wǒ zhè ge bào gào hái méi xiě wán
我 这 个 报 告 还 没 写 完 ，
nǐ zì jǐ xiān qù chī ba
你 自 己 先 去 吃 吧 ！

Sorry, my report has not been finished yet. You can first go and eat.

CN182

nǐ xiān qù chī fàn
你 先 去 吃 饭 ，

qǐng shùn biàn bāng wǒ dài gè fàn huí lái
请 顺 便 帮 我 带 个 饭 回 来 。

You first go and eat lunch. Please on your way back help me bring a take-away.

CN183

nà nà nǐ xiān chī
娜 娜 ， 你 先 吃 ，

wǒ hái yǒu yì diǎn shì hái méi zuò wán
我 还 有 一 点 事 还 没 做 完 。

Nana, you first eat. I still have a few unfinished tasks.

CN184

nà nà nǐ xiān qù ba
娜 娜 ， 你 先 去 吧 ，

wǒ de shì qing hái méi zuò wán ne
我 的 事 情 还 没 做 完 呢 ！

Nana, you first go to lunch. My task has not been finished yet.

CN185

bù hǎo yì sī nǐ xiān qù chī ba
不 好 意 思 ， 你 先 去 吃 吧 ，
wǒ yǒu wǒ shǒu shàngde huó méi gàn wán
我 有 . . . 我 手 上 的 活 没 干 完 。

Sorry, you first go to eat. I have…My task at hand has not been finished.

CN186

wǒ bào gào hái méi xiě wán
我 报 告 还 没 写 完 ，
nǐ xiān qù chī fàn ba
你 先 去 吃 饭 吧 ！

My report has not been finished yet. You first go and have lunch.

CN189

duì bu qǐ nà nà
对 不 起 ， 娜 娜 ，
qǐng nǐ xiān qù chī fàn
请 你 先 去 吃 饭 ，
shùn biàn bāng wǒ dǎ bāo
顺 便 帮 我 打 包 ！

I apologize, Nana. Please you first go and have lunch. On the way back please bring me a take-away.

CN190

nǐ bú yòng děng le xiān chī ba
你 不 用 等 了 ， 先 吃 吧 ，
wǒ zhè hěn máng wán liǎo wǒ huì gěi nǐ diàn huà
我 这 很 忙 ， 完 了 我 会 给 你 电 话 。

You don’t need to wait. Please have lunch first. I am very busy here. I will give you a call when I am done.

CN191

duì bu qǐ nǐ xiān chī ba
对 不 起 ， 你 先 吃 吧 ，
wǒ hái méi gōng zuò wán bì
我 还 没 工 作 完 毕 ！

I apologize. You have lunch first. My task has not been finished yet.

CN192

nà nà duì bu qǐ
娜 娜 ， 对 不 起 ，
wǒ bào gào méi xiě wán
我 报 告 没 写 完 ，
nǐ xiān chī bú yào děng wǒ le
你 先 吃 ， 不 要 等 我 了 ！

Nana, I apologize. My report has not been finished yet. You eat first. No need wait for me.

CN193

nà nà qǐng nǐ xiān chī ba
娜 娜 ， 请 你 先 吃 吧 ，
bú yòng děng wǒ
不 用 等 我 ！

Nana, please you eat first. No need to wait for me.

CN194

nà nà nǐ xiān chī ba
娜 娜 ， 你 先 吃 吧 ，
wǒ kě néng lái bu jí le
我 可 能 来 不 及 了 ，
nǐ bú yòng děng wǒ le
你 不 用 等 我 了 。

Nana, you first eat. Maybe I cannot make it. You don’t need to wait for me.

CN195

nà nà wǒ xiàn zài hěn máng ā
娜 娜 ， 我 现 在 很 忙 啊 ，
nǐ zì jǐ xiān chī wán fàn xiān ba
你 自 己 先 吃 完 饭 先 吧 ！

Nana, I am very busy now. You go yourself and go lunch first.

CN196

nà nà nà nǐ xiān qù chī ba
娜 娜 ， 那 你 先 去 吃 吧 ，

wǒ yào wǎn yì diǎn cái dào
我 要 晚 一 点 才 到 。

Nana, you first go and eat. I will go to the canteen and have lunch later.

CN198

nà nà bù hǎo yì sī ā ràng nǐ jiǔ děng
娜 娜 ， 不 好 意 思 啊 ， 让 你 久 等
le
了 。

yīn wéi wǒ de bào gào xià wǔ yào yì diǎn zhī qián yào
因 为 我 的 报 告 下 午 要 一 点 之 前 要
chū chū lái suǒ yǐ shuō nǐ xiān qù chī ba wǒ
出 出 来 ， 所 以 说 ， 你 先 去 吃 吧 ， 我
zhè biān děng yí xià wǎn yì diǎn wǒ zì jǐ qù chī
这 边 等 一 下 ， 晚 一 点 我 自 己 去 吃 。

Nana, sorry for making you waiting for a long time. Because my report needs to be finished by one o'clock in the afternoon, you can go and eat first. I need to wait for a while. I will eat at a later time.

CN199

wǒ méi nà me kuài
我 没 那 么 快 ，
nǐ xiān chī ba
你 先 吃 吧 ！

I am not so fast [to finish my task]. You can have lunch first.

CN200

nà nà nǐ xiān chī ba
娜 娜 ， 你 先 吃 吧 ，
wǒ hái yǒu yí fèn bào gào méi xiě wán
我 还 有 一 份 报 告 没 写 完 。
wǒ wǎn diǎn guò qù zài qù chī
我 晚 点 过 去 再 去 吃 。

Nana, you can go first. I still have one report that needs to be finished. I will go and eat at a later time.

CN201

nà nà nǐ xiān qù chī ba
娜 娜 ， 你 先 去 吃 吧 ，
wǒ guò huì er zuò wán le zài qù chī
我 过 会 儿 做 完 了 再 去 吃 。

Nana, you can go first. I'll go and have lunch after finishing the report.

CN202

nà nà bù hǎo yì sī
娜 娜 ， 不 好 意 思 ，

nǐ xiān qù ba
你 先 去 吧 ！

Nana, sorry, you can go first.

CN203

nà nà bù hǎo yì sī ā
娜 娜 ， 不 好 意 思 啊 ，
wǒ zhè biān de bào gào hái méi yǒu wán chéng
我 这 边 的 报 告 还 没 有 完 成 ，
nà nǐ jiù xiān qù chī fàn ba
那 你 就 先 去 吃 饭 吧 ，
bú yòng děng wǒ rán hòu wǒ zì jǐ qù
不 用 等 我 ， 然 后 我 自 己 去 。

Nana, sorry. My report has not been finished yet. So you can go and have lunch first. No need to wait for me. I will go to the canteen afterwards.

CN204

nà nà nǐ xiān qù chī ba
娜 娜 ， 你 先 去 吃 吧 ，

rán hòu nǐ bāng wǒ dǎ bāo huí lái
然 后 你 帮 我 打 包 回 来 。

Nana, you can go first. Then you can help me bring a take-away back.

CN205

bù hǎo yì sī nà nà
不 好 意 思 ， 娜 娜 ，

wǒ zhè biān hái shì zǒu bù kāi
我 这 边 还 是 走 不 开 ，

nǐ xiān qù ba
你 先 去 吧 ！

Sorry, Nana. I cannot leave from my work yet. You can go first.

CN206

nǐ xiān qù ba
你 先 去 吧 。

You can go first.

CN207

nǐ xiān qù ba
你 先 去 吧 ，
wǒ zhè hái méi nòng wán
我 这 还 没 弄 完 。
xià cì wǒ zài qǐng nǐ chī fàn péi gè zuì
下 次 我 再 请 你 吃 饭 赔 个 罪 ！

You can go first. I have not finished my task yet. Next time I will invite you for lunch and apologize for my fault.

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