

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to compare linguistic means of expressing politeness in Czech and in Danish. The term politeness covers both norms defining socially acceptable behaviour and strategies that speakers use to achieve their goals and avoid conflicts.

After defining the term politeness, I briefly introduce the most influential theoretical approaches to politeness since the 1960s. The second chapter brings an overview of linguistic means of expressing politeness in Czech and in Danish. The last, most comprehensive part of the thesis is concerned with selected areas typically connected to politeness, i.e. greetings and forms of address, expressing thanks and reacting to them, orders, bans, and requests.

In Czech, a polite request usually contains the particle *prosím* (please). This word has no equivalent in spoken Danish; however, Danish speakers can make use of other expressions, such as particles *godt, nok, lige* and *vel*, or the expression *vil du være sød/venlig* (would you be so kind). They can also use some of the conventional means of expressing a request indirectly. Many of those strategies are common to both languages, especially formulating the requests as a question, perhaps in a negative form. Polite requests in Czech are characterized by the use of conditional, Danish requests typically make use of the modal verb *ville*. Imperatives are more common in Czech than in Danish thanks to the possibility of modifying them by the particle *prosím*.

*Prosím* has its equivalent in written Danish, namely the word *venligst*. Strategies used in speaking can of course be applied also in writing. Furthermore, people typically make use of many external supportive moves, because they want to achieve their goals in a single turn and they cannot use nonverbal means.

The thesis finishes with an overview of possibilities for translating *please* into Danish, considering the various roles that this word can play.