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**POLITENESS THEORY PROJEKT: SOUMRAK DNE
A VEČER TŘÍKRÁLOVÝ, ANEB, COKOLIV
CHCETE**

Bakalářská práce

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**POLITENESS THEORY PROJECT: THE REMAINS
OF THE DAY AND TWELFTH NIGHT**

Bachelor Thesis

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracoval samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

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ABSTRACT

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This paper was conducted in order to apply the politeness theory on two works of art. Politeness theory allows researches to study social relationships of people. However, its application is not limited to real life scenarios. Fictional characters can be deconstructed through the lens of politeness theory as well. I decided to focus on two characters. The first character I decided to study is an English butler Stevens who is the main character of the novel *The Remains of the Day* which was written by a Japanese author Kazuo Ishiguro. The second character in question is the first one's early modern England counterpart whose position is similar to one of a butler. His name is Malvolio and he is one of the central figures of Shakespeare's comedy *Twelfth Night*. I attempt to establish who the two characters are in their respective cultures, why they behave in the manner they do and ultimately, what leads to their imminent downfall. The plentiful exchanges between the main characters and the others who inhabit their fictional world are the most relevant objects of analysis. To accomplish that a certain level of cultural context is necessary to understand what constitutes face threatening acts within the respective cultural settings.

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to analyze the main characters from the novel *The Remains of the Day* and from the play *The Twelfth Night*, or what you will through the lens of the politeness theory as suggested by Brown and Levinson (1978). The characters in question are an English butler of the name Stevens and his early modern times counterpart Malvolio.

I became familiar with the politeness theory for the first time during one of the culture related courses at the department of English at University of West Bohemia. The theory sparked my interest immediately and I found the way it allows our day-to-day conversations and situations we find ourselves in to be analyzed. During the very same course we were assigned to read *The Remains of the Day* and needless to say it was a pleasant experience I was delighted to enjoy several times again while working on this thesis. By the nature of both characters being employed in a position of the highest ranking male servant in their respective households, their lives are abundant in terms of everyday interactions with people who are superordinate, subordinate or equal to them regarding the social hierarchy. Therefore, there are many situations which demand one's own as well as others' face.

The novel speaks to me in several ways. Considering that my second field of study, in addition to English, is history I appreciate the historical setting of the novel. And while the characters that play key roles in the novel are purely fictional, the historical context is very real. Additionally, some figures that Stevens mentions in his recollections did play an important role in the course of history such as is the case of Lord Halifax or Joachim von Ribbentrop. While the story itself might be considered motionless to a certain degree by some, I believe it is overflowing with emotion. Breech (2006) in his review for *The Guardian* gifted the novel a rather fitting name, „the masterpiece of silent desperation.“ The novel itself is set in the 20th century England. However, as its author Kazuo Ishirugo stated in an interview with Vorda, in spite of the novel's seemingly realistic setting, the England the readers discover is very much mythical:

[T]he kind of England that I create in *The Remains of the Day* is not an England that I believe ever existed... What I'm trying to do here is to actually rework a particular myth about a certain kind of England. I think there is this very strong idea that exists in England at the moment, about an England where people lived in the not-so-distant past, that conformed to

various stereotypical images. This is to say an England with sleepy, beautiful villages with very polite people and butlers and people taking tea on the lawn. (Vorda et al., 1991, p. 139)

As was already mentioned, the main character of *The Remains of the Day* is an English butler of the name Stevens. Stevens himself tells us the story of his life. Such a life that could certainly be described as rich if one's profession is to be considered the most relevant metric. However, his life could not be considered satisfactory in terms of social relationships. His career begins in the early 20th century, between the two world wars. The house Stevens is employed at bears the name Darlington Hall and which during that time saw many meetings and conferences of international importance unfold within its walls, a feat Stevens is rather fond of. During those times he was the butler of Lord Darlington, a fictional character who in spite of his good intentions became a puppet in hands of Nazi sympathizers. However, the Stevens who tells us his story is not the young man at the height of his professional life, instead, we are guided by his present self who is already nearing retirement and the stories majority of the novel consists of are his recollections. He familiarizes us with his past while undergoing a motoring trip across south-western England to meet a long lost former colleague from Darlington Hall, Miss Kenton. It is her character much of the novel is centered around. She is a woman Stevens had the chance of pursuing a romantic relationship with but he let this opportunity slip away. The last character Stevens is supposed to have a close relationship with is his father Williams. The author of the masterpiece of silent desperation is a born Japanese novelist Kazuo Ishiguro who lives in England.

The second work of art, the play *Twelfth Night*, is one of Shakespeare's comedies. The bard, the man who boasts the title of the world's most renowned playwright probably does not require further introduction. His work is timeless and will forever belong among the most treasured cultural contributions towards humanity. The choice of this particular play is influenced by one of its characters, Malvolio, who is in a similar position as Stevens. That being his employment as a servant. In his case, the woman he wishes to pursue is his mistress, widow Olivia. It is no surprise that Malvolio's wishes remain ungranted considering they were unfounded and that it was because of a conspiracy of several of the other characters that they arose in the first place. The play also stands in direct opposition to the novel in terms of its occasional bawdiness which contrasts with the dry humour of the novel.

In terms of the structure of the thesis I decided to progress as follows:
The first chapter will deal with the concept of politeness theory itself as presented by Brown and Levinson. Terms such as face and face-threatening acts whose use is abundant

in this paper shall be explained as well as the various metrics associated with them which allow predictions in terms of what politeness is going to be employed. A detailed explanation of the various politeness super-strategies and substrategies will be provided.

The second chapter will begin with an overview and historical development of the particularly English phenomenon of the gentleman. Only the first of the characters in question, the butler Stevens, shall be analyzed through the lens of politeness theory in this chapter. I will also explore Stevens' idea of what constitutes dignity in terms of politeness theory.

In the third chapter an analysis of the two letters that Stevens and Malvolio are recipients of shall be provided. Both letters contribute greatly towards the proceedings of the respective stories. I will attempt to discover the positive and negative politeness substrategies their respective writers employ to achieve their respective goals and establish whether the letters are more positive or negative in terms of politeness. I shall also provide an explanation of several riddles the letter Malvolio receives contains.

The fourth chapter will concern itself with situations Stevens and Malvolio negotiate that share a common theme. I decided to explore two kinds of themes which both involve situations that intrinsically threaten the face of their participants. Firstly, both stewards partake in discourse with the fairer sex Secondly, both Stevens and Malvolio are subjected to conditions in which they have to face humiliation. While Malvolio is one of the most essential characters of the play *Twelfth Night*, one the comedic value of the work of art in question is to a large extent derived from, interactions among him and other characters are naturally not as abundant as it is the case with Stevens whose time constraints are not as severe. *The Remains of the Day* offers us countless stories that illustrate how Stevens perceives himself as well as how he is perceived by others. *Twelfth Night*, by the nature of being a play, offers us fewer such instances. Furthermore, Malvolio is not the undeniable main character in terms of the Shakespeare's comedy.

And finally the conclusion is the part where I will attempt to establish who the characters in question are in their respective cultures and what circumstances led to their downfall.

CHAPTER 1

Politeness theory

The theory was first introduced by Brown and Levinson in 1978 and later revised in 1987. Politeness on its own means constructing language and behaviour in such a way that is deemed appropriate in a given cultural setting. The goal of politeness is to mitigate the risk of how much committing face-threatening acts damage the hearer's face. If the speaker is being polite they consider the hearer's feelings while constructing speech. Brown and Levinson have then proposed a definition which states that consists of the complex remedial strategies that serve to minimize the risks to "face", or self-esteem, of conversational participants (Magnusson, 2004, p. 18). Another definition that has been provided is "linguistic work mitigating or counteracting modes of aggression inherent in speech interaction" (Magnusson, 2004, p. 144). Social relations within the framework of politeness theory are viewed as being continuously repaired even during the process of their construction (Magnusson, 2004, p. 120).

Face

Face can be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for themselves by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is then our certain self-image or self-esteem that we want to preserve and others to acknowledge. It is derived from the English folk term that is associated with the term "lose face" meaning be embarrassed or humiliated. Our face is directly tied to other people's faces. It has to be maintained and only by recognition of our face by other people it can be enhanced or lost if others do not attend to it in interaction. Our face can also change several times throughout the day. We expect different behaviours towards us from different people based on what "face" we are wearing at the moment. We may change several of them throughout the day: a teacher, friend, stranger, father. In general, it is in every participant's interest to maintain each other's face. Damage to one's face can be done by committing positive or negative face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61-2).

There are two sub-types of face and politeness associated with them: Positive and negative face and politeness. People from positive politeness cultures seek affirmation. Or as Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 61) have defined it, "the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others." An example of a country whose inhabitants are mostly concerned with positive politeness are the United States of America which sits on

top of the ranking in terms of positive politeness. One way of maintaining each other's positive face and a certain illusion of equality is ellision of titles. It is also not advisable to attempt to discuss politics with another person considering American voters only have two major political parties to choose from and as such a risk of disagreements on several political issues is imminent. Other examples include Latin American countries or the Netherlends in terms of Europe. People from negative politeness cultures desire freedom from imposition. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 61) have defined it as "the want of every "competent adult member" that his actions be unimpeded by others." Many European or Asian countries belong to this category with China on top. The Japanese have a rather complex system of addressing one another and therefore maintaining each other's face. The Czech Republic, is very much a negative politeness culture. Showing deference by the means of titles is common practise. Unlike in the United States where the first title worthy of mention is the PhD, in the Czech Republic, people with master degrees are rather proud of them in comparison. Some even go far in terms of veneration of titles to extend this to a bachelor's degree. Strangers chatting in the street is a rare sight, people generally prefer to be left alone minding their own business.

Face-threatening acts

Brown and Levinson claim that many of the everyday speech acts carry a significant element of risk. A piece of evidence in support of this claim is the abundance of verbal strategies one has to minimize damage and manage risk (Magnusson, 2004, p. 20). The speech acts that carry an element of risk are referred to as the face-threatening acts which are such acts that intrinsically threaten one's face, either positive or negative. Positive FTAs are then such FTAs that threaten the hearer's positive face. Negative FTAs threaten the hearer's negative face. An FTA can be done both by means of verbal and non-verbal communication. FTAs can be threatening to both the speaker and the hearer. Positive FTAs are defined by Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 66-67) as those acts that threaten the positive-face want, by indicating (potentially) that the speaker displays a negative evaluation of some aspects of the hearer's positive face. These include disapproval, ridicule, reprimands or criticisms. Then there are those that indicate that the speaker disregards the hearer's positive face such as expressions of out of control emotions, mentions of inappropriate topics or boasting. Other examples include apologies, breakdowns of physical control over one's body or self humiliation. Negative FTAs are then defined by Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 65-66) as those that predominantly form a threat towards

the addressee's negative face by indicating that the speaker intends to impede on the hearer's freedom of action. Examples of negative FTAs include orders and requests, advice, threats or reminders. Other instances are offers, promises, compliments, thankfulness, expressions of strong negative emotion towards the hearer or responses to the hearer's faux pas (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 65-66). The seriousness of the FTA is determined by three factors. They determine the overall risk the speech-act carries and predict the level of politeness that should be employed. The three metrics are the relative power of the speaker over the hearer, the social distance between them and the culturally specific seriousness of the FTA in question (Magnusson, 2004, p. 46). In case of lower risk threats positive politeness is usually relied on because it asserts or suggests identification between the participants. The opposite can be stated about negative politeness which is expected in case of more serious FTAs when the speaker strives to avoid assumptions about the hearer's volition to comply and express the speaker's wish not to impinge. Negative politeness then asserts distance between them, it is a rhetoric of dissociation (Magnusson, 2004, p. 21).

Politeness strategies

According to Brown and Levinson (1989, p. 68-69) there are, in total, five politeness super-strategies : The first one is simple. One commits the FTA on record without redressive action, baldly. The second one is more sophisticated and can be divided into two strategies. One does commits the FTA on record but with redressive action of the kind called positive politeness or commits the FTA on record with redressive action of the kind called negative politeness. The fourth strategy is the most perplexing one. One commits the FTA off-record which means a certain level of ambiguity will be discovered. The fifth and final one is that one simply does not commit the FTA. The super-strategies are then ordered based on the seriousness of the FTA. The more serious the speaker deems the FTA to be, the higher numbered strategy they should use (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 69).

Bald on-record

The super-strategy number 1 is used when the speaker is not concerned about preventing damage to the hearer's face at all and is instead focused on doing the FTA with maximum efficiency and without any ambiguity. That typically occurs when the power difference between the speaker and the hearer is very high. Examples of such relationships could be a father telling his son to pass the salt during a family dinner, a supervisor giving an order to

one of their subordinate or a teacher telling one of their students to come to the blackboard. Other cases might include situations which simply provide no time for politeness such as exclaiming “look out!” at a person who is about to start walking across the road in spite of an approaching vehicle. The third situation which demands the bald on-record approach is in case the sound channel is obscured. Imagine attempting to communicate with somebody over the noise of a vacuum cleaner. You are not necessarily going to be very polite. There are several advantages to going on record such as being given credit for honesty and trust rather than potentially being seen as a manipulator (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 68-71).

On-record with redressive action

If the speaker goes on-record with redressive action it means they are attempting to counteract the potential damage to the hearer’s face. The speaker wants it to be clear to the hearer that they intend no damage to be done, on the contrary that the hearer’s face is preserved. The redressive action can be oriented towards either the positive or negative face of the hearer. Positive politeness substrategies are approach based. On the other hand negative politeness substrategies are avoidance based and can be characterised by self-effacement, formality and restraint. Advantage of the positive politeness redressive actions is the minimalization of the FTA by the means of assuring the hearer that the speaker likes them and wants what they want. This may, for instance, allow to soften any criticism the hearer may potentially take. A significant benefit of redressive action of the negative politeness variety is the ability to pay respect or deference to the hearer as a compensation for the FTA and thus avoid or lessen a future debt. The speaker can also maintain social distance and minimize the threat of mutual face loss the hearer is to refuse any attempts in terms of advancing familiarity towards them by the speaker (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 69-72).

Off-record

A speaker who utilizes the super-strategy number 4 speaks indirectly. Such a coded message then has to be decoded and interpreted by the hearer. It is deployed in cases where the FTA seems almost too risky to be committed but not enough. As such an indirect approach is preferred. By being ambiguous one’s intention does not have to be clear. Among the linguistic realizations of this strategy belong rhetorical questions, irony and metaphor, understatement and hints. Going off-record can be advantageous due to being credited for tactfulness and non-coerciveness. The speaker can avoid responsibility for the

potential interpretation of the speech act as an FTA in terms of intention. It can also provides the hearer with a chance to show that they care for the speaker. “I don’t feel so good.” – “I will make you a cup of tea.” (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 69-71).

Avoiding the Face-threatening act

If the potential threat to the hearer’s face is deemed too significant by the speaker, the speaker might simply avoid committing the FTA altogether. Since the speaker did not say anything at all it might sound as if nothing has happened. However, the opposite is the case. The speaker recouring to the super-strategy number 5 speaks volumes about the seriousness of the FTA. An example could be a person not telling their friend his/her partner is cheating on him/her. The threat to the hearer’s positive face would be to significant. Narration of the main character of the novel that has been analyzed is of great assistance in terms of identification of this strategy which would otherwise prove difficult to identificate. The advantage of this strategy is simply the avoidance of offending the hearer at the cost of failure in terms of achievement the speaker’s desired communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 72).

Substrategies of positive politeness

In addition to the five strategies of politeness, Brown and Gilman (1989, p. 167) list fourteen substrategies of positive politeness as well as ten substrategies of negative politeness based on the Brown and Levinson model. Among those is utilization of humour, expression that the hearer’s and speaker’s wants are identical or use inclusive terms. Another options are exaggeration of positive attitude towards the hearer or taking notice of something admirable or giving something the hearer will want. One can recourse to assertion of reciprocal exchange, offer or promise the hearer something, indicate that their wants are considered as well or stress common ground. Some other strategies include attempts to seek agreement in safe topics or avoidance by the means of hedging one’s statement. Another option is being optimistic that the hearer’s and the speaker’s wants are identical.

Substrategies of negative politeness

Brown and Gilman (1989, p. 168) have put forward a total of ten negative politeness substrategies. One can, for instance, be conventionally indirect. Another strategy is to simply avoid assumptions that the hearer will want to comply by the means of questions or hedges. One can also attempt to minimize the imposition or help one's advances by the means of deferential language. Deference is related to the next strategy which is to simply apologize, admit a mistake or impingement at the expense of the hearer or ask for forgiveness. The continues with the option of impersonalization of the involved. That can be achieved by using the passive without the agent for instance. This strategy is reminiscent of the following one which is to portray the FTA in question as a general rule. The last two options are nominalization to increase distance and formality and going on record as incurring a debt.

CHAPTER 2

An important cultural phenomenon that is seen as particularly English is the idea of a gentleman. The term and England are intertwined to such a degree that the premodifier English usually precedes it. While establishing the roots of the English gentleman is a daunting task one might look towards the medieval knight for inspiration (Berberich, 2007, p. 15). The leading characteristics of the medieval knight that remind one of the English gentleman were among others his code of moral conduct, courteousness towards women and sense of fair play in respect to defeated enemies. Above all however, the medieval knight honoured the sense of duty towards his lord and was deeply embedded in the medieval feudal system of privileges and duties. If we were to look for the historical period in which the term began to be used generally during the Renaissance period in the 16th century, one of the golden ages of England and the age of Shakespeare (Berberich, 2007, p. 15). The Renaissance era saw development of new weapons and battle techniques which caused the medieval knight to become redundant. Prowess in battle was replaced by manners, knowledge and the ability impress at court (Berberich, 2007, p. 15). A group of scholars of the Oxford group surrounding Erasmus and Sir Thomas Moore, among others the Spanish scholar Vives, introduced Italian influences into England. Berberich (2007) states, that the gentleman of the Renaissance era were supposed to become adept in many disciplines. The extensive list of such disciplines consists of rhetoric, logic, history, philosophy, poetry, theology, mathematics, astronomy, cosmography, foreign languages or civil law. Newly found idea of humanism was reflected in the ideal gentleman of the time. Such a task would naturally prove rather daunting for most gentlemen and so the importance was put on appearing as a gentleman and not necessarily attaining all the qualities of the ideal. The Renaissance thus saw the birth of a new literary genre, the conduct book (Berberich, 2007, p. 16). Its goal was simple: improvement of its reader's mind and behaviour, formation of a future gentleman. The conduct book eventually evolved to the courtesy book until it finally became the etiquette book which was rather popular even as late as in the nineteenth century. Overall, what a young gentleman was mostly expected to attain were distinguished manners. What these "manners" comprised of changed over time as well. Courtesy of the medieval knight was eventually replaced with civility (Berberich, 2007, p. 17). As the society changed so did the target audience of such books. The courtesy books of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries aimed at mostly the male upper-class readers. The etiquette book however had a whole new market to exploit. That is because the significant societal changes

of the previous centuries culminated in higher political significance of the middle class (Berberich, 2007, p. 18). As such these books aided middle class gentleman with emulating behaviour and style of the upper classes who used to have the sole grasp over the political control of the society. The growth of the middle class was aided by a long period of peace which promoted commerce. The newly enriched middle classes ultimately aspired to join the ranks of the upper class. It was this possibility to move between the classes that differentiated Britain from the rest of Europe and provides an explanation as for why Britain did not experience any attempts to dramatically change the societal order and stands in bright contrast to all the revolutions of Europe or the caste system of India, Britain's richest colony. It was in the nineteenth century when the idea of the gentleman was most prevalent. It is claimed that that the Victorians inherited the idea of the gentleman, they added to it, they developed it and they set up factories for gentlemen in their public schools (Berberich, 2007, p. 18). The ideal gentleman was seen as auster in appearance and severe in behaviour and the sincere appearance was, like conduct, defined most importantly as a visible manifestation of a well-ordered, morally consistent inner self (Berberich, 2007, p. 18). The first generation industrialists and businessman would send their sons to Eton or Oxford where they could attain the right gentlemanly education. Ultimately, the aim was to merge one's family with one of the already established upper class ones. Such goal was not out of the question considering the societal changes and rising importance of the middle class would come at expense of some of those already established upper class families who were in need of resources to maintain their property and as such did not fight merging with families of a less extensive pedigree. A gentleman was no longer a person of the upper class but a status every man could aspire to, provided he upheld the appropriate manners of honour, charity and social responsibility (Berberich, 2007, p. 20). Eventually, as boys and young men were increasingly more often sent to the newly established or reformed public schools such as Eton, Rugby or Harrow, manliness became a feature of upmost importance in the nineteenth century. Rugby and football attained their religious status (Berberich, 2007, p. 21). J. A. Morgan defined the nineteenth century manliness as embracing the antithetical values – succes, aggression and ruthlessness, yet victory within the rules, courtesy in triumph, compassion for the defeated (Berberich, 2007, p. 21). Then, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the concept of Muscular Christianity was born (Berberich, 2007, p. 22). Mangan and Walvin point out the dominant traits of manliness in the Victorian era: the key attributes include neo-Spartan virility as exemplified by stoicism, hardiness and endurance.

The ability to cope with stress without showing emotion under any circumstances was important, hence the term “a stiff upper lip”.

The story of *The Remains of the Day* unfolds withing a particularly upper class setting. The exact same comment can be made about the Shakespeare’s comedy. Both Stevens and Malvolio rank as the highest positioned servants in terms of their particular social settings. Service as an institution is vastly different today or in the previous century when compared to early modern England. Servants were of all social classes and a significant part of contemporary populace would have been employed in a position of service at some point during their lives. In case of those of the gentler birth they would be employed as servants during the transitional period during youth or early adulthood (Magnusson, 2004, p. 39). Such is the case of Malvolio who, as a bachelor, is not yet in the position of a married man, a particularly important status in terms of the patriarchal early modern English society. However, the power both of them wield is incomparable. In Stevens’ time, that is in the early to middle 20th century, a majordomo did not command much authority when compared to their early modern counterparts (Cahill, 1996, p. 64).

An interesting scene from the point of view of politeness theory occurs during Stevens’ journey to see Miss Kenton. Circumstances forced Stevens to stay a night in the village of Moscombe. He spends a night as a guest in a household. Stevens’ upper class attire as well as the expensive car he arrived in were bound to be a cause for commotion and soon enough Stevens finds himself surrounded by curious villagers. Stevens then has to have a conversation with them. While the villagers claim they know how to tell somebody is a true gentleman: “*You can tell a true gentleman from a false one that’s just dressed in finery*” (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 134). The only person who is able to recognize Stevens’ class membership is Dr Carlisle. I believe the reason why Stevens is not capable of fooling him is incorrect choice of politeness. The villagers play their roles of peasants in the presence of a lord. If one is to accentuate the class difference between oneself and someone else there are essentially two options to achieve such a goal. One can elevate the other or belittle oneself. A combination of both approaches is possible in case the social and power difference is particularly vast or the face-threatening act is very serious. Should the need arise the socially dominated people would willingly partake in self-humiliation as a means of expressing civility towards the dominant speaker (Magnusson, 2004, p. 120). While extreme markers of politeness would be expected during an exchange between a peasant and their feudal lord, the 20th century villagers obviously do not deem it necessary

to make the impression of simpletons. They simply elevate Stevens' position by the means of lowering their own. Hence their incessant need to stress that they are mere common people. Stevens is aware that he might be unable to keep his act in the presence of Dr Carlisle and attempts to excuse himself prior to Dr Carlisle's arrival. Unfortunately for Stevens he enters the scene before Stevens is able to do so but even then Stevens excuses himself as soon as possible. When interacting with Stevens, Dr Carlisle adopts a rather familiar style. He even refers to Stevens as an "*old chap*" (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 140). Stevens remains somewhat distant and refrains from indulging in a conversation with Dr Carlisle. It is easy to imagine why Stevens plays along with the villagers rather than explain the situation. The situation that would arise if Stevens was to explain that he does not own the expensive car which he arrived in but rather works in a position that demands him to wear a suit would be quite embarrassing. The longer he pretends to be a person of some importance the more embarrassing it would be to admit he is not. At the same time it must be somewhat satisfying for Stevens to know he makes the impression of an actual gentleman in terms of the villagers. He even betrays a sign of feelings of superiority over them when discussing the nature of dignity with one particularly agitated villager: "*It would be far too complicated a task for me to explain myself more clearly to these people*" (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 135).

What Stevens' encounter with the villagers exposes is a feature *The Remains of the Day* has in common with the Shakespeare's comedy. That is the emphasis on clothing in terms of evaluating class membership. Stevens can pose a bit of a challenge to people who do not know him. His position requires him to wear his trusty suit at all times. The only appropriate time for him to not wear it is when his professional duties have finished for the day. *The Remains of the Day* includes a scene in which Stevens forces himself to act out of character. Stevens could have simply explained the situation; that he is no lord but rather a butler but he chose not to. I believe the reason Stevens did not do so is that such a situation would lead to the complete opposite of his "face wants." As Stevens explains in the novel, dignity is of the highest importance to him. I would venture as far as to proclaim it is one of his core values. Maintaining one's face at all times no matter the situation at hand. Explaining his actual position to the oblivious villagers would lead to quite an embarrassing moment. Embarrassment is the opposite of dignity. We have to be capable of ignoring our face wants albeit temporarily during exchanges that are bound to cause embarrassment. Even worse for Stevens, the longer he maintains his position as an

important man the more difficult and more embarrassing it is to reveal the actual state of affairs. Moreover, the resulting situation would not be a source of embarrassment for Stevens alone. The villagers who were being led astray by Stevens would potentially lose their face as well as a result of their inability to see through Stevens' disguise.

On the topic of embarrassment, there is a segment in *The Remains of the Day* which can illustrate how conflicting social roles can result in an embarrassing situation. Some context is necessary for the conversation I am going to rewrite to make sense. The story begins with Stevens' father suffering a fall while negotiating certain stairs. His fall is rather symbolic as it represents his metaphorical fall from grace. However, this particular event was just a symptom of a greater ailment. In short, Stevens' father became much less responsible of a worker due to his forgetfulness and arthritis. While that would be nothing out of the ordinary considering the man is in his seventies at that point of the story, a conference of international importance is to be held at Darlington Hall. Therefore, Lord Darlington asked Stevens to deliver the news to his father, that the scale of his duties is to be reduced by a significant amount. The result is the following conversation between Stevens and his father.

Stevens: "Ah. I might have known Father would be up and ready for the day."

Father: "I've been up for the past three hours."

Stevens: "I hope Father is not being kept awake by his arthritic troubles."

Father: "I get all the sleep I need."

Stevens: "I have come to relate something to you, Father."

Father: "Then relate it briefly and consisely. I haven't all morning to listen to you chatter."

Stevens: "In that case, Father, I will come straight to the point."

Father: "Come to the point then and be done with it. Some of us have work to be getting on with."

Stevens: "Very well. Since you wish me to be brief, I will do my best to comply. The fact is, Father has become increasingly infirm. So much so that even the duties of an under-butler are now beyond his capabilities. His lordship is of the view, as indeed I am myself, that while Father is allowed to continue with his present round of duties, he represents an

ever-present threat to the smooth running of this household, and in particular to next week's important international gathering."

Stevens: "Principally, it has been felt that Father should no longer be asked to wait at table, whether or not guests are present."

Father: "I have waited at table every day for the last fifty-four years."

Stevens: "Furthermore, it has been decided that Father should not carry laden trays of any sort for even the shortest distances. In view of these limitations, and knowing Father's esteem for conciseness, I have listed here the revised round of duties he will from now on be expected to perform."

Father: "I only fell that time because of those steps. They're crooked. Seamus should be told to put those right before someone else does the same thing."

Stevens: "Indeed. In any case, may I be assured Father will study that sheet?"

Father: "Seamus should be told to put those steps right. Certainly before these gentlemen start arriving from Europe."

Stevens: "Indeed. Well, Father, good morning" (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 47-49).

This situation is a cause of embarrassment for Stevens. The awkwardness of the situation stems from the conflicting roles Stevens and his father have to play simultaneously. Stevens holds the dominant position in terms of their professional relationship. While his father used to be his superior in this regard in the past, their roles have reversed at this point of the story. Stevens is the highest ranking servant of the house and there is no higher position he could possibly attain. His father, on the other hand, is now an under-butler and is about to be demoted again. However, the two also play the roles of a father and a son. England between the world wars was a society that could certainly be described as patriarchal. One's father's word and attitude meant a lot and would influence one's life to a great extent. The fact that Stevens is walking in his father's steps in terms of his profession speaks for itself. Considering the close nature of their relationship, the social distance between them is extremely low. Not only are they a father and a son they even share the same workplace. As for his father, the situation is not merely a source of embarrassment. It is a particularly serious face-threatening act as well. In this case a positive one as it presents a threat towards his positive face, his image of the great butler who, as has been illustrated by the means of a story already, was capable of forcing

a couple of gentlemen cower in fear by simply staring them down. Stevens is undoubtedly aware how delicate this issue is. The seriousness of the face-threatening act should be reflected in the manner Stevens constructs his speech. Stevens does attempt to begin the conversation in a more familiar manner. He even laughs a little during his initial statement even though there is not much to laugh about. The delicateness of the situation combined with the environment the conversation is to be conducted in which Stevens described as sharing features with a prison cell can hardly be considered a suitable setting for laughter. However, in spite of the extremely low social distance Stevens makes the impression of a distant relative when he speaks with his father. It is curious how often he addresses him in 3rd person, possibly to distance himself from the face-threatening act he is about to commit. Upon discovering his father's lack of will to cooperate Stevens switches to a much more direct speech. In the most damaging statement Stevens even describes his father as an "ever-present threat to the smooth running of this household" which is quite a serious transgression. Hence why Stevens has to emphasise that it is mostly Lord Darlington who has lost his belief in Stevens' father's professional capability. Stevens' father's strategy is different. He does not even attempt to conceal his irritation concerning the situation. Stevens' hopefulness to conduct the conversation in a friendly manner is quickly dispersed by his father's cold responses. His unwillingness to participate in any face maintaining work is made clear. He constructs his speech in a rather direct manner and refuses to accept the position of a subordinate. He even commits positive face-threatening acts at Stevens' expense when he suggests that Stevens has nothing better to do than conversing with him and when he describes Stevens' task as a mere chatter. When Stevens asks him to study the list of duties he is expected to attend to in the future he does not acknowledge it at all. Although he does attempt to save his face when he provides a reason for his fall and shifts the blame on the man who is supposed to repair the stairs.

A concept Stevens dedicates quite some time to explain is one of dignity. According to him, dignity is something one can attain throughout their career. Stevens illustrates what constitutes dignity through three stories, one told to him by his father and two involving his father himself. The story told by his father concerns itself with a butler who moved to India with his lord. The mysterious and outlandish landscape of India poses many challenges to unsuspecting butlers compared to the tame countryside of England. So, rather than a cute harmless hare, the butler discovered there was a tiger beneath the dining table. I have no idea what my reaction to such dire circumstances would be and I hope I will never receive

the opportunity to find out. The butler reacted in a manner that could possibly most accurately be described as English. Rather than suffering a mental breakdown, he simply shut the door to the dining room and went on to inform his lord: *“I’m very sorry, sir, but there appears to be a tiger in the dining room. Perhaps you will permit the twelve-bores to be used?”* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 27). All that followed was the sound of three shots fired by the butler and upon being questioned by his lord if all was well he simply stated *“Perfectly fine, thank you, sir. Dinner will be served at the usual time and I am pleased to say there will be no discernible traces left of the recent occurrence by that time”* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 28). Once again a statement that could not possibly be any more stereotypical English if it tried.

In the second story, it is Stevens’ father himself who displays the qualities Stevens is so fond of. It occurred back when his father was at the height of his career when was employed by certain Mr John Silvers. One afternoon, Mr John Silvers and his three guests allowed themselves to become inebriated and two of the guests who Stevens refers to as Mr Smith and Mr Jones expressed a wish to go for an afternoon driver around the local villages. Since the usual chauffeur was not available at the time it was Stevens’ father who was tasked with driving the car. During the drive, Mr Smith and Mr Charles were behaving in a rather childish manner. At one point they were harassing Stevens’ father somewhat because the order in which they were going through villages was not up to their liking. Stevens’ father managed to endure the harassment with *“an expression balanced perfectly between personal dignity and readiness to oblige.”* It was only when the two rowdy men decided to start making unpleasant remarks on behalf of Stevens’ father’s employer, Mr John Silvers. That was the reason that sprung him to his feet and open the back door of the car to deal with them. His approach towards confronting them was simple. That is to simply stare them down. This process lasted long enough, until eventually, one of the two said *“I suppose we were talking a little out of turn there. It won’t happen again”* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 30).

The third story reveals that Stevens once had a brother. A brother who died during the Boer Wars as a result of the incompetence of his general. The general was not punished and even allowed to complete the campaign. Ten years after the incident, the very same general was to visit the Mr John Silver’s house. The latter, acutely aware of the visit’s implications on Stevens’ father, allowed him the option to take a leave for the duration of the general’s visit. Stevens’ father appreciated the offer but refused to leave. To make

matters worse, the general's valet fell ill and Stevens' father volunteered to take the position of the valet. For days he spent in close proximity to the general and had to suffer through his boastful behaviour in regards to his military accomplishments. He managed to withstand all of this without a single remark that would have been deemed inappropriate considering the large power difference and the equally significant social distance.

Stevens concludes his idea of what constitutes dignity as such: "it has to do crucially with a butler's ability not to abandon the professional being he inhabits." (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 32). He even provides a metaphor when he compares dignity to a suit. A suit one of the great butlers who can boast to have attained true dignity is only allowed to be undressed when they are entirely alone. According to him, his father was one of the butlers who managed to attain the quality of dignity. He even goes so far as to call his father "the embodiment of dignity" (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 26).

In respect to the politeness theory I believe an analogy can be drawn between the concept of face and Stevens' suit. The stories told might make it seem that his idea of dignity translates into the ability to endure any possible situation or a face-threatening act without the loss of face. In this case, by face I mean the self-image of a great butler. While the suit is on no situation is too difficult to negotiate. This face also has to be maintained. There are several instances in the novel when Stevens has to defend his father's professional ability from Miss Kenton's criticism.

CHAPTER 3

Apart from the most obvious feature both works have in common, that is the feature of a majordomo character, there are several others. For instance, both stories are driven by the means of a letter. A letter written by a woman. In both cases, these letters spark false hope and untimely aspirations in their recipients and spring them into action. Stevens, who spent most of his life in servitude towards Lord Darlington with fervor bordering on fanaticism sets out to meet with his former colleague Miss Kenton. I consider this to be quite a venturesome journey to be undertaken by such a character as the old butler whose past is by no means illustrious in terms of travelling. Unfortunately, the letter we are provided with is incomplete. We have to be content with mere recollections of Stevens's and rely on his narration, one which is not particularly trustworthy. His re-telling of the letter begins as follows:

“But to return to her letter. It does at times reveal a certain despair over her present situation - a fact that is rather concerning. She begins one sentence:

'Although I have no idea how I shall usefully fill the remainder of my life ... '

And again, elsewhere, she writes:

'The rest of my life stretches out as an emptiness before me.'

For the most part, though, as I have said, the tone is one of nostalgia. At one point, for instance, she writes:

'This whole incident put me in mind of Alice White. Do you remember her? In fact, I hardly imagine you could forget her. For myself, I am still haunted by those vowel sounds and those uniquely ungrammatical sentences only she could dream up! Have you any idea what became of her?'

I have not, as a matter of fact, though I must say it rather amused me to remember that exasperating housemaid - who in the end turned out to be one of our most devoted. At another point in her letter, Miss Kenton writes:

'I was so fond of that view from the second-floor bedrooms overlooking the lawn with the downs visible in the distance. Is it still like that? On summer evenings there was a sort

of magical quality to that view and I will confess to you now I used to waste many precious minutes standing at one of those windows just enchanted by it.' (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 35).

Then she goes on to add:

'If this is a painful memory, forgive me. But I will never forget that time we both watched your father walking back and forth in front of the summerhouse, looking down at the ground as though he hoped to find some precious jewel he had dropped there.' (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 36).

As Stevens himself stresses the main undertone of the letter is rather nostalgic. The recollections of shared stories or reminiscing about mutual acquaintances are exactly the kind of behaviour friends indulge in as a part of relationship maintenance. These recollections are a perfect tool to assert common ground. As expected of a discourse between people who are very close to one another, that is to say the relationship is between two people who are in a similar position in terms of power relations, it is a discourse significantly marked by positive politeness and association. Among the positive politeness strategies Miss Kenton employs is the utilization of an inclusive form to include both herself and Stevens in the activity. More precisely, Miss Kenton chooses the personal pronoun in the first person plural form “we“ to refer to herself and Stevens when she states “*but I will never forget that time we both watched your father...*“ (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 36). She even reinforces this particular strategy when she uses the term “both.“ Additionally, she employs humour when she mentions the “exasperating housemaid“ (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 35). Use of humour is considered a positive politeness strategy as well. The sentence “*I will confess to you now I used to waste many precious minutes standing at one of those windows just enchanted by it*“ also clearly demonstrates that she is well versed in employment of positive politeness substrategies (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 36). The choice of the verb confess betrays a tone of intimacy and presupposition of mutual trust. In addition, Miss Kenton does not ask for permission, she confesses to Stevens that could be described as intimate. Hardly something one would express when communicating with one’s superior in terms of the power metric Brown and Levinson have proposed. However, I believe that at least in terms of the part of the letter Stevens was willing to share with his readers, examples of negative politeness substrategies can be found as well. The most obvious example of expression of deference is Miss Kenton’s anticipatory plea for forgiveness when she writes: “*If this is a painful memory, forgive me*“ (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 36). While the choice of the verb *forgive* which is quite strongly emotionally charged would suggest

that rather a serious face-threatening act will follow, her request for forgiveness is not accompanied by even the most common term that would signify imposition on her part, that is “please“. Considering the frequent exchanges between the two characters on the sensitive topic of Stevens’s father growing incompetence as a result of his aging I would consider the sentence to possess a serious risk of face loss for Stevens. Especially so when the fact that Stevens, by the time he receives the letter, is approaching the conclusion of his career as well and is able to observe the first signs of incompetence in his own work. Ultimately, even if Miss Kenton considers this particular sentence to be equipped with a high potential for face loss on Stevens’ part she does not deem it necessary to utilize excessively high amount of politeness substrategies when constructing her letter due to the reasonably low power distance as well as a relatively low social distance. There is one additional possibility for occurrence of a negative politeness strategy. Miss Kenton might have expressed deference by the means of a salutation. Even though the nature of the very beginning and the ending of the letter remain a mystery Stevens decided not to disclose I would consider a simple formal option to be the most appropriate choice for her letter. An informal or even one bordering on intimacy would not be sensible options provided Miss Kenton’s goal was to keep the purpose of the letter shrouded by ambiguity.

To explain my final point regarding Miss Kenton’s letter allow me to return to its beginning. The first two sentences Stevens shares with the reader highlight a certain strategy which is particularly effective in regards to the prevention of face loss. Both the sentences “*Although I have no idea how I shall usefully fill the remainder of my life...*“ and “*The rest of my life stretches out as an emptiness before me*“ are structured in a particular manner (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 35). That is, both of them as Stevens rightfully accentuates “*reveal a certain despair over her present situation*“ (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 35). Considering the upper class rhetorics both Stevens and Miss Kenton are accustomed to, which is the kind of rhetorics that frequently utilizes the tool of understatement, the choice of words such as *remainder of my life* and *emptiness* would suggest Miss Kenton to be in quite a desperate state of mind. In spite of the perceived desperation Miss Kenton does not actually ask Stevens to do anything about the current state of her affairs (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 35). Instead, she leaves the interpretation of the letter to Stevens. However, both characters are aware of their past relationship. While their relationship ultimately remained one of professional nature there are ample situations described in the novel illustrating the two could have elevated their relationship to a romantic one. Expressing one’s romantic

feelings towards another person is one of the most serious face-threatening acts. Such an action puts one in a position of significant vulnerability. I would argue that the fact that Miss Kenton is not young anymore but rather old enough to be expecting to become a grandmother in the near future does not make it any less serious. We all remember the first time we were rejected during our pursuit of a romantic relationship. Even if Miss Kenton is not in a position to face her first rejection her age could potentially mean her viewing this as her last chance for true love. The risk of face loss on behalf of the speaker is so great that Miss Kenton decides to go off-record in terms of politeness super-strategies. The ambiguity of the message Miss Kenton is trying to express allows Stevens to interpret the letter as he sees fit. It is his choice to evaluate, whether the letter is simply one whose goal is mere relationship maintenance or whether it is a love letter and an invitation for Stevens to take the initiative and express his unvoiced romantic interest in her. Miss Kenton then can simply “sit on the hedge“ and react based on Stevens’ interpretation of her letter. Should Stevens decide it was merely a case of a long lost colleague reaching out to him after a long period of isolation she can simply accept it. Miss Kenton effectively commits the face-threatening act while keeping an option for face repair should Stevens’ romantic interest in her diminished over the years of their separation. Should Stevens evaluate the letter as a romantic one, then she has the option to accept his advances without any risk of face loss.

Ultimately, if we are to view Miss Kenton’s letter as one designed to prompt him into action and travel across the country to see her then such a letter would be considered a significant negative face-threatening act. What else could Miss Kenton ask of the aging butler to do for her that would be a more considerable impingement on his wish to be unimpeded. As such, I would say that Miss Kenton’s ambiguity serves a double purpose. Not merely to avoid risking a loss of face on her behalf, should Stevens’ romantic interest be long deceased but also as a means to minimize the impact of the negative face-threatening act by offering Stevens the option to interpret her letter however he wishes. I was able to find four instances of positive or negative politeness substrategies employed by Miss Kenton in her letter. If I was to count the obligatory yet by Stevens unstated salutations then the number could rise to six if both the beginning and the ending of the letter are counted separately. If I consider only the four that are explicitly stated then the score would be tied with two positive and two negative politeness substrategies employed. Miss Kenton utilizes the positive politeness substrategies of humour and an inclusive form.

As for their negative counterparts Miss Kenton admits the impingement when she asks Stevens for forgiveness. The first part of the letter could also be described as quite ambiguous. I would consider ambiguity to be the prevailing theme of the letter. Adding the two unstated cases of negative politeness would tip the score in favour of negative politeness.

Let us now turn our attention to the second letter. The origin of the following letter is more complicated. On the other hand, the purpose it serves is clear. It is a letter written by one of the side characters of *Twelfth Night*, the female servant Maria. What significantly contributes towards the curious qualities the letter possesses is the fact that it is a forged one. The presumed author is supposed to be Malvolio's mistress Olivia. In this case, the letter is provided in its entirety as Malvolio reads it aloud to both the amusement of the members of the audience as well as the mischievous conspirators led by its author Maria.

“To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes. Her very phrases!

Jove knows I love, but who? Lips, do not move, no man must know.

I may command where I adore, But silence, like a Lucrece knife, With bloodless stroke my heart doth gore. M.O.A.I. doth sway my life.

If this fall into thy hand, revolve. In my stars I am above thee, but be not afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em. Thy fates open their hands. Let thy blood and spirit embrace them and, to inure thyself to what thou art like to be, cast thy humble slough and appear fresh. Be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants. Let thy tongue tang arguments of state; put thyself into the trick of singularity. She thus advises thee that sighs for thee. Remember who commended thy yellow stockings, and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered. I say, remember. Go to, thou art made if thou desirest to be so. If not, let me see thee a steward still, the fellow of servants, and not worthy to touch Fortune's fingers. Farewell. She that would alter services with thee, The Fortunate-Unhappy

Thou canst not choose but know who I am. If thou entertain'st my love, let it appear in thy smiling, thy smiles become thee well. Therefore in my presence still smile, dear my sweet, I prithee“ (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.85-164).

As expected, Maria's letter is in stark contrast with that of Miss Kenton. Maria is capable of making a fool out of Malvolio because she is well-acquainted with the style of

rhetorics Olivia would employ if she was the author of the letter. Such a style is not limited to being influenced predominantly by either positive or negative politeness. Olivia, who is situated at the very top of the social hierarchy, is able to afford being very direct with her speech. Considering Malvolio is her servant, Olivia giving him unambiguous, unmitigated orders carries only a small element of risk. Therefore, Olivia's ability to commit the negative face-threatening act of order by utilizing the super-strategy bald on-record. She can afford to commit the face-threatening act efficiently and without ambiguity. Malvolio acknowledges as much himself when he states that "*why, she may command me. I serve her, she is my lady. Why, this is evident to any formal capacity*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.106-108). The most obvious lexical mark of negative politeness present in the letter is the utilization of the archaic pronoun forms. Those are naturally the second person singular pronouns *thee*, *thou*, *thy* and *thysself* as opposed to their second person plural counterparts that are used in both cases today. The subject form "*thee*" appears seven times, the object form "*thou*" five times, the possessive form "*thy*" eight times and even the reflexive form "*thysself*" can be found twice. By utilizing the second person singular forms Maria signifies that the intended author of the letter, Olivia, is the social superior of the addressee, Malvolio. As such, she is not expected to use the plural form when addressing her servant. An occurrence of a negative politeness substrategy can be found in the initial part of the letter. When Maria writes "*Jove knows I love, but who? Lips, do not move, no man must know*" she is being ambiguous by going off-record (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.90-91). I believe another substrategy can be observed in "*in my stars I am above thee*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.129-130). This sentence clearly establishes the power and social distance between the two characters at the present moment. The list of politeness substrategies of the negative variety continues and one is to be unveiled in the statement "*she thus advises thee that sighs for thee*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.137-138). The personal pronoun *she* can serve as a means for Olivia to distance herself from the negative face-threatening act. That being the face-threatening act she mentions in the very same sentence herself, the act of giving advice. The last substrategy of negative politeness I managed to find is in the sentence "*if not, let me see thee a steward still*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.137-138). In this case, it is the lack of assumption of willingness to comply on behalf of Malvolio introduced by the conditional. An additional case of this substrategy can be found in "*If thou entertain'st my love*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.159-160). Again, the conditional expresses the uncertainty of Malvolio's compliance.

While a power and social distance between Malvolio and Olivia exists it is nevertheless not great enough to permit Olivia to be overly direct in her address to Malvolio. While he is her servant he is no peasant she could order and belittle without impunity. If his mistress was to disregard his dignity completely she could at the very least lose a loyal servant shortly after she lost her husband. Maria is aware of this and structures her letter accordingly. Consequently, the bountiful amount of negative politeness substrategies is complemented by the presence of positive ones as well. The first one can be found in the opening line. "*To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes*" utilizes the substrategy of giving something desired (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.85-86). Considering Malvolio's fervorous obedience of the orders listed in the letter, Olivia's affection is something greatly desired by the steward. The penultimate substrategy is Maria taking notice of admirable qualities when she commends Malvolio's smile "*thy smiles become thee well*" (Shakespeare 1623/2005, 2.5.160-161). For the last case of a positive politeness substrategy we have to turn our attention to the utterance "*dear my sweet, I prithee*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.162). In addition to the adjective dear Maria adds sweet. This structure is reminiscent of the substrategy of sympathy exaggeration. Moreover, the possessive pronoun my is charged with a certain level of intimacy when used in context of appropriation of other human beings as opposed to mere objects. The "*I prithee*" situated at the very end of the letter has the letter conclude with negative politeness which deferential behaviour is associated with, as Maria asks Malvolio to do as she wishes (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.162).

In total, Maria utilizes three positive politeness substrategies. I was able to find cases of Maria giving something desired, noticing admirable qualities and exaggerating sympathy towards Malvolio. Throughout the letter she asserts her superiority in terms of the social metric through her choice of pronouns she addresses Malvolio with. Negative politeness substrategies are more plentiful. In case of those I noticed expressions of deference, the lack of assumption of willingness to comply, means of distancing herself from the negative face-threatening act of advice giving and finally going off-record and being indirect. That amounts to seven substrategies in total, three positive politeness substrategies and four negative. As it is the case with Miss Kenton's letter, the amount of negative politeness substrategies outscores their positive counterparts. In this case, three positive politeness substrategies can be found compared to four negative politeness strategies.

In summary, the two letters exhibit both similar and distinctive features. The general theme of Miss Kenton's letter is rather nostalgic. Maria's letter is not nostalgic at all, the dominant feature is the use of directives. Maria's letter is less ambiguous in terms of its meaning. The purpose of the letter is quite clear. That is to essentially prank Malvolio and observe him as he ridicules himself in front of his mistress. His behaviour, inspired by Maria's letter, eventually leads into him being imprisoned, albeit his imprisonment is only temporary. In case of Miss Kenton's letter, the roles are reversed. The purpose of the letter can be interpreted in more than one way. The authorship of the letter then, is quite clear. Among features both letters share is the utilization of both positive and negative politeness substrategies. On the other hand, Maria's letter is more ambiguous in regards to its author. Both letters also boast more negative politeness substrategies than positive politeness ones. Additionally, both letters fulfill their respective purposes. Malvolio swallows the bait and makes a fool out of himself. His 20th century counterpart undertakes a motoring trip to see his former colleague Miss Kenton for one more time. Neither Miss Kenton or the intended author of Maria's letter overstep their respective social boundaries and the letters remain authentic as ironic as it is considering one of them is a forged one. Naturally, Maria does overstep her social boundaries to a rather extreme extent. Forging a letter and making her mistress Maria its intended author is a serious transgressions. She even imitates Olivia's handwriting and her Lucrece, which is the design carved on the sealing wax stamp. A feature both letters also share is that they serve as a vessel to commit a negative face-threatening act. It is quite clear that Stevens remained somewhat optimistic in his chances to pursue a romantic relationship with Miss Kenton. I believe so because throughout the novel Stevens almost exclusively refers to her as Miss Kenton. At the time of his journey, Miss Kenton has not been known Miss Kenton at all for decades. Stevens is blissfully unaware of her family affairs at that time, such as the fact that Miss Kenton has children and is expecting to become a grandmother soon. He is nevertheless knowledgeable about her marital status considering she expresses the woeful state of her marriage in the letter and is well aware of her new name, Mrs Benn. While it is not openly stated, Miss Kenton must have signed her letter with her current name. If then, the letter could be interpreted as a love letter then that is another similarity since Maria's letter definitely is definitely one. In both cases we can observe how the ability to commit the face-threatening act accompanied with appropriate politeness substrategies leads to the success of their respective agencies.

Apart from the insight into the epistolary practices of the nobility of the 16th century England, Maria's letter also offers two enigmas both Malvolio and many researchers were incapable of decoding for many years. Both of these provide a significant contribution towards the comical effect of the scene. During the scene which sees Malvolio take the bait in form of the letter the steward recognizes the handwriting of his mistress. Malvolio states: "*By my life, this is my lady's hand. These be her very c's, her u's, and her t's, and thus she makes her great P's. It is in contempt of question her hand*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.80-84). As perplexed as I was by the choice of the four particular consonants I must admit that ideas of sexual nature were among the first ones that crossed my mind. Suggested solutions to this conundrum that various researchers have put forward are plentiful. Some of them are more intricate than others. Some of them can readily be deemed as more feasible than others. I am going to briefly mention some of them before. The foolish knight Andrew is just as blissfully unaware of what Malvolio has just spelt out and even repeats most of the mysterious letters after him to amplify the comedic effect of the scene and the amusement of the audience when he expresses his puzzlement: "*her c's, her u's, and her t's. Why that?*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.84). The simplest solution that has been suggested is that it was merely a result of an oversight in Shakespeare with no further explanation provided for the choice of the four particular letters (Smith, 1998, p. 1201). Another possibility is also rather straight-forward. Shakespeare was to select them simply due to their phonetic qualities, that is to say because they sound well when put together. However, this solution is unsatisfactory, considering one of the letters is the vowel "u" and as such does not rhyme with the remaining letters, the consonants "c", "t", and "p" (Smith, 1998, p. 1202). Andrew's echoing of Malvolio "*her c's, her u's, and her t's. Why that?*" is a telling sign of a hidden meaning behind Shakespeare's choice of the four particular letters (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.84). Furthermore, it signals that the contemporary audience should be aware of it and capable of cracking the code. One solution that has been put forward is rather obscene. As recent editions acknowledge, c-u-t or cut served as a synonym for cunt during the Renaissance era (Smith, 1998, p. 1201). Cut could also be used as a verb signifying sexual activity by the means of a euphemism (Smith, 1998, p. 1202). Furthermore, references of sexual nature that can be found in the play are not limited to the term cut that has just been discussed. One of the curious exchanges between Sir Toby and Sir Andrew provide several examples of ambiguous terms which can be interpreted sexually. In this case the two knights boast about their sexual prowess:

Sir Andrew: I'll stay a month longer. I am a fellow o' th' strangest mind i' th' world. I delight in masques and revels, sometimes altogether.

Sir Toby: Art thou good at these kickshawses, knight?

Sir Andrew: As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be, under the degree of my betters, and yet I will not compare with an old man.

Sir Toby: What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight?

Sir Andrew: Faith, I can cut a caper.

Sir Toby: And I can cut the mutton to't.

Sir Andrew: And I think I have the back-trick simply as strong as any man in Illyria (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 1.3.101-112)

Several terms present in this exchange are of such nature, such as galliard (dalliance), caper (copulate), mutton (prostitute), and back-trick (sexual mastery) (Smith, 1998, p. 1203). An important aspect to consider here is the different impact of spoken and written discourse. "C, u, and t" are not necessarily pronounced in the same way they are written. Both the final sound of "and" and the initial sound of "t" would not be pronounced. Therefore, the pronunciation of "and" can easily become identical to pronunciation of the letter "n". "C, u, and t" would in turn become "c, u, n, t". It is easy to see how Malvolio spelling out "c, u, n, t" could be hardly considered as a face-maintaining activity.

The second riddle is more perplexing even if somewhat similar in meaning. Malvolio is not alone when he exclaims "*what should that alphabetical position portend?*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.109-110). He is, of course, wondering about the hidden meaning behind another four letters, in this case the mysterious M.O.A.I. Considering his egoistic nature, his immediate reaction is rather predictable: "*If I could make that resemble something in me!*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.110-111). My first reaction was similar. The letter M in the initial position evoked Malvolio's name in my mind instantly. Even all the following vowels are the sole vowels Malvolio's name consists of. Malvolio notes this himself: "*M. Malvolio. M – why, that begins my name!*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.115). Various researches have once again introduced many explanations in terms of this mystery. One such solution claims that M.O.A.O stands for I AM O, meaning I am Olivia (Smith, 1998, p. 1206). Another draws attention to the simple fact I have mentioned before, that is the presence of all the letters within Malvolio's name. The most trivial

solution I have discovered is that the letters are simply the first, second, second from last and the last letter in Malvolio's name (Smith, 1998, p. 1206). Possibly the least likely solution could be that the letters stand for the four elements: Mare (Sea), Orbis (Earth), Aer (Air), and Ignis (Fire) (Smith, 1998, p. 1206). A thought-provoking explanation is that there is no meaning hidden in M.O.A.I. to be discovered. It states that the anagram is supposed to challenge the audience just as much as it is supposed to challenge Malvolio (Smith, 1998, p. 1209). One solution that has been put forward is as complicated as the ones I have already mentioned are simple. Shakespeare seems to have inspired by a certain Sir John Harington. In 1596, Sir Harington had published a satirical act on the flushing toilet mere four years before *Twelfth Night* was performed for the first time. His work bears the title of A NEVV DISCOVRSE OF A STALE SVBIECT, CALLED THE Metamorphosis of A IAX. The letters A IAX allude to the Grecian warrior Ajax's metamorphosis into a hyacinth. In short, A IAX eventually transformed into jokes. In Shakespeare's works this term is synonymous with privy. Shakespeare was somewhat fond of this joke, one which is lavatorial in nature. So much can be said considering its use is not limited to *Twelfth Night* alone. It appears in another of his comedies, namely *Love's Labour's Lost*. However, its use is not limited to comedies as the term can be found in *King Lear* as well. The work was particularly popular and went through at least four editions during the year it was published alone. Sir Harington even attained a moniker "Sir Ajax." While the contemporary public might have been rather fond of his work, the opinion of Queen Elizabeth I. was the exact opposite. The Queen had another reason to be displeased by Sir Harington. He was a captain of horse during the Irish Campaign of 1599 and it was him who had to report the mission's failure to queen Elizabeth whose displeasure was severe. While certainly not as coarse as the first riddle, the second one does not work in Malvolio's favour either if his face-wants are to be considered. Repeatedly spelling out the abbreviated title of an obscene piece of work of the times, moreover one that is the source of displeasure of queen Elizabeth herself is charged with quite the potential for face loss on behalf of Malvolio (Smith, 1998, p. 1215-1219).

A particularly interesting feature of Maria's directives is the very specific one about Olivia supposedly commending Malvolio's yellow stockings: "*Remember who commended thy yellow stockings, and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered. I say, remember*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.139-140). Malvolio falls for it: "*She did commend my yellow stockings of late, she did praise my leg being cross-gartered, and in*

this she manifests herself to my love, and with a kind of injunction drives me to these habits of her liking“ (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.151-155). His reaction is quite perplexing considering what Maria has to say about this: *“He will come to her in yellow stockings, and ’tis a colour she abhors, and cross-gartered, a fashion she detests*“ (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 2.5.182-184). It is possible that the mere prospect of ascending the metaphorical social ladder made Malvolio conjure up memories of events that had not actually happened. However, to don yellow stockings carries more implications than insulting the sense of fashion of his Mistress Olivia. The yellow colour was not particularly constraining in 16th century London. Various kinds of people would wear clothing of yellow colour and the same can be stated about stockings. Why is it then that the combination of the colour yellow and stockings should be such a faux pas on Malvolio’s account? One context yellow stockings are associated with is the opening of the children Christ’s hospital but it is clear this bears no significance in terms of Malvolio’s stockings. Especially considering that said hospital had opened nearly half a century before Malvolio entered the stage for the first time (Giese, 2006, p. 235). There are two additional options related to contemporary politics. Olivia and queen Elizabeth shared their disdain for this particular colour. Yellow was the flag of Duke of Norfolk who had been a reason for strife in her Court until he was executed 1572. Additionally, yellow was the colour of Spain, her arch-enemy (Giese, 2006, p. 236). An explanation that is certainly more relevant to the topic at hand is the symbolism of marital betrayal and illicit sexuality. Wearing yellow stockings, Malvolio might be making an impression of the jolly young bachelor even though his imminent goal is to become Olivia’s husband (Giese, 2006, p. 239-240). It is also a possibility that the yellow were associated with the lower classes. In that case, Malvolio would be belittling himself in front of Olivia while simultaneously trying to be elevated to the rank of a count (Giese, 2006, p. 240).

CHAPTER 4

Both *The Remains of the Day* and *Twelfth Night* provide us with situations in which we can observe the two stewards struggle when dealing with matters concerning the fairer sex. However, their aspirations differ to a great extent. Malvolio's intent is to marry up the social hierarchy. He does not seem to be madly in love with Olivia. Rather, he seems to be madly in love with his own image of count Malvolio. The adjective mad does seem to be an appropriate description of Malvolio's state as he finds himself imprisoned for making an impression of a complete fool. Madness is the state of his mind which creates scenes of Olivia commending his yellow stockings seemingly out of thin air. Malvolio does not lack the courage to fully commit to wooing of Olivia. Naturally, being led astray by Maria's letter his attempts are destined to fail from the onset due to their displacement. Moreover, his aspirations are not completely devoid of merit. During the Renaissance period a household commanded by a young, unmarried woman would have been significantly disadvantaged (Cahill, 1996, p. 37). Olivia also demonstrates that she is willing to be pursued by someone of a more common origin when she woos Cesario. The proceedings during Malvolio's interaction with Olivia unfold as expected. Her mind is occupied fully by the newly arrived guest, Cesario. She does send Maria to bring Malvolio to her but not for the reasons he would have appreciated: "*Where's Malvolio? He is sad, and civil, and suits well for a servant with my fortunes*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.5-6). When Malvolio, fooled by the letter, enters the stage, he could not be further away from sad and civil. Not only is he dressed in the infamous yellow stockings, he addresses his mistress "*Sweet lady, ho, ho!*" I would certainly call this an eyebrow raising behaviour (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.17). Malvolio begins his address with a positive politeness substrategy. By the means of the adjective sweet he utilizes the substrategy of exaggeration of sympathy. Olivia's reaction reprimands Malvolio for his inappropriate behavior: "*Smil'st thou? I sent for thee upon a sad occasion*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.18). Olivia's language soon betrays a tone of irritation: "*Why, how dost thou, man? What is the matter with thee?*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.23-24). I believe the change of address from Malvolio to "man" demonstrates this. Throughout their exchange, Malvolio remains somewhat ambiguous. "*Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs. It did come to his hands, and commands shall be executed. I think we do know the sweet Roman hand*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.25-27). In this segment, Malvolio utilizes the negative politeness substrategy of stating the face-threatening act as a general rule when he says that

commands shall be executed. Another negative politeness substrategy he resorts to is distancing himself from the negative face-threatening act of giving orders by referring to himself in the third person singular. By utilizing both of these substrategies he ensures Olivia that he understands that her giving him orders is reasonable and that the face-threatening act is slight, thus mitigating its potential of damage. At this point, Olivia is already of the opinion that her steward must have gone mad. At least her next utterance would suggest so: "*Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio?*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.28). Considering what Malvolio is trying to achieve here, it is no wonder this particular sentence would only encourage him to continue in his efforts. "*To bed? Ay, sweetheart, and I'll come to thee*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.29). Once again Malvolio exaggerates his sympathy towards Olivia by referring to her as a "sweetheart." The entire scene is quite humorous indeed as the two both interpret "going to bed" in different ways. "*God comfort thee! Why dost thou smile so and kiss thy hand so oft?*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.30-31). Maria is also a witness to all this and serves as a catalyst, ensures that her plan comes to fruition, and prevents the events from derailing. "*Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady?*" she asks upon which Malvolio begins citing several parts of her letter. (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.34-35). Naturally, Olivia remains oblivious in terms of what his references are alluding to and concludes: *why, this is very midsummer madness*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 3.4.51). For Malvolio, the entire scene is a positive face-threatening act of extreme proportions. Having one's own sanity brought into question is undeniably a serious threat to Malvolio's face wants. Even today such an accusation would bear serious implications as issues related to mental health are becoming increasingly normalized. However, that cannot be said about early modern England. Prior to the conclusion of the play Malvolio is released from prison and demands justice.

In case of Stevens it is more complicated. Both him and Miss Kenton work as servants at Darlington Hall. Stevens might be the highest ranking servant of the household but he is nevertheless a clear subordinate of Lord Darlington. Stevens is no lord and has neither the means nor ambition to aspire to be one. Neither of them would be considered to have overstepped their respective social boundaries if they were to pursue a romantic relationship together. And yet Stevens' approach towards courtship could not be any more different than Malvolio's. A decent portion of *The Remains of the Day* is dedicated to interactions between Stevens and Miss Kenton. I decided to analyze one of such interactions, one which actually managed to unsettle Stevens so much that his usual

dignified self resorted to concluding the conversation in a rather emotional manner. Another reason bears more importance. Stevens himself marks this event as the likely turning point in terms of his relationship with Miss Kenton. The episode begins with Miss Kenton entering Stevens' pantry one evening while he was engaged in reading a book. Miss Kenton initiates the exchange with a face-threatening act of criticism. The criticism is slight as it only concerns the state of Stevens' pantry. However, in spite of Stevens' dismissive answer she continues criticizing his room: *"Really, Mr Stevens, this room resembles a prison cell. All one needs is a small bed in the corner and one could well imagine condemned men spending their last hours here"* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 119). Stevens expresses his wish to be left alone by simply not looking up from his reading and remaining silent. Miss Kenton does not follow the non-verbal cues and directs her attention towards the book Stevens is reading. She goes off-record somewhat when she asks Stevens *"now I wonder what it could be you are reading there, Mr Stevens"* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 119). The evasive behaviour of Stevens' merely boosts her curiosity and when Stevens looks up from his book she can already be seen advancing towards him. As she nears closer and closer to Stevens she makes multiple insinuations about the nature of the book Stevens was reading before she had interrupted him. That is that the content of the book is something rather racy. Such an idea is naturally a threat to Stevens' face of the ever dignified butler. Miss Kenton attempts to convince Stevens to show her the book by using the positive politeness substrategy of a promise: *"Please, show me the volume you are holding, Mr Stevens, and I will leave you to the pleasures of your reading"* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 120). What follows is rather embarrassing for Stevens. Miss Kenton slowly releases the book from Stevens' clutches while he simply looks away in an awkward manner. He also provides a description of the situation, one which is very telling: *"the atmosphere underwent a peculiar change almost as though the two of us had been suddenly thrust on to some other plane of being altogether"* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 120). Not only does the atmosphere change, the same can be said about Miss Kenton: *"there was a strange seriousness in her expression, and it struck me she seemed almost frightened"* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 120). The whole situation is concluded when, upon discovering the nature of the book Stevens was reluctant to reveal, Miss Kenton says: *"Good gracious, Mr Stevens, it isn't anything so scandalous at all. Simply a sentimental love story"* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 121). The scene is then brought to an end when Stevens shows Miss Kenton out of his pantry in a manner he describes as quite firm. The entire episode is a negative face-threatening act committed by Miss Kenton because by disregarding his privacy she

disregards his want to be unimpeded. Miss Kenton does not find that overly improper possibly due to the low difference in power and the insignificant social gap. While Stevens is initially adamant that the sole reason why he reads such books is to enhance his command of the English language, in the very next paragraph he admits to have gained some enjoyment from reading them. What was then the reason behind Stevens' peculiar reaction? According to what he tells the readers, Miss Kenton would disappear from the house on regular basis during her days off. Stevens mentions these outings and frequent mood swings of hers to his colleague who alarms Stevens about the possibility of Miss Kenton being pursued by another man. During one of the Stevens' and Miss Kenton's evening sessions which Stevens declares to be concerned with professional matters of course, Miss Kenton seems so distant that he decides to discontinue them. No amount of repair attempted by Miss Kenton is capable of changing Stevens' opinion. He is adamant. I believe the reason Stevens did so as well as the root of his inability to navigate the scene with his usual dignity can be attributed towards his jealousy. Stevens contrasts with Malvolio who when given a reason he might have a chance to pursue Olivia does not hesitate for a single moment. Stevens, on the other hand, when given a clue is incapable of risking his face of an ever-dignified butler even though some of the clues he is given are quite clear. When Stevens inquires Miss Kenton in regards to her frequent outings during one of the sessions over cocoa she provides him with an opportunity to pursue her. She refers to the man who has been pursuing her as a mere acquaintance, denigrates him and even compliments Stevens: *"it occurs to me you must be a well-contented man, Mr Stevens. Here you are, after all, at the top of your profession, every aspect of your domain well under control. I really cannot imagine what more you might wish for in life"* (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 125). Miss Kenton is clearly alluding to the one thing Stevens might be missing in life, that being the love of a woman. However, Stevens uses this opportunity express the importance of his dedication to such an important man as Lord Darlington.

What both Stevens and Malvolio have in common though, and what I would argue leads to their wishes to remain ungranted are their feelings of self-importance. Both of them think highly of themselves. Malvolio's feelings of self-importance manifest themselves in a rather crude way at least when compared to Stevens. Malvolio makes clear how overdeveloped his ego is when he daydreams about becoming a count. Stevens also boasts about the importance of his position on a couple of occasions. At one point he even indirectly compares himself to a general: *"the butler's pantry, as far as I am concerned, is*

a crucial office, the heart of the house's operations; not unlike a general's headquarters during a battle" (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 119). Possibly the most serious transgression against the "face wants" of a person, the most serious face-threatening act is humiliation. Their feelings of self-importance are challenged to the core when they face humiliation. Both *Twelfth Night* and *The Remains of the Day* provides a case in which our characters have to face the complete disregard of their "face wants." Once again, their respective approaches towards negotiating these situations could not be any more different.

Stevens' humiliation is initiated by his employer Lord Darlington himself:

Lord Darlington: Step this way a moment, will you, Stevens? Mr Spencer here wishes a word with you.

Mr Spencer: My good man, I have a question for you. We need your help on a certain matter we've been debating. Tell me, do you suppose the debt situation regarding America is a significant factor in the present low levels of trade? Or do you suppose this is a red herring and that the abandonment of the gold standard is at the root of the matter?

Stevens: I am very sorry, sir, but I am unable to be of assistance on this matter (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 142).

Stevens is recognizes the actual reason behind Mr Spencer's question. It is known that in some cultures, when questioned by their superiors, people pretend to be completely clueless no matter how much knowledge about the matter they hold in reality. This strategy serves as a means of acknowledgment of their subordinate position (Magnusson, 2004, p. 120). Stevens decides to adopt this strategy as well. Since he needed some time to evaluate the situation at hand he actually does make the impression of struggling with the question. The gentlemen notice this and interpret it as a sign of Stevens' lack of ability to give an appropriate answer. While Stevens focuses solely on his ability to remain calm and fulfill his duties of intellectually elevating the gentlemen above himself I would say it is safe to assume that Stevens would not be able to give them an appropriate answer even if he wanted to. Mr Spencer proceeds to ask Stevens additional questions. Stevens is unable to answer a single one of them which is the source of amusement of the gentlemen. Again and again, he recurses to his ritualistic response: "*I'm very sorry, sir, but I am unable to be of assistance on this matter*" (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 142). A little detail I have noticed is that while his previous responses are amplified by the adverb "very" it is missing in his last response. Perhaps Stevens overstates his willingness to partake in the belittlement of his

person to some extent no matter how adamant he is about it being simply a part of his duties. While Stevens claims that he has nearly forgotten the incident by then I would find such a notion rather difficult to believe. The seriousness of the face-threatening act is acknowledged by Lord Darlington himself the very next morning. Lord Darlington begins his apology as such: “*Look here, Stevens, it was dreadful. The ordeal we put you through last night*” (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 143). Stevens phrases his response as expected: “*Not at all, sir. I was only too happy to be of service*” (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 143). He even emphasises how happy he was to be of service with the adverb “too.” Lord Darlington clearly does not consider humiliation to be part of Stevens’ daily routine. His apology continues: “*It was quite dreadful. We’d all had rather too good a dinner, I fancy. Please accept my apologies*” (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 143). Dreadful is indeed an appropriate term to describe what Stevens was subjected to. The seriousness of the face-threatening act is well illustrated by his lordship’s apology. Firstly, the fact that a man in such a position as Lord Darlington considers it appropriate to apologize to a servant of his would suggest as much. Even though a tremendous power and social gap between himself and Stevens exists, Stevens is considered a particularly valuable worker by Lord Darlington. He proved himself to have been a notably competent butler, especially in the 1930s when he witnessed conferences of international relevance. At that time, Darlington Hall housed such important, albeit in some cases rather controversial figures of contemporary politics such as Joachim von Ribbentrop or Anthony Eden. His loyalty to Lord Darlington could hardly be questioned. As a butler who boasts many years of work experience in a distinguished household, I would be optimistic in terms of his prospects to acquire a position in another household should he decide to conclude his career in Darlington Hall. In conclusion, I believe Stevens negotiated this tricky situation to the best of his ability. He recognized the disproportionate difference in power between himself and Mr Spencer as well as the high social distance. The two metrics imply a certain possibility an attempt at defense could lead to unnecessary escalation of the situation. Moreover, such speech act would require a very careful construction. Stevens would rely on many substrategies of politeness to aid him with negotiation of his position. That is the position of a butler who is not to be humiliated before the eyes of his lordship for the amusement of his guests. However, the most important reason why I believe Stevens was correct in his evaluation of the situation was the current state of Mr Spencer and the other gentlemen. Lord Darlington’s apology “*We’d all had rather too good a dinner*” would suggest that the

gentlemen were somewhat inebriated when the humiliation of Stevens occurred (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 143).

Mr Spencer is not the only source of humiliation as far as Stevens is concerned. There is another instance of Stevens' face being under threat and this time it is Miss Kenton who assaults Stevens' positive face. The incident occurred during the important conference that has already been mentioned while discussing the segment concerning Stevens' father. Before the conference, Stevens and Miss Kenton have a conversation in her parlour. She mentions her acquaintance has asked her to marry him and that she is still uncertain whether or not she should accept. Stevens appears unimpressed and does not attempt to intervene even though this just might be one of his last opportunities to change advance their relationship. Stevens merely wishes Miss Kenton a pleasant evening but she is not satisfied with such an answer. She continues trying to force a reaction from Stevens: "*Mr Stevens, do I understand that you are wishing me to remain on duty this evening?*" (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 156). Not that nor "*but I can see you are very unhappy about my going out tonight*" is capable of making a lasting impression on Stevens (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 156). With nothing but Stevens' wishes of a pleasant evening Miss Kenton takes her leave. Once she has returned Stevens encounters her waiting for him. To her disappointment, Stevens does not ask how and limits his speech to mere polite expressions such as: "*I trust you had a pleasant evening, Miss Kenton*" (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 158). Considering the greater situation such a statement sounds quite ironic. Miss Kenton informs Stevens that she has accepted her suitor's marriage proposal. Once again, Stevens' reaction which consists of his congratulations and assurance of his best efforts to secure a suitable replacement can hardly be deemed satisfactory by Miss Kenton. Stevens is being quite impolite here. As someone who has devoted many years of service to Darlington Hall, she is just to expect a more invested reaction from Stevens even if it was to be insincere. Stevens disregards Miss Kenton's positive face and Miss Kenton retaliates in a similar manner. She tells Stevens how she and her to be husband pass the time over anecdotes concerning Stevens. She even boasts about recreating pep-talks Stevens addresses to the staff. Stevens merely excuses himself but it is clear he is not one to take ridicule lightly. While Stevens boasts about his ability to never betray signs of emotion one of the guests who is fond of conversing with Stevens during his stays at Darlington Hall, Mr Cardinal, asks Stevens whether he is "*all right there*" shortly afterwards (Ishiguro, 1989, p. 160). Perhaps the exchanges with Miss Kenton left a deeper mark than he is willing to admit. Stevens is too preoccupied with

maintaining of his face considering this moment is the culmination of his career. His profession is of higher importance to him compared to the prospect of advancing his relationship with Miss Kenton.

Malvolio confronts his humiliation much more proactively. But that is to be expected of someone who holds more power in comparison. Malvolio has two personas in one person to negotiate his release with. That person is the jester Feste who initially plays the role of the curate Sir Topas and pretends to have been sent to question Malvolio. Feste merely toys with Malvolio as one would expect of a fool. Malvolio remains polite while addressing Feste: "*Sir Topas, never was a man thus wronged. Good Sir Topas, do not think I am mad. They have laid me here in hideous darkness*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 4.2.28). His efforts seem futile as Feste has no intentions to conduct a productive conversation with Malvolio. The torment of his is simply to be prolonged a little. What eventually saves Malvolio is not his ability to negotiate his release but an order from one of the schemers, Sir Toby, to have him released: "*If he may be conveniently delivered, I would he were, for I am now so far in offence with my niece that I cannot pursue with any safety this sport the upshot*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 4.2.63-66). My niece in this case means Olivia herself. Feste then returns, this time playing his usual role. He sings a song to attract Malvolio's attention but ignores him initially, as Malvolio simply addresses him as "fool." Malvolio eventually deploys a positive politeness substrategy when he suggests a reciprocal exchange: "*Good Fool, as ever thou wilt deserve well at my hand, help me to a candle, and pen, ink, and paper. As I am a gentleman, I will live to be thankful to thee for't*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 4.2.75-77). Feste toys with Malvolio some more but at last he agrees to bring Malvolio the means to write a letter. Malvolio again promises his deepest thanks: "*Fool, I'll requite it in the highest degree. I prithee be gone*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 4.2.111-112). Additionally, he expresses deference when he uses the term "*prithee*." As such, Malvolio's imprisonment comes to an end. His imprisonment is obviously a face-threatening act of highest order. Not only is he imprisoned, the reason for his imprisonment is madness which poses a significant threat to his positive face. Being judged insane is a serious accusation now, let alone in terms of the early modern England. Malvolio's opinion that he has been subjected to a great deal of injustice is correct. In contrast, Stevens is more concerned about his image of a great butler. As such, his way of dealing with humiliation is bound to be more reserved. It is also important to note that towards the conclusion of the play, Malvolio makes significant progress in terms of saving

of his face. The wrongdoing he was subjected to is acknowledged by Olivia herself who states: "*Thou shalt be both the plaintiff and the judge of thine own cause*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 5.1.343-344).

CONCLUSION

What Stevens and Malvolio share is their sense of self-importance. Both of them think very highly of themselves. Malvolio demonstrates so by his inability to partake in the playful interactions with Feste and other characters. On the other hand he is quite ready to fantasize about himself being granted the title of a count through his marriage with Olivia. Stevens' ways of expressing his over-developed ego are much subtler when compared to his early modern counterpart. His boasting about having dealt with international politics in front of the villagers of Miscombe not to mention his analogy between a butler's parlour and a general's headquarters betray what an important figure he considers himself to be. Stevens is presented with an opportunity to protect the weak. In spite of Miss Kenton's urging him to oppose Lord Darlington and not release the two Jewish girls employed at Darlington Hall. His gentlemanship is merely superficial. While he is able to fool a group of villagers to believe he is a true gentleman he owes this feat to his suit, the fancy car he arrives in and his ability to speak like a gentleman. Stevens is more concerned with the facade of a gentleman than behaving like one. Malvolio is rather hypocritical himself. At the beginning of the play, he makes the impression of a sanctimonious puritan when he scolds his mistress for drawing amusement from the revelry behaviour of Feste: "*I marvel your Ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal.*" (Shakespeare, 1623/2005, 1.5.74-75) However, the moment he is offered an opportunity to pursue Olivia, he changes completely. The sanctimonious puritan is replaced by a man who is too happy to indulge in a flirty behaviour with his mistress. To his despair his newly acquired face of a man who wears yellow stockings, smiles all the time and kisses his hand is not accepted by Olivia and the consequences are severe. Those being his imprisonment and loss of face of the puritan Malvolio he once was.

What both works of art have in common, at least in terms of the fates of the two servants, is the importance of letters. Both Maria and Miss Kenton manage to achieve their respective goals. Although considering Malvolio's eagerness to comply even in terms of the yellow stockings, it is possible that Maria's goal was more achievable than expected. Neither of them overstep their boundaries and support their causes with an appropriate amount of politeness substrategies to remain authentic.

Malvolio pursues the love of his mistress Olivia. His efforts were, naturally, bound to fail from the very beginning considering they were unfounded. The yellow stockings Malvolio dons in a vain attempt to appeal to his mistress are symbolic in terms of the betrayal of Olivia wooing Cesario. One also has to doubt about the sincerity of his feelings. It would seem that it is opportunism rather than genuine love what guides Malvolio on his journey to win the favour of his mistress. Marriage is merely a way to reach his goal while his counterparts. On the other hand, his playful mistress Olivia, desires true love. Unlike Malvolio, who as a bachelor, still lacks a firm place within the contemporary patriarchal society, the stakes are not as high for Olivia. Stevens' approach is very different. His feelings concerning Miss Kenton seem authentic. Considering he still considered Miss Kenton to be. But then again, it could have been opportunism that caused Stevens to travel across the country to see her. At his age, any chances of him marrying a woman are rather slim, especially if we are to take into account he spends absolute majority of his time at Darlington Hall. Considering him and Miss Kenton have some history together, a better opportunity of pursuing a romantic relationship with a woman could hardly arise. A potential marriage with Miss Kenton would not be of any benefit to him in terms of class membership. Moreover, Stevens has already achieved all he could have wished for in terms of his profession. As the butler of Darlington Hall there is no higher position for him to conquer. The one who is more of an opportunist in terms of the Stevens and Miss Kenton relationship is Miss Kenton. There are several instances of Miss Kenton providing Stevens with an opportunity to elevate their professional relationship into a romantic one but Stevens refuses them all. Stevens is more concerned with the maintenance of his face of a great butler to risk it for a chance of a relationship with her. One that is both respected and disrespected by Miss Kenton depending on the circumstances. It would also seem that the concept of family itself does not seem to be particularly valuable to Stevens. The relationship he has with his father seem to be quite professional in nature. Even when he is to convey to his father that he is effectively demoted he plays more a role of a superior rather than a son. The novel only contains one mention of Stevens' deceased brother. Moreover, not a single mention of his mother is found.

Stevens and Malvolio also differ greatly in terms of confronting their humiliation. Stevens does not consider having to deal with face-threatening acts out of the ordinary. As demonstrated by the stories he tells when attempting to define what dignity means to him, the ability to deal with them efficiently and without betraying a single sign of damage to

his professional face is a sign of a great butler. And a great butler he considers himself to be. Even the story he tells about his father that is supposed to prove his father was one of the great butlers as well suggests so. It was only after father's employer had been insulted that he confronted the inebriated men. Father's way of negotiating the situation was also very efficient. Not a word was uttered or an emotion revealed.

The ending of both the novel and the play is quite ambiguous. Malvolio is supposed to be a comedic character. He is the central figure of the play in this regard. And yet, his story is unfinished and the conditions he is surrounded by the last time we hear of him would suggest the conclusion of his part of the story is certainly not the one he himself would have wished for. Then again, even if his grievances are not addressed on the stage, he is promised justice by Olivia. Stevens, a rather tragic character, has to come to terms with all his life decisions and face the fact that he does not have much time left. In spite of that he does find solace in knowing that unlike Malvolio's his story is not concluded yet. Because of this his story concludes with a breath of optimism. There are still some days to look forward to and enjoy the human warmth. The evening is the best part of the day.

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SHRNUTÍ

Kazuo Ishiguro je bezesporu spisovatelem světového formátu a svými díly si vysloužil nejedno literární ocenění. Ve svých knihách často pracuje s minulostí. Vypravěči jsou nezřídka starší lidé, kteří za pomoci svých vzpomínek přibližují čtenáři světy nikoliv plné akce, ale plné emocí. Jinak tomu není ani v případě jeho prvního díla, které se soustředí na prostředí Anglie. Kniha nese anglický název *The Remains of the Day* (česky *Soumrak dne*) a především právě tato kniha je inspirací této práci. Hlavním hrdinou tohoto románu je starý anglický majordomus Stevens. V rámci románu sledujeme za pomoci Stevensových vzpomínek jeho cestu profesním a osobním životem. Ačkoliv je děj zasazen do prostředí Anglie dvacátého století, nejedná se podle Ishigura o Anglii, která by kdy existovala, jakožto spíše o Anglii fiktivní, existující v rámci populárních nostalgických představ. Druhým využitým dílem je jedna z Shakespearových komedií, konkrétně *Twelfth Night* (česky *Večer tříkrálový*). I v rámci této hry můžeme najít postavu podobného profesního zařazení. Jedná se o Malvolia, postavy, kolem které se soustředí komediální náboj hry. I on je majordomem, ačkoliv z doby alžbětinské. A i on, ač je hra zasazena do kulturního prostředí tehdejší Anglie, se pohybuje ve fiktivním světě a to v jisté Ilýrii. Ke studiu obou postav byl využit koncept takzvané Politeness theory, který byl představen Penelope Brown a Stevenem Levinsonem již v roce 1978. Tato teorie pracuje s termíny jako je „face“ či „face-threatening-act“. „Face“ je možné stručně vysvětlit jako jistou identitu, kterou si člověk pro sebe vytvoří a jejíž uznání a respekt ostatních lidí očekává. „Face-threatening-act“ je posléze jakákoliv situace, akt či činnost, která onu identitu ohrožuje. Tyto koncepty jsou posléze užity v rámci této práce ke zkoumání vzájemných vztahů mezi oběma majordomy a ostatními postavami. Za tímto účelem bylo nejprve potřeba získat jistý kulturní přehled, co se Anglie týče. Obě postavy, jejich rozhodnutí a osudy, jsou posléze porovnány za použití kulturního textu a již zmíněné teorie.