

A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Business and Social Etiquette in the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá mezikulturní analýzou obchodní a společenské etikety ve Spojeném království a České republice. Cílem práce bylo zjistit, do jaké míry se etiketa liší mezi těmito dvěma kulturami. Práce se skládá ze dvou částí – teorie a analýzy. Teoretická část se zabývá historií a vznikem slova ‘etiketa’, dále etiketou obecně. Další součástí teoretické části je význam etikety v obou zemích. V praktické části se věnuji analýze obchodní a společenské etikety se zaměřením na shody a rozdíly mezi Spojeným královstvím a Českou republikou. Praktická část obsahuje rozhovory se studenty, kteří krátce žili ve Spojeném království a poskytli mi použití jejich zkušeností z Velké Británie v mé bakalářské práci.

Klíčová slova: etiketa, mezikulturní analýza obchodní a společenské etikety, civilizace, sociální průzkum.

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with a cross-cultural analysis of business and social etiquette in the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. The aim of this thesis is to find out to what extent etiquette between these two cultures differs. The thesis is composed of two parts: theory and analysis. The theoretical part deals with history and origin of the word ‘etiquette’, then with etiquette itself in general. The next component of the theoretical part is the significance of etiquette in both countries. I devoted the practical part to the analysis of business and social etiquette while focusing on the similarities and differences between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. The practical part contains interviews with students who shortly lived in the United Kingdom. The students provided me with utilization of their experience in my bachelor thesis.

Keywords: etiquette, cross-cultural analysis of business and social etiquette, civilization, social survey.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, knowledge of etiquette is even more important than ever before, not just in the social sphere but also in business world. Etiquette is very crucial to create and maintain a civilized society. Civilization of society has been going on for centuries. I am examining the topic of A cross-cultural analysis of business and social etiquette in the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic, because I want to determine to what extent etiquette differs between these two countries. I have chosen this topic because I am very interested in this issue. I attended a ball in Austria, called Uni-Gala, which is considered to be a very prestigious event. Both famous people and politicians can be seen there. Despite all the rules of good behaviour, some women took off their shoes because their feet hurt and some men took off their suit jackets due to the heat. Such breaches of etiquette are inappropriate and should not have happened.

It is the aim of this thesis to analyse two points of concern and, thus the similarities and the differences in the rules of behaviour between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. Through this analysis I hope I can help others to understand the variety of cultural differences considering these rules. According to my research, there are lot of similarities but also few differences in the rules of etiquette between these two countries because civilisation does not mean the same thing to different groups of people or cultures. Every nation has different history, cultural heritage, and religion. These factors certainly influence the society of the nation. The partial aim is to point out the differences so that British people and Czech people who are going to build a rapport with each other can gain some knowledge about differences either in social or in business etiquette.

First chapter of the theoretical part examines the history and origin of the word 'etiquette', then with etiquette itself in general. Next chapters of the theoretical part concern with the significance of etiquette for society and why having good manners is very important. Further chapters deal with importance of etiquette in these two nations.

The practical part is devoted to the analysis of business and social etiquette while focusing on similarities and differences between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. I have studied the literature related to British and Czech etiquette. The practical part also contains interviews with students who have lived in Great Britain for a short period of time, so that they can contribute with their own experience. The survey is mainly focused on differences of the rules of etiquette and the behaviour between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. Knowledge of these similarities and differences is a key

factor for being successful in international communication, such as business negotiations and socialization with people from other cultures and also for avoidance of cultural shock.

I. THEORY

1 ETIQUETTE

People often assume that every culture is similar to their own, but every culture is different and unique, therefore such inferences can lead to a situation where everybody is at cross purposes. (Jandt 2010, 82-83) What is considered as polite in one culture can be seen as impolite in another. (Gullová 2011, 12) Nevertheless, it is incorrect to assume that other cultures differ in all aspects because, by doing so, we could miss the common characteristics shared by particular cultures which are important for building good relationships between them. Therefore, it is better to ask and be interested in other cultures than to expect that everything is similar or different to ours. (Jandt 2010, 82-83)

Etiquette consists of habits which have been created for generations and have been accepted by particular communities. These habits are still being created and are constantly changing. They differ according to continents and regions and they are influenced by social, economic, cultural, religious, and climatic circumstances. There is no universal etiquette in the world. The significance of the knowledge of social etiquette in commercial and diplomatic practice with foreign partners is unquestionable. It influences the success or failure of these activities. It is, therefore, appropriate to devote oneself to familiarisation with historical, cultural legacy, socio-political, and economic state of affairs in the particular territory side by side with the professional preparation for negotiations. Our business partners can differ from us in behaviour and actions. It is important to get acquainted with the differences of current etiquette in a particular country, more precisely, in the particular region of the world in comparison with our rules of etiquette. The principle is that special rules of etiquette in any country or region in the world must be respected by the foreign guest in maximum possible measure, even if there is an objection to something (religious, hygienic etc.) by the guest and it is necessary to acclimatize to the local customs. It is a requirement for a global manager, executive director, trade diplomat, international company employee, or from international organization to be culturally perceptive so that these differences can be foreseen in order to be tolerated by foreign partners, but above all, to understand them and accommodate to them as much as possible. (Gullová 2011, 9)

1.1 History of the Word 'Etiquette'

“The word etiquette comes from the French word *étiquette* (Old French *estiquette*). The primary meaning in French is represented by the English word *ticket*. In Old French, the word chiefly denotes a soldier's *billet*. The transition from the sense 'ticket, label' to that of

‘prescribed routine’ presents no intrinsic difficulty, but its actual history in French is not very clear; other mod. Romance languages have adapted the word from the French in the secondary sense; Italian *etichetta*, Spanish *etiqueta*.” (Simpson and Weiner 1989)

The first meaning of etiquette according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* is: “The prescribed ceremonial of a court; the formalities required by usage in diplomatic intercourse. In 1750, etiquette was mentioned by Lord Chesterfield in “Letters”: Without hesitation kiss his [sc. the Pope’s] slipper, or whatever else the etiquette of that Court requires.” (Simpson and Weiner 1989)

“In the 19th century, etiquette was defined as: The unwritten code of honour by which members of certain professions (esp. the medical and legal) are prohibited from doing certain things deemed likely to injure the interests of their brethren, or to lower the dignity of the profession. In 1868, J. E. T. Rogers, an English economist and politician mentioned: The etiquette of certain professional functions prescribes, that a service should be divided.” (Simpson and Weiner 1989)

For my thesis, another meaning is important: “The conventional rules of personal behaviour observed in the intercourse of polite society; the ceremonial observances prescribed by such rules. Etiquette is referenced in *Mourtray Family* by E. Hervey, in 1800: A formal dinner; which, according to his ideas of etiquette, he thought himself obliged to give.” (Simpson and Weiner 1989)

The Civilizing Process, written by the German sociologist Norbert Elias, is the first formal analysis and theory of civilization. Why is etiquette such an important issue in society? The process of civilization has been going on for hundreds years. The importance of good manners was already significant in the middle ages. People from the middle classes were trying to imitate courtly-aristocratic upper class’s manners, because knowledge of good manners meant a higher status in society. The concept of civilization was to show the self-image of upper the class in relation to lower class people and to characterize the specific kind of behaviour thanks to which this upper class felt itself different from less civilized people. (Elias 2000, 34, 54)

1.2 Good Manners

Etiquette is very often mistaken for *ethics*. Ethics is a philosophical discipline, the science of morality. Ethics works with the categories of good and evil. In contrast, etiquette means a collection of rules of social behaviour and a label or a ticket at the same time because of

the same origin of these words. Despite the fact that these terms carry different meanings, there is continuity to be found between them. To the area of exploration of morality also belong interpersonal relationships, respect of the values of other people, communities, and cultures and rules for such behaviour are defined by etiquette. Etiquette determines our behaviour in concrete situations and leads us to consideration, empathy and sensitive attitude towards others and so it fulfils its mission. (Špaček 2008, 5-6)

Why is knowledge of good manners so important for people? The expression „natural behaviour“ is very often understood as a possibility to act the way people consider as “natural”, thus spontaneously or informally. People just do not want to be controlled by any rule. That is a delusion because anything being natural for one person can be utterly unacceptable for another person. This is the reason why rules of etiquette exist, because they create the framework for our behaviour. We have an opportunity to show our personality better than in a game without rules. Anybody who is not adept at the rules of social behaviour must be constantly alert of all the pitfalls hidden in every situation. Such a person must be very nervous and, thus not focusing on a conversation, which is considered to be very important. What a difference from a man who does everything with absolute certainty just unwittingly. This man can be totally devoted to his companion because his behaviour is relaxed and utterly natural. Only such a companion can impress the object of personal interest because it is a pleasure to meet such a person again. Knowledge of good manners definitely has a great impact on business relations. Today no one doubts that etiquette opens doors to any contact with people at offices, at schools, in social intercourse, in personal life, and at business meetings. Our behaviour can be natural and simultaneously in accordance with the rules of etiquette. (Špaček 2008, 6-7)

“When asked ‘What is the definition of etiquette?’, Naomi Polson, who received her etiquette certificate in Washington DC and is the Founding Director of The Etiquette Company, replies, ‘Etiquette has to do with good manners. It is not so much our own good manners, but making other people feel comfortable by the way we behave. So it is more or less thinking of others and how others perceive us: So that everyone knows the rules for doing things and everyone is in a very comfortable position in society.’ She continues, ‘That is what I do; that is my bread and butter. I teach individuals and I go into very large companies and teach in groups.’ (Essortment)

“Etiquette is another name for kind thought. The man who says ‘I know nothing about etiquette’ does not realize that he is saying ‘I know nothing about courtesy to my fellow beings’.” (Essortment)

“Good manners are not only indispensable in society, but they have a very practical value in the business world. Breeding is an essential part of the equipment of anyone who wishes to go far in his particular work or profession. No doubt many failures can be traced to boorishness, to lack of consideration for one's fellows, to neglect of the courtesies essential to civilized living...In both social and business life we seek the people with whom we can be at ease, the people whose manners do not offend us and in whose company we feel entirely comfortable.” (Essortment)

A person who is sociable and considerate to people is well-liked by them. Etiquette also involves the ability to correctly estimate the situation into which we enter. Etiquette formalizes the relationships among people. Conventional politeness has its own place in social behaviour. Even if we do not honestly mean what we say, we are to other people's profit. (Špaček 2008, 9-10) Will Cuppy claims: „Etiquette means behaving yourself a little better than is absolutely essential.” (Search Quotes)

Jiří Guth-Jarkovský, the first master of ceremonies of the Czechoslovak president T.G. Masaryk, distinguished between decency and politeness. Decency may be given to a man but politeness needs to be learnt. Politeness is the outward expression of decency. The base of decency thus is esteem and thoughtfulness. Decency enables a society to live, politeness makes life easier. Politeness is the intentional restriction of one's individualism, egotism and the voluntary subordination to the norms and rules of social life. Guth-Jarkovský also claims that man also should be polite to impolite people. A polite word also influences rude people and it can change their thinking. (Špaček 2008, 11) Arthur Schopenhauer stated that “Politeness is to human nature what warmth is to wax.” (Brainy Quote)

A man should be polite especially to subordinate and common people. Politeness helps to bridge the gap which separates rich people from poor ones, superior people from subordinate ones. (Špaček 2008, 11)

“Many experts say that etiquette is simply showing respect for others and yourself at the same time. So, even though aspects of good manners do vary from place to place and some rules may be added or adjusted to keep up with technology or lifestyles - the foundation of etiquette, its meaning, will forever remain strong.” (Essortment)

“There is, indeed, nothing that costs less and, at the same time, is of more value to you than good manners... However, it must be remembered that...Just as words die from our language and others are born into it, just as skirts soar to the knees one season and tumble to the ankles the next, so do the formalities and outward gestures of etiquette vary according to the times.” (Essortment)

Etiquette is a collection of rules of behaviour historically created and stabilized by traditions. Anyone who becomes a part of society has to begin to respect its standards. Etiquette is evolving as human society develops. Etiquette just reflects the level of society's development and the taste of the majority. The rules of good manners have not been codified and, thus the only penalty for its breaching is a disgruntled society, sometimes a lifted eyebrows, or contemptuous looks of others. (Špaček 2008, 9)

A mass entry of all social classes into social life caused another simplification and stirr of etiquette rules. On the other hand, the participation of the masses in social life results in the cultivation of these classes. Modern etiquette respects social changes and does not resist them. The development of etiquette has never been as tumultuous as today. There are two extremes: on one hand, there is the conservative conception, which insists on tradition and classical forms of relations, on the other hand, there is the freestyle, which rejects the traditional conception of etiquette, standards for clothing, dining, and behaviour. Etiquette is an inherently conservative element of behaviour, and has an important stabilizing function in society and, thus fashion news should not swing it. Social behaviour is ceasing to be the private thing of a man and also becomes a necessary vocational condition. (Špaček 2008, 14-15)

The authors of books about etiquette do not create standards that exist in a society. Their books just record the norms and, thus preserve and stabilize them. Everybody follows principles that were taught by their parents or learnt through observation. (Špaček 2008)

Another example of how the principles of social behaviour can be taught is through a social education. This means a process leading to the acquisition of knowledge and skills in social intercourse. It includes methods, customs, conventions and rules of social contact. The common goal of social education should be friendly and human relationship of a person to other people. Up to recent times, social education was strongly underestimated and it was not taught in schools. Students gain deeper knowledge in schools, universities and also in dancing courses. (Gullová 2011, 12)

What if the rules of behaviour had never come to be and nobody knew them? Would it be possible to live in such a society and feel comfortable simultaneously? Good manners create cultivated relationships between people. Decency brings people closer together. Self-control is a basic demand of decency. Nobody should act in a fit of passion or anger because their good sense is lost under this condition. If we are in a bad mood, we should not show it, otherwise it would be a regrettable sign that we are lacking in taking others into consideration. (Špaček 2008, 8)

George Bernard Shaw stated: “The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.” (The Quotations Page)

In the seventies of the foregone century, the so-called professional etiquette was starting to be propagated. It is basically a collection of rules for behaving in a working environment. It is the ability to behave tactfully, professionally, and elegantly when meeting others in the workplace. Important parts of the professional etiquette are working etiquette (it relates to the relationship between superior and subordinate), business etiquette (which deals with entrepreneurship and with business negotiation), telephone etiquette etc. Professional etiquette is subject to relatively rapid changes. Some of its elements have been developed only recently, e.g. netiquette, i.e. decent treatment with e-mail. (Gullová 2011, 8)

Among the most important qualities of a man who associates with people are tact and empathy – the ability to identify with another person’s situation, needs and feelings. Empathy is an inborn quality to a certain extent. Egocentric people usually lack it. Tact means to realize what hurts somebody’s feelings and what does not. (Špaček 2008, 12) Jean Cocteau pronounced: „Tact in audacity is knowing how far you can go without going too far.“ (Search Quotes)

Tact means even something more than decency and politeness. Tact can be considered as adjustment of rules of social contact in every particular case without retreating from basic principles. It is an ability to consider adequacy of our behaviour and actions and also a skill to identify with a person with whom we are in contact and treat that person the same way as we ourselves would wish to be treated. Tact cannot be taught from books. It is an art in some measure. It also demands certain level of intelligence and magnanimity. Tact is an unconscious, inborn quality in comparison with learnt principles and rules. In practice, it is about how to behave in particular situation to not insult other people. E.g. In

conversation, it is appropriate to avoid topics, which could hurt somebody. Tactful actions enable us put our partners in a good mood and impress them, thus soften them up in our favour. In this sense, the notion of tact is very near to tactic. (Gullová 2011, 13)

2 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ETIQUETTE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

2.1 The Historical Context in the United Kingdom

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says about etiquette: “The royal court was the natural home of etiquette, because it centred upon a monarch around whom niceties of behaviour spread in expanding circles. The author of *Beowulf*, writing of Anglo-Saxon society, describes Wealtheow the queen, ‘mindful of etiquette’. The Middle Ages was a golden period for Western etiquette, since the feudal system was strictly stratified.” In the 16th century, British norms of behavior were significantly influenced by the publication of Italian works noted as courtesy books. At the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, etiquette was also flourishing in Britain. Beau Nash and Beau Brummell, arbiters of men’s fashion, implemented their vagaries as rules for polite society. By the mid-20th century, interest in polite behaviour was not limited to the social elite anymore. (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*)

2.2 The Importance of Etiquette in the United Kingdom

“Manners, in other words, a polite way of behaving, are important in Britain, where ‘Manners make man’, whereas among Czechs ‘Clothes make man’. The idea of the gentleman was developed in English public schools in the early 19th century; previously, foreign visitors thought the Englishman rude.” (Peprník 2004, 122)

According to Henry James, an American writer living two-thirds of his life in London, “there are three things in human life which are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. The third is to be kind.” (Bryant 2008, 143)

There is a great emphasis in Britain on “teaching children to respect honesty, good manners and other people.” (Oakland 2011, 303) British parents often entrust their children to boarding schools, which not only substitute their parents, but they also form their character and create a circle of friends for the future. The British themselves claim that the behaviour of adults can reveal the school that they attended. (Kocourková 2003, 65-66) An article from the British journal *New Statesman* supports the importance of upbringing. The author introduced “Demos reports on parenting, Building Character.” Tough love is highlighted as a significant factor in raising a child. Children must live according to certain rules, from the very beginning, to become good and well behaved people. Unfortunately, there is a wide gap between social classes. Poor children are missing the “socializing

institutions that provide alternative models for how to behave”, so they have less chance to become a successful and well-mannered person. (Russell 2009)

I believe that the importance of etiquette is greater in Britain than in the Czech Republic. It is also shown in a survey of twenty countries made by the analytical company Customs Research Worldwide in 2006. Its purpose was to show which country has the best social behaviour according to the respondents. In accordance with their research, Britain is considered to be the country with the best social behaviour. 11% of Czech respondents considered their own country as having the best social behaviour. However, 25% of Czechs found the British to have the best social behaviour. 20% of the British respondents believed their country had the best social behaviour. This helps to prove that the significance of good social behaviour in United Kingdom is higher than in the Czech Republic. (Gullová 2011, 19-20)

Another characteristic that supports this suggestion is that in the United Kingdom, there is a stronger and more obvious class division. It was always important for the upper class to have specific kind of behaviour to be differentiated from the lower classes. (Elias 2000, 34) The social classes in Britain are not always evaluated by wealth but it is based on factors “such as speech, manner, taste, and lifestyle choices.” (Fox 2004, 406) The United Kingdom is a monarchy which is another factor supporting the importance of etiquette there. The royal family sticks to the royal etiquette that is even stricter and a class on its own.

One of the British values is also fair play, mostly associated with sport, but it is also very important for queuing, driving etiquette, business etiquette, polite egalitarianism etc. (Fox 2004, 407)

2.3 The Historical Context in the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic has many hectic years in its history. It can be characterized by: the switchover from a totalitarian regime to a democratic one; the separation of Slovakia from the Czech Republic which meant termination of Czechoslovakia; progressive integration with European political, military, and economic structures. These changes allowed greater freedom but also bring more responsibility of individuals; what is not forbidden, is allowed; transformation of centrally planned to free market economy giving rise to new classes in society; the supply of products from the entire world; the expansion of media and advertising; international travel including study tours and business trips; occasional strikes

and demonstrations; assets-stripping and other blackmails; membership in NATO and accession to the EU with subsequent discomfiture and concerns about further development of the European “super state”; globalization; rising importance of supporters of sustainable development; recent terroristic attacks etc. (Smejkal, Bachrachová 2007, 15)

Today, all of this is a part of everyday life, which is much more dynamic, more changeable, and being more subject to various influences than it was in the unfortunate fifty years between the first occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939 and the revolutionary year of 1989. Many parallels can be found in the era of the creation of the first Czechoslovakian Republic after 1918. Similarly to these days, democracy was proclaimed as the super ordinate principle to any social behaviour and all the traditional social customs were rejected and considered to be unnecessary for modern democratic people. Jiri Guth-Jarkovsky, the leading ethics expert in that time, criticized the conditions of Czech society in a book he wrote about good manners, called *The Social Catechism*. (Smejkal, Bachrachová 2007, 15)

2.4 The Importance of Etiquette in the Czech Republic

After the political changes in 1989, many people thought that they could do anything regarding social intercourse. Currently, large groups of people still act with this attitude. These people connect loose manners, vulgarity and unwillingness to abide by the particular rules with the opposition to the old regime. This excuse for such behaviour is not acceptable anymore. (Gullová 2011, 18-19)

The next group of people consider rules of social behaviour to be outdated. They advert to the fact that no one should care about their behaviour, their dress sense, or their appearance, because it is none of their business. Unfortunately, a significant group of economically and politically active people, who are elite in a sense, share this attitude.

Another group of people are aware of the unfavourable situation with manners in the Czech Republic. This cognition results from a few facts. One of these facts is the confrontation of more people with foreign countries than ever before. The second one is the discovery that the Czech Republic has a great deficiency in personal and business contacts from a formal point of view. Another assumption is that new generations of workers and entrepreneurs, starting their career in Czech companies and foreign corporations, have never been taught the rules of etiquette in schools nor in former practice. However, they have realized that this lack of knowledge degrades them in front of people who know the

rules of etiquette. Plenty of Czech managers find themselves in embarrassing situations just because they do not know who is supposed to shake hands with whom first. Some of them do not know that there are great differences in eating and dining abroad. For example, not everybody eats pork, beef or seafood, not everyone drinks alcohol etc. Many Czech managers are not willing to respect and tolerate other cultures. However, there is an awareness of the low standard of social behaviour in the Czech Republic. In a sense, it could be called renaissance of social behaviour. Many companies, entrepreneurs, and organizations come to realize that there is a potential for improvement, and so they purposefully strive to become equal to more experienced domestic and foreign partners. They now know that purchasing a luxury car or an expensive suit is not enough. Professionalism is required in all areas of daily life. In the business world, it is a must to know and observe the rules of formal intercourse. Knowledge of etiquette is an economic necessity for both individuals and for companies. Etiquette rules have become more important in the Czech Republic than ever before. (Gullová 2011, 18-19)

II. ANALYSIS

3 THE ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS AND SOCIAL ETIQUETTE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The analytical part of my bachelor thesis is focused on the similarities and differences regarding business and social etiquette between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic.

First of all, I have created a glossary, concerning behaviour, and this glossary is to be found in the next chapter.

Second of all, I have studied literature and web sources related to this issue to examine to what extent etiquette of these two cultures differ. I have also interviewed a few students, studying the bachelor program of English for Business Administration, whom have been to the United Kingdom for some time so they could provide me with their experience. The purpose of these interviews was to support my findings about the similarities and differences in etiquette between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. The further aim of this analysis is to refute or to affirm my hypotheses.

I would like to introduce the five Czech students whom I interviewed.

Students no. 1, no. 2 and no. 3 were visiting Devon in Britain for a week to attend a course about British culture. They stayed with British families and were in contact with British people. Student no. 3 also had a summer job in Scotland for three months.

Student no. 4 worked as an au-pair for one year near London.

Student no. 5 had a summer job in the United Kingdom for three summers.

Student no. 6 had a summer job in the United Kingdom for three months.

4 GLOSSARY

Tactless Behaviour is the converse side of tact. Incessant emphasis on oneself and monologue are parts of it. It is also tactless to speak about purely private issues, to gossip about somebody, or to be extremely inquisitive.

Consideration is supposed to be a natural quality of each cultural individual. A Considerate person is very tolerant, but not without principles. This person does not make efforts to achieve advantages at the expense of others and tries to make the lives of other people easier.

Respect for people does not mean that we behave exaggeratedly respectfully. It is manifestation of our love of people, the proof that we appreciate every single human being. It also means the respect for human work and its results.

Aesthetic plays a significant role during the creation of a first impression and influences behaviour and also manifestations in society. A man with an unkempt look or with repulsive habits can hardly expect that he will be a welcome visitor anywhere. The Sense of beauty constantly enriches a human. A refined taste is a depiction of a personality and contributes to its further development.

Authenticity is being genuine in the relationships with other people, not hiding oneself under a mask, not pretending to be anything else and ability to share an honest opinion.

Directness is treating people directly, calmly and honestly, without restraint.

Decorum is a synonym for social behaviour, more precisely good manners.

Emotive Personality is an ability to show feelings, experience them, but having them under control and not trying to impose feelings on other people.

Empathy is an ability to empathize with others, to look at things through their eyes.

Confrontation is an ability to stand face to face with other people, get involved in a particular idea and promote it.

Concreteness is not using indefinite, ambiguous or abstract words and speaking definitely and to the point in conversation.

Cultural Shock means negative consequences of contact with another civilisation. It occurs during longer trips abroad and lasts weeks or months. The main symptoms of cultural shock are isolation, frustration from the foreign language and from foreign mentality, from a different approach to problems and its solution, from a social exclusion etc.

Morality is an ability of a human to behave according to consciousness i.e. appraisal of every situation from the point of ability to distinguish the good and bad.

Manners mean a relatively steady way people act in reciprocal relationship and in the relationship to a society.

Openness complements authenticity of a human and enables others get to know this human being and distinguish what this human feels and thinks about.

Social catechism is an older expression of *Social Codex* – integrated list of rules of social behaviour. The term, borrowed from legislation, emphasizes that rules should be perceived as obligatory.

Tolerance is an ability to be generous to others, to overlook some deficiencies, to accept different opinions or thoughts. It should however always be honest and not hypocritical.

Tradition is the handing over of manners, customs, knowledge, life experience, and institutions. It comes from the history and epitomizes the wisdom and experience of the past times.

Xenophobia is the disgust, hostility, mistrust to everything foreign and unknown and fear of it.

Loss of Face – sudden (objective or subjective) decline of somebody's authority, dignity or respect caused by real or alleged affair e.g. defeat in an argument or in business negotiation and also disclosure of something unpleasant (secret) etc.

Custom – It is a way of thinking or acting that is characteristic for particular group of people. Customs influence the way people get dressed, what they eat and how they behave. (Gullová 2011, 14-15)

5 THE ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL ETIQUETTE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

5.1 Politeness

Hypothesis no. 1: I presume that the British are more polite than the Czechs because I have been to London for three months and British people were very nice to me in comparison with Czech people.

My question for students about politeness was: “Who do you think is more polite, the British or the Czechs and why do you think so?”

Student no. 1: “People from the United Kingdom are very polite and in the Czech Republic it doesn't matter if you're rude to somebody it's like, yeah, it's not very nice of you but they wouldn't see it as some kind of horror.”

Student no. 2: “The British people are more polite than Czech people from my experience. Czech person doesn't actually talk to you at all and if they do, it's a very brief conversation in my experience.”

Student no. 3: “Well, It depends what the people faith and what they really do. For example Czechs don't say ‘sorry’ so much. I would say that Czechs are more polite than British because British people say a lot but they don't really do a lot. For an instance when they block you in the street they are able to tell you ‘excuse me’ and ‘I'm sorry’ for ten times but they don't really move to the side.”

Student no. 4: “British usually answer to some offer ‘yes, please’ while Czechs say just ‘ok, thank you’ and they consider it quite rude so I think that British are definitely more polite than Czechs and they take notice of it and I think that they look at you quite strangely if you don't follow their rules.”

Student no. 5: “I think that British people are more polite according to my summer experience in the UK. My customers were very kind and helpful with everything. If asked them about something they were open to help me.”

Student no. 6: “I would say, that British are much more polite than Czechs. I think so because when I was performing the job interviews on the possible job positions, they did not mind I made some language mistakes and haven't got lot experience needed for the position. What's more they were laughing with me and even made jokes.”

In conclusion, all but one student think from their experience that British people are more polite than Czech people although politeness is according to etiquette in both

countries very important and theory may differ from the reality. British seem to be putting it into practise better than Czechs. However these answers are just opinions of these students.

Politeness is one of the most important features of good manners. It is intentional behaviour when people limit their egotism and they are thoughtful to others. Polite people are making other people feel comfortable. Being polite is also important for a society to be civilized. The crucial thing about polite behaviour is that it does not offend anyone. Politeness is something that we use every day. In both countries is put the emphasis on being polite. (Špaček 2008, 10-12; Debrett's)

Hypothesis no. 2: I think that British people use phrases such as 'sorry', 'excuse me', 'thank you' much more often than Czech people.

I put this question to the students: "Have you experienced British people saying phrases such as 'I am sorry', 'excuse me', 'please', 'thank you' etc. in the situation when you would not expect them to say that? Do they seem to you using these phrases more than needed?"

Student no. 1: "Definitely yes. We were working with one chef in Britain who was saying: 'Barbara, could you please pass me this? Please. Thank you.' All the time the half of sentences consisted of 'Yes, please', 'Thank you', 'Could you', 'Would you' and 'Is it ok with you?' etc. I think that for our culture they use it too much but for them it's a standard."

Student no. 2: "Yes, it's part of their nature and they use it a lot."

Student no. 3: "Yes, from Czech point of view they use these phrases too much but it's part of their culture. They don't really mean excusing but they say it because it's just polite."

Student no. 4: "Definitely. I think they are even saying 'sorry' for things that you did and not them and according to me they use these phrases more than needed because sometimes I felt quite uncomfortable."

Student no. 5: "Yes, they are using these phrases all the time. When I do some mistake they are saying: 'I'm sorry, my fault.' I think they don't really mean it. It's just a phrase."

Student no. 6: "I would definitely say so. The question is, if they really mean it."

The British are considered to be more polite than other nations but as was mentioned before it is connected to their hypocrisy which was noticed also by the students. On the other hand the Czechs are not being polite that often and in such measure but when they are polite it is mostly meant genuinely. Such are opinions of students.

Hypocrisy which is typical for the British could indicate that also their politeness is hypocritical. However this hypocrisy is a kind of politeness for them. Some forms of their politeness are so deep-rooted that it is practised even involuntarily – “the ‘sorry’ reflex” when they apologize for accidents that have been caused by somebody else. Nice example: “Excuse me, I’m terribly sorry but you seem to be standing on my foot.” (Fox 2004, 407) British also insist on foreigners or visitors being polite. As the example, I will introduce an article written by an Indian woman, Riddhi Shah, about her Indian friend visiting Britain. Her friend asked a Londoner “Where is Oxford Street?” Of course, the Londoner was irritated that he did not say please in the question. “It happened everywhere he went. Whether it was forgetting to say thank you after being served at the bar or walking silently past someone holding a door open, we caused raised eyebrows, pointed pleases, and demands for thank yous.” mentions the writer. (Shah 2005)

5.2 Social Kissing

Hypothesis no. 3: I assume that both cultures do not usually kiss on the cheeks when meeting somebody but young British people might do it more often than Czech people.

My question for students: “What do you think is different in social kissing?”

Student no. 1: “I’ve never seen anyone kissing in Britain so I cannot say but Czechs don’t kiss that much. It also depends on the generation. Young generation does it because they love everything what is French.”

Student no. 2: “I have experienced social kissing at secondary school. Young girls were kissing each other entering the class. I don’t have any experience with social kissing in UK.”

Student no. 3: “I don’t know if there is a difference between the UK and the Czech Republic but I kiss on the cheek with my family and it also depends on gender. I never kiss close friends.”

Student no. 4: “I think that British tend to kiss on both cheeks every time they meet even twice a day. I don’t think it is usual in the Czech Republic. It would be usual if you didn’t see the person for a long time.”

Student no. 5: “In the Czech Republic we don’t do this often just sometimes and in the UK friends are kissing each other. But I haven’t seen much of this in any of these two cultures.”

Student no. 6: “I would say that social kissing in UK is absolutely normal while in CZ is not. People in CZ would be quite surprised when seeing two girls kissing in a public, but not in the UK.”

From the answers is visible, that according to these students, there is no big difference in social kissing between these two cultures.

The kiss should be just gestured without making any sounds. In the Czech Republic kissing only close people is regular greeting. It expresses their positive relationship to them so they do not kiss unfamiliar people. The situation in the United Kingdom is very similar. British also do not kiss people they do not know but they also decide according to situation, age, background and profession. (Gullová 2011, 198; Debrett's)

5.3 Dress Code

Hypothesis no. 4: I suppose that the dress code for special occasions is almost the same in the United Kingdom and in the Czech Republic. However dress code at horse racing differs a lot because in the United Kingdom it is very special event and even the Queen is present.

Question on Dress Code: “Do you think that the dress code at horse racing in the United Kingdom in the Czech Republic differs? How if yes? ”

Student no. 1: “I’ve never seen any horse racing but I think that horse racing in the United Kingdom is like kind of like obsession when everyone wears their favourite dresses and it’s like the highest social event that can happen while in the Czech Republic people who love horses go there. In the UK it’s like royal sport whilst in the Czech Republic it is just normal sport, I would say.”

Student no. 2: ”Yes, I think it differs. In the UK the horse races are more formal than in the Czech Republic.”

Student no. 3: “Well, I’ve never been to any horse racing but I think that UK guys are much more formal and they take it more seriously. It means something to them so they even wear a suit. For example when I see Czech people at ‘Velká Pardubická’ I don’t really see any special clothes.”

Student no. 4: “According to what I’ve seen in TV I think that British care more about the dress code and they’re smarter clothed than in the Czech Republic I would say we are wearing casual clothes.”

Student no. 5: “I’ve never been to Czech horse racing but I’ve been in the UK and liked the way that people dress on these occasions, they like to wear hats and men look like true gentlemen. It’s extremely formal there.”

Student no. 6: “It might. Horse racing in the UK is noble event. Even royal family is present. People from the upper – class want to show the latest fashion. The most noticeable are the hats. In Czech Republic it is rather the matter of the money and the horses itself.”

All the students claim that the horse racing in Britain is more formal than in the Czech Republic and the dress code is at higher level in the United Kingdom and Student no. 5 even experienced British horse racing.

The difference related to horse racing is the dress code. It is for the British highly ranked event where men are very often supposed to be wearing a grey or black morning dress and women should wear dress which is long enough and straps must not be thin. There are very strict rules of etiquette for clothing. Men should wear hats and it is appreciated if they raise them above their heads when greeting ladies. For ladies it is great opportunity to show their creativity with various hats and fascinators. The Royal Ascot is very prestigious event. The Queen is present and there are very strict rules for admission. (Debrett’s) On the other hand in the Czech Republic it is sufficient to wear the same clothes as for the social event in the afternoon. Men wear light coloured suits and shoes. Women must always wear stocking. Creative hats are also welcomed. (Špaček 2010, 129) Common observer can also wear sport clothes because there are no such strict rules for clothing at horse races as in the United Kingdom. (Martin Cáp)

Concerning the dress code, unlike the Czechs, the British do not use the term ‘smoking’ for any kind of clothing, they use instead of this name terms such as ‘dinner jacket’, ‘black tie’ or ‘cravate noir’. (Debrett’s)

5.4 Table Manners

Table manners are a sign of our decent behaviour. It is appropriate to start with practising right table manners as soon as possible to avoid embarrassing situations and violation of table etiquette in public. (Špaček 2010, 133)

Hypothesis no. 5: I assume that dining manners little bit differ between the British and the Czechs.

Question on Table manners was: “Have you experienced or are you aware of something different in table manners?”

Student no. 1: “What I really appreciate is that the British take time to sit at one table for having a dinner. It was nice to see that they really get together and talk while in the Czech Republic for example in my family we never eat together because we don’t have the same time table so there is no chance. And I think that the British are having a proper dinner every day.”

Student no. 2: “Yes, in my host family they are waiting for each other until they eat, then they sit together. The food is also different. The lunch is not cooked. It’s just something packed for example sandwiches.”

Student no. 3: “British people are used to ask another member of family to pass them something when having a dinner together. I think that Czechs rather stand up and do it by themselves.”

Student no. 4: “Yes. I’ve noticed that their table manners are much better than ours. They usually meet at the table for having a dinner and talk about their days. It’s different in the Czech Republic.”

Student no. 5: “I’ve experienced that British people sometimes don’t clean tables after themselves in pubs or fast foods.”

Student no. 6: “British cannot cook. They buy frozen food.”

From students’ experience, the British families often have a cooked dinner together while in the Czech Republic it is not very common and Czech dinners are rather not cooked. In the Czech Republic is rather cooked lunch and not cooked dinner. However those are just experience of a few students.

Table manners for dining differ just in a few details between these two cultures. First of all, the British eat soup from the side of the spoon while the Czechs eat from the end of the spoon. Also the placement of a cutlery after finishing a meal is diverse. Czech people put the knife parallel to the fork at position of ‘sixteen o’clock’ on the plate. It means to right-down. On the other hand the British put the cutlery at the bottom centre of the plate. (Debrett’s; Špaček 2010, 48-49)

6 THE ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS ETIQUETTE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The knowledge of other culture's habits is crucial for businessmen because any lack of such knowledge can lead to failed business negotiations. Avoiding mistakes in rules of behaviour will allow businessmen to be pleasant company and being successful in business world. (Špaček 2010, 9-10)

6.1 Way of Address

There is a significant difference between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic in addressing familiar and unfamiliar people. While the British are used to be called by their first name in very short time after an introduction with somebody, it takes a longer time starting to call another person by their first name in the Czech Republic. Calling people by their first name is rather common between friends. Czech people also use their academic degrees for addressing people while British people usually do not. However it is possible to call the British person by their academic degree such as Professor or Doctor. (Chaney 2007, 175; Katz 2008) "In England, special protocol exists for addressing royalty, peers, clergy, and others. The managing director in a British firm is usually the top official and equivalent to a U.S. corporate president." (Chaney, 2007, 164)

Business cards play a role mainly for professional or business purposes in the United Kingdom and also in the Czech Republic. They can be printed or engraved if a big impression intended. "The size should be the same as a credit card. The style and design depends on holder or on a strict corporate policy." It should contain information such as the name of the bearer, function in the company, name of the company and contact details. The difference is that Czechs are used to also state their academic degrees on business cards while British are not. (Špaček 2010, 161; Wyse 2006, 22; Gullová 2011, 201)

Hypothesis no. 6: I presume that in the Czech Republic, people can express the respect more easily by using the form 'vy' instead of 'ty' in the second-person personal pronoun. The English language does have just one form 'you' for everybody and it seems quite informal.

The question for students on this issue: "How did you feel about calling older or unfamiliar people in Britain as well as close person by the form 'you'? Czechs distinguish between familiar persons addressing them by the form 'ty' and unfamiliar persons by the form 'vy'. What do you think is better?"

Student 1: “I was quite shocked when I met one man about sixty years old in Scotland and he said: “Hi, I’m Charles.” And it surprised me because I’m not used to it. Also our American teacher Jason said to us: “Call me Jason, it’s fine.” English is different language for me so I don’t have such a problem with it but doing it with Czech it would be problem for me to call sixty years old man ‘ty’.”

Student no. 2: “For me it was kind of weird but I used to it and now it’s normal for me. In Czech it can be difficult to decide how to call the other person if we don’t know their age.”

Student no. 3: “I think that English way is much better because it’s much more comfortable, you don’t have to care and you just say ‘you’. It also worked for breaking the barrier between people. Here you first say ‘vy’ and after getting to the point when you can say ‘ty’ you start to talk about different topics which you consider appropriate for talking to familiar people.”

Student no. 4: “At the beginning I was quite nervous and did not feel very comfortable at saying ‘you’ to older people than me. After I used to it I started to feel comfortable because you don’t have to distinguish between people and it’s friendlier.”

Student no. 5: “I didn’t see it bad to call them ‘you’ because they are used to it in Britain. I don’t think that some way is better than the other. ”

Student no. 6: “I felt at least strange. It was unpleasant for me. I think the Czech way is better, you can easily show respect.”

In summary, students had various answers and some prefer the British way because it is friendlier and there is no need to be nervous how to call the other person. On the other hand, some students would rather use the Czech way because they can easily show respect, however some embarrassing situations can be caused more often in the Czech Republic when somebody does not know which way should be used preferably.

“The Czech language has two forms of the second-person personal pronoun.” The form ‘ty’ is used to call familiar people, younger people or people at the same age whilst the form ‘vy’ is used in a formal intercourse usually to address older people or a person who is respected. (Countries and Their Cultures)

6.2 Punctuality

Being punctual is a sign of good manners. On the other hand, keeping other people waiting makes them waste their time involuntarily and it is also very inconsiderate behaviour. An

example of taking others into consideration is accuracy. The degree of our timekeeping shows how we respect other people. A correct person rightfully considers inaccuracy as a sign of insulting negligence. It is rude to make someone wait, even if it is unintentional and it is bordering on flagrant behaviour to make someone wait intentionally. (Debrett's)

Hypothesis no. 7: I assume that both The United Kingdom and the Czech Republic are punctual. However, the British might be more timekeeping than the Czechs.

I asked the students: "Who do you think is more punctual, the British or the Czechs? Could you support your claim?"

Student no. 1: "I think it depends on personality. However, the British could be more punctual because of their etiquette, but I don't have any particular experience with that."

Student no. 2: "I think that British are more punctual because the Czech people are lazy and they don't mind to come later. However, the buses in Britain were always late from my experience."

Student no. 3: "It's hard to say, but I would say that British people are more punctual, but it also depends on a particular person. Some people in Czech Republic are very punctual and other people in the Czech Republic are always late."

Student no. 4: "It's hard to say, but I would say that Czechs are more punctual than British. Considering business, I think that everybody tries to be on time and they don't want to ruin their business. In casual life, I don't know if there is a difference or not."

Student no. 5: "I think British. In the company, in Britain, where I worked, we had to do everything on time and if there was a little delay, it was a problem."

Student no. 6: "I cannot say, did not have the opportunity to judge the punctuality. But I would say that it is almost the same."

In summary, four of the six students think that the British are more sensitive about timekeeping than the Czechs. However, all of them were not really quite sure about this, because they do not have much experience with punctuality of British people and with timekeeping of both nations in the business world. These answers are just students' opinions.

There are some cultures that do not really put an emphasis on being on time and these are called polychronic. On the other hand, monochronic cultures are very concerned with timekeeping. The United Kingdom belongs to strongly monochronic cultures whilst the Czech Republic is slightly monochronic. (Gullová 2011, 27-28) Business meetings with the British must be announced at least a week ahead and it is important to be there on time.

It is not acceptable to be more than ten to fifteen minutes late in the Czech Republic and to be more than five to ten minutes late in the United Kingdom. If there is something that causes being late it is convenient to call in advance. British people prefer an accurate agenda arranged in advance and they do not like surprises at the last minute. (Gullová 2011, 82-83; Katz 2008)

6.3 Style of Business Negotiation

Hypothesis no. 8: I suppose that it is very important to get to know the etiquette and habits of a culture which is going to be negotiated with because making prejudices or stereotypes can cause failed business negotiation and it can even insult somebody from different culture.

The style of business negotiation can vary among cultures because of different beliefs, etiquette, customs, language etc. Therefore, it is crucial for each side of intercultural negotiation to find out what is typical or what differs in the other party. (Chaney 2007, 208) Cultural stereotypes and prejudices are inappropriate. Each side must feel to be respected by the other. For some countries the location can be decisive so it is important to make sure if the other side feels more comfortable in its own country. The Czechs often give up the chance to take advantage of negotiating in the Czech Republic because they want to make use of an opportunity to travel. (Chaney 2007, 242-243; Gullová 2011, 24)

British people usually work from nine to five while Czech people work from eight to four. (Buchtová and Pokorný 2004, 32, 96) In both countries it is not recommended to plan the meeting before nine in the morning and on Friday afternoon. (Gullová 2011, 25; Buchtová and Pokorný 2004, 32)

British people and Czech people like doing things their way and it takes longer time to make a deal to both countries. They both also focus on win-win solution. While the Czechs look for long-term results, the British go for immediate results. Humour in business negotiation is rather used by the British than the Czechs. Gifts are not recommended for the first business meeting in any of these countries because it can be considered a bribe. Neither Czechs nor British are willing to take excessive risk. Czech businessmen evaluate every particular situation whilst the British have their universal principles which are usually applied. None of them show the anger but Czechs have fewer problems to be direct in saying 'no' when they are not interested in an offer. British people are more dependent on agenda and they are very systematic. They do not like any surprises. Both the British

and the Czechs respect seniority and usually have to ask for manager's approval before making a deal. (Katz 2006; Mole 2003, 45-47, 115, 166-167) British are used to express their disapproval in a very polite way. (Gullová 2011, 83) In the Czech Republic it is usually the host who is supposed to end the business negotiation; on the other hand British businessmen expect the other side to initiate the end of the negotiation even if they are the hosting counterpart. (Gullová 2011, 29, 83)

According to my cousin Josef, who has been living and working in London for twelve years and experienced many business meetings, there are businessmen and businesswoman from a variety of cultures and they are generally aware of their differences and mostly careful to not offend their counterpart. The British in general might be more experienced in doing business with other nationalities than the Czechs.

6.4 Language at the International Business Meeting

Hypothesis no. 9: I assume that the British use their mother tongue at international business negotiation because it is worldwide language while the Czechs have to learn second language, usually English or to hire an interpreter.

Concerning the language, the British are advantaged to speak in their mother tongue because English is a worldwide language. On the contrary, it is impossible for the Czechs to conduct international negotiations in the Czech language. They are expected to speak English very well or to bring an interpreter along. (Gullová 2011, 24) When speaking about language there are some differences in terms for leading function in a company. In Britain the 'directors' are leading a company and one of them is the 'managing director' simply 'manager'. It does not match with our term for this function 'director general'. Therefore it is always important to accommodate style and terminology on business cards according to every culture separately for international purposes. (Gullová 2011, 138-139)

6.5 Date of Business Negotiation

Hypothesis no. 5: I surmise that there are different dates of feasts and holidays in these two nations. Therefore it is important to assure oneself that the counterpart does not have any holiday when suggesting the date for the business negotiation.

It is important to know the holidays and feasts of the counterpart and to respect them when initiating the business negotiation. In Britain there are some different holidays between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland whilst in the Czech Republic there

are winter holidays and spring holidays but date differs in every region. In Britain it is more common than in the Czech Republic that businesses do not work between Christmas and New Year. (Gullová 2011, 25)

The British are used to be informed about the date of business negotiation well in advance while Czechs do not insist on the announcement to be sent in such an advance if there already was some preceding business cooperation. (Katz 2008; Gullová 2011, 83)

6.6 Greeting

Hypothesis no. 10: I assume that the British use the phrase “How do you do?” or “How are you?” just as greeting not expecting the answer about how the other person is really doing. This is different in the Czech Republic where this phrase is considered a question. The Czechs greet other people by simple “Hi” or “Hello”.

My question concerning this was: “Are you aware of the fact that British people saying ‘How do you do?’ actually do not want to hear how you really are and they expect you to response in the same way ‘How do you do?’ Is this situation the same in the Czech Republic?”

Student no. 1: “Definitely yes. Every time when British people meet they are like ‘How are you?’ and they don’t expect you to say ‘Oh, everything goes bad.’ They just expect to hear ‘Oh, I’m great. Thank you very much. How are you?’ They don’t want to hear how you really are.”

Student no. 2: “I’m aware of that. It’s like saying ‘Hello’ for British but for Czechs it is different. Czechs want to hear how the other person is doing.”

Student no. 3: “That’s another huge difference. Of course I know it but for first time I didn’t and it was troublesome because I was kind of fool at that situation because I started to speak about how I am and the other person did not really care.”

Student no. 4: “No, I don’t think it is the same. For British it’s just a part of saying ‘Hello’. They just want to hear that you are doing well. They don’t expect you to tell them that you are feeling bad. In the Czech Republic we honestly want to know your feelings.

Student no. 5: “Yes. I have experienced that with my boss in the UK when he asked me and I told him how I am, then he stopped me and told me that I can’t answer like that. If anybody asks me in the Czech Republic I immediately start to complain.”

Student no. 6: “I would say, that it also means something like „Hi”. I would say, in Czech Republic it is different. By asking this question, people really would like to know how you were. Otherwise, they would not ask you.”

In summary, all the students know that this situation differs and a few of them even experienced the embarrassing situation with British when they did not know about it in the past.

British usually greet people with phrases such as “How do you do?” or “How are you?” not expecting the answer about how the other person is really doing. It requires responding either “How do you do?” or “How are you?”. On the other hand Czechs asking “How are you?” really want to know how the person is doing. (Mole 2003, 118; Katz 2006)

6.7 Handshake

Hypothesis no. 11: I would say that the Czechs shake hands more often than the British because British people are very reserved.

Both the British and the Czechs use a handshake when meeting other people. However British people rather shake hands when they meet new people or at reunions. Handshaking is not always necessary for them. Handshake is soft and sometimes even omitted by the British. (Gullová 2011, 22; Mole 2003, 118) On the other hand, the Czechs are often used to shake hands when meeting new people or business partners or familiar people. Their handshake is firm and brief and with friends sometimes accompanied with pat on each other's back. It better to avoid touching with the British because they are very non-tactile society. (Gullová 2011, 28; Debrett's)

6.8 Small Talk and Taboos

Hypothesis no. 12: I presume that there are more taboos for conversation in the United Kingdom than in the Czech Republic. In the United Kingdom there is not very common to speak about personal things.

The question for students: “What might be taboos in the United Kingdom and in the Czech Republic?”

Student no. 1: “I would say that British people don't think about anything else than weather. They don't speak about personal things with people who they don't know. I think that they have much more taboos than we do. In the Czech Republic we don't talk about how much we earn. I think that the Czechs are more open.”

Student no. 3: “It’s hard to answer this one. I would say that the British do not want to talk about private issues. What I’ve noticed was that they are even scared when talking about different religions especially Islam because I’ve shown one video to my host in UK about spreading Islamic world and she was so shocked about that that she even didn’t tell me anything. I was like: ‘It’s pretty scary right?’ and she was just like ‘Right’ and that was it, she was silent. So I saw the big cultural difference because if I was with Czech, we would talk about that. She didn’t want to talk about that at all. We can see that British people are conservative in these issues.”

Student no. 4: “I think that Czech people are quite open so they don’t mind talking about things but for example salary could be irritating for them. In the UK I would say it depends how much you know the person and how much you are familiar.”

Student no. 5: “I think we don’t have any taboos in the Czech Republic. In the UK they are quite closed and they don’t want to talk about personal things such as money and feelings.”

Student no. 6: “Taboo in the UK could be royal family and in the Czech Republic money.”

The students think that there are more taboos in the United Kingdom than in the Czech Republic. Most of them were right about the fact that personal issues are taboo in the United Kingdom while they could not think of some big taboo for the Czech Republic.

Appropriate and inappropriate conversational topics differ quite a lot among cultures. In the United Kingdom the small talk can include topics such as weather, sport, history, architecture, gardening etc. and the taboos for conversing are money, prices, politics, religion, personal problems and illnesses. On the other hand it is even convenient to ask the Czechs about personal issues because it builds their trust in others. Other tips for conversing are beer and sport. There are no big taboos for conversation but it is recommended to avoid some political issues such as fifties, the year 1968 and the Velvet Revolution in 1989 and asking about salary. (Chaney 2007, 103; Gullová 2011, 83; Buchtová and Pokorný 2004, 32, 96)

6.9 Unsuccessful Business Negotiation

Hypothesis no. 13: I suppose that lack of knowledge of other cultures’ etiquette and habits can definitely lead to unsuccessful business negotiation because it is very easy to offend somebody from different culture when being ignorant toward getting to know their culture.

The question which I asked students about this topic was if the lack of knowledge of other culture's etiquette can lead to unsuccessful international business negotiation.

Student no. 1: "I would say that definitely yes, but all people when they are doing business they are trying very hard to come on time and to do everything what should be done. It can happen in business but you would have to do something very harsh."

Student no. 2: "Yes, I think so because if you don't know for example what some kind of gestures mean in other cultures you actually can do something what is considered rude and impolite."

Student no. 3: "Of course, if you don't follow their culture they would consider you weird and if they like sympathy I don't think you would be successful."

Student no. 4: "I would say that in the United Kingdom there are lot of nationalities so I think they are quite used to those nationalities and they are aware of their habits so I don't think they would consider it like too bad. I think it wouldn't be the reason for unsuccessful business negotiation."

Student no. 5: "Yes. If you want to be a manager of some big company and if you need to do business with companies from other countries you should learn their etiquette."

Student no. 6: "If you do not know what is appropriate for the negotiation, the answer is definitely "yes". One must be aware of the things that are expected from him."

In summary, five of the six students stated that knowledge of other cultures and its etiquette is very important for being successful in intercultural business negotiation.

The knowledge of etiquette is very important for businessmen because any lack of such knowledge can destroy the chance for successful business negotiations. Avoiding mistakes in rules of behaviour will allow businessmen to be pleasant company and predestines them for being successful in business world. (Špaček 2010, 9-10)

CONCLUSION

The aim of this bachelor thesis was to examine to what extent etiquette of the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic differs and to point out the differences so that British people and Czech people who are going to build a rapport with each other can gain some knowledge about differences either in social or business etiquette.

It is very important in social intercourse with other cultures to know their habits, customs, and behaviour to achieve good relationships. Breaching etiquette rules makes it more difficult to get on well with other cultures and also to be successful in international business negotiation.

History and the importance of etiquette are described in the theoretical part. This part also examines the significance of rules of behaviour in both countries. The theoretical part additionally includes the chapters about historical context in both countries.

The practical part consists of two main chapters examining business and social etiquette in the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic.

According to my research, there are many similarities in the rules of etiquette. However, there are also differences, which are the focus of the practical part of this bachelor thesis.

In my research, I used interviews with six students of Tomas Bata University, who have shortly stayed and therefore could share their experience with me. The aim of these interviews was to support my findings about similarities and differences in etiquette between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. Secondly, I have studied the literature concerning business and social etiquette in the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic so that I could draw additional comparison.

The final aim of the practical part was to refute or to affirm my hypotheses about similarities and differences in etiquette rules between the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. Most of them were affirmed, albeit only partially and a few of them were refuted. That proves that it is crucial to learn other culture's habits and etiquette to avoid prejudices and stereotypes, otherwise it could cause intercultural misunderstandings and conflicts, unsuccessful business negotiations or at least cultural shock of one or both parties.

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