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I think men and women deserve social equality, and this is reflected in the language of my thesis:  
In order to highlight that I am referring to both men and women I will use male and female pronouns alternately.

# 1 Introduction

This thesis deals with the fascinating concept that what people say does not only depend on the individual and his or her thoughts but also on the conventions that are established in the social, cultural or ethnic group that he or she is part of. These conventions vary from language to language and from culture to culture – thus, sometimes making it hard for us to communicate successfully. The success of our communication depends on the knowledge that we have of the conventions of the culture of our conversation-partner. Being aware that these differences are a challenge in inter-cultural communication, certain scholars have devoted time and effort to find out what these conventional differences are, how they affect language learners and people communicating in a foreign surrounding.

This thesis operates in the realm of pragmatics, the part of linguistic studies that deals with language and its users in a social context. The term “pragmatics” as it is used nowadays was first brought up by Charles Morris in 1938. He defined it as the branch of semiotics<sup>1</sup> that deals with the relation of signs to interpreters (Levinson 1991: 1) and thus with the psychological, biological and sociological phenomena which occur in the functioning of signs (Morris 1938: 30). This rather broad definition was narrowed down according to its various usages in different fields of study, of which one is Anglo-American linguistics and philosophy (Levinson 1991: 5). But even here, research is done in different fields of interest, making it impossible to narrow down the term pragmatics to one definition and still giving full credit to the work being done. Levinson takes the interested reader on a tour through the world of pragmatics, pointing out the various definitions with their advantages and drawbacks (Levinson 1991: 1-35). Mey (2001), on the other hand, brings himself to propound the following definition: “Pragmatic studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society” (2001: 6). He also utters his doubt concerning “clear, sharply demarcated boundaries”. Pragmatics, he states, is in constant development, thus boundary markers once placed will have to be moved. (2001: 7).

One of the basic facts about pragmatics is that it is interested in the language user. (Mey 2001: 5) It does not care about thought up conversations and the meaning of sentences and words but rather about the meaning of a speaker's utterance and how it is understood by the hearer. In short, pragmaticists<sup>2</sup> care about language as it is used in real life situations. The branch that is of

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1 The study of signs

2 Levinson (1991:9) uses this term to refer to people working in the field of pragmatics. Robinson (2006:87) refers to them as pragmaticians.

most importance for this paper is inter-cultural pragmatics, which focusses especially on how cultural values and cultural norms shape the interaction of the speaker and the hearer (Wierzbicka 1991: 2). Analysing this link between language and culture comes with difficulties and uncertainties which Wierzbicka is keen to explore. She claims that cross-cultural pragmatics is vital to human concerns and that it is worth taking “the risk of errors and blunders” in this field of study as the questions to be discussed within and the insights to be gained are truly worthwhile (1991: 283).

This is also the opinion of the pragmaticists working on the Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) project (Blum-Kulka et.al. 1989: 2) who did research on speech acts and the varieties they take across a range of languages. This project attracted a lot of attention and support in its time and even now, more than twenty years after its foundation, researchers are using the coding scheme developed by the CCSARP (cf. Afghari 2007: 178, Kasanga 2007: 65). The CCSARP project shows that problems that occur in inter-cultural communication are “often the direct results of differences in systems of conversational inference and cues for signalling speech acts which combine to form the culture's distinctive interactional style.” (1989: 6).

The purpose of this thesis is to find out whether a culture's distinctive interactional style can be tracked down in the public speech act of apology. While study groups like the CCSARP research into speech acts in a very personal area, like apologies and requests between individuals, the focus in this diploma thesis is put on the public area and how apologies, or – to use Benoit's (2000) term for this broad concept – image repair work, is carried out.

I assume that the above mentioned connection between language and society also influences how image repair work is conducted and will analyse examples of public image repair work from two different cultures. According to Coulmas, apologies are a good choice for such an endeavour, because they “exist as generic speech acts in every speech community” (1981: 81). And even though apologies tend to be highly routinised, each speech community has its own way of expressing them, thus maybe revealing some of its norms and values (ibid.).

When it came to choosing the cultures that I would be analysing, my experience played an important role. Various holidays in the UK gave me the feeling that customers there are treated with more care than in my home country, Austria.<sup>3</sup> I gained this impression first of all in British supermarkets, where I felt that I did not have to queue up that long at the checkouts and

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<sup>3</sup> The following examples are not meant to be proof of anything, they should simply show the reader how I came to choose my topic.

was treated friendlier by the cashiers. Further, experiences with British and Austrian waiters added to my suspicion that customers are deemed higher in the UK than they are in Austria. Discussing these thoughts with (British) friends, I was supported in my ideas and got interested in finding out more about this.

I will take these two examples as starting points for this thesis' first research question: Is there a difference in value of public and customer relations between the UK and Austria? Of course, tackling this problem involves research into the relevant areas of study and relying on theories and approaches that have been established and worked with before. This will be done in the next chapters.

## **I. Theoretical Background**

### **2 Speech act theory**

Why speech acts are of such importance for anyone dealing with language and how it is meant and understood is pertinently summed up by Wierzbicka in the introduction to her dictionary of speech act verbs:

“Public life can be conceived as a gigantic network of speech acts. [...] Virtually every time someone opens his or her mouth in our presence we seek to categorize their utterance as this or that kind of speech act. [...] Speech act verbs [...] are crucially important to the way we perceive the world we live in – the world of human relationships and human interaction.” (1987: 3)

Let us start off with a look at how speech act theory came into existence.

#### ***2.1 A brief history***

Speech act theory was introduced by John L. Austin who is remembered for having shook the world of philosophy by claiming that we use language not only for describing the world around us. He pointed out that sentences can be more than mere true or false statements and separated the things that we say into constatives and performatives. Constatives being the aforementioned statements that are either true or false, and performatives being the new concept of performing a certain kind of action through words. Thus, by saying something we can also be doing something.

Austin gives the following example of a performative speech act. In the marriage ceremony, by saying “I do” you are marrying your partner. You are not doing anything else which you are reporting on by saying these words, it is these words themselves that are

performing the action of marrying. Other examples of performative speech acts include christening a ship or sentencing someone to prison, but we do not have to leave the realm of everyday speech for finding them: Promising, inviting, threatening, betting, congratulating, apologizing, etc. are also examples of performative speech acts. When talking of performatives one cannot say that they are true or false as one can do with constatives. However, performatives can most certainly go wrong.<sup>4</sup> Austin put a lot of thought into how acts that are performed through speech (marrying, betting, promising, etc.) can end up as failures and summed up his conclusions under the name of infelicities. Furthermore, he sees it as his task to establish clear criteria to classify all the performative verbs (i.e. verbs with which we do something rather than state something). In the course of doing this, however, he finds that he is dealing with rather fuzzy boundaries. *Marrying*, *naming* and *sentencing* are clear examples of performatives whereas *stating* or *maintaining* are not this clear and can be used in both constative and performative utterances.<sup>5</sup> Also, truth (which Austin first thought to be unique to constatives) and felicity conditions<sup>6</sup> (which he first thought to be unique to performatives) he now considers to be vital to both types of utterances, not a means of distinguishing them. Eventually, Austin discards the constative/performative distinction and moves on to what he calls a fresh start on the problem (Austin 1975: 90f).

## **2.2 Locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts**

This fresh start first involves pinning down what 'saying something' actually is. First, Austin claims, one has to utter the sounds which form words. He calls this the 'phonetic act'. One also has to combine these words according to certain rules of the lexicon, grammar, intonation, etc. - this is the 'phatic act'. Furthermore, one uses these words with a certain meaning (i.e. sense and reference), which is what he calls the 'rhetic act'. These three acts together are 'saying something' or, as he calls it from now on, the locutionary act.

Once we have produced speech (the locutionary act) Austin asks in which way and sense we are using it. We could be giving information, answering a question, threatening, reassuring, criticizing someone, etc.. All these are various forces or purposes, which Austin calls illocutionary acts. To explain this, let us take the locutionary act

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4 Think of a couple that is getting married in church but finds out that the person that married them was not a priest after all.

5 Or, to put it Searle's way (1976: 14): saying certain things constitutes getting married (performative), saying certain things constitutes making a promise (also performative), but saying certain things also constitutes making a statement (constative?). Making a statement is an illocutionary act just as promising or marrying is.

6 Conditions that need to be fulfilled to perform a speech act successfully

1. I will be here tomorrow at 10.

This sentence can be uttered by the speaker with different forces/illocutionary acts behind it: it can be meant as a promise, reassurance, an order, a threat, a warning, etc.

Further on, the effect that this illocutionary act has on the hearer is called the perlocutionary act. It is what we bring about or achieve by saying something, the consequential effect that we have on the hearer by uttering an illocutionary act. If we take the example from above, the perlocutionary effect of *I will be here tomorrow at 10* could be that the hearer is scared and does not show up, it could be that she feels persuaded to be there at 10, it could be that she feels threatened and shows up with strong friends (Austin 1975: 109). “The perlocutionary act always includes some consequences, as when we say ‘By doing *x* [the illocutionary act] I was doing *y* [the perlocutionary act]’ ”(Austin 1975: 107). These consequences may be of big or small impact or even totally unintentional.

I will use our example one more time to distinguish the three acts clearly: *He said that he would be there tomorrow at 10* refers to the locutionary act, *he promised that he would be there tomorrow at 10* refers to the illocutionary act and *he made me believe that he would be there tomorrow at 10* refers to the perlocutionary act. (Austin 1975).

Austin states that illocutionary acts are connected with the production of certain effects other than the perlocutionary effect. First, one has to make sure one is understood. As he puts it “I cannot be said to have warned an audience unless it hears what I say and takes what I say in a certain sense.” (1975: 116) He concludes that to perform an illocutionary act successfully, one has to *secure its uptake*, i.e. make sure that one is being heard. Further, a successfully performed illocutionary act takes an effect, “changes the natural course of events” (Austin 1975: 117). For instance, a ship that is given a certain name will be referred to by this name in the future or a person who is sentenced to two years in prison will be spending two years in prison. Last, illocutionary acts are inviting a response. An examples could be an order, which invites the response of obedience or a promise which invites the response of fulfilment (1975: 117).

Having established his theory of illocutionary acts Austin draws up a list of the illocutionary forces an utterance can take.<sup>7</sup> Going through a dictionary he filters out the verbs that carry illocutionary force and ends up with a list of thousands of verbs. These he puts into five categories (1975: 150f): (1) Verdictives, i.e. speech acts used for giving a verdict; (2) Exercitives, i.e. speech acts used for the exercising of powers; (3) Commissives, i.e. speech acts

<sup>7</sup> This is very similar to the list of *explicit performatives* which he saw a need for before his rejection of constatives vs. performatives.

that commit you to doing something; (4) Behabatives, i.e. speech acts having to do with social behaviour (apologizing is part of this group); and (5) Expositives, i.e. speech acts that make utterances fit into the course of an argument. This, the first of innumerable attempts to classify illocutionary acts,<sup>8</sup> leads me on to John R. Searle, the second important contributor to speech act theory who, amongst other things, revised this taxonomy.

Searle further developed and systematised Austin's theory of speech acts. He is said to have improved the understanding of the relation between the three speech act types with his schema of an illocutionary act 'F(p)'. F being the illocutionary force that is applied upon the proposition p, which for Austin was the locutionary act (Martinich 2002: 95, Searle 1969: 31). Searle emphasises that propositions are not statements or assertions in themselves – they are what is asserted through the act of asserting but in themselves do not carry any kind of illocutionary force and therefore also cannot occur alone. Searle makes clear that “[w]hen a proposition is expressed it is always expressed in the performance of an illocutionary act.” (1969: 29).

Searle coined the term of the *illocutionary force indicating device*.(1969: 30) This IFID indicates “[...]what illocutionary force the utterance is to have; that is, what illocutionary act the speaker is performing in the utterance of the sentence”(1969: 30). Illocutionary Force in English can be expressed in various ways, like e.g. through “word order, stress, intonation contour, punctuation, the mood of the verb, and the so called performative verbs” (1969: 30) and does not necessarily have to contain explicit IFIDS like “I apologize” or “I question”.

Another area in which Searle sees space for improvement is Austin's taxonomy of speech acts. Declaring that is is defective “in its lack of clear criteria for distinguishing one kind of illocutionary force from another” (1976: 1) he writes his own “Classification of illocutionary acts” which primarily aims at providing a reasoned classification of illocutionary acts into certain basic categories or types. In his taxonomy Searle does not want to put the focus on illocutionary verbs as those are specific to their language. Austin, he claims, only achieved a classification of **English** speech act **verbs**, he himself wants to go further and aims at classifying the illocutionary **acts** which are part of any language (1976: 8).

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8 Cf. chapter 3.1

## 2.3 Searle's taxonomy of speech acts

### 2.3.1 Conditions

As basis for his taxonomy Searle names “illocutionary point, and its corollaries, direction of fit and expressed sincerity conditions“ (1976: 10). First, the illocutionary point is the purpose of an illocution. It is different to the illocutionary force as it does not take into account the various degrees an illocutionary force can have. Thus, requests and commands which are clearly different in force have the same illocutionary point, namely getting the hearer to do something (1976: 3).

Second, direction of fit, is a consequence of the illocutionary point. It shows whether through the speech act the speaker attempts to change the world according to his words (as is done in e.g. requests, where the hearer is asked to act according to the words of the speaker) or whether the speaker attempts to match his words to the world (as is done in explanations, statements or descriptions) (1976: 3f).

Third, the sincerity condition is the psychological state expressed in the performance of the illocutionary act. This refers to what has to be the case for the speaker so that she can perform the speech act in question – a sincerity condition is intrinsic to the notion of the act. For example, the sincerity condition for promising is that the speaker intends to do what it is that she is promising; the sincerity condition for asserting is that the speaker believes that it is true what she is asserting. When a sincerity condition is not satisfied and the speech act is performed nevertheless, this is called a defective<sup>9</sup> illocutionary act. With this background knowledge we can now have a look at Searle's five categories of speech acts.

### 2.3.2 Categories

(1) Representatives. They have the purpose to “commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition.”(1976: 10). Direction of fit here is words to world,<sup>10</sup> and the sincerity condition is that the speaker believes in what he says. This class contains many of Austin's expositives and verdictives.

(2) Directives. Their illocutionary point is to get the hearer to do something. Their direction of fit is world to word,<sup>11</sup> and the sincerity condition is that the speaker really has the wish or desire which he communicates through this speech act. Many of Austin's behabatives

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9 The term *defective* is closely related to Austin's *infelicitous* (Searle 1969: 54)

10 I.e., the speaker tries to match his words to fit to the world.

11 I.e., by uttering a directive, the speaker tries to change the world according to his words.

(like daring or challenging) as well as some of his exercitives fit into this category.

(3) Commissives. These illocutionary acts commit the speaker to some future course of action. They aim to make the world fit to the words<sup>12</sup> and their sincerity condition is intention. Searle takes over this class from Austin but excludes some of the verbs that Austin saw fitting here, like e.g. intending.

(4) Expressives.<sup>13</sup> They are used to express the speaker's attitudes about the state of affairs represented by the propositional content. There is no direction of fit but the hearer is expected to believe that the proposition expressed by the speaker is true. Sincerity condition thus is, that the speaker has the feelings that he expresses in this speech act. As examples Searle names amongst others apologizing, thanking and congratulating.

(5) Declarations. They are what Searle calls a “very special category of speech acts” (1976: 15). With speech act verbs of this class, through applying the IFID and through saying that something is the case, this something becomes the case.<sup>14</sup> If a declaration is successfully performed it changes the status or the condition of the referred-to object. Examples are “You are fired” or “I appoint you chairman”. Declarations do not have sincerity conditions.

This classification of speech acts is the one most widely used and often seen as the final word on the matter (Robinson 2006: 82). It is, however, greeted with different levels of enthusiasm. Martinich (2002: 95) highly praises Searle's taxonomy when he writes that it is intuitively satisfying, semantically-based and has several especially neat aspects. Others, however, are not that overwhelmed and move on to create their own taxonomies. Ballmer and Brennenstuhl (1981), for example, set out to test Austin and Searle's taxonomies on German verbs and, being unhappy with the result, end up proposing a more holistic taxonomy of speech acts themselves. Vendler (1972) adapts Austin's classification and adds two more categories. (Robinson 2006: 82). Bach and Harnish's taxonomy<sup>15</sup> (<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kbach/spchacts.html>, 17 September 2010) focuses on the type of attitude that is expressed through the illocution. Wierzbicka (1987: 3) on the other hand does not share the enthusiasm for

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12 Even though commissives and directives are very much alike (they have the same direction of fit), Searle prefers not to sum them up under one category, because that would imply that promises are some kind of request to oneself. For more details see Searle (1976: 12).

13 Searle's explanation of expressives in “Foundations of Illocutionary Logic” (1985: 211) is much clearer in my opinion. Therefore I use this one rather than the definition given in “Classification of illocutionary acts”: “The illocutionary point of this class is to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content.” (1976: 12)

14 Declaratives neither have world to word nor word to world fits but bring about a fit if they are performed successfully (1976: 14)

15 Based on both Austin and Searle's taxonomies

categorisation and criticises Searle and his taxonomy companions for their inclination to classify before analysing. She cannot see why they would develop neat categories for speech act verbs to fit into before having analysed how they work in detail. To her, the analysis of the single speech act words is of greater importance.

Overall, one has to bear in mind that any attempt to put all the speech act verbs into categories can only be partial and focuses on the aspect most important to the author. This could be seen as a drawback if one cared deeply for putting things into categories – or, one could look at it through Robinson's (2006: 87) eyes and appreciate “the rich creative variety of human verbal actions”.

## ***2.4 Universality of Speech Acts***

The idea of universality in general refers to the highly discussed concept that there are “transcendent features that any natural language must possess in order to be able to fulfil its two basic functions of expression and communication” (Vanderveken 2002: 25). In this paper however, the notion of universality shall be discussed in the light of speech act theory. Searle claims that his work is “an attempt to give philosophically illuminating descriptions of certain general features of language, [...] and [...] is concerned only incidentally with particular elements in a particular language.” (1969: 4) and states that throughout his work he has to pay attention to “actual natural languages”. Thus, when working on his taxonomy he has to consider illocutionary verbs, which are part of a specific language, but only to use them to get a grip on illocutionary acts, which are a part of every language, i.e. universal (1976: 8). The specific language that Searle chooses to extract his universal pragmatic principles from is English. And he is not the only linguist drawing the ethnocentric conclusion that what is working for English must be working for any language. Wierzbicka (1985a) criticises Clark and Schunk (1980) for the same assumption that Shoshana Blum-Kulka (1987) criticises Leech (1983), namely that indirectness is a politeness indicator, not only in English but in all languages. Both Wierzbicka (1985a) and Blum-Kulka (1987) report on cultures where this assumption does not hold true and thus show that how one implies politeness into speech acts is not the same in various cultures. Therefore, they conclude that the realization of speech acts is not universal. Rather, speech acts are verbalised and conceptualised differently across languages.

Still, it needs to be pointed out that the notion of universality is only deemed inappropriate for the **realization** of speech acts. The claim that there are universal laws for successful performances in speech act theory (2002: 60) or the claim that some universal laws

are valid for illocutionary forces (2002: 47), as made by Vanderveken, shall not be contested here as they are not of relevance for this thesis. What is of interest though, is the concept that “illocutionary forces are [...] natural kinds of language use” to which the performative words and force markers of natural languages do not correspond exactly (Vanderveken 2002: 29). This means that what can be done with words is the same in all languages, but that what practically is done, (i.e. whether and how a speech act concept is realized) can be different in each language. Thus, some languages and cultures realize certain illocutionary forces, which others do not. For example, in English one cannot break off one's marriage through the performance of a speech act like “I hereby divorce you” - even though in Islamic culture, i.e. under Sharia law, this can be done (<http://www.islamic-sharia.org/divorce-talaq/what-is-the-proper-way-of-giving-divorce-in-islam-13.html>, 16 Nov. 2010). Or, in a different culture the appliance of an illocutionary force might bring about an unexpected perlocutionary effect. For example, Samoans when complimented, feel obliged to offer what they have been complimented on to the complimenter (Holmes 1988) – a rather different reaction to what Europeans would do. To my mind, these fairly obvious examples of differences show very well how speech acts depend on the cultures they are part of. And, if one is interested in this aspect of language, one should try to find out also about subtle cultural differences in speech act realizations, which is exactly what the researchers of the CCSARP set out to do.

## ***2.5 The Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns project (CCSARP)***

The CCSARP project<sup>16</sup> was initiated in 1982 to investigate the cultural differences in speech act realization. The study group was concerned with the “repertoire of linguistic behavior [that a speech act, in their case requests and apologies,] exhibits in its performance in languages.” (Blum-Kulka et.al 1989: 2). One of the challenges in this context was the data gathering process. Requests and apologies are widely used in our daily lives, but how can a large number of samples be obtained for analysis? How can one find out about the pragmatic knowledge of people? It has been argued that the only reliable method for collecting data for speech act analysis is ethnographic observation (Manes & Wolfson 1981: 115). However, as this is a rather laborious process which comes with its own disadvantages (it is unsystematic and the social characteristics of the informants, like age or ethnicity, often remain unknown) (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 67), the CCSARP researchers have been thinking of new methods to obtain

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<sup>16</sup> Which was mentioned before in chapter 1

the data needed. The result of this endeavour is the Discourse Completion Test.

## **2.6 The Discourse Completion Test – Advantages and Drawbacks**

The CCSARP researchers suggest the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as a method fit for their purposes. Participants are given a handout which describes various situations and are asked to write down what they would say in each situation. The situations were designed to elicit a certain speech act, e.g. an apology. “[T]he same coding scheme [was used] for the analysis of patterns in different languages [...] to ensure cross-linguistic comparability” (Blum-Kulka 1987: 132).

It has been argued by Wolfson, who also worked on the CCSARP project (1989: 181), that the DCT cannot reveal the whole spectrum of a speech act as “one can not assume that in different cultures, what appears to be the same situation will result in the same speech act.” This means that a Canadian researcher writing a DCT with the aim of eliciting apologies, can only put down situations of which she knows that one would answer apologetically in the Canadian culture. If, however, in the target culture apologies are given in situations in which one would not apologize in Canada, the researcher would not find out about them with the DCT.

Nevertheless, the DCT is a rather efficient method for collecting a large corpus of data and finding semantic formulas that occur in natural speech (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 80), which makes it a much used data collecting tool. After a variety of studies<sup>17</sup> have been published using this method the question arises as to how much the data gained represents natural language behaviour. Beebe and Cummings published a report on the DCT in 1985 (1996: 65), in which they encourage the use of DCT despite its many weaknesses. They compared data gained in telephone conversations to data gained with the DCT and state that even though the DCT data is less elaborate, less complex and less repetitive (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 75) it contains the same formulas and categories as the telephone responses. Thus, they maintain that DCT is a legitimate data collection method.

Mansoor and Parvaresh (2009) do not share this opinion. They compared the various forms of DCTs<sup>18</sup> and, analysing the results of the tests separately, they had to draw deviating conclusions about the Iranian culture (2009: 371). These results together with research done by others<sup>19</sup> lead them to argue against the DCT. However, they do not suggest a more suitable data

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17 For some examples see (Varghese & Billmyr 1996: 39)

18 Open Written DCT, Dramatic Written DCT, Multiple-Choice DCT, Oral DCT, Discourse Role-Play Task and Discourse Self-Assessment Task ( Mansoor & Parvaresh 2009: 366)

19 E.g. Yuan (2001) argues that in a DCT people fill in what they think they would say in a situation, not what they actually would say.

collecting method. Also, some of the reasons that they claim speak against the use of the DCT<sup>20</sup> were also identified by Beebe and Cummings (1996), but not thought to be significant. This paragraph should show that even a method used by such a large number of researchers over such a long period of time like the DCT is not uncontroversial and that the data gained should be treated with care regarding possible limitations.

### **3 Private Apology – A speech act**

Apologies between individuals, or in other words, private apologies, are a well covered area in speech act research. They can be described as “an interpersonal exchange between two individuals, one who has been wronged another who is in need of absolution.” (Hearit 2006: 81).

#### **3.1 Taxonomies and Classifications**

A lot of thought has been put into the form of apology, i.e. what has to be said exactly to perform the speech act of apologizing. Various authors have come up with various categories for the different realizations of apologies. As Meier points out,<sup>21</sup> these categories are not congruent, they lack a mutual system that allows comparison. She maintains that in the attempt to define Repair Work we are “confronted with [...] a terminological smorgasbord” and that analysing twenty-five treatments of the speech act of apology she found nineteen different “combinatory renditions” (1992: 23). Nevertheless, a definition of apology is vital for our understanding of it, which is why some important classifications are put forward in this chapter.

Before, let us consider Ellwanger's view on this topic. He questions taxonomies which are created for their own sake (2009: 27) and maintains that a new taxonomy is not meaningful unless it can be used for a specific purpose, and that with so many taxonomies being around, authors have to show how theirs is useful in particular if they want to see it survive in academic discourse (2009: 20). He gives Tavuchis' work as an example of a simple and useful taxonomy. It consists of only four categories (“the apology given by one individual to another, that given by one to a collective, that offered by a collective to an individual, and that extended by a collective to a collective” 2009: 20) and can be used for a fast classification. Of course, different purposes require different categories. The following sub-chapters provide an introduction to taxonomies which serve different purposes and are of relevance to this thesis.

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20 Namely, that data is not as rich and complex as natural data (Mansoor and Parvaresh 2009: 371)

21 Strictly speaking, Meier is looking into definitions of Repair Work, of which apology is only a subcategory. However, many of the authors and their taxonomies which she mentions are those I am referring here too. (e.g. Fraser, Goffman, Coulmas, Wierzbicka)

### 3.1.1 The CCSARP's definition of apology

One influential categorisation is the one developed by Olshtain and used in the CCSARP- and its successor-projects.<sup>22</sup> Wolfson (1989: 180) and Meier (1992: 26) show how this terminology is built on six others, the first in the line being Fraser's terminology from 1981. Olshtain, who also worked on a taxonomy together with Cohen in 1981 and 1983 and Blum-Kulka in 1984, offered the final taxonomy to be used in the CCSARP in 1989. First, she gives the following definition of apology:

[An apology is] a speech act which is intended to provide support for the H (hearer) who was actually or potentially malaffected by a violation X. In the decision to carry out the verbal apology the S (speaker) is willing to humiliate himself or herself to some extent and to admit to fault and responsibility for X. Hence the act of apologizing is face-saving for H and face-threatening for S, in Brown and Levinson's (1978) terms. According to Leech (1983) [...] the social goal [is] maintaining harmony between S and H. (Olshtain 1989: 157)

Second, she analyses how the speech act of apologizing can be realized. She claims that the speaker has the following options: (1) she can apologize through an explicit IFID,<sup>23</sup> like for example *I am sorry* or *I apologize*. This is the formulaic routinised way to perform an apology; or (2) give an explanation or account of the cause which brought about the violations; (3) She can express her responsibility of the offence; (4) offer repair; or (5) promise forbearance. Two of these strategies are called general – they can be used to apologize in any situation. These are (1) the uttering of an IFID and (3) claiming responsibility for the offence, which shows the speaker's willingness to admit her own fault. The other three strategies may work as an apology depending on the situation in which they are used.<sup>24</sup>

Olshtain uses this taxonomy in the comparison of three different languages (Hebrew, Canadian French and Australian English<sup>25</sup>) and finds no significant differences in strategy selection between these languages (1989). Rather, the two general apology strategies account in all three languages for 60 % to 75 % of all cases, while explanations only make up 10 % of the data. In 2009 (Mok & Tokunaga 2009: 75) Olshtain's strategies were called “the classic five semantic formulas” which shows how influential this categorisation has remained even outside of the CCSARP.

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22 The categorisation developed for the CCSARP is still used in our decade, like for example by Kim (2008) and Grieve (2010).

23 Which is explained in chapter 2.2

24 Especially (2), explaining why one did something that caused the offence, may add to the hearer's grief rather than relieve it. (Olshtain 1989: 157).

25 Speech samples were elicited by means of the DCT

### 3.1.2 Wierzbicka's definition of apology

A different way to define apology is brought forward by Wierzbicka. She aims at describing speech acts “inherently intelligible” and “intuitively verifiable”, thus avoiding ethnocentrism. For doing so, she uses her technical “metalanguage” which lists the semantic components and constituents of each speech act verb (1987: 10). She puts apologizing in the “Thank group” and describes what the speaker means by it the following way:

- I know that I caused something to happen that was bad for you
- I think that you may think something bad about me because of that and feel something bad towards me because of that
- I say: I feel something bad because of that
- I don't want you to think something bad about me because of that and to feel something bad towards me because of that
- I say this because I think I should say it to you (Wierzbicka 1987: 215)

Meier (1992: 11) believes this to be the “best formulation of preconditions or presuppositions for *apologize* or even for RW [Repair Work] in general”.

### 3.1.3 Deutschmann's definition of apology

In “Apologising in British English” Deutschmann shows that the form of an apology, the IFID, can be used to fulfil various functions. He classifies apologies according to these functions and ends up with the following three categories (2003: 44).

First, the prototypical or 'real' apology is basically apology as we got to know it so far. It is the remedy for a transgression and consists of 4 components: the offender, who takes responsibility for the offence (even though he does not have to have caused it); the offended, who either perceives her/himself as such or is perceived as such by the offender; the offence, which is real, potential or perceived as such by the offender or offended; and finally the remedy, which consists of the recognition of the offence, acceptance of responsibility and display of regret (cf. Figure 2.2. in 2003: 46). Second, 'formulaic' apologies are used in situations where the offence is minimal and apologizing is a matter of routine, like for example when apologizing for social gaffes like coughing or slips of the tongue (2003: 46). Third, 'face attack' apologies are those which do not serve a remedial purpose. They are used as disarmers before a reprimand or challenge (2003: 46, 204).

In his study of the dialogue corpus of the spoken part of the British National Corpus of the years 1992-3, Deutschmann found that formulaic apology is the most widely used of the three groups - it makes up for half of the data. It hardly ever expresses regret and takes the short

form of a “simple, syntactically detached IFID” (2003: 204). 'Face attack' apologies account for roughly ten per cent and are a bit more complex in form. The most syntactically complex form is used in 'real' apology, which comprises 36 per cent of the data.

### **3.1.4 Goffman's definition of apology**

Goffman (1971) analyses apologies with regard to social dynamics. He claims that having committed an offence, an offender can be sanctioned or expelled from society if she does not show that she subscribes to its rules. To avoid this, she will have to do remedial work, which according to Goffman (1971: 109) can take the form of a request, an account or an apology.<sup>26</sup>

The request is the only form of remedial work that occurs before the offence. It “consists of asking license of a potentially offended person to engage in what could be considered a violation of his rights.” (1971: 114). This is done for example, when someone says: “Can I ask you something personal” before asking whatever it is that might offend, thus giving the other person a chance to “invite the violation” which this way ceases to be one (1971: 114).

The category of accounts contains five sub-categories, which in short are all working on the principle that the offender, if he is able to mitigate the circumstances of the offence, shows that the offence “is not to be taken as an expression of his moral character.” (1971: 112). Accounts consist of (1) denials that either the offence has happened or that oneself had anything to do with it (1971: 109), (2) “attempt[s] to redefine what [one] is accused of by shifting some or all the responsibility for the offense to [one's] accusers” (1971: 110), (3) claims, that what has been done was not meant seriously but rather as a joke and that if one had known of the consequences of one's deeds one would not have done them, (4) “claims of mitigation based on sleepiness, drunkenness, youthfulness [etc.]” (1971: 111); and (5) the claim that one was “ignorant of what was to happen” (1971: 112). Altogether, these five remedial strategies can be called explanations, excuses and pretexts (1971: 112).

Goffman's third category are apologies, which are “part of the system of social sanctions and rewards that encourage appropriate behavior”. (Wolfson & Marmor 1989: 175). They are “gesture[s] through which an individual splits himself into two parts, the part that is guilty of an offense and the part that dissociates itself from the delict and affirms belief in the offended rule” (1971: 113). This means that the offender has to admit that he has broken a social norm, accept responsibility for it and express regret for having done so, thus showing that he is still a valid member of society who normally abides by the rules and who “now [...] sees his offenses from

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<sup>26</sup> Kathleen Gill prefers the distinction of remedial acts into denials, excuses, justifications and apologies (2000).

the perspective of a moral-minded man.” (1971: 116). Several authors follow Goffman's line of thought and consider apologies as highly moral acts.

### ***3.2 Apology as a moral act***

Apology is considered a moral act because the apologiser “acknowledges the existence of right and wrong and confirms that a norm of right behavior has been broken” (Taft 2000: 1141). Gill claims that people who apologize are indicating that they have some of the “basic moral capacities necessary for social life” (2000: 16) and Paul Davis (2002: 171) even calls apologies lynch pins of moral growth. That is, he argues, because apologizing is a dialogue, in which “the culprit and victim can develop (a) sharpened awareness of the transgression, (b) appropriate affective response, and (c) resolve to make the relevant moral improvements.”(2002: 17).

This makes apology, in the eyes of certain researchers,<sup>27</sup> the superior form of remedial work, the one that should be strived for and performed correctly, as only when it is done correctly and honestly the speaker and hearer can benefit of its effects. Let us now have a closer look at what have been claimed to be the effects that make apologies such special speech acts.

### ***3.3 The mysterious power of apology***

Apologies have been called “one of the most profound human interactions” which work for the offended parties, because they “have the power to heal humiliations and grudges, remove the desire for vengeance, and generate forgiveness”, as well as for the offender by “diminishing the fear of retaliation and relieving the guilt and shame that can grip the mind with a persistence and tenacity that are hard to ignore”. The ideal result of an apology is the “reconciliation and restoration of broken relationships” (Lazare 2004: 1). Lazare is not alone with his belief in the healing powers of apologies. Taft calls the process of apologizing a sacred act (2000: 1157) and Nicholas Tavuchis (1993: 5) claims that “in a mysterious way and according to its own logic” apology manages to “resolve conflicts and somehow restore an antecedent moral order by expunging or eradicating the harmful effects of past actions”. It can “rehabilitate the victim and restore social order” (1993: 9). A satisfying apology, he claims, has miraculous qualities: those of forgiveness and reconciliation, “which effectively transmute trespasses and prevent them from becoming permanent obstructions to social relations despite the inexorable fact of betrayal.” (1993: 6). Apologies are said to be healing in various ways: they restore the victims' self respect and dignity and assure them that the offence was not their fault, they assure both parties that they

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<sup>27</sup> E.g.: Lazare 2004

have shared values and can feel safe now in their relationship; furthermore, seeing the offenders suffering (in the process of apologizing), having meaningful dialogues with them and receiving reparation is said to be of additional positive influence on the victim (Lazare 2004: 71). Apologies are seen as a gesture of respect, which shows the victim that also the offender realizes that he or she has no right to treat the victim as he or she has done. By verifying this right, the apology is seen to have a psychological impact on the victim, which helps to restore a sense of self-worth and confidence (Gill 2000: 16).

### **3.4 The felicity conditions of apologies**

Above one can see how apologies can be a powerful tool for starting a healing process after an offence. However, apologizing does not always work out well. Apologies can be unsuccessful, or as Austin would have phrased it *unhappy*, and various authors have put thoughts into what needs to be the case, or what needs to be done for an apology to work well.

Searle states the truth conditions for apologies, which are part of his expressive category of speech acts, when he claims that “The truth of the proposition expressed in an expressive is presupposed”(1976: 12). This means that simply because he utters an apology the speaker is believed to feel the right kind of feelings necessary for doing so. As Meier (1992: 12) points out, this means that it is not actually necessary for the speaker to feel sorry – as one can apologize without these feelings – and still count as feeling sorry, because of the apology uttered.

In “Foundations of illocutionary logic” Searle and Vanderveken claim that the point of apologizing is the expression of “sorrow or regret for some state of affairs that the speaker is responsible for.”(1985: 211). Therefore, they name the following two preparatory conditions for apologies: First, the speaker must be responsible for what it is that he feels sorry for and second, the proposition must be true and what is expressed in the proposition must have been bad for the hearer.

Fraser mentions four assumptions that need to be true for the person who apologizes: The first one is, that she believes that an act has been performed before the time of the apology, implying that one cannot apologize for something that has not yet happened. Second, she has to believe that the act “personally offended” the hearer. Thirdly, the speaker believes that she is, at least to some degree, responsible for the offence. And finally, she feels genuine regret for committing the offensive act. (1981: 261).

Many authors (e.g. Olshtain 1989, Taft 2000, Gill 2000) share the opinion that the offender's acceptance of responsibility and the expression of regret are the vital components of

an apology. This is also reflected in its form: it is the uttering of responsibility and regret that are said to make an apology sincere. Thus, to simply say “I apologize” without saying what for and adding an expression of regret does not constitute a sincere apology (Lazare 2004: 25). Lazare warns, that a lot of “insincere” and “cheap” apologies are uttered in the attempt to “reap the benefits” of sincere apologies. These pseudo-apologies, as he calls them, are ineffective and exacerbate conditions rather than heal them. Lazare believes that many people do not know how to apologize correctly (2004: 138) and claims that apologies fail under the following conditions: (1) if there is no or only conditional acknowledgement of the offence (which could be, for example, saying “I’m sorry for whatever I’ve done); (2) if there is no expression of genuine remorse; (3) if there is no offer of appropriate reparations; and (4) if the speaker lacks commitment to make changes in the future (2004: 8).

Another insight into apologies is given by Davis who claims that there is an ideal apology (or as he calls it, a consummate apology), and that the closer an apology is to this ideal, the more likely it is to be accepted. To utter a consummate apology, the apologizer has to have the right kind of feelings,<sup>28</sup> i.e. he has to “realise[...] exactly how he has transgressed, feel appropriate self-reproach at the transgression, and is therefore disposed to avoid this transgression in future.” If the offended can be convinced that all these conditions are fulfilled, it would be logical, but never compulsive, for him to accept the apology. If not, this could be the starting point for a process, in which the offender and the offended negotiate the apology. (Lazare 2004: 209, Taft 2000: 171).

The notion of apology as a process is widely agreed on. (Lazare 2004, Taft 2000, Liebersohn 2004). As Davis writes

Relations are rarely hereby normalised, as though akin to the Queen’s naming a ship. Wounded feelings, as is well known, take time to heal. It is the attempt at normalisation to which the recipient agrees. So, whilst the apologiser is not entitled to swift normalisation, he should be able to rely on certain responses on the part of the recipient. (2002: 172)

This leads us to seeing apology as a speech act which *can* start a process that *might* lead to reconciliation but not as a speech act, which simply by being pronounced (and having its preconditions fulfilled) automatically reconciles. Again, the perlocutionary effect that the illocutionary act of apologizing brings about need not be the effect which the speaker hoped for.

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28 This reminds of Austin’s felicity conditions

### ***3.5 Genuine versus ritual (or pragmatic) apologies***

Genuine apologies are those uttered for the reasons mentioned above and basically imply that the speaker accepts responsibility for his actions and regrets them. These circumstances are accepted as a first set of motives to apologize (Fraser 1981: 266, Lazare 2004: 134). However, there are also other motives for people to apologize. Fraser (1981: 266) points out, that sometimes people apologize merely to fulfil what is expected of them. Apologies for these reasons are called ritual apologies and an example would be a person pushing through a crowd, saying sorry at short intervals, without paying too much attention to the people around (1981: 266). Vollmer (1989: 198) calls these kind of apologies mere expressions of sympathy which aim to meet social needs for etiquette, but do not contain an expression of responsibility and regret. Lazare's group of strategic or pragmatic apologies, basically describes the same thing. His pragmatic apologies are uttered in response to strong external pressure rather than in response to (strong internal) feelings. Through them, the speaker seeks to influence how others perceive her and behave towards her.

After Lazare's rejection of insincere apologies (2004: 8) one might expect a similarly harsh reaction to pragmatic apologies, but this is not the case. Lazare claims that both, apologies for genuine and pragmatic reasons pursue the same goal, namely to restore peace or family happiness, etc.. This aim, he maintains, is what is of value in an apology, and if a pragmatic apology “meets important psychological needs of the offended or [...] reestablishes harmony and reaffirms important social values” then, to him, it is just as good as a genuine one (2004: 158). Kramer-Moore and Moore offer an insight which works in favour of Lazare's indifference towards motives for apologizing. They rightly maintain that a hearer has no means of finding out what pushed the offender to apologize (2003: 162). If in doubt about the sincerity of the apology, the hearer might take some comfort in the fact that the apologizer is indicating that he “has the basic moral capacities for social life” (Gill 2000: 16), admits to playing by social rules and acknowledges that he owes the hearer an apology. Thus, also this kind of apology is supportive of the hearer even though one can not know for which reasons the speaker apologized. It should not be forgotten that people lie, and that the two vital parts of an apology can be uttered without being heartfelt (Ellwanger 2009: 57), so the distinction between these two types of apologies to which so many people hold on, is probably not important, simply because it is impossible to know with which of the two types one is confronted with at the moment. Ellwanger also points out that all these attempts to look “behind” an apology show that researchers perceive it as a

descriptive speech act rather than a performative one (2009: 5). Apology being a performative act means that the speaker communicates that she has certain feelings, regardless of whether she really has them. Admitting to having these feelings can render the speaker vulnerable in certain aspects, which will be explained in the following chapter.

### **3.6 Disadvantages of apologizing**

*“Never regret , never explain, never apologize.” Benjamin Jowett, 1817 – 1893, Oxford University*

*“No sensible person ever made an apology.” Ralph W. Emerson, 1803 – 1882, poet, cf. Lazare (2004)*

These statements date back to a time when it was extremely unpopular for anyone in a position of power to apologize. Apologizing was seen as a sign of weakness. Nowadays, we have a different view on apologies, which is visible in the literature, as we have seen above, but also on the political stage. Even for the president of the U.S.A. an official apology is not out of order any more.<sup>29</sup> To acknowledge that one did wrong is sometimes even seen as a sign of strength. So why choose not to apologize?

Fear of rejection, Lazare claims, is one reason that keeps people from apologizing. Also, feelings of embarrassment and shame might stand in an apologizer's way. Interestingly enough, this second reason can also be one that pushes people towards apologizing, as apologizing is also seen as a possibility to rid yourself of these bad feelings. Further, as an apology counts as an admission of guilt, people may choose not to apologize for fear of being held responsible or even being prosecuted for what they have done.

Lazare states that for offering an apology one has to be courageous, as there are several risks to take. First, apologizing can make you look like you are “the original instigator of the unpleasantness”, because apologies are expected from the person who started the fight. Second, by apologizing one admits that one has done something wrong, which may provoke teasing or ridiculing from the person one apologizes to, or others who happen to hear the apology. Third, by being the one who gives way, one takes the risk of being perceived as weak; and fourth, in case the other person chooses not to accept the apology, one may feel rejection and humiliation. (2004: 142).

Lastly, it shall be pointed out that the belief that any grudge can be healed by the mere utterance of an apology carries its own drawbacks. If it is assumed that an apology undoes

<sup>29</sup> In the 1970's Nixon famously non-apologized, whereas Clinton apologized for his affair at the end of the 90s.

whatever has been done, the offender may choose not to change her behaviour but apologize for it repeatedly. This, of course, is not the point of an apology – it should rather be an “ongoing commitment by the offending party to change his or her behaviour” (Lazare 2004: 142).

Also, in some cases, a mere apology may not be enough. On a small scale, this can mean that if I break a friend's vase and apologize without offering to replace it, my apology might not be taken seriously as I do not show to be concerned enough to compensate for the damage I caused. On a bigger scale, like for example after the U.S. government imprisoned its Japanese citizens in WWII because of fear of espionage, an apology surely is a starting point, but not enough to heal the grudge. Reparative justice, as described by Thompson (2008: 32) “asks that victims are put in the situation they have been in before they suffered the injustice or compensation equal to the value they have lost.” But in most cases it is not possible to undo what has been done so what can be done? The U.S. government decided to pay \$20.000 to each Japanese prisoner. This gesture provoked a variety of feelings, and not only positive ones: A man commented disparagingly that not only did the U.S. take four years of his life, they also put the price of \$ 5.000 on each of his lost years and called it equal (Lazare 1995: 78). This only shows how delicate the question of apology and reparation is.

### **3.7 The reality of apology**

Chapter 3.2 'Apology as a moral act' describes the high hopes that are projected on apologies in their function of reconciliation. As researchers tend to focus on the supposedly even sacred (Taft 2000: 1157) healing power of apology, it is often forgotten where the term actually comes from and what its original meaning is.

The English term 'apology' derives from the Greek 'apologia', which means 'speech in defence'. As Yosef Liebersohn explains,

[Apologia] was used as a formal forensic term to describe the response speech of a defendant at a trial. As a response to the 'logos' of the prosecutor, the defendant presents his counter-speech: the 'apo-logos'. (2004: 923)

These apologias “were highly stylized statements of defence with tight and calculated logical arguments” (Ellwanger 2009: 37). Probably the most famous apologia is the speech given by Socrates to defend himself against charges of corrupting the youth of Athens, in which he attacks his opponents and justifies his deeds but “emphatically does not apologize” (Warner 2002) in the sense of apologizing today. The aim of such a speech was not merely to defend one's actions but to seek acquittal, as the consequences of a guilty verdict included exile and death while a

successful speech could lead to exoneration (Downey 1993: 47). Ellwanger (2009: 42) maintains that apology was seen as an “exclusively defensive statement” until the end of the Middle Ages.

Apology gained its remorseful dimension through the Catholic church’s way of dealing with conflict and its close relationship and interdependence with the Medieval state. Trials, which in the Middle Age took place mostly in the name of treason and heresy, were held jointly by religious and state power and had death as a probable outcome. Apologists would, if at all, receive their chance to speak only after the verdict had been brought in. They then had the option to choose whether or not to defend themselves, but their 'apology' could not influence the verdict any more. Thus, “[a]ccepting one's fate, welcoming one's death, and convincing oneself of the forgiveness of God merged to form the substance of medieval apologia.” (Downey 1993: 49). Besides, the practise of Christian confession plays a vital part in the beginnings of the apology of regret (Ellwanger 2009: 43). The ritual of confession has existed and changed throughout Christian history but, as Tentler (1977) points out, four vital criteria of confession can be recognised over the centuries:

[C]onfessants must “feel sorrow at having lapsed,” they must explicitly name the act that is the source of that sorrow, they must perform some “penitential exercises” whether by choice or force, and they must be ceremonially absolved by some religious authority. (1977:3, referred to in Ellwanger 2009: 44)

The parallels between confession and apology of regret can easily be identified<sup>30</sup>. As Ellwanger points out, the only difference lies in the absence of institutional power, which led to the consolidation of point two and three. Nowadays, one does not perform 'penitential exercises' prescribed by an authority– rather, the penance is seen in the articulation of the apology itself (2009: 59).

When “the monolithic nature of religious and state power” (Ellwanger 2009: 52) dissolved, transgressions were responded to separately by state and church and “the categories of *sin* and *crime* were extricated” (ibid.). The Catholic church's response to sin was a system that compels the wrongdoer to confess, and offers forgiveness in exchange for confession. The state on the other hand, gradually established new standards and stopped relying on confession for proving someone's guilt. The investigation, which shows belief in the power to produce knowledge from observation, was introduced to courtrooms, as well as the accused's right to speak for herself (Ellwanger 2009: 53) Thus,

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30 Also, for example, by comparing these four criteria to Lazare's four components of an apology, which are: Acknowledgement of the offence; Communication of remorse and related attitudes of forbearance, sincerity and honesty; Explanation; and Reparation. (2004: 79)

[t]he tradition of *apologia* as a rhetorical phenomenon was reborn in the Modern era, but it was no longer understood as apology. The Medieval conflation between the discourses of defense and regret had fostered a public conception that to apologize was to repent and beg forgiveness. (Ellwanger 2009: 53).

This is visible not only in most people's understanding of the term “apology” but also in the work of researchers who deal with it. The aspect of regret is placed in the foreground, and it is argued (Ellwanger 2009: 36) that this is because of the assumed outstanding connection between the apology of regret and forgiveness. However, forgiveness, as Ellwanger claims, does not require apology.<sup>31</sup> You can be forgiven without having apologized and you can apologize without being forgiven (2009: 10). Forgiveness may be granted for 'forgivable offences' or for political reasons, or not at all. Also, a person who through her defence shows that she is not to blame and is exonerated, is in some way 'forgiven' (2009: 37).

When Aaron Lazare<sup>32</sup> looks at apologies and finds that most of them are empty, shallow, hollow and cheap (2004: 8), this is because he established criteria for authentic apologies before analysing the **several** functions that apologies can have. (Ellwanger 2009: 13). By disregarding apology of defence Lazare only gets one half of the picture, which quite likely is the reason for why he sees examples of failed apologies everywhere (*ibid.*).

Ellwanger argues for a reunion of the two concepts of apology and shows that apology of regret and apology of defence are not as different as many scholars claim. They both are “speech that responds to crisis” (2009: 34) and have the common potential to achieve conciliation (2009: 37). He argues for a “hybrid model of analysis that does not impose such a rigid division between *apologia* and apology” (2009: 8).

The main implication of understanding apology as any discourse that responds to crisis is that one must understand apology not as one image restoration strategy among others, but as synonymous with “image restoration” writ large. All apologies deal with defense, regret, or both; and therefore, accounts, excuses, justifications, denials, mortifications, and pleas for forgiveness should all be considered sub-categories of apology, not simply as alternatives to apology for maintaining one's image.” (Ellwanger 2009: 35f)

However, the use of *apology* as the umbrella term for all sorts of response to crisis is not widely accepted yet. So far, most researchers use the term apology only in its meaning of apology of

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31 This thought is also represented in Norrick's definition of apology : “apologizing has the social function of admitting responsibility for a state which affected someone in an adverse way and thereby implicating contrition and sometimes, asking to be forgiven” (1978: 284 in Wierzbicka 1987: 216)

32 Lazare, who was introduced in chapter 3.2, is the author who believes in regretful apology as the main trigger of social healing.

regret.

## 4 Public Apology

While private apologies have been common in the Western world for centuries, public apologies are said to have become popular only recently. The wide use of “extraordinary public acts of contrition” has brought forward terms like *apology-mania* (Taft 2000: 1135) and it has been argued that we are now living in the *age of apology* (Kampf 2008, Harris 2006, Brooks 1999, Meier 2004), where public apologies “have become a vital part of the global culture” (Mills 2001: 113). In this *age*, marked by social and global tension, “apology has taken on a new ethical importance as a formalized discursive means to achieve conciliation and heal the cultural rifts hewn by the troubling events of our era” (Ellwanger 2009: 2). Public apology has been defined as an apology that

is expressed in the public domain on the assumption that it is relevant to the public at large and not solely to the victims of the wrongdoing. Public apologies may be issued by individuals purely as individuals, or by individuals acting as spokespersons for groups or institutions. (Govier & Verwoerd, 2002: 67f)

This basically means that the offender in her apology not only addresses the addressee (i.e., the offended) but also has to consider a number of participants – who were not involved in the offence but nevertheless are an audience to the apologetic discourse.<sup>33</sup> Lazare (2004: 38) shares this opinion when he maintains that public apologies are those made in the presence of a broader audience. Harris, Grainger & Mullany (2006: 720) report that applying models of private apology to the use of public apology is both “difficult and instructive” because most people's experiences of apology lie only in the private domain.

### 4.1 Differentiation of terminology

#### 4.1.1 Apology

First, let us deal with the term *apology*, which has previously been discussed in chapter 3.7. It is widely used for statements of contrition, in which the apologizer admits that he is responsible for an offence and regrets it. Benoit, whose theory of image repair work is of importance in the field of public image repair, also defines apology this way (1997: 254). However, taking into account

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<sup>33</sup> Clark and Carlson (1982: 333) maintain that all illocutionary acts with more than one hearer present are not only directed towards the hearer (addressee), but also towards these other hearers (who they call participants), however, with a different message. The terms *addressee* and *participants* appear to be of value also for the public speech act of apology.

the two forms of use of *apology* (i.e., apology of defence and apology of regret) throughout history and the various inconsistencies that emerge through a biased use of the term, one is tempted to define *apology* as speech that responds to crisis, and thus include both – the aspects of defence and regret.

#### 4.1.2 Public vs. political apology

Second, the terms *public apology* and *political apology* need to be described. They are sometimes used as synonyms, like for example by Ellwanger (2009: 4). Meier (2004) uses both terms but does not remark on whether or how they are different, which could mean that she also sees these terms as interchangeable. Harris, Grainger & Mullany (2006) deal with *political apology* as a subcategory of *public apology* and define it in terms of four characteristics:

- (1) Political apologies are in the public domain and, as a consequence, are highly mediated.[...]
- (2) Political apologies are often generated by (and generate further) conflict and controversy. [...]
- (3) Both an explicit IFID (illocutionary force indicating device) and a form of words which indicates the acceptance of responsibility and/or blame for the ‘offence’ by the apologizer appear to be crucial component parts of political apologies in order for the media and viewers to perceive them clearly as valid apologies. [...]
- (4) Because they are usually in the public domain and, thus, highly mediated as well as often involving substantial differences in status and power between the apologizer and the ‘victim’, it is rare for the response to a political apology to contain any explicit form of absolution. (2006: 720f)

These characteristics show that Harris, Grainger & Mullany's concept of *political apology* is the same as Ellwanger's (2009) concept of *public apology*. The only difference lies in the fact that Harris, Grainger & Mullany (2006: 719) assume that their characteristics are valid only for *public apologies* which “centrally involve a politician (or other prominent figure associated with political life) as the perceived apologizer”. Ellwanger does not impose such a restriction on his concept: the mechanisms that he finds to be working in the discourse of public apology he sees as valid for public apologetic discourse at large, regardless of the occupation of the apologizer.

Kimoga's (2010) understanding of *political apology* also does not stand in conflict with Ellwanger's *public apology*. Even though Kimoga and Ellwanger deal with apology in different ways,<sup>34</sup> they appear to refer to the same concept when defining *public* and *political apology*. Thompson (2008), who also tackles *political apology*, offers the following definition:

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<sup>34</sup> Kimoga analyses a political letter and focuses on what the offender achieves by giving a remorseless apology. Ellwanger presents the to and fro between the offended and the person asked to apologize and focuses on how this discourse is damaging for the offender. Kimoga's work will be discussed in chapter 4.2.

A political apology is an official apology given by a representative of a state, corporation, or other organised group to victims, or descendants of victims, of injustices committed by the group's officials or members. (2008:31)

Her idea is different in so far as the person offering the apology has to stand for a structured organization (2008: 37). This differentiates her concept of *political apology* from that of Ellwanger (2009) or Harris, Grainger & Mullany (2006) who do not insist on this aspect.

### **4.1.3 Corporate apology**

A third term one encounters frequently when dealing with apology in the public domain is *corporate apology*. The wide use of this term may be due to Benoit's (1997a) image repair theory<sup>35</sup> which deals mainly with *corporate* image crises and *corporate* image repair efforts. Benoit gives advice on how organizations can deal with attacks on their image and clarifies that by organizations he means "corporations, gov-ernment [sic] bodies [and] non-profit groups". He (1997a: 255) also offers a differentiation of public apology into *political apology*, *corporate apology* and *entertainer apology*. He claims that the same rhetoric options are open to all three groups but that there are differences concerning what is appropriate and useful in each group.

### **4.1.4 Other concepts**

Courtright & Hearit (2002: 349) use the term *organizational apologia*, which not only includes "large, for-profit organizations" but also public and religious institutions.

Cunningham (1999: 285) makes an attempt at a typology based on who is offering an apology. His typology consists of apologies uttered by (1) individuals; (2) professional and commercial organizations; (3) religious organizations; (4) spiritual leaders; (5) governments; and (6) heads of state.

All these terms and definitions show that upon reading a new article about public apology one is likely to be confronted with new terminologies and definitions. If this has not been sufficiently demonstrated in the paragraphs above, the following selection of terms should further illustrate this point: *State-to-State apology*, *governmental apology* (Bilder 2006), *state apology* (Gibney & Roxstrom 2001), *celebrity apology* (Ingham 2007), *organizational apology* ( Courtright & Hearit 2002), *corporate apology* (Benoit 1997a), etc.

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35 Benoit (1994) first called the topic of his study the "theory of image restoration strategies" which is also present in the title of his main work *Accounts, Excuses, and Apologies: A Theory of Image Restoration Strategies* (1995). In the course of time, however, he discarded this term and started referring to his work as the theory of image repair strategies (for further information see Benoit 2000).

#### 4.1.5 Conclusion

In view of this variety of concepts, I suggest the use of the term *public apology* for apologies uttered in the public domain as outlined above by Govier & Verwoerd (2002), Lazare (2004) and Ellwanger (2009). Thus, *public apology* serves as an umbrella term to which more specific terms, e.g. *political apology* (as described by Thompson 2008) or *organizational apology* (as outlined by Courtright & Hearit 2002), are subordinate. The advantage of this is that the term *public apology* is clear and uncontroversial, and further differentiation can be achieved by assigning topical concepts (like those mentioned above) to subcategories.<sup>36</sup>

#### 4.2 Differences between public and private apologies

Some authors are of the opinion that private and public apology are very much alike because they are uttered to fulfil similar needs, follow the same structure and have the same sincerity conditions. Lazare (2004), being one of these, nevertheless also sees vital differences between private and public apology.

First, he claims that in a public apology sincerity does not play such an important role.<sup>37</sup> Public apologies are uttered “for the record” and if they achieve their aim, which is the restoration of the offended party's public dignity, sincerity is not an issue. Second, public apologies are often prepared with the help of others and subject to the influence of third parties, which makes them less spontaneous and less emotional. Also, as the focus lies on their exact wording, public apologies are often carefully prepared in advance. Another important factor is that public apologies often are offered in response to public pressure and not because the offender deems it important to apologize.<sup>38</sup> Lastly, with public apologies it is sometimes not obvious who the offender and the offended were, and who in fact uttered the apology, the offender himself or a spokesperson. (2004: 38f) Further on, Lazare (2004: 178) also mentions differences concerning the timing of public and private apologies<sup>39</sup>

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36 There are many subcategories which have been dealt with thoroughly and I find it hard to draw the line as to which parts to include in my thesis and which to leave out. Thompson (2008), for example, discusses the features vital to genuine political apology and Bilder (2006) highlights the reasons which governments have for giving an apology or for refusing to apologize. Brooks (1999) shows how state apology is closely intertwined with the question of compensation and analyses how this issue has been dealt with in history. All these are highly interesting aspects of public apology, which, however, cannot be discussed here as this would go beyond the scope of this thesis.

37 Sincerity in private apology, even though deemed very important by Lazare and like minded authors, is not a widely agreed on necessity. Ellwanger (2009) or Kramer-Moore and Moore (2003), for example consider the question of sincerity as one which cannot be answered and therefore need not be raised in the first place. (see also 3.5)

38 This will be dealt with in greater detail when talking of Ellwanger's theory.

39 Which are discussed in detail in chapter 4.3.2.3.2.

These are, one might argue, excessively strong deviations for considering the two concepts as “more alike, than different”, as Lazare does (2004: 39). It is therefore important to point out that his focus lies on the common aim that public and private apologies have, namely that of conciliation, which in his point of view eclipses the different circumstances and means by which it is sought to be achieved.

However, this idea that public and private apologies pursue the same aim has been met with doubt (cf. Ellwanger 2009, Howard-Hassmann & Gibney 2008, Hearit 2006, Kimoga 2010, Tavuchis 1991). It has been argued, that “the more remote the apologizer the less meaningful the apology” (Howard-Hassmann & Gibney 2008: 6) and that public apology is a new form of *Realpolitik*, a symbolic diplomatic move so to speak, which the apologizer performs only if it is in her own interest (ibid.). Howard-Hassmann & Gibney (2008: 8) even consider that “the politics of apology is [...] merely a cynical type of symbolic politics, meant to erase real injustices from public memory and exculpate their perpetrators”. McLaughlin (1997 in Thompson 2008: 32) is amongst the harshest critics of public apologies when he claims that they are “symbolic and meaningless gestures made by leaders who have no intention of avoiding similar acts in the future”. It has been claimed that “apology has become a form of political speech with increasing significance and power” (Luke 1997: 344). Kimoga (2010) follows this line of thought when he claims that under certain circumstances, apology ceases to be a moral statement and becomes a political action (2010: 2185). This happens, for example, when apology is used by leaders (like heads of state) who need to appear competent and honest even in the trickiest of situations. In case their public image is threatened they would make any statement capable of restoring it. To define the political action which he claims apology has become, Kimoga describes politics as “a struggle for power between those who seek to assert and maintain their power and those who seek to resist it” (ibid.). He claims that “the whole political process is a contest and tension between power asserters and power resisters” (ibid.). Power itself, he argues, can be seen from two opposing points of view: First, as the capacity to achieve a goal regardless of resistance; and second, as the ability to act with the approval of a group (ibid.). How one chooses to see power dictates one's view on politics as well because power lies beneath any political action. Politics itself “lies at the centre and base of society and thus permeates every social action.” An individual who shapes society is always also influenced and nurtured by society, which means that this individual's actions are not only of social nature but of political nature too (ibid.). The language used by such individuals is political language and

“concerned with presenting and selling ones positive image to others”. Apology used in such a context could be a “functionalistic strategy of restoring a tarnished image and reselling it to others”, thus becoming “a tool of asserting and maintaining power by the offender” (ibid.). Apology used in such a way obviously stands in total contrast to the notion of apology as reconciliatory discourse.

This relates to Ellwanger's (2009) observation that the purpose of apology as claimed by many scholars (i.e., reconciliation) and the actual purpose of public apology do not coincide. But instead of deploring the abuse of apology and enumerating its failures, Ellwanger calls out for a “critical apparatus that is attuned to what a given apology *does* do (and how it does it)” (2009: 15, original emphasis). Finding the real purpose of public apologetic discourse therefore lies at the heart of his work which is outlined in the following chapter.

### 4.3 Public Apologetic Discourse

In his dissertation *The rhetoric of public apology*, Ellwanger argues that the public use of apology does not focus on reconciliatory functions. Public apology, he emphasizes, is indeed very different from private apology (i.a., 2009: 64)

Ellwanger observes “a new faith in the power of public apology and a willingness of the *demos*<sup>40</sup> to solicit such statements [of apology] from public figures who are thought to have committed some offense” (2009: 2f). Possible reasons for this new faith are far from obvious, he claims, but argues that they might be found in the following line of thought: Society holds those people who “live in the public eye and who enjoy an unusual degree of power (whether it be cultural, financial or political)” (2009: 64) to a higher standard of behaviour than private persons. Public figures are, however, not better at living up to such high standards, which means that they are more likely to commit actions perceived as offensive. Also, we believe that they have a higher obligation to stand up for their transgressions and to rectify them. Furthermore, alternative media (e.g. blogs) and websites (e.g. *youtube*) have facilitated spreading words, which means that more potentially offensive statements can be received by a larger audience (2009: 27).<sup>41</sup> Mass media play a role when they broadcast statements which they represents as offensive. Also, they provide a platform for offended individuals by broadcasting the resulting call for an apology. The apology (or the refusal to apologize) then again is distributed through the media.

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<sup>40</sup> Ancient Greek, meaning *the population* or *the common people*.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. also Hearit (1999: 203): “[T]he rise of the Internet in general and newsgroups specifically have, in effect, greatly increased the speed by which latent publics are likely to become activist ones”.

Ellwanger claims, that “[t]he repetition of such scenarios in the media produces a public hunger for these apologetic dramas” (2009: 3f). But what do such dramas achieve and who profits from their enactment? These questions are answered in the following chapter.

### 4.3.1 Purpose of public apologetic discourse

Ellwanger (2009: 220) observes that reconciliation is hardly ever the outcome of public apologetic discourse. He claims that the reason for this is that the process of public apology has nothing to do with seeking reconciliation. On the contrary, public apologetic discourse is frequently “tense, agonistic and combative” and probably “wholly incapable of performing the conciliatory work that private apologies accomplish so easily” (2009: 85).<sup>42</sup> Ellwanger sees beyond the misleading common name of private and public apology and is able to discard the idea that public and private apology are of the same nature, i.e. striving for reconciliation. Quite the opposite, as he finds that public apologies are called for in order to

punish offensive speech that is thought to negatively affect the power and status of particular groups within democratic society. In other words, citizens and the media utilize the rhetoric of reconciliation to punish individuals whose free speech threatens a certain conception of the liberal humanistic public sphere (2009: v).

Free speech is (said to be) of high value in the Western democratic world, which implies that offensive or discriminatory statements are not, and cannot, be legally prosecuted. Still, there are limits to what can be said publicly without causing an uproar – in the game of *Who can say what?* (2009: 116) public figures often transgress the boundaries of the acceptable, but not those of the law. A solution as to how to deal with these dilemmas is offered in public apologies. They

covertly punish legal (but intolerable) actions in the public sphere. The successful call elicits an apology that establishes guilt in the very moment it punishes through the humiliating spectacle of a mediated statement of regret – a statement that ultimately signifies a total submission of power to the moral authority of the masses. [...] Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the apology’s punitive operation is that it conceals its aims through the rhetoric and pretense of conciliation. (Ellwanger 2009: 6).

Thus, even though democratic societies claim to advocate free speech, intolerable statements and minor offences in the public sphere can be responded to with the “extremely cunning punishment” (2009: 65) of public apology. Through the public expression of guilt the offender humiliates herself and the whole apologetic spectacle suggests that she is unworthy of the power

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<sup>42</sup> This is also represented in Harris, Grainger & Mullany's second characteristic of political apology.

that allowed her to make such statements in the first place (ibid.). Also, through this discourse the offended parties show that they possess “the power to punish acts that would marginalize certain persons on the ground of their difference” (2009: 166). This refers to the “perhaps most remarkable aspect” of public apology: the fact that the relatively powerless are apologized to by powerful actors and institutions (Howard-Hassmann & Gibney 2008: 2). This way they demonstrate to “the public at large the cost of disrespect, and in doing so, they illustrate the harm they are capable of inflicting upon those who enact such transgressions” (Ellwanger 2009: 167). In short, public apology resembles “a discursive torture that enforces punishment via public humiliation” (2009: 211) and as such functions as a deterrent “that resolves (but does not reconcile) the crisis by ensuring against the repetition of the offense in question” (2009: 86).

### **4.3.2 Constituents of the public apologetic discourse**

#### **4.3.2.1 *The offence***

The impetus for the apologetic spectacle is usually an extra-judicial offence like an action or speech perceived as “racist, sexist, discriminatory, or intolerant in some way” (Ellwanger 2009: 220). This still “unmediated event [...] may or may not be perceived as offensive by its primary audience” (2009: 27). Only when the media represents it as an offence to an audience much larger than the primary one, is the need for a public apology aroused. Later, the event may be reconstituted in the calls for apology – and then another time in the apology that responds to such calls (ibid.). This means, that the original offence is not stable but often represented in contradicting ways by the various people who refer to it throughout the public apologetic discourse (2009: 28).

#### **4.3.2.2 *The call for apology***

The apologetic discourse is initiated by the call for apology which demonstrates the offensive character of the speech or deed in question to the public (Ellwanger 2009: 125). This *accusatory statement*, or call for apology, plays a major role in the differentiation between public and private apologies, and has even been called “integral to the apologetic dynamic” (2009: 220). It is voiced by “representations of the *demos* (the media, private citizens, political groups and conglomerates)” (2009: 87) in order to re-establish a code of behaviour that has been broken by the offender.

The call for apology intends to communicate to the offender “You cannot say that!” and aims at identifying him “with an existing social group or type, one that cannot (in good taste)

perform the speech or action in question” (2009: 126). The accusers aim to imbue the offender with a limiting ethos,<sup>43</sup> one which “disallows specific possibilities for public speech” (2009: 126). Also, this ethos has to be seen as “the essential identity of the individual in question” (ibid.). For example, it is especially inappropriate for white people to use the word nigger.<sup>44</sup> If they use it anyway, it is likely to cause offence – and part of the offence lies in the fact that the speaker took the right to say something, which a member of his social group cannot say.<sup>45</sup> Anger is “the dominant emotion caused by an offence”, Ellwanger (2009: 87) claims, and public apology can serve well for calming down this anger. There are certainly vengeful aspects in the call for public apology, he maintains, and further emphasizes that this call for apology is a charge of offence in itself and more powerful than a mere accusation because it communicates to the offender that she owes an apology (2009: 64). Thereby it “covertly *assumes* the need for conciliation and *dictates* the ways that resolution might be achieved” (ibid., original emphasis).

It has been argued that calls for apology are “sanctimonious demands for further punishment and public humiliation” (Tavuchis 1993: 56) or even “rhetoric trap[s]” (Hearit 2006: 85). Furthermore it has been claimed that these accusatory statements are rarely uttered with reconciliation in mind but nevertheless, in the name of reconciliation, coerce the offender into apologizing (Ellwanger 2009: 220). Keeping this in mind, achieving harmony, which has been identified as the social goal of private apology (Leech 1983 in Olshtain 1989: 157) can not be said to be the motivational factor behind the call for public apology. Rather, as Ellwanger (2009: 87) argues, it is used to “challenge, reduce, or question the social power and authority of the accused”.

#### **4.3.2.3      *The apology or the refusal to apologize***

An accusatory statement leaves the offender with two options: she can publicly apologize or choose not to do so. Ellwanger argues that either option actualizes the limited ethos bestowed upon her by her accusers (2009: 130). Choosing to apologize equals an admission of guilt and “the final proof to the accusers' claim of transgression” (ibid.). Hereby the limited identity of a transgressor is imprinted on the apologizer and established publicly. Also, through the process of her “painful public confession” the offender suffers public humiliation, a punishment brought

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43 Ethos is a rhetorical concept, which, according to Reynolds (1993: 326), “encompasses the individual agent as well as the location or position from which that person speaks or writes”.

44 As it is for men to refer to women as hos (as in Ellwanger's example on page 115) ; or for the able-bodied to refer to the disabled people as idiots; etc.

45 Ellwanger (2009: 132) also claims that this identity game can work in favour of a person using insensitive speech in public: “e.g. 'It's OK that *she* said that; after all, she's insert identity category here”.

upon her by those who called for her apology (ibid.).

The accused's second option is to resist apologizing, be it because she believes that she has said or done nothing wrong or for pragmatic reasons. Those accused of an offence would obviously prefer “to avoid the pains [that the] [...] (non-mandatory) punishment [of apologizing publicly] entails.” (2009: 87). It is, however, not easy to escape from this public apologetic discourse. Even silence in response to the call for apology is a public act and will be interpreted by the media. Explanations will be sought as to why the accused reacted the way she did. Thus, in case she remains silent upon a call for apology she may be portrayed as “insensitive and unwilling to seek reconciliation” (2009: 131), which also draws an unfavourable image and bestows upon her a limited ethos.

An opportunity to get out of this dilemma is seen in equivocal communication (Tyler 1997: 59) which has been defined as “the response chosen when all other communicative choices in the situation would lead to negative consequences” (Bavelas, Black, Chovil & Mullet 1990: 54). In our case, such equivocal communication could take the form of an expression of sympathy which does not express any guilt. “I am sorry if what I said offended you” is actually a widely used answer to calls for apology and often leads to a discussion of whether an apology has been offered or not.<sup>46</sup> Kampf (2009) focuses on such public *non-apologies*<sup>47</sup> and finds fourteen “different creative forms of apologetic speech [which are used] in order to minimize [...] responsibility for misdeeds” (2009: 2257). Researchers on apology mostly dismiss such statements as insincere or morally wrong (e.g., Taft 2000: 1159), which, however, does not wane their popularity. This is, one might argue, because such *non-apologies* are useful to an offender just because of their ambiguity. By offering them, offenders may hope to be let off the hook without losing face in public. Additional to the issue of whether and how the offender apologizes, the questions of whom she apologizes to and when she apologizes are said to be of importance. Therefore, two sub-chapters are devoted to these topics.

#### **4.3.2.3.1 The audience of the apology**

In case the accused chooses to give a statement in response to the accusatory call, the question arises to whom this statement is addressed and thus also, in whose (or which) interest it is given. Lazare argues that apologies directed at the wrong audience (i.e. not the victim of the offence) should be analysed in regard to what the apologizer gains from such a statement (2004: 101).

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. Harris, Grainger & Mullany (2006: 739) for an example of such a discussion.

<sup>47</sup> A term also used by Gill (2000: 13)

Apologies directed towards those capable of punishing the offender or to third parties with whom the offender wishes to maintain relationships, can be said to be performed only in the interest of the accused and therefore not pursuing reconciliation. Lazare<sup>48</sup> (2004: 101) and Ellwanger<sup>49</sup> (2009: 106) both give examples of public figures apologizing to those who could deprive them of their livelihood rather than to the victims of their offences. The accused utter such an apology “to manipulate the situation to protect themselves rather than to reconcile with the victim” (Lazare 2004: 101).

When it comes to corporate apologies, the question of audience is even more demanding because a company has obligations towards several interest groups, like e.g. “local citizens, governmental regulators, stockholders, employees, pressure groups and politicians” (Benoit 1997b: 178). The consideration of these multiple audiences can leave the company in a dilemma, as “considering only the interests of the victims of a crisis may breach the [...] important obligations [which a company has towards its stockholders and creditors]” (Kaufmann, 1994: 35 in Tyler 1997: 59). Tyler argues that making an admission of guilt is unwise and “perhaps even immoral” (ibid.) because it can lead to legal liability and corporate extinction which harms shareholders. In short, any public apologetic statement could potentially soothe the anger of one interest group while at the same time inflame that of another because of the different, and often even mutually exclusive interests, concerns and goals of each group. Hearit agrees when he writes that

the central tension in responding to criticism [for a company] is the balance of stockholder and stakeholder interests. Said another way, a company that responds to criticism of its actions must maintain a careful balance between being socially responsive to its community and fiducially responsible to its investors (Epstein, 1972). The same is true for institutions – they must balance social with liability concerns;” (Hearit 2006: 208)

This statement shows well how the accused (company) has to set priorities regarding whom is addressed primarily in a public apologetic statement. This insight results in the explicit advice for crisis communicators to “identify the most important audience (or prioritize important

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48 After biting off a part of Evander Holyfield's ear in 1997, Mike Tyson apologized to “his family, the Nevada State Athletic Commission, the judge responsible for his probation, and others but did not give significant mention to the actual victims -Holyfield and the home audience who had paid a premium to watch the match on pay-per-view” (Ingham 2007: 37)(Lazare 2004: 101).

49 Michael Vick, quarterback of the Atlanta Falcons, has financed and participated in dog fights and the killing of animals. First, he apologized privately to the owner of the Atlanta Falcons. Only later, when his plea of guilty was accepted by the court (but before he had been sentenced), he offered a public apology (Ellwanger 2009: 106). The owner of the falcons has the power to limit Vick's future options and probably therefore has been the recipient of the first apology.

audiences)” ( Benoit 1997b: 178) .

#### **4.3.2.3.2 The timing of the apology**

Time “is a situational constraint that is particularly powerful in apology”, Ellwanger (2009: 67) argues, and with these words represents the many authors who claim that timing is a critical factor in apology (e.g., Frantz & Bennisson 2005, Lazare 2004, Cohen 1999).

Ellwanger points out that the timing of the offence itself is influential and argues that “whether or not a statement or act is perceived as offensive often depends on the moment in which it occurs” and gives examples of public offences which probably would not have caused an uproar had it not been for the specific moment at which they were made public (2009: 104f). Timing is also of importance in the call for apology, which must come relatively quickly in order for people to appear genuinely upset and not moved by ulterior motives (2009: 67).

It has been argued that there are differences between private and public apologies regarding the timing of the apologetic statement. “In the private realm,” Lazare (2004:178) claims, “the offender often has the luxury of time and reflection in order to deliver an appropriate apology”. Not only is time helpful for considering the wording of one's apology, also the victim needs time: Frantz & Bennisson (2005: 202) argue that apologizing too quickly is not effective because victims first need a chance to express themselves and feel understood. If the victim feels that he has been unheard, it is too early to give an apology. In the public realm, however, “an unambiguous apology [is demanded] as soon as the offense becomes known” (Lazare 2004: 178). Should the offender wait too long before giving an apology, it may be suggested that he has other motives than genuine regret (Ellwanger 2009: 68). Patel & Reinisch (2003: 22) agree when they suggest that “the nearer the apology is to the event in question, the more likely that the apology will be regarded as sincere and result in positive consequences”. Support for this can be found in Blaney & Benoit's (2002: 387) study of Firestone's image repair, where they argue that Firestone's campaign was appropriate, but would have had to be implemented earlier in order to achieve the desired outcome.

In case an offence can be prosecuted in court, an early apology is advised as it “may prevent an injury from turning into a dispute” (Cohen 1999: 1049). A delayed apology on the other hand, “risks hardening the victim's response to the harm and rendering it immutable to change” (Shuman 2000: 186 in Patel & Reinisch 2003: 23). Nevertheless, for legal reasons (which are discussed in chapter 4.4.2.2), Patel & Reinisch (2003: 23) advise giving a statement of sympathy at first and leaving it “until a later stage to make a full apology that admits fault and

expresses remorse”.

#### **4.3.2.4 Outcome and effects of public apologetic discourse**

So far, we have seen how an offence, if taken up by the media, can cause a call for apology which aims at eliciting an apologetic statement. In this chapter we will deal with the question of what such an apologetic statement effects and what it can achieve for the public at large, the media, the offended and the offender.

As shown above, the apologetic statement has the potential to embarrass the offender in public – Ellwanger (e.g. 2009: 220) repeatedly states that it is a humiliating experience to publicly accept guilt and acknowledge one's wrongdoing. The fact that inconsiderate and offensive speech can bring people into such humbling situations may work as a deterrent against such speech and reaffirm to the insulted group of people that what has been done to them is not tolerated by society. Even though this is an important message to send, the question remains whether public apologetic discourse is capable of achieving the goal it presumably pursues: reconciliation. While with private apologies reconciliation lies in the hands of the offended and the offender, there are more aspects to consider in the case of public apology.

At the first instance of the offence, i.e. before it has been mediated, the offended group is most often of a manageable size. But as soon as the media disseminates the offence, the offender is confronted with a much larger group of people. Furthermore, the media constructs the offence not merely as offensive to the victim and the primary audience, but as offensive to “every individual who values an inclusive and diverse democratic society” (2009: 173, original emphasis). By broadcasting such offences, the media “exposes new audiences to the very pain and suffering that it attempts to dissolve” and leaves them

with no way to communicate or reconcile with the offender. The public apology that the media elicits seems to be a cheap consolation prize aimed at compensating citizens for their outrage – an outrage produced by the media's re-staging of the private offense as a public one. (Ellwanger 2009: 208)

Thus, the media enlarges the group of offended people to whom the accused has to reach out to achieve the goal of reconciliation. Also, these people hardly ever have an option of acting upon the offence they encounter through the media. Upon hearing of the catastrophic results of the tsunami, people can help by donating money (2009: 175) – but upon hearing about offensive speech, what can they do? Ellwanger exploits such options and comes to the conclusion that media and public calls for apology do not work towards reconciliation as they merely create a

bigger number of offended people. Furthermore, those who are upset by what they hear in the media are likely to have “different ideas about what an adequate or authentic apology would look like“ (2009: 176) and about what the offender could do to reconcile. Thus, it is “very improbable that a heterogeneous group of citizens who perceive a wrong can effectively bestow forgiveness” (2009: 87) which means that some of the people who were offended will never experience reconciliation.

Additionally, the cases analysed by Ellwanger show that some of those propagating public apologies are openly admitting that they are thereupon pursuing their need for revenge – which they, however, do not always find to be satisfied with a mere apologetic statement (2009: 168). Still, asking for a public apology is the only means they have to quench their thirst for revenge: free speech is of high value in democratic societies and loss of face is the only punishment that through the media can be inflicted on someone accused of offensive speech.

Lastly, let us deal with the question of which motivation the offender could have for participating in his own punishment. As mentioned above, the aim of those pressing for his apology is to leave him with the limited ethos of a transgressor (2009: 118). The offender, however, is not obliged to play along that game and to give a humiliating statement just because his accusers have asked him to do so. Much rather, his own interests lie in cleaning up his tarnished reputation and in being conceived by the public as a valuable member of society who can be trusted to respect its norms and values. Therefore, he may apologize in order to ensure the public that in future he will abstain from the inappropriate behaviour which initiated the call for his apology. How the offender can influence public apologetic discourse in his favour has been analysed in closer detail by Benoit and his various co-authors (e.g., 1994, 1997a, 1997b, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008). Benoit's theory of image repair work, which is the base of all these case studies, will now be explained.

#### **4.4 Image Repair Discourse<sup>50</sup>**

While Ellwanger's discussion of public apologetic discourse is located in the field of sociology (it deals with apology as a tool for clarifying and reaffirming the norms and values of society and the use of apology for reaffirming a transgressor's membership in a group – interests, which according to Ingham (2007: 6) fall in the study of sociology), we are now analysing public

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50 Five years after publishing his theory of *image restoration*, Benoit (2000: 40) claims that he sees the term image repair as more appropriate because “'restoration' might imply that one's image has been restored to its prior state”. In his later publications (e.g. 2002) he uses both terms alternately, but in his most recent papers (e.g. 2009) he writes of *image repair* exclusively.

apology as a tool of crisis management in public relations.

It is widely believed that the most valuable commodity an organization has is its reputation (Amiso & Evuleocha 2003: 11). Therefore it is not surprising that numerous researchers work on finding how reputation can be protected and repaired (e.g. Amiso & Evuleocha 2003; Benoit 1995; Coombs 1998; Frantz & Bennis 2005; Hearit 2006; McLaughlin, Cody & O'Hair 1983). The two approaches which I find to be most pertinent to this thesis are Benoit's (1995) and Coombs' (1998). Benoit's theory is appropriate because it considers the image repair work of organizations and individual public figures alike and gives advice to both when possible.<sup>51</sup> Coombs criticises and elaborates upon Benoit's theory and empirically examines some of his conclusions. Therefore, it is their insights that are dealt with in the following paragraphs:

The fact that image is essential to organizations as well as to individuals is the key premise to Benoit's study and often emphasized at the beginning of his articles (cf. Benoit 1997a, 1997b, 1999, etc.). Image repair theory is based on the two assumptions that communication is a goal-oriented activity and that the maintenance of a favourable image is a primary goal of communication (Benoit 1995: 93). Benoit (1999: 145) describes *image* as “the perception of a person (or group, or organization [sic]) held by others” and argues that it “is influenced by one’s own words and actions, as well as by the discourse and behavior of others” (ibid.). Having a positive image (or reputation) is “important to our emotional well-being” as well as “in our dealings with others” (1999: 146) and therefore, whenever our image is at threat, we attempt to repair it (ibid.). According to image repair theory, our image is threatened under the following conditions: an offensive act has occurred and one is accused of being responsible for that act (Benoit: 1997b). Benoit (ibid.) further claims that it is not a condition that one is actually responsible for the act – as long as one is thought to be responsible, one's image is at risk: “perceptions”, Benoit argues, “are more important than reality” (ibid.).<sup>52</sup>

Image repair theory focuses on the *message options* the accused has when facing a crisis (1997b: 178) and names five general rhetorical options to those who need to repair a damaged image: denial, evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification

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51 This differentiates it from the work of many others (e.g. Hearit (1997, 2006,...), Amiso & Evuleocha (2003)) which focuses on image repair by corporations only. Corporate image repair work is a very interesting topic but it is out of the range of this thesis to devote space to solely this aspect.

52 Also Blumstein et.al (1974: 558) conclude that “people do not react so much to what we do, but rather to the interpretation we provide for our acts”. Meier (2004: 11) applies this conclusion to apologies and argues that by “assigning an interpretation to our misdeeds, [apologies][...]assume a great deal of power”.

(Blaney & Benoit 2001: 16). As some strategies have subcategories, Benoit offers the accused a total of fourteen specific options for repairing their image.<sup>53</sup> These options are outlined in table 1.

**Table 1 Benoit's Image Repair Strategies in Blaney & Benoit (2001: 16)**

Strategy	Key Characteristic	Example
<i>Denial</i>		
Simple Denial	Did not perform act	I did not do it
Shift the blame	Another performed act	My accountant did it
<i>Evading Responsibility</i>		
Provocation	Response to another's act	Opponent attacked first
Defeasibility	Lack of information/ability	Did not know about bill
Accident	Mishap	Miscalculation was an accident
Good Intentions	Meant well	Tried to reduce deficit
<i>Reducing offensiveness of event</i>		
Bolstering	Stress good traits	Look at accomplishments
Minimization	Act not serious	Only twenty million
Differentiation	Less offensive than similar acts	Not a tax increase, a revenue enhancer
Transcendence	More important values	Tax evasion as protest, not dishonesty
Attack accuser	Reduce accuser's credibility	Witness is a liar
Compensation	Reimburse victim	Return illegal funds
<i>Corrective action</i>	Plan to solve/prevent recurrence of a problem	New policy on accepting campaign contributions
<i>Mortification</i>	Apologize	I'm very sorry

Len-Ríos & Benoit (2004: 96) emphasize that all these strategies pursue the common aim of self-defence, or, in another word, apologia. According to this categorization, mortification (which subsumes statements accepting responsibility for the offensive act, apologizing and/or asking for forgiveness) is one of fourteen strategies for self-defence in a crisis.

#### **4.4.1 Terminological discord: Image reparation vs. public apologies**

The fact that Benoit names *apologize* as the key characteristic of mortification does not go well

<sup>53</sup> Benoit (1997c: 155) claims to have based his work on the three key approaches to image restoration, i.e. Burke (1970), Ware & Linkugel (1973) and Scott & Lyman (1968). His approach, he argues, offers a balance between the extremes of too few and too many options for image repair.

with Ellwanger's view on the topic. Ellwanger insists that *apology* is synonymous with *image repair* writ large, because apology contains all the aspects of regret and defence and aims at resolving a dispute, regardless of which aspect is in the foreground. As mentioned above, Ellwanger (2009: 36) advocates the use of the term apology as “any discourse that responds to crisis” - implying that all of Benoit's image repair strategies are sub-categories of apology, and not, as outlined by Benoit, “alternatives to apology for maintaining one's image” (Ellwanger 2009: 36).

As I see it, this discrepancy is only one of terminology: What Benoit calls *apology* and deals with under the name of *mortification* is the same concept that Ellwanger understands as *apology of regret*. Because Ellwanger encourages an “inclusive view of apology” (2009: 35), he would like to see *apology* used as an umbrella term for all image repair strategies. On the one hand, I agree that it makes sense to unite the two historically separated aspects of apology under their mutual name and regard apology as a concept that contains regret and defence. But, on the other hand, the term *apology* nowadays is widely understood as apology of regret only – meaning that whenever one deals with *apology* one has to clarify whether it is used in its ordinary sense as remorseful apology or in a broader sense including all strategies that can be used to achieve reconciliation. Interestingly enough, this issue was also relevant nearly twenty years earlier, when Meier (1992: 48) decides which term she would use to refer to “speech phenomena which serve the same intent (i.e. image maintenance)”. She discards *apology* because of “the potential confusion with *apologize* used as a performative verb and its subsequent use as a cover-term for a broader range of strategies one of which is often also labelled 'apology'” (ibid.). Her other option, remedial work, she finds inappropriate because of the frameworks and studies that it is associated with. Thus, she decides to stick to *Repair Work*, a term which she finds to be uninfluenced by previous concepts.

At this stage I would like to make the point that the term *apology* has not only evolved until it reached the meaning that we are acquainted with today, but it is still evolving. There is no reason to assume that it has reached its final meaning now, especially in regard to the current effort (Ellwanger 2009: 35f) put into finding and establishing *apology's* appropriate use in academic discourse. In the context of this thesis one view of *apology* needs to be established and I will argue that apology as an umbrella term for image repair work is the most sensible concept here. This is, because the focus of this thesis lies in apologies given in the public realm in order to repair the image of the offender. The research I have done so far (e.g. Harris, Grainger &

Mullany 2006, Ellwanger 2009) warns me that only a very small proportion of these apologies is likely to be of the sincere and remorseful kind as praised by Lazare (2004), Gill (2000) and others. The majority of offenders will apply all the strategies at hand (defence, accounts, justifications, regret, etc.) in order to repair their image. However, the offended will not call for the offender to do some image repair work but for him to offer a public apology. In order to analyse open-mindedly the 'public apologies' that follow these calls and the larger discourse that surrounds them, I need a framework that allows for this and does not force a bilateral distinction between *successful apologies* that allow for reconciliation and *failed apologies* that do not abide by the guidelines for apologies as laid out by researchers. Therefore, *public apology* with all its different strategies is the focus of my thesis.

#### **4.4.2 Advice on image reparation**

Having established which strategies exist for repairing one's image, Benoit analyses the image repair discourse of various corporations, e.g. AT&T (Benoit & Brinson 1994), Texaco (Brinson & Benoit 1999) and Firestone (Blaney, Benoit & Brazeal 2002); and public figures, e.g. Hugh Grant (Benoit 1997a), Queen Elizabeth (Benoit & Brinson 1999), Bill Clinton (Blaney & Benoit 2001) and President Bush (Benoit & Henson 2009). He uses the conclusions drawn from these examples, together with results from a study concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of image repair strategies (Benoit & Drew 1997c) to offer the following assumptions as to which strategies are helpful in certain situations.

##### **4.4.2.1 Specifications in regard to the offender's profession**

Let us start with Benoit's (1997a) distinction of entertainment image repair from political image repair. He argues that politicians have to worry about attacks from opposition parties – and even from political leaders of the same party who want to “avoid getting tainted” (Len-Ríos & Benoit 2004: 104) – something that is irrelevant for entertainers who do not have to expect accusations from other entertainers. Also, a politician's opposition would be interested in keeping the offence in the public eye for as long as possible<sup>54</sup>, hoping that the voters will remember this incident at the next elections. An entertainer need not worry about such attempts either. The most relevant difference Benoit points out is that the way an entertainer performs her job has “no serious impact on our lives” (1997a: 255). Politicians, however, “make decisions on a daily basis that affect all of their constituents” and potentially decide between the saving or spending

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54 And gives the example of the Whitewater hearings as the longest in U.S. history (1997a: 255).

of huge amounts of money (ibid.). Therefore, admitting responsibility for a serious mistake can have serious consequences for the future career of a politician, but not for the career of an entertainer, meaning that mortification as an image repair strategy is probably more advisable for entertainers than for politicians.

Benoit also outlines how entertainment image repair is different from corporate image repair. The key difference, he argues, lies in the fact that corporations are not people who have a private life in which they could perform offensive speech or actions. Only its employees can do such things, and employees can be replaced - they are separate from the corporation. An entertainer, however, “can't fire himself, [and] can't easily distance himself from his own acts.” (1997a: 256). Further, he argues that even though to a lesser extent than politicians, companies still have to expect attacks from competing companies and gives the cola wars (Pepsi-Cola vs. Coca-cola, Benoit 1995) as an example. Entertainers, on the other hand, are less likely to battle each other. Also, corporations (like for example airlines) and their decisions have influence on the lives of people – thus leaving mortification as a less attractive option for corporate repair work. Benoit further points out that a corporation is likely to “face litigations along with the threat to its image” which restricts it in its choice of image repair strategy, because using mortification would risk “providing evidence of guilt for plaintiffs suing them” (1997a: 256).

#### **4.4.2.2 *Remorseful apology in image repair work***

The issue of remorseful apology (which is also referred to as contritious/ regretful apology or apology of regret) in public discourse has provoked discussions and research with a particular focus on the question of whether lawyers should advise accused companies or individuals to offer a regretful apology. On one hand, it is argued that it can soothe the feelings of the offended, promote settlement and therefore prevent a lawsuit from being filed. On the other hand, there is the fear that the statement of apology will be admissible at trial and that jurors and judges take it as an admission of responsibility. (Robbennolt 2003: 461). While Japanese (legal) culture considers remorseful apology to be “an integral part of every resolution of conflict” (ibid.) and thus also encourages apology in court, US legal culture is said to discourage apology on the grounds that “paying the damages or accepting punishment ends further responsibility and that there is no need for personal contrition or apology” (Wagatsuma & Rosett 1986: 462). However, with the growing awareness of the healing power of remorseful apology, it has been argued that apology should start playing a role in US legislation (Taft 2000, Robbennolt 2003, Cohen 1999). But because an apology contains an admission of responsibility that the offended may use

against the accused in court, lawyers frequently advise their clients against giving an apology.

In order to give the defendant an option to say that they are sorry without having to fear consequences, attempts have been made to establish *safe harbours* or *safe apologies* as part of the US legal system. So far, expressions of sympathy – like *I am sorry you have been hurt* – are “inadmissible as evidence of an admission of liability” (Robbennolt 2003: 471) in some US states,<sup>55</sup> and it has even been considered protecting all components of a remorseful apology (i.e., expression of sympathy and responsibility) from being allowed as evidence in court (ibid.). The discussion of the pros and cons of such safe harbours have led to different conclusions. Taft (2000), argues that a person who is truly repentant would not avoid the consequences of her actions but accept them as part of the authentic expression of contrition. Safe apologies, in contrast, support offenders in the use of apology for mere strategic purposes. Taft claims that

[w]hen the apology is shrouded with legal protection, when it cannot be considered an admission, when no legal consequence can attach to the party through the apology, apologetic discourse moves from potential to actual corruption. The moral process of apology in such a protected environment is now subverted (2000: 1156).

This claim is repeated by Cohen (1999: 1067) who argues that an apology sounds empty if it is uttered with the precondition that it must not be used to make the apologizer pay for his offence. Wagatsuma and Rosett (1986: 487) also share this opinion when they state that an apology which does not offer reparation is hollow. But there is also another line of argument to be considered: Cohen (1999) claims that safe apologies can help prevent needless conflict by allowing the offender to apologize and thus avoid “the insult of not saying one is sorry from adding to the already existing injury” (1999: 1067). He argues that safe apologies convey two separate messages: First, an admission of wrongdoing and regret, and second, the invitation to have a “*different* conversation about liability” (1999: 1068, original emphasis). Thus, in his point of view, an apology should be able to be given without worries about legal issues, and the question of reparation dealt with separately. Cohen (1999: 1022) further emphasizes the importance of an early apology to calm down the victim's anger and claims that the risk that is involved in giving an apology (i.e., providing proof of one's liability) may be beaten by the risk that not apologizing brings along (i.e., that the victim sees a lawsuit as the only option to calm down anger and receive justice). To conclude, a safe apology can be seen as a kind of safety net for the offender – it allows him to be perceived as being sorry and responsible without having to stand up for these

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55 I.e., in Massachusetts (which was the first state to allow for this rule in 1986), Texas (1999), California (2000), Florida (2001) and Washington (2002) (Robbennolt 2003: 471).

statements in court. While some see such safe apologies as morally wrong, others welcome them as means to prevent unnecessary lawsuits.

Even without such judicial background (i.e., without safe apologies), it has been argued, apologizing is less of a threat than has previously been assumed (cf. Ingham 2007: 22). Patel & Reinisch state that

[w]hile an apology might strengthen a plaintiff's case (to the disadvantage of the apologist), the evidence indicates that an apology has equal, or even greater, potential to make a positive contribution to an apologist's legal strategy. (2003: 9f)

Also keeping concerns for possible litigation in mind, Benoit (1997b: 183) advises companies that are at fault to admit this fault immediately. In the analyses of various image repair discourses (e.g. Texaco (Brinson & Benoit 1999), AT&T (Benoit & Brinson 1994) Hugh Grant (Benoit 1997b), etc.), mortification – combined with other strategies – has been found to be an effective image repair strategy which “can be vital to image restoration efforts” (Len-Ríos & Benoit 2004: 104).

#### **4.4.2.3      *Mortification and corrective action in image repair work***

It has been argued that mortification on its own is only acceptable when it comes from individuals and that institutions who use this strategy are expected to present corrective action<sup>56</sup> along with it (Courtright & Hearit 2002: 355). In various case studies (i.a., AT&T (Benoit & Brinson 1994), Texaco (Brinson & Benoit 1999), President Reagan (Benoit, Gullifor & Panici 1991) corrective action has been found to be a strategy that works well together with mortification. A combination of these strategies is advised especially to those “who are forced to take responsibility for a problem” (Benoit & Brinson 1994: 87) but nevertheless Benoit warns that the application of both strategies cannot assure success (Benoit 1997b: 184). In particular companies who want to fight a legal battle should abstain from using these strategies (Brinson & Benoit 1999: 507). To further support the results of these case studies Benoit conducts an empirical study to find which image repair strategies work best in interpersonal conflict situations. This study shows mortification and corrective action to be more useful than any other option (Benoit 1997c: 159).

#### **4.4.2.4      *Criticism of the advice given on the basis of image repair analysis***

Most of Benoit's conclusions are built on case studies and this implies certain limitations:

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<sup>56</sup> “Corrective action can take two forms: fixing the damage from the wrongful act and/or taking steps to assure that the problem never occurs again” (Blaney, Benoit & Brazeal 2002)

As he admits himself, case studies only focus “on the source, on the source's options, and on discourse (texts) from the sources” (Benoit 2000:40). This makes their findings very specific and it has been argued that Benoit's results are a conjecture and his conclusions cannot be generalized (Sheldon & Sallot 2009: 28). Other critics of image repair theory point out that it “is actually a taxonomy and not a true theory in the sense of making predictions” (Coombs & Schmidt 2000). They argue that its strength lies in identifying the strategies used in crisis situations but certainly not in interpreting the success of these strategies. This is, they claim, because no guidelines for researchers are established to judge the success of a strategy and therefore there is no hard evidence to support the researchers' findings (2000: 165).

Being sceptical of the results of the Texaco case study (Brinson & Benoit 1999), Coombs & Schmidt (2000) conduct an empirical study in order to investigate the usefulness of Brinson & Benoit's results - in particular concerning the supposed superior role of mortification and corrective action in image reparation (in comparison to bolstering, shifting blame and separation<sup>57</sup>) (1999: 507). The next chapter deals with the concept on which this study is based and its results.

**4.4.2.5 A different view on image repair work: Coombs' defensive-accommodative continuum of crisis-response strategies**

Coombs (1998) takes various crisis-response strategies developed by other researchers<sup>58</sup> and groups them into seven categories which he places on a defensive-accommodative continuum. “The responses on the defensive end of the continuum seek to protect the organization [and deny the crisis], whereas the responses on the accommodative end seek to address victim concerns [and accept responsibility]” (Coombs 2001: 165). See figure 1 for the strategies and their place on the continuum.

**Figure 1: Defensive-accommodative continuum of crisis-response strategies (Coombs 1998: 189, grey text added from the running text)**

<b>Defensive</b>	
Weak perception of crisis responsibility	<p>- Attack accuser</p> <p>aggressively denying claims of a crisis and punishing the accuser</p>

**Figure 2: Continuum for the analysis of crisis situations (Coombs 1998: 189)**

<b>Weak personal control</b>
<p>- Natural Disaster</p>

57 Separation is not part of the original image repair strategies but is introduced in Brinson & Benoit (1999: 504) as a special form of *shifting the blame*.

58 Cf. Coombs (1998: 179) for further information



the legal risk which a full apology implies because any other victim-centred accommodative theory can achieve the same social effects (2000: 176). A similar study conducted by Coombs & Holladay (2008) also comes to the conclusion that “sympathy and compensation can be just as effective in producing a favorable reaction from stakeholders who are not victims of the crisis” (2008: 255).

Coombs sees the final goal of his research in giving useful advice to crisis managers (Coombs 1998: 178). To do so, he provides them with the means to identify the characteristics of the crisis situation and the means to choose appropriate response strategies. Crisis responsibility appears to him to be the “natural link between crisis situation and CCS [i.e., crisis communication strategies]” (Coombs 1998: 180). Therefore he devises a continuum with endpoints of low and high personal control<sup>59</sup>, on which crisis types can be placed (cf. figure 2). Coombs argues, that once a crisis is identified according to “the degree to which the organization itself could control the crisis event” (1998: 182), a second factor needs to be considered. This factor is called *performance history*; it describes whether the company is dealing with a one-time crisis or whether there have been crises before. Negative performance history (i.e., there have been crises before) intensifies “perceptions of crisis responsibility and image damage for the accident and transgression crisis types” (1998: 187), implying that an accident or transgression which is part of a history of accidents or transgressions needs to be located closer to the high responsibility end of the crisis continuum. Coombs admits that this system of analysing a crisis is crude (Coombs & Holladay 2001: 322) but claims that nevertheless it can help crisis managers choose an appropriate response strategy: When an organization is perceived to be responsible for the crisis, accommodative strategies are advised – if not, defensive strategies are claimed to be useful. Thus, once the crisis type is identified on the scale, the appropriate crisis communication strategy can be found in figure 1. Coombs (1998: 190) argues that this system helps crisis managers respond fast to a crisis – and that fast responses are useful, is, as far as I found, one of the few undisputed aspects in crisis communication research (cf. Conlon 1996: 1051, 1053; Brinson & Benoit 1999: 504).

Having gained an insight into the concepts relevant for organizations and individuals in need of image work, I will now move on to the practical part of this thesis.

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<sup>59</sup> Personal control is the control and responsibility that an organization itself has over the crisis event (Coombs 1998: 182)

## II. The study

### 5 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to analyse the speech act of apology in public apologetic discourse in Austria and the United Kingdom and compare possible differences in how public apology is being used. It builds on the proposition that there is a connection between language and society, and that this connection is also valid in the area of public apology. By analysing public apologetic speech, I hope to come to conclusions that provide further insight into what kind of values are of importance in each culture.

Further, I am interested in the notion that dealing with the public (e.g. with customers, consumers or the public at large) is more carefully handled in the UK than it is in Austria. Meier's (1992: 93) conclusion that Austrians are more self-oriented in restoring their image than Americans are (Americans were found to verbally express more concern for the hearer) can be seen as supportive of this idea. By analysing public apologetic speech, I hope to be able to come up with assumptions regarding this topic. First, however, it is important to see what kind of research has already been done in this area and which conclusions have been drawn.

### 6 Previous Research

My research builds on the premise that there is a connection between language and society. This premise is widely-supported, for example by Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984: 197), who assume that cross-cultural variability is one of at least three factors influencing a speaker's choice in speech act realization.<sup>60</sup> Another proponent of such an assumption, Wierzbicka (1985a), claims that “communicative behaviors cannot be fully understood without reference to cultural values” like “relational harmony and communication styles” (Park 2009: 69). She further argues that social attitudes and the style of social interaction can be revealed through language (1986a: 352) and that the following four aspects of language are particularly culturally revealing: “1) forms of address; 2) expressive derivation; 3) illocutionary devices of different kinds, such as interjections and particles; and 4) speech act verbs” (ibid.). When dealing with speech act verbs, such as *apologize*, Wierzbicka analyses how exactly the speech act verb is used in a certain culture applying her semantic metalanguage (cf. chapter 3.1.2) and investigates whether it is used in other cultures as well and which differences exist.<sup>61</sup>

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60 The other two factors are intra-cultural situational variability and individual variability (ibid.).

61 She found, e.g., that *apologize* has no equivalent in Aboriginal culture and offers an explanation for why this is

Other researchers focus on how apology strategies, usage and frequencies vary according to culture and how being unaware of these cultural differences in apology behaviour can “lead an individual in one culture to appear an incompetent communicator in another culture” (Park & Guan 2009: 66). It has been argued that while a language learner's phonological, syntactic and lexical errors are justified with the learner's low command of the foreign language and easily being forgiven, this is not the case with pragmatic inadequacies. These, in the eyes of native speakers, are often seen as rude behaviour (Dalmau & Gotor 2007: 288)<sup>62</sup>. Thus, an apology which “is not offered in the socially correct manner, [...] might result in increased resentment” (Gibney & Howard-Hassman 2008: 7). In order to better understand which differences exist and to help language learners communicate effectively in the second language, researchers have examined the realisation patterns of apologies (i.e., apology strategies) and the role of contextual factors (e.g., the severity of the offence or the relationship between the interlocutors) influencing the choice of strategy (cf. Deutschmann 2003: 47).

### **6.1.1 Research on private Apologies**

Mono-cultural studies have investigated private apologies in, amongst others, the following languages: Akan (Obeng 1999), American English (Bean & Johnstone 1994), Austrian German (Meier 1997), British English (Aijmer 1995, Deutschmann 2003, Davies, Merrison & Goddard 2007, Owen 1983), German (Vollmer & Olshtain 1989), Fijian (Hickson 1986), Indonesian (Wouk 2006), Mexican Spanish (Wagner 2004), New Zealand English (Holmes 1990), Persian (Afghari 2007, Shariati 2007), Sudanese Arabic (Nuredden 2008), Tunisian Arabic (Jehabi 2011) and Vanuato (Meyerhoff 1999).

Studies which compare private apologies cross-culturally include comparisons of British English to Danish (Trosborg 1987) and German (House 1989); American English to Austrian German (Meier 1992), Chinese (Park & Guan 2009), Chinese and Korean (Guan, Park & Lee 2009), Hebrew (Cohen & Olshtain 1981), Jordanian Arabic (Baitaneh & Baitaneh 2008), Polish and Hungarian (Suczcyńska 1999), Singaporean and Australian (Wong 2002)<sup>63</sup> and Venezuelan Spanish (García 1989); and English to Setswana (Kasanga & Lwanga-Lumu 2007), English to Italian (Lipson 1994) and South Korean to Australian (Kim 2007). Further, a number of studies has compared apologies of EFL students to apologies of native speakers of English, mainly focusing on the transfer of sociopragmatic strategies from the native to the foreign language. In

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(cf. Wierzbicka 1986a: 365).

<sup>62</sup> This idea is also expressed in Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984: 196)

<sup>63</sup> Wong does not focus on the apology itself but on the reaction towards apology in service settings.

this area data includes analyses of Catalan (Dalmau & Gotor 2007), Chinese (Chang 2010), Danish (Trosborg 1987), German (House 1989) Hebrew (Cohen & Olshtain 1981), Jordanian (Baitaneh & Baitaneh 2006) and South Korean EFL apologies (Kim 2008). Of particular interest for this thesis is the data concerning British and (Austrian) German apologies, which is discussed in the following chapters.

#### **6.1.1.1 Findings on British English private apology**

Analysing which forms “remedial moves” made by British speakers take, Owen (1983) finds that forms explicitly containing the words *apology*, *apologies* or *apologize* (type i) are rarely used in spoken English (1983: 63f), while remedial moves including the key word *sorry* (type ii) are the most common types (1983: 65). The third type of remedial moves are expressions using *I'm afraid* (type iii), which according to Owen (1983: 88f) are “less clear-cut” than the other two cases. Native speakers asked to label these three types describe expressions of the first group as *full-blown apologies*, and expressions of type iii as *apologetic*.

In Britain, the use of apology “may be a way of signalling your social identity linguistically” concludes Deutschmann (2003: 206), and argues that “its use is primarily part of a middle-class sociolect” (ibid.). Further, apology may be a way of signalling high status: Deutschmann (2003: 208) finds that “relatively powerful speakers were seen to apologise more to those with relatively less power than vice versa” and argues that such downward politeness is used in egalitarian societies as a sign of solidarity towards social inferiors (2003: 209). Thus, it “paradoxically becomes a linguistic marker of power” (ibid.). Deutschmann further finds that the presence or absence of an audience affects the use of apology form (i.e., more participants in a conversation lead to a more frequent use of apology) (2003: 206), and concludes that apology is being used as a politeness formula in public situations with the aim of “presenting oneself as ‘respectable’” (ibid.). This is backed up by Deutschmann's finding that an apology given in front of a larger audience often functions as a “disarmer of statements which somehow contradicted the opinions expressed by another interlocutor ” (2003: 210).

#### **6.1.1.2 Findings on Austrian German private apology**

So far, apology behaviour in Austrian German has not been very well researched. I encountered two studies dealing with Austrian apology (Meier 1992 and 1997). This is what they find:

First, it has been concluded that “an interplay of factors (e.g., symmetry in the interlocutor relationship, chances of future interaction, face-to-face contact, and perceived

seriousness of the offense)” is relevant for the choice of repair work strategy (Meier 1997: 200f). Seriousness of offence by itself is not as connected to the choice of apology strategy as has been thought. Meier's data refutes the claim that a more serious offence calls for a more elaborate apology (1997: 201). Rather, in Austrian German the situation perceived as most serious is the one which most frequently elicited no response at all.

Further, Meier finds that routine formulae (i.e., “highly conventional forms that could hardly be construed as anything other than RW”, e.g. *Es tut mir leid.*) are most frequently used in asymmetrical relationships, something that she claims has also been found valid for German speakers by Vollmer & Olshtain (1989) (1997: 201). Another similarity in data of Austrian (Meier 1992: 87) and German (House 1989: 322) speakers also regards the use of routine formulae. German speakers use a greater variety of formulae to apologize when compared to English speakers, who use “one highly routinized all-purpose token (*sorry*) with overriding frequency” (House 1989).

### **6.1.1.3 English and German apology compared**

Comparing the speech act of apology between speakers of Austrian German and American English, Meier (1992) finds that the main difference lies in the orientation of the speaker to the hearer. “Austrians most often employ[...] a strategy of “bringing” the H[earer] to the S[peaker], whereby the onus is put on H to see things S's way, to step into S's shoes. This is in contrast to S moving towards H, involving a more H-supportive orientation” (1992: 83).

Further, Meier (1992: 89) finds that Austrians use excuses more than Americans do and argues that reasons for this may lie in the country's political history:

The more one can plead lack of responsibility, the less one can be held to blame. Where there is less personal choice, there is in turn less personal responsibility (cf. Ringel 1991:17). The former Habsburg Monarchy, in establishing a tradition of state provision and imposing a myriad of rules and regulations upon its 'children,' limited personal choice, and thus, personal responsibility (cf. Ringel 1991:17). (Meier 1992: 90)

House, however, finds that German speakers express responsibility more frequently than English speakers do. She describes German apologetic behaviour in the following way:

German subjects tend to be more verbose, selecting more self-directed strategies (such as grounding and justifying moves) in their attempt to express responsibility for an offence, and in general use expressions of responsibility more frequently than English speakers. (2006a: 251)

But House uses only data acquired from German speakers in Germany. This supports the idea

that there are fundamental differences in the speech behaviour of Austrians and Germans, because a preference for excuses (which admit the wrongfulness of the act, but not one's responsibility for it) and a preference for expressions of responsibility are not easily combined under the name of one German communicative style. Whether one German communicative style can be argued for in other cases is discussed in the next chapter.

#### **6.1.1.4 English and German communicative styles compared**

House (2006a) provides an insight into the cultural differences in communicative styles “preferred by members of the German and Anglophone linguistic and cultural communities”. Such broad terms include native speakers from all over the world and therefore also Austrian speakers of German and British speakers of English. However, the studies that are referred to throughout this paper analyse German German culture and language (House 1996, 1998, 2006b) and the question arises whether conclusions drawn about the German variety of German language and culture are relevant for the Austrian variety of German language and culture as well.

Arguments can be found for both sides. On the one hand, Meier (1992) assumes that the values held by Austrians may be closer to those of its Slavic neighbours than to those of German German speakers – which implies that German German data is not helpful for providing insights into Austrian culture. Also, the results on apologetic behaviour by Meier (1992) and House (2006a), as discussed above, lead to believe that Austrian and German communicative behaviour differs. On the other hand, Meier (1992) does find similarities between German German and Austrian German, which could be interpreted as a hint of similarity in cultural background. Therefore the question arises whether, under the proviso that the researcher does not blindly trust the data, parts of the conclusions drawn about German German can be consulted when dealing with Austrian German.

I believe that at least some of House's (2006a) conclusions are valid for all German speakers. An example to support this belief is her assumption based on the lack of a German word for *small talk*. House found German speakers to be “generally less likely and less willing to engage in 'small talk'” than the English speakers and argues that the lack of “an equivalent German expression” for *small talk* is indicative of that behaviour. As there is also no equivalent expression for *small talk* in Austrian German, this could mean that her thoughts on that particular aspect of vocabulary are valid for Austrian German speakers as well. Another example supporting this belief deals with the German interpretation of rules. House claims that German

people see them as “fixed and valid, regardless of non-predictable, changing circumstances”. To explain, she tells us about German bike paths which are for cyclists only (even if no cyclist is in sight) and the Germans' affinity to stick to this rule and point it out to people who are breaking it. A similar behaviour has been observed in the Austrian culture by Haywood & Walker (2008), authors of the lonely planet guide. They advise: “Don't cross the traffic lights when the figure is red, even when there is no traffic in sight. Austrians rarely do it, and the cops can instantly fine you for jaywalking” (2008: 41). These examples may show that there are some values held dear by both German and Austrian culture. Most importantly, however, House (2006: 249) herself states that her paper deals with the “German linguistic and cultural community”; a community which includes Austria. In the hope that her work is, partly, a resource to fall back on when considering my cases I will now provide an overview of her thoughts on German and Anglo-Saxon language behaviour.

To begin with, I will cite the paragraph which sums up her conclusions on German language behaviour. House argues that

being polite in German often involves saying what one means and meaning what one says (directness); engaging more and sooner in ‘serious talk’ than carefully preparing the ground for such seriousness with ‘small talk’ (focus on content); focussing in detail on matters relating to both self and the topic in hand (orientation towards self and content); and linking utterances with their specific content in certain speech events (ad hoc formulation). (2006: 263)

She presents these thoughts in the following dimensions of cross-cultural differences between English and German (figure 3).

**Figure 3: Dimensions of cross-cultural differences (German – English) (House 2006: 252)**

<b>German</b>		<b>English</b>
Directness	↔	Indirectness
Orientation towards Self	↔	Orientation towards other
Orientation towards Content	↔	Orientation towards Addressees
Explicitness	↔	Implicitness
<i>Ad-hoc</i> Formulation	↔	Verbal Routines

The German preference for direct speech can be seen in the unproblematic use of the imperative form in German. In German, the imperative is used without causing offence. To “members of the Anglophone cultures”, however, the imperative sounds unfriendly, rude or even aggressive

argues House (2006: 255).<sup>64</sup> Also Wierzbicka (1985: 150), who compares Anglo-Saxon to Polish culture, finds that there are heavy restrictions on the use of the imperative in English. Further, Wierzbicka describes Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition the following way:

[It is] a tradition which places special emphasis on the rights and the autonomy of every individual, which abhors interference in other people's affairs (*It is none of my business*), which is tolerant of individual idiosyncrasies and peculiarities, which respects everyone's privacy, which approves of compromises and disapproves of dogmatism of any kind. (1985: 150)

German speakers are also found to be more explicit in conveying messages, and are said to prioritize the content of their message over the addressees' feelings (House 2006: 256). Further, House claims that German speakers expect their interlocutors to mean what they say<sup>65</sup> (2006: 257f), just as they themselves mean what they say and say what they want (2006: 258). She also argues that German speakers do not use verbal routines as frequently as English speakers do, which the latter consider unfriendly, especially in service situations (where they miss the verbal concern expressed in addressee-centred routine formulae like *How are you?*) (2006: 256). These characteristics, as portrayed in figure 3, stand in contrast to what is deemed as polite by speakers of English. Further differences, according to House, regard the “Anglo-Saxon ‘Etiquette of Simulation’“ which implies

that one ‘must sound (and act) as if one meant it’ when expressing, for instance, thanks, apologies, compliments and other ‘face-lifts’ [...]. This kind of effective ‘impression management’ tends to be both underdeveloped and less strongly valued by German speakers. (2006: 263)

To conclude, I would like to remind the reader that all the differences pointed out in this chapter are assumptions and hypotheses, as the authors themselves readily admit (e.g. House 1996: 358). Nevertheless, it is assumptions like these that can help support cultural understanding and enlighten cultural clashes (Wierzbicka 1985: 177) – which makes them “vital to human concerns” (1991: 283).

### **6.1.2 Research on public apologies**

The spectrum and use of apologetic strategies has also been investigated in the area of public apologies with the aid of examples taken from various areas of public interest – apologies from

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64 It needs to be mentioned that Wierzbicka (1985: 175) explicitly warns against the use of “terms such as ‘directness’ or ‘indirectness’” as they are “much too general, much too vague to be really safe in cross-cultural studies, unless the specific nature of a given cultural norm is spelled out”.

65 E.g., when exchanging numbers and promising a call, a German speaker would take the promise literally and expect the call, whereas a British/American speaker would simply understand this as an indication meaning “I am well disposed to you” (House 1996: 353).

religious institutions (Hearit 2004, etc.), state institutions (Roberts 2006, etc. ), corporations (Benoit 2002, etc. ), and figures of public interest (Benoit 1999, etc.) have been investigated. Researchers like Benoit (1995), Coombs (1998) and Hearit (1997) aim to draw conclusions as to which strategies work best in certain scenarios and give advice to those who need to apologize in public.

Interest has also been taken in analysing the role of public apology cross-culturally. Such efforts include the comparison of US-American and Israeli public apology speeches (Liebersohn 2003), the analysis of apologies between US-American and Chinese diplomats (Glinert 2010, Zhang 2001), the public apology that the Japanese prime minister directed to the Chinese in 2005 (Mok & Tokunaga 2009) and the analysis of the misunderstandings between Japan and the UK concerning Japan's apology to the UK in 1995 (Murata 1998). However, I have not encountered a study that examined cross-cultural public apology between Austria and the United Kingdom.

## **7 Research approach and design**

In the course of this study I will analyse public apologies<sup>66</sup> (and the surrounding discourse) by public entities in Austria and the United Kingdom in response to similar crisis situations for which they are directly responsible. By doing so, I will strive to answer the following research questions: Which differences are there in public apologetic discourse between Austria and the UK? Can these differences be linked and explained in context with conclusions drawn from research on each culture's singularities? I will now explain how I aim to find answers to these questions.

### **7.1 Method**

This study aims at exploring a so-far not very well researched area (i.e., cultural differences in public apologetic discourse between Austria and the UK) which is why a qualitative study is the most appropriate method. Qualitative research, as Dörnyei (2007: 39) points out, is “an effective way of exploring new, uncharted areas” and providing a repertoire of possible interpretations of human experience (rather than providing a generalizable correct interpretation) – thus making it a useful tool for researchers who venture on a “journey into the unknown” (2007: 40). Drawbacks of qualitative research are that it can only provide an insight into a phenomenon and that its specific conditions and insights probably do not apply broadly to others (2007: 41). Also, because of lack of methodological rigour, qualitative studies can appear unprincipled and fuzzy;

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66 As defined in chapter 4.4.1

and the results of qualitative research depend on the perceptions of the researchers – they are always influenced by her biases and idiosyncrasies. Another problematic aspect is called *anecdotalism*. It describes the fact that the researcher has to state convincingly that her findings are based on critical investigation and not dependent on a few well chosen examples (Silverman 2005: 211).

In order to conduct a useful study despite such restrictions, the qualitative researcher has to ensure that quality criteria are heeded: The researcher must strive to assess and document the legitimacy of the findings. Also, as the researcher herself is the instrument of the study, she has to convince the audience that she is a scholar with principled standards and integrity (2007: 56, 59). She should identify her own biases and the role they play in her conclusions. She should also give alternative explanations a fair hearing and explicitly point out aspects that run counter to the conclusion of the study (2007: 59). Further, she should offer a detailed and reflective account of the steps taken to achieve the results and present the findings in rich contextualised detail (*ibid.*).

The best method available to answer my research questions appears to be a case study. Dörnyei (2007: 155) states that it is “an excellent method for obtaining a thick description of a complex social issue embedded within a cultural context”. There are three types of case study (Stake 1995: 3): First, the intrinsic case study, which deals with a case which is interesting because of its own value. As Baxter & Jack (2008: 548) point out, the intent in intrinsic case study is to better understand the case itself and not some “abstract constructs or generic phenomenon”. Second, there is the instrumental case study, which provides insight into a wider issue while the actual case is of secondary interest. The case merely “plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else.” (Stake in Baxter & Jack 2008: 549) Third, we have the multiple case study (which is an instrumental case study extended to several cases), where a number of cases are studied jointly in order to investigate a phenomenon or general condition. Of these three types the instrumental case study best fits my purpose because I will analyse the public apologetic discourse (of entities in the two cultures) in order to gain insight into the underlying cultural values that influence this discourse.

## **7.2 Data**

Dörnyei (2007: 151) emphasizes that a case “constitutes a single entity with clearly defined boundaries”. Thus, my first task is to define how I choose my case. In my study, a case consists of the pieces of information and news given throughout the public apologetic discourse

surrounding the crisis of a public entity. Because I compare the apologetic discourse cross-culturally, I need to ensure that I find two similar cases, one occurring in Austria, the other in the UK. In order for the cases to be comparable, they should be dealing with similar crisis situations.

I will obtain my cases by the method of criterion sampling (cf. Dörnyei 2007: 128). I will use only a situation which fulfils the following criteria as a case: A public entity (e.g., a celebrity, politician or company) experiences a crisis (which, for whichever reason, is of public interest) and has to deal with this crisis. A similar situation must have happened in both Austria and the UK (in order for me to compare the cases) and the crisis and public apologetic discourse needs to be documented well so that I have sufficient material to conduct an analysis.

## 8 Case study: Police and crisis management in Austria and the United Kingdom

Table2 Case study overview

	Austria	UK
<b>Victim</b>	Foreign (US-American) citizen who has been residing in the country for several years	Foreign (Brazilian) citizen who has been residing in the country for several years
<b>Offender</b>	Viennese police	Metropolitan police (London's police)
<b>Crisis situation</b> (according to Figure 2)	The crisis is portrayed as a transgression by the victim and as an accident by the police. That the incident was in fact a transgression is supported by the verdict against the police.	At the beginning it is not quite clear whether the murder is in fact a transgression or the legitimate outcome of a police action. The guilty verdict against the Met and the open verdict at the inquest prove that the killing was in fact a transgression of the law.
<b>Offence</b>	Grievous bodily harm	Murder
<b>What happened</b>	Victim was injured because of a mix-up at Spittelau tube station	Victim was killed because of a mix-up at Stockwell tube station

### 8.1 Case #1: Austrian Police and crisis management: The case of Mike Brennan

#### 8.1.1 The incident

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 the black US-American Mike Brennan, who works in Vienna as a teacher at the VIS (Vienna international School), was mistaken by the Viennese police for a

drugdealer and brought to the ground with physical force. As a result, Brennan suffered from bruises, swellings, and hairline fractures in two of his vertebrae. These are the facts that the police and Brennan agree on. How that incident occurred, however, is heavily disputed and could not even be solved satisfactorily in court.

Brennan's version is as follows: He was on the underground train U4 to meet his girlfriend. Because he had a bad feeling about how some people were acting on the train he sent her a text and then gave her a call.<sup>67</sup> He was still on the phone to her, talking loudly, when he left the train at Spittelau station and expected to meet her on the platform. As he stepped out, a man in street clothes immediately jumped at him. Brennan fell on his back, his head hit the ground and the man kept punching him without saying a word. The attacker was joined by a second man who also punched Brennan. At this point, Brennan did not know if he was being robbed or what was going on. When he screamed they told him to "Stop screaming". They kept hitting him for three or four minutes. Brennan's girlfriend, Birgit, arrived and tried to pull the first attacker off Brennan, but he pushed her away, told her not to interfere and jumped back on Brennan. One attacker shouted "Polizei, polizei!". Brennan wondered why the man was calling for the police, and who he was and, if these men were the police, why they were beating him. After the attack, the men pulled Brennan to his feet. One of them took his phone and bag and searched it. The other one asked him for his passport and Brennan gave them his Vienna international school ID, which was never returned. After that, they seemed to realise that he was not the man they were looking for. Throughout this, Birgit kept asking the attackers in German who they were and to show her their badge. Only when she was on the phone calling the police, did one of the attackers pull out his police ID, flashed it at her face and put it back. Brennan felt serious pain in his back and dropped back down to the ground upon which one of his attackers commented "So machen die das immer" (Mas/APA/derstandard.at 2009).<sup>68</sup> Brennan understands this as a racial comment. Later, when he yelled "Please call the ambulance, someone please help me!", his girlfriend called the ambulance, which later took him to hospital. Brennan sees this incident as an unprovoked act of police brutality and racism (Brennan 2010; Die Grünen Wien 2009; Mas/APA 2009, Peters 2009a, 2009b).

This is the police's version:<sup>69</sup>

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67 For a more detailed account cf. Die Grünen Wien 2009.

68 According to the style sheet for papers in linguistics (Version April 2009, Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik der Universität Wien) German quotations need not be translated into English (2009: 5).

69 Upon my request, the spokesperson of the police, Iris Seper, let me know that "for legal reasons" I am denied access to the official police protocol which was sent to the Staatsanwaltschaft. What I cite here is only a part of it, as read out in Club2 (ORF 2009b Min.7:35).

Wir haben uns als “police” vorgestellt. Als der Brennan den Beamten als Polizisten erkannte zeigte er eindeutige Anzeichen eines sich anbahnenden Fluchtverhaltens. Brennan verspannte seinen gesamten Körper und war im Ansatz begriffen sich wegzuducken um an Revierinspektor S. vorbeizugelangen. Die Aufforderung “Stop Police!” wurde wiederholt, zeigte allerdings keine Wirkung bei den[sic] Brennan. Revierinspektor S. ergriff den SA<sup>70</sup> mit seinen beiden Händen an der Oberbekleidung um den bevorstehenden Fluchtversuch zu unterbinden. Brennan versuchte sich loszureißen und weiterzugehen. Die abermalige Aufforderung “Stop Police!” wurde erneut ignoriert. Der SA fuchtelte mit seinen Händen vor dem Gesicht des Beamten herum. Schließlich führte Revierinspektor S eine rasche Bewegung nach vorne und unverzüglich gleich wieder nach hinten durch um den Brennan durch die plötzliche Gewichtsverlagerung aus dem Gleichgewicht zu bringen. Mit maßhaltender Körperkraft wurde er zu Boden gebracht. (transcribed from ORF 2009b Min.7:35).

The policeman did not intend to injure Brennan, he just wanted to bring him to the ground and keep him there until reinforcement arrived. Later, when Brennan was up again, he dropped to the ground suddenly and unexpectedly, causing a sensation at the platform. When the police realised the mix-up they apologised immediately. When Brennan said that he was in pain, a policeman called the ambulance but hung up again when he realised that Brennan's girlfriend was on the phone to call the ambulance at the same time (APA 2009; APA-DeFacto 2009b; 2010; Klenk 2009; Windwarder 2009).

These two reports are contradictory and no consent was reached as to what actually happened. Not even the CCTV cameras (which are in operation at the platform) could be used to solve the case. If recordings exist, it is not sure what happened to them. As only the police can request access to the Wiener Linien's CCTV recordings, Brennan's lawyer got in touch with the public prosecutor's office and asked for them to obtain the recordings (ORF 2009m). In August 2009 *Der Standard* writes that the recordings are judicially seized (Simoner 2009). However, on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 the same newspaper had reported that due to specific technical circumstances no recordings were available (APA 2009b) and, in an article on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February, that there is only live surveillance at Spittelau and that therefore no recordings of the incident exist (Brickner 2009). In court no camera-evidence was used which reinforces the assumption that recordings indeed do not exist.

Without recordings it is impossible to reveal what actually happened. Nevertheless, an offensive act has occurred (or has been reported to have occurred) and the police are accused of being responsible for that act. As Benoit (1997b, cf. Chapter 4.4) argues, regardless of whether the accused are in fact responsible or not, being accused puts their image at risk. In this case, the

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70 SA is an abbreviation used by the Austrian police. It stands for Schwarzafrikaner.

police are accused of racism and unprovoked brutality and I will now show what they said and did in order to repair their image.

### 8.1.2 The public apology

The police informs its own department BBE, i.e. *Büro für besondere Ermittlungen*, which is led by a secretary of Polizeipräsident Gerhard Pürstl (Klenk 2009). On February 12, the BBE sends their report to the public prosecutor's office. On the same day the *Menschenrechtsbeirat*<sup>71</sup> is informed. No public statements are given.

(1)<sup>72</sup> On February 11 a female member of the police calls Brennan's partner and tells her that she regrets the incident and that this is the first time such an incident has occurred in Vienna. She invites them to come to a police department so that the police can explain how the mix-up occurred. The next day the police try to call again, but do not get through (Windwarder 2009).

(2) The press office of Vienna's police states on February 15 that giving statements concerning this incident is not their responsibility but that of the public prosecutor's office. By the evening, Vienna's Landespolizeikommandant<sup>73</sup> Karl Mahrer asks for understanding that he cannot say anything about the allegations (APA DeFacto: 2009). He claims that three aspects need to be explored: First, has the man been mistaken for a dealer, and if so, how could this happen? Second, what is the deal with the injuries? Third, how was the case communicated internally? (ibid.) Mahrer promises that "Sobald alles geprüft ist, wird es ganz, ganz schnell klare Konsequenzen geben" (ibid.) and claims that "Wer mich kennt weiß, dass ich für eine Polizei stehe, in der Rassismus keine Chance hat." (ibid.). He adds that the allegations against the police are taken seriously and would be looked into as soon as possible (APA 2009c). Further, he says:

Ich möchte erst dann mit dem Opfer sprechen und mich entschuldigen, wenn die internen Ermittler ihre Untersuchung abgeschlossen haben. Das wird aber schon in den nächsten Tagen der Fall sein [...] Aber bei einer Amtshandlung sofort zuzuschlagen ist selbstverständlich nicht Standard der Polizei. (Möseneder 2009)

(3) In the meantime, Brennan's call for apology is printed in several newspapers: "Ich erwarte, dass die Polizei ihren Fehler zugibt und sich entschuldigt. Ich möchte nicht, dass so etwas mir oder jemand anderem nochmals widerfährt" (e.g. APA 2009c, APA DeFacto 2009). Brennan is not the only one who criticises the police for failing to apologize. Brickner, journalist

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71 For the task of the Menschenrechtsbeirat see: [http://www.menschenrechtsbeirat.at/cms15/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=33&Itemid=9](http://www.menschenrechtsbeirat.at/cms15/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33&Itemid=9)

72 The single steps of the public apology or reactions to it are numbered for easier identification in the next chapter.

73 Because the titles of Austrian police officers differ from title of British police officers I will keep the Austrian title when no adequate translation can be found.

of *Der Standard* writes:

Wobei - drittens - Mahrer und anderen Polizeioberen kein Zucken aus der Krone fiele, würden sie sich mit dem geschockten US-Bürger jetzt sofort in Kontakt setzen. Doch der Polizeichef will mit dem Schwerverletzten erst reden, wenn der Übergriff intern bewiesen ist: eine Scheu, sich etwas zu vergeben, die Korpsgeist statt Mut zur Transparenz zeigt. (Brickner 2009b)

(4) On February 16 the Viennese BPD (i.e., Bundespolizeidirektion) issues a press release<sup>74</sup> which states that the Viennese police regrets the mix-up:

Die Wiener Polizei bedauert die stattgefundenen Verwechslung. Unmittelbar nach der Amtshandlung erfolgte eine Kontaktaufnahme mit dem Betroffenen, um sich zu entschuldigen, wobei lediglich die Lebensgefährtin erreicht wurde.

Grundsätzlich sind Verwechslungen von Personen mit ähnlicher Statur, Kleidung, etc. nicht auszuschließen. Durch Einhaltung der Mitwirkungspflichten seitens der Betroffenen an der Klärung des Sachverhaltes kann ein derartiger Irrtum jedoch rasch geklärt werden. (BPD 2009)

(5) Brennan's lawyer, Alexander Hofmann is scandalized by the police's press release. "Wie hätte mein Mandant auf die Verwechslung hinweisen sollen, nachdem man sich auf ihn gestürzt und auf ihn eingedrückt hat?" he asks. (Red 2009). The anti-racism association ZARA calls the police's statements "more than cynical" (TT/APA 2009).

(6) The police union states that "manche Vorwürfe [sind] zwar nicht entschuldbar, aber erklärbar [...] die Szene wird immer härter ... die Polizistinnen und Polizisten müssen auch an ihre eigene Sicherheit denken". *Der Standard* reports this with the heading "Im 'Fall Brennan' werden seltsame Schlüsse gezogen" (Red 2009).

(7) On February 25 Gerhard Pürstl (Polizeipräsident) and Karl Mahrer (Landespolizeikommandant) respond to the accusations. They say that "the alleged victim of racism clearly exaggerated a bit" (APA-DeFacto 2009b). The policemen indeed addressed the supposed dealer with the words "Stop police you are arrested". Also, they did apologize immediately after they realized the mistake (ibid.) .

(8) On February 25 the ORF programme Club 2 "Was ist los mit unserer Polizei?" is broadcast. In this context Gerhard Pürstl, Vienna's Polizeipräsident, apologizes to Brennan for the mix-up. This is a transcription of Pürstl's statement in Club2:

Pürstl: "Es kam am Bahnsteig zur Verwechslung. Das ist unbestritten. Ich möchte an dieser Stelle das auch ausdrücklich bedauern. Verwechslungen im Zuge von Fahndungen, das kanns polizeilich immer wieder geben. Das kommt in den besten Polizeien vor. Soll nicht sein, aber wanns passiert ist, dann muss man auch dazu

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74 The full press release in German can be found in the appendix.

stehen und das bedauern. Dafür entschuldige ich mich aber ausdrücklich. Es gehen aber dann die Darstellungen unserer Beamten und die bisherigen Erhebungen deutlich von dem ab was wir eben gehört haben und was eben geschildert wurde [i.e., Brennan's portrayal of what had happened], denn ich gehe davon aus, dass die Polizeibeamten mit "Stop Police you are arrested" sich als Polizeibeamte zu erkennen gegeben haben. Das ist an und für sich eine Floskel die eintrainiert ist, die für solche Amtshandlungen eintrainiert ist, und die immer am Beginn einer Festnahme eines Suchtgiftdealers steht, den ja die Beamten vor sich glaubten" Presenter: "Brennan, war das das erste das sie gehört haben "Stop police you are arrested"? Brennan: "No, that's not the first thing I heard." (ORF 2009b, Min.2:10)

(9) In Club 2 Brennan does not comment on Pürstl's apology at all and I also could find no other immediate response by Brennan. However, towards the end of the year, *Der Falter* writes that Brennan does not accept the police's apology because it only refers to the mix-up and not to the uncouth method of the apprehension (APA-DeFacto 2009c).

Barbara Liegl, the manager of anti-racism association ZARA, also claims that the police misunderstand the problem. "Nicht die angebliche Verwechslung der Männer ist das Problem, sondern - so sich die Vorwürfe bestätigen - die Unverhältnismäßigkeit des Polizeieinsatzes", she says (Leonhard 2009).

The *Neue Kärntner Tageszeitung* points out that the police's apology goes hand in hand with accusing Brennan and writes "Wirklich bedauerlich ist, dass man nach mehr als zwei Wochen noch immer nicht soweit ist, die Hand zu einer (ordentlichen!) Entschuldigung auszustrecken - zu einer ohne Wenn und Abers. Die ist nämlich längst überfällig." (Zacharias 2009).

(10) In April 2010 one of the policemen is charged with bodily injury caused by negligence. Legal proceedings are held on June 24 at the Bezirksgericht Josefstadt (i.e., the court of the Viennese district Josefstadt). At the hearing, the policeman says: "Es war ein bedauerlicher Zwischenfall, was mir an und für sich auch leidtut." (APA 2010), and "Es war ein 30-Sekunden-Fehler, der mich jetzt als rassistischen Polizisten darstellt" (Wasinger 2010b). However, judge Margaretha Richter believes that the way the policeman approached Brennan was not in accordance with the regulations and she cannot rule out that the policeman injured Brennan deliberately (APA 2010). Therefore, the policeman is charged with grievous bodily harm and the case taken to the Viennese Straflandesgericht (i.e., the Viennese criminal court) (Bernold 2010).

(11) When Brennan is asked in July whether he has heard anything from official sources yet, he answers:

Gar nichts. Bis heute nicht. Ich finde, die Polizisten sollten sich entschuldigen.

Verantwortung übernehmen für ihr unprofessionelles Vorgehen und die schweren Folgen. Auch wenn es eine Verwechslung war: Darf man einen Drogendealer krankenhaushausreif prügeln? Aus meiner Sicht nicht. (Kurier 2010)

(12) In October 2010 proceedings are held at the Straflandesgericht. The policeman testifies

Ich habe den Mann mit den Worten ‚Stop! Police! You are arrested!‘ angehalten. Er hat überhaupt nicht reagiert. Für mich hat es ausgeschaut, als ob er sich unter mir durchducken und davonlaufen will. [...] Dass ich von einem Fluchtverhalten ausgegangen bin, war mein großer Fehler. Kann sein, dass er mich nicht gehört hat. Das Verhalten, das er gesetzt hat, habe ich falsch interpretiert. [...] Ich habe einen menschlichen Fehler gemacht. (APA 2010b; Seeh 2010)<sup>75</sup>

His lawyer argued that "Hätte der US-Amerikaner keinen Widerstand geleistet, wäre die ganze Situation gar nicht eskaliert." and further says that the scrapping was justified (Wasinger 2010). On January 11, Judge Patrick Aulebauer finds the policeman guilty of negligent grievous bodily injury and charges him with a fine of 2800€. The policeman comments

Es ist traurig, wie die Berichterstattung über diesen Fall gelaufen ist. Ich war vom ersten Tag an schuldig. Es hat genau ins System gepasst: auf der einen Seite ein unschuldiger Schwarzer und auf der anderen Seite die Polizei (APA-DeFacto 2011).

The verdict is called "mild" in several newspapers (e.g., Simoner 2011, Wasinger 2011).

(13) In an interview after the verdict was delivered, Brennan says to the *Falter*:

Ich habe nicht das Gefühl, dass es dem Beamten leidtut – oder sonst jemandem. Während des Prozesses vermied er Augenkontakt. Es war schockierend für mich zu sehen, dass er nicht den Eindruck machte, als wäre er sich irgendeines Fehlers bewusst. (Gepp 2011)

### 8.1.3 Analysis

What is most striking about the police's crisis management, is that they took a long time to speak out in public. The "mix-up", as they refer to this incident, happened on a Wednesday afternoon and it took the police four days, until Sunday evening, to address the media and thus the public. The police's reluctance to give statements concerning the incident allows for the victim's version of the incident to be published without the voice of the offender being heard. Policeman Windwarder (2009), who is a member of the *Kriminalisten*<sup>76</sup>, argues that it was the poor to non-existent crisis management of the police, which allowed for the mix-up to turn into the

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75 Different chunks of the message were printed in various newspapers and I was quite surprised that the wording was not exactly the same in all versions. What I cite here are sentences taken out of two articles.

76 A club, aiming at the promotion of public relations for the profession of detectives

international scandal it has become. *Kurier*-journalist Grolig (2009) also claims that the police's crisis management is not efficient. He notes that the police's "moment of shock" lasted fourteen days and points out that Pürstl's comments (cf. 8) were not enough to win a victory for the police.

According to Ellwanger (cf. Chapter 4.3.2.2), the call for an apology means communicating to the offender that he cannot say what he said or do what he did, which is exactly the function that the call for apology takes in this case. In Brennan's call for apology the police are accused of having done a serious wrong: Using violence against an innocent person, without identifying themselves or giving the person a chance to speak out for himself. They are now put under pressure to repair their image, which after this incident is that of a racist force that inappropriately resorts to violence (Müller 2009).

In the statement (cf.2) which is given by Karl Mahrer, *Landespolizeikommandant* of Vienna, the police react to that call for apology, but not in the way wished for by Brennan and probably the media (which portrays the story from Brennan's viewpoint). In his speech Mahrer stresses the routines and values of the police by stating that the incident is taken seriously and being investigated. He claims that once the case is investigated there will be immediate consequences. He highlights that instantaneous beating is not a policy of the police. By promising an apology, he could be showing that apologizing is an option that the police considers in case of wrongdoing. However, Mahrer does not address Brennan but the public at large, thus giving reason to believe that his statement is aimed at creating a more favourable image of Austrian police and not at reconciling with the offended individual. It becomes clear the next day that the statement does not improve the situation of the police in the media, which criticises the police for postponing making contact with Brennan and for not apologizing to him (cf.3).

The police press release from February 16 further aggravates the image of the police in the media (cf.3). The police merely regret the mix-up, but do not apologize for the unjustified violence against Brennan. Also, they try to shift the blame for the incident onto him (by accusing him of neglecting his duty to resolve a mix-up). Brennan's lawyer and ZARA who are scandalized by the police statement are given voice in newspapers (cf.5).

This does not influence the police to change their procedure. High police officials (Mahrer and Pürstl) accuse Brennan of exaggerating (cf.7) which can be seen as an attempt to make him look like an unreliable witness of the incident in public. On February 28, the police

further attempt to undermine Brennan's trustworthiness by stating that his injuries are not as bad as he says. The police claim to have obtained this information from a witness, whom they keep anonymous at his request (APA 2009d). Mahrer and Pürstl further state that the policemen involved in the incident did indeed apologize to Brennan (cf.7). After the promise of an apology (cf.2) and the report of a failed apology (cf.4), this is another mere report of an apology (cf.7). Thus, the word 'apology' is used by the police several times. A statement of apology however is not given in public.

In TV-programme Club2 (cf.8) Pürstl finally offers an apology, but it concerns the mix-up only (just like the police's press release (cf.4) which merely utters a regret for the mix-up). It is immediately followed by comments of doubt concerning Brennan's version (or an accusation of lying, depending on how one chooses to interpret the statement). The same tune is repeated by the policeman who injured Brennan in the court hearing when he says that he is sorry for the regrettable incident (cf.10). These apologies cannot be said to be an attempt to reconcile with the victim.

The crisis management of the police provokes a reaction from ZARA-manager Liegl (cf.9) who points out that the police do not understand the real problem. Also, a newspaper article in the *Neue Kärntner Tageszeitung* describes the author's regret that the police are not offering the already overdue "proper" apology (cf.9). The police, however, turn a deaf ear to such calls. Throughout the whole time they maintain their defensive crisis response strategies *excuse* (cf.4,8) and *attack accuser* (cf.7,8).<sup>77</sup>

In July 2010 Brennan points out in an interview that he has neither been contacted by the police nor received an apology (cf.11). The police could have reacted to that, but did not. When Brennan is interviewed again in January 2011 he has still not received an apology. He is also under the impression that neither the policeman nor anyone else is sorry for or aware of the mistake that was made (cf.13). This shows that the crisis management of the Austrian police did not lead to reconciliation with the victim. In the following chapter I will analyse how the British police manages a similar crisis situation.

## **8.2 Case #2: British Police and crisis management: The case of Jean Charles de Menezes**

In this case, allegations against the police are brought up as the truth of what had happened

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. chapter 4.4.2.5

slowly emerges. It therefore makes sense to tell the whole case as it unfolds and not, like above, split the incident from the public apologies that are made.

## **8.2.1 The incident and public apologies**

### **8.2.1.1 *The Met kills an innocent man***

On July 7 2005, 52 people are killed by suicide bombers on London public transport. On July 21 there is another attack, but the bombs fail to explode. On July 22 Jean Charles de Menezes, a Brazilian living in London, is mistaken for a suicide bomber and shot dead by the Met (Metropolitan police) at Stockwell tube station.

(1) Head of the Metropolitan police, Sir Ian Blair says at a press conference on July 22 that the shooting is directly linked to the anti-terrorist operation (Siddique & Sturcke 2007):

The information I have available is that the shooting is directly linked to the ongoing and expanding anti-terrorist operation. I need to make clear that any death is deeply regrettable. But as I understand the man was challenged and refused to obey police instructions. (transcribed from BBC 2005b).

(2) The next day, July 23, the Met tell the media that the dead man was not a terrorist. Ian Blair gives this statement:

This is a tragedy. The Metropolitan Police accepts the full responsibility for this and to the family I can only express our deep regrets. But I think it is also important to recognize that the underlying causes of this are not a police action or a police policy or procedures but actually the fact that we have terrorists using suicide as a weapon on the streets of London and below the streets of London. (transcribed from BBC 2005c)

He said there was no reason to believe the four men sought over the failed bombings - whose images caught on CCTV were released on Friday - had left the country. He acknowledged "somebody else could be shot" as the hunt continued, but added "everything is done to make it right". But he said the "shoot to kill" policy for dealing with suspected suicide bombers would remain in force. (BBC 2005)

"We're quite comfortable the policy is right but these are difficult times. They (the rules) have to be that. There's no point in shooting at someone's chest because that's where a bomb is likely to be. [...] There's no point in shooting anywhere else if they fall down and detonate it. This is drawn from experience from other countries. The only way to deal with it is to shoot to the head. [...] Somebody else could be shot. But everything is done to make it right. [...] This is a tragedy. The Metropolitan Police accept full responsibility for this. To the family I can only express my deep regrets. [...] This is a terrifying set of circumstances for individuals to make decisions. We have to recognise is [sic] that people are taking difficult decisions in

life threatening situations. [...] It wasn't just a random event. There's nothing gratuitous going on, nothing cavalier here, no conspiracy to shoot people. There are still officers out there having to make those calls as we speak. [...] We have to take this tragedy, deeply regret it and move on to the investigation which is proceeding at an extraordinary pace." Declaring that his men were "racing against time", he added later: "What would have happened if these officers had not shot, and that man had been a bomber and got on the Tube. It would have been absolutely dreadful." (Prince 2005)

(3) "London's mayor Ken Livingstone calls the killing a 'human tragedy'. 'The police acted to do what they believed necessary to protect the lives of the public. This tragedy has added another victim to the toll of deaths for which the terrorists bear responsibility,' he said." (Dennis 2005)

(4) On the same day, Home Secretary Charles Clarke tells the BBC:

It's a tragedy for Mr de Menezes and his family. I very much regret what has happened. The police were trying to do their very best in very difficult circumstances to protect the people of London from suicide bombers. They have my full support. [...] In this tragic case, a mistake was clearly made which will be regretted for ever. (Prince 2005)

In this tragic case a mistake was clearly made which will be regretted forever. But I don't think that means that they're wrong to have a policy to deal with these appalling circumstances. I wish we didn't have to, I wish we didn't have suicide bombers, but we do. (transcribed from BBC 2005c)

"I very, very much regret what happened. "I hope [the family] understand the police were trying to do their very best under very difficult circumstances." On the ongoing bombings investigation, "good progress" was being made thanks to "tremendous support" from the public. Mr Clarke said he was postponing joining his family on holiday because of the current crisis. (BBC 2005)

(5) These statements are reported under headings such as "Police chief 'sorry' over death" (BBC 2005), "Sorry..But we're right" (The Mirror: Prince 2005), "Regrets, but no apology, in London subway shooting" (NYtimes: Sciolino 2005) or "Death of an innocent man" (Guardian 2005). The NYtimes further write that "Sir Ian Blair, the London police commissioner, stopped short of an outright apology as he expressed "deepest regrets" and accepted "full responsibility" for the killing of Jean Charles de Menezes". It is further reported that "About three dozen people, apparently Brazilians, demonstrated in front of Scotland Yard in central London, holding a banner that read, 'Sorry is not enough'". (Sciolino 2005) The *Guardian*, on the other hand, after pointing out the police's most obvious mistake is killing an innocent man and criticising Jack

Straw's comment that "this was not a serious setback for the police", recognizes the police's apology:

To their credit, the police did break with their earlier tradition of prevarication, coming out with an unequivocal statement on Saturday that the man they had shot had no connection with the four attempted bombings on Thursday. There was an apology to Mr De Menezes's family and a sincere sense of regret. (Guardian 2005)

(6) De Menezes' cousin Alex Pereira, who is acting as the family spokesperson, comments on the statements: "Apologies are not enough. I believe my cousin's death was result[sic] of police incompetence." (BBC 2005). "I ask all the people to ask the Metropolitan Police and Tony Blair, 'What kind of job are they doing?'" (Sciolino 2005).

"The police explanation is that they had to kill someone to show the population that they are making the country safe.[...] Jean was a 100 per cent good guy who never did anything wrong and had no reason to run. His English is good, he did not fear the police, and he had nothing to hide. [...] He wasn't fanatical about anything and didn't know any Islamic extremists. He enjoyed pubs, clubs and socialising. He kept out of trouble and was never in any wrongdoing." Alex identified his cousin's body and broke the news of Jean's death to his appalled mother Maria, 50. He said: "The police have tried to apologise. But they should all be ashamed. They have shown they are incapable and stupid. There's no explanation for what they have done. [...] If Jean had been blown up by Muslim fanatics I could understand it and move on. But to be shot by the police five times at close range? [...] I don't get it. Someone needs to pay. I want answers. Don't give a gun to someone with a brain the size of a three-year-old." (Prince 2005)

(7) On July 25, British foreign secretary Jack Straw and his Brazilian counterpart, Celso Amorim meet. It is reported that the following was said:

"I profoundly regret the circumstances in which we had to hold this meeting," Straw said in a joint news conference with Amorim. "I would personally like [to] take this opportunity to offer my own condolences to Mr. Menezes' family and friends, and condolences to the Brazilian government and people." (CNN 2005)

Mr Straw said he "profoundly regretted" the death. Security sources have said electrician Mr Menezes was in the UK on an out-of-date student visa. Mr Straw said he did not know Mr Menezes' precise immigration status but said it was his "understanding that he was here lawfully". (BBC 2005d)

Mr Amorim said the dead man's family wanted his body quickly returned to Brazil. And he said compensation from the Metropolitan Police was important for what was a "humble" family. "It would not lessen the shock and concern at the death of this innocent person but it would be something concrete in addition to the apologies that have been made verbally," he said. (BBC 2005d)

Jack Straw, in a joint press conference with his Brazilian counterpart, Celso Amorim,

made an unreserved apology on behalf of Britain last night. He said: "My own sense of loss was made more poignant because I happen to live in this part of London, where I have lived for over 25 years." Mr Straw also said a claim from Mr de Menezes' family for compensation would be treated "sympathetically and quickly". (Morris, Brown & Lakey 2005)

In a BBC interview Amorim says:

I did not expect to be told very much at this stage in terms of details. I came here to express what we already said in our note, official note yesterday, that the Brazilian government and actually the Brazilian public opinion is shocked and perplexed by these events cause it's now cleared it was a peaceful and innocent person who was killed. I reiterated that of course Brazil is totally in solidarity with the UK and with everyone else in the fight against terrorism. But of course, even in the fight against terrorism we should also be cautious to avoid the loss of innocent life and that's what apparently happened. I heard expressions of regret, deepest regret by Lord Triesman [Foreign Office Minister with responsibility for relations with Latin America]. I actually had asked to see the foreign secretary but he was not in town. But in the course of our conversation also Jack Straw came to the phone. And he said the same, more or less the same words, of deep regret and he ensured that there would be a thorough investigation, that this may take a little while but it will be a very thorough investigation. (transcribed from BBC 2005e)

It is further reported, that Amorim said "We cannot recover the life of the Brazilian citizen who died but it is very important to know all the details" (AP 2005).

(8) On July 25 prime minister Tony Blair gives a statement regarding the killing of de Menezes:

We are all desperately sorry for the death of an innocent person. And I understand entirely the feelings of the young man's family. But we also have to understand the police are doing their job in very, very difficult circumstances. And I think it's important that we give them every support. And that we understand, that had the circumstances been different and for example this had turned out to be a terrorist and they had failed to take these actions, they would have been criticised the other way. At the same time therefore, in expressing our sorrow and deep sympathy for the death that has happened, it is important that we allow the police, and support them in doing the job they have to do in order to protect people in this country. (transcribed from BBC 2005f).

(9) De Menezes' cousins criticise Blair's apology for including a defence of the British police. Arialva Pereira, a cousin, says "His apologies aren't easing our pain [...] He's not saying anything about punishing the police who did this, it's more like he's supporting them." (NY Times 2005). In Gonzaga, de Menezes' home town, hundreds of people are protesting, saying that the "apology did not go far enough" (BBC 2005d) and that "Apologies don't help, we want justice"(NY Times 2005). The people demand the arrest of the police officers who killed de

Menezes (ibid.). Gonzaga's mayor Júlio de Souza refers to Menezes' death as an assassination and says that "It's easy for Blair to apologize, but it doesn't mean very much [...] What happened to English justice and England, a place where police patrol unarmed?" (ibid.). The Landless Rural Worker's Movement states that "Menezes 'was assassinated in cold blood, a victim of intolerance' and call for the British withdrawal from Iraq" (ibid.).

### **8.2.1.2      *The Met did not tell the truth after the killing***

(10) On July 28 2005 the Met admit that contrary to their report de Menezes did not wear a bulky jacket (in which a bomb could have been hidden) and also did not jump the ticket barrier (but used his oyster-card). He did not behave suspiciously (Honigsbaum 2005).

In its report the *Guardian* does not spell out that the police must have lied to the public when first reporting the incident. Other newspapers do so and use headlines like "Menezes police chief 'misled' public" or "How the public was misled" (Mailonline 2005a). Bloggers who cite the *Guardian's* article invent new headlines: "We are going to kill people for fun, lie about it and then do it again" (AnonymousCoward 2005), "London police are lying about why they shot Brazilian man" (Myreader 2005) or "London Police Chief 'Sir' Ian Blair is a Bloody Liar, Should be Stripped of Title" (Mathaba 2005).

De Menezes' cousin, Vivien Figueiredo, "condemn[s] the shoot-to-kill policy which had led to her cousin's death and vow[s] that what she call[s] the 'crime' would not go unpunished" (Honigsbaum 2005). Another cousin, Patricia da Silva Armani says that "An innocent man has been killed as though he was a terrorist,' [...] 'An incredibly grave error was committed by the British police.'" (ibid.).

### **8.2.1.3      *Leaked documents accuse Met***

(11) On August 16 leaked documents from the IPCC (Independent police complaints commission), which is investigating Menezes' killing, state that the Met made a series of "catastrophic blunders" (BBC 2005g, Edwards & Brough 2005, Tendler & Ford 2005) and that "Mr de Menezes died because of misjudgements, errors and bad decisions even more grave than first thought" (Alleyne 2005). Amongst other things, it is revealed that Ian Blair "tried to block an independent inquiry into the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes because [...] it would impede the police's terrorist investigations" (The Sunday Times 2005).

Thereupon, the family's call for truth is repeated by cousin Alessandro Pereira: "My family deserve the full truth about his murder. The truth cannot be hidden any longer. It has to be

made public. [...] They killed my cousin, they could kill anyone, any English person." (BBC 2005f). Also, De Menezes' family demand a public inquiry into his death and that those responsible for the shooting are jailed for life (BBC 2005e). They claim that "Sir Ian and Tony Blair share the officer's culpability. 'They are the really guilty ones'" (Cowen, Dodd & Norton-Taylor 2005). The family's lawyer, Harriet Wistrich, claims that "the leak 'raises very, very serious questions about the shoot-to-kill policy'" (Williams & Wright 2005) and urges the government and police to review this policy (BBC 2005f). She also calls for Sir Ian Blair to resign (BBC 2005e). She says "He should go. Lies have been put out and nobody has corrected them." (Edwards & Brough 2005). This is repeated by Alessandro Pereira: "My family want the truth. For the sake of my family, for the sake of the people of London. In Jeans [sic] name I say that those responsible should resign. Ian Blair should resign." (Pereira 2005)

(12) Norman (2005) of *The Independent* notices that because of a lost game, football manager Eriksson gives a heartfelt apology; And points out that such words would not be heard from

Sir Ian apologising for misleading the public, and more pertinently Mr de Menezes's grieving family, with the bizarre untruths told (perhaps unwittingly) about the electrician's clothes, demeanour and refusal to obey police commands. (Norman 2005)

The article includes the following call for apology:

Nothing humanises a public figure like humility; nor dehumanises one so much as wilful and dishonest intransigence in the face of overwhelming evidence. If Sir Ian could only grasp this and issue a genuine and unqualified apology - not the traditionally grudging "I have to take responsibility because it happened on my watch" - to the de Menezes family, and promised to do everything in his power to learn from this fiasco, he might even cling on to his job. As it is, his refusal to admit the blindingly obvious will further antagonise his former fan club in the right-wing press to the point at which Charles Clarke has no choice but to give him the boot. (Norman 2005).

(13) While some high Met officials claim that the leaks are an embarrassment for the Met, and that Sir Ian Blair would be put under pressure to go, the Met and the Home Office state that it would be inappropriate to comment (BBC 2005f). Ian Blair admits a month later that

more could have been done to set the record straight, but he denied misleading Mr de Menezes' family. [...] He admitted that he had considered resigning after Mr de Menezes' family called for him to step down. "I certainly did," he said. "But I don't think it was right for the organisation, or for the country, or for London to do that. The big job is to defend this country against terrorism. (Bowcott, Cowan, Travis &

Jones 2005).

#### **8.2.1.4 Met “ex gratia” offer to family**

(14) On August 20, de Menezes' parents make public that on August 1 they received an offer of £15,000 in addition to funeral costs or travel expenses from the Met. The offer and the way the offer was made did not help improve relations between the Met and the family: De Menezes' parents state they were “pressurised into agreeing to the meeting with Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Yates at their home in the remote town of Gonzaga, with less than a day's notice” (Carrell 2005). Also, the letter that contained the offer was written in complex legal English – de Menezes' parents only speak Portuguese. “[T]he police letter advised them to get advice from the family's lawyers in Britain, [but] the [family] claim their requests to postpone the meeting until their lawyer could get to them were turned down by Mr Yates.” (Carrell 2005).

The family tell the media that they felt insulted by the Met offer and that they rejected it. Mrs. de Menezes says "I thought it was disgusting for this policeman to be talking about money when my son was only just buried. I did not like having to sit near such a man." (ibid.). De Menezes' brother states

They thought we were poor people, stupid people. We may be poor but we are not that stupid. We will not exchange money for my brother's life - but we will punish them [...] We do not want money in exchange for Jean's life, but we want to punish them - so we want a lot of money. We are also concentrating on making sure these policemen go to prison (Carrell 2005).

The family's solicitor, Gareth Peirce, “describe[s] the approach by the Met as 'disturbing'” (BBC 2005h) and says that “[i]t might have been a 'deliberate attempt to ensnare families into inappropriate agreements or inappropriate decisions’” (ibid.).

The Met confirm that this offer was made but stress that that “it was intended to be an "ex gratia" payment, which would not affect any further compensation or legal action” (BBC 2005h). Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott responds to the allegations: “I haven't seen the letter and I think it would be terrible if it was done that way [...] It does sound not a very sensitive way to deal with such a difficult matter.” (BBC 2005h).

#### **8.2.1.5 Shoot-to-kill policy will be carried out in future**

(15) Ian Blair first comes face to face with the Menezes' family on September 13 2005 when giving evidence to the Commons home affairs select committee inquiry into the London bombings. “He apologized for [Jean Charles de Menezes'] death and said the police were

'extremely sorry'" (Travis 2005). Regarding the shoot-to-kill policy he says:

We made a small number of administrative changes, but the essential thrust of the tactics remains the same. There is no question that a suicide bomber, deadly and determined, who is intent on murder, is perhaps the highest level of threat that we face and we must have an option to deal with it. (Morris 2005).

He further states that the Met need a policy to deal with suicide bombers and that the shoot-to-kill policy is the "least worst option". He says that it will be carried out even though the official inquiry into the death is not yet completed (Travis 2005, Morris 2005).

Three cousins of de Menezes are present at the hearing. They are offered a meeting with Ian Blair in person but turn down the offer. They read out this statement:

We are horrified to know that the shoot-to-kill policy is still in operation today. It remains a secret policy that has never been discussed in parliament. It must be suspended until the investigation is completed (Travis 2005).

#### **8.2.1.6 Investigation into Ian Blair's behaviour**

(16) On October 11 2005 de Menezes' family make an official complaint to the IPCC claiming that Ian Blair "had misled the family and the public immediately after Jean's death", that he "bears ultimate responsibility for the Menezes killing and that he deliberately tried to cover up what really happened after Jean's death" (Justice4Jean 2005).

(17) On November 28 2005 the IPCC announces that it will investigate Sir Ian Blair's conduct following the death of de Menezes (Cowan 2005). This second investigation is called "Stockwell 2" and follows the complaint made by the de Menezes family. A Met commissioner states the following:

We wish to make it clear that whilst the further complaints raised clearly involve the commissioner, they are not solely about him. They specifically ask that the IPCC investigate where any misleading accounts relating to the tragic events of July 22 originated from, and how and why they were put into the public domain. (Cowan 2005)

The de Menezes' family is "delighted" about this announcement. Cousin Alex Pereira says: "'This is fantastic news and a great victory for our campaign.'" (Justice4Jean 2005).

#### **8.2.1.7 Public Apologies**

(18) In November 2005, Ian Blair talks to the *Guardian*. This interview, concerning his "tempestuous year in office" is published on January 30 (Dodd & Katz 2006). In it, Blair admits that the Met made a "serious mistake" by failing to correct reports that Menezes behaved suspiciously. Ian Blair further says:

Clearly the Met could have taken the decision on the Saturday when we recognised that we had killed an innocent man, we could have put the record straight. Although we did put the record straight by saying he wasn't connected, we didn't put the record straight about all the issues around him jumping over barriers and heavy coats and so on ... In a terrible way, the Met was transfixed on other things. It was transfixed on: where are these bombers? And therefore, in a dreadful way, we didn't see the significance of that. That was our mistake. It was. It was a bad mistake. (Katz 2006)

(19) On March 9 2006, after discussing the Stockwell shooting with the Brazilian president, Tony Blair says the following in a press conference: “Once again let me say that we offer our deepest regrets to the family for this very tragic event and I, of course, assured the President that the proper investigations and procedures would continue through to their conclusion.” (Jones & Burleigh 2006).

Cousin Alex Pereira responds: "I won't accept Blair's apology because he's killing people - he apologised but at the same time they will still carry on with their shoot-to-kill policy." (ibid., BBC 2006). Regarding the meeting of Tony Blair with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, the family expressed hope that “the Brazilian government's involvement would help break down barriers in their search for justice” (ibid.).

#### **8.2.1.8 *Met is charged under health and safety laws***

(20) The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) receives the IPCC report over the De Menezes shooting in January 2006. In July 2006 it decides that there is “insufficient evidence” to prosecute any individual and that instead the Met will be charged under health and safety laws “for 'failing to provide for the health, safety and welfare' of Mr Menezes on 22 July” (BBC 2006b, CPS 2006). Cousin Alex Pereira states that “the decision [is] 'unbelievable' and 'ridiculous'" (BBC 2006b). The Met are “concerned and clearly disappointed” with the decision to prosecute the Met but “acknowledge and support” that no officers will be prosecuted (BBC 2006b).

(21) On May 11 2007, before a verdict is reached under the health and the safety charges, the IPCC announces that none of the eleven police officers involved in Mr. Menezes' death will face disciplinary action. It further states that a decision regarding the four senior officers will be made only after the health and safety trial. IPCC chairman Nick Hardwick adds that “the grief of Mr de Menezes’ family was 'entirely understandable', but there is no realistic prospect of the 11 officers being disciplined” (Times Online 2007).

Cousin Patricia da Silva Armani tells the media that the family is bitterly disappointed (Times Online 2007):

It is disgraceful the IPCC can make such a decision - they are letting the police get away with murder. [...] First officials killed my cousin, then they lied about it and now the officers are walking away without any punishment. It is a travesty of justice and another slap in the face for our family. [...] The police officers' lives go on as normal while we exist in turmoil, fighting to get the answers and justice we deserve. (ibid.).

A spokesperson of the family says:

We can see no advantage in making this early announcement, other than to provide relief to the officers facing potential disciplinary charges [...] Whilst the officers are spared that ongoing anxiety, the family are given no relief to their own agony, grief and anxiety caused by their lack of access to all the evidence surrounding the shooting of their loved one [...] We hope ultimately that all the officers about whom evidence emerges of wrongdoing that led to this wrongful death are ultimately rendered fully accountable. (Gill 2007)

The de Menezes legal team points out that “it is 'highly unusual' for the disciplinary decision to be made prior to the conclusion of criminal proceedings” (Times Online 2007).

On the other hand, the Met welcomes the IPCC's recommendation and states:

The shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes is a matter of very deep regret to the Metropolitan Police Service and our continued thoughts are with his family. [...] We have apologised publicly and in private to them and we would again like to take this opportunity to say sorry for this tragedy. (Gill 2007)

We welcome this move forward and are pleased for these officers and their families who have faced much uncertainty. (Times Online 2007)

(22) On November 1 2007 the Met is “convicted of health and safety breaches and fined £175,000 with £385,000 costs” (*Evening Standard* 2007). The verdict says that the police operation was “carried out 'so badly that the public were needlessly put at risk'” (Sturcke 2007). However, the Stockwell shooting is judged to be a “corporate failure, not an individual failure” and no individual police officer is charged with criminal offences (Wright 2007). The de Menezes family solicitor says that the family is pleased with this outcome but they do not approve of the police's defence team which “descended to the gutter, seeking to shift the blame onto the innocent victim of their wrongdoing. We deplore the tactics of the defence and the smearing of Jean Charles's name [...] Any attempt to salvage the image of the Metropolitan Police by those in senior positions, publicly apologising for their errors, has been undermined by the defence put forward.” (BBC 2007, Naughton 2007).

(23) The guilty verdict against the police again brings up voices asking for Sir Ian Blair's resignation. De Menezes' mother says "Sir Ian should now think about what his men have done to my son and consider resigning." (Wright 2007). Also, Shadow Home Secretary David Davis,

the Tory party and the Liberal democrats demand Blair's resignation (ibid., Edwards & Steele 2007). Sir Ian Blair says the following after the Met is found guilty:

The death of Jean Charles de Menezes was a tragedy. He was an innocent man. The Metropolitan Police service has apologised to the family and friends of Mr de Menezes many times in the past. Once more I express my deep regrets for his death. [...] What we are going to do now do is to take time to consider whether and how any of our current operating practices need to be altered in the light of this conviction. [...] It is important to remember that no police officer set out that day to shoot an innocent man. I am certain that this death was the culmination of actions by many hands, all of whom were doing their best to handle the terrible threat facing London on that day - a race against time to find the failed suicide bombers of the day before. [...] the difficulties shown in this trial were those of an organisation struggling, on a single day, to get to grips with a simply extraordinary situation - its greatest operational challenge in a generation. The judge noted that this was an isolated breach of law in quite extraordinary circumstances. [...] This case thus provides no evidence at all of systematic failure by the Metropolitan Police service and I therefore intend to continue to lead the Met in its increasingly successful efforts to reduce crime and to deter and disrupt terrorist activities in London and elsewhere in the UK. At the same time, it will be my personal task to ensure that the lessons learnt from the death of Mr de Menezes are incorporated into our training, our policy and our operations. (BBC 2007b)

This statement is not received favourably by Brian Paddick, a senior police officer, who writes a Daily Mail article about the verdict. Paddick criticises Blair's demeanour after the Met was found guilty:

There was no apparent remorse or humility. Instead he was bullish, saying that, as no systemic failure had been identified, he would carry on. If ever there was a time for reflection and nothing more than a repetition of the apology made two years ago to the de Menezes family and the public, that was it. Ian missed the point; it is not about being convicted or not, it is about public trust and confidence. (Paddick 2007)

Paddick writes that “Nothing Sir Ian has done since the event suggests any sincere regret for what happened under his watch; only a view that his own skin should be saved” and demands his resignation (McKie 2007). Commenting on the press coverage over the Met's conviction, Pauli (2007) titles “Ian Blair sacked by the press”. The *Daily Mail* pushes ahead by calling Ian Blair a “man without honour” (Wright 2007), and calls his speech a “textbook exercise in blame avoidance” (Wright 2007). The *Daily Mail* (2007) further writes new lyrics to Gloria Gaynor's *I will survive*, changing the chorus to “I won't resign”. Other newspapers also would like to see Blair resign. (Pauli 2007, McKie 2007). However, Blair has the “full confidence” of Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Home Secretary Jacqui Smith (Sturcke 2007).

### **8.2.1.9      *Resignation of one police officer***

(24) Andy Hayman, Britain's most senior counter-terrorism officer, who was found to be guilty of misleading the public in the Stockwell 2 report, resigns on December 4 2007. The de Menezes family “welcome the fact that [he] is no longer in office” but is “disappointed that by resigning Hayman is effectively evading formal punishment for his wrongdoing” (Justice4Jean 2007b).

His resignation makes Hayman the only police officer so far to suffer personal consequences over the Stockwell shooting. The policemen who killed De Menezes remain on firearm duty and one of them killed another person in November 2006 (Justice4Jean 2007). Cressida Dick, the officer in command of the operation in which De Menezes died, is promoted in February 2007. The de Menezes family heavily criticise this promotion and argue that it “send[s] out a message that these police officers are above the law and have already been exonerated” (Justice4Jean 2007).

### **8.2.1.10      *IPCC: No one will be charged over de Menezes' death***

(25) On December 21 2007 the IPCC announces that also none of the four senior officers involved in De Menezes' killing will face disciplinary charges. The family reacts “with anger” (Justice4Jean 2007b) and says:

It is nothing short of a public scandal that despite two lengthy and critical IPCC reports and a damning jury verdict at the Old Bailey, the IPCC and the MPA still cannot find any reason to bring disciplinary action against a single person for the shooting dead of Jean Charles de Menezes. The IPCC has shown it is no better than the discredited Police Complaints Authority that it replaced in holding police to account. The cynical and disgusting timing of this announcement is a clear attempt to bury bad news. It is clearly time for the government to review the effectiveness of the IPCC. (Justice4Jean 2007b)

### **8.2.1.11      *Apology by the marksman***

(26) One of the policemen who shot Jean Charles de Menezes, known as Charlie12, addresses the family directly during his hearing at the inquest. Before giving details of how he shot de Menezes, he says:

I am trying to be as delicate as I can for the benefit of the family but there are some things that need to be said. [...] I know this is, quite frankly, an awful time for them and I will try to be as sensitive as I can [...] My sincere regrets, I can't put myself in the position that they are faced with [...] I'm a family man myself, and to lose a son or any member of the family in this situation... I just can not believe and I offer my sincere condolences, I really, really respectfully do that [...] If there had been any other alternative, you must believe me, I would have taken it. But I didn't believe I

had any alternative and if I didn't act then members of the public would have been killed, my colleagues would have been killed and I would have been killed. I had a duty to protect the public. (Clements 2008).

The *Mirror* reports that Charlie 12 (C12) had apologized to the family (Clements 2008), while other newspapers do not use the word *apologize* to describe his words. The *Evening Standard* and the *Guardian* merely state that C12 had offered his “sincere regrets” or “sincere condolences” for the family's loss (Cheston 2008, Laville & Dodd 2008).

#### **8.2.1.12 Ian Blair resigns**

(27) On December 1 2008, Ian Blair resigns. He states that his resignation is due to a lack of support from London mayor Boris Johnson (BBC 2008). The de Menezes family say that "Ian Blair should have resigned three years ago when he and his men killed the wrong man." and add that that “for Sir Ian to state he had resigned not through any failings reinforced their belief the Metropolitan Police still refused to accept responsibility” (Skynews 2008).

#### **8.2.1.13 Inquest into de Menezes' death**

(28) At the inquest into de Menezes's death, the Coroner Sir Michael Wright rules out the jury's option to decide his murder was an unlawful killing, leaving the options of lawful killing and an open verdict. Upon that, the family withdraw their legal team from the case and four cousins protest in T-shirt's that read “Unlawful killing” “Your legal right to decide” (Randhawa 2008). After the court protest, cousin Patricia da Silva Armani says “After three months of evidence, 100 witnesses and millions of pounds, the coroner, Sir Michael Wright, has presided over a complete whitewash [...] He has failed on every count of the purpose of an inquest investigation.” (Randhawa & Cheston 2008). Cousin Vivien Figuerdo says: "For three and a half years we have had one simple request, that all the evidence be put in front of the jury and for them to be allowed to decide [...] We have faced a system which has repeatedly blocked, silenced and stopped all the avenues we have tried in order to get justice." (Edwards & Rayner 2008)

(29) On December 12 2008, the jury decides on an open verdict, the “most critical” option available after an unlawful killing-verdict had been ruled out (Laville & Siddique 2008). The jury thus show that they do not trust the statements made by police officers in the hearing – the *Independent* prints the headline “Menezes: Did the police lie?” (Hughes 2008) and it is stated that the verdict is “highly damaging to the Metropolitan police” (ibid.).

(30) De Menezes' mother expresses the family's gratitude to the jury and anyone who helped them in this difficult time (BBC 2008b). She says:

I am very happy with the verdict. Since the moment the coroner ruled out unlawful killing, I was feeling very sad. But today I feel reborn. I am so happy with the verdict, and want to thank everyone - the legal team, campaign group and the jurors. I think that Jean's name has been cleared from all the accusations that he behaved in a suspicious way. (Laville & Dodd 2008b).

The family is relieved that the jury did not return a “lawful killing” verdict and claims that “the jury would have gone further and recorded a verdict of unlawful killing 'had they not been gagged by the coroner'."The jury's verdict is a damning indictment of the multiple failures of the police and the lies they told,"(Laville & Siddique 2008). Cousin Patricia da Silva Armani says: "An unlawful verdict was what we were expecting. After the verdict that we had today I can only say that we will carry on with the struggle." (Edwards & Rayner 2008).

(31) The acting Commissioner of the Met, Sir Paul Stephenson, says the following (for his full statement cf. Rayner 2008):

We have heard the jury's conclusions and now need to take time to give proper consideration to them. I also note the coroner's intention to make a report on his recommendations for any future action we may need to take. The death of Jean Charles de Menezes was a tragedy. He was an innocent man and we must, and do, accept full responsibility for his death. For somebody to lose their life in such circumstances is something that the Metropolitan Police Service deeply regrets. In the face of enormous challenges faced by officers on that day, we made a most terrible mistake. I am sorry. I wish to once again express my profound condolences to the family of Jean Charles. They have suffered the most dreadful of losses. July 2005 brought with it unparalleled challenges for the Met and the people of London, including the unique situation where there were four failed suicide bombers on the run. Our priority that day was to arrest these terrorists before they could commit further atrocities and potential acts of mass murder. No one set out that day to kill an innocent man. [...] our priority is to protect Londoners by stopping those who are intent on terrifying us all. In doing that, we must learn from the terrible tragedy of Jean Charles's death. (Rayner 2008)

The *Daily Mail* writes that Sir Paul “issued a full and frank apology”, and also that he was “forced to issue a grovelling apology for the July 2005 shooting”. The *Daily Mail* further states that by saying “I am sorry” Sir Paul “seemed to go one stage further” than Sir Ian Blair who expressed his “deep regrets” (Gill 2008). The *Sun* reports that Stephenson apologized to Jean Charles' family (France 2008) and the *Guardian* states that “the verdict drew a personal apology from the acting commissioner” (Laville & Dodd 2008b). The *BBC* (BBC 2008b), the *Independent* (Hughes 2008) and the *Telegraph* (Rayner 2008) cite Stephenson verbatim and do not label his speech.

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith also speaks out after the verdict is returned. She offers her

“deepest sympathy” to the family and says that "What we have learned from the accounts of the tragic events that day reminds us all of the extremely demanding circumstances under which the police work to protect us from further terrorist attack" (Laville & Siddique 2008)

Nick Hardwick, IPCC chairman, says:

The death of Jean Charles de Menezes was a truly shocking event. An entirely innocent man on his way to work was shot and killed by our police while he sat on the tube. We now know there was nothing in his actions which justified this fate. He had no opportunity to defend himself or protest his innocence. I would like to repeat on behalf of the IPCC my sincere sympathies to the family of Jean Charles de Menezes. (BBC 2008b)

#### **8.2.1.14 Legal settlement**

(32) On November 23 2009 the de Menezes family and the Met reach a legal settlement. They publish the following joint statement:

The commissioner of police of the metropolis and representatives of the De Menezes family are pleased to announce that all litigation between them arising out of the tragic death of Jean Charles de Menezes has been resolved. [...] The members of the family are pleased that a compensation package has been agreed which enables them to put these events behind them and move forward with their lives. [...] In view of the physical and mental distress caused to the members of the family by these events and the understandable publicity and press interest, it has been agreed that it is in the best interests of the family that no further statement in relation to this settlement will be made either by them or the commissioner [...] The commissioner would like to take this opportunity of making a further unreserved apology to the family for the tragic death of Jean Charles de Menezes and to reiterate that he was a totally innocent victim and in no way to blame for his untimely death. (Dodd 2009)

The actual amount of money the family receives is covered by a confidentiality clause (Wright 2009), but it is believed that the Met will pay the family “just above £100,000” and their “substantial legal costs” (Dodd 2009).

The *Daily Mail* calls this a “paltry sum” and argues that, if this assumption is true “the Metropolitan Police will have escaped extremely lightly”(Daily Mail 2009). The newspaper further states that “[t]he bitter truth is that under our compensation laws the poorer you are, the less you get” (ibid.). The *Guardian* states that both, the family and the Met, refuse to comment on the claim that the family received less money than they would have if they were not poor (Dodd 2009).

The *Daily Mail* compares the compensation sum for the family to the pay-off of Sir Ian Blair. The newspaper points out that Blair “faced calls to resign over the shooting, was condemned by the Independent Police Complaints Commission and heard his marksmen branded

liars by an inquest jury” (Wright 2009). It further denounces that still, Blair received four times the amount of money when he left the Met, than the de Menezes family did as compensation for Jean Charles' death. It further states that £100,000 is a final insult to the family and concludes: “To pay Mr and Mrs de Menezes so much less than the sum awarded to the man who bears corporate responsibility for Jean-Charles' death is, quite simply, grotesque” (Dailymail 2009).

The *Daily Mail* also criticises Ian Blair and makes a point very similar to the one that Paddick (2007) made concerning Blair's speech after the verdict against the Met:

As the man in overall charge of anti terrorist policing at the time, Sir Ian should have expressed sorrow and humility and committed himself to ensuring that such a disaster could never happen again. Instead he acts as if it was little more than a bad day at the office for him and his officers. He initially blocked the independent external investigation into the shooting, and still refuses to admit any fault or shoulder any blame. (Daily Mail 2009).

#### **8.2.1.15 Ian Blair receives life peerage**

(33) In May 2010 Ian Blair is given life peerage. Cousin Vivian Figueiredo says:

We are disgusted at this decision. [...] As commissioner, we believe Ian Blair was ultimately accountable for the death of Jean, for the lies told and the cover-up. [...] He even tried to stop the IPCC [Independent Police Complaints Commission] investigating our cousin's death. This is a final slap in the face for our family. (BBC 2010).

In response to the criticism Ian Blair says:

First of all, there is a terrible amount of pain in the de Menezes family and I cannot imagine what that feels like. [...] I have always said that I am now and always was accountable for the death of Mr de Menezes. What I have also said was that I was not responsible for it. [...] [T]he death of that man remains with me. All of us regret it. (BBC 2010b)

It is further reported that at this occasion Blair

also described the "unprecedented hunt" days after the London bombings which led to the innocent man being mistaken for a suicide bomber. Sir Ian said police had made the "worst error of all" by failing to make it known publicly when the error was found. He added that attempts to block a later Independent Police Complaints Commission investigation was "an error" (BBC 2010b).

### **8.2.2 Analysis**

The first public statement that the police make after the killing is given by the head of the Met and expresses that “any death is deeply regrettable”. This is a phrase which is widely agreed upon but does not relate to this particular death and also does not say that it is the Met or the

speaker who are the ones feeling regret. Such a general comment is maybe uttered to create rapport with the public. Also, by describing the murdered man as a person who refused to obey the police, the statement places the murder in a context in which the public is more inclined to understand and forgive the police action (cf.1).

When on the next day it turns out that the victim was not a terrorist, Blair has to revise this statement (cf.2). He now calls the event a tragedy and expresses the Met's full responsibility and the Met's deep regrets to the family. This statement, which on its own would be an outright apology (on behalf of the organisation, not on behalf of Blair), is weakened by the acquittal of the Met's actions and shift of blame to the terrorists in the next sentence. Blair expresses the Met's full responsibility in the first sentence and denies it in the second. Blair further denies the Met's guilt by justifying the shoot-to-kill policy and not even considering its temporary abolition. Thus, the police action that led to the death is, previous to any investigative results, justified by Blair. The question remains how the acceptance of "full responsibility" and the expression of "deep regrets" are compatible with such a denial of guilt and the unwillingness to revise the fatal policy. In chapter 4.4.2.3 it is pointed out that *mortification* (i.e. apologizing) is only acceptable from institutions if they present *corrective action* along with it. Ian Blair expresses the Met's, an institution's, responsibility and regret but does not state that anything will be done to prevent such a killing from happening again. Rather, he denies that the institution's policies are faulty.

The Met's guilt is also denied by London's mayor Livingstone - he calls the event a tragedy and blames the terrorists for it (cf.3). Home Secretary Clarke gives a statement of regret and sympathy to the family but follows it up immediately with a justification of the police (cf.4). When Clarke states that the police were trying to do their best to protect the people one can see Coombs' *ingratiation* strategy being applied. This *ingratiation* strategy is repeatedly used by officials when apologizing for the death (cf.8 Tony Blair, cf.23 Ian Blair, cf.26 Home Secretary Smith, cf. 26 Met Commissioner Stephenson)

Journalists interpret Blair's statements in various ways. It is reported that the police broke with "their earlier tradition of prevarication" and apologized, but also that the police stopped short of an outright apology (cf.5). The family interprets Blair's statement as an apology but states that "apologies are not enough". Cousin Alex Pereira is reported to have said "the police have tried to apologize. But they should all be ashamed" (cf.6). From this statement I understand that for Pereira to perceive the apology as meaningful, the police would have needed to communicate feelings of shame, i.e. humiliate themselves in public. Their simple expression of

regret does not soothe his feelings. Other parts of his statement also show that he would like to see the police humiliated: He calls them “stupid” and “incapable” and ridicules the marksman as “someone with a brain the size of a three-year-old”. This cousin's anger and thirst for revenge cannot be satisfied with a simple statement of regret.

The list of officials who publicly state their regret over the death grows longer as Foreign Secretary Straw and Foreign Minister Triesman offer their condolences (cf.7). Brazilian Foreign Secretary Amorim, to whom these words are directed, states that he heard “expressions of regret”. Amorim's statement (cf. BBC 2005d, BBC 2005e, CNN 2005) suggests that Straw did not downplay his condolences by defending the police, like Blair, Livingstone and Clarke did. Such an unequivocal statement is an exception in this case. However, I do not have access to a full record of the conversation and it may be that Amorim left out some of Straw's statements when reporting their conversation to the press. Prime Minister Tony Blair also makes a public apology, but after he states his regret he claims to understand the family's feelings, justifies the police's action and speaks of the importance to give the police every support.

Unsurprisingly therefore, this statement is not one that the family can appreciate. Cousin Arialva Pereira does not accept this apology because Blair is not “punishing the police who did this” but supporting them (cf.9). He states that such an apology is not “easing our pain”. In the family's home town Blair's statement is criticised further: People say that the apology did not go far enough and that apologies don't help and justice is what is needed (cf.9). The mayor of the home town says that it's easy for Blair to apologize, but it does not mean very much (cf.9.) So, Blair's apology is rejected on many levels: For supporting the police and for being an “easy apology” which “does not go far enough”. I assume that the critical point here is that Blair's statement does not promise any *corrective action* (cf. Table 1), i.e. any plans to prevent such a killing from happening again. It is easy to be “desperately sorry” for de Menezes' death – surely many Londoners who have nothing to do with the killing also feel “desperately sorry”. But for the head of government, in whose power it is to work towards preventing a killing in the future and who is seen as one of the “really guilty ones” by the family (cf.11) , for him to express nothing but sorrow and sympathy is understood to be “not enough”.

When it is made public that the police's initial statements were false, journalists write that the police “misled” the public, while bloggers write that the Met (and Blair) were lying (cf. 10). The *Independent* publishes an article which heavily criticises Ian Blair's “blithe refusal to own up to a sequence of terrible mistakes”. There is no immediate response by the Met or Blair.

However, in an interview a month later, Blair says that “more could have been done to set the record straight”, but he does not admit to misleading the public (cf.13). In November of the same year, Blair states that the Met made a “serious mistake” in not correcting the reports which slandered de Menezes (cf. 18) and that this mistake was able to happen because the police were transfixed on finding the bombers. In Benoit's terms (cf. Chapter 4.4), Blair is using the strategy of *bolstering* to repair the Met's image. Only in 2010, when Blair is no longer head of Met, he admits that the police made the “worst error of all” by failing to make it known publicly when the error was found (cf.33). This supports the assumption that people admit guilt once they cannot suffer personal harm from it.

When documents describing the Met's “catastrophic blunders” leak, there is evidence that the Met's actions should not have been justified before having been questioned. There are now documents stating that the Met did make mistakes and the death of de Menezes cannot simply be blamed on external factors. Nevertheless, none of the officials who stated full support for the police, withdraw this support. The family, who now have evidence that the police did not do the best they could to save de Menezes' life, are demanding a public inquiry into the death and repeatedly call for the truth to be brought to light. They also call for Ian Blair to resign. Interestingly enough, the family never ask for an apology. They demand the truth and the sacking or the imprisonment of the ones responsible. The call for an outright apology is only made by journalists (cf.12).

Four days after the leaked documents are published and no response is given by the Met, the family decide to publish the letter they received from the Met shortly after de Menezes' death (cf.14). I argue that by publishing this letter at that time, the family put pressure on the Met to finally comment on their treatment of de Menezes and his family. Bringing up this letter also allows the family to show the anger they feel towards the Met: The family state they feel insulted by the offer. The mother says she feels disgusted by the policeman who brought the offer and a brother tells the media that the family want to punish the police and put the policemen into prison. The Met admit to writing this letter, but stress that the family could have taken the money without being legally bound (cf.14).

A month later, when Blair justifies the shoot-to-kill policy, he also apologizes for the death again (cf.15). It seems that whenever officials refer to the de Menezes case, an apology is obligatory before the actual statement can be given. On this particular occasion, Ian Blair confirms that the shoot-to-kill policy is the best way to respond to suicide bombings, meaning

that it will be carried out even though the official inquiry is not yet completed. This is another inconsistent statement on behalf of the Met. Surely, if the police are as sorry as they claim to be, they would not hold on to a policy that could bring them in the same situation again? At any rate, the family are “horrified” and turn down the apology as well as a meeting with Blair. I assume that the family have no interest in meeting Blair in private, because they do not care for a half-hearted personal apology that may be used by the media in favour of the Met.

In 2006, upon meeting the Brazilian president, Tony Blair again offers “our deepest regrets to the family”. To the apology he adds the promise that “the proper investigations and procedures would continue through to their conclusion”(cf.19). This appears to be a worthy apology which also states that an effort is made to find the truth, something that the family desperately seek. However, the family recall that the shoot-to-kill policy is still in operation and on these grounds reject Blair's apology (cf.19).

When in 2007 the IPCC announces that eleven of the police officers will not be charged personally for de Menezes' death – a decision which is made before a verdict is reached under the health and safety charges – the family are “bitterly disappointed”. They state again that they hope the responsible officers “are ultimately rendered fully accountable” (cf. 21). The Met, before stating their pleasure over the IPCC's decision, express their “very deep regret” over the shooting and let the media know that they apologised in public as well as in private to the family and are now “saying sorry” again. This shows again, that statements concerning the case are accompanied by a statement of regret directed at the family.

After the guilty verdict is delivered, the family point out how these public apologies which are meant to “salvage the image of the Metropolitan police” are undermined by the defence put forward by the police (cf.22). This way, the family again communicate that an apology without appropriate measures is useless to them. Appropriate measures are also said to be lacking in Ian Blair's behaviour. The Met Commissioner is accused by the press of having done nothing that would show his sincere regret (cf.23). Words and deeds in Blair's case are two different things.

In connection with the guilty verdict, Blair's resignation is demanded in numerous newspapers (cf. 23). These demands are further fuelled by the speech Blair gives after the announcement of the verdict. Even though his Met has been proven guilty, Blair states that all the police “were doing their best”, implies that the “extraordinary situation” was responsible for de Menezes' death and states that he will continue to lead the Met (cf. 23). There are a few

contradictory aspects in this speech: What Blair intends to communicate is that not the Met but the “extraordinary situation” is to blame for the killing - nevertheless he offers his regrets to the family and promises corrective action. If everyone was already “doing their best”, then how can the Met become even better? How can Blair offer regret and improvement if he believes that the Met is not to be blamed?

When Hayman, the officer found guilty of misleading the public, resigns, the family argue that he's getting off too lightly and that he should have stayed and received the formal punishment for his wrongdoing (cf.24). Also, when Ian Blair resigns a year later, the family criticise the way he does it: they argue that Blair should have resigned three years ago, when it became clear that the wrong man was killed. (cf.27) Also, the fact that Blair resigns without admitting any failings on his part, is not approved of by the family who see this as a sign of the Met's refusal to accept responsibility. Thus, it becomes clear that the family does not ask for Blair's resignation as an end in itself. The aim behind it seems to be to shame him in public and punish him. When Blair resigns, citing reasons unrelated to de Menezes' killing, this is not achieved.

“Sincere condolences” are further offered to the family by one of the marksmen who shot de Menezes. At the inquest, he addresses the family directly and states that he “can't put [him]self in the position that they are faced with”. In his speech the marksman “humanizes” himself – he talks in a way that may shift the jury's and family's perception of him as a killer to that of a family man (cf. 26). The family do not comment on the marksman's apology.

When the open verdict is delivered, more public apologies are given (cf.26). “Deepest sympathy” and “sincere sympathies” are offered to the family by Home Secretary Smith and IPCC chairman Hardwick (cf.26). The new head of the Met, Sir Paul Stephenson, gives a speech in which he states the Met “made a most terrible mistake” and “accept[s] full responsibility for his [de Menezes'] death”. (cf.31) He also expresses his “profound condolences” to the family. Interestingly enough, it is Stephenson, a man who bears no personal responsibility and is not the one accused by family and media, who says that he is sorry. The *Daily Mail* writes that by saying *sorry* he goes one step further than Blair did. But what the newspaper fails to write is how much easier it must be for Stephenson to admit responsibility for the killing because he most obviously does not bear any responsibility and could not possibly be personally held accountable. The one who is most clearly involved in the killing, Sir Ian Blair, does not say that he is sorry. In 2010, having received life peerage, Blair states that he is accountable for the death and that he has

never denied this – and adds that he nevertheless is not responsible. And even though the Met have been found guilty of having unnecessarily endangered de Menezes' life (cf. 20) and are put under pressure by the open verdict returned at the inquest (cf. 23), no one is ever found to be responsible – not even the head of the Met. This tactic of blaming the whole institution but no individual officer was already criticised by Paddick in 2007 (cf.23). Paddick argued that the Met should admit that individual officers made grave errors and hold them to account in order to restore the entire service's tarnished reputation (Paddick 2007). This, however, was not done.

In 2010 the family and the Met come to a legal settlement (cf.32). A final “unreserved apology” is given by the commissioner, who also stresses that de Menezes was “in no way to blame for his untimely death” (something the police had denied in the Health and Safety trial). As arranged, neither the police nor the family comment on the amount of money that was paid to the family. Nevertheless, it is speculated in the media that the compensation money is £100,000 and the Met are condemned in the media for paying so little to the family of the victim and so much to the commissioner under whose lead the killing happened (cf.32). The last words on this case, written in newspaper articles, call the compensation money a paltry sum and a final insult to the family.

### ***8.3 Comparison of the public apologies in Austria and the UK***

#### **8.3.1 Differences in the call for apology**

Mike Brennan asks for the police to admit their mistake, to take responsibility for their unprofessional behaviour and to apologize (cf.3,11). Furthermore, Brennan seeks justice (cf. Akinyosoye 2010, AP 2009, Lindinger 2009). A friend creates the blog “Justice for Mike Brennan” (<http://justiceformikebrennan.blogspot.com/>) in his name and keeps its followers updated on newspaper articles, interviews, etc., concerning the incident. Brennan is often asked by journalists whether the police have contacted him or apologized to him – a question that he keeps answering in the negative (cf.11).

In contrast, the de Menezes family never demand an apology and the question whether they have been apologized to is not a big issue for the media either, probably, because the British police repeatedly state their regret in public. In response to these statements the family communicate that they do not care for an apology (cf.5) and that they would like to see action taken on behalf of the police. They further demand that the guilty are punished (cf.6,9), that the policy that led to de Menezes' death is abandoned (cf.10), that justice is served and the truth is

revealed. They create the website Justice4Jean (<http://www.justice4jean.org/>) where they publish press releases and the family's opinion on the process of events. The family's statements are rather harsh and inflammatory when referring to the police (cf. 6).

Brennan, on the other hand, calmly tells his version of the events and also calmly responds to the accusations that he feigned injuries – he calls these accusations “outrageous rumours” but does not accuse the police of perpetrating them (Bischofberger 2009). He explicitly says that he does not have a problem with the police, only with the people who did that to him (ibid.). He does not insult the police like the de Menezes family do (cf. Menezes 6) and he does not demand resignations. Brennan is active in so far as he tries to alert attention to his case: he gives interviews, attends discussions, makes his own video (Brennan 2010), etc. . But he does not attempt to take the legal process in his hands, like the de Menezes family do. He states that he “hopes for justice” (AP 2009) and seems to be trusting the state to get it right.

The de Menezes family take an active role in the development of the examination of de Menezes' death. They voice their doubt over the objectivity of the IPCC's investigation, they criticise the Met's handling of the death and ask that the IPCC investigate the misleading accounts relating to the killing (cf. 17). At their call, the Stockwell2-investigation is launched. The family are also very present in the media: Their comments on the current events in relation to the Menezes inquiry are printed along with the police's statements and the Met acknowledge the family and state their regret over the killing in most of their statements.

Both the de Menezes family and Brennan are invited to meet police representatives (cf. UK15, A1) and both turn down the offer. I assume that they do this because they are not interested in a private statement of regret – they both pursue justice and justice will not be done in private meetings with the police. Even though Brennan demands an apology, he is not running after the police (i.e. going to the police station) to get one. It appears that the demand for an apology is indeed the demand for the offender to humiliate himself in public. This aim cannot be achieved in a private meeting – which may be a reason why both victims turn it down.

The call for apology appears to be more aggressive in the UK. The truth is demanded ferociously by the victims in the UK and they attempt to watch over the legal process taking place, demanding insight into reports (cf. Crawford 2008) and asking for further investigations when the ongoing one is not dealing with the questions that matter to them (cf.16). The Austrian victim is calmer in his public statements. He demands an apology and asks for justice to be served, but he is less radical in his communication with the police and his judgement of the

police in general.

### **8.3.2 The timing of the apologies and the question of who apologizes to whom**

I will start by pointing out a common trait in the policeforces' reactions to the respective incidents. Both heads of police justify their force and stand behind the actions taken by the officers. Also, neither policeforce holds the officers involved to account in order to restore the police's tarnished image. Benoit argues that it is advisable for an organisation to distance itself from the employees who committed an offensive act in order to repair its image (cf. Chapter 4.4.2.1). Interestingly enough, this strategy, which could have been used by both the British and the Austrian police, was used by neither. Both police organisations stood behind their officers and did not use disciplinary action against them.

The first difference is that in the UK a public apology was given shortly after the incident by the head of the police, and that it was soon to be followed by statements of the Home Secretary and the mayor of London. Austrian police, on the other hand, responded slowly to allegations and no higher-ranking official than the *Polizeipräsident* commented on the incident at all.<sup>78</sup> Also, in de Menezes' case there was communication between the governments: The British Foreign Minister and Foreign Secretary both expressed their regret to the Brazilian Foreign Secretary and the Brazilian people. It can be argued that this action was necessary because a murder is a grave incident and requires more communication than committing grievous bodily harm. However, there are two incidents of the Austrian police killing a man they were meant to be looking after. In both cases policemen were found guilty of negligent homicide (News 2002; APA 2005): In 1999, the Austrian police killed the Nigerian refugee Marcus Omofuma during his deportation. There was no apology from the police or the government but it was also pointed out that neither was an apology demanded by the Nigerian government (Cserveny & Löwstedt 2009). In 2003, the Moroccan Seibane Wague died “as a result of an official police operation with medical personnel attending” (Ghadimi 2007: 190). His family (Wague's Austrian wife and his brother) demanded an apology, but received none (Ghadimi 2007: 189). In these cases of homicide the Austrian government and police were not as willing to give public statements of regret as the British government and police were in the case of de Menezes. Despite the

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<sup>78</sup> Austrian home secretary Maria Fekter only came in contact with Brennan's case when she refused to accept a petition which was sent to her on the occasion of Brennan's “mix-up”. It concerned the discrimination which people of dark skin colour face from Austrian authorities and was started by an UNO-official. Fekter refused to accept it and asked for it to be sent to the *Polizeipräsident* instead (Der Standard 2009).

differences between the murders in Austria and the UK, the response of Austrian officials to these murders makes the assumption plausible that the Austrian government and police are less inclined to express regret when confronted with an image-threatening situation of such extent (cf. Lorenz, who says that in Austria no one has ever apologized to those who were killed in a police action, ORF 2009d Min. 1:45).

In both countries, the policemen who committed the offence followed the example set by their superiors. In the court hearing, the marksman who shot de Menezes addressed the family directly and offered his “sincere regrets” (cf.26). The Austrian policeman, when confronted with Brennan in court, did not talk to him directly but told the judge that he regrets the incident “an und für sich” (cf.10), thus diminishing his expression of regret.

To conclude, it can be said that public apologies in the UK were given sooner after the offence and by higher officials than in Austria. As it is agreed that fast responses are useful in crisis communication (cf. chapter 4.4.2.5), it appears that in terms of the timing of the apology the British police did better. It is further noteworthy, that in the UK regrets are expressed to the de Menezes family on many occasions. It seems to become a ritual for those talking about the shooting to acknowledge the family (cf. 21,32, 33). When the open verdict against the police is delivered, the Home Secretary, the head of the Met and the head of the IPCC again express their regrets. Also, the statement of the final settlement between the family and the Met includes an apology to the family. In Austria, there are not so many voluntary statements of regret by police officials, and none addressed to the victim personally. It can therefore be argued that the Austrian police apologized to the wrong audience (i.e., to the people of Austria with whom they wish to maintain a positive relationship, but not to Brennan, the victim of the offence). This is another sign that the Austrian police apologize in their own interest and not in order to reconcile with the victim (cf. chapter 4.3.2.3.1).

### **8.3.3 Content of the public apologies**

In their first statement, the Austrian police (cf.2) are buying time by stating generalities which are probably meant to sound reassuring to the public. Among other things, an examination of the case, clear consequences and an apology are promised. (strategy Austria1: *Ingratiation* and *corrective action*, according to Coombs, cf. Chapter 4.4.2.5). The first statement given by the British police also includes generalities which are probably uttered to reassure the public that the police are competent (cf.1) (strategyUK1: *Ingratiation*).

The second statement of the Austrian police (cf.4) expresses regret (but only for the mix-

up, not for the injuries and the pain the police have caused him) and states that an attempt to offer an apology has been made. It does not contain an apology directed at the victim but shifts the blame for the incident onto him (strategy A2: *denial:shift blame*<sup>79</sup>). In their next public statement (cf.7) the police accuse Brennan of exaggerating and imply that he is lying (strategy A3: *attack accuser*). The *attack accuser* strategy is applied again, when the police claim to be in contact with a witness who can testify that Brennan is playing a show for the media and not as badly injured as he says (APA 2009d). In the fourth public statement (cf.8) the Polizeipräsident offers his explicit regret for the mix-up. The adjective “ausdrücklich” (explicit) accentuates Pürstl’s regret. Adjectives like “sincere, deep or honest” would be stressing an inner predisposition to uttering these words of regrets, something which Pürstl does not seem to be willing to do: His words of regret are not addressed to the victim himself, even though he is sitting in the same room. This suggests that the “explicit regret” is directed towards journalists and the viewers of the TV-show but not in particular to the victim. The expression of regret is followed by the strategy of *justification* (cf. chapter 4.4.2.5) when Pürstl states that what happened at Spittelau can happen in the best police forces (strategy A4: *justification*). Then Pürstl backs up the course of events as presented by the accused policemen, thus implicitly accusing Brennan of not telling the truth (*attack accuser*).

The British police applies strategies closer to the accommodative end (cf. the defensive-accommodative continuum by Coombs, chapter 4.4.2.5). For instance, in the second statement (cf. 2) Blair says that the Met accept full responsibility and offer their “deep regrets” (strategy UK2: *Full apology*). It becomes obvious, however, that this full apology is not meant seriously when in the same statement Blair argues that it really is the terrorists who bear responsibility for the killing (strategy UK3: *denial: shift blame*). To accept full responsibility and shift the blame in the same statement is contradictory. Another controversy can be found in this speech, this time regarding the strategy of *corrective action*. Blair states that “everything is done to make it right” (strategy UK4: *corrective action*). This promise together with an unequivocal acceptance of responsibility would very likely convince the public that the Met mean what they say. As pointed out in chapter 8.2.2, *mortification*<sup>80</sup> as an image repair strategy on behalf of an organization is credible when accompanied by *corrective action*. But the Met further state that “we’re quite

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79 *Shift blame* is not an explicit strategy in Coomb’s continuum. I argue that depending on the wording of the statement *shifting blame* could fall in the categories of *excuse* (*admits that there is a crisis but minimizes organizational responsibility for it*) or *denial* (*claims there is no crisis or that the organization is uninvolved*).

Benoit, however, explicitly states *shift blame* as a subcategory of *denial* and I will stick to his subdivision.  
80 Coombs uses the term *Full apology* to describe the strategy of apologizing. Benoit names the same strategy *mortification*. When referring to Benoit’s advice on image repair work I am using his term.

comfortable the [shoot-to-kill] policy is right” and that “[the rules] have to be that”. Thus also the strategy of *corrective action* is made implausible by contradicting statements.

The Met is supported in its strategy of *shifting blame* by the mayor of London (cf.3). The strategy of *ingratiation* (i.e., trying to create positive impressions of the organization) is applied again by the Home Secretary when she states that the police “were trying to do their very best” and have her full support (cf. 4). The same message is sent by the Prime Minister (cf.8). The Foreign Secretary applies the strategy of *corrective action* by promising a thorough investigation (cf.7).

An interesting aspect is that in court both police forces use defensive strategies. The lawyer of the Austrian police shifts blame onto Brennan when he claims that Brennan bears guilt because he let the situation escalate (cf.12). By doing so, he repeats the accusation that the police raised against Brennan earlier on (cf.4). The British police drop their accommodative strategies in the trial over health and safety regulations. Instead they choose the strategy of *denial (shift blame)*, which is contradictory to the *full apology* and *corrective action* strategies which they used in public. *Denial (shift blame)*, the most defensive strategy that the Met ever use, is not applied in public statements, only in the court hearing. This may be because the Met want to harvest advantages in court, without facing further threats to their image in public. The de Menezes family are aware of the contradiction between strategies applied in court and out of court and state that attacking de Menezes in order to defend the police undermines the apologies which were given by senior officers (cf.22).

On Coombs' continuum for the analysis of crisis situations (cf. Figure 2), both crises can be placed between transgression and accident. According to Coombs, such a crisis should be responded to with strategies from the accommodative end of the continuum of crisis response strategies. Austrian police, however, refuse to admit that what they did to Brennan is a transgression. They portray the incident as an accident for which they bear no responsibility and choose their crisis response strategies accordingly (and even further to the defensive end of the continuum than advised for an accident). Brennan and most media, on the other hand, portray the incident as a clear transgression, which would require accommodative response strategies. As there is no investigation that would prove one party right, the means to judge the incident is the final verdict which finds the policeman guilty. This verdict communicates that the policeman bears responsibility and that Brennan's injuries are not the result of a mere accident. Thus, latest after the verdict, an accommodative response strategy is advisable for the Austrian police.

However, the police do not comment and the policeman himself merely says that it is sad how the media pre-judged him.

To sum up, Austrian police use the strategies of *ingratiation*, *corrective action*, *justification*, *denial (shift blame)* and *attack accuser* which can be placed on the defensive end of the continuum, with *attack accuser* being the most defensive strategy on the scale. The British police choose the strategies of *full apology*, *corrective action*, *ingratiation* and *denial (shift blame)* to repair its image, thus applying strategies from the accommodative end (*full apology* being the most accommodative strategy). The British choice of strategies is aligned with Coombs' advice that a crisis for which the organization bears “personal” control should be met with victim-centred strategies from the accommodative end of the scale. This means, that according to Coombs' theory, the British crisis response is the more suitable one.

### **8.3.4 Action taken accompanying the public statements**

So far, I have taken the spoken statements into account and come to the conclusion that the Met use victim-centred strategies as advised by Coombs – but to apply such strategies takes more than verbally committing to them. Therefore, I will now compare how, if at all, the verbal strategies are followed up by actions.

As pointed out above, the British *full apology* is negated in the same statement in which it occurs. Also, the police are reported to have defended themselves in court by shifting blame on to the victim (cf.22), which of course contradicts the police's initial public acceptance of responsibility. The family point out this incompatibility and argue that public apologies are rendered meaningless by the police's defence. Thus, it can be concluded that the verbal strategy of *full apology* is not mirrored in police action.

The promise of *corrective action* is, at least partly, fulfilled by the two IPCC investigations, which are launched to learn lessons from the incident (Crawford 2008). The leaked documents from the first investigation make clear that the police did not behave correctly (cf.11). In the course of these investigations, lies have been revealed and stories which have “come up” in the police's favour have been proven to be wrong (e.g. the story about the bulky jacket or that de Menezes jumped the ticket barriers). The fact that two (expensive) independent investigations were launched shows that an effort was put into revealing the truth. However, when the IPCC decides that none of the police officers involved in the killing will face disciplinary action, the benefit of having the IPCC as an independent commission is questioned. The IPCC is accused of being ineffective and no better than the police internal investigation

department it replaced (cf.25). Thus, the strategy of *corrective action* is followed through in so far as investigations were launched and that the police action that led to the death is revealed in public. What is missing, are consequences for the policemen involved.

The Austrian police mainly use defensive strategies, and it is only the promise of *corrective action* given by Landespolizeikommandant Mahrer (cf.2) which requires follow-up action in order to be fulfilled.

Mahrer promised that allegations against the police would be looked into and taken seriously and that there would be clear consequences once the investigations are completed. Those investigations, however, are run by an office which is subordinate to the Austrian police (i.e., the BBE). An independent investigation is demanded by Brennan's lawyer (Klenk 2009b), but not carried out. The police-internal investigation concludes that Brennan's injuries are not due to deliberate bodily harm: It is claimed that the policemen had to use bodily force because Brennan refused to obey (Mayr 2010).

While the investigation in the UK brings to light the facts about police procedure, this is not the case in Austria. This may partly be blamed on the police-internal investigation but also on the lack of CCTV recordings and the fact that no witnesses step forward and volunteer to speak out. Therefore, the only material available to come to a conclusion about what really happened on that February 11 are the two versions of the story and Brennan's injuries. The police, of course, discredit Brennan's version altogether and state that nothing was done wrong and that only the mix-up is regrettable. Therefore it can be doubted that the *corrective action* promised by Mahrer (cf.2) has any effect on the police at all. Also, because the internal investigation finds no errors, there is apparently no need for the clear consequences that Mahrer had promised. Had there been an investigation into the case, the police might not have been able to hold on to their portrayal of the incident. The Austrian promise of *corrective action* appears to have been uttered merely as a component of the *ingratiation strategy*, but with no intention to be fulfilled.

At first sight, the British way of dealing with the crisis appears to be the more suitable one. By applying victim-centred crisis-response strategies, the Met respond well to the crisis type at hand. However, the Met's actions do not always mirror the verbal strategies and sometimes even contradict the oral statements (e.g., Blair promising that “everything is done to make it right” while at the same time attempting to stop an independent investigation into the case cf.2,11). The actions that the Met take are not of the accommodative, victim-centred kind. E.g., the attempt to stop the investigation, the retention of the shoot-to-kill policy, the police's defence

in court.

I am under the impression that the Met are very skilled with words, but not interested in following up these words with actions. Thus, the actions of the Met are not too different from the actions taken by the Austrian police: The Met (unsuccessfully) attempt to avoid an independent investigation – the Austrian police (successfully) do not allow an independent investigation. In court, the Met shift blame for the incident on to the victim – so do the Austrian police. There is no change in the shoot-to-kill policy which led to the death – neither is there a change of policy in Austria. None of the Met police officers involved face disciplinary action – neither do Austrian police officers. The main differences between the two events concern the clearing up of the inconsistencies (which, in de Menezes' case was mostly achieved by the IPCC and the inquest, but not at all in Brennan's case) and the approach towards the victims (accommodative strategies in the UK, defensive strategies in Austria). To sum up, the Austrian police stick to defensive strategies in their actions and oral statements while the British police pursue defensive strategies in their actions and accommodative strategies in their oral statements.

I agree with the *Guardian* (2005, cf. 5) that it is to the Met's credit that they offer statements of regret and break with the “tradition of prevarication” (ibid.). The Austrian police appear not to be ready to do so yet. This is also criticised by Lorenz (ORF 2009c, Min. 8:50; ORF 2009d, Min.0:00), who states that in case of accusations, to be on the safe side, the Austrian police and Home Secretary first of all stand behind the accused police officers. This is exactly what was done in Brennan's case. And this is also what was done in de Menezes' case. However, the British police, over and above statements of support for its staff, also issue apologetic statements to the victims.

## 9 Conclusion

I argue that if judged by their actions both police forces respond similarly and follow defensive strategies. If judged by their public statements however, the British police can be said to have responded in a more sophisticated way than the Austrian police, who stuck to their defensive strategies also in oral statements. It appears that both police forces find it hard to admit guilt and to take blame for their wrongdoing. This is mirrored in their actions. Their communicative style, however, differs and this may be due to the cultural norms which are prevalent in each society.

“Orientation towards other” and “orientation towards addressee” have been pointed out by House (2006a, cf. chapter 6.1.1.4) to be English communicative styles, in contrast to “orientation towards self” and “orientation towards content” which she finds to be German

communicative styles. In the course of my research I came across an article dealing with “the things that really make Britain great” (Aitch 2008). “Apologising” is listed as item number three on this list and the author argues that “Brits are apologetic to the point of irritation” (ibid.). The website “Icons” (<http://www.icons.org.uk/nom/nominations/sorry>, 13 April 2011) has nominated “sorry” as an icon that represents England. Saying sorry is described as an “expression of light regret” and “not necessarily the same thing as apologising” and it is pointed out the British “say sorry before complaining [...] and also when asking somebody for information”. On the other hand, a *News.at* article (Hoa 2010) describes Austrians as particularly unwilling to apologize. These three texts are, of course, no academic sources, but they may help describe a tendency which is also present in House's research. They suggest that apologizing has a different connotation in the UK than it has in Austria. In the UK, apologizing may be an expression of the addressee-oriented communicative style and as such used more easily by members of the British cultural group.

It can be argued that the English communicative style is reflected in the Met's victim centred oral response strategies. Even though the British police initially deny their guilt for the killing as much as the Austrian police deny guilt for Brennan's injuries, the British communicative style has influence in so far as concern for the victim is expressed nevertheless. In Austria, where orientation towards the addressee is not valued that highly, no concern is expressed for the victim.

At this point the question arises, which of the two crisis responses is the better one? To answer this question I would again like to bring up Wierzbicka (1985a) who compared Polish speech acts to English speech acts and found that the difference in style depends on the different cultural traditions and values that these communities hold dear (1985a: 167). She finds that in Polish culture *cordiality* is valued, while in Anglo-Saxon culture *autonomy of the individual* is important. It is impossible to argue that one of these values or communicational styles is, per se, better – they are simply different. I argue that the same holds true for the differences in police crisis responses. The Austrian police do not put an effort into glossing over their public statements and they do not show concern for the victim when none is to be expected in their actions. The British police, on the other hand, issue sophisticated public statements and express concern for the victim which, however, is not followed up in their actions. Which of these approaches is deemed to be better depends on the values that are important to the beholder and cannot be decided once and for all.

In the introduction I established that the purpose of this thesis is to find out whether a culture's distinctive interactional style can be tracked down in the public speech act of apology. This case study constitutes one step towards being able to answer this question, and it suggests that cultural values and preferences in interactional style indeed influence public apologies.

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# Appendix

## Press Releases by the Austrian police

Misshandlungsvorwurf gegen Polizisten - versendet am 16.02.2009

Wien (OTS) - Am 11. Februar 2009 erfolgte die Festnahme eines Verdächtigen wegen Suchtmittelhandels in der U-Bahnstation Spittelau. Im Zuge dieser Festnahme kam es zur Anwendung von Körperkraft seitens der Beamten. Dabei wurde der Mann verletzt. Bereits nach kurzer Zeit stellte sich jedoch heraus, dass es sich um eine Verwechslung handelte, da die Personsbeschreibung nahezu ident mit einem Verdächtigen war. In weiterer Folge wurde der Verletzte im Krankenhaus ambulant behandelt. Der tatsächliche Verdächtige, der sich im selben Waggon aufgehalten hatte und in der Station ausstieg, versuchte vorerst zu flüchten, wurde jedoch schließlich angehalten und festgenommen. Nach Bekanntwerden der Verwechslung und der damit verbundenen Verletzungen wurde das Büro für Besondere Ermittlungen mit Erhebungen beauftragt. Dieses Büro hat am 12. Februar einen Bericht an die Staatsanwaltschaft Wien übermittelt, der Menschenrechtsbeirat wurde informiert. Derzeit sind noch Einvernahmen von Zeugen ausständig. Allfällige dienst- und disziplinarrechtliche Maßnahmen werden nach Vorlage aller Ermittlungsergebnisse überprüft. Die Wiener Polizei bedauert die stattgefundene Verwechslung. Unmittelbar nach der Amtshandlung erfolgte eine Kontaktaufnahme mit dem Betroffenen, um sich zu entschuldigen, wobei lediglich die Lebensgefährtin erreicht wurde. Grundsätzlich sind Verwechslungen von Personen mit ähnlicher Statur, Kleidung, etc. nicht auszuschließen. Durch Einhaltung der Mitwirkungspflichten seitens der Betroffenen an der Klärung des Sachverhaltes kann ein derartiger Irrtum jedoch rasch geklärt werden. Für allfällige Rückfragen steht Iris Seper unter der Telefonnummer 31310 72114 zu Verfügung.

Bpd/16.02

Verwechslung bei Suchtmittel-Schwerpunkt. Nachtrag zu Pol. 5/16.02 =

Wien (OTS) - Nach den Behauptungen des Mike B., am 11. Februar 2009 im Zuge einer Verwechslung bei einem Suchtmittelschwerpunkt im Bereich der Linie U6 misshandelt worden zu sein, nahm das Büro für Besondere Ermittlungen Erhebungen auf. Nach dem vorläufigen Abschluss stellt die Bundespolizeidirektion Wien zusammenfassend fest: Bei intensiven Fahndungsmaßnahmen nach einem Suchtmittelhändler kam es zur erwähnten Verwechslung. Dieser Einzelfall wurde von der Bundespolizeidirektion Wien ausdrücklich und mehrmals bedauert. Versuche mit dem Betroffenen in Kontakt zu treten, blieben vorerst erfolglos. Daraufhin wurde am 18. Februar 2009 mit seinem Rechtsvertreter Kontakt aufgenommen und angeboten, seinem Klienten das Bedauern in einem persönlichen Gespräch auszudrücken.

Zu den Behauptungen des Mike B., er sei im Zuge der Anhaltung vorsätzlich verletzt worden, wurden auch unbeteiligte Zeugen einvernommen. Die Behauptungen des Betroffenen konnten durch das Büro für Besondere Ermittlungen aus dienst- und disziplinarrechtlicher Sicht nicht bestätigt werden. Vielmehr wird verdeutlicht, dass sich die einschreitenden Polizisten ordnungsgemäß zu erkennen gegeben haben. Nach derzeitigem Ermittlungsstand widersetzte sich der Angehaltene der Amtshandlung, was im Zuge der Eigensicherung der Beamten zur Anwendung von Körperkraft führte. Dies führte auch zu den Verletzungen des Betroffenen. Die Überprüfung der rechtlichen Zulässigkeit der Anwendung der Körperkraft obliegt jedoch auch der Staatsanwaltschaft. Nach Vorliegen derzeitiger Ermittlungsergebnisse werden bis zur

Entscheidung der Staatsanwaltschaft keine dienst- und disziplinarrechtlichen Maßnahmen gegen die einschreitenden Polizeibeamten gesetzt.

## German summary

In dieser Arbeit beschäftige ich mich mit Entschuldigungen im öffentlichen Raum. “Sich entschuldigen” wird allerdings als weiter Begriff gesehen und schließt alle Sprechakte ein, mit denen ein Image nach einer Krise wieder aufpoliert werden kann. Das Ziel meiner Arbeit ist es herauszufinden, ob es kulturell bedingte Unterschiede im verbalen Krisenmanagement gibt. Hierzu vergleiche ich den Fall einer öffentlichen Entschuldigung aus Österreich mit einem vergleichbaren Fall einer öffentlichen Entschuldigung aus Großbritannien.

Das erste Kapitel ist eine Einleitung in die Arbeit und stellt unter anderem die interkulturelle Pragmatik, die sich mit der Verbindung zwischen Sprache und Kultur beschäftigt, vor. Danach wird ein Einblick in die Sprechakttheorie gegeben: Kapitel 2 geht auf Austins Theorie und Searles Dreiteilung des Sprechakts in Lokution, Perlokution und Illokution ein. Weiters wird hervorgehoben, dass illokutionäre Akte zwar universal, d.h. in allen Sprachen vorhanden sind, deren Realisierung aber stark von den kulturellen Gegebenheiten abhängig ist. Aus diesem Grund können keine allgemein gültigen Regeln aufgestellt werden, die einen Sprechakt für alle Sprachen und Kulturen erklären und dessen korrekte Anwendung festlegen würden. Dies trifft natürlich auch auf Entschuldigungen zu: Was in einer Kultur als angemessene Entschuldigung zählt, kann in einem anderen kulturellen Umfeld als unpassend gedeutet werden. Die Studien des CCSARP-Projekts (Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns project) zielen darauf ab, die kulturellen Unterschiede in der Realisierung von Sprechakten aufzuzeigen.

Studien dieser Art legen den Fokus meist auf interpersonale, private Sprechakte. Dementsprechend gibt es für Entschuldigungen zwischen zwei Personen - einem Opfer und einem Täter - mehrere Definitionen. Diese werden im dritten Kapitel vorgestellt, in dem “sich entschuldigen” auch aus moralischer Sicht erläutert wird und die Bedingungen, die für eine ehrliche Entschuldigung gegeben sein müssen, geklärt werden. Außerdem werden die etymologischen Wurzeln von “apologize” aufgezeigt. Vom griechischen *apologia* kommend hatte *apologize* keineswegs schon immer die heutige Bedeutung. Diese hat sich über die Jahrhunderte hinweg von *apologia* als Verteidigungsrede zu *apology* als Ausdruck der Reue entwickelt.

Der erste Abschnitt des vierten Kapitels behandelt Entschuldigungen im öffentlichen

Raum und wie sie sich von privaten Entschuldigungen unterscheiden. Von zentraler Bedeutung ist Ellwangers Theorie, die sich mit dem Diskurs um öffentliche Entschuldigungen auseinandersetzt. Ellwanger zeigt, dass öffentliche Entschuldigungen andere Ziele verfolgen als private Entschuldigungen. Bei öffentlichen Entschuldigungen zwingt das Opfer den Täter zu einer Entschuldigung, um ihn öffentlich zu blamieren. Ziel des Diskurses öffentlicher Entschuldigungen ist daher keineswegs eine Versöhnung, sondern eine Art Rache des Opfers, die öffentlich aufzeigt, dass der Täter sich nicht so verhalten darf wie er sich verhalten hat. Im letzten Abschnitt des vierten Kapitels wird auf öffentliche Entschuldigungen als Mittel der Image-Wiederherstellung im PR-Bereich eingegangen. Benoits und Coombs Ratschläge zu erfolgreichem Krisenmanagement und die Rolle der öffentlichen Entschuldigung im Bereich der Image-Wiederherstellung werden hier erläutert.

Kapitel 5 ist eine Einleitung zu meiner Fallstudie. Durch die Analyse öffentlicher Entschuldigungen in Österreich und Großbritannien möchte ich herausfinden welche Werte in der jeweiligen Kultur von Bedeutung sind und den Diskurs beeinflussen.

Kapitel 6 zeigt die in diesem Themengebiet schon vorhandenen Studien. Von besonderer Bedeutung sind Houses Studien, da diese den angelsächsischen und deutschen Kulturkreis betreffen und erste Schlüsse über den kommunikativen Stil in der jeweiligen Kultur bieten.

In Kapitel 7 beschreibe ich wie ich zu dem Schluss gekommen bin, die Fallstudie als Methode meiner Untersuchung auszuwählen und welche Kriterien für die Auswahl der Daten festgelegt wurden.

In Kapitel 8 wird das Krisenmanagement der österreichischen und der britischen Polizei unter vergleichbaren Umständen dargestellt und analysiert.

Kapitel 9 zeigt abschließend auf, dass das verbale Krisenmanagement der Polizeien voneinander abweicht, während in ihren Aktionen (die die Polizeien als Reaktion auf die Krise setzen) ähnliche Strategien verwendet werden. Ich komme zu dem Schluss, dass - zumindest in den hier analysierten Fällen - kulturelle Werte sehr wohl einen Einfluss auf Entschuldigungen im öffentlichen Raum haben.

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