

POLITENESS IN MODERN VIETNAMESE

A Sociolinguistic Study of a Hanoi Speech Community

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Anthropology
University of Toronto

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0-612-27746-1

ABSTRACT

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The purpose is to provide a description of native politeness conceptions of Hanoi speakers, and of politeness manifestations in their directives. The thesis seeks to gain insights into some issues of contention in the existing theories of politeness, namely, politeness functions, its realizations in languages, and the roles of socio-situational parameters in polite behaviour. The thesis adopts a synthetic framework, based on a critical acceptance of the two contrasting theories of politeness - the instrumental theory (Lakoff 1973, Brown & Levinson 1978, Leech 1983), and the normative theory (Matsumoto 1988, Gu 1990). The analysis draws on folk, interview, questionnaire, and natural conversation data. The analytical procedures of Speech Act Theory and Conversation Analysis, as well as statistical techniques are employed.

The findings of the thesis highlight that Hanoi speakers consider politeness to be not only an individual communicative strategy, but also an observance of social norms of behaviour. These two functions manifest themselves differently in the two aspects of respectful and strategic politeness. The main politeness devices employed in directives are address terms, indirectness, and other pragmatically supportive moves. However,

indirectness is not found to be the most important politeness device. It functions as a strategic politeness device rather than a respectful politeness one, and its use depends primarily on the degrees of imposition of utterances. Address terms, on the other hand, function primarily as a respectful politeness device rather than a strategic politeness one, and their use depends primarily on the speaker-hearer social relationships. The thesis suggests that respectful politeness operates with two main rules, namely respect rule and solidarity rule. Strategic politeness, on the other hand, operates with two main maxims, namely, the tact maxim for competitive directives, and the generosity maxim for convivial directives. These two aspects of politeness and their rules/maxims also have different correlations to the social and the personal sides of the face. Finally, the thesis argues that the social variations of politeness are not only the functions of the speakers' social identities and the parameters of the context, but also, and primarily, the consequences of the competition between contrasting behaviour models in native ideologies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Needless to say, this study would not have been possible without the assistance and cooperation of a great many people.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Harvard-Yenching Institute and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for their generous support of my long and expensive study at the University of Toronto.

I am most grateful to my supervisor, Professor Hy Van Luong, whose inspiring seminars stimulated me to investigate this topic in the first place. Without the access to his data base, which he has generously given to me, I could never have been able to finish my program in less than four years. The success and completion of this dissertation are due to the constant encouragement, support, invaluable advice, and distinctive guidance, that he extended to me throughout the entire process. Of course, any error that has remained in the work is my sole responsibility.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the members of my dissertation committee, Professors Rolf Kroger and Bonnie McElhinny for their extremely helpful and insightful comments. They have challenged me on certain important theoretical issues which make me reformulate and see better my thoughts. Their extensive, detailed comments and supportive criticism helped to clarify many ideas, greatly improved the quality of the thesis.

My thanks are also extended to other professors of the

University of Toronto, with whom I have taken courses, or come into contact during this time. I am especially appreciative of the support and the constructive comments on the thesis's proposal I received from Professors I. Kalmar, M. Heller, R. Wardhaugh, and S. Nagata.

I extend my warmest thanks and enormous gratitude to the families in Hanoi who agreed to be my informants. For many of them their lives were in turmoil yet they unselfishly invited me into their homes and lives and gave willingly of their time.

I truly acknowledge the contribution from many friends and colleagues who participated in the collection of conversation data and the transcription of the tapes. I wish to express my special thanks to Ms. Dang Thanh Phuong for the enormous support and self-sacrificing help she gave me during my field research.

To my family, I extend my final thanks. I am most indebted to my husband for his generous help in intellect and time. He spent hours of his time to help me with the data entry and shared with me many useful ideas. My daughter has supported me in ways that are uniquely her own. Had it not been for their unshakable love and unending support, I could never have had enough courage and energy to complete this study.

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PREFACE

Over the last two decades, together with many other aspects of pragmatics, linguistic expressions of politeness have increasingly attracted the attention of sociolinguists and anthropologists. A series of work has been published on linguistic politeness from a variety of different perspectives: from the construction of universal theories of politeness (Lakoff 1973, 75; Leech 1983; Brown & Levinson 1987[1978]), to detailed descriptions of various manifestations of linguistic politeness in different languages (Matsumoto 1988; Gu 1990; Blum-Kulka 1990, 92), or cross-cultural studies of linguistic politeness (House 1989; Blum-Kulka 1987, 89; Hill et. al. 1987; Ide & Hill 1992). However, there are disagreements among researchers regarding many of the central issues informing the linguistic study of politeness, which allow us to delineate the following three main perspectives.

The first perspective is reflected in the pioneering work on politeness by Lakoff (1973), Brown & Levinson (1987), and Leech (1983). Based on different theoretical achievements in pragmatics, sociolinguistics, social psychology, and anthropology, these authors attempt to construct theoretical models of politeness wherein politeness is considered as a strategy to defend face or to avoid conflicts, is intimately linked to rationality-based communicative acts, and it operates on a mean-end basis, and is therefore universal. In these politeness models, for the first time, different linguistic expressions of politeness (mainly in Western languages) are analyzed as rational strategies of language

use and are considered manifestations of different universal politeness rules. Its theoretical and methodological contributions to politeness research are undeniable; however, due to its extreme focus on the personal aspects and the universality of politeness strategies and rules, this perspective is often criticized for having ignored the social and cultural aspects of politeness and its claims have been challenged by politeness research done in other cultures and societies.

The second perspective emerges as an attempt to overcome the limitations of the first perspective and to study politeness in non-Western cultures and societies. Based on ethnographic and linguistic data of non-Western languages and cultures, instead of focusing on politeness strategies as universal pragmatic principles, researchers within this perspective (Matsumoto 1988; Ide 1988; Gu 1990) are bound to understand politeness as a manifestation of etiquettes and cultural norms of behaviour. Politeness, according to this perspective, is considered in terms of cultural conventions and socially prescribed norms of behaviour which constrain individual behaviour. It is therefore not conceived in forms of universal strategies functioning on the mean-end basis, as assumed by universal models. In contrast to the universal view of politeness, politeness according to this second perspective is examined and defined within a certain social or cultural context. Through its focus on the social and conventional aspects of politeness in particular social and cultural contexts, as opposed to the strategic and personal aspects of politeness

privileged in the universal models, this perspective seems to establish a dichotomy between conventional social rules or norms of politeness, characteristic of Asian cultures, and individual and strategic rules of politeness, characteristic of Western cultures.

The third perspective tends to reconcile the contrasts between these two perspectives through a more synthetic approach, where politeness is considered as a combination of two aspects differing in terms of functions, such as Discernment and Volition (Hill et al. 1987), or social politeness and strategic politeness (Kasper 1990), or first-order and second-order politeness (Watts 1992). The goal of this synthesis is, according to Ide (1993), to create an overall framework which can include what has been left out of the pioneering theories of the two above-mentioned perspectives, a workable and well-balanced framework with which we can analyze and interpret language use in both Western and non-Western languages. However, "What is missing in the construction of such a theory are descriptive works and empirical evidence from non-Western perspectives" (Ide 1993:9). Due to the lack of linguistic evidence from concrete languages and cultures, the works within the synthetic perspective could only provide us with hypotheses based on limited experimental data (Hill et al. 1987), or with a review of the existing politeness literature (Kasper 1990, Ide 1993), which remains largely untested in forms of linguistic data, especially in regard to data from non-Western languages.

Notwithstanding a large number of works in sociopragmatics on linguistic behaviour in general and on polite behaviour in

particular, there is a great deal to be done in the study of cultural variations of politeness in order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of politeness in languages and to construct a universal politeness theory: it is necessary to study native speakers' metapragmatic conceptions of politeness, to describe and analyze usage patterns of politeness in concrete cultural contexts, to analyze expressions of politeness in concrete speech acts, and to examine the relationship between polite behaviour and the social parameters conditioned by the speaker, hearer, and the situational context, etc.

In this context, the main purpose of the present thesis is to study native politeness conceptions and politeness manifestations through the directive behaviour of speakers in Hanoi, an urban speech community in Northern Vietnam. This will constitute the very first step toward the study of politeness in the Vietnamese language. Given these concerns, the thesis aims at highlighting certain issues of contention in the politeness debate, namely, (1) the nature and functions of politeness (conceived as social norms of behaviour or individual communicative strategies, and in forms of universal or culturally specific phenomena); (2) politeness realizations in languages (rules/strategies and expressive means, the role of indirectness, honorific words, and mitigating elements); (3) the effects of contextual factors (speaker-hearer relationships and illocutionary forces of speech acts) and of the social variables of the speaker with regard to polite behaviour in verbal interactions.

Aiming to pursue the above-mentioned goals, the thesis consists of 5 main chapters (not including the preface and conclusion). An outline of the contents of each chapter is given as follows:

- Chapter 1: presents a critical overview of theoretical and empirical works on politeness, states the principal purposes of the thesis, raises research questions, outlines the scope of the data, and provides theoretical and methodological foundations.

- Chapter 2: offers a study of native metapragmatics of politeness in Hanoi, drawing on interview and questionnaire data.

- Chapter 3: gives a description of the main expressive means of politeness used in directives found in questionnaire data and in real-life interactions.

- Chapter 4: discusses the functional differences between respectful and strategic politeness, their rules and strategies as manifested in directive acts of Hanoi speakers, and interprets their functional differentiation in relation to the notion of face.

- Chapter 5: presents a study of the social variations in polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers.

It is hoped that this thesis, with an emic description of politeness in a concrete speech community, will contribute to a better understanding of politeness in languages, because, as Ide remarks, "The more descriptions we acquire about...politeness, the more we realize how little we in fact know about the range of possible expressions of politeness in different cultures and languages" (1989:97).

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the Politeness Theories

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a critical review of theoretical and empirical work on politeness, to suggest research hypotheses for the study of politeness in the Vietnamese language, and to formulate research questions and a comprehensive methodology for the thesis. In this section I will present an overview of the work belonging to the three theoretical perspectives which mark different stages in the politeness research conducted over the last two decades as briefly mentioned in the preface. It is commonly held that politeness theories were formulated within the parameters of research opened up by the first perspective (which researchers often call the instrumental or strategic perspective), were developed further through the second perspective (often called the normative or social-norm perspective), which is seen as an alternative approach to the strategic one, and are currently marked by an attempt to combine the two approaches by adopting a more synthetic approach. On the basis of this historical review of the three main theoretical perspectives, I will highlight the achievements in politeness research, and address the main issues of contention, which will ultimately help in the formulation of research hypotheses for the study of Vietnamese linguistic politeness.

1.1.1 The Instrumental Perspective

This perspective receives different names in the review literature on politeness: the instrumental or strategic view (Kasper 1990), the indirectness approach (Held 1992), the second-order view (Watts et al. 1992), and the modern view (Werkhofer 1992 among others). Within this framework one can further distinguish two different views, one of which Fraser (1990) calls the conversational-maxim approach (Lakoff 1973; Leech 1983), and the other is called the face-saving approach (Brown & Levinson 1987 [1978]). Although differing in their methodology, these approaches are united in what they conceive politeness to be individual strategies to avoid conflicts in social interactions. The starting points for this perspective are mainly to be found in Grice's ideas (1975) about implicatures and conversational cooperative principles and in Goffman's ideas (1972) about face.

Grice (1975) proposed the Cooperative Principle (CP) and considered it a means to distinguish explicitness from implicitness. Based on the assumption that interactions are always guided by a goal or a series of goals, Grice established the Cooperative Principle which each participant was expected to follow: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of talk exchange in which you are engaged" (1975: 45). According to Grice, the speaking agent is rational and his/her talk exchange is purposive so that the CP (which consists of the maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner) is normally observed.

Given this cooperative nature of talk, any violation of a maxim is taken to signal some conversational implicature(s). When considering the politeness maxim as one of the other possible maxims of the CP besides the four above-mentioned maxims, Grice argues that the observance of the politeness maxim may, in many cases, produce certain unconventional implicatures (1975: 46). For instance, if A wants some matches from B, the production of an imperative request such as "Please give me some matches!" is quite relevant to the main maxims of the CP (maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manners). However, this direct request is not relevant to the maxim of politeness because it is more impositive than an indirect request such as "Excuse me, do you have a light?". Thus, if A uses a question instead of an imperative request, the use of a question is constrained mainly by the maxim of politeness rather than the other maxims of the CP. And under the constraint of the maxim of politeness, the question acquires another conversational implicature (a requestive force), besides its primary interrogative force.

Grice's ideas of rational speaking agents and purposeful talk, of the Cooperative Principle, and of the relationship between implicatures and politeness are important points of departure for politeness theorists within the instrumental perspective.

Grice's ideas were first developed by Lakoff (1973) into a theory of politeness built on the Cooperative Principle. Although Lakoff did not offer any clear definition of politeness, we can, however, infer from her interpretation that she took politeness to

be a means to avoid conflict: "When Clarity conflicts with Politeness, in most cases Politeness supersedes: it is considered more important in a conversation to avoid offense than to achieve Clarity" (Lakoff 1973: 297). Lakoff suggested two rules of pragmatic competence determined by the immediate purposes of communication, namely: 1. Be clear, and 2. Be polite. That is, as Lakoff explains, when one's principal aim in speaking is communication, one will attempt to be clear, when one's principal aim is to navigate among the respective statuses of the participants in the discourse indicating where each stands in the speaker's estimate, his/her aim will be, less the achievement of clarity, than an expression of politeness (ibid.: 296). The clarity rules are rules of conversation and are essentially the same as Grice's maxims. The politeness rules consist in the following:

- Rule 1. Don't impose (used in a formal context).
- Rule 2. Give options (used in an informal context).
- Rule 3. Make A feel good - be friendly (used in an intimate circle).

(Lakoff 1973: 298)

The choice of any of these politeness rules will depend on the speaker's assessment of the situation and interpersonal relationships. Based on her introspection, Lakoff (1975) remarks that women are generally more polite than men, that is, they often leave a decision open, they do not impose their mind, or views, or claims on others, etc. This occurs because, according to Lakoff, women are expected to be compliant in accordance with their marginalized and subordinate status in society.

A more detailed version of the conversational maxim approach is suggested by Leech, who conceives the Politeness Principle (PP) as not just another principle to be added to the Cooperative Principle (CP), but as a necessary complement, which rescues the CP from serious trouble because the CP in itself

... cannot explain (i) why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean, and (ii) what is the relation between sense and force when non-declarative types of sentences are being considered.

(Leech 1983: 80)

Accepting Searle's classification of speech acts, based on their illocutionary goals (assertives, impositives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives), Leech also suggests a classification of speech acts into four types, according to how they relate to the social goals of establishing and maintaining comity (competitive, convivial, collaborative, and conflictive), and tries to link them to the kinds of politeness with which they are associated. Important to Leech's theory is the distinction between the speaker's illocutionary goals (intended speech acts) and social goals (intentions to be truthful, polite, ironic and the like). Leech proposes that there are two sets of principles which concurrently constrain human communicative behaviour, namely, textual rhetoric and interpersonal rhetoric. Both the Cooperative Principle and the Politeness Principle fall under the category of interpersonal rhetoric with the CP enabling one participant to communicate on the assumption that the other participant is being cooperative, and the PP maintaining the social equilibrium and the friendly relation. This means they often create a field of tension

which the speaker must negotiate. The global statement of the Politeness Principle "Minimize (other things being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs" and the corresponding positive version "Maximize (other things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs" (ibid.: 81) are concretized into the following six interpersonal maxims:

- Tact maxim: (in impositives and commissives)
Minimize cost to other. Maximize benefit to other.
- Generosity maxim: (in impositives and commissives)
Minimize benefit to self. Maximize cost to self.
- Approbation maxim: (in expressives and assertives)
Minimize dispraise of other. Maximize praise of other.
- Modesty maxim: (in expressives and assertives)
Minimize praise of self. Maximize dispraise of self.
- Agreement maxim: (in assertives)
Minimize disagreement between self and other.
Maximize agreement between self and other.
- Sympathy maxim: (in assertives)
Minimize antipathy between self and other.
Maximize sympathy between self and other.

(Leech 1983: 132)

Leech is much more detailed than Lakoff in that he offers a set of scales which help to determine the degree of tact needed in a concrete situation. Thus, the scales for the tact maxim are composed of:

- Cost-benefit scale: on which is estimated the cost or benefit of the proposed action A to the speaker or to the hearer.
- Optionality scale: on which illocutions are ordered according to the amount of choice which the speaker allows to the hearer.
- Indirectness scale: on which, from the speaker's point of view, illocutions are ordered with respect to the length of the path (in term of means-end analysis) connecting of the illocutionary act to its illocutionary goal.
- Authority scale: on which the power of one participant over another is measured.
- Social distance scale: on which the solidarity between the participants is measured.

Leech's project is incomplete because no assessment scales are

offered for other maxims of the Politeness Principle. Moreover, Leech does not tell us how his maxims may interact in determining the degree of politeness needed and consequently the linguistic form needed. A further problem associated with both Lakoff's and Leech's models is whether politeness can be explained in terms of these limited maxims and whether it depends solely on the speaker's calculation? These maxims are induced from introspection and logical analysis rather than from the qualitative and the quantitative analysis of data based on rigorous procedures, therefore new maxims may be added.

The second starting point in the theories of politeness within the instrumental view is Goffman's notion of face and his understanding of politeness (1972). Goffman's notion of face refers to the "positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman 1972: 319). This face is located in the flow of events in the encounter. If the encounter establishes a face for that person which is better than he/she could expect, he/she is likely to feel good. If his/her expectations are not met, he/she is likely to feel bad. The desire to maintain face, and the fear of losing it are common human features, transcending all cultural, ethnic, social, sexual, economic, geographical, and historical boundaries. In this sense, politeness has an important function, transcending everyday etiquette, and like diplomatic protocol, it seeks to disarm aggression and conflicts in social interactions by limiting the trespassing on interlocutors'

interests, equanimity, or personal preserves. However, as correctly noticed by Werkhofer (1992), Goffman has located face in a private sphere, being exclusively promised by an intimate circle because for him "it is the rules of the group and the definition of the situation which determine how much feeling one is to have for face and how this feeling is to be distributed among the faces involved" (Goffman 1972: 320), hence his politeness concept has an individualistic characteristic.

Goffman's notion of face and concepts of politeness were further developed by Brown & Levinson (1987 [1978]) in close combination with Grice's ideas about rational, purposive talk and the relation between implicatures and politeness. This politeness model is no doubt the most influential approach to politeness to date because it satisfies the demands for metatheoretical parsimony and explicitness, and above all, because it emphasizes a quality at the heart of modernity: voluntarism. The whole theory is based on the fundamental assumption that human communication is rational and purposeful, and the social person is endowed with rationality and face as the combination of two kinds of face-wants: the negative face-want of "every competent adult member that his action be unimpeded by others," or in other words, the want to have one's territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction (i.e., freedom of action and freedom from imposition), respected; the positive face-want is "the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others," i.e., the want that his positive self-image or "personality" be appreciated and approved

(1987: 62). The working hypothesis is that face is constantly at risk in social interactions, consequently any speech act which is involved in a relational dimension is face-threatening (either for the speaker or the addressee) and potentially needs to be redressed by a certain level of politeness. In other words, the defense of self and other's negative and positive face is assumed to be the most important function of politeness in all languages and cultures (1987: 13). Thus, according to Brown & Levinson, politeness codes are redressive strategies to mitigate the degree of face loss resulting from communicative acts (verbal or nonverbal) which they call face-threatening acts (FTA). They provide a list of FTAs, for instance, acts threatening: a) the speaker's negative face, such as thanking, accepting an offer, b) the speaker's positive face, such as apologizing, confessing, c) the hearer's negative face, such as ordering, inviting, complimenting, d) the hearer's positive face, such as denying, criticizing (1987: 65-68). These face-threatening acts can be realized using one of the following strategies (in the order of increased politeness levels): 1) bald-on record, without redress; 2) on record with positive politeness redress, i.e., bringing positive face by expressing solidarity with the addressee; 3) on record with negative politeness redress, i.e., using mechanisms which make the addressee feel he/she is respected or not imposed upon; 4) off record, i.e., doing the act so that it is possible to refuse the responsibility; and 5) not doing the act at all (ibid.: 60).

In addition to the universality of face and of rational face-

oriented action, the above superstrategies of negotiating FTAs and their abstract realizations are also claimed as potentially available to persons in any culture as a rational means of dealing with the face of others. The use of these superstrategies, as claimed by Brown & Levinson, is constrained by three main independent, culturally sensitive and context-specific, sociological variables which subsume all the other factors: relative power (P) refers to the power of the addressee with respect to the speaker and reflects the degree to which the addressee can impose his plans and self-evaluation at the expense of the speaker's plans and self-evaluation. Social distance (D) refers to the distance between the speaker and the addressee: the degree of familiarity and solidarity they share. Absolute ranking (R) refers to "a culturally and situationally defined ranking of imposition by the degree to which they are considered to interfere with an agent's wants of self-determination or of approval" (ibid.: 77). Due to this relationship of dependency, the choice of any linguistic form as a realization of a certain strategy results from the speaker's assessment of certain contextual factors, especially of the relations between the speaker and the addressee and the potential imposition of the message. Taking for example, the speaker-addressee relationship, Brown & Levinson suggest that positive politeness is appropriate for equal and intimate participants, and negative politeness is, on the contrary, the index of hierarchy and distance. In relation to the gender-based pattern of polite behaviour drawn from her data in Maya, Brown

(1980) suggests an explanation for the overall higher politeness level in women's speech as compared to men's. She contends that this results from the fact that women perceive, to a greater extent than men, the social power of the addressees, the social distance between interlocutors and, the potential face-threatening nature of speech acts. More concretely, women's high negative politeness scores in speaking to women are seen as the consequence of the patrilocal residence rule which creates a high distance between women who are married into their husbands' houses. Women's high scores of positive politeness in speaking to men are seen as a strategy to express intimacy and affection which could rescue women from being customarily beaten by their husbands or fathers.

Despite its feasibility and flexibility, many aspects of Brown & Levinson's model are frequently and systematically challenged. The most serious concerns address the following aspects: the strong claim for universality of their politeness model, the concepts of "face" and "face-threat," the understanding of politeness as individual strategic behaviour structured by the speaker's immediate goals, and the association between politeness and indirectness. Starting with the notion of face, as Janney & Arndt (1992) notice, face is closely related to the concept of self, so that the universality of face would presuppose an identical conception of self across cultures. However, Brown & Levinson's independent construal of self, endorsed by many Western cultures, is challenged by the dependent or interdependent construal of self favoured by non-Western cultures. For instance, in his discussion

of the Chinese concept of face, Hu (1944) distinguishes two kinds of face: **Lien** refers to the respect of the group for a man with a good moral reputation, **Mien-tzu** refers to a certain kind of prestige that is emphasized in this society: a reputation acquired through getting on in life, achieved through success and ostentation (p.45). Such a socially oriented notion of face does not seem to resemble the concepts of positive and negative face proposed by Brown & Levinson. In regard to Japanese culture, Matsumoto (1988) also argues that a Japanese individual defines himself not as an independent person with certain rights and a certain domain of independence, but primarily as a group member, a "bunch holder" with certain acknowledged relations to others. Consequently, acceptance by other persons depends, not on respecting the territory of others, but to a great extent on properly preserving the social ranking order. The Japanese notion of face is correspondingly bound with the maintenance of rank order, and politeness for the Japanese is mainly the observance of socially determined rules of behaviour. And still from a quite different perspective, Strecker (1993) offers us a Hamar (Southern Ethiopian) notion of face. The Hamar concept of politeness is not derived from the concept of face as understood by Brown & Levinson, nor does it correspond to that of Hu or Matsumoto. But instead, it is derived from the concept of "bairu," the most general aspect of the person, referring to his power of life, his well-being, his good luck and good fortune. Strecker's hypothesis regarding the Hamar theory of politeness, together with the interpretations of

the Chinese and Japanese notions of face and politeness, put forward by Hu and Matsumoto, indicate the complex nature of the questions raised by concepts of self, face, politeness, and call for serious theoretical re-evaluation in order to avoid misleading generalisations.

Another line of attack is related to Brown & Levinson's application of Grice's conversational implicatures and their identification of politeness with indirectness. The idea is that a polite utterance reveals the speaker's true intention only indirectly, and the more face-threatening the utterance is, the more indirect it should be. These hypotheses are often supported by the data on requestive behaviour derived from Western cultures. Held (1992) believes that "the success and subsequent influence of these approaches are not only to be seen in the ability to define indirectness in its interactive function, but also based on the fact that the traditional idea of respect and tact is given its most plausible shape through theories of indirectness" (p.139). Yet, cross-cultural literature on requests does not seem to support the universal link between indirectness and politeness. It is often remarked that not all cultures register directness as invariably less polite than indirectness, and indirectness is not always used because of its politeness function. For instance, Tannen (1981, 82) shows that American speech interactants tend to speak more directly than Greek speech interactants, but this does not suggest that American speakers are less polite. In a series of works on requests in American English and Hebrew, Blum-Kulka (1987,

89) also demonstrates that Israeli speakers show more preference for the direct style than English speakers. Interpreting this reality, Blum-Kulka (1992) suggests that indirect requests are less often used in Hebrew because of their cognitive burdening and their potentially implicit irony. A direct style is preferred because it helps enhance intimacy and strengthen affective bonds (Blum-Kulka 1990) especially in the context of a "backstage event" such as a family dinner. Matsumoto (1988) also indicates that indirectness is rarely if ever used as a politeness device in Japanese. Even Leech (1983), while suggesting the indirectness scale for the Tact Maxim (with the same propositional content, the more indirect the illocutionary act is, the more polite the utterance is), brings to our notice that the functioning of the indirectness scale will depend on the relationship between the illocutionary goal and the social goal of the utterance. This evidence directly challenges the direct link between indirectness and politeness and makes the universal postulate seem rather dubious.

A further criticism is centred on Brown & Levinson's individualistic approach toward speech action. Werkhofer (1990) complains that their individualism is reflected in at least four aspects of their argument: 1) It is a cognitivistic one in that it describes what is going on as taking place within the cognitive apparatus of the individual speaker; 2) The whole procedure is triggered by the speaker's initial act or intention; 3) The speaker's initial intention is unconstrained by social considerations; and 4) The speaker's intention is confined to the

limited subset of egocentric or face-threatening ones. Werkhofers does not mean that these assumptions are completely unrealistic, but he does imply that individual strategic choice is only a special case, and postulates that undue generalisations rule out many other classes of utterance (1990:167).

Thus, starting from Grice's ideas of a rational speaking agent and purposeful talk, of the Cooperative Principle and the role of implicatures in politeness, and combining these ideas with Goffman's notion of face and its link to politeness, politeness theorists within the instrumental perspective emphasize the instrumental functions and individualistic characteristics of politeness, linking politeness and the intention to defend face in a "means-end" relationship. With the assumption that any communicative act, from the initial stage of generation, is not constrained by any social considerations; and presupposing that the speaking person is free to choose what he/she intends to say, and can predict the seriousness of face threat resulting from the intended act, and therefore can change it accordingly, by a certain level of politeness, the instrumental perspective takes politeness to be a means to avoid conflict or a strategy to save face, the use of which is a compromise between the speaker's initial intention and his/her cooperative attitude toward the addressee. This approach has purposefully diminished the roles of social factors in constraining social behaviour, and in fact, does not seem to be applicable to the description and analysis of politeness data in many non-Western languages. The result is that starting from the

early eighties, some politeness researchers started casting doubt on the universality of this model and tried to work out an alternative perspective which is more applicable to the data of particular languages. The normative perspective was born in this context.

1.1.2 The Normative Perspective

This term is used to designate a research approach which considers politeness as a matter of etiquette and the social norms of behaviour. In the review literature on politeness this perspective also receives different names: the social norm view (Fraser 1990), the first-order view (Watts et al. 1992), the causal-deterministic view (Held 1992), and the traditional view (Werkhofer 1992). Advocates of this approach often think that each society has its own system of norms and conventions for appropriate conduct. Any behaviour is considered polite if it is done in accordance with the social conventions of conduct, and is considered impolite (rude) if the contrary applies. This view is often based on ethnographic and linguistic evidence from Far-Eastern cultures. For instance, in his study of Javanese etiquette, Geertz (1968) notices that "In Javanese it is nearly impossible to say anything without indicating the social relationship between the speaker and the listener in terms of status and familiarity" (p.282), and he finds in this language, different etiquette patterns which mark different levels of status and intimacy relations, and their usage patterns are characteristic of different social classes in Java. Many researchers in Japanese

and Chinese politeness also stress the socio-cultural specificity of the notions of face and politeness in these cultures, which seem to contradict Brown & Levinson's hypotheses as to the link between politeness and self-centred face wants and concerning the instrumentality of politeness. Contrary to Brown & Levinson's hypothesis that in Japanese culture, negative politeness should prevail because the social structure in Japan is mainly vertical, Matsumoto (1988) shows that Japanese behaviour is group-oriented rather than self-oriented, and consequently negative politeness plays a negligible role in Japanese politeness. According to this author, Japanese politeness is intimately bound up with showing recognition of one's relative position to others in communicative situations, that is, with maintaining one's social rank. Polite behaviour is therefore not derived from individual calculations but rather from the social constraints on individual behaviour. And this, according to Matsumoto, makes all utterances in Japanese, even very simple ones like "Today is Saturday," potentially face-threatening, and consequently "in any utterance in Japanese, one is forced to make morphological or lexical choices that depend on the interpersonal relationship between the conversational participants" (Matsumoto 1988:418). Ide et al. (1989) also think that from a Japanese perspective, Western face represents highly individual attributes, and Japanese politeness does not revolve around this type of face, but rather, around a notion of place marking the interpersonal relations between speech interactants according to which the speaker is required to acknowledge his/her status and the

status of others in the communicative context. In other words, contrary to the dynamic, flexible notion of politeness associated with the calculations of the degree of face loss as described by Brown & Levinson, politeness in Japanese culture seems to be mandatory and fixed, consisting of intragroup constraints on speech behaviour and is independent of individual rational intentions:

In a Western culture where individualism is assumed to be the basis of all interactions, it is easy to regard face as the key to interaction. On the other hand, in a society where group membership is regarded as the basis for interactions, the role or status defined in a particular situation rather than face is the basis of interaction.

(Ide et al. 1989: 241)

In relation to the concepts of face and politeness in the Chinese culture a similar pattern is found. It was mentioned before that the Chinese concepts of face are mainly associated with the social evaluation of prestige and the moral quality of a person through the notions of **Lien** and **Mien-tzu** (Hu 1944), which have nothing in common with the want to be unimpeded. Gu (1990) traces the historical origin of the Chinese concept **Limao** (politeness) and confirms that it is derived from the old Chinese word **Li** used by Confucius (551 B.C. - 479 B.C.) to refer to the social hierarchical order. According to Confucius, in order to maintain social order, it was necessary to restore Li, and to restore Li it was necessary to rectify names, i.e., to put each person in his/her place according to his/her social position:

If ming (name) is not properly rectified, speech can not be used properly; if speech is not used properly, nothing can be achieved; if nothing is achieved, Li cannot be restored; if Li is not restored, law and justice cannot be exercised; and if law and justice are not exercised, people will not know how to behave. (Confucius, quoted by Gu, 1990:238)

About two or three hundred years after Confucius died the word Li began to be used to designate politeness in the sense of humbling oneself and showing respect to others (according to Dai Sheng's Li Ji, West Han Dynasty). This meaning, according to Gu, remains at the core of the modern conception of Limao (politeness) with its four basic notions: respectfulness, modesty, attitudinal warmth, and refinement, which are developed into four politeness maxims: self-denigration maxim (denigrate yourself and elevate others), address maxim (address your interlocutors with an appropriate address term), tact and generosity maxims (the same as Leech's maxims mentioned above). In Gu's diachronic view, "it is the Li (i.e., social hierarchy) that gives rise to the Li (i.e., politeness), and that it is Li (i.e., politeness) that expresses and helps maintain Li (i.e., social hierarchy and order)" (1990:239). Even in her synchronic view which emphasizes that the function of politeness in modern Chinese is more to enhance social harmony, and to defuse interpersonal tensions and conflicts rather than to signal hierarchical relations, Gu still believes that Chinese politeness is a phenomenon "belonging to the level of society, which endorses its normative constraints on each individual" (ibid:242).

Thus, contrary to the instrumental perspective, the normative perspective tends to believe that politeness is determined by social factors rather than by individual intentions, and the motivations of polite behaviour have social characteristics. Therefore, excluding social factors from politeness models or

giving them a secondary status, as in Brown & Levinson's framework, is not satisfactory. Also, contrary to the instrumental perspective which mainly focuses on the universality of politeness, the social norms perspective focuses particularly on the cultural relativity of politeness: "politeness is necessarily defined within the framework of a given culture" (Coulmas 1992:321). However, due to its strong emphasis on the cultural and social nature of politeness, this perspective is also criticised for its tendency to make a deterministic link between the essential characters of a society and its language, and for ignoring the role of individuals in structuring and restructuring social order.

Looking back at the review of the instrumental and the normative perspectives, one has a clear impression that they assert quite different, if not contradictory ideas, about the phenomenon they both label "politeness." Is the right answer necessarily to be looked for in one of the two alternatives put by the question: Is politeness social norms of behaviour or individual strategies? One may think that as social marking is optional, norms of polite behaviour also lend themselves to strategic choices. Moreover, the repeated confirmation of a strategic choice may also influence its likelihood of becoming accepted as a norm of social behaviour. Politeness, therefore, may be both normative and strategic, though the interplay between these positions may not always be the same in all cases. Along this line of thought is born a new perspective on politeness which seeks a synthesis of the instrumental and the social norms perspectives.

1.1.3 The Synthetic Perspective

This term is used to refer to an emerging orientation in the study of politeness which is characterized by an attempt to work out an alternative, both to the individualism of the instrumental perspective and to the social determinism of the normative approach.

First of all, there are attempts to reconceptualize the relationships between the social and the individual in polite behaviour through the metaphors of politeness, as a conversational contract which is constrained and determined by social conventions and conditions (Fraser 1990), or as money, which is a medium mediating between individuals and between the individual and the social (Werkhofer 1992).

Starting from a recognition that, upon entering into a conversation, each party brings an understanding of some initial set of rights and obligations that will determine, at least for the preliminary stages, what each participant can expect from the others, and with the proviso that during the course of time, there is always the possibility of the renegotiation of the conversational contract, Fraser considers that:

Being polite does not involve making the hearer "feel good," à la Lakoff or Leech, nor with making the hearer not "feel bad," à la Brown and Levinson. It simply involves getting on with the task at hand in light of the terms and conditions of the conversational contract.

(Fraser 1990: 233)

Acting politely is then, for Fraser, the same thing as using language appropriately, where the terms and conditions of the

conversational contract do not exist outside specific speech communities and their members. These terms and conditions may be imposed through conventions applicable to all ordinary conversations or by institutions. These structural and institutional requirements are seldom, if ever, renegotiated. On the contrary, the terms determined by previous encounters or the actual particulars of the situation, are often renegotiable in light of the participants' perception and/or acknowledgement of factors such as the status, the power, and the role of each speaker, and the nature of the circumstances.

By linking politeness to the terms and conditions of the conversational contract, Fraser has attempted to combine the factor of individual choice with the conditioning perspective of social constraints on human behaviour. Distinct from Fraser, Werkhofer (1992) hopes to overcome the strong individualistic bias of the universal models by applying the theory of money to the study of politeness. According to him, politeness, like money, is a personal and a social good, but the social constraints on it are stronger than individual intentions:

As the functions of politeness are changeable, one might want to presume that the individual user will be able to more or less employ the medium according to her/his wishes. But, due to the fact that these functions turn into a power of the medium - and due to other factors, as for example, brute force or social sanctions - the chances of the individual user to master it will correspondingly be diminished.

(1992: 190-91)

Fraser's conversational-contract view and Werkhofer's money view of politeness can be seen as positive advances in the politeness research field because of their attempts to transcend the

traditional bifurcation between normativeness and instrumentality, and between the social and the individual, placing these polarities in a more synthetic perspective. However, because these authors do not go so far as to apply their theoretical assumptions to the analysis of real-life data, their theories constitute more an epistemological method rather than an analytic programme.

Inheriting the achievements of the two opposing perspectives in the study of politeness, some other researchers of the synthetic perspective tend to consider politeness to be a unity of two aspects, differing in functions and practices, so that the interrelationships between them are necessarily culturally and socially specific. Thus, Hill et al. (1986) suggest: "a system for polite use of a particular language will exhibit two major aspects: the necessity for speaker Discernment and the opportunity for speaker Volition" (p.349). Discernment is basically what they mean by the Japanese "wakimae", i.e., the sets of socially-agreed-upon-rules which "define one's minimal obligations within the polite-use sub-system" (p. 351), and the violations of which, will offend others and thus hurt the speaker's social image. Volition is understood as the "aspect of politeness which allows the speaker a considerably more active choice, according to the speaker's intention" (p.348). Through a comparative study of requests in borrowing a pen in Japanese and English, the authors indicate that Discernment is an important factor in the polite behaviour of Japanese speakers, while for American English speakers, Volition is more important. Although the authors claim that their findings

lend empirical support to Brown & Levinson's hypotheses that Distance and Power are the two major elements operating in the sociolinguistic systems of politeness, and the emphasis accorded to each vary according to the specific cultures concerned, it seems that they cast more doubt on the universality of the model, because there is an added implication here that in Japanese indirectness can also be found an expression of politeness, which functions under constraints of Discernment (the socially-agreed-upon-rules). However, this has been subsequently refuted by other scholars of Japanese studies (Matsumoto 1988). What is needed here is a better understanding of the differences, in terms of functions and expressions, between Discernment and Volition, and an evaluation of their correlations in particular languages.

Some other politeness researchers also share Hill et al.'s idea about the need to work out a politeness concept incorporating the two aspects which were separated by the instrumentalist and normative workers. For instance, Kasper (1990), in a review on politeness research, calls for a need to study politeness as a combination of strategic politeness and social-norm politeness, the correlations between which may differ in different cultures. According to Ide (1993), what lies ahead in pursuit of linguistic politeness is the task of synthesizing the theoretical views of first-order politeness and second-order politeness in a broader framework which would be applicable to the descriptions and analyses of language use in Western and non-Western languages. There are at present, however, very few if any,

works within the synthetic perspective which are elucidated by the empirical data of several, or even of, one language.

From the above-presented review of the literature on politeness, at least three points of contention can be noted:

1) Is politeness an expression of individual strategic behaviour or social norms of behaviour, or does it encompass the elements of both aspects in a complex dialectical unity?

2) What are the expressive means of politeness? Does the degree of politeness of an utterance co-vary with the degree of indirectness? Is the direct link between politeness and indirectness universally valid or culturally specific?

3) What factors seem to be more relevant in explaining variations in polite behaviour? In other words, to what extent can polite behaviour be said to be dependent upon the speaker's communicative intents (i.e., illocutionary force of the intended speech acts), the relationships between interlocutors (power and solidarity factors), or the speaker's social identities (social group membership, education, gender, age among other things)?.

Focusing on these issues in the hope of making a partial contribution to the field of politeness research, the present thesis will investigate the phenomena of politeness found in a Hanoi speech community. Before presenting this thesis's research hypotheses and methodology, I would like to briefly review the politeness research conducted in the Vietnamese language.

1.2 The State of Art in Politeness Research in Vietnamese

The question of politeness has already been treated in a number of studies conducted in the context of the Vietnamese language and culture, for instance, through the study of verbal and non-verbal patterns of respect behaviour in Vietnamese (Nguyen Dinh Hoa 1956), through study of Hanoi ways of talking (Nguyen Kim Than 1987), and through studies of personal reference terms and usages (Hy Van Luong 1987, 90), or the studies of Vietnamese etiquette (Hoang Trong Phien 1991; Pham Thi Thanh 1995). Although aiming at different theoretical issues, these works have unveiled the most basic characteristics of Vietnamese behaviour patterns, and the roles of sociocultural factors in social interactions in general and in polite behaviour in particular.

Nguyen Dinh Hoa's work (1956) is the first research to offer important suggestions for the study of Vietnamese forms of linguistic politeness. Based on the so-called Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, considering language as an important and integrated part of a culture, the author examines verbal and nonverbal patterns of respect behaviour and offers an in-depth analysis of address and reference terms, seeing in them the most revealing patterns which help display the characteristic traits of Vietnamese culture and behaviour. While considering the main idea of respect behaviour "cultivating and promoting social amenities as well as avoiding and easing social friction" (ibid.: 220), he also emphasizes that respect behaviour is dependent on interpersonal relations, determined by factors of status, age, gender and

education, i.e., the highly appreciated values pertaining to a person's self-image in traditional Vietnamese society, a society in which he suggests "one notices the absence of caste distinctions, but the presence of clearly marked social categories" (ibid.: 244).

Along the lines of investigating the ideological and social dimensions of linguistic behaviour, Luong (1987, 90) unveils different pragmatic patterns in the use of Vietnamese person reference terms, suggesting that the use of person reference terms is mediated by a native ideology which emphasizes the pragmatic implications of language in the reproduction of the socio-political order. This is reinforced by the Confucian doctrine of name rectification, emphasizing that "names or role terms should be appropriately used in accordance with the order of the universe, and that a person should behave in accordance with what the "name" of his role would pragmatically entail" (1990:6). The author distinguishes two pragmatic models in the use of Vietnamese person reference terms which are closely linked to the native ideology: (1) The organic unity model, with its emphasis on hierarchical formality and solidary stability, is the dominant model and is characterized by the use of kin terms and title terms; (2) The model of *communitas*, with an emphasis on stable and informal solidarity, is the alternative model and is characterized by the use of proper names and personal pronouns. Due to the coexistence of these contrasting native pragmatic models of and for sociocultural reality, the pragmatic meanings of Vietnamese personal reference terms are inherently ambiguous. The choice of

any address term in a concrete communicative context, according to the author, is consequently a strategic intention-based choice, and a representation of one of the native pragmatically structured models of and for reality. I have found in Luong's distinction between the two traditional behaviour models, especially in the dominant model of organic unity with its emphasis on hierarchical formality and solidary stability, a basis for the establishment of politeness rules in Hanoi (Chapter 4), and for the interpretation of the social variability in polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers (Chapter 5).

Aiming at practical goals (i.e., teaching Vietnamese for foreign students) rather than at theoretical ambitions, some authors focus their attention on describing etiquette-based speech acts such as greetings, thanking expressions, making excuses, etc. Based on his suggestion that politeness is the basic trait of Vietnamese etiquette, "reflecting a cultural characteristic of speech while being imbued with socio-psychological colours," Hoang Trong Phien (1991) presents a system of politeness devices, such as address terms, modal words, and syntactic constructions, and analyzes their use in concrete contextual situations in terms of the speaker's intentions, feelings, and the speaker-hearer relationships. Unfortunately, the author does not provide any clear definition of politeness, neither does he clearly distinguish between the functions of each device and the rules constraining its use in practice, hence, the work makes a distinctly limited contribution to the study of politeness. In another work on

Vietnamese etiquette, Pham Thi Thanh (1995) gives five rules of Vietnamese polite speech, but these rules seem to be too general and pertain more to manifestations of respectful politeness than to aspects of strategic politeness (for more details see Chapter 4).

The aforementioned views of researchers in Vietnamese, especially Nguyen Dinh Hoa's interpretations of Vietnamese respect behaviour and Hy Van Luong's hypotheses about the pragmatic models of Vietnamese reference terms usage, seem to support a general impression that Vietnamese politeness is not only to be considered as individual strategic behaviour, but also and primarily, a norm of behaviour reflecting social relationships in the community, and a tool of society in the maintenance of social order. However, as only a secondary focus of these researchers, politeness has not received a systematic treatment and therefore there is not enough evidence to test the applicability of the three existing hypotheses about politeness. In this context, a systematic study of politeness in the Vietnamese context, with the aim of highlighting the above-mentioned issues, is of great theoretical significance.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

The application of the three different politeness perspectives to the Vietnamese context would yield three different series of expectations in terms of the three points of contention:

- According to the instrumental perspective, it would be expected that Vietnamese speakers would consider politeness strategies as functioning to help speakers achieve their

communicative intents, and not as linguistic rituals, indicating the observance of socially sanctioned norms of behaviour. In terms of politeness realizations, it would be expected that the main expressive means would be the strategies of bald-on record, on record with redress (positive and negative politeness) and, off record, with the underlying principle of indirectness being the correlate of politeness. In terms of politeness variations, it would be expected that the use of politeness strategies would mainly depend on the degree of face-threat of speech acts (illocutionary forces) and the speaker-hearer relationships (degree of power and distance between them), rather than on the social attributes of speakers.

- According to the normative perspective, it would be expected that Vietnamese speakers would consider politeness as the observance of social norms of behaviour, rather than as a form of individual strategic behaviour. In terms of politeness realizations, the presence of politeness markers as indicators of speaker-hearer relationships would be expected, and according to their emphasis, indirectness could be considered as a politeness device, but only to the degree that it informs these social relationships. In terms of politeness variations, the use of politeness markers is not expected to be dependent upon the illocutionary forces of speech acts, but mainly dependent upon the social relationship between participants and the speaker's social identity.

- According to the synthetic perspective, it would be

expected that Vietnamese speakers consider politeness both in forms of social norms of behaviour and communicative strategies, and these two functions would at the same time be distinctive and intertwined. In terms of politeness realizations, the presence of markers of social relationships and/or of strategies in the service of communicative purposes would be expected though politeness would not necessarily be the correlate of indirectness. In terms of politeness variations, it would be expected that the use of politeness markers would be variously constrained by such factors as communicative intents, of speaker-hearer relationships and the speaker's social attributes.

Based on the study of Vietnamese folk concepts, on the research of Vietnamese scholars, and on the preliminary analysis of linguistic practices in the modern Vietnamese language, I am inclined to make my predictions along the lines of the synthetic perspective. More concretely, from a synthetic approach, I formulate the following predictions about Vietnamese politeness:

In terms of politeness functions: I would not expect that politeness for Vietnamese speakers only depends upon communicative intention-based strategies (the instrumental perspective), or only upon the observance of social norms of behaviour (the normative perspective). What I would expect is that in both native metapragmatic consciousness and in actual discursive practices there is a distinction between two aspects of normative (social) politeness and strategic (personal) politeness: social politeness is constrained by social conventions in order to show respect for

status and solidarity relationships in social intercourse, while personal politeness is manipulated by immediate intentions and communicative purposes. And I suspect that in relation to the notion of politeness, these two aspects have a complicated, inextricable and distinctive relationship, both in terms of functions and expression.

In terms of politeness expressions: I suspect that politeness in the Vietnamese language can not be expressed only by strategies which function according to the principle of indirectness being the correlate of politeness, nor can it be expressed by the markers of social order alone, but rather, by a combination of both factors. In accordance with my hypothesized, distinctive and inextricable relationship between the two aspects of politeness, I would expect the presence of certain devices which have identical or distinctive functions in expressing each aspect of politeness. More concretely, I expect that honorifics, which mainly consist of address terms, will be basically used to express social politeness, and other devices besides honorifics, primarily the manifestations of indirectness, will be mainly used to express personal politeness, although the relation between these two functions of each politeness device is, in itself, a question for further investigation.

In terms of politeness variations: while supporting the hypothesis that polite behaviour is jointly constrained by different factors of situational contexts, such as the illocutionary forces of speech acts and the speaker-hearer's status

and solidarity relationships, I also expect certain correlations between the polite behaviour, and the speaker's social attributes, such as age, gender, and occupation.

1.4 Research Methodology

1.4.1 The Scope of Research Questions and Data

In order to be able to test the proposed hypotheses about the Vietnamese politeness data, the present thesis will use the techniques of formal interviews and questionnaires on native metapragmatic conceptions, and will rely on the analysis of natural recorded data.

The main purpose of the present thesis, as already mentioned, is to study Vietnamese politeness from an emic view point, aiming to highlight the main points of contention in the politeness debate. This will require an extensive investigation of native metapragmatics of politeness and polite linguistic behaviour, derived from Vietnamese speakers in many different places, different social groups, and in many different situational contexts. This job, however, would demand considerable time and effort. Aiming at the above-mentioned purposes, the thesis will limit itself to the study of native politeness conceptions and politeness manifestations in directive acts of Hanoi speakers.

I chose Hanoi as a research site for opportunistic reasons. The fact that I am a native speaker of this dialect and grew up in this city made it easier for me to begin my research in this place

rather than in any other place in Vietnam. Hanoi is a big city in North Vietnam with a population of about 2 million. The Hanoi dialect belongs to the Northern dialects of the Vietnamese language which has three main dialects: Northern, Central and, Southern.

The natural conversation data of Hanoi speakers used for this thesis was collected within the framework of a large project on "Gender, class, and discursive practices: A comparative study of Northern and Southern Vietnam" headed by professor Hy Van Luong in the summer of 1991 and composed of a team of three field workers, of which I was one. The focus on the "indigenous" population necessitated the choice of the judgement sampling method instead of the preferred method of random sampling. Each field worker suggested a list of households of her/his own acquaintances, of which nine were finalized by the field project coordinator to meet our needs. All nine households were established in Hanoi a long time ago and have been maintained for at least 60 years. The individual members consist three generations, and include speakers of both sexes, with different educational and occupational backgrounds (see Table 1).

Another part of the corpus used for the thesis is derived from formal interviews and questionnaire data supplied by 46 speakers of nine sampled households, and administered personally during the spring-summer of 1995 (see Table 1 for 1995). Besides these two main sources of data, I also draw upon my own experience to make necessary comparisons and interpretations.

Table 1: Informants crosstabulated by sex and age

| Field work | Number of informants | SEX | | AGE | | | |
|------------|----------------------|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|
| | | M | F | I | II | III | IV |
| 1991 | 77 | 33 | 44 | 16 | 15 | 31 | 15 |
| 1995 | 46 | 22 | 24 | 14 | 13 | 19 | |

Table 1 (cont.) : Informants crosstabulated by occupation and education

| OCCUPATION | | | | EDUCATION | | | |
|------------|----|-----|----|-----------|----|-----|----|
| I | II | III | IV | I | II | III | IV |
| 18 | 28 | 11 | 20 | 24 | 28 | 16 | 9 |
| 18 | 12 | 12 | 4 | 22 | 16 | 8 | |

SEX: M = male

F = female

AGE: I = over 60yrs

II = from 40 yrs to 60

III = from 17 yrs to 39

IV = under 17 years

OCCUPATION: I = professionals

II = workers

III = self-employed

IV = students

EDUCATION : I = high school and up

II = secondary school

III = elementary school

IV = preschool

1.4.2 Formal Interviews

The interview is a method often used to explore metapragmatics (see, for example, Blum-Kulka 1992, Ide et al. 1992). My interview project was a means of eliciting native speakers' politeness conceptions and attitudes. 46 members from 9 sampled households participated in formal interviews. Each interview often lasted from 10 to 15 minutes. Informants were asked open-ended questions like "what is a polite person like?," "what kind of speech can be thought of as polite?," "why are you polite?," "what is politeness for?," etc., and were asked to provide examples from their own experiences to illustrate their views. When permission was given,

interviews were recorded, otherwise notes were taken. Despite certain limitations (for instance, the untestability of certain arguments), the interview method permitted me to elicit native conceptions and to overcome my intuitions or theory-based knowledge. The results of formal interviews are presented in Chapter 2.

1.4.3 Questionnaire Data

Questionnaire data represent ways of quantifying native conceptions and they are often used in politeness studies to test previous research results or hypotheses (see, for example, Clark & Schunk 1980, 81; Blum-Kulka 1989). In this study, directed at similar goals, questionnaire data are used to quantify native politeness conceptions and evaluations in terms of politeness functions and politeness levels associated with concrete utterances. The following questionnaires were used:

- Questionnaire 1 aims at exploring native perceptions of politeness functions (purposes).
- Questionnaire 2 aims at studying native perceptions of the semantics of politeness.
- Questionnaire 3 aims at studying the relationships between politeness meanings.
- Questionnaires 4 and 5 aim at measuring degrees of politeness associated with different variants of the time request.

Questionnaires 1-3 are designed to test native metapragmatic politeness conceptions first revealed in formal interviews, and the results are presented in Chapter 2. Questionnaires 4-5 are

designed to provide the basis for an assessment of the politeness effects of different linguistic means in a variety of speech acts and the results are presented in Chapter 3.

1.4.4 Conversational Data (Directives)

The study of politeness realizations in verbal behaviour (namely in directives) is based on a corpus of natural conversations collected in 1991 (see 1.4.1). In each of 9 chosen households, recordings of natural conversations were conducted in different situations of family settings, at family members' workplaces, at market places, among family members and between family members and other people (friends, acquaintances, coworkers, strangers) of both the same sex and cross-sex, the same generations and cross-generations. For each household at least four full tapes, each lasting 90 minutes, were required. Each tape was accompanied by a fieldwork journal providing information about speech participants, speech events, and other useful observations (attitudes, gestures, etc.). The tapes were transcribed by research assistants from the Linguistics Institute in Hanoi.

Based on these tapes, their transcripts, and the journals, 2300 directives (identification criteria are provided in 3.1) and their usage contexts were taken as data for the study of politeness manifestations. The data was used to determine the relative importance of different situational factors in constraining polite behaviour. All directives are subject to a multidimensional analysis in terms of (1) expressive means, (2) politeness levels, (3) illocutionary and social goals (directive types), (4) social

relationships between speakers and hearers (age, status, and solidarity relationships) and, (5) social characteristics of speakers (age, gender, education, occupation). The analytical procedures and results are presented in Chapters 3-5.

In the analysis of directives in terms of the above-mentioned issues, both qualitative and quantitative methods are used and the relative importance of each method varies depending on the concrete questions addressed. Qualitative analysis is mainly based on the analysis of the relations of pragmatic meanings and utterance structures to the usage contexts (by means of replacement, deletion, and contrastive analysis), and it aims at determining politeness contents and levels, the functions of expressive means and the role of contextual factors. Quantitative analysis is mainly based on statistical data (represented in tables, graphs) and it is used to highlight the results of qualitative analysis.

Chapter 2

VIETNAMESE POLITENESS CONCEPTS

2.0 Introduction

What is politeness and what are its functions? There is no consistent answer to these questions in existing works on politeness. While researchers endorsing the instrumental perspective think of politeness in forms of strategies to be rationally used by individuals to defend and protect their and others' faces, researchers within the normative perspective consider it to be a manifestation of social norms of behaviour which do not depend so much on individual intentions. Other researchers, from a more synthetic perspective, suggest that politeness is both characterized by the strategic behaviour of the individual and by social norms of conduct, while the correlation between these two aspects may differ depending on the particular cultural context. To contribute to this ongoing debate on the nature and functions of politeness, and to help explain polite behaviour as described in subsequent chapters, this chapter will evaluate the metapragmatic politeness conceptions of native speakers in Hanoi. The metapragmatic data on politeness conceptions of Hanoi speakers will be discussed in terms of the functions of politeness and its semantics. The analysis will be based on two main sources of data which I gathered during my field research in Hanoi during the Spring-Summer of 1995, namely, folk sayings (proverbs, idioms, and songs) about politeness concepts and

the speech behaviour of the people of Hanoi, and direct interview and questionnaire data, collected from a sample of Hanoi speakers. Before reporting the research results and conclusions, I would like to discuss briefly the theoretical background of the metapragmatic study of native politeness conceptions.

2.1 Theoretical Background

The significance of the need to study native metapragmatic conceptions of politeness will be better highlighted by situating this study within the broader theoretical framework of the study of language ideologies, which are often understood as sets of cultural ideas about language and about verbal communication in society, or in a broader sense, as "shared bodies of commonsense notions about the nature of language in the world" (Rumsey 1990: 346). According to Woolard & Schieffelin,

The topic of language ideology is a much-needed bridge between linguistic and social theory, because it relates the microculture of communicative action to political economic considerations of power and social inequality, confronting macrosocial constraints on language behavior. It is also a potential means of deepening a sometimes superficial understanding of linguistic forms and their cultural variability in political economic studies of discourse. (1994: 72)

In sociolinguistics and anthropology, attention to cultural conceptions of language is informed by several methodological traditions (see Woolard & Schiellelein, *ibid.*). Of interest here is the study of language ideologies from the ethnography of speaking, a research area which broaches the topic of politeness.

With its main focus on ways of speaking from the point of view

of events, acts, and styles, the ethnography of speaking has recently sought an alternative focus on the cultural ideas underlying speech such as beliefs, values and attitudes, etc., and considers them as a force which have shaped the understanding of verbal practices. It has recently been demonstrated that the theoretical concepts underlying studies of language acquisition, of discursive practices and social interactions have connections with certain folk beliefs. For instance, ethnographers of speaking have pointed out that speech act theory, through its focus on intention, is deeply rooted in English language ideologies which emphasize the psychological state of the speakers and downplay the social constraints on speech. They argue that the application of this theory to the studies of speech acts in other cultures and societies will tend to obscure local language ideologies (Rosaldo 1982). A thoroughgoing attention to language ideologies would also require more studies in the social variations of languages. These should not simply offer a diagram of social differentiation, but they also should help to identify and analyze the ideological production of that diagram (Irvine 1989).

With regard to politeness, attention to language ideologies was also inspired by the critique of the universal politeness theories. As outlined in Chapter 1, many cultural and cross-cultural politeness researchers have expressed their doubt as to the validity of universal politeness theories and they argue that these theories are rooted in Western conceptions of face and the self. According to these researchers, in order to get a better

understanding of politeness and its various manifestations in the different languages of the world, it is necessary to study the cultural variations in politeness conceptions offered by native speakers from different cultures and societies, because "we cannot be at all certain that an English native speaker today understands "politeness" in exactly the same way as the German native speaker understands "Hoflichkeit" or the French native speaker "politesse" (Watts 1992:49). Native politeness conceptions are thus unveiled by either an analysis of folk and linguistic data (Hill et al. 1986, Matsumoto 1988, Gu 1990), or an analysis of native speakers' explanations and definitions (Blum-Kulka 1992). In this thesis both methods are used to highlight the politeness conceptions of Hanoi speakers.

2.2 The Functions of Politeness

2.2.1 Folk Data

Politeness has been valued in the social life of Hanoi people since time immemorial. The following folk saying tells us how Hanoi people took pride in their polite behaviour:

Chàng th²ớm cũng th² hoa nhài,
Chàng lịch cũng th² con người Tràng An.
(A jasmin is always recognized for its wonderful smell,
A person of Trang An (Ha noi) is always recognized
for his/her politeness).

A Vietnamese writer of the XVII century, Pham Dinh Ho, has the following things to say about the customs in Hanoi during his childhood:

The custom is to respect loyalty. In everyday interactions people treat each other with much indulgence and modesty.

If a person commits an offence, he desperately fears to be laughed at (...). In respectful families older people pay careful attention to the behaviour of their youngsters, and if anyone fails to observe the customs, they will be immediately informed.

(Pham Dinh Ho 1981:72)

And this is what Le Grand de La Liraye (1861) wrote about Hanoi in the XIX century:

Although not the capital city anymore, Ké chợ (i.e., Hanoi) is still the best place in terms of art, industry, commerce, population, **politeness and culture**. (emphasis added).

(Le Grand de La Liraye, 1861:79)

The polite lifestyle of Hanoi people in general, and their polite speech in particular, is obviously rooted in a deep tradition. What has made politeness such a prominent trait of Hanoi people's behaviour? In order to answer this question we need to understand the historical emergence of Hanoi as an urban center and all the conceptions of behaviour which have appeared and existed in its history.

Indeed, Hanoi was once a rural area. Due to its geographical advantages (it is situated in the basin of the Red river, the biggest river in North Vietnam), trade rapidly developed here and Hanoi soon became a market place. According to a Vietnamese researcher, Hanoi first developed into an economic and commercial center from a single market, and then it evolved from a series of markets (Nguyen Kim Than 1987). We can still find evidence of this in the central part of the city which consists of 36 ancient streets, each carrying the name of an occupation, or a product, and in many of these streets, the residents manufactured and sold products relating to their daily occupations (for example, Silk

street, Silver street, Fish sauce street, Chinese medicine street, etc.). Linguistic evidence is also to be found in the word "Ke cho" (market people) which was used as a name for Hanoi in the 18th century. What is worth noting here is that together with importance as an economic and commercial center, the demographic structure of Hanoi has also changed. Besides its indigenous population, Hanoi has become a magnet for people from different parts of the country who come to make their fortunes. According to some researchers (To Hoai 1979, Nguyen Kim Than 1987), the existence of an "oasis of patois" in Sét, Bưởi, and Đàng villages in the suburbs of the city is a relic of the ancient village of Hanoi. The central part of the city with its 36 ancient streets is on the other hand the site of new settlements. We can trace here the former sites of gold and silver trade founders who came from Hai Duong province, and the modern descendants of embroidery and weaving trade founders who came from Son Nam province, while the fish sauce traders came from Thanh Hóa and Nghệ An provinces, etc. Although gathered from different parts of the country, the new settlers easily fell into line with settlers from other provinces as well as with the indigenous population, because they all shared the same sense of community-based solidarity typical of the social organisation of the traditional Vietnam community with its basic unit being the village.

In traditional Vietnamese society, especially in villages, wet rice producers used to live with their families, which were organized into lineages according to blood ties. Within the lineages, relatives were closely linked together, and took good care of each other.

(Tran Dinh Huou 1994:194)

In this community-oriented culture, the intra-community and kinship relationships, rather than individual interests, are highly valued. The Vietnamese language abounds in proverbs and idioms which teach people how to behave in their community "Giàu ở làng, sang ở họ" (A person is rich thanks to his village and is noble thanks to his clan), "Sông ở làng, sang ở nước" (A person lives in his village and is famous in his country), "Chết một đồng còn hơn sống một mống" (It is better to die together than live alone). People most fear "làm mất lòng" (to hurt others' feelings) or "làm mất thể diện" (to offend others' face) by their own words or deeds, and are conscious of the potential offensiveness of speech: "Ăn no lòng, nói mất lòng" (Eating can please one while speaking can displease another), "Thuốc đắng dã tật, sự thật mất lòng" (A bitter pill can cure a disease but a truth can offend a friend). This communicative context and the common sense tradition of community-oriented solidarity affected the individual's speech and behaviour and developed a social responsibility to "defend face" and "to please each other": "Lựa lời mà nói cho vừa lòng nhau" (Choose the way to talk which is most pleasing each other). Gentleness, tact, and delicacy as seen as the most effective means to achieve these requirements: "Nói ngọt, lọt đến xương" (Sweet words can conquer the hearts of the people), "Nói phải, củ cải cũng nghe" (Apt speech makes even a turnip obey). This communicative situation and the tradition of community-oriented solidarity also required members to cultivate their speaking habits (in the same way as eating and other social skills) so as to conform with the community's customs

and rites of social intercourse "học ăn, học nói, học gói, học mở"
(Learn how to eat, how to speak, and how to open and end a
conversation properly). Speech behaviour is regarded as a
manifestation of one's personality:

Người thanh tiếng nói cũng thanh
Chuông kêu khẽ đánh bên thành cũng kêu.
(A good person has a soft voice,
Just as a good bell gives rings soundly upon a light tap)

Thus, it is obvious that the traditional behaviour patterns of
Hanoi speakers were primarily the product of this community-
oriented communicative situation, based upon the need to maintain
and protect community solidarity.

But the need for community solidarity was not the only
ideological factor affecting the polite behaviour of Hanoi
speakers. It is impossible to overestimate the influence of
Confucianism with its fundamental rule of **lễ** (rites) which deeply
influenced the cultural life of Vietnamese people in general and of
Hanoians in particular. **Lễ** combined with the tradition of
community solidarity had sufficient ideological force to shape the
polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers.

Confucianism widely disseminated in Vietnam more than two
thousand years ago. Being the capital city of almost all the
Vietnamese feudal dynasties, Hanoi can be said to be the cradle of
confucianism in Vietnam. As well as being an economic and
political center of the country, Hanoi was also the home for the
many different elite classes of society such as mandarins,
professionals, and students, etc., who were most influenced by
Confucian ideas, and who directly or indirectly introduced them

into the existing social life.

There are many ways of explaining the penetration and spread of Confucianism in Vietnam, but the common consensus among researchers is that the Vietnamese people found in it an ideological tool to organize and manage the society, namely the principles of **lễ** advocated by Confucius and further developed by many other Confucian scholars (Quang Dam 1994, Tran Dinh Huou 1994). The impact of the organizational and behavioural principles of **lễ** is amply reflected in the two main structures of Vietnamese traditional society: the Imperial court and the village-community. Being the organizational principle, **lễ** is used in the Imperial Court to distinguish the hierarchical order and the absolute power of the king from the place and obligations of inferior subjects; and in villages, **lễ** is used to reinforce the existing hierarchy in communities, lineages, families, and master-student relationships. Being the behavioural principle, **lễ** requires people in both places to behave in conformity to their places in the social hierarchy ("Cha từ, con hiếu, anh lành, em dẽ, chồng có nghĩa, vô vâng lời, trưởng có ân, ầu ngoan ngoãn, vua nhân, tôi trung" - parents are generous, offspring show filial piety, elder siblings are gentle, younger siblings are obedient, husbands show attachment to wives, wives are subservient, old people are kind, young people are good-natured, the king is benevolent, subjects are loyal). According to Quang Dam,

Lễ requires people to follow exactly all the rituals and principles advocated by Confucianism (...). If one does not do so, one does not have **lễ**. If one does not have **lễ**, one has no right to look, to hear, to talk, to do things.

Speaking, greeting, eating, etc., all need to be done in accordance with rites...

(1994:149)

These strict rules of behaviour have penetrated into Vietnamese cultural traditions and have gradually become the traditional behaviour patterns of the Vietnamese people. They combined with the native solidary and community-oriented behaviour patterns to constitute the new rules of behaviour informed by **lễ** **phép** (respectfulness) and **lễ độ** (propriety). In accordance with the new behaviour rules, the principles of "respectfulness" and "solidarity" function to maintain social harmony. A Vietnamese person is said "to have **lễ**, or to know how to keep **lễ** when conventions of social behavior - verbal or nonverbal - are strictly observed," and the worst insult which s/he can receive and by which s/he "is mortally hurt is the expression **vô lễ** (pheap), which means impolite, improper, ill-bred, without principles" (Nguyen Dinh Hoa 1956:224).

Thus, we can say that the need for community solidarity and the desire to observe **lễ** constitute the two most significant ideological factors constraining the polite behaviour of traditional Hanoi speakers.

However, during the last century and a half the Vietnamese social structure has undergone many changes which have certain demonstrable effects on the above-mentioned behaviour patterns. Two factors, in particular, are involved in these changes: first, a century-long contact with Western cultures through the influence of French culture (1858-1954) led to the appearance in society,

especially among the bourgeoisie, and among the intellectuals, civil employees, petty-bourgeoisie, townspeople, etc., of a new life style and behaviour patterns which were oriented toward egalitarian male-female relationships, challenging the traditional male-centred and hierarchical patterns. Second, the National Movement (1945) and the Socialist Transformation (since 1954) brought about radical social changes, which led to the gradual erosion of class differences, and to the active dissemination of egalitarian ideas in human relationships. Consequently, in modern Vietnamese society, the individual person has an acknowledged place, enjoys more freedom and equality in interpersonal contacts, is less constrained by the old hierarchy of rank (king-subjects) and class (master-servant) ties, and is freed from the absolute power of parents over children, and of husbands over wives. On the other hand, these changes have also created new threats to the values underlying traditional behaviour patterns (old informants often complain that nowadays children show less respectfulness toward older people in public places, and people treat each other with much less formality in the workplace). This is why, in accordance with Nguyen Dinh Hoa's contention, while orienting themselves toward new behaviour patterns, Vietnamese people in general and Hanoians in particular also want to retain certain aspects of their tradition:

...much of the ancient life with its age-old ideals and customs still persist in an immortal Vietnam eager to catch up with the West but also anxious to preserve its cultural heritage.

(Nguyen Dinh Hoa 1956:242)

The question put forward here is, given the influences of the traditional ideology and the above-mentioned changes in the socio-cultural life, what functions do contemporary Hanoians still see fulfilled in their politeness? To answer this question, a research project on the metapragmatics of politeness, based on direct interviews and questionnaires, was conducted on a sample of Hanoi subjects.

2.2.2 Interviews 1

The goal of direct interviews is to study native perceptions of politeness functions: 46 subjects from 9 studied households were interviewed in the Spring of 1995 (see Chapter 1, section 1.4 for their characteristics). Subjects were told before the interview that there was an ongoing research project on the polite speech of Hanoi people. In order for this research to proceed, their opinions were much needed and appreciated. A number of questions were discussed during each interview session, but of interest here is "Why should one be polite/speak politely?" (Vi sao phải nói năng lịch sự?), or "What is politeness speaking politely for?" (Nói năng lịch sự để làm gì?).

In answering these questions, most subjects emphasize the cultural, moral or social meanings of politeness: "Polite behaviour is a manifestation of one's cultural level" ("Lịch sử là một biểu hiện của văn hóa"), or "It is a manifestation of one's morality and personality" ("Lịch sử là sự thể hiện của nhân cách và đạo đức," or "It is a signal of one's respectful behaviour and affection" ("Lịch sử là dấu hiệu của sự tôn trọng và tình cảm").

The function of politeness here is evident in manifestations of public respect; more specifically, one should not throw garbage on to the streets, nor should one cut flowers in the parks, jostle against others, or make too much noise in the public.

These general interpretations, although they do not clearly highlight the functions of politeness, they do however show the tendency of native speakers to associate it with cultural values, and with specifically social considerations rather than with phenomena functioning in the service of a speaker's individual interests. However, when discussing more specific functions of politeness in speech, informants provide many interesting insights, suggesting both a marked consensus of opinion and a corresponding degree of dissent. Their suggestions make it clear that, from a native speaker's perspective, politeness in speech aims at protecting the hearer's and speaker's faces, as suggested in Brown-Levinson's model ("We speak politely to show our respect to other people and also for them to show us their respect," and "We speak politely because we want to protect the faces of others and of ourselves"), or at creating a pleasant and comfortable atmosphere in social interactions ("We speak politely to improve our relationships with others"). However, according to many informants, face (**thê⁷ diên**) is bound to a person's social attributes which are acquired in relation to others, and are socially acknowledged and respected (prestige, age, social status, etc.) rather than to the personal needs for territory and freedom of action in Brown-Levinson's interpretations. The function of

protecting face, therefore, is defined as the observance of socially prescribed norms of behaviour for specific groups of people in specific contexts. The choices in these contexts, if any, are influenced primarily by the nature of the speaker-hearer relationships more than by the illocutionary forces of utterances. For instance, informants were unanimously against a suggestion that parents should use polite forms of address with their children only when they need some service or favour, and could use less polite forms of address when they make offers, or invitations, or give permission. Similarly, they resisted the suggestion that address forms used in less face-threatening acts, such as greetings, thanking, inviting, could be less polite than those address forms used in highly face-threatening acts such as making requests. Thus, from the perspective of these subjects, the functions of politeness are highly related to marking social relationships (social indexes), and are relatively independent from communicative intentions (or strategic functions). Brown & Levinson also mention the social index function of politeness, but due to an overemphasis on the intentionality of speech, this function is viewed through the prism of strategic functions, and as a consequence, to "give deference" has become a strategy of negative politeness, used to mitigate the face threats of utterances.

While emphasizing the face-protecting function of politeness in the sense of maintaining speaker-hearer social (status and solidarity) relationships, informants also mentioned another more practical function of politeness, namely, to help achieve

communicative goals ("If you behave and talk politely, you'll get what you want more easily," and "You'll get into troubles if you aren't polite"). Certain intellectuals whose families have been resident in Hanoi for a long time especially emphasize what they call the diplomatic function (chức năng xã giao) of politeness. According to these informants, all human beings want to be treated gently, delicately, and without imposition. Therefore, to achieve one's communicative goals, one needs to develop tactful strategies. Moreover, the interviewees suggest that tact and delicacy constitute the contents of the polite style (phong cách thanh lịch) among Hanoi speakers. However, some other informants, mainly workers or intellectuals from the villages, think that this kind of formal, intention-based politeness is quite superficial. A researcher in social sciences who was born and grew up in a village, says he dislikes the polite style of Hanoi people, because "they always leave a door open to retreat if necessary" and "their politeness is close to falsehood," which he thinks is the product of the market-based economy. (He did in fact draw on the fact that Hanoi has developed from a market place). Comparing Vietnamese culture with cultures in the West, this man suggests that Vietnamese people prefer the politeness of keeping *lễ* (i.e., showing proper status and solidarity relationships) to an intention-based formal politeness (tied up with hints, tact, etc.), because a Vietnamese person is primarily a person of duties and obligations, and his/her life is closely tied to the family, lineage, and community, in contrast to the self-oriented person so

typical of highly industrialized societies. Similarly, comparing Vietnamese villages with their city counterparts, he claims that a village person is more oriented to keeping *lẽ* than to formal politeness because village life is more community-based than city life.

How are these two functions (purposes) of politeness related to each other? There is no consensus among informants in regard to this question. While many informants seem to accept the integration of the respect function (social index) and the strategic function in polite behaviour rather readily ("You're polite because you want to show your proper respect to other people and also you hope to get what you want more easily"), others seem to show their reservations by saying that these two functions may not always accompany each other in speech, although they agree it is not always easy to make a clear distinction. To illustrate this point they provide examples where politeness seems to be a simple observance of social rites of conduct, and there is no other implicit intent (greetings, inquiring after the health of an old person, etc.), as is the case with intention-based politeness (an apology for a past or future offense). This obvious lack of agreement in native perceptions of politeness functions seems to chime in with the conflict among researchers in their attempt to define the functions of politeness, and suggests that it is rather simplistic to attribute the various manifestations of politeness in speech to one kind of functions.

In order to be able to quantify native perceptions of

politeness functions, subjects were asked to answer some questions on questionnaires.

2.2.3 Questionnaire 1

Informants were asked to give their answers to the question "Why should one be polite (speak politely)?" by marking their choices among suggested options (as many as they wanted) or adding their own answers if different. The results show that informants marked the following 4 main purposes of politeness:

a) We are polite because we want to pay respect to the hearers' faces (46 informants out of the total of 46, or 100%).

b) We are polite as a way of showing respect to ourselves (29 out of 46, or 63.0%).

c) We are polite because we want to achieve what we want more easily (23 out of 46, or 52.0%).

d) We are polite because our partners are polite or we want them to be polite (22 out of 46, or 47.8%).

These results coincide with the results of interview (1), that is, there is an agreement among informants that politeness has the functions to protect hearers' faces (100% of subjects think that politeness is needed to show respect for status, age, and distance differences in speaker-hearer relationships), and speakers' faces (63.0% of subjects think that politeness is a manifestation of one's personality and morality, therefore it demonstrated self-respect). In contrast, subjects' opinions seem to be dispersed on the strategic function of politeness (only 52% of informants think that politeness is used to help achieve one's communicative goals).

When these results are analyzed across age, gender, occupation, and education groups (see 1.4 for more details), some variations in the patterns appear. While there is no difference between the social groups in terms of the first function of politeness (politeness is used to show respect to hearers' faces), there are some differences between them in terms of the second (demonstrating self-respect) and third functions (to help achieve one's communicative goals). More specifically, male subjects tend to associate politeness with the function of achieving communicative goals more often than female subjects (68% males vs. 33% females, $p=0.038$). In contrast, female subjects tend to emphasize politeness as a manifestation of one's personality and morality (45.5% males vs. 79% females, $p=0.040$). While there are no differences between age, occupation, and education groups on the second function of politeness (politeness is a manifestation of personality and morality), they do differ on the third function of politeness. There is a highly significant difference between education groups on the third function of politeness ($p=0.002$), and a little significant difference between occupation groups ($p=0.128$) and age groups ($p=0.135$). More specifically, highly educated professionals, together with the young and middle-aged persons, emphasize the strategic function of politeness more than poorly educated, working, self-employed and older people.

These data show a general tendency in Hanoi speakers to associate politeness with social norms of behaviour because of its cultural and moral values. They also reveal that many, but not all

social groups, emphasize the strategic functions of politeness. Could we now expect the same social variation patterns in terms of subjects' perceptions of the semantics of politeness? To answer this question, let us examine how these subjects conceive the notion of politeness.

2.3 The Semantics of Politeness

2.3.1 Folk Data

In modern Vietnamese there are a number of words which can express the meanings of politeness, they are **lịch sử**, **thanh lịch**, **lịch thiệp**, **lễ phép**, **lễ độ**, **kheo léo**, **tế nhị**, etc.

Which of these words/notions are used in folk sayings to express politeness? It is not easy to trace the etymological evolution of these words, but one thing is certain: not all of them appear in proverbs and idioms about politeness.

Three words of Chinese origin appear most often in proverbs and idioms about politeness in general and the politeness of Hanoi people in particular, they are **thanh**, **lịch**, and **lễ**. Though **thanh** and **lịch** mainly appear in proverbs and idioms about delicate, tactful, and gentle behaviour, **lễ** on the other hand appears in proverbs about Confucian-based ritual behaviour.

Thanh and **lịch** are used almost as synonyms in proverbs and idioms to refer to persons or actions with properties nowadays described by the words **lịch sử**:

Trai **thanh**, gái **lịch**
(Gentle men, polite ladies)

Người **thanh** tiếng nói cũng **thanh**
(A polite person has a soft voice)
Chẳng **lich** cũng thế con người Tràng An
(The people of Hanoi are known for their politeness)

But what do **thanh** and **lich** mean? There are no clear definitions of these words in ancient literature. But we can correlate them with other folk sayings to define their meanings. It seems that **thanh** and **lich** were used to emphasize delicacy, and gentleness in verbal behaviour which were highly valued:

Chim khôn tiếng kêu rảnh rang
Người khôn tiếng nói dịu dàng dễ nghe
(A clever bird has a clear voice
A wise person has a soft and pleasant voice)
Mẹ em chẳng phải vì tiền
Thấy anh ăn nói có duyên, dịu dàng
(My mother chose you for me not because you are rich
But because your speech is gracious and soft)

In contrast, rudeness and grossness were not at all valued: "An pham, noi tục", "An tục, noi khoac" (a person of ill manners and foul language).

However, **thanh** and **lich** in speech mean not only **gentleness** and **delicacy**, but also **tact**. Always aware of the importance of gentleness and delicacy ("Nói ngọt, lọt đến xương"-sweet words can conquer hearts), proverbs and idioms advise us to choose tactful ways of speaking:

Lời nói chẳng mất tiền mua
Lựa lời mà nói cho vừa lòng nhau.
(Words are free
Choose words which can please each other)

The topic of tactful speech is elaborated in many proverbs to recommend thoughtful talk ("Ăn có nhai, nói có nghĩ"-think twice before speaking), proper speech ("Học ăn, học nói, học gói, học

mở"-learn to speak properly), attention to the feelings of others ("Thuốc đắng dã tật, sự thật mất lòng"-a bitter pill can cure a disease but the truth will offend a friend), and avoidance of gross expressions ("Đạo to búa lớn"-bombastic language).

This discussion is far from being exhaustive, it nevertheless emphasizes that **thanh** and **lich** are used in folk sayings to refer to **tact**, **delicacy** and **gentleness**, the components of politeness.

In contrast to **thanh** and **lich**, **lễ** is mainly used in proverbs emphasizing Confucian-based behaviour ("Tiên học lễ, hậu học văn"-learn the rites first, then learn the literature). If **thanh** and **lich** refer to tact, delicacy, and gentleness, **lễ** denotes the concern to show proper respect for the status of one's interlocutors, mainly superiors (according to Vietnamese dictionary, 1988). This meaning of the word **lễ** is derived from the Confucian notion of **lễ**, a behavioural principle which is essentially elite- and male-centred, which emphasizes the obligations of inferiors and women: subjects have to be loyal to the King, children have to show filial piety to their parents, students have to listen to their teachers, women have to show **tam tòng** (three obediences: at home they should be subservient to their fathers; when they get married, they have to follow their husbands; when the husbands die, they have to follow their sons), and **tứ đức** (four virtues: industriousness, graciousness, proper speech, and impeccable conduct). **Lễ** is also used to protect face, but the kind of face which revolves around the social hierarchy which one has an obligation to protect but no right to negotiate. For example, in

the following "A mother's instructions to a daughter before she is married to her husband" the young woman is advised to show respect to her husband in order to protect her husband's social face, even when her own face is being attacked:

When your husband is angry, you should be calm and smiling. Don't think of complaining to anyone about his behaviour. When your husband beats you, **respectfully** ask him for mercy. Don't think of confronting him. (emphasis added)

(Kinh nghĩa, quoted in Nguyen Kim Than 1988:30)

As noticed by a Vietnamese writer in the middle of the 20th century, **lễ** in this context required people to slavishly obey superiors to protect self and other's faces, to the extent that they lost their own discriminatory ability, and their own sense of self (Toan Anh 1951).

However, the Confucian principle of **lễ** is interpreted variously by the different social classes of traditional Vietnamese society. If in the imperial palace and in Confucian scholars' families the elite- and male-oriented behavioural rules were strictly observed, in public spheres and especially among the common people (who are less bound by **lễ**), this rule was interpreted more flexibly. The social norms of conduct here require not only subordinates to pay respect to superiors, women to men, but also superiors to pay respect to subordinates, men to women. Perhaps this is the most likely context for the emergence and development of the principles of **kính trên nhường dưới** (respect superiors, yield to subordinates) and of **thuan vợ thuan chồng** (united spouses). Thus, in traditional Vietnamese society, the Confucian principle of **lễ** both directly (through a strict observance of **lễ** in

the royal families and Confucian circles) and indirectly (through a selective adoption of **lễ** by the common people in their family and social life) affected the behavioural conceptions of Vietnamese speakers in Hanoi. In either case, **lễ** has become an indispensable part of Vietnamese behavioural conceptions and the observance of **lễ** has become an important ideological factor, shaping Hanoi speakers' discursive practices.

This brief analysis demonstrates that Vietnamese folk politeness conceptions are mainly reflected in the notions of **thanh/lich** (with an emphasis on tact, delicacy, gentleness) and **lễ** (with an emphasis on showing respect for each other's status, prestige, age, etc., in social interactions). Comparing this with the previous discussion on politeness functions, there seems to be a certain link between the two functions of politeness, as perceived by Hanoi speakers, and the two aspects of politeness semantics as reflected in folk sayings. **Thanh** and **lich** seem to be associated with the strategic function of politeness while **lễ** seems to be associated with the observance of socially accepted norms of behaviour.

Are the semantics of politeness perceived by Hanoi speakers in the same manners as the interpretations of folk sayings? And can we expect that the differences in speakers' perceptions of politeness functions will also manifest themselves in the perceptions of politeness semantics? These questions will be discussed in the following section based on interview 2 and the data derived from the questionnaires 2-3.

2.3.2 Interview 2

The purpose of this part of the formal interview is to study native perceptions of the semantics of politeness. Subjects were encouraged to give their own definitions of politeness, to provide examples from their own lives and to analyze them.

The following words were used by subjects to answer to the question "what is politeness?": **thanh lịch/ lịch thiệp** (politeness), **lễ độ/ lễ phép** (respectfulness), **khéo léo** (tact), **đúng mực** (propriety), **tê nhị/ tinh tế** (delicacy), **khiêm nhường** (modesty). While most of them can tell the differences between **lịch sự** and **lễ độ, lễ phép, đúng mực, khéo léo, tế nhị, dịu dàng**, they generally can not tell the difference between **lịch sự** and **thanh lịch, lịch thiệp**. According to many subjects, **thanh lịch, lịch thiệp**, and **lịch sự** are synonyms, and they prefer to use **lịch sự**. The Vietnamese dictionary (Hanoi, 1988) does not indicate any clear differentiation of meanings between these words either, except that **lịch sự** is used as a key term in the definitions of the other two words/notions:

lịch sự: courteous and respectful behaviour in social interactions in accordance with the socially prescribed rites of intercourse.

thanh lịch: courteous and polite (lich su).

lịch thiệp: polite (lich su), know how to please other people.

It is obvious that **lịch sự** has the most general meaning and is commonly used by modern speakers. It is therefore used in this thesis to denote the most comprehensive concept of "politeness" in the Vietnamese language.

The words **lễ phép/lễ độ** (respectfulness), **đúng mực** (propriety), **khiêm nhường** (modesty), **khéo léo/khôn khéo** (tact), **tế nhị/tinh tế** (delicacy) were used by subjects to describe different meanings of politeness (**lịch sự**). One of the informants remarks: "It is hard to convey what politeness means in general terms. But everyone can agree that **lịch sự** (politeness) implies **lễ phép** (respectfulness), **đúng mực** (propriety), **khiêm nhường** (modesty), **tế nhị** (delicacy), **khéo léo** (tact)." The words used by subjects to define politeness can be divided into two semantic groups: the first group includes **lễ độ, lễ phép, đúng mực, khiêm nhường** which share the common sense of having a respectful attitude towards other people; the second group includes **khéo léo, khôn khéo, tế nhị, tinh tế** which share the common meaning of knowing how to behave linguistically and in a nonlinguistic sense, knowing how to please other people and fulfil one's goal.

What is worth noting here is that while using these notions to describe the semantics of politeness, informants are well aware of their fuller differentiation in relation to the two above-mentioned functions of politeness. Talking about the deference function of politeness, informants use the words of the first group: "a polite person is one who shows **lễ độ** (respect) to all people," and "being polite means showing **lễ phép** (respect) to superiors and **đúng mực** (propriety) to subordinates." Moreover, "being polite means **đúng mực, lễ độ** (behaving properly)". Talking about the strategic function of politeness, informants use the words of the second group: "speaking politely means speaking **khéo léo** (tactfully) and

tế nhị (delicately)," and "speaking politely means avoiding in a khôn khéo (tactful) manner what may offend other people," etc. Drawing upon this distinction in terms of politeness functions and semantics, informants also suggest that it is possible to distinguish between two aspects of Vietnamese politeness, namely the aspect of lịch sử tối thiểu (minimal politeness), and the aspect of lịch sử xã giao (formal politeness).

Lịch sử tối thiểu (minimal politeness) is explained by the subjects as an aspect of Vietnamese politeness mainly associated with showing respect to other people. Its semantics are tied to the notion of lễ độ, i.e., respect, propriety. Some informants also suggest that it can be named as lịch sử lễ độ (respectful politeness). In verbal interactions lịch sử lễ độ (respectful politeness) is clearly manifested in the observance of highly conventionalized patterns in greeting, addressing, answering, etc., in which the choice of expressive means depends mainly on speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. For instance, to be judged as having proficiency in minimal politeness, a Vietnamese person will choose the address forms which best express the speaker-hearer's status and solidarity relationships. The inappropriate use of address terms (calling a superior person by a descending kin term) is publically interpreted as indicating a serious offense of both speaker's and hearer's faces. Thanking or greeting is socially accepted as a polite action. But if these actions are not accompanied by appropriate hearer address terms (Cám ơn cô! - thank you, aunt!; Chào ông a! - Hello,

grandfather!), they may be seen as insolent, hence impolite.

Lịch sự xã giao (formal politeness) is explained as an aspect of Vietnamese politeness mainly associated with communicative intents and interactional efficacy, therefore, it can also be named as **lịch sự chiến lược** (strategic politeness). Its semantics are tied to the notions of **khéo léo/khôn khéo** (tact) and **tê nhị/tinh tế** (delicacy). To illustrate this conception of politeness, informants often resort to the use of mitigating actions such as thanking, begging to be excused, complimenting, and the subtle use of hints, or of indirectness to soften the impact of imposition of their acts, and to create a favourable context for the achievement of their goals.

When asked to distinguish between minimal (respectful) politeness and formal (strategic) politeness, subjects provided many interesting examples from their real lives. One informant told the following story. Once she came to visit her friend's family (they often came to visit each other's families). She brought a box of chocolates and gave it to her friend's daughter (who was 12 years old). The girl took the chocolates and thanked her. The mother also thanked her. Analyzing this act, the informant said the act of gratitude in this situation was just sufficient to indicate that the girl (and indeed her mother) knew how to be minimally polite (she was respectful enough), but it could not be said that she was tactful (i.e., have a knowledge of formal politeness). To show tact and delicacy in this situation, according to this woman, the girl (or her mother) should have added

something like "Thank you auntie, you are so kind, you always bring me a gift when you come over".

According to the informants, both respectful and strategic politeness are important in social interactions, but they differ as to their relative importance and the seriousness of the offences associated with the absence of each. **Lịch sử lễ độ** (minimal or respectful politeness) seems to be especially important in social interactions, as it evinces a minimal manifestation of one's cultural level (hence the form **lịch sử tối thiểu** - minimal politeness): "showing proper respect to other people is the minimal politeness anyone should have," and "a person with respectful politeness knows how to respect elders and make concessions to youth". This is why a violation of respectful politeness is considered by informants as a serious verbal offence: namely, because it shows a lack of affection, of morality: impoliteness here is equal to **vô lễ, hỗn láo** (lack of rites, disrespectfulness, insolence). Violations of respectful politeness occur when, for example, a subordinate person uses a low-status term to address a superior person or fails to use any address term at all, as when a subordinate person interrupts a superior person, etc.

Distinct from respectful politeness, **lịch sử xã giao** (formal or strategic politeness), although being considered by informants as a manifestation of a higher level of behavioral culture, could to some extent, be deemed preferable, but inessential. Some informants even point out that strategic politeness is mainly linked to life experiences, to psychological knowledge, and to the

mastery of verbal proficiency, rather than to one's morality and personality, and therefore, not everyone can understand it and use it. To illustrate this point, one informant provided the following example. Suppose you want to ask a stranger for some information, instead of saying "Chi ỏi, tôi muốn hỏi chị cái này!" (Sister, I want to ask you something!) one can say "Chi ỏi, cho tôi hỏi chị cái này!" (Sister, let me ask you something!). Although respectful politeness is equally observed in both sentences (i.e., the same status and solidarity markers are used), the latter is considered less imposing, more pleasant, and hence more tactful. The examples and the explanations provided by these subjects seem to emphasize that strategic politeness is more associated with tact and delicacy than with deference and propriety.

However, some informants, especially male workers and those from the country, seem to hesitate when talking about tact and delicacy, which they think can be easily associated with insincerity. For instance, one informant, a 70-year old researcher in Vietnamese history, whose wife was born in Hanoi and he himself has been living in Hanoi for a long time, makes the following remark: "Hanoians are very tactful (khéo), sometimes they will insult you without you noticing it. Rural people are more simple-hearted and straightforward. If they don't like something they just say it. But this doesn't mean they are unkind or they don't like you." According to this informant, the tactful and delicate style is commendable (although he admits to sometimes feeling reserved with overly tactful people), however, simple and

straightforward style should not be thought of as impolite. His opinion suggests that a lack of, or a violation of, strategic politeness is not considered by native speakers as a serious moral lapse, but simply as a deficiency in speaking experiences or lack of verbal skills due to one's comparatively limited life experiences. Impoliteness here is equivalent to **khiếm nhã** (discourtesy), or **thô lỗ** (rudeness), which are different again from **vô lễ** (disrespect), or **hỗn láo** (insolence).

Thus, speaking politely, according to Hanoians, is, for one thing, to follow the rules and conventions of respectful politeness, i.e., to be respectful and proper, but it is also to take into consideration the strategies of tact and delicacy. The distinction between respectful and strategic politeness is apparent in the data of formal interviews, although the differences in terms of functions, semantics, and relationships between these two aspects need to be further refined. However, we already have an impression that native perceptions of politeness do not seem to fully correspond to the expectations of either the instrumental or the normative perspectives. But it is still too early to draw such a conclusion.

Before presenting the questionnaire data, two points need to be made. First, according to many informants, in order for an utterance to accord with the properties mentioned (respect, propriety, tact, delicacy) and to be perceived as polite, it should satisfy the criterion of sincerity, i.e., it should reflect correctly (explicitly or implicitly) the true intent, attitude, or

feelings of the speakers and therefore it should be consistent with other manifestations of verbal or nonverbal behaviour. Without sincerity, an utterance, albeit in a polite form, will sound **giả** **đôi** (hypocritical). Second, although informants were quite unanimous in distinguishing respectful from strategic politeness in terms of functions and semantics, there is no consensus among them as to what the different aspects of politeness should be called. While most subjects think the term **lịch sự** (polite) can be used to refer to the general concept of politeness with its two distinctive aspects of **lịch sự tối thiểu/lễ độ** (minimal or respectful politeness) and **lịch sự xã giao/chiến lược** (formal or strategic politeness) as mentioned before, some thought the term was apt just for strategic (formal) politeness. As for the respectful politeness, they prefer to call it simply **lễ độ** or **lễ phép** (respectfulness). These subjects say, for example, that the respectful behaviour of children towards elderly people is better called **lễ phép** (respectful) or **lễ độ** (proper) and not **lịch sự** (polite). In reply to this, informants of the first group argue that the respectful behaviour of small children may not belong to the domain of politeness because they are not yet conscious of the politeness values of symbols. But for adult speakers, respectful behaviour is a necessary part of their awareness of politeness, therefore respectful behaviour (**lễ phép, lễ độ**) can also be termed **lịch sự** (polite). Thus, in accordance with these two different understandings, we have two different semantic definitions of the term **lịch sự** and two different ways of naming the two aspects of

politeness. In order to come up with a more satisfactory solution to this problem, it is necessary to test with more objective procedures, the native perceptions about the semantics of politeness and their relations to the two aspects of politeness assumed to have different functions. Using questionnaire 2, I will determine the basic semantic notions of the concept **lich su** (politeness). Using questionnaire 3, I will examine whether or not these notions belong to two different dimensions having quite different functions.

2.3.3 Questionnaire 2

In the interview part we see that 46 subjects use a number of words to describe the various meanings of politeness. Yet, it is not clear which of these are shared meanings, and which are only individual understandings. The purpose of this questionnaire is therefore to determine in a more precise way the basic meanings of politeness through an analysis of native speakers' opinions.

In this questionnaire, 46 subjects were asked to answer the question "what is politeness in speech?" by marking their choices among suggested options, or by contributing their own versions, if different: 7 words/notions were used by informants to answer the question, and their frequencies are presented in Table 2.

The data reported in Table 2 show that 4 words/notions were most frequently used by informants to describe linguistic politeness, namely **lễ phép** (42/46), **đúng mực** (41/46), **tề nhị** (39/46), **khéo léo** (33/46). The other words were used just by a few informants. Those who did not choose 5 (sincerity), 6 (modesty),

and 7 (polish) also provided their own explanations. For instance, some informants argued that **chân thành** (sincerity) must be present for an utterance to be considered as polite, and it is not merely another meaning of politeness, while **khiêm nhường** (modesty) was found implicitly present in the notion of respectfulness. **Trau chuốt** (polish) was rejected by most informants because it can be easily associated with insincerity.

Table 2: Frequencies of words used by 46 subjects to define the meanings of politeness

| | Notions | freq. | % |
|---|---------------------------------|-------|------|
| 1 | Lễ phép (respectfulness) | 42/46 | 91.2 |
| 2 | Đúng mực (propriety) | 41/46 | 89.0 |
| 3 | Tế nhị (delicacy) | 39/46 | 84.8 |
| 4 | Khéo léo (tact) | 33/46 | 71.6 |
| 5 | Chân thành (sincerity) | 3/46 | 6.5 |
| 6 | Khiêm nhường (modesty) | 1/46 | 2.2 |
| 7 | Trau chuốt (polish) | 1/46 | 2.2 |

Focusing on the four main words/notions used by informants to define politeness, it is apparent that they coincide with the principal notions used most frequently by subjects in formal interviews to talk about politeness: **lễ phép** (respectfulness) and **đúng mực** (propriety) were used to describe respectful politeness and their main function is to demonstrate respect towards other people; **tế nhị** (delicacy) and **khéo léo** (tact) were used to describe the formal/strategic politeness and their main function is to enhance communicative efficacy (see 2.3.1). The data do not yield any significant differences between subjects of different social groups in their use of these words to define politeness ($p > 0.140$).

The only exception is that there is a greater consensus among female subjects on the meaning **tê' nhi** (delicacy) of politeness (24 out of 24 female subjects marked this meaning, while only 15 out of 22 male speakers marked it: $p=0.009$). It seems that this gender differentiation in the perception of this meaning of politeness is related to the fact that some male subjects, especially workers and those of village-based backgrounds, put a strong emphasis on the straightforward and plain style, seeing in it, an expression of sincerity (see the discussion of interview data above).

When we look at the ways subjects choose these words to answer the question "what is politeness in speaking?," we can observe some interesting patterns (Table 3).

Table 3: Combination patterns of notions used by 46 subjects to define politeness.

| | Contents | freq. | % |
|---|----------------|-------|------|
| 1 | LP | 1 | 2.2 |
| 2 | LP, TN | 2 | 4.3 |
| 3 | LP, DM, TN | 6 | 13.0 |
| 4 | LP, DM, TN, KL | 28 | 61.0 |
| 5 | LP, DM, KL | 3 | 6.5 |
| 6 | LP, TN, KL | 2 | 4.3 |
| 7 | DM, TN | 1 | 2.2 |
| 8 | DM | 3 | 6.5 |

LP : **lê' phép**-respectfulness DM : **đúng mực**-propriety
 TN : **tê' nhi**-delicacy KL : **khéo léo**-tact.

The data reported in Table 3 suggest two noteworthy tendencies. First, the majority of subjects think that politeness is associated with three or four principal notions (39/46 or 84.8%), while only a few (7/46 or 15.2%) think that politeness is

related to one or two meanings. There is no significant difference among social groups as to their perceptions of the meanings of politeness, although the gender-based differentiation seems to be more conspicuous ($p=0.103$) than the age-based differentiation ($p=0.390$) and the occupation-based differentiation ($p=0.630$). Second, although all four main notions were used by subjects to define the meanings of politeness, *lễ phép* (respectfulness) and *dúng mực* (propriety), which in formal interviews were established as the main characteristics of respectful politeness, seem to figure more prominently than *kheó léo* (tact) and *tế nhị* (delicacy), which were established as the main characteristics of strategic politeness. This is reflected in the higher frequencies of *lễ phép* and *dúng mực* (Table 2).

Thus, despite the fact that in formal interviews subjects suggested quite a number of different definitions of politeness, the information collected from this questionnaire shows that native speakers' understanding of politeness is in fact based on the four principal notions of respectfulness, propriety, tact, and delicacy. However, these results do not show the relationships between these meanings of politeness in conjunction with their relations to the two assumed functions of politeness. They fail, therefore, to highlight the fact there are, apparently, two distinctive aspects of politeness as delineated in formal interviews.

2.3.4 Questionnaire 3

This questionnaire is designed to examine native perceptions of the relations of the main four meanings to the notion of

politeness and to the politeness functions, thus testing the hypothesis of the two politeness aspects, as they are deemed to differ in forms of functions and semantics. If this hypothesis is correct, then in accordance with a distinction in functions between the respectful and strategic aspects of politeness, as discussed in formal interviews 1 and questionnaire 1, we should be able to anticipate a distinction in their semantics, at least in cases where a distinction between the two kinds of polite behaviour can be assumed.

To test this hypothesis, 46 subjects were asked to evaluate the politeness meanings of 12 different utterances by marking one or more among 5 words/notions suggested in the questionnaire (they could also add their own, if different): **lịch sự** (polite), **lễ phép** (respectful), **đúng mực** (proper), **khéo léo** (tactful), and **tế nhị** (delicate). The 12 utterances chosen for the test are:

- 1) Greeting a superior person:
 - **Cháu chào cụ a!**
grandson greets great_grandfather honorific
(Hello, great grandfather!)
- 2) Responding to a subordinate's greeting:
 - **Không-dám, chào anh!**
no-dare hi elder_brother
(Alright, hello!)
- 3) Inviting superiors at the dinner table:
 - **(Con) mời bố mẹ xối cơm!.**
(offspring) invite father mother eat rice
(I am inviting mom and dad to eat!)
- 4) Responding to a superior person's question:
 - **Vâng a/đá.**
yes honorific
(Yes, Sir/Dad/Mom)

- 5) Thanking a superior for a gift:
 - **Cháu xin bà a!**
grandson beg grandmother honorific
(Thank you very much grandma!)
- 6) Thanking a subordinate for help:
 - **Cám_ón cháu, cháu tốt quá!**
thank granddaughter granddaughter good very
(Thank you, you are such a good person!)
- 7) Apologizing to a stranger for an inadvertent collision:
 - **Xin_lỗi anh (anh có sao không?).**
sorry elder_brother (elder_brother has hurt no?)
(Sorry, did it hurt you?)
- 8) Asking a stranger for the time in a direct mode with mitigation:
 - **Xin_lỗi, anh làm ỏn xem hồ mây giò rồi?**
excuse, elder_brother do favour look help what time
(Excuse me, could you tell me the time?)
- 9) Asking a young stranger for help in an indirect mode:
 - **Giá mà cháu có thể giúp bác...**
wish nephew can help senior_uncle
(I wish you could help me)
- 10) Criticizing an employee in an indirect mode:
 - **Hình_như dạo_này cậu có điều_gì không_ỏn?**
seem nowadays brother has something out_of_order?
(What's the matter with you lately?)
- 11) Disagreeing with a friend in an indirect mode:
 - **Theo mình, cậu cũng nên nghĩ lại!**
According self, friend also should think again
(I think you should think again!)
- 12) Refusing an invitation in an indirect mode:
 - **Xin_lỗi, mình đang bận chút việc.**
Sorry, self is busy a little thing
(Sorry, I have to do something right now)

These utterances were chosen with the aim of highlighting the distinction between the two kinds of polite behaviour suggested by subjects in the formal interviews, namely respectful politeness which has the main function to express respect for the speaker-hearer's status and solidarity relationships, and strategic

politeness which has the main function to diminish face-threat of the illocutionary force of utterances. Judging by their illocutionary points, utterances 1 and 2 are acts of greeting, utterance 3 is an act of invitation, utterances 5 and 6 are acts of gratitude, and utterance 7 is an act of apology. These utterances (1-7) are "hearer-beneficial" acts (Leech 1983), or "have polite content" (Gu 1990), or rather, they are not "face-threatening" (Brown & Levinson 1987). Therefore, in performing these acts, speakers do not need to use strategies to mitigate the negative effects of illocutionary points. Utterances (8-12), in contrast, express the acts of requesting (8, 9), of criticizing (10), of disagreeing (11) and refusing (12). These utterances (8-12) are "hearer-costly" (Leech 1983), or "have impolite content" (Gu 1990), or they are "face-threatening" (Brown & Levinson 1987). Therefore, in performing these acts, speakers need to use adaptive strategies (the use of such expressions as **xin lỗi** (excuse me), **làm ơn** (doing a favour, to please), indirectness, etc.) to mitigate the degrees of face threat. However, these utterances also differ in the degrees of face threat involved, ranging from high (utterances 9-12) to low (8). Depending on the differences in illocutionary points and the degrees of face threat, it is expected that the so-called strategic politeness (and the characteristics of **kheó léo** (tact) and **tế nhị** (delicacy) associated with it) will be more attached to utterances (8-12) than to utterances (1-7).

Judging by speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, we can also distinguish 3 different groups: in the first group

(utterances 1, 3, 4, 5), hearers are more powerful, while in the second group (utterances 2, 6, 9), hearers are less powerful, and finally, in the third group (7, 8, 10, 11, 12), hearers and speakers are equal. Among the utterances of the third group we can also distinguish the ones with speaker-hearer solidary relationships (utterances 10, 11, 12) from the ones with speaker-hearer non-solidary relationships (7, 8). Depending on speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, it is expected that respectful politeness as a marker of speaker-hearer social relationships will be identified in utterances where the hearer is powerful (1, 3, 4, 5) more clearly than in utterances where the hearer is less powerful (2, 6), and in utterances where the hearer is a stranger (7, 8, 9) more clearly than in the utterances where the hearer is an acquaintance (10, 11, 12).

In order to evaluate the politeness characteristics of these utterances according to informants' assessments, the results are calculated and presented in the following manner. First, the number of informants giving a characteristic (x) to each utterance is calculated. Second, each instance of having (x) is assigned a score of 1, and each instance of not having (x) is assigned a score of 0. Third, the total scores of the characteristic (x) for each utterance is summed up and divided by 46 to give the utterance's average (x) index. The closer the index is to 1, then the more likely the utterance will have the characteristic (x), while the closer the index is to 0, the less likely the utterance will have the characteristic (x). The index scores are reported in Table 4a.

Table 4a: Indices of politeness characteristics of 12 utterances as evaluated by 46 Hanoi subjects.

| Utter. | LS | LP | DM | KL | TN |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | .85 | .90 | .66 | .07 | .07 |
| 2 | .84 | .09 | .70 | .05 | .02 |
| 3 | .70 | .86 | .46 | .05 | .07 |
| 4 | .22 | .95 | .38 | .00 | .02 |
| 5 | .49 | .97 | .33 | .18 | .05 |
| 6 | .93 | .05 | .66 | .18 | .11 |
| 7 | .97 | .15 | .55 | .24 | .22 |
| 8 | .97 | .27 | .51 | .38 | .13 |
| 9 | .64 | .02 | .22 | .57 | .13 |
| 10 | .77 | .00 | .19 | .57 | .77 |
| 11 | .68 | .00 | .18 | .79 | .64 |
| 12 | .82 | .02 | .19 | .70 | .64 |

LS: **lịch sử**-polite LP: **lễ phép**-respectful,
 DM: **đúng mức**-proper KL: **khéo léo**-tactful TN: **tê nhị**-delicate

The data reported in Table 4a show that the five politeness characteristics have very different indices in the same utterances, while the same characteristic has different indices in different utterances. To make this outcome more easily observable, Table 4a is re-formulated into Table 4b. In this table, an utterance is assumed to have (+) a characteristic (x) if its index score of (x) is equal or greater than 0.50. Similarly, an utterance is assumed not to have (-) a characteristic (x) if its index score of (x) is equal or lower than 0.20. An utterance is assumed to be unclear (*) with regard to a characteristic (x) if its index score of (x) is greater than 0.20 and smaller than 0.50.

Tables 4a-b show a marked difference between utterances 1-6 and utterances 10-12. In utterances 1-6 (which "have a polite content" or are not "face-threatening" but which have distinctive speaker-hearer status differences), politeness is often associated

with respectfulness (LP) and/or propriety (DM), and it is not associated with tact (KL) and delicacy (TN). However, the

Table 4b: Pragmatic characteristics of 12 speech acts as evaluated by informants

| Utterances | LS | LP | DM | KL | TN |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | + | + | + | - | - |
| 2 | + | - | + | - | - |
| 3 | + | + | * | - | - |
| 4 | * | + | * | - | - |
| 5 | * | + | * | - | - |
| 6 | + | - | + | - | - |
| 7 | + | - | + | * | * |
| 8 | + | * | + | * | - |
| 9 | + | - | * | + | - |
| 10 | + | - | - | + | + |
| 11 | + | - | - | + | + |
| 12 | + | - | - | + | + |

Notes: + the act is considered to have this characteristic (index > .50)
 - the act is not considered to have this characteristic (index < .20)
 * undecided (.20 < index < .50)

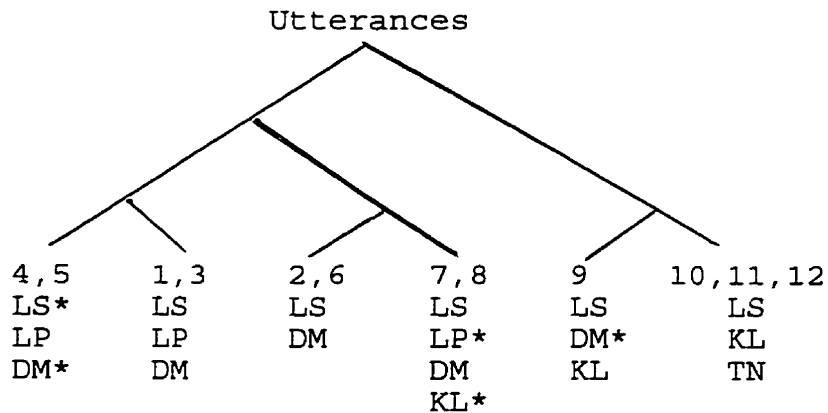
relationship between **lịch sự** (polite), **lễ phép** (respectful) and **đúng mực** (proper) in utterances of this group is not homogeneous. Judging by the speaker-hearer status differences, it seems that being polite to powerful persons entails being respectful and proper (utterances 1, 3, 5) while being polite to less powerful persons entails only being proper (utterances 2, 6). On the other hand, even when speaking to superior persons **lịch sự** (polite) is not always associated with **lễ phép** (respectful). This seems to be related to the fact that the status/power differences are relatively big or small: in utterances where the status differences are small, that is, both the speaker and the hearer are adults or

the difference between them is not clear (utterances 1, 3), being polite (**lịch sự**) is at the same time construed as respectful (**lễ phép**) and proper (**đúng mực**). In contrast, in utterances where the status differences are great, that is, the speaker is a child while the hearer is an adult (utterances 4, 5), **lễ phép** (respectful) and **lễ độ** (proper) is not associated with **lịch sự** (polite). This is consistent with the comments of some informants in formal interviews that the respectful behaviour of children should not be considered polite.

Though, in utterances 1-6, politeness is associated mainly with respectfulness and propriety, in utterances 10-12 (which are highly face-threatening and have low status-solidarity differences), in contrast, politeness is associated mainly with tact and delicacy. The characteristic **lễ phép** (respectful) is absent because the hearers are equal or less powerful. The characteristic **đúng mực** (proper) is also very weak. In between the group of utterances 1-6 and the group of utterances 10-12 are utterances 7-9 which have the politeness characteristics of both groups. Utterances 7 and 8 have low face-threat levels, and speaker-hearer relationships here are equal but distant. Their politeness is associated mainly with **đúng mực** (proper), and they are therefore closer to utterances 1-6 than to utterances 10-12. Utterance 9 has a high face-threat level and a less powerful, but distant addressee. Its politeness is associated mainly with **khéo léo** (tactful), and it is therefore closer to utterances 10-12 than to utterances 1-6. The result of this analysis can be represented

in the following figure (Figure1)

Figure 1: Cluster analysis of 12 utterances in terms of their politeness characteristics.



The analysis above indicates that in native perceptions the notions *lịch sự* (politeness), *lễ phép* (respectfulness), *đúng mực* (propriety), *khéo léo* (tact), and *tế nhị* (delicacy) have different correlations in utterances with different illocutionary points and different speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. On the one hand, it indicates that in relation to *lịch sự* (politeness), *lễ phép* (respectfulness) and *đúng mực* (propriety) seem to belong to one dimension and are determined by high speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences (utterances 1-6) while *khéo léo* (tact) and *tế nhị* (delicacy) seem to belong to another dimension and are determined by the high face-threat of illocutionary points (utterances 10-12). However, the demarcation line is not always clear (as reflected in utterances 7-9). This outcome proves the viability of the hypothesis that there might be

differences in native perceptions of the politeness meanings of different utterances and different groups of utterances. This reconfirms the comments made by the majority of subjects in formal interviews that politeness in Hanoi dialect consists of two different aspects, namely **lịch sử tối thiểu/lễ độ** (respectful politeness), which functions mainly to index the speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences in accordance with the dominant social norms of behaviour, and **lịch sử chiến lược/xã giao** (strategic politeness) which functions mainly to mitigate the face-threat of the utterances' illocutionary points to improve communicative efficacy. Respectful politeness is tied up to the notions of respectfulness and propriety, and strategic politeness is tied up to the notions of tact and delicacy. For another thing the analysis also shows that in discursive practices politeness may not always encompass both aspects of respectful and strategic politeness, and the four meanings of respectfulness, propriety, tact, and delicacy. These differ in each utterance and in each context. It may cover fully or partially the aspect of respectful politeness (as in utterances 1-6), or the aspect of strategic politeness (as in utterances 10-12), or it may have the meanings of both aspects (as in utterances 7-9). This depends on the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships as well as on the perceived degrees of utterances' face-threat. Take the relationship between **lịch sử** (politeness) and **lễ phép** (respectfulness) as an example. In utterances 1 and 3 (the face-threat is low, and the speaker, an adult, is less powerful)

politeness is almost identical with respectfulness. In utterances 4 and 5 (the face-threat is also low, and the speaker, a child, is also less powerful) the politeness indices are low while the respectfulness indices are very high. In contrast, in the remaining utterances, especially in 10-12 (the face-threat is high, but the speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences are low), the politeness indices are high but politeness does not seem to be connected to respectfulness (the respectfulness indices are very low). This evidence highlights that between politeness and respectfulness there is an overlap: there are cases where respectfulness can be considered as a meaning of politeness (for example, in utterances 1 and 3), and there are cases where respectfulness distinguishes itself from politeness (for example, in utterances 4 and 5). The same could be said about the relationship between politeness and its other meanings of tact, delicacy, and propriety.

Finally, it is important to state that the analysis above, not only shows the correlations of the main politeness meanings with the two aspects of respectful and strategic politeness, but also points out, at least to some extent, the differences in the expressive means of each aspect. It is evident, as evinced by subjects in formal interviews, that respectful politeness is expressed by honorifics (**a, da, vâng**), by polite address terms; and by honorific verbs such as **xõ**i (eat), **mõ**i (invite), etc. These words function mainly to index the speaker-hearer social relationships rather than to defuse the face-threat of utterances

(utterances 1-6). Strategic politeness, on the contrary, is mainly expressed by indirectness, by mitigating elements such as **xin lỗi** (excuse), **làm ơn** (do favour). These devices function mainly to soften the potential face-threat of utterances rather than to index speaker-hearer social relationships (utterances 10-12). However, the best way to study these politeness devices, and their functions as a basis for a distinction between respectful and strategic politeness, is to examine politeness realizations in actual discursive practices.

2.4 Discussions

2.4.1 On the Politeness Concepts of Hanoi Speakers

The analysis of folk, interview, and questionnaire data permits me to suggest that politeness, according to the perception of Hanoi speakers consists of two aspects, differing in terms of functions and semantics, which could be compatible with what theorists call normative politeness and instrumental politeness. According to the suggestions of the sampled subjects, I will use the term "respectful politeness" (**lịch sự lễ độ**) to name the first aspect, and "strategic politeness" (**lịch sự chiến lược**) to name the second aspect. Politeness of the Hanoi speakers is taken in its extended meaning, covering both the forms of respectful politeness and strategic politeness.

Respectful politeness is behaviour aimed at marking speaker-hearer social relationships in conformity with the social conventions of intercourse. The two main characteristics of respectful politeness are **lễ phép** (respectfulness) and **đúng mực**

(propriety): **lễ phép** means showing respect to superior persons; **đúng mực** means showing proper respect to equal and less powerful persons and keeping distance/solidarity in conformity with the speaker-hearer solidarity relationships. The most common devices of respectful politeness are address terms, honorifics, or lexical items with similar functions. Depending on speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, speakers have to choose expressive means in conformity with the rules of respectfulness and propriety. For instance, in speaking to a person older than oneself, one is generally not allowed to use a "no-naming" style, and one has to choose terms of lower status to designate oneself and terms of higher status to designate the other party: **em-anh/chi** (younger sister/brother- elder sister/brother), **cháu-chú/cô/bác** (niece/nephew-uncle/aunt), **cháu-ông/bà** (grandson/granddaughter-grandpa/grandma), etc. Similarly, in the use of modal particles like **a, da, vâng**, younger or lower status people have to follow the rule of "gọi-da, bảo-vâng" (when being called, say "da"; when being talked to, say "vâng").

However, as already indicated, politeness in the Hanoi dialect covers not only its respectful aspect, but also its strategic dimension. If respectful politeness is principally tied to speaker-hearer's social relationships, strategic politeness is, on the contrary, mainly tied to communicative intents or the illocutionary force of utterances. Speakers resort to strategic politeness, not so much for the sake of marking the social relationships (although it is constrained by social relationships),

but rather for the sake of mitigating the potential threats of the utterances (criticizing, refusing, disagreeing, etc.). This is why strategic politeness is mainly bound to the notions of tact and delicacy, i.e., to the use of appropriate ways of speaking to maximize the advantages and to minimize the disadvantages of the situation so as to fulfil one's intentions. In discursive practices strategic politeness is realized by different linguistic means, namely, through the use of indirectness, through lexical items with mitigation functions such as **làm ơn** (doing a favour), **xin lỗi** (excuses), **hồ/giúp/giùm** (help), **có thể** (maybe), etc.

Both aspects of respectful and strategic politeness are highly appreciated in social interactions and can be learnt through socialization. Respectful politeness, however, seems to be especially highlighted because it is the index of social relationships, and is more directly related to the speaker's moral attitudes and affection rather than to speaking skills. Respectful politeness is therefore emphasized more in behavioural education within families and at school, while strategic politeness is learnt more through personal experience in social interactions. Children, for example, have to be carefully taught rules of respectful politeness (rules of address, of greetings, etc.) before they themselves can learn rules of strategic politeness (indirectness, hints, mitigation strategies).

What are the implications of this metapragmatic analysis of politeness functions and semantics in the Hanoi dialect for the debate on the functions and nature of politeness in the various

politeness theories?

2.4.2 Implications for Three Theoretical Hypotheses

The metapragmatic analysis of politeness in the Hanoi dialect attests to the applicability of the hypothesis that Vietnamese politeness may consist of two aspects, differing in terms of functions and semantics. Cultural evidence has been deployed to support this synthetic view. Such analysis also attests to the inappropriateness of the normative perspective in regard to the Vietnamese case: ignorance of the strategic aspect limits its universal applicability, although the Vietnamese example does not attest to the invalidity of this cultural approach in other cultures (see Matsumoto 1988). With regard to the hypotheses of the instrumental perspective, particularly in Brown & Levinson's model, the politeness concepts of Hanoi speakers do not seem to support their universal claims, especially in regard to the presence of respectful politeness in Vietnamese culture. Below I will argue that the universal model is not fully appropriate for an accurate description of Hanoi politeness, because it does not do full justice to one important dimension, namely, respectful politeness, which is closely tied to social norms and values. It could be said that the dimension of respectful politeness is treated in the universal model as a negative politeness strategy (namely, as "giving deference") or a positive politeness strategy (namely, as displaying "group identity markers"). However, there are no valid reasons for this assumption. First, respectful politeness, as already shown, is a prominent dimension of

Vietnamese politeness, and is clearly differentiated from Brown & Levinson's negative or positive strategies in terms of its functions: respectful politeness is behavior in conformity to the norms and conventions of society, and it does not necessarily entail individual strategies aimed at certain communicative goals. Brown & Levinson do, however, note the distinctive functions of this kind of behavior, but they over-emphasize rationality at the expense of conventions: "...conventions can themselves be overwhelming reasons for doing things (as anthropologists have usually assumed), there can be, and perhaps often are, rational bases for conventions" (1987:59). Accordingly, the authors only describe polite strategies, which are rationally chosen by individual speakers to satisfy their face wants and to achieve communicative goals. One consequence of this is that the model does not cover all aspects of politeness phenomena existing in other cultures, where social conventions function as important determining constraints of polite behavior and have close links to the social structure, of which the Japanese "wakimae" or Vietnamese "le do" are just a few examples. To illustrate the role of conventions in polite behavior and to highlight the differences between respectful politeness and politeness strategies in Brown & Levinson's understanding, I would like to take the use of address terms as an example. Interpreting the use of address terms in English and some other languages, Brown & Levinson classify them as the strategies of "giving deference" (belonging to the superstrategy of negative politeness), or "group identity markers"

(belonging to the superstrategy of positive politeness) depending on the various concrete situations. The use of **Sir** is an example of "giving deference". Brown & Levinson argue that **Sir** is appropriate only in situations where speakers are performing a potentially face-threatening act as in the following example

- Excuse me, **Sir**, but would you mind if I close the window?
and it is inappropriate in situations where speakers are not performing a face-threatening act, as in the following example:

- Goodness, **Sir**, that sunset is amazing.

(Brown & Levinson 1987:182)

Thus, the use of **Sir** to "give deference" depends on the speaker's subjective evaluation of whether or not the act he/she is performing is hearer-costly. Similarly, the authors speak of the use of such address terms as mom, sister, brother as group identity markers. Such a view of address terms, conceived as strategies of negative or positive politeness aiming at concrete contextual communicative goals, is not quite the same as the view of address terms, conceived as indicators of respectful politeness, deployed in the Vietnamese language. In the Vietnamese language address terms are indicators of status and solidarity relationships between interlocutors, and that is why their use depends mainly on social norms and conventions of address, although in many cases it is also influenced by individual intentions. For instance, if H is a father to S, then according to their status relationships and the social norms of address for this case, S has to use the term **bố** (father) to address H and to call him/herself by **con** (offspring),

and this is normally required in all situations, irrespective of whether or not S is performing a face-threatening act. In other words, S uses the pair **bô'** (**father-offspring**) because he/she follows the rules of respectful politeness socially marked for the hierarchical relationship "father-offspring." This is different from the use of **bô'** as a strategy to increase deference or solidarity, associated with a certain communicative goal; for example, when used in connection with a person who is not one's own father. Distinct from the markedness of the use of **bô'** as a strategy in the second case, the use of **bô'** as an index of respectful politeness in the first case is free from any notion of intentionality (unmarkedness). Thus, if respectful politeness is an observance of certain verbal patterns in conformity to the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, and therefore, is relatively free from communicative intents, strategies of negative and positive politeness are but a temporary appropriation of these patterns in service of concrete communicative intents. And as seen, even with the same expressive means, respectful politeness still differs from strategies of positive or negative politeness in relation to the functions of terms, which makes it impossible to identify one with another. We can therefore agree with Matsumoto that "superficial similarity can result from different underlying principles" (1988:404).

I have attempted, so far, to highlight a functional distinction between the respectful politeness characteristic of the Hanoi dialect and the strategies of negative and positive

politeness in Brown & Levinson's model. There is another important difference regarding the relation of strategic and respectful politeness to the parameters of power and solidarity in speaker-hearer social relationships. According to Brown & Levinson, negative politeness aims at satisfying negative face needs by increasing the distance (nonsolidarity) between interlocutors characteristic of nonsolidary and asymmetrical relationships, and positive politeness aims at satisfying positive face needs by increasing the solidarity and equality characteristic of solidary and symmetrical relationships (1987:75). Given this opposition, no politeness strategy in this model (both negative and positive) can simultaneously satisfy negative and positive face, that is, can express both power differentiation or distance and solidarity between speakers and hearers. Respectful behaviour in the Hanoi dialect, by contrast, can express both power differences, for example, through the use of kinterms in asymmetrical relationships (**bố**/father - **con**/child, **bà**/grandma- **cháu**/grandchild, **anh**/elderbrother - **em**/younger brother), and also solidarity between speech interactants (see Luong 1987, 90). For these reasons, it is difficult to identify Vietnamese respectful politeness with Brown & Levinson's politeness strategies (negative or positive). In other words, the universal model does not provide an accurate paradigm for the description of Vietnamese politeness, or more precisely, it can only serve as the model for the description of the strategic dimension of Vietnamese politeness. In order to describe the respectful dimension, it would have to be supplemented

by the approach of the social norm view, which means adopting a synthetic approach.

I have briefly presented above a politeness model for the Hanoi dialect, based mainly on interview and questionnaire data collected from a sample of 46 Hanoi speakers. The question arises as to whether this politeness ideology will manifest itself in the discursive practices of these Hanoi speakers. To obtain an answer to this question, I will turn now to a description and analysis of politeness manifestations in directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations of sampled Hanoi speakers.

POLITENESS IN DIRECTIVES

3.0 Introduction

In Chapter 2, based on folk, interview, and questionnaire data, I have presented an analysis of native metapragmatic conceptions of politeness. Politeness is perceived by the sampled speakers of Hanoi as a synthesis of two aspects, differing in terms of functions and semantics (i.e., respectful and strategic politeness). It is argued that such a view of politeness is basically different from the instrumental and the normative views of politeness, and seems to be associated with the synthetic view. However, this analysis could only provide us with a theoretical model of politeness in Hanoi. A question to be further studied is whether or not these two different aspects of politeness really manifest themselves in discursive practices as they seem to in speakers' perceptions. And it is expected that if there is in fact a distinction between these two aspects of politeness in linguistic expressions, there should also be a distinction between their expressive devices in terms of functions. Specifically, contrary to the universal model (the instrumental perspective) which recognizes no functional differences between deference markers (such as honorifics or polite address terms) and avoidance markers (such as mitigating elements, indirectness), I will argue that there are functional differences between these two devices in the Vietnamese. In order to be able to test this hypothesis, it is

first necessary to identify all the politeness devices available to Hanoi speakers, and then to distinguish them in terms of functions by objective procedures.

Confining itself to the first goal, this chapter will study politeness manifestations and devices in directives in the Hanoi dialect. To achieve this goal, the following procedures will be described:

- 1) Coding directives in terms of their expressive means (types of head acts and supportive moves) and directive types (direct and indirect directives). This content will be presented in the discussion of the structures of directives (3.1).

- 2) Coding directives in terms of the politeness effects of their expressive means (their presence helps increase or decrease the politeness levels of utterances) and the overall politeness levels of different directives (polite, neutral, or impolite). The assessment is conducted on the basis of the results of native politeness rankings of time requests (3.2), and according to the objective analytical procedures of natural conversations (3.3).

- 3) Discussing the relative importance of different politeness devices in directives based on an analysis of the relationships between politeness strategies with their relative politeness effects, and directive types with their relative politeness levels (3.4).

Before presenting the results, we will need to ask what a directive is, what are its structural characteristics, and what are the key topics in research on politeness in directives.

3.1 Directives and Politeness

3.1.1 What is a Directive Act?

Austin (1962) suggests that it is possible to distinguish a number of broad classes of speech acts according to their illocutionary forces. In this classification directives belong to the category of exercitives and are used by speakers to get the listener to do something. Such an illocution-based understanding of directives with the focus on the speaker's intention to regulate the behaviour of the listener is also found in many other researchers' definitions of directives (Searle 1975; Leech 1983; Ervin-Tripp et al. 1990 among others). However, the passage from this broad illocution-based understanding of directives to an identification of its specific subclasses is difficult to negotiate as there are many different speech acts which are marked by different speaker goals but which are all intended to produce some changes in the hearer's behaviour. Searle (1975), for instance, includes under directives all speech acts such as ordering, requesting, inviting, offering, advising, etc. Based on Searlian classification of speech acts and a classification of speech acts according to their social goals (i.e., how they establish and maintain social comity), Leech (1983) distinguishes two subclasses among directives with two different social goals: competitive directives or impositives are those acts whose illocutionary goals conflict with social goals, such as ordering, demanding, asking, etc. Convivial directives are those acts whose illocutionary goals coincide with social goals, such as offering, inviting, etc.

Distinct from this understanding of directives, Ervin-Tripp et al. (1990) argue that directives such as commands, orders, and requests, constitute one subcategory of the so-called control acts (which are intended to affect the hearer's behaviour). Under the category of control acts, besides the directives themselves, there are other acts such as offers, permissions, invitations, etc. A directive differs from an offer in that, in a directive, it is the speaker who receives the benefit of the act (1990: 308). It can be noted that the definition of control acts of Ervin-Tripp et al. basically coincides with Searle's definition of directives, and the understanding of directives by Ervin-Tripp et al. basically coincides with Leech's understanding of impositives (competitive directives).

Thus, depending on different understandings of the illocutionary goal of directives, there are two different ways of identifying a directive. In a narrow definition, a directive is a speech act which the speaker uses to get the hearer do something according to the speaker's own intention (the speaker is beneficial and the hearer is costly) such as ordering, demanding, requesting, and asking for a favour. According to a more comprehensive definition, a directive is any speech act which the speaker uses to produce a certain change in hearers' behaviour, irrespective of whatever benefit and in whichever direction it may produce that benefit. Accordingly, directives include not only speaker-beneficial acts but also hearer-beneficial (and speaker-costly) acts such as offering, inviting, giving permission. Directives in

the present thesis are understood according to this more comprehensive definition.

3.1.2 How to Identify a Directive in Natural Conversations.

What are the criteria for identifying an utterance or a group of utterances in natural conversations as having a directive function? This question has not only a theoretical, but also practical significance, because it bears directly on how to identify and quantify directives from natural conversations for further analysis.

In the tradition of formal grammar, formal criteria are of primary importance: a sentence with a predicative verb in the imperative mode is assumed to have a directive function. However, as justly noted in many work on speech acts (Austin 1962, Searle 1975, Brown-Levinson 1987 among others), a directive can be realized, not only by an utterance with a predicative verb in the imperative mode (the so-called direct directives), but also by utterances in other syntactic forms - narrative, interrogative, and exclamative (the so-called indirect directives). In fact, the relationships between sense and force, and between primary and secondary illocutionary forces in indirect speech acts, are very complicated and cannot be recognized based on syntactic shapes alone. Forms, therefore, are not reliable criteria for identifying directives in natural conversations.

As defined above, a directive differs from other kinds of speech acts mainly on the basis of its illocutionary goal, i.e., a functional distinction. Therefore, in a context where formal

differences are less important for the identification of an action as a directive, especially in the case of indirect directives, the problem now is "how does one move from the surface structure of an utterance to interpretation of the words spoken as a particular type of action?" (Woodwin 1990: 65). In other words, we need functional criteria for identifying indirect directives irrespective of their surface structures. According to Searle (1979), an indirect directive can be identified by analyzing the conditions for its use, which include the following rules: (a) Propositional content (a future act A of H); (b) Preparatory rule (1. H is able to do A, S believes H is able to do A; 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H will do A in the normal course of events of his/her own accord); (c) Sincerity rule (S wants H to do A); (d) Essential rule (counts as an attempt to get H to do A).

Based on an analysis of these conditions, Searle has identified 6 utterance types that would be appropriate to make indirect requests and other directives, including: (1) Sentences concerning H's ability to perform A (Can you pass the salt?); (2) Sentences concerning S's wishes or desire that H will do A (I would like you to go now!); (3) Sentences concerning H's doing A (Aren't you going to eat your cereal?); (4) Sentences concerning H's desire or willingness to do A (Do you want to hand me that hammer over there on the table?); (5) Sentences concerning reasons for doing A (Why don't you try it just once?); (6) Sentences embedding one of these elements inside another, including sentences embedding an

explicit directive illocutionary verb inside one of these contexts (Would you mind awfully if I asked you if you could write me a letter of recommendation?).

The analysis of directive strategies and their classification in terms of directness/indirectness have also been a key topic of concern in many other works on directives (for more details see 3.1.3), and have undoubtedly provided us with a better understanding of the relationship between sense and force in directives. There is, however, a tendency for researchers using this kind of analysis as the criterion for identifying directives, to limit their analysis to a single utterance with the focus on a single interactant, namely the speaker (for instance, House & Kasper 1981; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989). Consequently, they are liable to misidentify the directive function of the utterance, having ignored the role of discourse sequences, the role of the listener, or the role of other contextual and socio-cultural factors. For instance, they may misidentify the pre-sequence of a direct directive for an indirect directive, as noted by some researchers (Levinson 1983, Goodwin 1990). From the perspective of conversation analysis, researchers argue that "the primary resource used to interpret talk as action is the placement of the utterance within an ongoing sequence of action, i.e., its **sequential placement**" (Goodwin 1990: 66). According to Ervin-Tripp et al. (1990), a control act, in practice, often emerges from an intention that has not been fully formed. It is then negotiated in the course of a conversation and becomes recognizable only after

several turns have been completed, and can be retried in the case of failure. Therefore, "it is important to see control acts which occur during ongoing activity as emerging from dialogue, not pre-planned and fixed" (Ervin-Tripp et al. 1990: 310). Similarly, Wood & Kroger (1994) emphasize that a directive is a social act closely linked to communicative activities, and it is therefore necessary to identify and analyze it through close consideration of addressee's behaviour, i.e., we cannot base our analysis on one turn of talk (accomplished by S) alone but we need to take into consideration the sequences of discourse, i.e., the adjacency pairs of directives-responses.

Directives from the corpus of natural conversations recorded during the Summer of 1991, taken from 9 Hanoi families (see 1.4 for more details) are identified and analyzed in the light of this perspective. In order to identify a directive, an utterance (or series of utterances) is always considered in its relations to other utterances of the discourse sequences, including non-verbal actions/responses. A true directive, no matter what form it may take, always aims at regulating the listener's behaviour according to the speaker's intentions, and therefore will eventually evoke a response (verbal or non-verbal). Consequently, the primary source for identifying an utterance as having a directive force is the listener's response to it, i.e., the adjacency pair of the directive-response. For example, a question "**Sao lại để xe ở đây?**" (why do you leave your bike here?) is identified as having a directive force (S wants H to remove her bike), if following this

question H actually removed the bike and/or she gave some answer indicating that she understood the question as a request: for instance, H agreed to accomplish the request (**Vâng, để tôi để nó ra kia!** -Oh, I'll put it over there!), or refused to accomplish it (**Đề tam đây tí, tôi đi ngay đây!** -Just a minute, I'm leaving!). However, the identification of directives based on adjacency pairs is not always successful, because (1) H may misidentify S's utterance as a directive, and therefore H's response to it may not be a reliable index; (2) H may not understand the directive force of S's utterance (intentionally or unintentionally), and consequently, there is no expected response to it. In both cases it is necessary to look beyond the immediate adjacency pair to the next pair to find out if S's utterance has a directive force. In the first case (H misidentifies S's utterance as a directive), there is usually an effort from S to explain that s/he does not intend a directive, for example:

(1) Two young male friends are having coffee in cafe shop:

A1: **Này cậu còn tiền không?**

(Do you have money left?)

B1: **Còn, để tớ trả cho.**

(Oh yes, let me pay the bill. [And he took out his wallet])

A2: **Không, có tiền đây rồi, để mình trả. Mình hãy còn nó, cậu hai chục ngàn. Định trả cậu hôm nay. Nhưng nếu cậu còn tiền tiêu thì để đến tuần sau lĩnh lương mình trả.**

(No, I have money here, let me pay. I still own you 20 thousand. I could pay you today. But if you still have money, then I will pay you next week when I get my payment)

B2: **Ừ, lúc nào cũng được.**

(Just pay when you can)

In this exchange, B's response (both verbal and non-verbal) to A's question indicates that B took A's question for a request to

pay the bill. However, the next turn of talk by A displays that A really means that question as a request for information, which will enable him either to decide to pay his debt to B or to delay it for another week. It is obvious that in this situation if we only base our analysis on B's immediate response, we will risk misidentifying it as an indirect request.

In the second case (H does not understand or pretends not to understand the directive force in S's utterance by not giving any kind of response), there are usually multiple attempts from S to make the directive force more explicit and understood by H. For example:

(2) A father (A) is talking to his son (B):

- A1: **Quân, đi học về vứt túi ở đây à?**
(Quan, why did you put your backpack there?)
B1: (silence)
A2: (he is talking to the third person about another topic for a while, and then turns to his son)
Ồ, Quân, bảo thế mà không nghe à! Cất túi đi!
(Quan, you are not listening to me. Take your backpack away!)
B2: **Vâng ạ!**
(Yes, honorific)

In this exchange, if we base our analysis on the first adjacency pair, we have no reason to think that the father's first turn of talk is a request because the son provides no answer of any kind to it. But if we take into account the next adjacency pair (which is separated from the first one by a short period of time while the father is talking to another person), we see the father is angry because his directive force is not understood by the son, and he tries to make it more explicit by giving an order. In this situation, the source for us to identify the father's first

question as an indirect request is not the first adjacency pair, but the next one.

I have so far discussed how to identify a directive from the corpus of natural conversations, based on adjacency pairs. However, in many cases the identification of a directive is also related to its preceding utterances, that is, we need to see how it is initiated. This will be discussed in the next section on the structure of directives.

Although the identification of directives from the corpus of natural conversations is performed through a close consideration of their adjacency pairs, as discussed above, in the following analyses, to avoid lengthy examples, discourse sequences are introduced only when they are necessary for the analysis; in other cases, the directives alone are introduced. Examples taken from the corpus of natural conversations are distinguished from their invented derivatives through brief descriptions of their contextual situations following the numbers.

3.1.3 The Structures of Directives

How is a directive structured in discourse? House & Kasper (1981) have analyzed the surface structures of requests and their relations to politeness based on a distinction between the main propositions (which express the requestive force according to nine directness levels) and modality markers (which function to increase or decrease the effects of the action expressed by the main propositions). Specifying this classification, Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper (1989) identify as a request sequence, all the utterances

involved in a turn of talk, which may include alerters (preceding requests, serving as attention-getters), supportive moves (preceding or following head acts, serving as a check on preparatory conditions or providing reasons for requesting), head acts (which express the requestive force and are distinguished according to the indirectness scale and through perspectives), and internal modifiers (which are inside the head acts and function to determine the social impact the utterance is likely to have, i.e., to increase or soften the degree of coerciveness of the request). Considering the making of a request as a social act which may be achieved by a variety of specific actions, Wood & Kroger (1994) propose that a requestive act is accomplished in discourse through the use of a central speech act (CSA), consisting of a head act and modifiers that may be preceded or followed by auxiliary speech acts (ASAs), which is in accordance with Blum-Kulka et al.'s supportive moves, described above.

Below, I will attempt to apply this approach to analyze the structures of directives in the Vietnamese language. Let us consider the following example:

(3) A mother (A) is talking to her daughter (B):

- A: Con ỏi, nếu con về sớm, ghé qua chợ mua
hồ me ít gạo nhé, nhà hết gạo ăn rồi.
 offspring vocative, if offspring come early,
 go cross market buy for mother some rice
 modal-particle, house finish rice already
 (Daughter, if you come home early, go to the
 market and get some rice, we've run out of it)
- B: **Vâng ạ.** (Yes, Mom)

In this short exchange, the mother asks her daughter to buy some rice for the house. In the mother's speech, the underlined

parts (**con** òi - daughter; **nếu con về sớm** - if you come home early; **nhà hết gạo rồi** - we've run out of it) could be omitted without changing the directive force of her utterance. However, if we omit the non-underlined parts (**ghé qua chợ mua ít gạo** - go to the market and get some rice), the utterance could hardly be understood as a request. Thus, judging by the degrees of necessity of these different elements in expressing directive force, we can distinguish two parts in the structure of a directive: **the head act** (the non-underlined part in example 3), and **supportive moves** (the underlined parts).

3.1.3.1 The Head Act

This term is used following other researchers (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989, Wood & Kroger 1994) to refer to the main triggers of the directive forces without which the utterances are hardly perceived as directives. A directive may not have supportive moves but necessarily requires a head act. Judging by the expression of the illocutionary force, a directive may be direct or indirect. The distinction between direct and indirect speech acts was proposed by some researchers (Searle 1975; Evin-Tripp 1976; Brown-Levinson 1987; Blum-Kulka 1987,90 among others), largely based on Grice's notion of "conversational implicatures" (1975), distinguishing on the one hand the "literal meaning," the meaning directly expressed by the surface structure of the utterances, and on the other hand, the "implicit meaning," the meaning inferred indirectly. For instance, Searle (1979) has distinguished direct speech acts from indirect ones on the basis of the relationships between speaker

meaning and sentence meaning. According to Searle, in direct speech acts, the two meanings are identical, but in indirect speech acts, the two meanings are distinctive and create two different illocutionary forces: the primary force is linked to the speaker's meaning, and the literal meaning is linked to the meaning of the sentence. In order for the hearer to distinguish the nonliteral primary illocutionary force from the understanding of the literal secondary illocutionary force, the listener has to first establish "that the primary illocutionary point departs from the literal," and then determine "what the primary illocutionary point is" (Searle 1979: 35). To be able to do so, the listener will need a background knowledge shared with the speaker, and a minimal power of reasoning. Applying this theory into the analysis of directives, Searle has identified 6 types of indirect requests mentioned earlier (see 3.1.2). The distinction of directives according to the directness/indirectness of utterances can also be seen in many other research projects on directives. For example, Ervin-Tripp (1976) has distinguished, according to the relative power of the speaker and the hearer in conventional usage and the obviousness of the directives, the following 6 types of directives in order of increased indirectness: (1) need statements (I need a match!); (2) imperatives (Give me a match!); (3) imbedded imperatives (Could you give me a match?); (4) permission directives (May I have a match?); (5) question directives (Got a match?); and (6) hints (The matches are all gone!). Based on the relationships between the illocutionary content and the propositional content

(similar to speaker meaning and sentence meaning), House and Kasper (1981) also distinguish 8 scales of directness in directives. However, contrary to Ervin-Tripp (1976), they place imperatives instead of need statements in the highest level of directness. Going in the same direction, and based on the degrees of illocutionary transparency, i.e., the relative length of the inferential path needed to arrive at an illocutionary point, Blum-Kulka (1987, 89, 90) distinguishes 9 types of directives which can be grouped into 3 categories according to decreased directness (or increased indirectness): namely, direct (utterances 1 and 2), conventional indirect (utterances 3-7), and unconventional indirect (utterances 8 and 9):

- 1) Mood derivable (Move your car!; Clean up the kitchen!)
- 2) Performative (I am asking you to move your car!)
- 3) Hedged performative (I would like to ask you to move your car!)
- 4) Obligation statement (You'll have to move your car!)
- 5) Want statement (I want you to move your car!)
- 6) Suggestive formulae (How about cleaning up the kitchen?)
- 7) Preparatory queries (Would you mind moving your car?)
- 8) Strong hints (You've left the kitchen in a right mess!)
- 9) Mild hints (We don't want any crowding here!)

The levels of directness/indirectness of speech acts are also a criterion in Brown-Levinson's classification of politeness strategies. Their politeness strategies are ranged from the most

direct strategy of on-record without redress (Sit down!) to the less direct strategy of on-record with positive politeness (My dear, sit down!); to the strategy of on-record with negative politeness (Would you please sit down for a while?), and to the most indirect strategy of off-record (the use of hints, cues, etc.).

In this thesis, a speech act is considered direct if the speaker explicitly expresses his/her directive force and the hearer can understand that force directly from the surface structure of the utterance(s) without any inferential help. In contrast, a speech act is indirect if the speaker disguises his/her true directive force under another illocutionary force, and in order to understand this the listener needs to draw upon an inferential process. Thus, from the speaker's perspective, the degree of directness/indirectness of the directive is the relative length of the path from the speaker's true directive force to the syntactic shape of the utterance. From the hearer's perspective, the degree of directness/indirectness of the directive covaries with the relative length of the inferential path he/she has to go through to get to the true illocutionary forces. The more direct the utterance, the easier the listener can identify its directive force, the more indirect the utterance, the bigger the interpretation load is for the listener. Therefore, based on the relationships between the directive forces and the syntactic shapes of utterances, we can distinguish direct directives from indirect ones. Accordingly, a directive is direct if the head act is

expressed by a verb in the imperative mode (**Đóng cửa lại!**- Close the door!, **Me bảo con đóng cửa lại!**- I told you to close the door!), or if it is a request for information (**Mấy giờ rồi?**- What time is it?) where the predicative verb in the imperative mode is deleted from the structure of the question (**{Anh xem hộ tôi} mấy giờ rồi?** - {Please tell me} what time it is?). Distinct from direct directives, the head act of an indirect directive is not expressed by a predicative verb in the imperative mode, but in other syntactic shapes, and the directive force of the utterance can be identified by inference (**Sao con không đóng cửa lại?** - Why aren't you closing the door?; **Con đóng cửa lại cho mẹ được không?** - Can you close the door?; **Phòng lạnh quá!** - It's very cold in here!). There may be a problem here with the distinction between indirect requests and pre-requests. Levinson (1983) suggests that the problem of indirect speech acts on the conversation analysis view does not arise at all, because the "indirect request" is in fact the pre-request of a four-position request structure, with the two middle positions missing in preferred organization. While recognizing the insights of this view, I prefer to make a distinction between pre-requests and indirect requests. This is solved taking into account various criteria, especially the pauses between the turns of talk. If a direct request is accompanied by a supportive pre-request, after the pre-request is spoken, the speaker can proceed immediately to the main request (example 8 below). Or, if S's speech is interrupted by a turn of talk taken by H, S will also make the direct request in the next turn of talk

(example 9 below). But, if in a conversational exchange S issues a quasi pre-request and makes a pause to wait for H's response, or continues to repeat the pre-request (without being interrupted by H) a number of times before the direct request is made, I will consider this as an indirect request (albeit, unsuccessful) rather than a supportive move. Let us examine an example:

(4) A woman (A) is talking to her guest. Her daughter (B) is sitting nearby to sew a dress. A talks to B:

A1: **Cái hoa hồng lại nằm ở đây à?**

(Why is the rose here?)

B1: (silence)

A2: (She continues to talk to her guest. A few minutes later she turns to her daughter and says)

Cái hoa hồng nằm ở chỗ này thấp quá con ạ!

(The rose is too low there, daughter!)

B2: (she remains silent)

A3: **Giá mà đóm lên chỗ này một tí thì đẹp?**

(It would be better to put it a little higher!)

B3: (remains silent)

A4: (she exchanges one turn of talk with the guest and then turns to the daughter)

Đóm lại đi con! Tháo ra đóm lại được.

(Reposition it, daughter. You can pick it up and put it higher!)

B4: **Vâng, mẹ cứ mặc con!**

(Yes, Mom. Leave it to me!)

In this conversational exchange we can identify the mother's fourth turn of talk as a direct request, with a head act stating the directive force (**Đóm lại đi!** - Reposition it!), and a supporting move providing a reason for the directive (**Tháo ra đóm lại được!** - You can pick it up and put it higher!). As for the mother's first, second, and third turns of talk, should we consider them as supportive pre-requests or indirect requests? They occur in the talk somewhat independently from each other and from the direct request (the fourth turn). After each turn of talk, although she

is not interrupted by any turn of talk from the daughter, the mother does not make her direct request immediately. In fact, she continues to talk with her guest, and from time to time, she turns to her daughter with an increasingly intensified remark. This suggests that her first turn of talk (a remark about the place of the flower), her second turn of talk (her evaluation of the place of the flower), and her third turn of talk (a suggestion to reposition the flower) were used by the mother as different forms of the same request, but with an increasing level of directness level in an attempt to correct her failure to make a request indirectly. In this case, if we consider the mother's first, second, and third turns of talk as pre-requests, it would be hard to explain the discourse sequences (why the mother does not make the direct request after the first pre-request has been made, and why she is not interrupted by her daughter in any way?). It will also incur the risk of downplaying the speaker's strategic use of indirectness.

3.1.3.2 Supportive Moves

Supportive moves are not so much required for an utterance to be understood as a directive, but because they contribute to the realization of the directive acts according to concrete contextual situations. Depending on their relation to the head act, supportive moves are divided into: external moves and internal moves.

a) External supportive moves are situated outside the head act and have different semantico-syntactic and pragmatic functions.

They include:

- Alerters: these usually open the series of requests and serve to direct the hearer's attention. Linguistic means used for this purpose are interjections (**ê, này**) and/or address terms (kinterms, names, personal pronouns) with or without vocative particles (**ôi, a, này, ha**). Examples:

(5) A girl student A is talking to her classmate B:

A: **Ê Lan, đưa trả tao quyển sách đây!**
interjection Lan give return me classifier book here
(Hey, Lan, give me back my book!)

(6) A wife A is talking to her husband B:

A: **Ông ôi!**
grandpa vocative (Darling?)

B: **Cái gì đây bà?**
classifier what there grandma
(What's up, darling?)

A: **Ông ra đây, tôi nhờ ti!**
Grandpa come here, subject ask-[for favour] a-little
(Come here, I need to ask you a favour!)

- Adverbial clauses (or other external moves): these may precede or succeed head acts to provide reasons for, or to state the preparatory conditions for a request, or to probe the attitude and willingness of hearers to fulfil a request, etc. (they correspond to Blum-Kulka's supportive moves or Wood & Kroger's ASAs):

(7) A mother A speaks to her child:

A: **Ra đây mẹ mặc quần-áo cho!**
come here mother dress clothes for
(Come here, I'll help you to put on your clothes!)

(8) A woman A speaks to her older colleague:

A: **Chi còn tiền đây không, cho em vay tạm năm nghìn.**
elder-sister remain money here no give younger-sister
borrow temporarily five thousand
(Do you have any money here? I would like to borrow five thousand, I'll pay it back soon).

In these examples, adverbial clauses precede or succeed the head acts in the same turns of talk. However, in actual discursive practices, they may be disrupted by turns of talk accomplished by H, for instance:

(9) A man worker A speaks to another man-coworker B:

- A1: Hai ới!
(Hey there!)
- B1: Gì đây?
(What?)
- A2: Có mua chè không?
(Want to buy some tea?)
- B2: Có chứ.
(Sure)
- A3: Dừa tiền đây, mai tao mua cho.
(Give me the money, I'll bring it tomorrow)
- B3: Ừ, chờ tí!
(One moment please!)
- A4: Chè dốt này hết ý!
(The tea is excellent this time!)

In this exchange, if we temporarily omit all the turns of talk performed by B and piece altogether the turns of talk executed by A, we have a complete request consisting of a head act (Dừa tiền đây! - Give me the money!), and external supportive moves. The external supportive moves include a pre-request about the preparatory condition (Này, có mua chè không? - Hey there, do you want to buy some tea?), and two post-requests of purpose (mai tao mua cho - I'll bring it tomorrow) and of reason (Chè dốt này hết ý! - The tea is excellent this time!). This example demonstrates that a directive can in fact be realized in a few turns of talk, accomplished by the same person.

b) Internal Supportive Moves:

Distinct from external supportive moves, internal supportive moves are situated inside the head acts. Their presence is not as

important as head acts for the expression of the directive forces, but important for other pragmatic considerations (they correspond to Blum-Kulka's internal modifiers or Wood & Kroger's modifiers). They comprise the following elements:

- Address terms: these function to designate requestors and requestees and include kinterms (**bố**-father, **mẹ**-mother, **anh**-elder brother, **em**-younger sibling, etc.), personal pronouns (**tôi** - subject, **chúng tôi**-we, **tao**-I, **mày**-you), and personal names or titles. For example:

(10) A young woman (A) is talking to an old male guest (B):

- A: **Cháu mời bác uống nước!**
niece/nephew invite aunt/uncle drink water
 (Uncle, please have some tea!)
- B: **Ừ, cháu cho bác xin!**
 yes, niece/nephew give uncle/aunt beg
 (Yes, thank you, niece!)

- Supporting verbs: these include performative verbs such as **xin** (beg), **mời** (invite), **làm ơn** (do a favour), **xin phép** (beg permission), etc., modal verbs such as **phải** (must), **nên** (should), **mong** (wish), **muốn** (want), **cứ** (go ahead), etc., which stand before predicative verbs, and auxiliary verbs such as **hồ**, **giúp**, **giùm** (help) which stand after predicative verbs. For example:

(11) An old man (A) speaks to another old man (B) at a public meeting:

- A: **Xin ông xem hồ tôi mấy giờ rồi!**
 beg grandpa look help subject how many hours already
 (Could you please tell me the time?)
- B: **Đa, mới 7 giờ thôi cụ a!**
 honorific only 7 hour all great-grandpa/ma honorific
 (It's only about 7 o'clock!)

- Modal particles such as **à**, **nhi**, **nhé**, **nào** at the end of the requests function mainly to express the speakers' affection,

attitudes, etc. For example:

(12) A street seller (A) speaks to a woman in the house (B):

- A: **Bà ỏi, bà mua gạo đi a!**
Grandma vocative grandma buy rice imperative honorific
(Grandma, would you like to buy some rice for me?)
- B: **Vào đây! Đưa vào đây, tôi xem nào!**
come here take into here subject look modal-particle
(Come here, bring your stuff in here, let me have a
look at it!)

The pragmatic effects of external and internal supportive moves will be analyzed in 3.3 where the politeness levels of directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations are assessed.

Above, I have presented an analysis of the structures of directives in terms of both syntagmatic relations (a distinction between head acts and supportive moves) and of paradigmatic relations (a distinction between direct and indirect head acts). In the next section, I will proceed to a classification of directives according to these structural characteristics.

3.1.3.3 A Classification of Directives

Based on the differences in the directness/indirectness levels of head acts and the presence of pragmatically supporting elements in the structures of directives, the directives in the Vietnamese language are classified in the following two ways. First, directives are divided into direct and indirect. In a direct directive, the directive force is expressed explicitly in the head act with a predicative verb in the imperative mode. In an indirect directive, the directive force is not expressed explicitly by a predicative verb in the imperative mode, but is inferred indirectly from utterances with different illocutionary forces such as questioning, reporting, expressing surprise. In the second

stage, direct and indirect directives are classified into smaller categories according to the following principle: based on the presence/absence of external and internal supportive moves, direct directives are divided into first-order direct directives (without external and internal supportive moves), and second-order direct directives (with external and/or internal supportive moves); based on the degrees of indirectness, indirect directives are divided into first-order indirect directives (which have low degrees of indirectness) and second-order indirect directives (which have high degrees of indirectness). As a result, we have four main types of requests with the following distinctive characteristics:

a) First-order direct directives (DR1): the directive force is explicitly expressed in the head act by a predicative verb in the imperative mode without any external or internal supportive moves. The directive force is understood directly from the head act and there is no need for the hearer to make any inference. For instance, in the following example a mother gives her daughter the most direct order to tidy up the room:

(13) A mother A speaks to her daughter B:

A: **Đón nhà đi!**
tidy house imperative-operator
(Tidy up the house!)

b) Second-order direct directives (DR2): these are first-order direct directives added by internal and/or external supportive moves to modify the negative or positive effects of directives on hearers. For instance, in order to express her respect for her daughter and soften the imposition of the order in (13), the mother may add to her utterance different supportive

moves such as address terms, auxiliary verbs, modal particles, adverbial clauses, etc., as in the following examples:

- (14) a. **Đón nhà đi con!**
 tidy house imperative offspring
 (Tidy up the house, daughter!)
- b. **Con ỏi, con dọn nhà đi nhé!**
offspring vocative offspring tidy house imperative
modal-particle
 (Sweetheart, tidy up the house!).
- c. **Con dọn nhà đi hộ mẹ nhé, nhà cửa bê bộn lắm rồi.**
offspring tidy house imperative help mother
modal-particle, house untidy very already
 (Sweetheart, tidy up the house! It's very messy).

No matter what effects the supportive moves may have on the utterance (i.e., to increase or decrease its overall politeness level), the second-order direct directive is always less direct than the first-order direct one because its directive force is perceived in a simultaneous or consecutive association with other illocutionary forces such as getting attention, expressing a desire, presenting preparatory conditions, justifying, etc.

c) First-order indirect directives (IND1): the directive force is not explicitly expressed in the head act by a predicative verb in the imperative mode, but is inferred through conventions of expressive means and contextual cues. Conventional means often used to express indirect directives are possibility queries (**Anh có thể cho tôi mượn tờ báo không?**-Can you lend me your newspaper?), permission queries (**Tôi có thể mượn anh tờ báo được không?** - May I borrow your newspaper?), reason queries (**Sao anh không ngồi xuống?** - Why aren't you sitting?), and preparatory condition queries (**Chi còn tiền đây không?** - Do you have money with you?). The conventionality of these indirect directives lies in the fact that

the speakers use them and the listeners understand them, not principally on the basis of the sentence meanings, but through these meanings they express and understand the true directive forces. For example, when the mother in (13) and (14a-c) does not want to impose her will on her daughter, or when she is not sure if her daughter is available to fulfil her request, instead of the direct requests (13, 14a-c), she can use one of the following indirect requests in the same situation:

- (15) a. **Con có thể dọn nhà đi hộ mẹ được không?**
 (Daughter, can you tidy up the house for me?)
 b. **Sao con không dọn nhà đi?**
 (Why aren't you tidying up the house?)

Using these interrogative utterances, the mother indicates that she wants her daughter to tidy up the house, though without expecting her to confirm whether she can or cannot do that, or to provide reasons for not doing that.

d) Second-order indirect directives (IND2): the directive force is not directly expressed in the head act by a predicative verb in imperative mode, nor is it understood through the conventionality of the expressive means, but is inferred through the referential associations of things, properties, or actions mentioned with the help of contextual cues. For example, in the previous situation, instead of using utterances (15a-b) the mother could use a more indirect request, an exclamative statement:

- (16) **Nhà cửa bê bộn quá!**
 (What a mess!)

The only element in the utterance which helps infer the requestive force of "tidying up the room" is "bê bộn" (untidiness, mess),

however the associative link is quite loose and the requestive force can only be understood in its proper context.

Comparing these directive types with politeness strategies ranged in terms of the indirectness scale in Brown-Levinson's model, it is easy to see that, basically, first-order direct (DR1) corresponds to the super-strategy of bald on-record without redress (the most direct); second-order direct (DR2), to the strategy of on-record with redress (except conventional indirect strategy); first-order indirect (IND1), to the conventional indirect strategy (belonging to negative politeness); and second-order indirect (IND2), to the strategy of off-record (the most indirect). With regard to its correspondence with Blum-Kulka's classification (1990), we have, respectively, the direct strategies without mitigation, direct with mitigation, conventional indirect and unconventional indirect (for more details about Brown & Levinson's and Blum-Kulka's classifications of directives see 3.1.3.1 above).

I have so far presented an analysis of the structural characteristics of directives which will serve as the basis for the coding of directives used by Hanoi speakers. This step is necessary before we can proceed to a description and analysis of manifestations of politeness in directives in the following sections (3.3 and 3.4).

The analysis shows that, judging by its structure, a directive may have various expressions depending on the presence or absence of described structural elements and illocutionary modes (direct/indirect). The question arises as to which linguistic

elements could function to express politeness and what are their relative roles in the Vietnamese politeness system?

3.1.4 The Study of Politeness in Directives

Among speech acts, directives have attracted the most attention from politeness researchers (Brown-Levinson 1987; House & Kasper 1981; Leech 1983; Ervin-Tripp 1990; Blum-Kulka 1987, 89, 90; Wood & Kroger 1994). This is because the realizations of directives are intimately linked to the considerations of politeness. Brown & Levinson (1987) have argued that directives are potentially negative face-threatening: hearers may interpret requests as a show of power or as an intrusive impingement on their freedom of action; speakers may hesitate to make a request for fear of exposing a need or of offending hearers' faces. This is why in producing a directive, politeness has become the main concern of speakers. According to Ervin-Tripp et al. (1990:307), the study of politeness in directives has attracted the attention of researchers because (1) directives are varied according to the features of the context, and therefore they constitute a favoured setting for the study of social indices in language use; (2) the speakers may exploit the inferential abilities of hearers and use hedges when directives are an intrusion, and these practices can be studied as examples of conversational inference and indirection.

For the same reasons, directives have been chosen in this thesis as a focus for the study of politeness in the verbal practices of Hanoi speakers. And the main purpose of this chapter, as already stated at the beginning, is to study politeness

manifestations in directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations.

In their discussions of politeness realizations in directives, researchers (Leech 1983; Brown & Levinson 1987; Blum-Kulka 1987, 90) often mention two main devices:

1) Choosing indirect modes to express illocutionary forces according to the principle that the more indirect the illocutionary force is, the more polite the directive is.

2) Adding pragmatic elements (mainly supportive moves outside or inside the head acts) to increase the politeness levels of directives.

However, researchers do not share the same opinions in terms of the roles of each device in expressing politeness. Most researchers within the instrumental and universal perspective consider the choice of indirectness as the optimal way to express politeness if it is to be valid cross-culturally, because it satisfies the main principle of politeness, namely, it helps defuse impositions and gives options (Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983), or defends negative face wants (Brown & Levinson 1987). For instance, Leech argues that with the same propositional content the politeness level of an utterance increases along the indirectness scale (1983: 108). Brown & Levinson also consider indirectness as the basic principle of their politeness strategies, which are classified according to the principle of indirectness being the correlate of politeness (bald on record < on record with positive politeness < on record with negative politeness < off record). The more

indirect the strategy is, the more polite it is; the more direct the strategy is, the more face-threatening it is. Although the second device (the use of pragmatic elements to increase politeness levels) is also taken into consideration by instrumentalists, it is often assigned a secondary status. In Brown & Levinson's model, it is described mainly in the strategy of on record with redress (positive politeness and a part of negative politeness) which is placed lower than indirect strategies in terms of politeness levels. The universalists' emphasis on indirectness being the correlate of politeness is seriously challenged by the results of cross-cultural studies of politeness, and by social norm politeness researchers. Together with providing evidence casting doubt on the postulated universality of indirectness being the correlate of politeness, cross-cultural and social norm politeness researchers seem to emphasize the role of pragmatic elements functioning as politeness indicators. Contrary to Brown & Levinson, Blum-Kulka (1987) reports her findings in a comparative study of Hebrew and English requests, showing that non-conventional indirectness (which basically corresponds to Brown & Levinson's off record strategy) is ranked by Israeli subjects as less polite than conventional indirectness (which basically corresponds to Brown & Levinson's strategies of negative politeness) and directness with mitigations (basically, this corresponds to Brown & Levinson's on record with positive politeness). At the same time, she also points out that Israeli speakers reveal a preference for on record strategies with mitigation, at least in family contexts. In her research on

Japanese politeness, Matsumoto (1988) points out that indirectness is not usually used by Japanese speakers to produce a request, and is far from being a politeness device: instead of emphasizing distance and defusing imposition, indirectness in Japanese has other functions, and its use to efface the requestive force of an utterance is completely unnecessary, for it could even damage the social relationship between speakers and hearers. The main means of politeness in Japanese, according to Matsumoto (1988) and Coulmas (1992), are "etiquette patterns," honorific words functioning to mark social relationships, and other lexicogrammatical means with different pragmatic functions. The important role of pragmatic elements functioning as politeness markers, is also highlighted in politeness research in other Asian languages and cultures such as Chinese (Gu 1990), Thai (Kummer 1992), and Javanese (Geertz 1968; Smith-Hefner 1988).

The questions posed by these considerations are the following. What are the main politeness means of the Vietnamese language in general and of directives in particular? And, is indirectness in Vietnamese also an absolute correlate of politeness as predicted by the universal theories?

In a few works touching on the issues of Vietnamese politeness, researchers note the following characteristics of the Vietnamese language: first, it has a rich system of pragmatic elements such as honorifics, address terms, and modal words; and second, it is abundant in implicitness, indirectness, hints, etc., all of which could be used to increase the politeness levels of

utterances (Nguyen Dinh Hoa 1956; Hoang Trong Phien 1991). It is regrettable that these comments are largely based on authors' introspections, or on observations of idealized communicative patterns (etiquettes), or on data taken from literary books, hence, there is not enough evidence (due to a substantial lack of evidence from everyday discursive practices) to judge the relative importance of each device for politeness. In chapter 2, where metapragmatic results are presented, it is also obvious that the perception of politeness in each utterance is to various degrees dependent upon the use of directness/indirectness and pragmatic elements. For instance, as the comments on questionnaire 3 (see 2.3.4) show, politeness of utterances 1-6 is mainly expressed via the use of pragmatic elements such as address terms, honorifics, and performative verbs; and in utterances 10-12, it is mainly expressed via the use of indirectness. However, this evidence is far from sufficient to determine the relative importance of each device in expressing politeness in Vietnamese discursive practices. In order to solve these problems, it is necessary to study native speakers' assessment of the mentioned politeness devices, and the ways native speakers use them in their discursive practices.

3.2 Politeness of Time Requests

Native speakers' assessments of politeness means are studied via questionnaire 4, and the tendencies to use these expressive means in discourse are studied via questionnaire 5. It is expected that the results will help highlight native speakers' perceptions

of the politeness functions of indirectness and pragmatic elements, and determine their relative importance in politeness. Time requests were chosen as a target object of this investigation because they are commonly used by speakers both in family and in public interactions, and therefore, they would not likely create any problem for subjects in assessing their politeness levels. The 46 subjects who give answers to these questionnaires are the same 46 subjects chosen for the formal interviews and questionnaires 1-3 (see chapter 2). Originally, questionnaire 5 was completed before questionnaire 4 so that subjects were not influenced by the discussion of politeness, although here it is reported as a supplemental test.

3.2.1 Questionnaire 4

This questionnaire aims at measuring the degrees of politeness associated with different expressive means in time requests as evaluated by native speakers. The following 7 time requests are chosen for this questionnaire:

- 1) **May gio roi?**
(What time is it?)
- 2) **H oi, may gio roi?**
H vocative, what time is it
(H, what time is it?)
- 3) **H xem ho S may gio roi!**
H look help S what time is it
(H, tell me what time it is!)
- 4) **H lam on xem ho S may go roi!**
H do favour look help S what time is it
(Please tell me what time it is!)
- 5) **Xin loi, H lam on xem ho S may gio roi!**
Excuse, H do favour look help S what time is it
(Excuse me, please tell me what time it is!)
- 6) **H co the lam on xem ho S may gio roi khong?**
H can do favour look help S what time is it
(Can you please tell me what time it is?)
- 7) **H oi, H co dong ho khong?**

H vocative, H have watch no
(Do you have a watch?)

(**S** = kinterms designating requestor and **H** = kinterms designating requestee, used in accordance with the status relations between H-S)

These utterances were chosen on the basis of their differences in requestive modes (direct/indirect) and the quantity of pragmatic elements expected to change the politeness levels of requests (kinterms, mitigation elements such as **xin lỗi**, **làm ơn**, **hộ**). In utterance 1 (first-order direct), the directive force is expressed by a predicative verb **xem** (look) in the imperative mode (which is omitted in this case), and a direct complement "**máy giờ rồi?**" ("what time is it?") without any supportive pragmatic element. Utterances 2-5 (second-order direct requests) have pragmatic elements (internal and external supportive moves), added increasingly from 2 to 5; utterance 2 has a hearer address term (H); utterance 3 has both speaker and hearer reference terms (S, H) and a mitigating element (**hộ** - help) after the predicate; utterance 4 is different from utterance 3 with a mitigating element (**làm ơn** - do favour) before the predicate; and utterance 5 has an additional external supportive move (**xin lỗi** - excuse). Distinct from utterances 1-5, the directive force of utterance 6 (first-order indirect) is inferred from a question about the hearer's ability through its conventional meaning and from contextual cues. The directive force of utterance 7 (second-order indirect) is inferred through the referential association between the thing being asked (watch) and the time information provided with the help of contextual cues.

Forty-six subjects (see table 1, chapter 1) were asked to evaluate the degrees of politeness associated with each utterance in different contexts. And 6 situations, differing in degrees of social distance (family members/strangers) and family status and age relations (superior/equal/inferior) of H to S were chosen. A more detailed discussion of these 6 situations and the criteria used to identify the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships will be given in Chapter 4.

Table 5: Six situations distinguished in terms of hearer-speaker status and solidarity relationships used in questionnaire 4

| Solidarity (S,H) | Status (H,S) | (H is...) |
|-------------------|--------------|----------------|
| A. family members | 1. superior | parents |
| | 2. equal | spouse |
| | 3. inferior | son/daughter |
| B. strangers | 1. superior | older than S |
| | 2. equal | same-age |
| | 3. inferior | younger than S |

The following characteristics are provided in the questionnaire to informants' responses: very polite, polite, neutral, impolite, ceremonious. Besides these, informants also suggested other characteristics in their responses; namely, somewhat polite, somewhat impolite, very impolite, rarely used, and commented that ceremonious is the same as never used. To facilitate the analysis, the answers were recoded into an evaluation system consisting in 5 distinctive characteristics:

1) polite: includes all answers marked as very polite and polite. Polite utterances completely satisfy hearers' expectations

of politeness.

2) neutral: includes all answers marked as normal, and somewhat polite. Neutral utterances satisfy hearers' expectations of politeness to a normal level.

3) impolite: includes all answers marked as somewhat impolite, rude/impolite, very impolite. Impolite utterances do not satisfy hearers' expectations of politeness.

4) rarely used: these utterances may be polite, neutral, or impolite, but are rarely used compared to other kinds of utterances.

5) not used: ceremonious.

It is noted that in this evaluation system, characteristics 1, 2, and 3 (polite, normal, impolite) form a politeness scale for the time requests, characteristics 4 and 5 (rarely used, not used) provide additional information concerning the usage possibility of requests in actual contexts, and therefore, do not form points on this continuum.

First of all, if we ignore for the moment those comments on the usage possibility of utterances and measure all requests along a three-point scale with (1) polite, (0) neutral, and (-1) impolite, we will have the mean ratings of 7 utterances in all 6 situations, as presented in table 6.

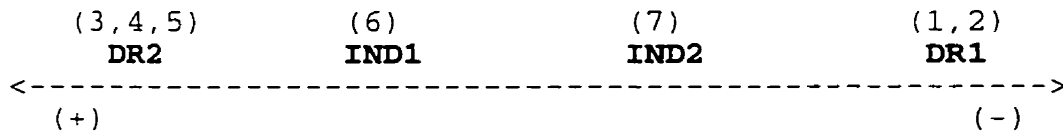
The results show that from a context-independent perspective (absolute politeness scale, Leech 1983), the lowest politeness means ratings belong to first-order direct requests (utterance 1: $m = -0.85$) and second-order direct requests (utterance 2: $m = -0.05$).

Table 6: Mean ratings of 7 time requests in a context-independent perspective

| utter. | means | std. | Pl(x) | ranking |
|--------|-------|------|-------|---------|
| 1 | -0.85 | 0.23 | - | 7 |
| 2 | -0.05 | 0.32 | o | 6 |
| 3 | 0.95 | 0.05 | + | 2 |
| 4 | 0.98 | 0.10 | + | 1 |
| 5 | 0.97 | 0.18 | + | 3 |
| 6 | 0.91 | 0.30 | + | 4 |
| 7 | 0.43 | 0.53 | o | 5 |

Pl(x): politeness levels of utterances
 + polite, - impolite, o neutral

The highest politeness means ratings belong to second-order direct requests with two or more pragmatic elements (utterances 3: m=0.95, utterance 4: m=0.98, utterance 5: m=0.91). Indirect requests occupy a midpoint between the two extremes: first-order indirect requests have a polite mean rating (utterance 6: m=0.91), and second-order indirect requests have a neutral mean rating (utterance 7: m=0.43). In other words, if we use a politeness continuum, running from the most polite level (+) at one end of the scale to the least polite (-) at the other end, these utterances can be ranged as follows:



However, these differences become relative in a context-dependent perspective. The figures in Table 7 report the politeness levels of 7 time requests and their usage possibilities

in 6 situations, as assessed by native speakers. Because the assessment criteria belong to two different scales (politeness scale and usage possibilities), instead of calculating the politeness mean ratings for each time request in each contextual situation, I will only provide the most dominant characteristic of each time request in each situation, as evaluated by subjects: + stands for polite; o stands for neutral; - stands for impolite; * stands for rarely used; ** stands for never used. The figure below the characteristic will show the percentage of subjects giving that characteristic (over the total of 46 informants).

Table 7: Politeness levels of 7 time requests in 6 situations and percentages of subjects giving that assessment

| utter. | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 |
|--------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | - (93.5) | - (87.0) | - (70.0) | - (95.7) | - (93.5) | - (91.3) |
| 2 | o (80.4) | o (89.0) | o (84.8) | - (58.7) | o (54.3) | o (69.6) |
| 3 | + (87.0) | + (71.7) | + (84.8) | o (58.7) | + (58.7) | + (71.7) |
| 4 | ** (52.2) | ** (52.2) | ** (71.7) | + (82.6) | + (82.6) | + (76.1) |
| 5 | ** (100.0) | ** (97.8) | ** (100.0) | + (82.6) | + (82.6) | + (82.6) |
| 6 | ** (73.9) | ** (67.4) | ** (78.3) | * (58.7) | * (61.0) | * (69.6) |
| 7 | * (76.1) | * (76.1) | * (73.9) | * (71.7) | * (69.6) | * (73.9) |

Note: + polite o neutral - impolite
 * rare ** not applied (ceremonious)

A1: speaking to parents B1: speaking to older strangers
 A3: speaking to children B2: speaking to same-age strangers
 A2: speaking to spouses B3: speaking to younger strangers

The results reported in Table 7 suggest the following remarks on the politeness level and usage possibilities of each utterance in different situations:

- Utterance 1 (**Má' y giố rôi?**) is a first-order direct request and is evaluated as impolite (-) in all 6 situations.

- Utterance 2 (**X ỏi, má' y giố rôi?**) is a second order direct request with one pragmatic element (an alerter) and is evaluated as neutral (o) when used in connection with family members, but is impolite (-) when applied to strangers, especially to older people.

- Utterances 3, 4, and 5 are second order direct requests with more than two pragmatic elements and are usually evaluated as polite (+), but have different usage possibilities: utterance 3 (**X ỏi, xem hộ Y má' y giố rôi!**) is polite in almost all situations except when applied to older strangers (B1) where it is only neutral (i.e., it is not polite enough); utterance 4 (**X làm ởn xem hộ H má' y giố rôi!**) and utterance 5 (**Xin lỗi, X làm ởn xem hộ H má' y giố rôi!**) are considered polite when applied to strangers (B1, B2, B3) but superpolite (**) when applied to family members (A1, A2, A3). However, some informants think they also can be applied to family members, and they are polite.

- Utterance 6 is a first order indirect request and is not used (superpolite) in family context and rarely applied to strangers, and utterance 7, which is a second order indirect request, is rarely applied (*) in any situation. However, some informants think that utterance 6 (**X có thể xem hộ Y má' y giố rôi không?**) can be used as a polite time request, and utterance 7 (**X**

ỏi, x có đồng hồ đây không?) can also be used as a neutral time request.

Before discussing the issues relating to the expressive means of the politeness of time requests, the presented results will be tested by another supplemental questionnaire, proceeding in an inverse direction.

3.2.2 Questionnaire 5

In fact, I always started my interview sessions with my subjects by asking them to provide on paper, the most appropriate time requests they would likely use in each of the 6 above-mentioned situations. The reason for this, as stated above, was that I did not want them to be affected by the subsequent discussion of politeness. It is hypothesized that if the results of questionnaire 4 are correct, then a certain correspondence between subjects' usage patterns and their evaluations in terms of politeness levels and usage possibilities could be expected.

Forty-six informants provided 276 time requests for 6 different situations. The majority of them (93.3%) have the same forms as 5 out of 7 time requests used in questionnaire 4. The highest frequencies belong to utterance 3 (150 or 54.5%), and then, in descending order, utterance 2 (51 or 18.5%), utterance 4 (27 or 9.8%), and utterance 5 (26 or 9.4%). The distributions (percentages calculated from the total of 46 subjects) of these time requests in each of the 6 situations, according to the 7 types of time requests used in questionnaire 4, are presented in Table 8. Comparing the reported time requests of questionnaire 5 with

subjective evaluations about politeness levels and usage possibilities in questionnaire 4, we notice a basic correspondence. Specifically:

Table 8: Percentages of reported times requests in each of 6 situations over the total of 46 subjects

| utter. | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 |
|--------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 2 | 28.3 | 34.8 | 26.1 | 2.2 | 4.3 | 15.2 |
| 3 | 60.9 | 50.0 | 63.0 | 32.6 | 54.3 | 65.2 |
| 4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.4 | 15.2 | 13.0 |
| 5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.4 | 19.6 | 6.5 |
| 6 | 0.0 | 2.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.3 | 0.0 |
| 7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| other | 10.9 | 13.0 | 10.9 | 4.3 | 2.2 | 0.0 |

- Utterance 1 (which was judged the least polite) is not used by any subject in any situation.

- Utterance 2 (which is ranked as neutral) is applied to family members more than to strangers, and has frequencies much lower than utterance 3 (polite request) in the same situation.

- Utterances 3, 4, and 5 (the most polite time requests) have distributions conforming to the results of the subjective evaluations in questionnaire 4: utterance 3 has high frequencies in all situations, in contrast to utterances 4 and 5, which mostly applied to strangers.

- Utterance 6 has a very low frequency and utterance 7 is not used by any subject.

3.2.3 Discussion

The results of questionnaires 4 and 5 allow us to make some preliminary remarks on politeness manifestations in time requests,

and regarding the relative importance of different linguistic elements in terms of the increasing politeness of the utterances.

First, in comparison to the politeness strategies described by Brown & Levinson (1987), it is apparent that first-order direct requests (which correspond to Brown & Levinson's bald on record) are also ranked by Hanoi speakers on the lowest point of the politeness continuum and tend to have a limited usage. However, and most importantly, contrary to the expectations of Brown & Levinson's model, indirect requests are not perceived by native speakers as the most polite requests, be they conventionalized indirect (first-order indirect) as with utterance 6, or off record (second-order indirect) as with utterance 7. The most polite requests, as ranked by native speakers, belong to second-order direct requests (utterances 3, 4, and 5), which basically correspond to Brown & Levinson's on record with redress.

Comparing the politeness levels of 7 time requests with their structural differences, we do not notice any evidence to support the hypothesis of indirectness being the correlate of politeness. The majority of subjects (>58%) state that indirect requests (utterances 6 & 7) are rarely or never used for time requests. Even those who think they could be used as time requests in certain contexts do not think of them as being the most polite: their mean ratings put them on levels lower than utterances 3, 4, and 5 on the politeness scale. This suggests that, where time requests are concerned, indirect requests are not perceived by native speakers as being the most polite. Does this mean that indirectness is

always less polite than directness and is not a politeness device? The data provided by the questionnaires on time requests do not seem to support a positive answer. According to the majority of informants, utterances 6 and 7 are rarely used as time requests because they are **khách sáo** (ceremonious), or more specifically, greater politeness is invested than needed (utterance 6), or it is not clear that a time request is being made (utterance 7), which does not mean that utterances 6 and 7 are impolite as with utterance 1. Moreover, for a number of subjects, utterances 6 and 7 could be used as time requests, and they are not ranked as the most impolite, but rather they are ranked as more polite than utterance 1, and even utterance 2. This means there are cases where indirectness is more polite than directness, therefore it can be used as a politeness device. Extending the analysis to supportive moves functioning as politeness indicators, we notice that their presence is more closely related to the increase or decrease of the overall politeness levels of requests than indirectness. The evidence is that a first order direct request (utterance 1) is usually ranked as impolite, and second order direct requests are usually ranked as polite if they have more than two accompanying pragmatic elements (utterances 3, 4, and 5). In comparison with indirect requests 6 and 7, a first-order direct request (utterance 1) or a second-order direct request with one accompanying pragmatic element (utterance 2) are less polite, while second-order direct requests with two or more accompanying pragmatic elements (utterances 3, 4, and 5) are considered more

polite. Although the relationships between the use of pragmatic elements and the politeness levels of requests require a more detailed study before any conclusive statements can be made, the above-mentioned facts help highlight that the politeness levels of a request are more bound to the use of pragmatic elements than to the choice of illocutionary modes (directness/indirectness). This may suggest that in the Hanoi speech community, as well as not being an absolute correlate of politeness, indirectness has a limited importance in politeness expressions, and pragmatic elements, on the contrary, have a primary importance in politeness expressions. If this suggestion is correct, it proves that the universal hypothesis that indirectness is the absolute correlate of politeness and is the primary politeness device does not fully fit the Hanoi case. However, there are two reasons for us to be cautious about this claim here. First, the time request may not be considered by the sampled subjects as a highly face-threatening act, therefore the use of indirectness is unnecessary. Second, the artefactual quality of questionnaire data may yield results different from observed behaviour. For these reasons, a comprehensive study of politeness expressions in directives taken from natural conversations is indispensable.

3.3 Politeness in Directives

As mentioned before, in order to be able to discover politeness devices in directives, directives identified from the corpus of natural conversations are coded (1) in terms of their

structural differences (the directness/indirectness levels of their illocutionary modes, the presence/absence of pragmatic supportive moves), and (2) in terms of their politeness (the politeness effects of different structural elements, the overall politeness levels of directives). The first coding procedures were already presented in the discussion of the structures of directives (3.1). In this section, I will present the second coding procedures through an analysis of politeness effects of different structural elements and the politeness levels of directives. The different directive types will then be crosstabulated by their relative politeness levels to determine the politeness devices used for directives and their relative importance (3.4).

3.3.1 The Politeness Effects of Linguistic Elements

The assessment of the politeness level of a speech act is a complicated task because it always incurs the risk of the researcher's subjective bias. The most reliable method, therefore, is to focus on native evaluations (for example, Blum-Kulka 1987; Clark & Schunk 1980, 81). However, this method is not always easily realizable, and can deal with only a limited quantity of data. Researchers more often focus on the socio-pragmatic effects of linguistic elements to evaluate the overall politeness levels of utterances. House & Kasper (1981), for example, evaluate the politeness levels of requests based on the pragmatic effects of directness (the more indirect the request is, the more polite it is) and modal markers (the presence of upgraders and downgraders). The idea that some linguistic elements can increase while some

others can decrease the politeness levels of utterances is a useful notion. However, it is dangerous to assume that greater indirectness always reflects greater politeness, and that downgraders always make the utterances they modify more polite. In an attempt to overcome this limitation, in what follows I will present an analytical scheme I use to assess the pragmatic effects of linguistic elements used in directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations. The assessment of actual pragmatic effects of linguistic elements will serve as the basis for the evaluation of the overall politeness levels of directives.

As the data in questionnaires 4 and 5 show, the politeness levels of time requests change depending on many factors relating to utterances and their contexts. The presence of linguistic elements and their actual pragmatic effects directly affect the politeness levels of utterances.

The examples of time requests indicate that in an utterance, linguistic elements perform not only syntactic or semantic functions, but also, different pragmatic functions. In relation to politeness, their pragmatic effects are reflected in their ability to change the politeness level of the utterance in a direction which will increase it, decrease it, or keep it at the neutral level. Accordingly, I distinguish three types of linguistic elements as indicators differing in politeness effects, namely polite indicators, impolite indicators, and neutral indicators. To identify the politeness effects of these indicators, procedures of deletion, replacement, addition, and transformation are used. The

condition for these procedures to be applied is the maintenance of the directive force of the original utterance and its original context of use.

3.3.1.1 Structural Elements

The use of deletion identifies an element as a polite indicator if its deletion decreases the politeness level of requests. Consider the original example (17a) and its derivatives (b,c):

(17) A street seller invites a woman to buy her products:

- a. **Bác mua đi a!**
aunt/uncle buy imperative honorific
(Please buy it!)
- b. **Bác mua đi ()!**
aunt/uncle buy imperative ().
(Buy it, aunt!)
- c. **() mua đi!**
() buy imperative
(Buy it!)

The deletion of **a** in (17b), of **bác** and **a** in (17c) renders these requests increasingly less respectful, therefore, less polite, in the series ranged from (17a) to (17c), identifying **bác** and **a** as polite indicators. Conversely, an element is identified as an impolite indicator if its deletion increases the politeness level of requests. For instance, the deletion of the modal verb **phai** (should) in (18) or of the external supportive move (you never clear things away after you) in (19) renders the orders less imposing and less offensive, hence less impolite.

- (18) An elderly man speaks to his old father-in-law:
Ông phải cởi cái áo len ra!
grandpa should take classifier sweater wool off
(You should take your woolen sweater off!)

- (19) An old man speaks to his wife:
Bà cất bát nước-mắm đi, ăn xong củ bày ra-dây.
 grandma take bowl sauce-fish imperative, eat finish
go-ahead put there
 (Take away that bowl of fish sauce, you never clear
 things away after you!)

Distinct from polite and impolite indicators, a neutral indicator can be deleted but its deletion does not substantially change the politeness level of requests. Compare the following original utterances (20a) and (21a), and their derivatives (20b, 21b):

- (20) A young woman speaks to her older friend:
 a. **Chi ỏi chờ em với nhé!**
 elder-sister vocative wait younger-sister imperative modal
 (Wait for me, please!)
 b. **Chi () chờ em với nhé!**
 elder-sister () wait younger-sister imperative modal
 (Wait for me, please!)
- (21) An old woman invites her elderly neighbour:
 a. **Bà vào nhà chơi a!**
 grandma enter house play honorific
 (Please come in!)
 b. **Bà vào () chơi a!**
 grandma enter () play honorific
 (Please come in!)

There is no substantial difference between (20a) and (20b), or between (21a) and (21b), which proves that **ỏi** and **nhà** are neutral in terms of politeness.

Besides deletion, replacement is also used to identify the politeness effects of elements with different paradigmatic variants, and those which cannot be deleted due to their grammatical indispensability. For example, in order to assess the politeness effects of the predicative verb **ăn** (eat) which is the kernel of the head act in the original invitation (22a), we can not delete it, but can only replace it by other synonyms. If it is replaced by a variant with formal colouring (**xối**), the invitation

becomes more polite (22b), and if it is replaced by a variant with derogatory coloring (*hộc*), it becomes impolite (22c).

(22) A man invites his guest during a meal:

- a. **Anh ặn côm nũa di!**
elder-brother eat (neutral) rice more imperative
(Have some more!)
- b. **Anh xoi côm nũa di!**
elder-brother eat (respectful) rice more imperative
(Please have some more!)
- c. **Anh hộc côm nũa di!**
elder-brother eat (derogatory) rice more imperative
(Eat up!)

From this operation it is clear that *an* is a neutral indicator (similarly *xoi* is a polite indicator, and *hoc* is an impolite indicator).

If an element cannot be deleted due to its grammatical indispensability and can not be replaced due to a lack of synonyms, it is identified as a neutral indicator, for instance, the predicative verbs *đọc* (read), *ngồi* (sit) in "**Con đọc đi!**" (Please read!), and "**Anh ngồi đây**" (Sit down!).

The pragmatic effects of structural elements depend on their syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations and other factors of situational contexts. One and the same linguistic element may not have the same pragmatic effect in different utterances or different contexts. Let us recall the time requests in questionnaire 4. The presence of the alerter (**Bố ời!** -Dad!) in utterance 2 (**Bố ời, mấy giờ rồi?** - Dad, what time is it?) is an important polite indicator, because it is the only factor, which renders the utterance neutral in terms of politeness, i.e., it makes utterance 2 more polite than utterance 1 (**Mấy giờ rồi?** -what time is it?), which is ranked as

impolite in this context (offspring-father interaction). But if we compare utterance 3 (**BỐ xem hồ con mấy giờ rồi!** -Tell me please, Dad, what time is it!) in the same context with a derivative added by an alerter (**Bố ời, bố xem hồ con mấy giờ rồi!** -Dad, tell me please, dad, what time is it!), we notice that the two are not significantly different in terms of politeness levels, again proving that the presence of an alerter in utterance 3 is not as important for politeness as it is in utterance 2. Similarly, depending on the context, the address pair **mày-tao** (personal pronouns I-you) is an impolite indicator when applied to superior family members or to strangers, but may be a neutral indicator when applied to friends, or subordinate family members. Within one utterance, different polite indicators do not have the same relative importance: there are more important and less important polite indicators. Consider again example (17) above. The deletion of the honorific particle **a** in (17b) renders it less polite than (17a), but not to the extent that it becomes unacceptable as with (17c) when **bác** is deleted: (17b) is neutral while (17c) is impolite. In other words, having the same function as polite indicators, **bác** is more important than **a** to the overall politeness level of the utterance.

In contrast to the presence of polite indicators, their absence from the utterance also affects the politeness levels of requests, and depending on the role of missing elements, their absence can be identified as an impolite or neutral indicator. It is an impolite indicator if its presence is indispensable to the

politeness of the request, or if its absence decreases the politeness level of the request to such an extent that the request is no longer accepted as neutral; for example, the absence () of the alerter **bố ỏi** (Dad) from the time request "**() mấy giờ rồi?**" (what time is it?) or of **bác** (senior aunt) in (17c) "**() mua đi!**" (Buy it). The absence of an element is identified as a neutral indicator if its presence is less indispensable for the politeness of directives, and without it the directives are still accepted as neutral in the contexts under consideration. For instance, the absence of the alerter **bố ỏi** (Dad) in utterance 3 of questionnaire 4 "**() , bố xem hồ con mấy giờ rồi!**" (Please tell me what time it is!), or of the honorific particle **a** in (17b) "**Bác mua đi ()!**" (Buy it, aunt!).

3.3.1.2 Indirectness

Deletion and replacement are appropriate only for the assessment of lexical units. In order to assess the pragmatic effects of directness/indirectness, it is necessary to transform requests from the indirect mode to their direct equivalents and to consider the changes in their politeness levels. Depending on whether the transformation increases, decreases, or maintains the overall politeness levels of utterances, then indirectness is identified as a polite, an impolite, or a neutral indicator (the basis for this assessment of the increase or decrease in the level of politeness is derived from the cost/benefit incurred by the speaker/hearer, which I will discuss later). Let us compare the following original indirect directives (23a), (24a), and (25a), and

their direct equivalents (23b), (24b), and (25b):

(23) A girl asks her cousin living in the same household:

a. **Long ỏi, em có cái dây chun nào không?**

Long vocative younger-sibling have classifier string rubber any no
(Long, do you have any rubber string?)

b. **Long ỏi, cho chị cái dây chun.**

Long vocative give elder-sister classifier string rubber
(Long, give me a rubber string!)

(24) A woman speaks to her child:

a. **Con có cất con dao đi không?**

offspring have put classifier knife imperative no
(Won't you put away that knife?)

b. **Con cất con dao đi!**

offspring put classifier knife imperative
(Put away that knife!)

(25) A man invites his guest, a woman younger than himself:

a. **Sao em không uống nước đi?**

why younger-sister not drink water imperative
(Why aren't you drinking the water?)

b. **Em uống nước đi!**

younger-sister drink water imperative
(Drink the water!)

The indirect request (23a) is more polite than its direct equivalent (23b) because it is less of an imposition, and it implies conditions permitting H to refuse (if H does not have a rubber string), without offending any party's face. The indirect request (24a) is more impolite than its direct equivalent (24b) because, in addition to the imposition (same as in 23b), it also has an emphatically threatening effect. The requests (25a) and (25b) do not differ in terms of politeness levels, but in terms of usage contexts: (25a) is used to reinvite while (25b) can be used to invite and reinvite. Accordingly, indirectness is identified as a polite indicator in (23a), an impolite indicator in (24a), and a neutral indicator in (25a).

It is worth noting here that we need to distinguish the

politeness effects of indirectness as an indicator from the overall politeness level of indirect requests. The politeness level of indirect requests depends both on indirectness as a pragmatic indicator, and on the pragmatic effects of other structural elements such as address terms, modal verbs, performative verbs, etc. An indirect request whose indirectness is a polite indicator may be just neutral or even impolite if other structural elements have neutral or impolite effects. For example, if both *alserter* and subject in (23a) are deleted, the politeness level of the original indirect request is significantly decreased, although the indirectness remains unchanged. More details concerning this issue will be given in the discussion on the politeness levels of directives in (3.3.2).

Together with structural elements and indirectness, intonation also makes a contribution to the politeness of utterances through the expression of speakers' attitudes and affections. In parallel with the distinction concerning tones (sharp/normal/soft) as a reflection of different attitudes (angry/normal/soft), intonation is similarly identified as an impolite, a neutral, or a polite indicator, and is taken into the assessment of the politeness levels of requests.

3.3.2 Politeness Levels of Requests

With this analysis of the politeness effects of different linguistic means, I now proceed to assess the politeness levels of directives in their specific contexts of use, and classify them into groups with different politeness levels. All directives are

analyzed and coded according to a 3-point politeness scale (polite, neutral, impolite) which is reduced from a 7-point politeness scale (very polite, polite, somewhat polite, neutral, somewhat impolite, impolite, and very impolite). As determined in 3.2, a directive is polite when it fully satisfies hearers' expectations of one or more politeness characteristics (respectfulness, propriety, tact, and delicacy), depending on concrete utterances and situational contexts. A directive is impolite when it violates one or more of the characteristics of politeness, i.e., it is disrespectful, inappropriate, tactless, and indelicate. In between of these two poles is a neutral request, i.e., it satisfies the hearers' politeness expectations at an acceptable level, and does not contain impolite indicators.

For the convenience of the exposition, in the subsequent discussion of the politeness levels of directives, the following abbreviations and signs will be used:

- Directive types (x):
 - DR1: first-order direct directive
 - DR2: second-order direct directive
 - IND1: first-order indirect directive
 - IND2: second-order indirect directive
- Expressive means (y):
 - S: address term designating speaker
 - H1: address term designating hearer in alerter
 - H2: address term designating hearer in subject
 - P: predicative verb
 - V1: performative verb
 - V2: modal verb
 - V3: auxiliary verb
 - M: modal particle
 - Adv: external supportive move (adverbial clause)
 - Ind: indirectness
 - Int: intonation
 - () : absence of y
- Politeness effects of expressive means: Pl(y)
 - + polite

- impolite
- o neutral
- Politeness levels of utterances: Pl(x)
- ++ very polite
- + polite
- >o somewhat polite
- o neutral
- <o somewhat impolite
- impolite
- very impolite

In accordance with the aforementioned differences in politeness levels, based on the analysis of politeness effects of expressive means and patterns drawn from native speakers' evaluations of time requests in questionnaire 4, I suggest the following formal criteria for assessing the politeness levels of directives in the corpus of natural conversations:

1) A directive is polite if it has no impolite indicators and has at least two polite indicators (as with utterances 3, 4, 5, and 6 of questionnaire 4).

2) A directive is impolite if it has at least one impolite indicator (as with utterance 1 of questionnaire 4).

3) A directive is neutral if all elements are neutral, or one element is polite (as with utterances 2 and 7 in questionnaire 4).

To illustrate this, I will attempt to assess the politeness levels of some cited examples and their derivatives to help highlight the politeness levels of the original utterances. Let us take (17) as an example: (17a) is a second-order direct request (DR2) with two polite indicators (**bác** - H2/subject and **a** -M/modal particle) and one neutral indicator (**mua** - P/predicative verb), which can not be deleted or replaced. According to the assessment criteria, this request is polite. Its derivative (17b) is also a

DR2 but it is neutral (or somewhat polite when the speaker is of the same age as the hearer) because it has only one polite indicator (H2: **bác**) due to the deletion of **a** which creates a neutral absence. The other derivative (17c) is first-order direct (DR1) and is impolite due to the deletion of the only polite indicator **bác** which creates an impolite absence. The differences in terms of politeness effects of linguistic elements and in terms of politeness levels of these requests can be represented as follows:

- | | | | | | | |
|----|------------|------------|-----------|----------|---|-----|
| a. | Bác | mua | đi | a | ! | |
| | H2 | P | M | | | DR2 |
| | + | o | + | | | + |
| b. | Bác | mua | đi | | ! | |
| | H2 | P | | | | DR2 |
| | + | o | | | | o |
| c. | Mua | đi | | | | |
| | () | P | | | | DR1 |
| | - | o | | | | - |

(Note: neutral absence and neutral intonation are not represented).

In a similar way, we can formalize the pragmatic effects of linguistic means and evaluate the politeness levels of direct requests in examples 18-22. With regard to indirect requests, in addition to the pragmatic effects of structural elements, we need to take into account the pragmatic effects of indirectness (marked under the head act). Let us take (23a) as an example. Indirectness here is a polite indicator (see 3.3.1), and the politeness level of the request is determined in the following way:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------|
| <u>Long</u> | <u>oi,</u> | <u>em</u> | <u>có</u> | <u>sợi</u> | <u>dây</u> | <u>chun</u> | <u>nào</u> | <u>không?</u> | |
| H1 | | H2 | | | Ind | | | | IND1 |
| o | | + | | | + | | | | + |

long vocative, younger-sibling have string ruber no
(Long, do you have any rubber string?)

If **em** (descending kinterm) is replaced by **mày** (personal pronoun) or is deleted, the politeness level of the request is decreased for one level:

Long oi, (mày) có cái dây chun nào không?
 H1 (H2) Ind IND2
 o o + o
 (Long, got any rubber string?)

When H1 is also deleted from the utterance, its absence signals an impolite indicator (if not compensated by a soft intonation or special circumstances), and the overall politeness of the request is calculated as follows:

Có cái dây chun nào không?
 () Ind IND2
 - + -
 (Any rubber string?)

However, if the request is uttered with a soft voice, indicating affection, and in a situational context where the deletion of alerter is permissible (for instance, when two sisters are engaged in some activity together), the absence of H2 signals a neutral indicator and the request is not impolite.

In short, by analyzing the pragmatic effects of expressive means, and based on the formal criteria, we are basically able to assess the overall politeness levels of directives used in actual interactions. However, to arrive at a more precise evaluation, the formal criteria alone are not sufficient. The assessment must be made through a close consideration of speaker-hearer relationships, and of the various kinds of illocutionary forces and other contextual factors that pertain. Depending on these factors, the politeness levels identified by formal criteria may change.

Depending on speaker-hearer status differences, directives with the same pragmatic indicators may have different politeness levels: when addressed to a superior, the politeness level of a request tends to decrease (because it requires a greater investment of politeness), when addressed to a subordinate, it tends to increase (because it requires lesser investment of politeness). Similarly, depending on differences in the illocutionary forces, directives with the same pragmatic indicators may also receive different politeness levels: when directives are hearer-beneficial (convivial acts), the politeness levels of utterances tend to increase, when directives are hearer-costly (competitive acts), the politeness levels tend to decrease. Compare the following requests:

- (26) a. **Me di nghỉ đi!**
 mother go rest imperative
 (Have a rest, mom!)
- b. **Con đi nghỉ đi!**
 offspring go rest imperative
 (Have a rest, daughter!)
- c. **Me rửa bát đi!**
 mother wash dishes imperative
 (Wash the dishes, mom!)
- d. **Con rửa bát đi!**
 offspring wash dishes imperative
 (Wash the dishes, daughter!)

All four requests are second-order direct requests (DR2) with one polite indicator (H2: hearer designation) and one neutral indicator (P: predicative verb). However, these requests differ in terms of (1) the status relationship between H-S (in a and c the hearer is superior; in b and d the hearer is subordinate), and (2) the costs/benefits the act brings for H (a and b are hearer-beneficial while c and d are hearer-costly), therefore, their

politeness levels are not the same. If we take into consideration the pragmatic indicators and the conditions to increase (>) or decrease (<) the politeness of the factors (1) and (2) mentioned above, the politeness levels of 26(a-d) can be distinguished and represented as follows:

| utter. | H2 | P | (1) | (2) | Pl(x) |
|--------|----|---|-----|-----|-------|
| 26 a. | + | o | < | > | o |
| b. | + | o | > | > | >o |
| c. | + | o | < | < | <o |
| d. | + | o | > | < | o |

Pl(x): poliness levels of 26 (a-d)

In request (26a) condition (1) decreases its politeness but condition (2) increases it; as a result, its overall politeness level corresponds to the formal assessment, i.e. it is neutral. In request (26b) both conditions increase its politeness; as a result, its overall politeness is higher than the formal assessment, i.e., it is somewhat polite. In request (26c) two conditions decrease its politeness; as a result, its overall politeness is lower than the formal assessment, i.e., it is impolite. In request (26d) condition (1) increases its politeness but condition (2) decreases it; as a result, its overall politeness corresponds to the formal assessment, i.e., it is neutral. Thus, despite the fact that all four requests are second-order direct and have the same pragmatic indicators, they are different in their politeness levels due to differences in speaker-hearer social relationships and in the cost-benefit of the acts.

This analysis highlights the fact that a careful account of

the pragmatic effects of linguistic elements and of the factors pertaining to their situational contexts will yield a relatively objective evaluation and classification of the politeness levels of utterances. It is hoped that this will help to diminish the affects of the researcher's subjectivity although a resort to native intuition in the coding process is indispensable.

3.4 Relative Importance of Politeness Devices

3.4.1 Indirectness

In order to assess the relative importance of indirectness for politeness in directives, I follow the procedures set out below: (1) 2300 directives identified from the corpus of natural conversations are coded in terms of directness/indirectness based on the criteria presented in 3.1.3; (2) The directives are coded in terms of their politeness levels based on the criteria presented in 3.3.2; (3) the number of directives in each directive type (first-order direct, second-order direct, first-order indirect, second-order indirect) are then compared to their respective politeness levels (polite, neutral, impolite). The statistical results are summarized in Table 10. The rows represent the frequencies of directives, classified according to 4 directive types. The columns represent the frequencies of directives of each directive type, classified according to a three-point politeness scale and their percentages, derived from the total number of directives of that directive type.

Table 10: Frequencies (and percentages) of directives crosstabulated by directive types and the overall politeness levels of utterances

| Pl (x) | DR1 | DR2 | IND1 | IND2 | Total |
|--------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| + | | 1022 (63.6) | 83 (48.2) | 23 (46.9) | 1128 (49.0) |
| o | 363 (76.7) | 432 (26.8) | 52 (30.2) | 17 (34.7) | 864 (37.5) |
| - | 110 (23.3) | 152 (9.6) | 37 (21.6) | 9 (18.4) | 308 (13.5) |
| Total | 473 (100.0) | 1606 (100.0) | 172 (100.0) | 49 (100.0) | 2300 (100.) |

Pl (x): Politeness level of utterance

DR1: first-order direct IND2: first-order indirect

DR2: second-order direct IND2: second-order indirect

The results reported in Table 10 indicate that, to judge by differences in illocutionary modes, direct requests (including both first-order and second-order direct) have very high frequencies (more than 90%) as compared to indirect requests (including both first-order and second-order indirect). The use of directness/indirectness in the Hanoi dialect will be better highlighted if we compare these results with those reported by Blum-Kulka (1989), which pertain to other languages. In her research, based on request data collected in natural conversations (at home in the kitchen, at school, at the police station, in the street), Blum-Kulka compares the use of directness/indirectness in four different languages; namely, Australian English, French, Hebrew, and Argentinian Spanish. The author classifies requests identified from natural conversations into 3 groups: direct requests (those with the predicative verbs in imperative mode or performative verbs), conventional indirect requests (questions with can/could,

will/would, would you mind..?, etc.), and unconventional indirect requests (for more details of Blum-Kulka's classification, see 3.1.3). The classification of directives I have chosen for the data at hand is very close to Blum-Kulka's classification: first-order and second-order direct directives can join Blum-Kulka's direct group, first-order indirect directives can join the conventional indirect group, and second-order indirect directives can join the unconventional indirect group (Table 11).

Table 11: The use of directive types in Vietnamese in comparison with some other languages (*)

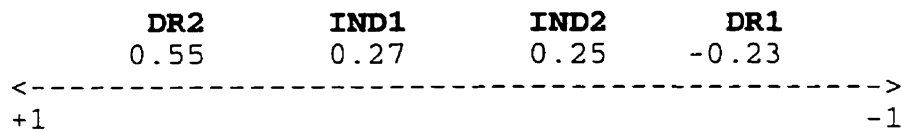
| utter. | Vietnam. | Australia English | French | Hebrew | Argentin Spanish |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| DR (1+2) | 2079 (90.3) | 109 (9.8) | 152 (24.0) | 271 (33.4) | 78 (39.6) |
| IND1 | 172 (7.5) | 919 (82.4) | 437 (68.9) | 476 (58.6) | 115 (58.4) |
| IND2 | 49 (2.2) | 87 (7.8) | 45 (7.1) | 65 (8.0) | 4 (2.0) |
| Total | 2300 (100.0) | 1115 (100.0) | 634 (100.0) | 812 (100.0) | 197 (100.0) |

(*) Source for other languages: Blum-Kulka, 1989.

The data in Table 11 show that Hanoi speakers use indirect directives much less frequent than speakers of these other languages. In languages which show an obvious preference for direct strategies, such as Hebrew and Argentinian Spanish, indirect requests still prevail (more than 60%), with first order indirect (IND1) predominating (more than 58%). In the Hanoi dialect, of 2300 directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations, only 9.5% are indirect. The differences are highly significant ($p < 0.0001$).

If we were to judge these results by the universal claim that indirectness is an absolute correlate of politeness, we would be necessarily perplexed, and would wonder why Hanoi speakers use so few indirect directives, which are the most polite, and why they use so many direct directives, which are less polite, including first-order direct directives, which are considered to be the least polite. However, this could be explained through the observation that conversation data were collected mainly in family contexts and between long-standing acquaintances, where the prevalence of hierarchical order (directives are directed to subordinates more often than to superiors) and stable solidarity permit less politeness investment, hence direct directives (less polite) are preferred to indirect directives (more polite). To be able to specify the relative importance of each politeness device, we cannot therefore simply base this on their frequencies alone; we need to consider the degrees of politeness they bring to utterances. Assuming that the universal claim of indirectness as the correlate of politeness is correct, and accordingly, indirectness is the most important politeness device, it is to be expected that the percentage of polite indirect directives over the total number of indirect directives will be higher than the percentage of polite direct directives over the total number of direct directives. However, an analysis of the correlation between directive types and their respective politeness levels (Table 10) does not seem to fully meet our expectations. To determine a more adequate basis for the assessment of politeness levels of each

directive type, the politeness index scores of each type is calculated by assigning 1 for each polite directive, 0 for each neutral one, and -1 for each impolite one. The scores for each directive type are then summed up and divided by the total occurrences of each type to give the group's politeness mean scores. The results could be represented on a politeness continuum as follows:



What seems to support theoretical expectations is that first-order direct directives (DR1) have the lowest politeness index scores which means they are the least polite. However, with regard to second-order direct (DR2) and indirect directives (IND1 and IND2), the results run contrary to our expectations. Although both first-order (IND1) and second-order (IND2) indirect directives are significantly more polite than first-order direct directives ($p < 0.0001$), proving that indirectness is also used as a politeness device, contrary to expectations, they are not the most polite. Their politeness index scores are significantly lower than those of second-order direct directives ($p < 0.01$). Even among the indirect directives themselves, second-order indirect directives (the highest level of indirectness) have politeness index scores which are lower than those of first-order indirect directives, although the differences are insignificant ($p = 0.6$). Thus, according to a politeness continuum running from the least polite (-1) to the most polite (+1), the politeness levels of directives gradually increase

from first-order direct (DR1) to second-order direct requests (DR2) in the following order: DR1 < IND2 < IND1 < DR2. This result corresponds to the preliminary observations formulated on questionnaire 4: it contradicts Brown & Levinson's politeness scale, which emphasizes the absolute importance of indirectness. It also indicates that in both metapragmatic consciousness and in discursive practices, indirectness in the Hanoi dialect is not an absolute correlate of politeness, and indirectness, although it can be used as a politeness device, is not the most important and preferred one. The high politeness levels of second-order directives (and also their high frequencies) suggest that the supportive elements with politeness effects are the dominant politeness devices in this dialect. With this in mind we can now resolve the above-mentioned paradox: Hanoi speakers use indirect directives much less than direct directives, not because they invest less politeness in familiar contexts (due to hierarchy and stable solidarity), but because the most polite directives in this dialect are direct ones with supportive moves, which have politeness effects (second-order direct). The high frequencies of polite direct directives highlight the fact that Hanoi speakers invest a lot of politeness in their speech, even in family contexts.

By proving that the politeness scale of directives applied by the Hanoi speakers does not completely covary with the degrees of indirectness of the utterances, and that pragmatic elements have an important place in the politeness system, the results imply that

the universal claim of indirectness as the correlate of politeness, does not accord with this speech community. However, the results do not deny the fact that indirectness in Hanoi also functions to a certain extent as a politeness device which is different from the function of indirectness in some other Asian languages, where indirectness has nothing to do with politeness (Japanese politeness: Matsumoto 1988). The question arises as to why indirectness in Hanoi is not proportional to politeness and has only a limited importance in the politeness system as compared to supportive elements? Based on an analysis of the functions of indirectness in speech, I would like to argue that

1) The major function of indirectness, at least in Hanoi, is not to increase politeness.

2) Even in contexts where indirectness could be indicative of politeness, its politeness level, or to be more precise, the politeness level of requests, still depends on pragmatic effects of supportive moves inside and outside head acts.

A speech act is indirect when one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by way of performing another (Searle 1979). In order to recognize the indirect illocutionary act, hearers have to resort to an inferential strategy consisting in two stages "to establish, first, that the primary illocutionary point departs from the literal, and second, what the primary illocutionary point is" (Searle 1979: 35). But what is the motivation for using indirect speech acts? Brown & Levinson argue that "indirect speech acts have as their prime *raison d'être* the politeness functions they

perform," and claim that "indirect speech acts are universal (...) and the universality of indirect speech acts follow from the basic service they perform with respect to universal strategies of politeness " (1987: 142). As argued in 3.1.2, indirectness is praised by politeness researchers within the instrumental perspective as an important and universal strategy for politeness because it corresponds to the strategies or rules/maxims of politeness which are claimed to be universally valid and important; namely, it shows respect to "negative face" (Brown & Levinson), it "gives options" and "does not impose" (Lakoff, Leech). In these politeness models, the authors equate the overall politeness level of an utterance and its indirectness. The thesis which is taken almost for granted here is that directness means imposition; it does not allow any choice or refusal (to use Brown & Levinson's terminology, it threatens hearers' negative face); and therefore, it is inherently impolite; yet, on the contrary, indirectness means non-imposition, it allows hearers to choose or to refuse (it respects hearers' negative face), and therefore it is inherently polite. The question arises as to whether directness always imposes and indirectness always allows options, and whether imposition is always impolite and giving options is always polite? Leech (1983) also considers indirectness to be one of the main politeness scales of the Tact Maxim, but he seems to recognize that the relationships between indirectness and politeness are not straightforward. For instance, he notices that within the same negative indirect speech act, the utterance "Won't you sit down?"

is not taken as an imposition and is considered polite, whereas the utterance "Can't you sit down?" is considered to be an imposition and is accordingly less polite. He also recognizes that different indirect speech acts may have different attitudinal implications, which can not be simply reduced to the question of politeness. When analyzing politeness levels according to the cost-benefit scale, Leech also notices that there is no absolute correlation between politeness and indirectness: with a request which is hearer-beneficial, for example, an invitation in informal contexts, the use of the indirect mode (Would you mind another sandwich?) is less polite than the use of the direct mode (Help yourself to another sandwich!). However, it seems that the data in English, where indirectness is an important politeness device, are not sufficient for Leech to cast doubt on the universal correlation between indirectness and politeness.

Examining the directive data in my corpus, I notice that if we consider imposition as inherently impolite, and giving options as inherently polite, then not all indirect directives imply optionality. Let us compare the following original utterance (27a) and its logical indirect derivatives (27b-d):

- | | | |
|------|---|-------|
| (27) | A mother speaks to her child: | Pl(x) |
| a. | Vấn cái đài nhỏ lại con! (Turn down the radio, son!) | >0 |
| b. | Con có thể vặn nhỏ cái đài lại không? (Can you turn the radio down?) | + |
| c. | Sao con mở đài to thế? (Why do you turn the radio up so loud?) | + |
| d. | Con có vặn cái đài nhỏ lại không? (Won't you turn the radio down?) | <0 |

(27a) is a direct request, and is therefore considered to be an

imposition. But due to the presence of a politeness indicator H2 (**con**-offspring), and due to the fact that it is spoken to a subordinate family member, the utterance has an overall politeness level slightly higher than neutral, i.e. it is somewhat polite. Utterances (27b-c) are indirect requests with suggestive forces, which permit hearers to make their own decisions so that indirectness is therefore indicative of politeness, and together with the politeness effect of H2, it makes these utterances more polite than (27a). Although (27d) is also an indirect request, it implies a threat rather than presenting the hearer with an option; hence, it is less polite than indirect requests (27b-c), and even less polite than direct request (27a). Thus, due to constraints of other conversational implicatures, an indirect act can also be considered to be an imposition, and hence, impolite.

Is the question of politeness and impoliteness contingent upon optionality and imposition? Leech's example of inviting, cited above, suggests that we need to consider the issue in the light of the cost-benefit scale (i.e. the degrees of costs and benefits which an illocutionary act brings for speakers and hearers). If we take only hearer-costly illocutionary acts (ordering, forbidding, asking for a favour, etc.), directness in the Hanoi dialect apparently helps to decrease politeness levels (if not compensated by politeness supportive moves), and indirectness helps to increase politeness levels for directives. But if we consider hearer-beneficial illocutionary acts, the situation is different. Distinct from English, in the Hanoi dialect, in order to increase

the politeness levels of a hearer-beneficial act, such as inviting, speakers may choose to increase directness, which is the opposite of giving options. The high coerciveness of invitations is not perceived by Hanoi interlocutors (the persons invited) as an offence to their negative face; on the contrary, they signal that the invited persons' positive face is respected and admired, and that the persons doing the inviting are really sincere. If an invitation is made, allowing for options, i.e. it puts the invited persons in a position to choose something beneficial for themselves (in which case they usually refuse), it is not considered polite. Let us consider the following example:

(28) A woman (A) speaks to her grandson (B):

- A1: **Cháu ra mời Ông vào ăn mít đi!**
 (Grandson, go and invite grandpa to eat jarfruit!)
- B: (calls) **Ông ời, ông ăn mít không ông?**
 (Grandpa, do you want to eat jarfruit?)
- A2: **Nam mời thế ả? Phải bao "cháu mời Ông vào ăn mít" chứ**
 (How could you invite him in such a manner! You should say, "I would like to invite you, grandpa, to come and eat jarfruit"!)

In this example, the woman scolds her grandson for his indirect invitation and insists on a direct one. Her behaviour clearly indicates what she counts as a polite invitation. It is obvious that the overall politeness of these utterances does not fully covary with the degrees of imposition or optionality: the imposition (directness) will decrease politeness if the illocutionary act is hearer-costly, but will increase politeness if the act is hearer-beneficial; optionality (indirectness) will increase politeness if the act is hearer-costly, and will decrease politeness if the act is hearer-beneficial. In other words, the

cost-benefit scale and the indirectness scale (expressing imposition and optionality) have different correlations along the politeness scale. The politeness scale seems to covary fully with the cost-benefit scale: the more beneficial the act is for the hearer, the more it is considered polite; the more costly the act is for the hearer, the more impolite it is. With regard to the indirectness scale, the politeness scale covaries with it, only as far as hearer-costly acts are concerned. However, as I will show below, even in utterances where indirectness covaries with politeness, the politeness function of indirectness is limited due to the pragmatic effects of supportive moves.

I have distinguished in 3.3.1, the pragmatic effects of indirectness and the overall politeness of indirect requests. Accordingly, the overall politeness of an indirect request depends on one hand, on indirectness, and on the other hand, on the pragmatic effects of supportive moves inside or outside the head act. Thus, an indirect request could be judged impolite not because of indirectness but because of impolite indicators appearing in the utterance. Compare the following two groups of invented utterances:

- (29) a. **Anh cho tôi mượn tờ báo!**
 elder-brother give subject borrow classifier newspaper
 (Please, give me the newspaper!)
- b. **Mày cho tao mượn tờ báo!**
 you-pronoun give me-pronoun borrow classifier newspaper
 (Give me, man, the newspaper!)
- c. **Cho mượn tờ báo!**
 give borrow classifier newspaper
 (The newspaper!)
- (30) a. **Anh cho tôi mượn tờ báo này được không?**
 elder-brother give subject borrow classifier newspaper
 possible no

- (Would you let me borrow this newspaper?)
- b. **Mày cho tao mượn tờ báo này được không?**
 you-pronoun give personal pronoun borrow
 classifier newspaper possible no
 (You let me borrow this newspaper?)
- c. **Cho mượn tờ báo này được không?**
 give borrow classifier newspaper possible no

If we consider the equivalent pairs, indirect requests in (30) are more polite than their direct equivalents in (29) in the same context (a library's reading room). Indirectness in these utterances helps decrease the imposition of the acts which are hearer-costly and speaker-beneficial, thereby contributing to the politeness levels of requests. However, if we compare indirect requests (30b) and (30c) with a direct request (29a), when used in the same context, it appears that the direct request (29a) is more polite than the indirect requests (30b-c). The presence of the informal address pair **mày-tao** in (30b) and the absence of the formal address pair **anh-tôi** in (30c) render these indirect requests less polite than a direct request with a formal address (29a). These examples indicate that even when indirectness is a politeness indicator, its presence alone is not sufficient to render a request polite, or at least more polite than a direct request. The overall politeness of requests depends on the pragmatic effects of other linguistic elements as well. This again proves that indirectness in Hanoi, although it functions as a politeness device, is not the main politeness device as it is in English, where indirectness is a correlate of politeness, and is grammatically marked (as in requests with **can, could, may, would**, etc.). It also proves that pragmatic elements have an important role in expressing politeness

in requestive behaviour of Hanoi speakers.

3.4.2 Supportive Moves

Based on the coding criteria presented in 3.3.1, all the pragmatic supportive moves used in 2300 directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations are evaluated in terms of their politeness effects (polite, neutral, and impolite indicators). The frequencies and percentages (in parentheses) of each type of pragmatic supportive move over the total occurrences of that type, classified by their pragmatic effects, are presented in Table 12.

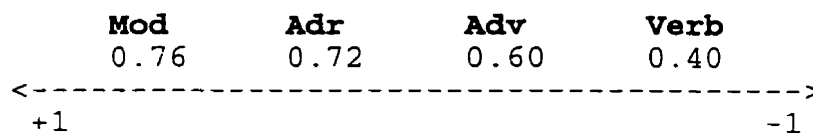
Table 12: Frequencies and percentages of supportive moves classified by their politeness effects

| Pl (y) | Mod | Adr | Adv | Verb |
|--------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| + | 281 (88.0) | 1390 (79.5) | 315 (80.0) | 104 (51.5) |
| o | | 226 (13.0) | | 75 (37.0) |
| - | 38 (12.0) | 133 (7.5) | 79 (20.0) | 22 (11.5) |
| Total | 319 (12.0) | 1749 (65.6) | 394 (14.8) | 201 (7.6) |

Pl(y): politeness effects of linguistic elements
 Mod: modal particles Adr: address terms Adv: adverbials

The results in Table 12 show that among 2663 supportive moves used to increase or decrease the politeness levels of directives, the majority are address terms (1749 or 65.6%). Judging by their politeness effects, modal particles (Mod), address terms (Adr), and adverbial clauses (Adv) seem to function as polite indicators (+) more often than verbs (88.0% polite indicators of modal particles, 79.5% of address terms, and 80.0% of adverbials, compared to 51.5% polite indicators of verbs). On the other hand, address terms

appear to be impolite indicators (-) less often than Mod, Adv, and Verbs (7.5% impolite address terms, compared to 12% impolite modal particles, 20% impolite adverbial clauses, and 11.5% impolite verbs). Using the same method of calculating politeness index scores, the average politeness index of each type of supportive move is represented, as follows, on the politeness continuum, running from the most polite (+1) to the least polite (-1):



In general terms, modal particles and address terms have politeness effects higher than adverbial clauses and verbs. However, these various categories of supportive moves have different subcategories which, in turn, differ in politeness effects, as will be shown in the following analysis.

3.4.2.1 Modal Particles

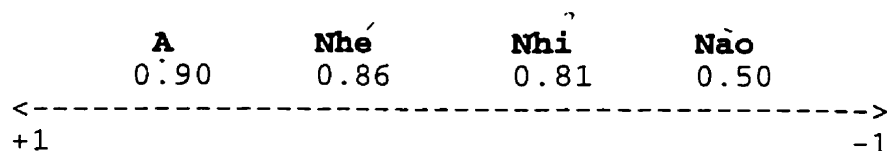
319 out of 2300 directives have modal particles in their structures. The most commonly used particles are **nhé** (final particle, meaning "all right": 32.6%), **nào** (final emphatic particle: 29.7%), **a** (honorific particle: 25.7%), and **nhì**' (final particle: 10%): 74.6% (or 238 out of the total of 319) requests with modal particles are judged as polite, while only 45.4% (or 899 out of the total of 1981) directives without modal particles are judged as polite. The analysis of the politeness effects of these particles in directives reveals that, if they appear in polite or neutral utterances, they help to increase the politeness levels of

utterances (**Bác củ k^h chau a** - Please leave it to me!, **Ở nhà củ ấn côm trước đi nhe**, **dừng đợi mẹ!** - Please don't wait for me at dinner-time!, **Cháu vào đây với bà nào**! -Come here with grandma!); Conversely, if they appear in requests containing one impolite indicator, they also help strengthen the impoliteness of the requests (**Thối im đi chì a**! - Shut your mouth!, **Lần sau thì chưa đi nhe**! - Don't you dare do that again!). The general tendency, however, is to use the modal particle as a polite indicator. Table 13 provides the frequencies and percentages (in parentheses) out of the total number of each kind of particles, classified according to their politeness effects.

Table 13: Frequencies (and percentages) of modal particles classified by their politeness effects

| Pl(y) | A | NHI' | NHÉ | NÀO | other |
|-------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| + | 78 (95.0) | 29 (90.6) | 97 (93.2) | 71 (74.7) | 6 (100.0) |
| - | 4 (5.0) | 3 (9.4) | 7 (6.8) | 24 (25.3) | |
| Total | 82 (25.7) | 32 (10.0) | 104 (32.6) | 95 (29.7) | 6 (2.0) |

Using the same method of calculating the index scores, then the average politeness index of the modal particles **a**, **nhi**, **nhe**, **nào** is as follows:



It is clear that **a**, **nhi**, **nhe** have average politeness indices which are considerably higher than that of **nào**, while the highest

politeness index belongs to **a**. This is because, distinct from **nhi**, **nhé**, and **nào**, the particle **a** expresses not only intimacy, but also respect (when applied to superior addressees).

3.4.2.2 Address Terms

Address terms (including mainly kinterms, personal pronouns, names, titles, etc. in alerters, subjects, or other places in the utterances) are used, both to designate speakers and hearers as requestors and requestees, and also, to indicate status and solidarity relationships between speech participants. Therefore, pragmatically, these terms have the important function of being polite indicators in directives. Let us recall that when informants were asked to evaluate the degrees of politeness of different time requests (questionnaire 4) with and without address terms (1) "**Mây giờ rồi?**" (what time is it?), (2) "**H ỏi, mây giờ rồi?**" (H, what time is it?), and (3) "**H xem hồ S mây giờ rồi!**" (H, please tell me what time it is?) (S,H are kinterms used in conformity to the status and solidarity relationships between H and S), they were unanimous in judging that utterance (1) is impolite (disrespectful), utterance (2) is neutral, and utterance (3) is polite. As far as the data of directives from natural conversations are concerned, 71,0% (or 1057 out of the total of 1490) of directives with address terms are evaluated as polite, while only 9,6% (78 out of the total of 810) of directives without address terms are evaluated as polite. This demonstrates that address terms are important formal indicators of politeness, and this conforms with the comments made by informants during formal

interviews, that when communicating, especially when asking for a favour, it is important to avoid a "no-naming" style ("noi trong khong"), i.e., to avoid using first-order direct directives (DR1). Another remark to be made is that the politeness levels of directives seem to covary with the presence of address terms designating both speakers and hearers. Of 1490 directives with address terms, 8,7% (131) have only speaker address terms, 73.8% (1100) have only hearer address terms, and 17.5% (259) have both speaker and hearer address terms. Comparing these groups in terms of politeness levels, it is clear that directives with both speaker and hearer address terms have polite percentages (81%) higher than the polite percentages of directives with only speaker address terms (69.4%) or hearer address terms (68.7%). On the other hand, the high percentage of hearer address terms (1359 out of the total of 1490 or 91%) as compared to the percentage of speaker address terms (390 out of the total of 1490 or 26.1%) suggests that hearer address terms are preferred to speaker address terms, and are more important to the politeness levels of directives. This is related to the choice of request perspectives already mentioned by some researchers (Blum-Kulka 1989 among others). In order to reduce the degrees of imposition and increase politeness for directives, speakers prefer putting their utterances in hearer-oriented perspectives, i.e., with hearers as the agents of actions as in "Em học bài đi!" (Do your homework!), "Anh làm ơn cho tôi mượn cây bút!" (Could you please lend me your pencil!) to putting utterances in speaker-oriented perspectives, i.e., with speakers as the

subjects or recipients of actions as in "Chị bảo em học bài đi!" (I told you to do your homework!), "Tôi muốn mượn anh cây bút!" (I want to borrow your pencil!).

However, the question of politeness lies not only in the use or non-use of address terms, but also in the choice of appropriate terms in conformity to social norms and the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. When discussing the use of address terms in Vietnamese discursive practices, Luong (1987, 90) suggests two pragmatic models which constrain Vietnamese address: 1) the dominant model (organic unity model) emphasizing hierarchy and formal solidarity, characterized by the pervasive use of kinterms, and 2) the alternative model (communitas) emphasizing equality and informal solidarity, characterized by the use of proper names and personal pronouns. Accordingly, and from a politeness perspective, I expect that kinterms, proper names, and personal pronouns will have different degrees of relative importance in politeness expressions. The statistical results of the use of address terms, according to their pragmatic effects in directives, reconfirm this hypothesis. Take hearer address terms as an example (Table 14). Of 1359 hearer address terms (including 1100 terms used alone without speaker address terms, and 259 terms used in pairs with speaker address terms), 932 (or 67.5%) are kinterms, 285 (or 21%) are proper names, and 137 (or 10%) are personal pronouns, and the percentages of politeness indicators for each type are, respectively, 95.8% (893/932), 52.2% (149/285), and 10.2% (14/137).

3.4.2.3 External Supportive Moves

External supportive moves are mainly adverbial clauses used before or after head acts to provide the conditions for requests (Chi còn tiền không, cho em vay năm nghìn! - Do you have any money? Lend me five thousand!), the reasons (Cháu trú nhờ tí, trời mưa to quá! - Please let me stand here, it's raining cats and dogs!), the purposes (Ra đây, mẹ rửa tay cho! - Come here, Mommy is going to wash your hands!), the consequences (Cất con dao đi, dứt tay bây giờ! - Put that knife away, you will cut yourself!), or simply express speakers' attitudes, affections (Cháu ngoan quá, đưa đây cho bà nào! - You are such a good girl, give it to me!; Thôi để cho em, chi được cái thế là giỏi! - Leave her alone, you are such a nasty boy!). Besides these semantic functions, supportive moves have an important pragmatic function, they can increase or decrease the degrees of politeness of directives. Comparing the two requests "Chi cho em vay năm nghìn!" (Lend me five thousand!) and "Chi còn tiền không, cho em vay năm nghìn!" (Do you have any money left, please lend me five thousand!), we feel that the second utterance is more polite and more acceptable than the first one, because there is a presupposition, allowing for the preparation conditions for the future action, which permits the hearer an "out" if the preparation conditions are not felicitous. Or, let us take another example. Instead of saying "Ra đây!" (Come here!), the mother says to her child "Ra đây mẹ rửa tay cho!" (Come here, mommy is going to wash your hands!), the second utterance involves a change in the mother's attitude toward her child, and it is more

polite. Supportive moves function not only to increase the politeness levels of requests, but also to decrease them. Let us take the example cited above "Thôi để² cho em, chỉ được cái thể là giỏi!" (Leave her alone, you are such a nasty boy!). The supportive move is an idiomatic expression, indicating a reproach, hence its presence in the utterance renders the request (forbidding) more imposing, offensive, and hence, less polite. Thus, depending on their pragmatic effects, the presence of supportive moves can have differential effects on the politeness of directives. Of 394 external supportive moves used in 2300 directives, 80.0% (315/394) are polite indicators, and they appear mainly in polite (53.1%), or in neutral (41.5%) requests. Only 20.0% (79/394) of supportive moves are impolite indicators and they appear only in impolite requests.

3.4.2.4 Relative Importance of Verbs

Of 201 directives with verbs used as internal supportive moves, 62.2% (125/201) are assessed as polite, which is higher than the percentages of polite requests without these verbs (48.3%).

Three kinds of verbs appear as internal supportive moves before and after predicates, and affect the degrees of politeness of requests. They are performative verbs (V1), modal verbs (V2), and auxiliary verbs (V3). If performative verbs (mời-invite, xin-beg, xin phép-beg permission, báo-tell, yêu cầu-demand, etc.) can increase/decrease the imposition from the speakers' perspectives (Tôi xin anh bỏ² quá cho -I beg your forgiveness!, Con mời bố² me ăn cơm! - I invite mom and dad to eat rice!), modal verbs (phải-have

to, **nên**-should, **cu'**-go ahead, **muôn'**-want) and auxiliary verbs (**hồ**, **cho**, **giúp**, **giùm**-help, give, do a favour) express politeness effects from hearers' perspectives (**Anh cu' kê em!** -You go ahead! and **Chi đũa hồ em cái túi!** - Give me the bag, please!). Judging by their frequencies and politeness effects in utterances (Table 15), they have the following differences.

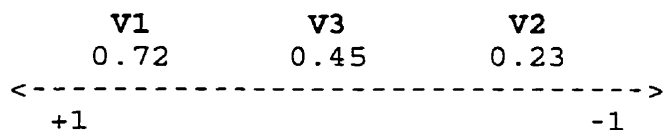
Table 15: Frequencies (and percentages) of supportive verbs classified by their politeness effects

| Pl(y) | V1 | V2 | V3 |
|-------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| + | 41 (82.0%) | 40 (40.0%) | 23 (45.0%) |
| o | 4 (8.0) | 43 (43.0) | 28 (55.0) |
| - | 5 (10.0) | 17 (17.0) | |
| Total | 50 (24.8) | 100 (49.6) | 51 (25.6) |

V1: performative verbs V2: modal verbs V3: auxiliary verbs

Although they do not have high frequencies (50/201: 24.8%), performative verbs were used mainly to increase the politeness of directives (82%) in a certain direction: to increase the level of formality and to benefit hearers (moi :32/50), or to defuse the imposition of face threatening acts (**xin**, **xin phép**- beg, beg for permission). Modal verbs have higher frequencies (100/201 or 49.6%), but their politeness effects in directives are limited (only 40% were used for politeness purposes), because two verbs which have high frequencies (**phai**, **cu'**- have to, go ahead) can only increase imposition, and therefore, are polite indicators in hearer-beneficial acts, and impolite indicators in hearer-costly acts.

With regard to auxiliary verbs, only two words are used: namely, **ho** (23/51) and **cho** (28/51). **Ho** (help) helps decrease the imposition of face-threatening acts, and is therefore a polite indicator; **cho** (give, for) is neutral in all cases. The average politeness index of these groups of verbs is as follows:



It is obvious that the politeness levels of performative verbs are higher than for modal and auxiliary verbs.

I have presented, so far, a preliminary analysis of the expressive means of politeness in directives drawn from a corpus of natural conversations. It is clear that indirectness in the Hanoi speech community, although also used as a politeness device, is not a correlate of politeness, and is not the main politeness device. The primary role in expressing politeness for directives in the Hanoi dialect belongs to supportive moves acting as polite indicators outside and inside the head acts. This, together with the questionnaire data on time requests, continues to support the hypothesis that the universal model, where indirectness is a correlate of politeness, does not quite fit, at least, the case of directives in Hanoi.

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN RESPECTFUL AND STRATEGIC POLITENESS

4.0 Introduction

The interview and questionnaire data discussed in Chapter 2 have provided us with a general picture of politeness in Hanoi as an integration of two aspects differing in terms of functions and semantics; namely, respectful and strategic politeness. This, however, raises an acute question as to whether or not such a distinction exists in actual discursive practices. An answer to this question will not only contribute to a better understanding of native politeness conceptions, but also help to illuminate the various existing hypotheses about linguistic politeness. If a distinction between respectful and strategic politeness really exists in discursive practices, we should be able to expect that these two politeness aspects are marked by different linguistic devices which have relatively different politeness functions and are constrained by different rules/maxims.

The analysis of natural conversation data in Chapter 3 shows that, contrary to the expectations of the universal politeness models, the main politeness device of directives in the Hanoi dialect is not indirectness (that is, indirectness is not an absolute correlate of politeness). In fact, the main and preferred politeness devices in directives are external and internal supportive moves with politeness effects (address terms, adverbial

clauses, verbs, and modal particles). To establish a solid basis to distinguish respectful and strategic politeness in discursive practices, we need to see whether or not there are functional differences between these politeness devices, and whether or not their use is constrained by different rules or maxims.

The first part of this chapter (4.1) will examine the distinction, in terms of manifestations (expressive means), between respectful and strategic politeness via an analysis of the functional differences between address terms and indirectness. The second part (4.2) will examine the distinction, in terms of the pragmatic structures, between respectful and strategic politeness via an analysis of the rules and maxims of each aspect. The third part (4.3) will examine the functional distinction, between respectful and strategic politeness, via a discussion of the relations of these politeness aspects to the notion of face. The last part (4.4) will discuss the interplay between the two aspects of respectful and strategic politeness.

4.1 Distinction 1: Expressive Means

4.1.1 Problems

The first task is to investigate a basis for the distinction between respectful and strategic politeness in terms of expressive means. Starting from the hypothesis that respectful politeness is used mainly to maintain the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, and strategic politeness is used mainly to manipulate the effects of the directive forces of utterances, I

expect that the expressive means of these two politeness aspects will have certain functional differences, reflected in their different relations to the important variables of the contextual situations.

To understand the reasons for this test, let us return to the important thesis of the universal politeness model regarding the functions of politeness strategies. Brown & Levinson (1987) hypothesize that all politeness strategies are used to mitigate the face threat (W_x) of a face-threatening act (FTA), counted as joint computation of three sociological variables of relative power (P) and social distance (D) between hearers and speakers, and the absolute ranking of impositions of the utterance (R_x). The relationship between W_x , as the motivation underlying the choices of politeness strategies, and the sociological variables is reflected in the formula $W_x = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_x$ (1987:76).

Interpreting this formula (henceforth referred to as the W_x formula), Brown & Levinson state that W_x will increase if D , P , and R increase (separately or jointly). Depending on the increase of W_x , speakers will have to choose the corresponding high politeness strategies (regardless of whether this increase is due to D , P , or R). For instance, the authors predict that people would usually choose off-record both when R is small but P and D are high, and when P and D are small but R is very high. In general terms, the W_x formula implies that a high politeness strategy or device (y) always has an identical positive correlation to power (P), distance (D), and ranking (R). When one of the three parameters changes

(the other two are held constant), the politeness device or strategy (y) should also change accordingly. In other words, if the Wx formula is correct, we will have the following logical corollaries:

a) If P changes while D and R are invariant, (y) will change proportionally with the increase/decrease of P.

b) If D changes while P and R are invariant, (y) will change proportionally with the increase/decrease of D.

c) If R changes while P and D are invariant, (y) will change proportionally with the increase/decrease of R.

The question arises as to whether or not, in the Hanoi dialect, any high politeness device/strategy will also be equally constrained by the three parameters of the contextual situation, and have the same positive correlational links to them, as predicted by the corollaries. Based on the hypothesized distinction between the two aspects of respectful and strategic politeness, I suggest that the expressive means of respectful and strategic politeness may have different relations to the parameters of power (P), distance (D), and ranking (R). More specifically, I expect that the expressive means of respectful politeness, an aspect of politeness which is tightly linked to the speaker-hearer social relationships, will depend more on the values of P and D rather than of R. In contrast, the expressive means of strategic politeness, an aspect of politeness which is tightly linked to the directive forces of utterances, will depend on the values of R more than of P and D. Therefore, contrary to Brown & Levinson's

predictions that the mentioned corollaries (a-b) should be equally correct for all politeness strategies, I expect that corollaries (a-b) would manifest themselves more clearly through the expressive means of respectful politeness, and the corollary (c) will manifest itself more clearly through the expressive means of strategic politeness. If the alternative hypothesis turns out to be correct, it will provide us with an objective basis to discriminate the expressive means of respectful politeness from the expressive means of strategic politeness in discursive practices, and will reconfirm the fact that an identification of the deference function (showing respect to speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships) and the mitigation function (defusing the negative effects of the directive forces of utterances) of politeness does not indeed accord with the discursive practices of Hanoi speakers.

4.1.2 Methods

In order to test the applicability of Brown & Levinson's hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis, I have analyzed the use of politeness means in 2300 directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations in accordance with their relations to the variables of power (P), and distance (D) in speaker-hearer relationships, and according to the absolute ranking of imposition (Rx) of the utterances. Among the politeness means revealed and described in Chapter 3, this chapter will focus on address terms and indirectness, which are hypothesized to be more or less representative of the differences in expressions between respectful and strategic politeness, respectively. I choose

indirectness because in Brown & Levinson's model, indirectness (including both conventional indirect and off-record) is considered a high politeness strategy (linked to the satisfaction of negative politeness wants), and because in Vietnamese it is also used to a certain extent as a politeness strategy. Address terms are chosen because they represent a politeness means with the highest frequencies in the data at hand, with a large number of words functioning to mark negative politeness (giving deference or distancing) according to Brown & Levinson's view. The following codings and analyses are performed:

Step 1: 2300 directives are coded according to 4 directive types (first-order direct, second-order direct, first-order indirect, second-order indirect), and according to the presence of address terms (kinterms, personal pronouns, names, etc.), and their politeness levels (polite, neutral, impolite).

Step 2: directives are coded according to the power/status and solidarity differences in the speaker-hearer social relationships, and the degrees of imposition of utterances.

Step 3: the results of step 1 are then compared to the results of step 2 to analyze the correlational links of address terms and indirectness to the parameters of P, D, and R in terms of the three hypothetical corollaries.

The coding procedures for step 1 were already discussed in detail in Chapter 3. In what follows I will, therefore, discuss the coding procedures for step 2, and the analysis performed in step 3.

The main task of step 2 is to classify directives according to the differences in speaker-hearer relationships and the degrees of imposition of directive forces. According to the speaker-hearer relationships, directives are coded into 6 main categories, differing in terms of solidarity and status, and corresponding to the 6 situations described in Chapter 3 (3.2.1). The basis for the distinction in terms of solidarity (D) is the frequency of contact between the speaker and the hearer. Accordingly, relationships are distinguished between the ones marked with distance (D+), characteristic of interactions between strangers, or of acquaintances with infrequent contact, and the ones marked with solidarity (D-), characteristic of interactions between family members or friends. The ground for a distinction in terms of power or status (P) are the differences in family or kin roles (superior, equal, and subordinate addressees in family interactions), in the social statuses or ages (higher status, equal status, and lower status addressees in public interactions). Consequently, these relationships are further classified according to those with powerful addressees (P+), characteristic of interactions with superior family members, and higher status or older non-family members; those with equal addressees (Po), characteristic of interactions with equal family members (such as spouses), and equal status or same-age non-family members; and those with less powerful addressees (P-), characteristic of interactions with subordinate family members, and lower status or younger non-family members.

This coding is based on objective and context-free social

relationships between speakers and hearers. In actual interactions, these relationships may be constantly reconstructed by different linguistic elements depending on participants' temporary emotional states. For example, A is a younger brother to B. If A is solidary and respects the higher status of B (i.e., A is polite), A will address B by **anh** (elder brother), and signal himself by **em** (younger sibling): this address exchange is an index of solidarity and respect. If A wants to be distant and equal with B (i.e., A is not polite), A will address B by **anh** (elder brother), and signal himself by **toi** (subject): this address exchange is an index of distance and equality. If A does not want to be solidary and respectful to the higher status of B (i.e., A is impolite), A will use the pronoun **mày** (you) to address B, and signal himself by the pronoun **tao** (I): this address exchange is an index of non-solidarity, non-respect. However, if A is a younger brother to B, all the directives A uses with B would be coded as speaking to a superior family member (D-, P+). The reconstructed status and solidarity relationships between speakers and hearers reflected in specific utterances will be analyzed in other places, for example, in the discussion of address terms (4.1.4).

This coding of utterances according to speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences is generally based on the information provided by subjects about their relationships with other members of the sample. The coding is generally not complicated. Some cases, however, need careful consideration. For example, acquaintances or relatives who have high frequencies of contact are

coded as solidary. Conversely, if they are apart from each other and do not have frequent contact, the distance is increased. For instance, X, Y, and Z are all acquaintances, but X and Y work at the same place and have close relationships, the distance between them is decreased; X and Z, on the contrary, work at different places, have non-frequent contact, or come to know each other through Y, and so the distance between them is increased. The power/status and distance/solidarity distinctions for the utterances' contexts are reflected in Table 16.

Table 16: Six situations distinguished by speaker-hearer power and distance relationships

| D(S,H) | P(H,S) | Situations | Examples (H is...) |
|--------|--------|------------|---------------------------|
| D- | P+ | A1 | superior family member |
| | Po | A2 | equal family member |
| | P- | A3 | subordinate family member |
| D+ | P+ | B1 | superior stranger |
| | Po | B2 | equal stranger |
| | P- | B3 | subordinate stranger |

The next step of the coding is to classify directives according to the degrees of imposition (or cost/benefit) of utterances (the R values). In Brown & Levinson's classification of face-threatening acts, both requests and offers are considered as threatening to hearers' negative face because of their imposing nature (1987:66). However, when calculating the degrees of cost and benefit an act brings to addressees, Brown & Levinson acknowledge that a hearer-beneficial act such as inviting or offering is less imposing than

a hearer-costly act such as requesting or ordering (1987:99,228). This is further clarified by Leech (1983) when he proposes to distinguish the cost-benefit scale (used to manipulate the costs and benefits the illocutionary acts bring to H and S) from the indirectness scale (used to manipulate the degrees of imposition). Leech suggests that these two scales function differently in competitive directives (such as ordering, forbidding, requesting, etc.) and convivial directives (such as inviting, offering, etc.). Going further along these lines, Gu (1990) argues that a directive act such as inviting is not by any criterion considered a face-threatening act in Chinese culture, even when it is highly imposing. Analyzing the imposing invitation of a Chinese woman addressed to her prospective son-in-law, Gu notes:

In this situation, a European will feel that S's act of inviting is intrinsically impeding, and that S's way of performing it is even more so. A Chinese, on the other hand, will think that S's act is intrinsically polite, and that the way S's performing it shows that S is genuinely polite, for S's insistence on H's accepting the invitation serves as good evidence of S's sincerity. The Chinese negative face is not threatened in this case.

(Gu 1990:242)

As far as the directives of Hanoi speakers are concerned, it is also noticed in Chapter 3 (3.3.1) that different from competitive (hearer-costly) directives, in convivial (hearer-beneficial) directives, imposition is not an index of a face-threat, but instead, it could even increase the politeness level of the utterances. This is because, in issuing hearer-beneficial acts such as inviting and offering, the direct mode is considered more polite than the indirect mode. It is, therefore, not sufficient to

take the degrees of imposition alone as the gauge of the R value of directives. The degree of cost-benefit an act brings to the addressee should also be taken into account. Based on this consideration, directives of the Hanoi corpus are divided into 2 groups depending on the degree of imposition and their effects on addressees: the first group includes highly imposing and hearer-costly requests such as ordering, asking for a favour, forbidding, etc., which are called competitive requests (marked as R+); the second group includes minimally imposing requests which are not hearer-costly or even hearer-beneficial such as offering, advising, inviting, and giving permission, which are called convivial requests (marked as R-).

The directives classified according to the power (P), distance (D) and imposition (R) differences are then compared to the politeness means used. In the following sections the use of indirectness and address terms will be discussed with regards to the afore-mentioned hypotheses.

4.1.3 Indirectness as an Expressive Means of Strategic Politeness

4.1.3.1 Hypotheses and Data

In their politeness theory, based on an assumption of the universal politeness function of indirectness, and the identification of indirectness with politeness, Brown & Levinson suggest a classification of politeness strategies ranging along an indirectness continuum, and predict that the use of high politeness strategies (such as conventional indirectness, off-record) will

positively correlate with the changes in the values of P, D, and R. In other words, indirectness will be used in accordance with the above-mentioned three corollaries inferred from the Wx formula.

In Chapter 3, I demonstrated, based on the questionnaire data of time requests and directives taken from a corpus of natural conversations, that conventional indirect directives (IND1) and off record directives (IND2) have lower frequencies and are less polite than direct directives with supportive moves (DR2). This suggests that for the Hanoi speakers, indirectness is not an absolute correlate of politeness, as predicted by the universal model. I also suggest three main reasons to account for the limited capability of indirectness to convey politeness, namely:

- 1) Indirectness in Hanoi directives can be used, not only to imply nonimposition and optionality, but also to imply threats, reproaches, and irony, which could potentially increase the imposition and threat to face.

- 2) Even when it is clearly used to imply nonimposition and optionality, politeness of an indirect directive still depends on the social goal of the act: indirectness can only increase the politeness of a competitive (hearer-costly) act, and in a convivial (hearer-beneficial) act it decreases politeness or keeps it in a neutral state (i.e. indirectness is not a polite indicator).

- 3) Finally, even in a competitive directive with indirectness being a polite indicator, the overall politeness of the utterance still depends on politeness effects of other supportive moves, especially of those which serve to index social relationships, such

as address terms or modal particles. Thus, indirectness by itself is not enough to make an utterance highly polite.

If the first reason indicates that indirectness in Hanoi has low frequencies of use and low politeness index scores because its main function is not politeness, the second and third reasons suggest that indirectness may have relations to the parameters of power, distance, and ranking, different from those predicted by the universal model. The politeness effect of indirectness in utterances seems to change depending on the changes in the values of R rather than on the changes in the values of P and D of speaker-hearer relationships. We can, therefore, expect that the use of indirectness in Hanoi directive data would follow corollary (c) more than corollaries (a) and (b). If this turns out to be correct, then according to my hypothesis about the distinction between respectful and strategic politeness in terms of their expressive means (4.1.1), indirectness is the expressive means of strategic politeness more than of respectful politeness.

The hypotheses of the universal model and the alternative hypotheses will be tested by analyzing the use of directness and indirectness among polite directives in their relations to the parameters of power, distance in speaker-hearer relationships, and the ranking of the impositions of utterances. The corpus consists of 1128 out of 2300 directives taken from natural conversations, which are judged as polite according to the coding procedures described in Chapter 3. These directives belong to three main directive types, namely, second-order direct (DR2), first-order

indirect (IND1), and second-order indirect (IND2). However, to facilitate the analysis, the directives are redivided into two groups, the direct group (which encompasses all second-order direct directives), and the indirect group (which encompasses first-order and second-order indirect directives).

Table 17: Frequencies (and percentages) of polite direct and indirect directives used in family and non-family interactions

| R(x) | (x) | A1 (D-P+) | A2 (D-Po) | A3 (D-P-) | B1 (D+P+) | B2 (D+Po) | B3 (D+P-) |
|------|-----|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| R+ | DR | 189 (93.1) | 49 (90.8) | 329 (90.8) | 53 (88.3) | 57 (90.4) | 58 (89.4) |
| | IND | 14 (6.9) | 5 (9.2) | 33 (9.2) | 7 (11.7) | 6 (9.6) | 7 (10.6) |
| R- | DR | 74 (84.0) | 11 (85.0) | 61 (81.3) | 39 (97.5) | 46 (97.8) | 56 (96.6) |
| | IND | 14 (16.0) | 2 (15.0) | 14 (18.7) | 1 (2.5) | 1 (2.2) | 2 (3.4) |

R(x): the absolute ranking of impositions of directives
(x) : the directive types; DR: direct; IND: indirect
A1: superior family addressees B1: superior non-family address.
A2: equal family addressees B2: equal non-family address.
A3: subordinate family address. B3: subordinate non-family addr.

These polite directives are classified into two different groups with different R values (R+ for competitive directives and R- for convivial directives), having the speaker-hearer distance (D+ for non-solidary relationships, D- for solidary relationships) and power (P+ for superior addressees, Po for equal addressees, and P- for subordinate addressees) relationships distinguished, according to the criteria described in 4.1.1. The frequencies and percentages of polite direct and indirect directives, classified by the distinctive values of P, D, and R, are presented in Table 17.

4.1.3.2 Results and Discussion

Brown & Levinson's hypothesis predicts that the use of polite indirectness will increase when the values of P, D, and R increase (corollaries a-c). The data presented in Table 17 contain some paradoxes of the corollaries regarding the correlation between polite indirectness and the increase of P, D, and R values.

1) According to the corollary (a), derived from the Wx formula, when D and R are held constant at a certain value and only P is variable, the use of high politeness strategies will change positively with the changes in the values of P. This means indirect strategies should be applied more often to superior addressees (A1, B1) than to equal (A2, B2) or subordinate addressees (A3, B3). Comparing the frequencies of polite direct and indirect directives in situations marked by the same values of D and R but different values of P, we notice that:

- With regard to competitive directives (R+), there is no significant difference in the use of indirectness in speaking to addressees with different power relationships, whether in family interactions (A1, A2, A3: $p=0.6$), or in non-family interactions (B1, B2, B3: $p=0.9$).

- With regard to convivial directives (R-), there is also no significant difference in the use of indirectness in speaking to addressees with different power relationships, whether in family interactions (A1, A2, A3: $p=0.9$), or in non-family interactions (B1, B2, B3: $p=1.0$).

These data show that the use of indirectness does not seem to

depend very much on the power differences in the speaker-hearer relationships, and does not positively covary with the changes in the values of P when D and R are held constant. This evidence suggests that the corollary (a) regarding the dependency of indirectness on the P values does not seem to be justified for the case of directives in Hanoi.

2) According to the corollary (b) derived from the Wx formula, when P and R are held constant at a certain value and only D is variable, the use of high politeness strategies will positively change with the changes in the values of D. This means indirectness should be used more with strangers (B1, B2 and B3) than with family members (A1, A2 and A3). Comparing the frequencies of direct and indirect directives used when speaking to family members (A1, A2 and A3) with those used when speaking to non-family members (B1, B2 and B3), provided the P and R values are identical, we notice that:

- With regard to competitive directives (R+), there is no significant difference in the use of indirectness in speaking to family members or non-family members, whether in the case of superior addressees (A1, B1: $p=0.4$), or in the case of equal addressees (A2, B2: $p=0.8$), or in the case of subordinate addressees (A3, B3: $p=0.7$).

- With regard to convivial directives (R-), the use of indirectness in speaking to family members seems to outnumber its use in speaking to non-family members. The difference is significant in the case of superior addressees (A1, B1: $p=0.06$), or

in the case of subordinate addressees (A3, B3: $p=0.02$), and insignificant in the case of equal addressees (A2, B2: $p=0.2$, 50% cells have expected frequencies smaller than 5).

These data show that when the values of P and R are constant, the use of indirectness does not increase with the increase in the values of D, but even seems to negatively covary with the values of D. These results run contrary to the predictions of the corollary (b), according to which the use of indirectness should positively covary with the changes in the values of D when P and R are held constant.

3) According to the corollary (c) inferred from the the Wx formula, when D and P are held constant at any value and only R is variable, the use of indirectness will positively correlate with the increase of R. This means that indirectness should be used in competitive directives (R+) more often than in convivial directives (R-). The data in Table 17 show that:

- When speaking to non-family members (D+), given the same P values, the use of indirectness in competitive directives (R+) seems to outnumber its use in corresponding convivial directives (R-). However, the significant level is rather low (for all 3 situations B1, B2, B3: $p=0.2$; 50% cells have expected frequencies smaller than 5).

- When speaking to family members (D-), given the same P values, the use of indirectness in convivial directives (R-) is higher than its use in corresponding competitive directives (R+). The difference is significant in situations when addressees are

superiors (A1:p=0.03) and subordinate (A3:p=0.025), and insignificant in situations when addressees are equal (A2: p=0.6; 25% of cells have expected frequencies smaller than 5). This means that in solidary contexts (D-) and when P is constant, the use of indirectness does not positively covary with the changes in the values of R, it even seems to negatively covary with the values of R: the smaller the values of R, the higher the incidence of indirectness.

Thus, the corollary (c) regarding the positive correlation between indirectness and R values seems to be justified for non-family contexts (although the significant level is very low) but not justified for family contexts. Could this paradox be explained by the differences in the D values between family contexts (D-) and non-family contexts (D+)? It is worth recalling that the corollary (c), inferred from the Wx formula, does not imply that the use of indirectness will positively correlate with R values in D+situations, and negatively correlate with R values in D-situations, it only implies that the use of indirectness will always positively correlate with R values, provided P and D are held constant at any value. Brown & Levinson predict that people will normally choose off-record, not only when distance (D) and power (P) are high (R is big or small), but even when D and P are low and yet the ranking of imposition (R) is high. This is why we cannot attribute the above-mentioned difference in the correlation between R and indirectness in situations A and B to the differences in the D values. On the other hand, the use of the difference in

the D values as an explanatory factor assumes that the use of indirectness correlates with D values when P and R are held constant. But as we have seen, the corollary (b) also gives rise to certain paradoxes resulting from the approach that considers indirectness as a correlate of politeness.

The analysis above indicates that the use of indirectness in directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations does not meet the expectations of the corollaries (a) and (b), and only partially satisfies the expectations of the corollary (c). In other words, the analysis does not justify Brown & Levinson's hypothesis about the positive correlations between indirectness and the values of power and distance in speaker-hearer relationships, and justifies only partially the positive correlations between the use of indirectness and the absolute ranking of impositions of directives (indirectness positively correlates with the increase in the values of R only in non-family (D+) contexts).

However, there is a question which deserves our attention here. We have been so far testing Brown & Levinson's hypotheses based on an analysis of the use of indirectness in polite directives. The underlying assumption of this approach is that indirectness always has polite effects (at least when the utterance is polite). Does this approach correctly reflect Brown & Levinson's view of the relationships between indirectness and politeness? If we simply focus on their schema of politeness strategies (1987:75) and their claims about politeness functions of indirect strategies and their universality: "indirect speech acts

have as their prime raison d'être the politeness functions they perform" and "the universality of indirect speech acts follows from the basic service they perform with respect to universal strategies of politeness" (1987:142), there is no doubt that the authors put an equation between indirectness and politeness. Our approach is therefore justifiable. However, in the introduction to the new reissue of the book, the authors state that:

Not all instances of a given strategy may be being used to do politeness, since politeness is not the only motivation for using these strategies; they may for example be used to put on a social "brake" or "accelerator" in the development of social relationships, or an off-record utterance may be used to avoid responsibility for actions unrelated to face concerns.

(Brown & Levinson 1987:22)

This notice implies that besides indirect acts which are polite, there are indirect acts which are less polite or not polite at all. This also means that there is no absolute identification between indirectness and politeness which is in full agreement with the analysis of the relationships between indirectness and politeness in Hanoi as presented in this thesis (although there remains the major difference that the authors do not make it clear, in what kinds of utterances indirectness does not function as a politeness indicator, and they are very ambiguous about whether or not, with the presence of indirect acts without polite effects, the claims that politeness is the universal function of indirectness still hold or not). In order to avoid any imposition of views (and also to test the applicability of the alternative hypothesis), it is necessary to develop a second approach which does not assume an identification of indirectness with politeness. In other words,

this second approach will be based on the concrete politeness effects of indirectness in directives with different rankings of imposition.

As analyzed in Chapter 3, contrary to the universal thesis that indirectness is always more polite than directness, the overall politeness levels of direct and indirect directives in Hanoi depend on the R values (ranking of imposition) of utterances. In a competitive, hearer-costly directive act (R+), if indirectness implies non-imposition and optionality, it is more polite than directness (second-order direct), and it is therefore considered to have a politeness effect. On the contrary, in convivial, hearer-beneficial requests (R-), indirectness with the implication of non-imposition and optionality is not perceived as more polite than directness, and is therefore not considered to have a politeness effect. This means, among the 1128 polite directives being discussed, only indirect competitive directives (R+) are more polite than their direct equivalents. Indirect convivial directives (R-) are not more polite than their direct equivalents, or indirectness here does not have a polite effect. Therefore, we should not take polite convivial directives into consideration in our discussion of the relations of polite indirectness to the parameters of power, distance and ranking. Accordingly, in order to consider the relationships between polite indirectness and the rankings of impositions (R) while the values of power (P) and distance (D) are constant, only competitive directives (R+) are taken into account. This implies that there is no polite

indirectness in convivial directives (R-).

An account of the data in Table 17, along these lines, shows that the preponderance of indirectness in convivial directives (R-) in family interactions (D-) can no more adequately serve as evidence of polite indirectness being a negative correlate of the ranking values of utterances (because indirectness in these utterances does not have polite effects). We can therefore suggest that the corollary (c) inferred from the Wx formula is justified for competitive directives (R+), not only in non-family interactions (D+) as the analysis of the first approach indicates, but also for family interactions (D-). In other words, if we take the concrete politeness effects of indirectness into considerations, the corollary (c) regarding the positive correlation of polite indirectness and the ranking of impositions of utterance (R) is verified.

What about the corollaries (a) and (b) according to the second approach? According to the approach identifying indirectness with politeness, the data in Table 17 do not support corollaries (a) and (b) regarding the positive correlations of polite indirectness and the power (P) and solidarity (D) differences in speaker-hearer relationships. These claims remain valid even when we only take polite indirectness in competitive directives (R+) into consideration. This is because, among competitive directives (R+), there is no significant difference in the use of polite indirectness to addressees with different power relationships, whether it pertains to family interactions (A1, A2, A3: $p=0.6$), or

non-family interactions (B1, B2, B3: $p=0.9$). There is also no significant difference in the use of polite indirectness to addressees with different solidarity relationships, whether it pertains to a powerful addressee (A1, B1: $p=0.4$), an equal addressee (A2, B2: $p=0.8$), or a less powerful addressee (A3, B3: $p=0.7$). Thus, even when we take the concrete politeness effects of indirectness into account, the corollaries (a) and (b) regarding the positive correlations of polite indirectness and the power and distance relationships between the speaker and the hearer, are not verified in the case of Hanoi directives. In sum, whatever approach we take (identify indirectness with politeness, or discriminate the concrete politeness effects of indirectness in utterances), the data of directives collected from a sample of Hanoi speakers seem to support the corollary (c) more than the corollaries (a) and (b). This indicates that in relation to the parameters of power and distance in speaker-hearer relationships (P and D), and of the rankings of impositions of utterances (R), polite indirectness seems to positively correlate with R more than with P and D. This outcome does not, then, support Brown & Levinson's hypothesis that polite indirectness has the same positive correlational links to the three parameters of power, distance, and ranking. It seems to verify the alternative hypothesis that the use of polite indirectness in the Hanoi dialect depends more on the values of R (degrees of impositions of the utterances) than on the values of status and solidarity in speaker-hearer relationships. Polite indirectness in Hanoi is therefore

more a device of strategic politeness than a device of respectful politeness.

4.1.4 Address Terms as a Politeness Device of Respectful politeness

4.1.4.1 Hypothesis and Data

In this section, I will analyze the use of polite address terms in relation to the corollaries (a, b and c), inferred from the Wx formula. The purpose is to test the applicability of the universal hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis about the relationships between polite address terms and the parameters of power (P) and distance (D) in speaker-hearer relationships and the degrees of imposition of the utterances (R). In their discussion of address terms as an important expressive means of politeness, Brown and Levinson make a distinction between address terms as indices of positive politeness (the use of **mom, brother, sister**, etc., as group identity markers), and address terms as indices of negative politeness (the use of **Sir, Madam, Professor**, etc., as deference markers). This also means that the authors acknowledge the dependency of the use of these address terms on the power and distance relationships between the speaker and the hearer. However, the authors further suggest that there is no need to consider the use of these polite address terms (and other honorific words) as the indices of social positions (that is, they are used to mark the status and solidarity relationships between speakers and hearers). Rather, they suggest that we consider the use of these polite address terms as strategies aiming at defusing the

seriousness of a face-threatening act, which is counted as a joint computation of three parameters of power, distance relationships between speaker and hearer, and the absolute ranking of imposition of the utterance (1987:182). This means, according to Brown & Levinson, the use of polite address terms will also follow the predictions of the corollaries (a, b and c), inferred from the Wx formula, as does the use of polite indirectness. Contrary to this hypothesis, I have suggested above, is an alternative hypothesis that in the speech of Hanoi speakers, polite address terms are used pervasively to mark the status and solidarity relationships between speakers and hearers (in accordance with the social norms of intercourse), and are therefore dependent upon the values of P and D more than upon the values of R. In other words, I expect that the use of polite address terms in directives, taken from a sample of Hanoi speakers, will satisfy the corollaries (a) and (b) more than the corollary (c).

To test the applicability of the universal hypothesis together with the alternative hypothesis, I have analyzed the relationships between the use of polite address terms in 2300 directives taken from the corpus of natural conversations and the parameters of power, the distance in speaker-hearer relationships, and the rankings of imposition of the utterances. The analysis is restricted to polite address terms for hearers (Adr+), which have the highest frequencies. Among 1058 polite address terms for hearers, identified and reported in chapter 3 (Table 14), only 1042 are taken into consideration because the utterances where they are

used can be clearly classified into categories with different speaker-hearer power and distance relationships. The other 16 are used in utterances where addressees represent a group of people with different status relationships to speakers, and the values of P and D cannot, therefore, be clearly classified. The relationships between the use of polite hearer address terms (Adr+) and the parameters of D, P, and R are examined through two kinds of analyses: (1) an analysis of the different occurrences of polite hearer address terms in different situations, and (2) an analysis of the distinctive functions of polite hearer address terms in expressing power and solidarity in different contextual situations.

For the first analysis, polite hearer address terms (Adr+) are identified and computed irrespective of their concrete functions.

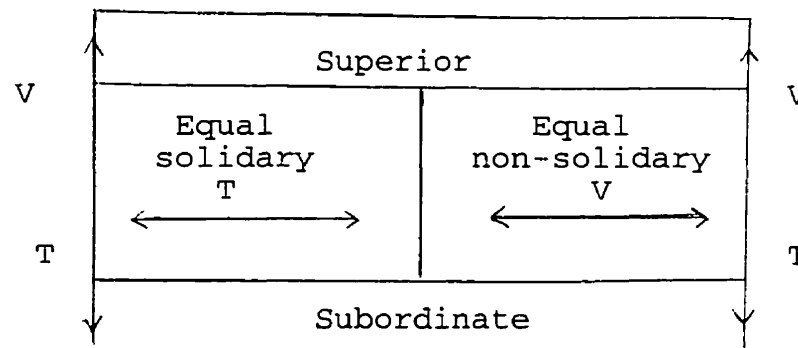
Table 18: Occurrences of polite hearer address terms (Adr+) in different situations (percentages over the total number of directives in each situation)

| R(x) | Adr+ | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 |
|------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| R+ | with Adr+ | 175 (68.5) | 56 (38.4) | 305 (31.0) | 54 (83.7) | 65 (52.0) | 63 (43.5) |
| | without Adr+ | 80 (31.5) | 89 (61.6) | 679 (69.0) | 11 (16.3) | 60 (48.0) | 82 (56.5) |
| R- | with Adr+ | 92 (82.6) | 15 (67.2) | 75 (53.7) | 41 (94.4) | 45 (84.6) | 56 (67.4) |
| | without Adr+ | 19 (17.4) | 7 (32.8) | 65 (46.3) | 2 (5.6) | 8 (25.4) | 27 (32.6) |

The occurrences of polite hearer address terms in competitive directives (R+), and convivial directives (R-), in family interactions (A), and non-family interactions (B), are reported in Table 18 (together with their percentages over the total number of

utterances occurring in each situation). The assumption here is that the occurrences of polite hearer address terms in each situation will approximately correlate to the degrees of politeness required for that situation.

For the second analysis, polite hearer address terms are coded according to their distinctive functions in reflecting or reconstructing the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships in directives in specific situations. The grounds for identifying these functions of Adr+ are the T/V distinctions marking the status and solidarity differences suggested by Brown & Gilman (1960). The authors make a useful distinction between two groups of address terms: the V-group reflect respect and/or non-solidarity and the T-group reflect non-respect and/or solidarity. Based on the presence of these different kinds of address terms, they establish the rules of address for situations pertaining to different speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. The patterns of address exchanges are reflected in the following model:



(Source: Brown-Gilman 1960)

According to this model, T is the address typically applied to

subordinate or equal and solidary addressees. V is the address typically applied to superior or equal non-solidary addressees. Wood & Kroger in numerous works on rules of address also make use of the T/V distinctions and their occurrences to evaluate the validity of the invariant rules of address (Kroger et al. 1979, Kroger 1982), and to examine the role of address exchanges in politeness (Wood & Kroger 1991). The authors also report that the politeness of address forms depends mainly on the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, with status having more weight for politeness than solidarity. However, there is one question which the authors do not discuss; namely, whether or not the use of polite address forms is equally affected by the rankings of the impositions of utterances as claimed by Brown & Levinson.

The polite hearer address terms used in 2300 directives of the Hanoi corpus can also be divided into 2 groups of formal terms (V) and solidary terms (T). The frequencies of each group can also be used to evaluate the relationships between their use and the parameters of status, solidarity in speaker-hearer relationships, and the rankings of the impositions of utterances, thus testing the plausibility of the universal and the alternative hypotheses.

a) The V-group include all polite hearer address terms (Adr+) with formal colouring (they express negative politeness in Brown & Levinson's terminology). They are expressed mainly by ascending kin terms such as **ông** (grandfather), **bà** (grandmother), **bố** (father), **mẹ** (mother), **chú-bác** (uncles), **anh** (elder brother), **chị** (elder sister), and by title and status terms such as **thầy** (teacher), **giáo**

sư (professor), and **giám đốc** (director). In a polite address exchange, these terms imply that the addressees are of superior statuses (when speakers use terms of the T-group to signal themselves), or that the addressees are equal but non-solidary (when speakers use the neutral personal pronoun **tôi** (subject) to signal themselves).

(b) The T-group include all polite hearer address terms (Adr+) with solidary colouring (they express positive politeness). They are expressed mainly by descending kin terms such as **cháu** (grandson/daughter), **con** (offspring), **em** (younger brother/ sister); and by proper names or solidary personal pronouns such as **ban** (friend), **minh** (self), **nhà** (wife or husband). These address terms imply that the addressees are inferior (when speakers use address terms of the V-group to signal themselves), or that the addressees are equal and solidary (when speakers use personal pronouns of solidary colouring to signal themselves).

The occurrences of hearer address terms of the V-group and T-group in situations differing in speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships and in the rankings of the impositions of utterances are reported in Table 19. According to the hypothesis that the use of polite address terms positively correlates with the values of P, D, and R, it should be expected that when two of three parameters are constant, and only one parameter is variable, the use of polite address terms will change accordingly. Specifically, in situations marked by high values of P, D, and R (speaking to superior persons, to non-family members, using competitive

directives), the occurrences of address terms of the V-group should prevail. In contrast, in situations marked by low values of P, D, and R (speaking to family members, to equal or subordinate persons, using convivial directives), the occurrences of address terms of the T-group should prevail.

Table 19: Occurrences of formal (V) and solidary (T) polite address terms for hearers (Adr+) in different situations (percentages over the total number of Adr+ in each situation)

| R(x) | Adr+ | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 |
|------|------|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| R+ | V | 175 (100.0) | 35 (62.5) | 20 (6.5) | 54 (100.0) | 46 (71.4) | 13 (20.5) |
| | T | | 21 (37.5) | 285 (93.5) | | 19 (29.6) | 50 (79.5) |
| R- | V | 92 (100.0) | 10 (66.7) | 8 (10.6) | 41 (100.0) | 34 (75.5) | 15 (26.7) |
| | T | | 5 (33.3) | 67 (89.4) | | 11 (24.5) | 41 (73.3) |

V : hearer address terms of the V-group (formal)

T : hearer address terms of the T-group (solidary)

R+: competitive directives;

R-: convivial directives

A1: superior family addressees

B1: superior non-family address.

A2: equal family addressees

B2: equal non-family address.

A3: subordinate family address.

B3: subordinate non-family addr.

4.1.4.2 Discussion

Based on the data reported in Tables 18 and 19, we will analyze the relationships between polite address terms for hearers and the parameters of status (P) and solidarity (D) in speaker-hearer relationships, and of the absolute ranking of impositions of utterances (R), thus testing the corollaries inferred from the Wx formula.

1) With regard to the relations of the use of polite hearer address terms (Adr+) to the speaker-hearer power relationships (P),

according to the corollary (a), we should be able to expect that the use of A_{dr+} will positively correlate with the values of P when the D and R values are held constant.

The data reported in Table 18 reconfirm that in situations with identical values of distance (D) and ranking (R), the use of polite hearer address terms gradually increases with the increase in the power (P) differences: from low occurrences in speaking to less powerful addressees (A₃, B₃) to higher occurrences in speaking to equal addressees (A₂, B₂) and highest occurrences of all in speaking to powerful addressees (A₁, B₁). More specifically:

- In competitive directives (R₊), the use of polite hearer address terms (A_{dr+}) positively correlates with the power values (P), and the differences are highly significant in both family contexts (A₁, A₂, A₃: p=0.000001) and non-family contexts (B₁, B₂, B₃: p=0.0001).

- In convivial directives (R₋), the use of A_{dr+} also positively correlates with the changes in the P values, and the differences are also highly significant in both family contexts (A₁, A₂, A₃: p=0.0005) and non-family contexts (B₁, B₂, B₃: p=0.0003).

However, the use of polite hearer address terms in these situations differs not only in their occurrences but also in the tendencies to use V-forms or T-forms. The data reported in Table 19 show that:

- In competitive directives (R₊), the use of hearer address terms of the V-group increases and of the T-group decreases, as the

power of addressees increases. The differences are highly significant for both family contexts (A1, A2, A3: $p=0.000005$), and for non-family contexts (B1, B2, B3: $p=0.00005$).

- In convivial directives (R-), the use of ADR+ of the V-group also increases and of the T-group also decreases, as the power of addressees increases. The differences are also highly significant for both family contexts (A1, A2, A3: $p=0.000005$), and for non-family contexts (B1, B2, B3: $p=0.0001$).

Thus, in any situation with identical distance (D) and ranking (R) values, the use of polite address terms for hearers (ADR+) in general and of the V-group terms in particular always increases as the power (P) of the addressees increases. This outcome indicates that the corollary (a) inferred from the Wx formula about the dependency of polite strategies on the speaker-hearer power differences is justified in the case of polite hearer address terms.

2) With regard to the relations of the use of polite hearer address terms (ADR+) to the speaker-hearer solidarity relationships, according to corollary (b) inferred from the Wx formula, we should expect that when the power (P) and the ranking (R) values are held constant, the use of ADR+ will increase as the distance (D) values increase.

The data reported in Tables 18-19 suggest the following:

- When the addressees are powerful (P+), only address terms of the V-group are applied both in family contexts and non-family contexts (Table 19: A1, B1). But the percentages of directives

with Adr+ over the total number of directives occurred when speaking to non-family members are higher than these percentages when speaking to family members (Table 18). The differences are significant for both competitive (R+) directives (A1, B1: $p=0.04$), and convivial (R-) directives (A1, B1: $p=0.00001$).

- When the hearers are equal (Po), there are no significant differences in the tendency to use V-group terms (indexing formality) and T-group terms (indexing solidarity) between family contexts and non-family contexts (Table 19, A2, B2: $p=0.4$). However, the percentages of Adr+ used in non-family contexts over the total number directives occurring in this situation are higher than these percentages of Adr+ used in family contexts. The differences are significant for competitive directives (see Table 18 for R+, A2, B2: $p=0.04$), and less significant for convivial directives (see Table 18 for R-, A2, B2: $p=0.2$).

- When the hearers are less powerful (P-), the use of Adr+ positively correlates with the changes in the D values (Table 18). The differences are significant both in competitive (A3, B3: $p=0.005$) and convivial (A3, B3: $p=0.07$) directives. At the same time, the percentages of V-group terms (compared to T-group terms) in non-family contexts are also higher than these percentages in family contexts (Table 19). The differences are significant for both competitive (A3, B3: $p=0.001$) and convivial (A3, B3: $p=0.006$) directives. These data reflect observance of the address rule "xung ton-ho nghiem" (elevate others-humble your self) in actual interactions. The application of address terms of the V-group to

less powerful addressees helps to reconstruct the power differences: a powerless person becomes an equal person. However, as the data show, this happens with non-family subordinates more often than with family subordinates.

The analysis above demonstrates that in a situation with identical power and ranking values, the use of polite hearer address terms positively correlates with the changes in the distance values. Thus, the corollary (b) derived from the Wx formula is verified for the case of address terms. However, if the changes in the power values (corollary a) affect both the occurrences of $Adr+$ and the distributions of V-group and T-group forms, the changes in the distance values affect the occurrences of $Adr+$ more than the distributions of V-group and T-group forms. This suggests that in the use of polite hearer address terms ($Adr+$) in general and in the use of V-group or T-group forms in particular, the speaker-hearer status differences are more important than the solidarity differences.

3) With regard to the relations of the use of polite hearer address terms ($Adr+$) to the absolute rankings of the impositions of utterances (R), according to the corollary (c), we should expect that when the power (P) and distance (D) values are constant, the use of $Adr+$ will positively correlate with the changes in the values of R . Contrary to this expectation, the data reported in Tables 18-19 show that the politeness investment via polite hearer address terms does not positively correlate with the changes in the values of R :

- When speaking to non-family members (D+), the occurrences of ADR+ in competitive (R+) directives are not only, not higher, but lower than their occurrences in corresponding convivial (R-) directives (Table 18). The differences are significant in all three situations of speaking to powerful addressees (B1: $p=0.01$), to equal addressees (B2: $p=0.005$), and to less powerful addressees (B3: $p=0.001$). There is no significant difference either in the distributions of V-group and T-group forms between competitive directives and corresponding convivial directives (Table 19: $p>0.2$).

- When speaking to family members (D-), the occurrences of ADR+ in competitive (R+) directives are also significantly lower than their occurrences in corresponding convivial (R-) directives (Table 18). This is true for all three situations of speaking to powerful addressees (A1: $p=0.008$), to equal addressees (A2: $p=0.02$), and to less powerful addressees (A3: $p=0.00005$). There is no significant difference in the distributions of V-group and T-group forms between competitive and their corresponding convivial directives (Table 19: $p>0.3$).

Thus, in all situations with identical power and distance values, the occurrences of polite hearer address terms in general and of V-group or T-group forms in particular in competitive directives are not only not higher, but in many cases significantly lower than their occurrences in corresponding convivial directives. This suggests that the corollary (c) derived from the Wx formula about the positive correlation of politeness

strategies and the ranking values of utterances is not verified for the case of polite address terms. This outcome seems to support the alternative hypothesis that, distinct from polite indirectness, polite address terms are used to manipulate the rankings of the impositions of utterances less often than to express the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships according to social conventions of address. Polite address terms are therefore more liable to be a device of respectful politeness than of strategic politeness.

4.1.5 Conclusion

This analysis of the use of two politeness strategies in 2300 directives taken from the Hanoi corpus of natural conversations shows that politeness strategies via polite indirectness and polite address terms for hearers have different relations to the speaker-hearer power (P) and distance (D) relationships, and the absolute rankings of the impositions of the utterances (R). While the use of politeness strategies via polite indirectness seems to depend more on R values than on D and P values, conversely, the use of politeness strategies via polite address terms seems to depend more on P and D values than on R values. The analysis suggests that Brown & Levinson's W_x formula and the inferred corollaries regarding the positive correlation between politeness strategies and P, D, and R values, without distinguishing their functions, do not seem to fit the discursive practices of Hanoi speakers. Judging by its tendency to depend on the rankings of the impositions of the utterances more than on speaker-hearer status

and solidarity relationships, it is suggested that polite indirectness is used mainly as a politeness device of strategic politeness - a politeness aspect functioning mainly to minimize the degrees of imposition and face threats of directive forces of utterances. As for polite address terms, especially polite hearer address terms (Adr+), their use depends more on the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships than on the rankings of the impositions of the utterances. It is suggested, therefore, that polite address terms are used primarily as a politeness device of respectful politeness - a politeness aspect functioning mainly to express respect for the status and solidarity differences in speaker-hearer social relationships. As will be seen in subsequent discussions, although there are cases when respectful politeness devices can be used for strategic politeness functions and vice versa, their functional differences as discussed here seem to correspond to their distinction in terms of their relations to face. In this regard, Matsumoto is right to state that "Although the connection between deference and defusing face threats is in some way undeniable, it is far from clear that deference can be equated with the speaker's respecting an individual's right to non-imposition" (1988:409), because as Lakoff contends, "deference is based on the existence of interpersonal relations, and acts to sustain them, whereas the right to non-imposition is supported by the strategy of distance, which does not lay claim to such a relationship" (Lakoff 1979:64-65). In the following sections, I will continue to argue that this distinction in manifestations

between respectful and strategic politeness (via the distinctive correlational links of polite indirectness and polite hearer address terms respectively to the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships and the rankings of the impositions of utterances) is in fact a reflection of their distinctions at the level of deep structures (via the distinctions between respectful politeness rules and strategic politeness maxims), and at the level of pragmatic structures (via their different relations to face).

4.2 Distinction 2: Politeness Rules and Maxims

4.2.1 Rules or Strategies?

Depending on researchers' conceptions, polite behaviour in politeness research is usually described either as a system of strategies or as a set of maxims. Brown & Levinson (1987) talk about "politeness strategies" where politeness stands for a means speakers rationally use to save face. In the same way Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1983) use the term "politeness maxims/rules" to describe "mean-end" expressions used by speakers to avoid social friction. Despite the differences in terminologies, judging by the instrumental view of polite behaviour described by these terminologies, there is essentially no distinction among instrumentalists as to whether politeness represents a set of maxims/rules or a system of strategies.

The picture, however, is different for those who advocate the normative view or the synthetic view. Hill et al. (1986:347-8) think it is necessary to distinguish discernment, which they define

as "socially sanctioned norms of behaviour" which "are followed automatically by speech interactants," from volition, which is defined as strategies "actively chosen by speech interactants according to their intention." Matsumoto (1988:424) does not object to the use of strategies but argues that it is important to distinguish Japanese ritualized and conventionalized politeness strategies (for example, the deference rituals expressed by honorifics) from politeness strategies oriented towards Western negative face described by Brown & Levinson: in this sense Matsumoto's ritual and conventional strategies seem to correspond to Hill et al.'s discernment rules. Although she claims to follow Brown & Levinson's and Leech's functional approach, Gu (1990) suggests that Chinese politeness "is a phenomenon belonging to the level of society, which endorses its normative constraints on each individual" (p.242) and proposes four major politeness maxims (Self-denigration Maxim, Address Maxim, Tact Maxim, Generosity maxim) which in the Chinese context are "moral maxims, the breach of which will incur social sanctions" (ibid.: 420). In the view of these researchers, the distinction between politeness as strategies used to avoid social friction and politeness as social indices seems to be reduced to the distinction between rules or strategies according to their greater or lesser normativeness. This interpretation, as rightly criticized by Held (1992), has led to an extreme opposition of individualism to normativeness, which functions as a distinction between strategic and normative politeness. There are two separate but closely interrelated

problems to be considered here; namely, to distinguish the two politeness aspects based on their functional differentiation, and to distinguish rules or strategies of politeness based on their greater or lesser degrees of conventionality.

As will be argued in 4.3, the distinction between respectful and strategic politeness as understood in this thesis is principally reflected in their functional distinction, and not mainly in their lesser or greater degrees of normativeness. Respectful politeness aims at expressing the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships (i.e., it satisfies speaker-hearer's public faces). Strategic politeness, in contrast, aims mainly at defusing the seriousness of the absolute rankings of the impositions of utterances on a human being as an independent and private self (i.e., it satisfies speaker-hearers' private faces). This is the fundamental difference. Differences in the degrees of normativeness or conventionality of each aspect as well as of its expressive means are necessarily culturally specific. In a culture where behaviour is mainly oriented toward private face, such as in many Western societies, strategic politeness and its expressive means are certainly more conventionalized than respectful politeness, as with the use of indirect routines to express polite requests in English (Brown & Levinson 1987; Leech 1983; Blum-Kulka 1989,90). In a culture where behaviour is mainly oriented toward public face, such as in many Eastern societies, respectful politeness and its expressive means are clearly more conventionalized than strategic politeness, as with the ritual use

of honorifics as markers of social status in Japanese (Matsumoto 1988; Coulmas 1992), Chinese (Gu 1990), Javanese (Geertz 1968), and Thai (Kummer 1992). Thus, if the degrees of normativeness or conventionality are used as criteria to distinguish respectful from strategic politeness, we will find it hard to explain why highly strategic politeness devices, such as indirectness in English, are at the same time also highly conventionalized (Searle 1979).

However, while being against the use of normativeness or conventionality of politeness devices as a basis for a distinction of politeness aspects in forms of different functions, I do agree with Hill et al. (1986) that normativeness or conventionality of expressive means can be used as a basis to distinguish politeness rules from politeness strategies. Accordingly, politeness rules are highly conventionalized, and are determined by social constraints more than by individual intentions. In contrast, politeness strategies are relatively less conventionalized, and are chosen under the constraints of individual calculations rather than those of social pressures.

In the existing works on Vietnamese politeness, polite behaviour is often described as rule-governed (it is socially conventionalized) rather than as an effect of individual communicative strategies. The focus is exclusively on respectful politeness. Nguyen Dinh Hoa (1956) states that Vietnamese society has a strict status system and the Confucian rule of name rectification has such a strong impact on social interactions that the dominant motif belonging to the Vietnamese "thought world" is

"to take one's proper position in the social scale" (p.246). "The dominant theme as expressed through the language is to take one's proper position among other members of the community" (p.3). With his special emphasis on the principle of "occupying one's proper position in the social scale" Nguyen Dinh Hoa has identified Vietnamese polite behaviour as predominantly respectful. The author's silence regarding the coexistence of other possible politeness rules gives readers an impression that respectfulness is the only politeness rule governing Vietnamese social interactions, therefore, it can hardly be used to satisfactorily explain different manifestations of Hanoi speakers' polite behaviour. Luong, in the cited works (1987,90), although not aiming specifically at polite behaviour, has unveiled the impact of the organic unity model (with its emphasis on hierarchy and formal solidarity) and the alternative model of *communitas* (with its emphasis on equality and informal solidarity) in discursive practices of Vietnamese speakers, especially in the use of personal reference terms. The author has pointed out that "a particular discursive practice constitutes both a goal-directed choice and a representation of one of the alternative and pragmatically structured models" (1990:8). Most recently, Pham thi Thanh (1995) in her work on Vietnamese etiquette, has proposed five communicative rules constraining Vietnamese polite behaviour, namely: 1) a rule of communicative context (formality or informality); 2) a rule of ranks among speech participants (superordinate, equal, subordinate); 3) a rule of communicative

relations (stranger, familiar); 4) a rule of attitudes to speech participants (respect, intimacy); and 5) a rule of quantity of speech participants (a complement to rule 4 in the case of a group of addressees with diverse degrees of familiarity). It is easy to see that this system of rules either includes politeness rules which mainly express the respect for the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships (the P and D values), and there are no politeness strategies aiming at changing the absolute rankings of the impositions of utterances (R values), or includes both kinds of politeness rules and strategies without clearly distinguishing between them.

As discussed earlier, Hanoi speakers perceive politeness through the two aspects of respectful politeness and strategic politeness encompassed in the common "phep lich su" (politeness rules). This carries the implication that politeness is rule-governed. However, due to a strong Confucianist emphasis on the conformity of behaviour to social relationships, respectful politeness seems to be more foregrounded than strategic politeness in social intercourse. One consequence of this is that, although both aspects of politeness are under constraints of social norms and individual choice, respectful politeness is to a greater degree linked to social norms: when speakers use any device of respectful politeness (for example address terms) to reflect or reconstruct the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, they are constrained to choose among the behavioural norms socially sanctioned in conformity to hearers' expectations, unless speakers

do not desire to show respect to their status and solidarity relationships, and intentionally violate the rules of polite address. This explains why in the previous discussion, when address terms are used not to reflect the social relationships, but to reconstruct them, their use nevertheless still follows the invariant rules of address. Distinct from respectful politeness, strategic politeness as a means to defuse the impositions of utterances, is not closely linked to highly conventionalized norms of social intercourse. Its use depends on individual calculations more than social constraints. The absence of strategic politeness does not therefore incur serious social sanctions.

Thus, the aspects of respectful and strategic politeness in Hanoi differ from each other not only in their functions but also in their degrees of conventionality. Respectful politeness aims at expressing respect to the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships and is closely linked to social conventions of behaviour. Therefore, the pragmatic system of respectful politeness could be best described in terms of **rules** (the rules of respectful politeness). This implies that respectful politeness is a system of rules both constraining and guiding people to behave in conformity to the speaker-hearer social relationships. Strategic politeness, on the other hand, aims at manipulating the impositions of utterances, and it is linked to individual strategic calculations more than to social conventions of behaviour. Therefore, the pragmatic system of strategic politeness could be best described in terms of **strategies** or **maxims** as they usually are

in the universal theories. Of the two terms, maxim seems to fit the conceptions of formal/strategic politeness of Hanoi speakers more than strategy. The use of maxim implies that strategic politeness is not only individual communicative strategy, but this strategy is to a certain degree also rule-oriented. This term is therefore used to describe the pragmatic system of strategic politeness (the maxims of strategic politeness).

I have no ambition to devise a comprehensive system of rules and maxims of politeness in Hanoi. However, based on the observation of the many various manifestations of politeness in directives taken from a limited corpus of natural conversations, in what follows I will attempt to suggest some basic rules of respectful politeness and maxims of strategic politeness and to describe their manifestations in directives.

4.2.2 The Rules of Respectful Politeness

In the previous section, through an analysis of the correlational links between polite hearer address terms and the speaker-hearer power (P) and distance (D) relationships, as well as the rankings of the impositions of utterances (R), I have demonstrated that respectful politeness and its expressive means appear to depend on the P and D values more than on the R values. The question now is what rules seem to constrain the functioning of respectful politeness and its devices. While discussing the universal rules guiding an actor's conduct in general, and address exchanges in particular, Kroger proposes the following four main rules:

Rule 1 is activated in exchanges in which the other is more powerful: "Be wary and cautious and maintain a safe distance from those in power who may hurt you" (by using respectful forms of address and by suffering silently indignities such as receiving disrespectful address forms).

Rule 2 is activated in exchanges in which the other is less powerful: "Treat with contempt, if you wish, those who are powerless and cannot threaten you" (by using disrespectful forms of address and insisting on respectful ones).

Rule 3 is activated in exchanges in which the other is close and intimate: "Cherish those who are close to you and who will support you in your need" (by using intimate forms of address and multiple names in recognition of the complexity, variety, and importance of intimates).

Rule 4 is activated in exchanges in which the other is distant but equal, a stranger: "Maintain distance from strangers who seem to be equal but are potentially threatening" (by using and expecting formal forms of address).

(Kroger 1982:816)

Rule 1 and rule 2 differ in terms of speaker-hearer power differences, rule 3 and rule 4 differ in terms of speaker-hearer solidarity differences. These are basically speaker-oriented rules which reflect speaker's calculations and strategies in dealing with the speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences. These rules, therefore, are not the same rules aiming at respecting the speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences in accordance with the socially-prescribed rules of intercourse which I am trying to describe here.

Below I will argue that Vietnamese respectful behaviour also functions in accordance with these universal rules, but under the influence of cultural factors, and from politeness perspective (not in regard to behaviour in general), yet there are certain differences. With regard to exchanges characterized by inequalities of power, when the other is powerful, the "showing

respect to superiors" rule (**kính trên**) not only represents a strategic calculation-"Be wary and cautious and maintain a safe distance from those in power who may hurt you"-but also, and more importantly, carries a moralized principle of social conduct requiring one to show one's proper respect for one's superiors. When the other is less powerful, although subject to the injunction to "treat with contempt, if you wish, those who are powerless and cannot threaten you," the dominant principle of social conduct will require one to "yield to subordinates" (**nhường dưới**), i.e., to show proper respect to one's subordinates. With regard to exchanges characterized by differences in solidarity relationships, if solidarity is expected for all solidary relationships irrespective of power (in)equalities, non-solidarity on the contrary is also expected for all distant relationships: one keeps one's distance not only from those of equal or superior statuses, but also from those of lower statuses in formal contexts (for instance, one still calls a stranger, younger than oneself, by **anh/chi** (elder brother/sister), and one uses **tôi** (self) to designate oneself). These divergences suggest that Vietnamese respectful politeness functions under the constraints of somewhat different rules. I would like to suggest two rules of respectful politeness, which are perceived by Hanoi speakers through the two main notions of **lễ phép** (respectfulness) and **đúng mực** (propriety). These rules have intertwining relationships, as each consists in two main subrules, distinguished in terms of speaker-hearer power (rule 1) and distance (rule 2) differences.

1) **Qui tắc lễ phép** (respect rule): expresses proper respect to others in accordance with the speaker-hearer status relationships. It has two subrules:

a) Showing proper respect (kính trọng) to a superior other.

b) Showing proper respect (ton trọng) to a subordinate other.

2) **Qui tắc thân thiện** (solidarity rule): maintains proper solidarity relationships in accordance with the speaker-hearer solidarity differences. It has two subrules:

a) Being solidary to intimate or close others.

b) Keeping one's distance from non-solidary others.

Comparing these rules with the notions through which native speakers perceive the semantics of politeness (Chapter 2), we notice that these rules cover the notions of "respectfulness" (**lễ phép**) and "propriety" (**đúng mực**) more than the notions of "tact" (**khéo léo**) and "delicacy" (**tê nhị**), therefore, they are more the rules of respectful politeness than the rules of strategic politeness. In verbal interactions these rules do not only constrain, but also guide people to behave in accordance with the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. Speakers do not only follow these rules, but also exploit them to reconstruct their status and solidarity relationships with hearers within the limits that the social conventions allow them. A behaviour which falls outside these limits may have serious consequences for social harmony, as will be shown in the following discussions.

4.2.2.1 Respect Rule (**Qui Tắc Lễ Phép**)

Based on interview and questionnaire data on native

metapragmatics (Chapter 2), the respect rule is identified as the main rule of respectful politeness. It is rooted in the Confucianist principle of "name rectification" which has been moralized into a social norm of behaviour. Accordingly, in any form of respectful behaviour, speakers need to index the proper identification of their status relations to hearers by appropriate expressive means. Although there is no absolute correspondence between the notion of status and the notion of power (P) used by Brown & Levinson (see Goody 1978), these two notions are mainly defined according to a distinction between asymmetrical and symmetrical relations among speech participants, and can be used as equivalents. Accordingly, differences in speaker-hearer status relationships are assumed in this thesis as simultaneously indexing speaker-hearer power differences, and in turn, power differences also imply status differences. As in many other cultures, the hearer-speaker status/power relations are perceived by Vietnamese speakers in terms of superior (P+) and subordinate (P-) for asymmetrical dyads, and equal (Po) for symmetrical dyads. The power differences are determined by different social attributes depending on the speaker-hearer social relationships and on communicative contexts. In family interactions where hierarchy is established on the basis of kin ties, power is determined mainly by kin roles; in public (formal) interactions where "the particularly salient tension between gerontocratic and meritocratic criteria in the hierarchical ranking of community members was conceptualized in terms of the structural opposition between **thiên** **trước**" ("heavenly

title," i.e., age) and **vuông tước** ("title granted by the king" or "secular title," i.e., bureaucratic ranks and examination degrees)" (Luong 1990:135), power is determined by age and social status relationships. In accordance with this power distinction, **qui tắc lễ phép** (respect rule) requires that speakers behave in conformity to the speaker-hearer status relationships, i.e., to express the hierarchical formality, one of the most important characteristic of the dominant behaviour model in the Vietnamese sociocultural universe (Luong 1990). This properly respectful behaviour is best expressed in the idiom "**kính trên, nhường dưới**" (respect age, yield to youth). Any failure to follow this rule would be socially judged as assuming disdainful attitudes (*thai do coi thuong*) if speakers do not show proper respect to equal and subordinate addressees, or as being disrespectful and insolent (**vô lễ, hỗn láo**) if speakers do not show due respect to powerful hearers. In social interactions the respect rule functions in close proximity with the second important rule of respectful politeness, the solidarity rule.

4.2.2.2 Solidarity Rule (**Qui Tắc Thân Thiện**)

Being a supplementary rule of respectful politeness, aiming at realizing **qui tắc lễ phép** (respect rule) according to speaker-hearer solidarity relationships, **qui tắc thân thiện** (solidarity rule) determines the degrees of solidarity to be invested in speech, depending on the speaker-hearer solidarity relationships and the formality of the communicative contexts. Thus, if the respect rule is used more to determine the degrees of respect in

accordance with the speaker-hearer status relationships, the solidarity rule is used more to determine the degrees of solidarity in accordance with speaker-hearer solidarity relationships. In following this rule, it is important for speakers to determine correctly the solidarity relationships they share with hearers. In the Vietnamese sociocultural context, the speaker-hearer solidarity relationships are determined primarily on the basis of kin ties (kins vs. nonkins), of frequency of contact (solidary vs. distant): kin ties and frequency of contact increase solidarity (D-), non-kin ties and infrequency of contact increase distance (D+). Besides the speaker-hearer relationships, the communicative contexts also affect the D values. The formality of the contexts tends to increase distance (D+), and the informality of the contexts may help to decrease distance and to increase solidarity (D-). Thus, the D values depend both on the relationships (kins/nonkins, group members/ strangers) and on the communicative contexts (formality or informality), and in this sense it could be thought of as a contextual-relational variable. For instance, if speakers and hearers have kin ties, their relationships are assumed to be solidary (D-), but this is correct only in informal contexts (for example, in family interactions). In formal contexts (for example, in a public meeting where speakers and hearers are participants), the formality assumes that speakers need to keep their distance (D+) from hearers. In contrast, if speakers and hearers are strangers their relationships are assumed to be nonsolidary (D+). But if this is obligatory in formal contexts (for instance at

official receptions, public meetings, etc.) where speakers use only titles or ascending kinterms to address hearers and use **tôi** (subject) for self-address, in informal contexts speakers may choose to be on solidary terms with hearers (for instance, in asking a stranger in the street for a favour speakers may use ascending kinterms to address hearers and corresponding descending kinterms for self-address). For this reason I suggest the D variable could be considered as having discriminatory values both for speaker-hearer relationships and for communicative contexts. In correspondence with the differences in the speaker-hearer solidarity relationships (D values), the solidarity rule suggests that speakers express "properly" their solidarity relationships to hearers. The propriety is reflected in two interrelated aspects, namely, in the increase of solidarity for solidary relationships or informal contexts (D-) and in the maintenance of due distance for non-solidary relationships or formal contexts (D+). A violation of this rule could be socially judged as either taking liberties (**suông sã**), or being too cold (**lạnh lùng**).

In actual interactions **qui tắc lễ phép** (respect rule) and **qui tắc thân thiện** (solidarity rule) function in close interrelationship and jointly depend on speaker-hearer relationships. The correlations between these rules in determining the degrees of respect and solidarity to be invested according to the speaker-hearer power (P) and distance (D) differences are schematized in Table 20.

Table 20: The correlations between respect and solidarity rules according to speaker-hearer power and distance differences

| D(S, H) P(H, S) | D- | D+ |
|--------------------|--|---|
| P+ | kính trọng-thân thiện (respect-solidarity) | kính trọng-khoảng cách (respect-distance) |
| Po | tôn trọng-thân thiện (respect-solidarity) | tôn trọng-khoảng cách (respect-distance) |
| P- | | |

On this basis we can now distinguish four concrete rules of respectful politeness in accordance with the speaker-hearer status/power and solidarity/distance relationships:

- **Kính trọng-thân thiện** (respect-solidarity) rule: show respect and solidarity to powerful but solidary others (used when speaking to parents, grandparents, elder sisters/brothers, etc.).

- **Kính trọng-khoảng cách** (respect-distance) rule: show respect but keep distance from powerful and distant others (used when speaking to powerful persons in formal contexts).

- **Tôn trọng-thân thiện** (respect-solidarity) rule: show respect and solidarity to less powerful/equal and solidary others (used when speaking to spouses, colleagues, friends, siblings, offsprings, etc.).

- **Tôn trọng-khoảng cách** (respect-distance) rule: show respect and keep distance from less powerful/equal and non-solidary others (used when speaking to same-age or younger persons in formal contexts).

Below is an analysis of the realizations of respectful

politeness rules through the use of address terms.

4.2.2.3 Realizations of Rules of Respectful Politeness Through Address Exchanges

As discussed above (4.1), the Vietnamese language has a rich system of words denoting speakers, hearers, and the third person, including kinterms (**ông**-grandfather, **bà**-grandmother, **bố**'-father, **mẹ**-mother, **anh**-elder brother, **con**-offspring, etc.), titles (**thầy giáo**-teacher, **giám đốc**-director, **thiếu tá**-major, etc.), personal pronouns (**tôi**-subject, **minh**-self, **tao**-I, **mày**-you, etc.), and personal names. Generally speaking, kinterms (KT) are bound up with expressing respect and solidarity, titles are bound up with expressing respect and distance, and therefore they are both entitled to be used as polite address forms according to the rules/subrules of respectful politeness. With regard to personal pronouns, there are on the one hand, pronouns implying "tôn trọng-khoang cách" (respect-distance) such as **tôi** (subject), **chúng tôi** (exclusive we), "tôn trọng-thân thiện" (respect-solidarity) such as **minh** (self), **chúng ta**, **chúng mình** (inclusive we), and on the other hand, pronouns implying non-respect such as **tao** (I), **mày** (you), **chúng tao** (exclusive we), **chúng mày** (plural you). Accordingly, the group with a respectful meaning satisfy the subrules of respectful politeness and could be used as polite address terms, the group with a non-respectful meaning violate the rules of respectful politeness and therefore could not be used as politeness markers.

The determination of respect and solidarity/distance meanings of address exchanges is in fact a complicated job, which involves

not only the forms speakers send, but also the forms speakers receive or use to designate self (Kroger 1982). For example, a kinterm of the V-group such as **anh** (elder brother) or **chi** (elder sister) could be used to address a superior and solidary addressee with an implication of respect and solidarity (S sends **anh/chi** (elder brother/sister) and uses **em** (younger brother/sister) for self-address, or an implication of respect and distance when used to an equal and nonsolidary addressee (S sends **anh/chi**, uses **tôi** (subject) for self-address and receives **anh/chi** from H), or to a subordinate addressee (S sends **anh/chi**, uses **tôi** for self-address and receives a kinterm of the V-group or a title indicating a higher status). A title such as **thiếu tá** (major) could be used to express respect and distance to a superior addressee (S sends **thiếu tá**, uses **tôi** for self address and receives a lower-ranking title), or respect and distance to an equal addressee (S sends **thiếu tá**, uses **toi** for self-address and receives a similar title), or to a subordinate addressee (S sends **thiếu tá**, uses **tôi** for self-address and receives a higher-ranking title). It could even express respect and solidarity when used to a superior addressee (S sends **thiếu tá**, uses a kinterm of the T-group like **em**-younger brother/sister for self-address). The use of proper names to address H will imply a lack of respect (**vô lễ**) if H is powerful, and solidarity if H is equal or less powerful. But it could also imply a lack of respect if S uses **tao** (I) for self reference, or respect and solidarity if S uses kinterms of the V-group or personal pronouns such as **tôi**, **minh** (subject, self) for self-

address. Thus, despite this obvious complexity, the general principle at work here is that any address term could be used in certain ways in combination with other address terms to express different meanings of the speaker-hearer power and distance relationships.

In comparison with the above-mentioned subrules of respectful politeness, I would suggest the following four main polite address exchanges, differing in terms of the speaker-hearer power and solidarity relationships. Each is marked by certain address terms used by speakers for hearer address and for self-address (or received from hearers):

a) "**Kính trong-thần thiên**" (respect-solidarity) exchanges, marked by nonreciprocal pairs of kinterms where S uses kinterms of the V-group (**ông/bà**-grandfather/mother, **bố/me**-father/mother, **anh/chi**-elder brother/sister, etc.) to address H and to signal him/herself by (or to receive) kinterms of the T-group (**con**-offspring, **em**-younger sibling, **cháu**-nephew/niece). These are typically polite exchanges applied to superior persons in families or kin groups. In following the "kính trong-thần thiên" (respect-solidarity) rule, subordinate persons in the families such as offsprings, nephews/nieces almost have no other choice but to use ascending kinterms to signal addressees and to use descending kinterms for self-address. Examples:

- (31) A granddaughter speaks to her grandfather:
Ông ời, ông đưa khăn đây cháu giặt cho!
grandpa vocative grandpa give towel here
granddaughter/grandson/niece/nephew wash for
(Grandpa, give me your towel to wash!)

The use of ascending kinterms for hearers and descending kinterms for speakers here clearly defines the status hierarchy and kin ties, thereby expressing both respect and solidarity. In practice, some address terms can be omitted but their omission may change the politeness levels of the utterances. Compare (31) and its derivatives (32 a-e) below:

- (32) a. Ông ôi, đưa khăn dây cháu giặt cho.
 b. Ông đưa khăn dây cháu giặt cho.
 c. Đưa khăn dây cháu giặt cho.
 d. Ông đưa khăn dây giặt cho.
 e. Đưa khăn dây giặt cho.

The politeness levels of these utterances gradually decrease from (a) to (e): in (a) and (b) the deletion of one **ông** makes these utterances slightly less polite than the original utterance (31), but the hierarchical and solidary relationship is still marked by the address exchange **ông-cháu** (grandpa-granddaughter/son). In (c) the absence of **ông** leaves **cháu** exclusively responsible for the load of relational semantics. Although the low status meaning of **cháu** implies that the addressee is the one enjoying a higher status, **cháu** alone is not enough to replace an ascending kinterm to mark the high status of the addressee: (c) risks becoming insolent and impolite (vo le). In contrast, the presence of **ông** alone in (d) is not enough to mark the hierarchy and solidarity meanings needed for the case due to its pragmatic ambiguity: **ông** can mark hierarchy and solidarity (in the pair **ông/grandpa-cháu/granddaughte/son**), or equality and distance (in the pair **ông/grandpa-tôi/subject**), and therefore, utterance (d) is also impolite. The absence of both **ông** and **cháu** in (e) indicates a lack of respect and solidarity, the

utterance is therefore very impolite (vo le).

The respect-solidarity for superior family members can be reflected not only in direct address exchanges but also in the ways people talk about them. To show respect and solidarity for one's grandpa/ma, parents, older siblings, instead of third person pronouns **ông ấy** (that old man: he), **bà ấy** (that old woman: she), **anh ấy** (that young man: he), **chị ấy** (that young woman: she), one often uses groups of kinterms such as **ông cháu**, **bà cháu** (my grandpa/ma), **bố em**, **mẹ em** (my dad/mom), **anh em** (my elder brother), etc. Examples:

- (33) A teenager speaks to an elderly man:
Bác Hoa ơi, bác vào ông cháu hỏi cái gì ấy!
senior-uncle/aunt Hoa vocative senior-uncle/aunt enter
grandpa nephew/niece ask classifier what that
(Uncle Hoa, come in please, my grandpa wants to ask
you something!)

The "kinh trong-thân thiên" (respect-solidarity) address exchanges (i.e., speakers use ascending kinterms to signal addressees and descending kinterms to refer to selves) can also be extensively used in informal public interactions. In these cases, the speaker-hearer actual social relationships are usually compared to the kin roles based on age criteria: speakers call a man/woman of their grandpa/ma' ages as **ông/bà** (grandpa/ma) and use **cháu** (grandson/daughter) for self-address, call a man/woman of their elder brothers/sisters' ages as **anh/chị** (elder sibling) and use **em** (younger sibling) for self-address, etc. Examples:

- (34) A middle-aged man, the host (A) speaks to a young woman, his guest (B):

A: **Mời cô uống nước đi!**
invite junior-aunt drink water imperative
([aunt] please have some tea!)

B: **Bác củ kê cháu!**
senior-uncle/aunt imperative leave nephew/niece
(Please leave it to me!)

This kind of address satisfies both the need to express hierarchy and the need to express solidarity for certain social relationships.

b) "**Kính trong-khoảng cách**" (respect-distance) exchanges are marked by the fact that speakers use kinterms of the V-group to address superior H and **tôi** (subject) to refer to selves or to receive kinterms of the V/T-group denoting lower statuses. These exchanges are preferred in public interactions when speakers are speaking to powerful addressees with whom they have (or want to have) distant relationships. Examples:

(35) The chair A (elderly man) speaks to an old man B at a public meeting:

A: **Tôi xin mời cú Bằng lên đọc thơ a.**
subject beg invite grand-grand-father Bang come read poem honorific

(I would like to invite Mr. Bang to read his poem)

B: **Ày-chết, anh củ mời người khác trước đi. Dè tôi đọc sau.**

Oh elder-brother imperative invite people other before imperative. Let subject read after.
(Oh, please let other people read first. I'll read later)

In (35) the chair of the meeting uses an ascending kinterm (grandgrandfather) to address an old man and receives from that man a lower ranking ascending kinterm (elder brother). The superior status of the addressee is acknowledged and respected, but the use of **tôi** (subject) for self-addresses by the chair and the old man implies that their relationships are formal (non-solidary).

Another manifestation of "kính trong-khoảng cách" (respect-distance) exchanges is reflected in the way speakers use high

ranking titles to signal addressees, use **tôi** (subject) to refer to selves, and receive titles or ascending kinterms with lower status meanings. These are ritual address exchanges in public institutions (employees call their "bosses" by **giám đốc** (director), **thủ trưởng** (boss), use **tôi** for self address, and receive **anh/chi** (elder brother/sister), at schools (students use **thầy/cô** (teacher), **giáo sư** (professor) to call their instructors, use **tôi**, or **em** (younger brother/sister) to call themselves and receive **anh/chi** (elder brother/sister), in the armed forces (soldiers or low ranking officers use high ranking titles to address their higher ranking officers, use **tôi** for self-address, and receive low ranking titles).

It is obvious that in order to identify a "kinh trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) address exchange we need to consider at least two criteria: the asymmetrical use of high titles or ascending kinterms for superior addressees (i.e., subordinate speakers do not receive the same titles or ascending kinterms), and the use of **tôi** (subject) by speakers for self-address instead of descending kinterms. The first criterion allows us to distinguish "kinh trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) address exchanges from "ton trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) address exchanges: if a title or kinterm of the V-group is used only for a superior addressee (while the speaker uses **tôi** for self address), it is "kinh trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) address (see examples above). On the contrary, if a title or a kinterm of the V-group is used only for a subordinate addressee (for example, parents call

their grown-up offsprings by **anh/chi** (elder brother/sister) and use **tôi** for self-address), or used symmetrically for both speaker and addressee (for example, colleagues call each other by **anh/chi** and use **tôi** for self-address), it is "ton trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) address (see 3 below). The second criterion allows us to distinguish "kinh trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) address exchanges from "kinh trong-than thien" (respect-solidarity) address exchanges: a title or a kinterm of the V-group applied to superior addressees implies "kinh trong-khoang cach" (respect and solidarity) only when the speaker uses **tôi** for self address. If speakers use kinterms of the T-group for self address, the address exchanges imply "kinh trong-thân thiên" (respect and solidarity) more than "kinh trong-khoang cách" (respect and distance).

c) "**Tôn trong-thân thiên**" (respect-solidarity) address: this is used in polite address exchanges with equal or subordinate addressees with whom speakers have (or desire to have) solidary relationships in informal contexts. With equal addressees "tôn trong-thân thiên" (respect-solidarity) address is reflected in the use of terms of the T-group such as proper names, words such as **ban/câu** (friend), **minh** (self), etc., to address friends or close colleagues, and in the use of **minh** (self), **tớ** (I) for self-reference. Example:

- (36) A girl (A) speaks to her close girl friend (B):
 A: **Lan ỏi, đưa mình mượn quyển địa-li!**
Lan vocative give self borrow classifier geography
 (Lan, will you pass me your geography book?)
 B: **Ồ đằng sau lưng câu ấy.**
 in side after back friend that
 (It's just behind you)

The status equality is reflected in the symmetrical use of hearer address terms, the solidarity is reflected in the use of **minh** (self) for self-reference.

With regard to subordinate addressees, "ton trong-than thien" (respect-solidarity) address is reflected in the use of descending kinterms (**con**-offspring, **em**-younger sibling, **cháu**-granddaughter/son) or proper names as hearer address terms and of corresponding ascending kinterms (**bô/me**-father/mother, **anh/chi**-elder sibling, **ông/bà**-grandfather/mother) as self-reference. Example:

(37) A mother speaks to her little daughter:

Me lấy con ăn nhé!

mother take offspring eat modal

(Shall mom give it for you [offspring] to eat?)

Different from "kinh trong-than thien", in this type of address, due to the speakers' superior statuses, the omission of reference terms (kinterms of the T-group, proper names) for subordinate addressees, or of kinterms of the V-group for self superior in utterances with multiple reference terms does not significantly change the politeness levels of utterances:

(38) Elder sister speaks to her younger sister:

Thôi, (chi) bỏ bớt gạo ra em nhé?

Now (elder-sister) take off rice younger-sibling modal

(Shall I take off some rice now [younger sister]?)

However, if none of the address terms (including proper names) is used, the utterances may become face-threatening:

(39) A father speaks to his daughter:

Đi lên nhà trên mà chơi!

go up house over play

(Go upstairs and play there!)

The absence of an ascending kinterm for the powerful speaker and a

T-group address term for a less powerful addressee in this example indexes the speaker's lack of respect for and solidarity with the addressee.

d) "**Tôn trọng-khoảng cách**" (respect-distance) address is a polite address used with equal or subordinate addressees with whom speakers have no solidary relationships (or desire to keep their distance) in formal contexts. With equal addressees speakers usually use kinterms, titles of the V-group for hearer address and use **tôi** (subject) for self reference. In return, speakers also receive similar V-group address terms. Example:

(40) A host (A) speaks to an employee (B) of the local electricity bureau:

- A: **Anh xem hộ tôi mỗi suất là bao-nhiêu?**
elder-brother look help subject each portion is how-much
(Can you tell me how much is for one household?)
- B: **Vâng để tôi xem. Nhà chị mỗi tháng là nghìn hai a!**
yes let subject see house elder-sister each month is
thousand two honorific
(Oh yes, let me see. Your payment is one thousand
two hundred each month)

Different from "kinh trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) (see 2 above), in this polite address exchange A uses an ascending kinterm to address B, **tôi** to refer to the self, and receives a similar address (same status meanings) from B. The reciprocity of hearer address terms indicates an equal status relationship, and the use of **tôi** for self-address indicates a lack of solidarity.

"Ton trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) address is also used with less powerful addressees. Powerful speakers use kinterms of the V-group or titles to signal less powerful addressees, use **tôi** for self-address, and receive ascending kinterms or titles of higher ranks:

- (41) A visitor (A) speaks to a younger host (B):
- A: **Có-nhê anh cũng chưa xuống nhà tôi nhi?**
 perhaps elder brother also not come house subject modal
 (Perhaps you haven't been to my place yet?)
- B: **Thưa bác, cháu xuống rồi a.**
 honorific senior-uncle/aunt nephew/niece come already
 honorific
 (Oh yes, I've already been there)

In this example A (a powerful person) uses a kinterm of the V-group (**anh**-elder brother) to call her addressee who is less powerful and also receives a kinterm of the V-group (**bác**-senior aunt/uncle). Although these two terms belong to the V-group, they do differ in their status level. Thus, in "ton trong-khoang cach" (respect-distance) address exchange used with less powerful addressees, the V-group address terms are also asymmetrically used (that is, the terms used for less powerful persons can not be reciprocated to more powerful persons).

I have presented above the address exchanges taken from the 2300 directives of the Hanoi corpus. These address exchanges illustrate the functioning of the respect and solidarity rules of respectful politeness in daily verbal activities. We can see that although the use of these polite address terms is principally choice-based, the choices are nevertheless governed by social conventions regarding the marking of respect and solidarity in conformity with the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. This shows that the claim about polite address terms being an expressive means of respectful politeness, and functioning under constraints of the speaker-hearer status (P) and solidarity (D) relationships, is justifiable. However, together with the use of polite address terms as an observance of the

address rules of respectful politeness, there are also cases where speakers consciously violate social conventions of address, or manipulatively exploit these conventions to restructure the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships in the service of specific strategic intentions. This is where polite address terms as a device of respectful politeness may be temporarily used as a device of strategic politeness (see 4.4 below).

4.2.3 The Maxims of Strategic Politeness

If we could consider politeness a means to maintain/protect faces for speakers and hearers in a general sense, then to achieve this goal, respectful politeness aims at acknowledging and showing respect for the speaker-hearer power (P) and distance (D) differences, and strategic politeness aims at minimizing the negative effects (R) of the illocutionary acts on participants. As I already showed in 4.1.2, strategic politeness can be expressed by different means, of which the vital components are supportive moves and direct/indirect modes. The question now is what rules seem to constrain the use of strategic politeness devices?

In the politeness models within the instrumental perspective, two principles used to change the politeness levels of the utterances receive special attention: (1) increase indirectness or optionality, and (2) minimize cost and/or maximize benefit for addressees; minimize benefit and/or maximize cost for speakers. Lakoff (1975) emphasizes the first principle by referring to two rules of politeness: 1. Do not impose, and 2. Give options. Brown & Levinson also build their politeness strategies on the principle

of minimizing imposition (directness) and increasing optionality (indirectness), but they expand the notion of imposition (R) to include not only personal territories and freedom of action, but also material and spiritual costs (1987:72). Leech seems to pay attention to both principles by stating that politeness (tact) is related to three scales: 1. Cost-benefit, 2. Optionality, 3. Indirectness. However, Leech's politeness maxims for impositive and commissive acts (Tact and Generosity maxims) are based only on the cost-benefit scale. Thus, if for Lakoff and Brown & Levinson, the minimization and maximization of cost-benefit are included in the increase and decrease of imposition and/or optionality, for Leech the increase and decrease of imposition or optionality are included in the minimization and maximization of cost-benefit. This difference, however, does not efface their similarity, that is, they all acknowledge a correlation between imposition and directness, or between the cost for hearers and impoliteness on the one hand, and between the optionality and indirectness, or between the benefit for hearers and politeness on the other hand.

The analysis of 2300 directives attests to a certain identity of the cost-benefit and imposition-optionality principles. However, the use of these principles to increase politeness for utterances appears to depend upon the rankings of the impositions of utterances (R). The R values (or the face threat) of a directive is understood as being constituted from two relatively independent variables, namely (1) the degrees of imposition or optionality speakers give to addressees, and (2) the cost-benefit

(tangible and intangible) participants receive as the action is accomplished. Therefore, to change the politeness level of a directive by changing its R value, it is necessary to change one or both variables of imposition-optionalness and cost-benefit.

In Chapter 3, I noted that the imposition-optionalness of the utterances (and their corresponding directness-indirectness) have different politeness effects in directives with different social goals. In competitive directives imposition decreases politeness, and optionalness increases politeness. In convivial directives, on the contrary, imposition increases politeness and optionalness decreases politeness. Therefore, to increase politeness we need to decrease imposition or increase optionalness in competitive directives, and increase imposition or decrease optionalness in convivial directives (see Chapter 3: 3.3).

From a cost-benefit view we can also say that in competitive directives (which are hearer-costly and may be speaker-beneficial) imposition increases the cost for hearers, therefore the decrease of imposition and increase of optionalness will directly decrease cost and increase benefit for hearers. In convivial requests (which are hearer-beneficial and may be speaker-costly), imposition increases the benefit for hearers, and therefore the increase of imposition and the decrease of optionalness will directly increase the benefit and decrease the cost for hearers. Thus, imposition-optionalness and cost-benefit are interrelated and their correlations depend on the R values of utterances. This analysis suggests that we can combine the imposition-optionalness principle

and the cost-benefit principle (in a narrow sense: referring to the cost-benefit that the speaker and hearer receive from the directive act) into a single politeness principle for directives. This is the principle of changing the cost-benefit for speaker and hearer, which is understood in a broader meaning, to include the degrees of imposition for the hearer, and the cost-benefit that the speaker and hearer receive as the acts are performed. This principle can be stated as follows: change the cost-benefit for the speaker and hearer in conformity with the social goals of directives (minimize the cost and maximize the benefit for hearers in competitive directives, maximize the benefit and minimize the cost for hearers in convivial directives; minimize the benefit and maximize the cost for speakers in competitive directives, maximize the benefit and minimize the cost for speakers in convivial directives).

Accordingly, we can still apply Leech's Tact and Generosity Maxims (built on a cost-benefit scale) with certain modifications to analyze politeness strategies in directives of Hanoi speakers. Leech's maxims are defined as follows:

Tact Maxim (in impositives and commissives)

(a) Minimize cost for H, (b) Maximize benefits for H.

Generosity Maxim (in impositives and commissives)

(a) Minimize benefits for S, (b) Maximize cost for S.

(Leech 1983:132)

Leech's Tact maxim satisfies the above-mentioned principle of minimizing cost for both competitive directives (which basically correspond to Leech's impositives) and convivial directives (which basically correspond to Leech's commissives). The submaxim

"Minimize cost for H" is applied more often in competitive requests. The submaxim "Maximize benefit for H" is applied more often in convivial requests. As for the Generosity maxim, the directive data show that this maxim works only for competitive requests, because the minimization of benefit and maximization of cost for speakers can not increase politeness for convivial directives. Examples:

(42) A man (A) is talking to his friend (B):

A: **Ti anh co di dau khong em muon xe mot-lat!**
 in-a-while elder-brother go where not younger-sibling
 borrow bike a-short-while
 (If you are not going anywhere, may I borrow the bike for a short while?)

B: **Xe day, minh chang di dau-ca, cau lay ma di!**
 bike here self not go any-where, friend take and go
 (It's overthere. I'm not going anywhere. Take it)

A's turn of talk is a hearer-costly and speaker-beneficial request. This conflict in interests makes the request potentially face-threatening for H. The use of **môt lát** (a short while) implies that the benefit S receives (or the cost H suffers) is really small, and it helps diminish the potential threat. Distinct from this, B's turn of talk is a speaker-costly and hearer-beneficial offer. By saying that he is not going anywhere (which may not be true) B minimizes the cost for himself to make it easier for A to accept the benefit, and the offer is therefore more polite. If we replace B's turn of talk by the following derivative:

Xe day, minh vua lau xong, cau lay ma di!
 (The bike is over there. I've just cleaned it. Take it!)

the offer will become less polite because the claim that B has just cleaned the bike will increase the cost for him, and will certainly make A feel uncomfortable with the offer. So it is clear that to

increase politeness for a hearer-beneficial (and speaker-costly) offer, speakers need to minimize the cost for self instead of maximizing the cost as stated in Leech's submaxim (b) of the Generosity maxim (this is also remarked by Gu, 1990, for the Chinese language). If we change the Generosity submaxim (b) into minimize cost for S, we must also change the submaxim (a), because it (minimize benefit for S) contradicts the changed submaxim (b) (minimize cost to S). The directive data show that the minimization of benefit to S is applicable only to competitive directives and not to convivial directives. The evidence is that in polite invitations, Hanoi speakers usually stress the benefit which speakers would receive if the invitations are accepted (see examples below).

To sum up, the preliminary analysis of data shows that Leech's Tact Maxim (minimize cost and/or maximize benefit to H) seems to be applicable to the analysis of strategic politeness in both competitive and convivial directives whereas the Generosity Maxim (minimize benefit and/or maximize cost to the self) seems to be applicable only to competitive directives. In convivial directives speakers need to minimize cost and/or maximize benefit to self. Accordingly, there are two ways to change Leech's original versions. The first way is to keep the Tact Maxim unchanged for both competitive and convivial utterances and to split the Generosity Maxim into two different submaxims, one for competitive utterances (minimize benefit and/or maximize cost to self), the other for convivial utterances (minimize cost and/or maximize

benefit to self). The second way is to change the two maxims so that each would be applicable to only one type of directive, with the Tact Maxim involving only the minimization of cost to H in competitive directives, and the Generosity Maxim involving only the maximization of benefit to H in convivial directives. The first way has one limitation, that is, it fails to highlight that in competitive directives (which are hearer-costly), the submaxim "Minimize cost to H" figures more prominently than "Maximize benefit to H," and in convivial directives (which are hearer-beneficial), the submaxim "Maximize benefit to H" is more important than "Minimize cost to H." On the other hand, the submaxims of the Tact Maxim, however similar they may be for both kinds of utterances at the content level (minimize cost and/or maximize benefit to H), their realizations are nevertheless different for each (optionality-indirectness helps to minimize cost and/or to maximize benefit to H in competitive utterances, but to maximize cost and/or to minimize benefit to H in convivial utterances). In order to distinguish between the role of minimizing and maximizing benefit to H in directives with different R values, and in order to emphasize the different manifestations of the Tact Maxim in each kind of utterance, the Tact maxim is proposed to be applied only to competitive directives, and the Generosity maxim is proposed to be applied only to convivial directives. The contents of each maxim are redefined as follows:

- 1) **Tact Maxim** (used for competitive utterances)
 - a) Minimize cost and/or maximize benefit to H.
 - b) Minimize benefit and/or maximize cost to S.

- 2) **Generosity Maxim** (used for convivial utterances)
- a) Maximize benefit and/or minimize cost to H.
 - b) Minimize cost and/or maximize benefit to S.

Each of these maxims consists in two submaxims, one is hearer-directed (a), the other is self-directed (b). Compared with the politeness conceptions of Hanoi native speakers, it is evident that these maxims reflect "tact" (**khéo léo**) and "delicacy" (**tê' nhi**) more than "respectfulness" (**lễ' phép**) and "propriety" (**đúng mực**), therefore, they are more qualified as rules of strategic politeness than as rules of respectful politeness. In the following sections, I will proceed to examine the various manifestations of these maxims in the directive corpus.

4.2.3.1 **Tact Maxim** (used for competitive directives)

Competitive directives such as ordering, asking for a favour, forbidding, etc., are hearer-costly. The cost to hearers may come either from imposition (encroachment on hearers' freedom of action, territories), or from the fulfilment of the directives (investment of time, efforts). This is why in employing these directives, speakers often use the strategy of minimizing the cost to hearers. Hanoi speakers use many different tactics to change the cost/benefit for hearers and speakers in competitive directives. The two submaxims of Tact do not function in the same way for all competitive directives. From the cost-benefit view, any competitive directive is potentially hearer-costly, and it may be speaker-beneficial or at least neutral. Accordingly we can divide competitive directives into two different groups: (1) Speaker-beneficial and hearer-costly, (2) speaker cost/benefit neutral and

hearer-costly. To increase politeness for directives of the first group, speakers apply both submaxims of Tact, while to increase politeness for requests of the second group, speakers apply only submaxim (a) of Tact.

a) **Minimize cost** and/or **maximize benefit to H**

With competitive directives imposition is a potential threat to hearers' face, a cost to hearers, because it violates hearers' freedom of action, encroaches on hearers' territories (it threatens H's negative face), and it offends H's social images (it threatens H's positive face). If minimizing cost and/or maximizing benefit to H is a way of increasing politeness for directives, the first thing speakers need to do to achieve this, is to minimize imposition and/or maximize optionality for addressees. The minimization of imposition and maximization of optionality function as two aspects of the same rule, as any change leading to a minimization of imposition will simultaneously help to increase optionality, and vice versa. The following strategies are used by Hanoi speakers:

- Change highly imposing requests, orders, commands into minimally imposing requests for a favour by using supporting words (**hồ/giúp/gium**-help, **cho**-for, **làm ơn**-do a favour) and address terms.

Example:

- (43) A woman speaks to her father-in-law:
Ông ơi, ông để hồ con cái bát lên đây, cái bát đây!
Grandfather vocative, grandfather put help offspring
classifier bowl on here, classifier bowl that
(Dad, could you please put that bowl there for me?)

By using **hồ** (help), the speaker expresses the idea that she is

asking for help. This move creates a motive for the hearer to accomplish the request out of his own "courtesy" and therefore hearer's face is saved.

- Change highly affirmative requests into suggestions by using supporting words such as **thử** (try), **định** (be about to, attempt), **có lẽ** (perhaps), etc. By resorting to this strategy, the speaker seems to send a message to the hearer that the request is very tentative, maybe not serious at all, thus the accomplishment is up to the hearer, as in the following example:

(44) A man in one household speaks to his neighbour, another young man about his motorbike:

Nó đã xì ra như thế-này, có khi em kiểm-tra hồ anh cái xăm một-cái!
it already let-air out like this perhaps younger-sibling check help elder-brother classifier tire once
(It let all its air out. Perhaps you will check the tire for me, OK?)

- Choose hearer-perspective instead of speaker-perspective. Speaker-perspective directives, especially those with performative verbs such as **bảo/nói** (tell), **ra lệnh** (command), **yêu cầu** (require) are highly imposing (**Bố bảo con đi ra ngoài kia!** -I tell you to go out!; **Con yêu cầu bà về để con nói chuyện với bà ấy nhé!** - I require that you go home so that I can talk to her!). Therefore, to make the requests more polite, a hearer-perspective is preferred. Example:

(45) Employee of the water supply centre speaks to the host:

Cô ời, cô cho cháu thu tiền nước tháng Bảy đi a!
junior-aunt vocative junior-aunt let nephew/niece collect money July water imperative honorific
(Auntie, please let me collect money for July!)

The imposition of the hearer-perspective directive is minimal

as compared to its speaker-perspective equivalent (**Cháu thu tiền nước thang Bảy cô a!** - I'm collecting water money for July, auntie).

- Avoid indicating directly that speakers are requestors and hearers are requestees by using impersonalizations (**chúng mình/bọn mình/nhà mình** - we, our family), or third-person pronouns.

Example:

(46) A husband A speaks to his wife B:

- A: **Chú-nhật này nhà mình làm bún-chả ăn đi!**
Sunday this house self make noodle-with-roasted-meat eat imperative
(Shall we [our family] make special noodle this Sunday?)
- B: **Ông muốn ăn ông bảo con gái ông nó làm cho mà ăn chứ còn ai nữa mà nhà mình!**
(If you want, tell your daughter to make it, there is no one else to say "our family"!)

The use of impersonalization in this utterance allows the speaker to be included in the list of requestees, thus diminishing the imposition. The wife's answer indicates that she well understands her husband's strategy.

- Use external supportive elements to indicate the reasons for the directive, and to check on the preparatory conditions for the future action, thus helping to minimize the imposition and maximize the optionality of the request. Example:

(47) A woman talks to her mother-in-law:

- Mô ời, mô có gừng không, cho con xin một tí!**
(Mom, do you have any ginger, please give me some!)

The principle at work here is:

- If condition (x) is satisfied, H will accomplish action (y).
If condition (x) is not satisfied, H will not accomplish (y). S

leaves H the freedom to decide whether or not the condition (x) is

satisfied, therefore H is free to accept or refuse the request without offending any party's face.

- Change direct requests into indirect ones with **sao/tại sao?** (why question), **có...không?** (yes...no question), **hay là** (alternative question):

(48) An old woman speaks to her daughter-in-law:
Bên nhà có còn nước rau không?
(Do you have any soup left?)
[Implication: May I have some soup?]

(49) An old woman speaks at a dinner table:
Già có cái đĩa xương mà để xương nhỉ!
(I wish there was a plate for the bones!)
[Implication: Please supply a plate for the bones!]

By using first- and second-degree indirect requests speakers allow addressees to arrive at their own conclusions through a two-stage inferential process of understanding the literal illocutionary act and the nonliteral illocutionary act (Searle 1979), thus making the requests less imposing, and more polite. But as I explain in previous chapters, polite indirectness is used more often for competitive than for convivial directives; its use nevertheless is limited due to the fact that politeness still depends on other structural elements and pragmatic implications (irony, threat, reproach). For example, despite their indirectness, the following requests are still highly imposing due to other conversational implications which belie politeness:

(50) A man speaks to his granddaughter:

Ai lại làm thế bao giờ?
(Who could ever act like this?)
[Primary implication: Please don't act like this!
Secondary implication: It's stupid to act like this]

The secondary implication which minimizes the politeness of the

utterances is arrived at through a three-stage inferential process:

All other normal persons do this (x)
You are not doing this (x)

You are not normal (i.e., stupid, stubborn).

To make sure that indirect requests are really polite, besides paying attention to the politeness effects of other structural elements, it is important to minimize the possibilities of other negative conversational implications.

I have so far analyzed the manifestations of the Tact's submaxim "minimize cost and/or maximize benefit to H," resulting from the minimization of imposition and/or maximization of the optionality of the directives. However, this submaxim can also be realized by minimizing the concrete cost and/or maximizing the concrete benefit which H receives from performing the requests. The following strategies are often used by speakers to minimize cost and/or maximize benefit for H:

- Minimize cost by acknowledging the cost, thus incurring a debt to H:

(51) A visitor speaks to the host:

Em biết là chị bận, nhưng mai chi cố đi với em một buổi!
(I know you are busy, but please try to go with me tomorrow!)

- Minimize the cost to H by persuading H that the cost is small:

(52) A man speaks to his father-in-law:

Ông trông cháu hộ con một tí nhé!
(Please look after my child for a while!)

By using the external supporting move một tí (for a while), the

speaker in (52) implies that the cost to H is really small.

- Maximize the benefit to H by showing that the directive is hearer-beneficial, not hearer-costly:

(53) A woman speaks to her grandson:

Quân ỏi, có cái chiếu sau kia, trải ra mà ngồi, khỏi phải ngồi xuống đất!

(There's a mat behind you, if you sit on it, you won't have to sit on the floor!)

- Maximize the benefit by giving H praises, showing H's positive qualities:

(54) A man speaks to his little granddaughter:

Dừa đây cho ông nào, cháu ông ngoan quá!

(Give it to grandpa, how good my granddaughter is!)

- Maximize the benefit to H by indicating the cost H is incurring as in (55), or the cost H will incur as in (56), if H will not accomplish the directives:

(55) A woman speaks to her grandchild:

Ra đây bà rửa tay cho, tay cháu bẩn hết rồi kia!

(Come here and let grandma wash your hands, your hands are so dirty!)

(56) A man speaks to his grandson:

Đừng trèo lên đây cháu, ngã đấy!

(Don't climb over there grandson, or you'll fall down!)

To increase politeness for competitive directives, besides maximizing benefit and/or minimizing cost to H according to the Tact's submaxim (a), speakers also use the Tact's submaxim (b): maximizing cost and/or minimizing benefit to S.

b) **Maximize cost and/or minimize benefit to S:**

Different from the submaxim (a), the submaxim (b) is applied to a limited set of directives, those which are speaker-beneficial

and hearer-costly such as requests for a favour. The following strategies are found in the corpus of directives:

- S expresses a belief that the benefit he/she is receiving is small (therefore the cost to H is also small):

(57) Two neighbours (women) speak to each other

A: Chi có tiền cho em vay tạm chục nghìn, mai em trả!
(If you have some money, please lend me five thousand for the time being, I'll pay it back tomorrow!)

B: Có đây, đợi mình tí.
(Yes, I have. Wait a minute!)

The use of tạm (for the time being) implies that the cost to the hearer is small (submaxim a) and the self-benefit is also small (submaxim b). The request is therefore more polite than if tạm were absent from the utterance.

- S minimizes the benefit he/she is receiving by indicating that S is not receiving any benefit (example 58), or is in a troublesome situation (example 59):

(58) A street seller talks to a customer

Chi trả thêm cho em đi. Em cũng có muốn bán đắt đâu nhưng hàng dạo này đắt quá.
(Please pay me more. I don't want to take a lot of your money, but I bought them at a high price.)

(59) A man speaks to his neighbour

Câu vặn hồ mình tí, mình đau tay quá!
(Can you turn it on for me, my hands hurt!)

Compared to submaxim (a) of Tact, submaxim (b) is applied only to hearer-costly and speaker-beneficial directives, and employs a limited set of strategies. This corresponds to Leech's remarks that hearer-directed maxims are always more important than self-directed maxims.

This analysis of the manifestations of the Tact's submaxims gives us a better understanding of the functioning of strategic politeness in competitive directives. In the following section we will continue to examine the manifestations of another maxim of strategic politeness, namely, the Generosity maxim in convivial directives.

4.2.3.2 Generosity Maxim (used for convivial directives)

Different from competitive directives, convivial directives such as inviting, offering, giving permission, etc., generally aim at bringing some benefit to addressees. In carrying out these directives, S may incur a cost (for example when S invites someone to dinner S will have to spend both money and time), and H will likely get some benefit, or at least his/her positive face is attended to. However, accepting a benefit may become a potential threat to H's own face (according to Gu (1990), accepting an invitation to dinner may make a person seem greedy in the eyes of other people in Chinese culture), hence costly to H, therefore H may not feel easy about it. A refusal from H may also offend S's positive face, except when the invitation is issued insincerely. To make it easy for H to accept an invitation to dinner without feeling uncomfortable about the cost to S, and also to protect his/her own positive face, S needs to employ certain strategies. The analysis of convivial directives in the Hanoi dialect indicates that the purpose is achieved by following the Generosity maxim of (a) maximizing benefit and/or minimizing cost to H, and (b) by minimizing cost and/or maximizing benefit to S.

a) **Maximize benefit** and/or **minimize cost to H:**

Convivial directives are usually hearer-beneficial. To increase politeness through these utterances, it is necessary to maximize benefit and/or minimize cost to hearers. How is this done? With regard to illocutionary mode, if in competitive utterances in order to hide illocutionary forces and minimize imposition on H, speakers need to maximize the benefit and/or minimize the cost to H, in convivial utterances, on the contrary, illocutionary transparency and maximization of imposition help to increase the benefit and minimize the cost to H. In order to increase the politeness of convivial requests, Hanoi speakers often maximize imposition and/or minimize optionality, or maximize directness and/or minimize indirectness. Example:

(60) A and B are friends and both are young women

A1: **Lan ỏi, chủ nhật tuần sau đến nhà mình chơi nhé!**

(Lan, come to my house next Sunday, OK?)

B1: **Tuần sau à, bận lắm không biết có đến được không?**

(Next Sunday? I am very busy, I'm not sure if I can come?)

A2: **Bận gì mà bận, thế nào cũng phải đến đây!**

(You are not busy, you will have to come anyway!)

B2: **Ừ, để còn xem đã!**

(OK, let me think!)

A3: **Không đến tớ giận đây.**

(If you don't come, I'll get angry.)

B3: **Ừ, thì đến!**

(All right, I'll come!)

In this episode, if A1 is replaced by an indirect invitation such as "**Lan ỏi, tuần sau đến nhà mình chơi không?**" (Lan, can you come to my place next Sunday?) which Lan would refuse because she will be busy, the invitation sounds insincere to the ears of native speakers. The imposition of the invitation (A1) is further

increased by A2 where the speaker denies the reason the hearer provides to refuse the invitation, and reissues the invitation in a stronger tone (**Thế nào cũng phải đến đây!** - You will have to come anyway). H is still hesitating (B2) and S continues her insistence (A3) with a threat that she will be angry if H does not come (a strategy to maximize the cost to self which will be discussed later). H finally accepts the invitation. Obviously, the imposition is the most important, if not the only, factor which makes H accept the invitation. The insistence makes the invitation sound sincere and the invitation is perceived as polite. The maximization of imposition and minimization of optionality can be achieved by different strategies.

- Speakers use predicative verbs in the imperative mode to explicitly express the directive act, instead of hiding the true illocutionary act as in the case of competitive directives:

(61) A man invites an older man, his guest, to drink tea

Bác uống nước đi a!
 Senior-aunt/uncle drink water imperative honorific
 (Please drink your water!)

(62) An old woman A, a visitor in one household, says to the host B, who is as young as her daughter

A: **Chi ngồi vào đây đi!**
 elder-sister sit on here imperative
 (Sit down here, please!)

B: **Vâng, bác cứ mặc cháu a!**
 (Please don't pay any attention to me!)

Although these directives are highly imposing, they are polite because they are hearer-beneficial. If we replace the predicative verbs **uống** (drink), **ngồi** (sit) by other verbs such as **tránh ra** (**Chi tránh ra đi!** - Stay away!), **rửa bát** (**Cô rửa bát đi!** - Wash the

dishes!), the requests now become hearer-costly and are less polite than the previous hearer-beneficial ones. The use of directness in convivial requests obviously helps increase the politeness of the utterances.

- Increase imposition or directness of convivial directives by using supportive words with persuading, ordering meanings:

(63) A woman speaks to an old woman, who is the host

Cụ cứ nằm ngủ đi cụ à!
 grand-grandma/pa go-ahead lie rest imperative grand-
 grandma/pa honorific
 (Please go ahead and enjoy your rest!)

(64) A wife speaks to her husband

Anh phải đi khám ngay đi!
 elder-brother have go check immediately imperative
 (You should go to the doctor immediately!)

If in competitive directives the presence of **phải** (have to) **cứ** (go ahead) increase the imposition and hence decrease the politeness of the utterances, in convivial directives their presence increases the imposition and increases the politeness of utterances.

- Choose speaker-perspective instead of hearer-perspective. Different from competitive requests, the speaker-perspective in convivial directives usually makes utterances more imposing, hence more polite than the hearer-perspective. Compare the following three make-up utterances in which the speaker (a girl) invites an old woman (her grandma) to have a cup of tea:

- (65) a. **Bà uống nước đi à!**
 grandma drink water imperative honorific
 b. **Mời bà uống nước đi à!**
invite grandma drink water imperative honorific
 c. **Cháu mời bà uống nước đi à!**
granddaughter/son/niece/nephew invite grandma drink water
 imperative honorific

(65a) is a hearer-perspective utterance and it is less polite than (65b) and (65c) which are speaker-perspective utterances. The speaker perspective in (65b-c) is realized by the performative verb **mời** (invite). However, (65b) is less polite than (65c) because the agent of the verb **mời** is not explicitly expressed while in (65c) it is made explicit by the speaker address term **cháu** (granddaughter). Thus, the difference in politeness levels between (65a) and (65b-c) is determined by directive perspectives. The difference between (65b) and (65c) is determined by the presence of a speaker address term as an index of respectful politeness.

- Avoid using indirectness in convivial directives. As mentioned above, accepting an offer may be a potential threat to H's positive face, but refusing an offer may also be a threat to S's face. In order for an offer to be polite, Hanoi speakers often avoid using indirectness.

(66) An episode between an elderly husband A, his wife B, and a young woman C (the couple's guest)

- A: **Cô uống nước không cô?**
 (Do you want something to drink?)
 C1: (hesitating) **Đa?**
 (what?)
 B: **Mời cô ra uống nước!**
 (Please come and have something to drink!)
 C2: **Vâng ạ, bác kê cháu.**
 (Oh yes, please leave it to me.)

The guest in (66) is uncomfortable with the indirect invitation of the husband, and that is why, instead of answering, she asks a question, pretending she did not hear the invitation. The wife repeats the invitation but she does it in a direct way and her invitation is accepted positively. This shows that in order to increase the politeness of convivial directives, together with

maximizing their imposition (directness), speakers can minimize the optionality (indirectness) of directives. However, the data also show that this further depends on speaker-hearer solidarity relationships: in family interactions, stable solidarity allows indirectness to be used more often than in public contexts (see 4.1).

Besides increasing imposition and avoiding indirectness, speakers also change the concrete cost-benefit hearers are going to receive from the convivial requests, using many different strategies:

- S gives reasons to justify that the requests are hearer-beneficial:

(67) A daughter speaks to her mother

Me ấn cồm đi cho nóng!
Mồm eat rice imperative for warm
(Mom, please eat your dinner while it's still warm!)

- S maximizes the benefit of the offer to H by indicating the cost H is incurring or will incur if the offer isn't accepted:

(68) A father says to his son

Lấy cấi mủ của bồ mà đội, không trủa nắng chết!
take classifier hat of father to wear, not at noon heat die
(Take my hat, son! The midday heat will kill you.)

The analysis above demonstrates that the Generosity submaxim (a) of "maximizing benefit and/or minimizing cost to H" functions prominently in increasing the politeness of convivial directives. However, it would be incomplete if we did not see that speakers also use the submaxim (b) of the Generosity maxim in dealing with the politeness of convivial directives.

b) **Minimize cost and/or maximize benefit to S:**

If minimization of the cost and/or maximization of the benefit to H in convivial directives seems to be accepted rather readily, the idea of minimizing the cost and/or maximizing the benefit to S seems rather dubious. But let us recall that one of the possible reasons which makes H refuse S's invitation or offer (thus damaging S's positive face) is the fear of being indebted to S. Therefore, in order to create favourable conditions for H to accept the invitation, besides maximizing the benefit and/or minimizing the cost to H, S also increases the politeness by minimizing the cost and/or maximizing the benefit to self. We found the following strategies used in the corpus:

- S indicates that there is no cost incurred by the self (or the cost is very small).

(69) A host A speaks to her guest B:

- A1: **Hôm-nay mời bà ở lại đây xối cơm với tôi!**
(Today I invite you to stay and have dinner with me!)
- B1: **Cơm nước gì, bà chi bày vẽ.**
(Dinner? It's going to cost you.)
- A2: **Bày vẽ gì, cơm rau ấy mà!**
(It costs nothing, just rice with vegetables)
- B2: **Vâng, tôi chiêu bà.**
(All right, I will stay to please you).

Despite the sincerity of the invitation, the guest first refuses for fear of incurring cost to the host (B1). To make it easier for the guest to accept the invitation, the host now (A2) uses the strategy of minimizing the cost incurred by the self (just rice with vegetables). This move has rendered the invitation (A1) easily acceptable, and hence more polite. Example:

(70) Two women (colleagues) speak to each other:

- A1:** Nhà em có cái phích lại vỡ mất rồi, chưa mua lại được. Lúc nào muốn uống nước cũng phải đun, đến khổ.
(Mý thermos is broken and we haven't bought a new one yet. It's too bad, hey? It takes time to boil water when we want some hot tea.)
- B1:** Thế à, à nhà mình có cái phích cũ còn dùng được nhưng không dùng đến, để mai mình mang đến cho.
(Oh, really? Well, we have an old thermos, which is still usable although we don't use it, I'll bring it to you tomorrow)
- A2:** Thối, phiền chi chết!
(No, don't go to all that trouble.)
- B2:** Có gì đâu mà phiền, để mai nó hỏng, phí đi.
(No trouble at all, it will stop working if it's not used, and what a waste that will be!)
- A3:** Vâng thế hôm nào em đến cho em xin, chi khỏi phải mang đến, phiền chi.
(Then someday I will come and take it, you don't need to bother to bring it for me.)
- B3:** Phiền gì, đường nào mai đi làm mình cũng phải đi qua đây cơ mà.
(No trouble at all. I'll have to pass over here on the way to work, anyway.)
- A4:** Vâng, thế mai chi mang cho em xin nhé!
(Really, well then please bring it tomorrow!)

In this episode, to accomplish her offer to A (actually there are two offers: B offers A a thermos and offers to bring the thermos to A), B uses the submaxim "minimize cost to self": first B assures A that she does not need the thermos any more (B1), therefore the offer does not incur a cost to her (and at the same time she also follows the submaxim "maximize benefit to H" by indicating that the old thermos is still usable). First A refuses the offer because she does not want to bother B (A2), but B makes it clear there is no cost incurred for her (B2), and so A agrees to take the thermos (A3), and suggests she will come and take it. B then continues to offer to bring the thermos to A by indicating it is convenient for her to do so (B3), and the result is that A also accepts this second offer. This example demonstrates how the submaxim of

minimizing the cost to self may increase the politeness for convivial requests.

- S indicates that S would benefit if H accepts the invitations or offers:

(71) Two old women speak to each other

- A1:** Bà ở đây chớ đi về làm gì dưới ấy vội!
(Stay here a little longer, what are you hurrying away for?)
- B:** Ở mãi rồi, ở nữa để ăn hết cơm nhà bà à.
(I have already been here for a long time, and if I stay any longer, I'll eat up all your rice.)
- A2:** Gớm, bà ăn được bao nhiêu, có bà làm hết việc nhà cho tôi thì có ấy!
(What! How much can you eat! and You did all the chores for me!.)

- S indicates that S will incur a cost if H does not accept the offer:

(72) An old man A (a guest) speaks to the host B

- A1:** Thứ Bảy này mời hai cụ xuống sinh hoạt tổ thơ nhé!
(This Saturday you are invited to join the poets' club)
- B:** Thứ bảy này à, không biết tôi có đi được không.
(This coming Saturday? Not sure if I can come.)
- A2:** Mời cụ cố gắng xuống. Không có cụ thì tổ thơ mất hẳn khi thế này.
(Please try to come. Without you we won't be in the right mood)

I have so far presented the various manifestations of the Tact Maxim (for competitive utterances) and the Generosity Maxim (for convivial utterances) used by Hanoi speakers in issuing directives. To complete this discussion, I would like to add that speakers also use different submaxims of the same maxim to increase the politeness level of the same directive. Example:

(73) A young woman talks to a stranger in the street:

Anh ỏi, anh có đi qua Lò dúc (1) cho em đi nhớ (2) xe

một quãng (3), chân em đau quá không đi bộ được (4).
(Elder brother, if you pass Lo Duc (1), please give me
a ride (2) a short one (3), my feet hurt badly and
I can't walk (4).

In this competitive request S uses the strategy of minimizing the cost to H (Tact's submaxim a), reflected in the moves (1), (2) and (3), and the strategy of minimizing the benefit to self (Tact's submaxim (b), reflected in moves (3) and (4). Her request is very polite. The use of these submaxims primarily depends on the Rx values of utterances, and to certain degree, on the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. A further observation can also be made: the use of Tact and Generosity Maxims to increase the politeness of utterances suggests that their violations would decrease the politeness of utterances, or generate other interesting conversational implications, to which, due to the limited scope of this thesis, I hope to return with details some other time.

4.3 Distinction 3: Relations of Respectful and Strategic Politeness to Face

4.3.1 Face and Politeness

How are the two aspects of respectful and strategic politeness, described above, related to the notion of face - a notion often presented as the motivation of polite behaviour? As outlined in Chapter 1, face, understood as the desire that one's self-image be attended to by others in social interactions, is put forward by Goffman (1972) and further developed by Brown & Levinson (1987) as the motivation underlying polite behaviour. By linking

this notion with Durkheim's distinction between "positive and negative rituals", Brown & Levinson have construed an allegedly universal concept of face as consisting in two unified aspects, namely, the positive face and the negative face, conceiving them as the fundamental motivation for two kinds of corresponding universal polite behaviour, namely, positive politeness and negative politeness. Although Brown & Levinson's binary conception of face and their schema of politeness strategies, motivated by the desire to protect face, have been widely applied in works on politeness, their strong claims for the universality of their hypothesis have been seriously challenged both theoretically and empirically. The criticism mainly focuses on the individualism of their face construal, which appears to be inapplicable to cultures where social behaviour has a strong tendency to conform to social conventions and norms of conduct (see 1.1.1). The criticism and evidence from other cultures have stimulated a renewed exploration of the notion of face, encompassing new concepts such as "social face," "group face," which aim at explaining the conceptions of social politeness/discernment prevailing in some non-Western societies (Matsumoto 1988; Ide 1989; Gu 1990; Nwoye 1992; Mao 1994), in contrast to Brown & Levinson's construal of face, characterized in terms of individualism, and which is claimed to be applicable only to strategic politeness/volition prevailing in Western cultures.

The link between face and politeness in Vietnamese is first mentioned in Nguyen Dinh Hoa's work (1956) where face is presented

as pride in one's social prestige (in Hu's view, 1944). The interview and conversation data analyses also attest to a close link between face and the linguistic perceptions and behaviour of Hanoi speakers, where it is referred to through two words **thê' diên** and **mặt**. **Thê' diên** is a word of Chinese origin and is used in such expressions as "giữ thê' diên" (keep one's face), "mất thê' diên" (lose one's face). **Mặt** is a Vietnamese word standing for the body part extending from the chin to the forehead. It can also be used to denote face in such expressions as "lâm dệp mặt" (do honour to somebody), "lâm mặt mặt" (to embarrass somebody), "nê' mặt" (to show respect to somebody), or "qua mặt" (to neglect somebody). The question here is, given the concept of politeness as consisting in two aspects of respectful and strategic politeness which differ in terms of functions, how should face be defined as the motivation for politeness? Brown & Levinson's construal of face is obviously inappropriate because it neglects the notion of respectful politeness. But the notion of public face or group face, proposed by normative politeness researchers, is also insufficient to explain the polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers because it neglects strategic politeness.

Below, I would like to argue that a construal of face that is able to explain the polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers should be understood as the unity of the individual and the social, with the individual side of face (with its many different manifestations being encompassed under the notions of positive and negative face) being the motivation of strategic politeness, and the social side

(characterised by social attributes such as age and social status, etc., which are subsumed by Brown & Levinson under the P variable) being the motivation of respectful politeness.

The definition of face as the unity of the individual and the social is based on recent research on the self as well as on Vietnamese folk concepts of face.

4.3.2 The Self and the Duality of Face

Goffman's (1972) and Brown & Levinson's (1987) notion of face is intimately tied to the self: for Goffman, face is the self-image endorsed by the others; for Brown & Levinson, face is the desires to have one's self respected and recognized. A person with face is one who is aware of his/her own self, a person who protects others' faces is one who respects others' selves. Thus, no matter what face could be, whether it is an image (a perspective from the external world, to take O'Driscoll's word, 1996), or wants (a perspective from the internal world), any determination of the contents of face is inevitably bound to the consideration of the structure of the self. Now what is the structure of the self and what are its characteristics?

The self has long been a subject of study in social psychology and anthropology. There is a widely held conception of human nature which is based on the so-called Western view of individuals as independent, self-contained entities, possessing internal attributes (thoughts, feelings, desires, abilities, etc.), and of behaviour as consequences of these internal processes (see, for example, Geertz 1975). According to this independent construal of

self, individuals behave and demand to be treated in compliance with their internal attributes rather than with attributes acquired in relation to others, because the person is "a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic centre of awareness, emotion, judgement, and actions organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against a social and natural background" (Geertz 1975:48). These individuals of course are also responsive to the social environment, but this responsiveness

is fostered not so much for the sake of the responsiveness itself. Rather, social responsiveness often, if not always, derives from the need to strategically determine the best way to express or assert the internal attributes of the self.

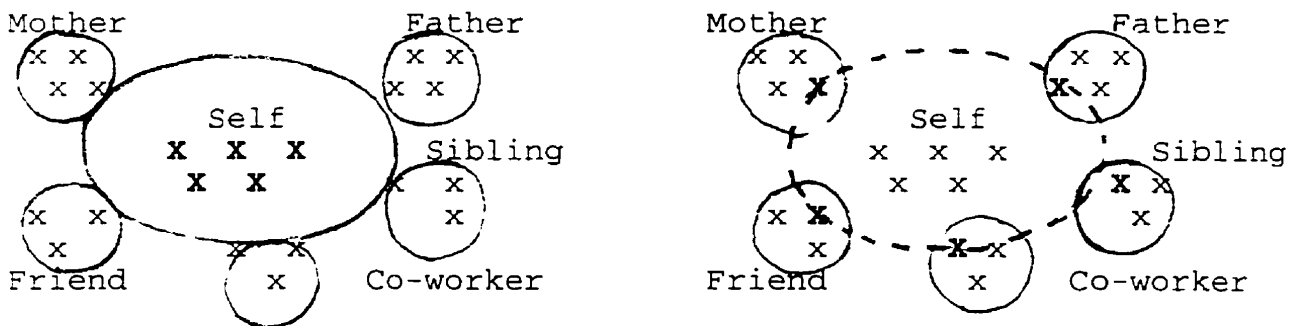
(Markus & Kitayama, 1991:226).

However, research on the self drawing on non-Western cultures often shows that the Western independent construal of self is not universally valid. According to some researchers (for example Yang 1981, Hu 1944), under the influence of Confucianism, Chinese people tend to perceive their selves through sets of interdependent relationships rather than inherently personal attributes, and their behaviour is constrained by outward rather than inward properties. Similarly, the Japanese perception of the self, according to some researchers (Matsumoto 1988; Ide et al. 1989), is bound to status and interdependent correlations of an individual to the larger social unit, and accordingly, the nature of the self can only be clearly defined in all of its social relationships. Therefore, in Markus & Kitayama's words:

It may not be unreasonable to suppose [...] that in some cultures, on certain occasions, the individual in a sense of a set of significant inner attributes of the person, may cease to be the primary unit of consciousness. Instead, the sense of belongingness to a social relation may become so strong that it makes better sense to think of the relationship as the functional unit of conscious reflection. (ibid.:226)

On this basis, the authors propose to distinguish two different structures of the self, the independent construal with its emphasis on inner aspects (inherent attributes), and the interdependent construal with its emphasis on external (relational) attributes, the distinction between which is represented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Conceptual representations of the self (source: Markus & Kitayama, 1991:226).



A. Independent view of self

B. Interdependent view of self

In Figures 2A and 2B, large circles represent the self, and small circles represent specific others (parents, siblings, friends, etc.). The Xs in large and small circles are representations of various inherent attributes (desires, abilities, feelings, freedom, etc.) of self and others, the Xs in the intersections are representations of aspects of the self acquired

in relation to specific others (lower/higher/equal status, younger/same age/older, etc.). Figure 2A shows that the independent construal of the self is identified mainly on the basis of internal attributes of the self (represented by dark Xs in the large circle), which are almost separated from others. Figure 2B shows that the interdependent construal of the self is identified with an emphasis more on relational attributes (represented by dark Xs in the intersections of large and small circles) than on internal attributes.

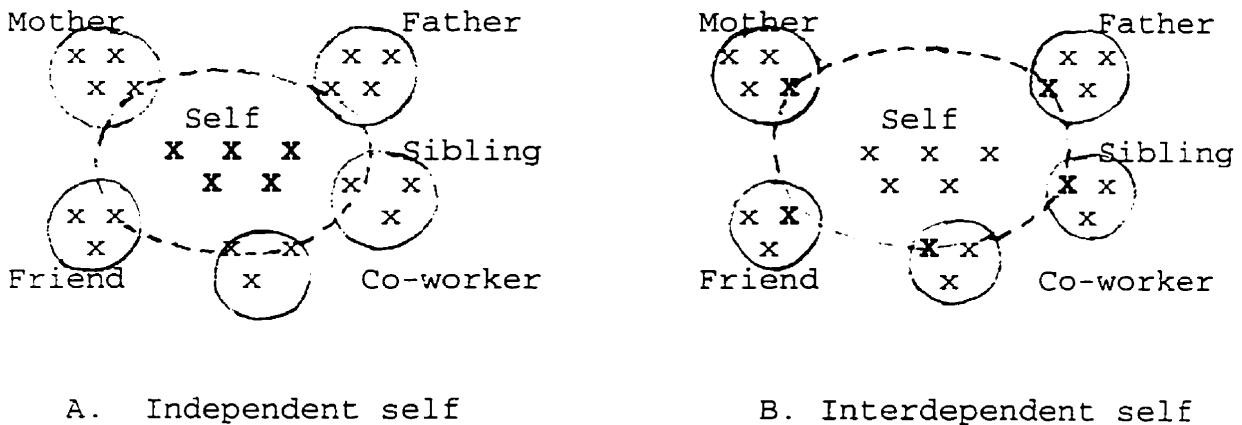
These two almost contrasting views on the self clearly tell us much about the disagreements among researchers on the definition of the face. Considering face as one of the two most important qualities of the modern person (having face and rationality) and identifying it as wants (positive and negative face wants), Brown & Levinson undoubtedly take their point of departure from the independent construal of the self, with an emphasis on the internal attributes, and therefore incur the criticism of researchers endorsing the interdependent construal of the self, with an emphasis on the relational attributes. These two construals of the self with a tendency to contrast public face (tied to an interdependent self) with private face (tied to an independent self) can not be used to satisfactorily explain the polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers, because their politeness represents not only volition (strategic politeness) but also discernment (respectful politeness), which means it is constrained by both kinds of face.

In order to apply the notion of face to explain the various manifestations of politeness in the Hanoi dialect, the structure of the face should be reformulated to include both private and public face. This will then facilitate a direct link to the reconsideration of the nature of the self and the distinction between independent and interdependent self. A distinction between two aspects of the self - the external and the internal aspects, as well as a distinction between cultural variations of the self based on the correlation of these two aspects, is important and necessary. However, I believe there is no need to oppose them absolutely. In Figure 2, Markus & Kitayama display this opposition very clearly with the independent self (Figure 2A) which does not include relational attributes (there is little or no overlapping between the large circle and the small circle, and there are no Xs in the intersections). I would like to suggest that any conception of self would include both internal aspects (inner attributes) and external aspect (relational attributes), and depending on the cultural and situational contexts, one aspect could be foregrounded, and therefore, could affect our behaviour more. The other aspect could become less prominent but it could not disappear totally: the varying degrees of prominence reflect social and cultural variations of the self. Accordingly, the differences between the independent and interdependent construals of the self could be represented as in Figure 3.

Distinct from Figure 2, Figure 3 shows that the independent self (A) and the interdependent self (B) include both inner

attributes (the Xs inside the large circles) and relational attributes (the Xs in the intersections). The difference lies in the fact that the independent self focuses more on the inner attributes than on the relational attributes (Figure 3A: the Xs in the large circle are darker than the Xs in the intersections), and the interdependent self focuses more on the relational attributes than on inner attributes (Figure 3B: the Xs in the intersections are darker than the Xs in the large circles). Thus, the two construals of the self differ but they do not oppose each other. Their common trait is the unity between the external aspects and the internal aspects although the correlation between them may differ in different cultural and social contexts.

Figure 3: A revised model of conceptual representations of the self.



In accordance with the duality of the self as discussed above, the notion of face also needs to be reformulated as a unity of the two distinctive aspects, namely the private face and the public

face, with the private face being mainly tied to the internal aspects of the self, and the public face mainly tied to the external aspects of the self. More specifically, the private face is the self-awareness and the desire to be respected as an independent individual with inherent attributes (abilities, desires, feelings, freedom, and territories, etc.), and basically, it corresponds to Brown & Levinson's notion of face as consisting in two basic wants: positive face wants (the desire to be acknowledged, confirmed and sympathized with), and negative face wants (the desire to be unimpeded upon and to have freedom of action). The public face comprises self-awareness and the desire to be respected as a member of a bigger social unit with attributes and values acquired in relation to other members, including "macro-social attributes" such as age, gender, family status; and acquired social attributes such as ranks, titles, social positions and achievements. These social attributes of the self seem to be reduced in Brown & Levinson's model to the speaker-hearer power (P) and distance (D) differences. Thus, if in Brown & Levinson's model the desire "to be unimpeded upon," or the desire to have speaker-hearer power and distance differences be respected belongs to the private face, I would alternatively suggest it belongs to the public face. And if in Brown & Levinson's model there is no distinction between two kinds of polite behaviour - one aims to respect speaker-hearer power and distance relationships, and the other aims to minimize the ranking of the impositions of utterances - the directives of the Hanoi corpus suggest that the distinction

is necessary. Respectful politeness aims at paying respect to the speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences, or the public face of participants. Strategic politeness aims at minimizing the ranking of the impositions of utterances, or paying respect to the private face of participants.

4.3.3 The Two Aspects of the Face and Their Relations to Respectful and Strategic Politeness

As discussed above, face is taken as consisting in two aspects: public face is linked to the relational aspect of the self, comprising self-awareness and the desire to have one's social attributes respected; and private face is linked to the internal aspect of the self, comprising the self-awareness as an independent individual with the inner attributes. As in Chinese (Hu 1944; Gu 1990; Mao 1994), or Japanese (Matsumoto 1988; Ide 1989) cultures, in Vietnamese culture a person's face is thought of primarily in terms of relational attributes such as status, age, rank, prestige, reputation and gender, etc. This is because besides the communal cohesiveness (emphasis on communal interests) characteristic of a South-East-Asian country (see 2.1), the Confucian ethic has provided

clear definitions of various social statuses and roles. It clarifies as it were the various social situations which play predominant part in any individual's life, thus supplying him/her with, so to speak, ready-made behavioral patterns.

(Nguyen Dinh Hoa 1956:191)

A Vietnamese person will see his/her face as being offended when norms of behaviour are violated, i.e., when status and social roles are not properly indicated, for example, when address terms are not

used in accordance with status or age relationships (an older person is addressed through a descending kinterm, or a personal pronoun), or when greeting or inviting is not done correctly (when a younger person does not greet an older person first, or when an old person is invited to sit with young persons at a dinner party), etc. The consequence is that in social intercourse, a Vietnamese person is sensitive to the attributes indexing social differences (higher/equal/lower rank and older/same-age/younger, etc.), and is conscious to conform to socially sanctioned rules of interactions (address, greeting and inviting rules) to show proper respect to other people, or at least, not to offend other people's face. Public face is therefore an important aspect of the Vietnamese face, and there is always a potential threat to it in social interactions. The best way to avoid social conflicts is to follow socially accepted norms of behaviour. In this sense, respectful politeness constitutes the social rules of behaviour. As public face is linked to the status, role, rank and solidarity relationships between participants, it is therefore justifiable to use Brown & Levinson's notions of relative power (P) and distance (D) to describe it at a more abstract level. Accordingly, paying respect to speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences means paying respect to public face. Consequently, any polite behaviour which aims primarily to respect the speaker-hearer power and distance relationships (for example, through the use of honorifics) should be considered as a manifestation of respectful politeness.

However, the cultural emphasis on the public face does not

necessarily mean that the private face is suppressed from the face conception and does not therefore play any role in social interactions. In fact, the respect for independent self still exists in people's consciousness which looks at surface differences just as:

Hon nhau tam ao manh quan,
Coi ra ai cung minh tran nhu ai.
(Everyone is the same without their clothes on)

Apart from its literal meaning, this folk song reflects a keen sense of the self and the face: the surface differences (self-in-relation-to-others) are important but not the only component of the face; and it is important to respect the internal side of the face (the independent self) which is considered the same in all people. The desire to defend one's private face seems to be a "natural" feature of human beings, including those with low statuses or low social values: "Con giun xeo lam cung quan" (Even a worm will turn if stepped on repeatedly). And if private face is characterized by two wants, positive wants (the desire to be acknowledged, confirmed and sympathized with), and negative wants (the desire to be free from imposition), the potential threats to it in social interactions are derived from both aggression, disagreement, and lack of solidarity; and from imposition, offensiveness, and cost incurred by the utterances. The main way to defend the private face from offense is to minimize imposition, aggressiveness, or the degrees of cost to H produced by the acts S does (i.e., the R values). In this sense, strategic politeness constitutes the strategies used to minimize the R values to protect private face.

Accordingly, any strategy used to mitigate R (for example, indirectness) should be considered as a manifestation of strategic politeness.

Thus, in accordance with two different aspects of face there are two aspects of politeness, differing in terms of functions: respectful politeness is oriented towards public face, and its main function is to pay respect to P and D values; strategic politeness is oriented towards private face, and its main function is to minimize R values. This suggests that if we could think that the degree of face threat of an utterance (W_x), computed from the P, D, and R values, is the motivation underlying the choice of a politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson's original formula: $W_x = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_x$), the W_x value underlying the choice of respectful politeness would be different from the W_x value underlying the choice of strategic politeness: in the first case, the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationship has more weight in relation to the W_x value than the impositions of utterances; in the second case, the ranking of imposition of utterance is more weighty than the speaker-hearer relationship. If the order could be used to symbolize the degrees of weightiness (from more to less) of the P, D, and R values on the W_x values, we have the following W_x formulae applied to respectful politeness (1) and strategic politeness (2):

$$(1) \quad W_{x1} = P(H,S) + D(S,H) + R_x$$

$$(2) \quad W_{x2} = R_x + D(S,H) + P(H,S)$$

Formula (1) symbolizes the face threat (W_{x1}) dictating the use of

respectful politeness. Formula (2) symbolizes the face threat (Wx2) dictating the use of strategic politeness. Different from Brown & Levinson's original formula, where all parameters are equally important to the seriousness of Wx, irrespective of their positions, in these formulae the variables occupying front positions have more effects on the Wx1 and Wx2 values, and therefore, are more important to the choice of politeness strategies than the variables occupying last positions. Depending on each utterance, and each situational context the Wx values will increase mainly due to the P (Wx=Wx1), or mainly due to the R (Wx=Wx2), or due to both (Wx=Wx1+Wx2), and politeness strategies should be appropriately chosen: an utterance with high Wx values, due mainly to the P values, will require basically respectful politeness expressions (for instance, when one is greeting a person of higher status); if both the P and R values are high, respectful politeness needs to be supplemented by strategic politeness (for example, when one is asking a higher status person for a favour). However, as has been emphasized many times before, respectful politeness is very much foregrounded in social interactions. A failure to observe respectful politeness is considered as a serious offense. Example:

(74) An eight-year old boy A talks to his twelve-year old sister B:

A1: **Cát cái cốc đi này!**

Put classifier glass imperative modal
(Put away the glass!)

B1: **Mày uống rồi mày đưa đây à?**

you-pronoun drink then you-pronoun give there modal
(You drink and then you give it to me like that?)

A2: **Cát hộ người-ta còn gì!**

put help someone so what
(Please put it away!)

B2: **Thế mà không nói được tử tế à?**
(Can't you talk more politely?)

In this episode, in his first turn of talk, the boy uses a direct request without any respectful or strategic politeness marker which provokes a negative reaction from the girl. To correct this, in his second turn of talk the boy adds a supportive verb **hộ** (help) and a personal pronoun **người ta** (someone) to his original request. If **hộ** is able to mitigate the imposing force of the direct request (a strategic politeness maxim of minimization of cost to H), **người ta** is unable to indicate the superior status of the sister and the solidary relationship between the two (a violation of the respect rules). The fact that the sister still does not accept her brother's second request and insists on a more appropriate form of behaviour shows how respectful politeness is tied to face in speakers' linguistic consciousness, or in other words, how the face of the Vietnamese person is bound to its social side.

4.4 The Interplay between Respectful and Strategic Politeness

The distinction between respectful and strategic politeness, described so far, is useful for a theoretical and empirical understanding of Vietnamese politeness. However, the two aspects of politeness do not oppose each other or exist in isolation. They have complicated relationships and the study of their functional interplay is important. The question arises as to when a device of respectful politeness can be used for a strategic politeness function and vice versa, when a device of strategic politeness can

be used for a respectful politeness function.

4.4.1 Respectful Politeness is Used for Strategic Politeness Functions

In her discussion on the choice of linguistic forms with social information in Japanese, Matsumoto (1988) argues that the use of unexpected social indicators will generate "interactional implications," similar to the generation of "conversational implicatures" when conversational maxims are violated (Grice 1975). According to Kasper (1990), whenever a social indicator is used, it must be used in conformity to the socially accepted norms or conventions, and the nonconformity will eventually lead to some implication. A few other works also demonstrate that with regard to a language where a social indicator has many equivalents (for example, address terms and honorifics), the use of a social indicator may then be a strategic choice (Luong 1990, Blum-Kulka 1990). Analyzing the use of unexpected address terms in the corpus, I notice that they are temporarily used as strategic politeness means when they are not used in conformity to the rules of respectful politeness.

The manipulation in the use of these address terms is generated first of all from a violation of the respectful politeness rules aiming to offend hearer's face: instead of following the social conventions of address, the speaker may choose to use a nonstandard address exchange to restructure the existing speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationship, thus displaying

a lack of respect for the hearer (or offending the hearer's face). In this case, we are dealing with the dark side of politeness: the face-attack strategies. In the example (74) above, instead of the usual address exchange **chị-em** (elder sibling-younger sibling) characteristic of their hierarchical and solidary relationship, the boy misses the use of any address terms in his first turn of talk. When reminded of his inappropriate behaviour, the boy uses **người ta** (someone) for self-reference which implies an equal non-solidary relationship with his sister. Another example:

(75) Two nine-year old boys (A, B) are having a dispute, C is B's mother:

- A1: (steps on B's foot)
 B1: **Ôi đau quá!**
 Ow! it hurts! (B pushes A away)
 A2: **Sao mà đẩy tao?**
 (why did you push me?)
 B2: **Lui ra kia! Đấm toét chân bố mà rồi đây con này!**
 (Stay away! you hurt your father's feet badly, offspring)
 C : **Ồ, Cha ả nói hay nhỉ!**
 (How bad your language is!)

In this episode, B's violation of the social rules of address (he uses an ascending kinterm (**bố**-father) for self-reference and a descending kinterm (**con**-offspring) to address his peer) is a serious offense. He was given an immediate reproof by his mother. Through a violation of the social conventions of address, B restructured his relationship with his peer as non-respectful, non-solidary. This is a highly face-threatening act, both for the speaker's face and the hearer's. In fact, this restructuring of social relationships, based on a violation of the rules of respectful politeness, is often used when the speaker wants to

attack the hearer's face.

Besides the address exchanges used to attack others' faces based on violations of social conventions of address, there are address exchanges which are used based on the appropriation of social conventions to increase politeness for speech, and finally, to achieve one's communicative goals. In these cases, polite address exchanges can temporarily become devices of strategic politeness. For example, the father in a family customarily addresses his son following the rule of respect-solidarity marked by the address exchange **con/offspring-bó**/father. If in one specific context he follows the rule of respect-distance marked by the address exchange **anh/elder brother-tôi**/subject, this restructuring of the status and solidarity relationship indicates the father has some reason for doing so. A street seller can follow the rule of respect-distance marked by the address exchange **chi/elder sister-tôi**/subject in addressing a same-age customer. If she uses the address exchange **chi/elder sister-em/younger sister** (marked by respect and solidarity), this exchange indicates that the seller has used the address terms to restructure their social relationship. We can suggest that she does this probably to gain the customer's sympathy. In these cases, address terms are used more for specific strategic purposes rather than for purely respectful purposes.

A question arises as to how to distinguish a respectful politeness-oriented use of address terms from a strategic politeness-oriented use of address terms. If an address exchange

is used in accordance with the rules of respectful politeness, there is no contradiction between the temporary status and solidarity values, indicated by the address exchange, and the speaker-hearer relationship, evaluated according to the social norms of intercourse. This can be called an unmarked address exchange. If an address exchange is used in accordance with the rules of strategic politeness, there is a conflict between the temporary status and solidarity values indicated by the address exchange and the speaker-hearer relationship as evaluated according to the social norms of intercourse. In this case, the status and solidarity relationship is reconstructed in the service of specific communicative intentions. This can be called a marked address exchange. If the study of unmarked address exchanges contribute to the understanding of the rules of respectful politeness and the rules of polite address, the study of marked address exchanges, on the contrary, will contribute to a better understanding of what Kasper (1990) calls "the exploitation of social indices in strategic politeness expressions."

4.4.2 Strategic Politeness Becomes an Index of Respectful Politeness

If respectful politeness devices can be temporarily used for strategic politeness functions, can strategic politeness devices be used to express respectful politeness? This would probably occur, not through a temporary functional mutation, but through a gradual functional mutation, which is closely related to the ritualizations of linguistic expressions. In this process, a

device of strategic politeness may acquire a function of respectful politeness. For instance, being the devices of strategic politeness aimed at defusing the degrees of the impositions of utterances, adverbial clauses of reasons, of preparatory conditions, indirectness, performative verbs such as **xin phép** (beg for permission), **cám ơn** (thank), **xin lỗi** (apologize), and supporting verbs such as **làm ơn** (do a favour), **hồ/giúp/giùm** (help) do not seem to be used in the same manner in situations marked by different speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. It seems that the functional mutation occurs more obviously in ritualized strategies of using performative and supporting verbs than in less ritualized strategies of using indirectness, and of using adverbial clauses.

**SOCIAL VARIATIONS OF POLITENESS
IN HANOI**

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the social variations of politeness in Hanoi. Through an examination of the complicated relations of the linguistic variables of politeness to the speaker's social identity, and the speaker-hearer power and distance differences, I will attempt to highlight, to what extent the social variations in polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers is the function of the speaker's social identities, of situation-specific strategies, or of ideological conflicts, structured by the relationships of (in)equality in society. The first part of the chapter (5.1) will present the theoretical and ethnographical backgrounds, and the research hypotheses. The second part of the chapter (5.2) will investigate the social variations of polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers through the analyses of 1. the social variations of politeness in directives; 2. the social variations of polite indirectness in directives.

5.1 Backgrounds and Research Hypotheses

5.1.1 Theoretical Backgrounds

In the existing literature on sociolinguistics, there are three major theoretical traditions in the interpretations of the social variations of language use in general, and of linguistic

expressions of politeness in particular.

In the first major theoretical tradition, speech differences are considered as reflection and/or reinforcement of the speaker's social identity. Since the beginning of the century, Sapir (1915, 29) noticed that linguistic expressions used by speakers may imply something about the speakers' social characteristics, which he called "person-implications". He identified some linguistic differences, and suggested they may relate to gender inequality in Yana. Sapir's remarks were supported and further elaborated in many subsequent studies on social variations in language use, in relation to the speaker's social identity in general, and to gender in particular. Examining the use of some phonological variables in American English in New York, Labov (1966, 1972) identified certain class-based differentiations (the use of the prestige variants correlates with the stratification of social groups), gender-based differentiations (female speakers use less stigmatized variants and are more sensitive to prestige variants than male speakers), and stylistic differentiations (the use of the prestige variants is increased with the increase of formality in all social groups). Given this regularity, all unusual exceptions are explained as an indication of a linguistic change. Trudgill (1974) also noticed gender-based differences in the use of different variants of (ng) in Norwich English (female speakers use prestige variants more often than male speakers), and explained them as consequences of male-female power inequality, and women's greater status consciousness. Distinct from Labov and Trudgill, Lakoff (1975)

paid attention not only to the pronunciation, but also to the use of lexical and grammatical elements, and sentence structures. Based on her data drawing from American English, Lakoff noticed that women tend to use rising intonation, prestigious phonological variants, hedges, intensifiers, qualifiers, and tag questions, etc., more frequently than men. Lakoff considered this as an indication of women's powerlessness and subordination, and hypothesized that this may relate to gender inequality in society. The works done by Labov, Trudgill, and Lakoff have contributed to a much better understanding of the "correlation of independent social variables with linguistic variables, reifying the age-old impression that people's speech is emblematic of their class, age, gender, ethnicity, and region" (Chambers 1993:137). However, being the pioneers in the study of the relationships between linguistic variables and social variables in general, and between language use and gender in particular, these authors are frequently challenged on certain important issues. The critique addresses primarily the assumptions about the independence of the social variables, and the simplistic relationships between social identities and language use. Instead of an exclusive focus on gender and its investigation in isolation from the other attributes of the speaker's social identities, many researchers suggest that the social variations in language use are also constrained by the speaker's social status (O'Barr 1982), and social networks (Milroy 1987), or are jointly controlled by a number of variables such as ranks, age, and gender (Ochs 1987). It is argued that gender is more often indirectly

indexed with language, that is, the relationship between a linguistic form and a social identity is culturally and ideologically mediated (Ochs 1992). The second critique addresses the issues of linguistic forms and functions through the notion of markers. Smith-Hefner (1988) notices that politeness codes in Javanese may have different functions depending on the perceptions of speakers and hearers in particular contexts. Politeness can be an index of subordination when it is used to express deference to superior persons. And yet, it can also be an index of authority and verbal art when it is applied to subordinate persons. Cameron et al. (1989) also indicate that a linguistic form, such as a tag question, may have different functions (that is, it can express both subordination and authority). Therefore, to consider it as a marker of one single function, i.e., of subordination, as does Lakoff, is unsatisfactory.

Born in the context of the critique of the first theoretical tradition regarding its explanations of the relationships between the social structure and the language structure, and especially of the relationships between linguistic forms and their functions, the alternative theoretical tradition places a focus on the pragmatic ambiguity of linguistic forms, and seeks to explain the social variations in language use not only in terms of group identities, but also in terms of class-structured ideological opposition. Martin (1987), for instance, suggested that the diversity of discursive practices in American English on menstruation, childbirth, and menopause, relates to the ideological conflicts

among women of different social classes. While middle-class women seem to adopt the metaphor of the male-dominated medical textbooks about menstruation as failed production, women of the working class, on the contrary, discuss it in terms of natural cycles. Examining the diversity of pragmatic implications in the use of person-reference terms in colonial Vietnam, Luong (1988) highlighted how they constitute an integral part of the class-structured ideological conflict: identical forms may have quite different pragmatic implications when they are embedded in conflicting ideologies. Thus, distinct from the first theoretical tradition, the second tradition seeks to study "how discursive practices and their pragmatic meanings are structured by diverse and conflicting ideologies, and therefore not necessarily underlain by an integrated set of rules constituting speakers' shared knowledge" (Luong 1990b: 4).

Despite the obvious differences, the two aforementioned theoretical traditions have one thing in common: they all seek to explain the social variations in language use by the factors external to the interactive process (i.e., by the factors pertaining to the speaker's social identity, or the ideological conflicts). Distinct from them, the third major theoretical tradition suggests that variations in language use should be studied within the matrix of rational strategic choices, or of ongoing social activities. This theoretical tradition is closely tied to Brown & Levinson's (1987) strategic politeness model.

Based on the hypothesized correlation between politeness and the sociological variables of relative power (P), distance (D), and the utterance's face-threat (R), Brown & Levinson suggest that in the research on the social variations of politeness, sociolinguistics needs to shift an "emphasis from the current preoccupation with speaker-identity to a focus on dyadic patterns of verbal interaction as the expression of social relationships" (1987:2). Drawing on her data from Tenejapa, Brown (1980) explains the higher politeness indices of women as compared to those of men not as a direct indication of women's social subordination (women in Tenejapa have an important role in the families, and participate in many social activities). In fact, women use politeness as strategies to deal with the face-threats they sense in talking to men (women are customarily beaten by their husbands and fathers), or to other women (there is a certain distance between women in the households because they all are married into their husbands' houses). Interpreting this phenomenon, Brown suggests that 1) women are more sensitive than men to the status and solidarity differences, therefore, they will be more polite than men in the context characterized by high power and distance differences; 2) women are more sensitive than men to the potential face-threat of what they are going to say, therefore, they will be more polite than men in the context characterized by high degrees of imposition of the utterances. Thus, instead of correlating the found variations in polite behaviour to gender on an a priori basis, Brown situates them in the matrix of strategic choices, and

indicates why, when, where, and under what social conditions, women are more polite than men. A similar approach to the social variations in language use with an emphasis on social activities is found in Goodwin (1990). Analyzing the use of language by Latin American girls and boys in a number of social activities, and in a number of speech activities, Goodwin remarks that in certain kinds of social activities, boys and girls build systematically different social organizations, while in some other kinds, they do not display any differences. Thus, language use does not only reflect, but also constructs and reconstructs social identities. The social structure is constantly recreated through different social activities. Consequently, the author suggests that activities should be the basic unit of analysis of variations. A focus on activities in linguistic research on variations, according to Freeman and McElhinny, has changed "the research question from what the differences are between men's and women's speech to when, whether, and how men's and women's speech are similar and different" (1996: 245).

The three aforementioned analytical frameworks have different implications for the study of the social variations in polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers.

5.1.2 The Determination of the Analytical Variables

In order to establish when, whether, and how polite behaviour is similar or different, we need to study the relations of the linguistic variables to the speaker's social identity, and the factors of the situational context. To do so, we will need to

determine, what variables of the speaker's social identity, and what parameters of the context, to build our analysis on.

The first issue to be discussed is the determination of the speaker's social variables. Examining the impact of extra-contextual factors on language use, many sociolinguists (Labov 1972, Milroy 1987 among others) suggest that gender, age, social group, and ethnic group, etc., are all important. However, they also comment that the effect of each of these variables on language use will depend on the social structures and cultural characteristics of specific speech communities. Which of the speaker's social variables will seem more important to the study of social variations of polite behaviour in the Hanoi context? Based on the data derived from the questionnaires provided by Hanoi subjects, and on an analysis of the existing literature on the social structure of Vietnam, I will focus on the three principal speaker social variables, namely, gender, age, and occupation.

As part of the interview and questionnaire project, 46 subjects were asked to provide their responses to the question "Which social groups, according to your opinions, usually speak politely?" on questionnaires. They can do this by marking their choices (as many as they wish) among the groups suggested on the questionnaires (questionnaire 6), or add new groups if they feel some are missing. Two men refused to provide their responses. They argued that in every social group, there are polite people, and impolite people. Therefore, it is unfair to suggest that people of this group are more or less polite than people of another

group. The remaining 44 subjects felt quite comfortable with the question and provided their responses. The social groups suggested for evaluation are: 1. male group, 2. female group, 3. old group, 4. young group, 5. professional group (including intellectuals and civil employees), 6. working group, 7. peasant group, 8. small business group.

The first variable is gender differentiation. The results derived from the questionnaires indicate a tendency among subjects to think that female speakers are usually more polite than male speakers, although the significant level is very low (16 out of 44 subjects think that women are usually polite, while only 8 out of 44 subjects think that men are usually polite: $p=0.2$). However, there is a significant difference between the two sex groups in their evaluation of the politeness attitudes of their own sex group, and the opposite sex group. The majority of female informants judge that their sex group is more polite than the opposite sex group (13 out of 24 female informants consider that women are usually polite, and only 4 women consider that men are usually polite, $p=0.02$). In contrast, male subjects report almost no sex-based differentiation in polite attitudes (4 out of 20 men think that men are usually polite, and 3 think that women are usually polite). These results suggest that men and women do not only differ in their polite behaviour, but also differ in their views on gender relations. Therefore, a close look at the locally constituted gender relationships is of vital importance for the interpretation of gender-based variations.

There are certain male-female differences in the socio-cultural structures of 77 sampled Hanoi speakers. With regard to the occupation structure, while working-class women and working-class men occupy the same percentages over the total number of their sex group in the whole sample (M=F=36.4%), among the professionals (who have stable jobs and good working conditions), the percentages of women are much smaller than the percentages of men (M=30.3%, F=18.0%), and finally, among the self-employed people (who have unstable jobs and bad working conditions), the percentages of women are almost twice larger than those of men (M=9.0%, F=18.0%). With regard to education, the percentages of women with high education are also smaller than those of men (M=39.4%; F=25.0%). In workplace, more men hold higher and more prestigious positions (for instance, chair in a governmental institution, director/vice-director in a manufacturing factory, etc.) than women. In family context, women do almost all domestic chores leaving men to be responsible for diplomatic matters, such as receiving guests, attending teacher-parents interviews at schools, etc.

Are these male-female differences a real manifestation of a male-female inequality in society? Are the gender-based variations in polite behaviour, as evaluated by 44 Hanoi subjects, a direct reflection of this gender relation? There is a common consensus among many Vietnamese researchers that gender relations in Vietnam have evolved from a matriarchal system, through a patriarchal pattern, and are currently moving towards a more egalitarian

structure. Accordingly, all gender differences found at the present are considered as the traces of the past patrilineal system (Le thi Nham Tuyet 1975). However, this uni-dimensional approach fails to offer a satisfactory interpretation for the complicated gender relationships in the Vietnamese family and social structures, as reported in recent publications. For instance, analyzing the household decision-making patterns in workers' and professionals' families in Hanoi, some researchers (Pham van Khoat 1990, Nguyen thi Bich Diem 1990), consider the high percentages of important decisions (such as buying or selling a house, dealing with difficult situations) made by the wives alone, or jointly by the wives and the husbands, as an indication of gender equality. On the other hand, they consider the greater percentages of domestic chores (such as cooking, shopping, doing the laundry) done by the wives alone, as an inheritance of the past gender inequality relationships (see Table 21).

What is not clear in this interpretation, however, is that, why in the working-class group, the gender equality is measured by the higher percentages of lone decisions by the wives on important issues, and not by joint decisions, while in the professional group, the gender equality is measured by the high percentages of joint decisions on important issues, and not by the percentages of sole decisions by the wives on important issues (which are much lower than the percentages of sole decisions by husbands). It is not clear either, why the gender equality is decided solely on the account of sole decisions by the wives or joint decisions on

important issues (such as purchasing or selling a house, dealing with difficult situations), and not on the account of other domestic chores, where the wives take the greater responsibilities?

Table 21: Decision-making patterns in workers' (1) and professionals' (2) households in Hanoi

| Objects of decision | Workers | | | Professionals | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------|------|---------------|---------------|------|
| | Wife alone | Husband alone | Both | Wife alone | Husband alone | Both |
| 1. Building a house | 42.1 | 34.5 | 23.4 | 2.3 | 43.2 | 54.5 |
| 2. Dealing with difficult situation | 49.5 | 37.1 | 10.3 | 6.8 | 22.7 | 70.4 |
| 3. Child rearing | 30.5 | 11.1 | 12.6 | 26.1 | 29.5 | 44.3 |
| 4. Taking care of old parents | 29.7 | 10.6 | 9.8 | 23.9 | 3.4 | 72.7 |
| 5. Budgetmanagement | 70.5 | 24.2 | 5.3 | 52.3 | 4.5 | 43.2 |
| 6. Cooking | 55.6 | 11.1 | 12.6 | 79.5 | 1.1 | 19.3 |
| 7. Shopping | 63.3 | 9.6 | 11.4 | 87.5 | 4.5 | 7.9 |
| 8. Doing the laundry | 59.1 | 7.4 | 11.5 | 62.5 | 1.1 | 36.4 |

(1) Source: Pham Van Khoat 1990

(2) Source: Nguyen Thi Bich Diem 1990

According to Luong (1989), such a simplistic interpretation of the change in the gender structure as a uni-lineal transformation from a male-oriented to a non-male oriented system, would fail to do full justice to the structure of the native system. The author suggests that there is a coexistence in the traditional Vietnamese society of the opposing models of gender relations, reflected in the kinship structures: the patrilineal system (based on the rigid separation of the sexes, closely related to the Confucian belief system of ancestor worship), and the bilateral system (based on the unity of opposite-sex individuals, closely related to the Buddhist belief system of cyclical reincarnation). These two gender models

still persist as the fundamental parameters of household formation and gender relations throughout twentieth-century Vietnam, despite the apparent change in the relation of structural dominance between the two models in the socialist north. Accordingly, Luong notes

If the salient pattern of joint conjugal decision making does not necessarily indicate a departure from the nominal consultation process by the husband in the past, the higher percentages of lone decisions by the wife than by the husband on work allocation suggest the possibility of a shift in the household authority structure.

(Luong 1989:751)

From this perspective, the data reported in Table 21 seem to offer different pictures of the gender structures in workers' and professionals' households. The different native gender models are embedded in different ways and have a different impact on the family authority structures. In professionals' households, if the high percentages of joint decisions do not necessarily indicate a decline of the patrilineal model, but signal an existence, and a development of the bilateral model, the low percentages of sole decisions by the wives on important issues (such as a purchase or a sale of a house), and the high percentages of sole decisions by the wives on unimportant issues (such as cooking chores, shopping, etc.), in contrast, indicate the significant dominance of the patrilineal model. In workers' households, the low percentages of joint decisions do not suggest a strong development of the bilateral model, while the high percentages of sole decisions by the wives on important issues may suggest that the patrilineal model seems to be challenged, and there seems to be a shift in power not toward gender equality (the bilateral model), but in

favour of women. This interpretation suggests that it is too simplistic to take the various manifestations of the decision-making patterns in workers' and professionals' households as a reflection of the uni-lineal development of gender relationships from the patrilineal model to the bilateral model. The important implication to be derived from this analysis is that, the gender differences in the socio-cultural structures, as well as differences in verbal behaviour, should not be interpreted solely from the ideology of the patrilineal model, which places an exclusive emphasis on gender inequality.

The second variable is age differentiation. The data derived from questionnaires 6 suggest that the speaker's age is an important factor in explaining social variations. There is a tendency among sampled subjects to think that old people are more polite than young people (34 out of 44 subjects think that old people usually speak politely, only 3 out of 44 think that young people usually speak politely: $p=0.000001$). However, there is no consensus among age groups on their evaluations of men's and women's politeness attitudes. The subjects of the old and middle-aged groups do not suggest any gender differences in polite behaviour (6 out of 25 subjects think that men usually speak politely, 7 out of 25 think that women usually speak politely: $p=1.0$). The subjects of the young group (younger than 40), tend to think that women are more polite than men (2 out of 19 think that men usually speak politely, 9 out of 19 think that women usually speak politely: $p=0.01$). Thus, similar to gender, between speakers

of different age groups there may be not only differences in polite behaviour, but also in their views on gender relations. A question arises now as to how to divide the age groups? According to Eckert (1989), a division of age categories is only appropriate when it makes age socially significant. This question has, so far, received less sophisticated attention from sociolinguists. For instance, Nguyen Thi Bich Diem (1990) divides the sampled households into two age groups, the first group have the husbands's ages higher than 30 (with high percentages of husbands who share domestic chores with their wives), and the second group have the husbands' ages below 30 (with high percentages of sole decisions by the husbands or joint decisions on important issues, and low participation of the husbands in domestic chores). On this basis, the author interprets all differences as reflecting age differentiations (old generation vs. young generation), and gender differentiation (males vs. females). This random division does not reflect native conceptions of an individual's life stages (adolescence - adulthood - middle age - old age). Nor does it relate to any significant social change. The explanations derived from the variation patterns, therefore, do not have any clear social implications. In an attempt to overcome this limitation, I will adopt a division of age categories, which will permit us to explain not only the age-based variations, but also the relations of each generation to the social changes associated with it. Accordingly, 77 sampled speakers are divided into four age groups in accordance with the native conceptions about an individual's

four life stages: the adolescent group (below 17), the adult group (17-39 yrs.), the middle-aged group (40-60 yrs.), and the old group (over 60 yrs.). Between these groups there are not only age, but also status differences (in family contexts, people of the old group speak mainly in self-superior or equal roles, people of the middle-age group, in addition, also speak in self-subordinate roles, and people of the young group speak mainly in self-subordinate roles). And more importantly, in relation to the historical context of the twentieth-century Vietnam in general, and of Hanoi in particular, this age division relates to the important changes in the socio-cultural life of society. The people of the old group have the strongest influences from the life modes and ideologies of the traditional Vietnamese society, and the French culture, which dominated the social and cultural life at least until 1954. The people of the middle-aged group are most influenced by the wartime life modes, and the socialist ideology, which dominated the social life, at least, from 1954 to 1975. The people of the adult and adolescent groups are most influenced by the post war-time life modes since 1975, and especially by the new socio-economic changes since the beginning of the eighties. To what extent the age differences, and the differences in their relations to the social changes, may help to highlight the social variations in polite behaviour, is a question to be looked at.

The third variable is the class-based or social stratification-based differentiation. The data derived from questionnaires 6 indicate that among the four social groups, the

professionals are considered more polite than the people of other social groups (35 out of 44 think that the professionals usually speak politely, 3 think that the workers usually speak politely, 6 think that the farmers usually speak politely, and only 1 thinks that the small business people usually speak politely: $p=0.000001$). To what extent these subjective evaluations fit the discursive practices of these groups is a question to be studied, but the data suggest that class-based, or social stratification-based (through occupation) differences, have certain effects on speakers' behaviour, at least in social evaluations. The question now is which approach is to be chosen to determine the social groups in the Hanoi context, the class-based approach, or the social stratification-based approach? According to the Marxist approach, the differences in the ownership of production means are the most important criteria for distinguishing social groups (classes), which differ in ideologies and practices. From the functional approach, the social groups are distinguished on the basis of differences in occupations, incomes, lifestyles, etc., among which occupation is the most prominent indicator (Milroy 1987: 97). As far as Hanoi is concerned, despite recent socio-economic changes, there is no clear class differentiation, due to the dominance of the socialist state ownership of production means. (Among 9 sampled households, no one owns an enterprise with employed workers, only two have small shops). However, there are certain differences between different social groups in terms of occupations, education, incomes, and working conditions, especially

after 1986. Instead of the Marxist class-based approach, some sociologists are beginning to apply the social stratification-based approach to their studies of the socio-economic structures of Hanoi. Trinh Duy Luan (1992) suggests a five-scale social stratification for the Hanoi population, using households' incomes: rich, fairly rich, average, poor, and very poor. The author also notes that besides the rich group, there is no significant difference in incomes between the remaining groups. Adopting a similar social stratification pattern, Pham Bich San (1992), Tuong Lai (1994) also find a positive correlation pattern between incomes, occupations, and education: professionals, high-ranking governmental officers, and those who have high education, usually have higher, and stable incomes, as compared to those of workers, those who have low education, and retired persons, etc. A close examination of the sampled population shows that they do not significantly differ in terms of incomes: they belong to the average group in the above-mentioned five scale social stratification. For this reason, I will base on occupations, educations, and working conditions, rather than incomes, as criteria to determine the social categories of the sampled population. Accordingly, the sampled speakers are divided into three main groups. The professional group include intellectuals and government civil employees. They have stable jobs, good working conditions, and high education levels (83% have higher education, 17% have secondary education). The working-class group have unstable jobs in enterprises, bad working conditions, and

lower education levels (10% have higher education, 65% have secondary education, 25% have elementary education). The self-employed group include handicraft persons, small dealers. They have bad working conditions, unstable jobs, have to organize and manage their own business, and have low education levels (37% have secondary education, 63% have elementary education). Besides the three main groups, there is also a group of students including those under 17 years old.

I have discussed so far the three main social variables which might seem to affect speakers' polite behaviour. The next step is to determine the parameters of the situational context, and the linguistic variables. In chapter 4, I have discussed the relative importance of the three parameters of the situational context, namely, the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, and the rankings of utterances' impositions. In this chapter, to make the analysis manageable, I will focus on two out of three main parameters of the situational context, namely, the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships, reflected in the six situations described in chapter 4. With regard to the linguistic variables, based on the analyses presented in the previous chapters, we will use the following two key variables: 1. directives with different politeness levels, and 2. polite indirectness. The correlations between these linguistic variables to the speaker's social variables, and the speaker-hearer social relationships, will permit us to study the social variations of politeness in Hanoi.

5.1.3 Research Hypotheses

The application of the three analytical frameworks to the study of the social variations of polite behaviour in the Hanoi dialect would yield three different series of predictions in terms of the correlations between politeness, the speakers' social identities, and the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships.

1) According to the socio-cultural framework, the variations in polite behaviour consistently correspond to the variations in speakers' social identities. Given the socio-cultural context of Hanoi, where differences in gender, ages, and occupations seem to constitute clear social identity differences, we will expect a consistent and regular change of politeness from one social group to another. That is, in any similar situation, the women are expected to speak more politely than the men, the old people are expected to speak more politely than the young people, and the people of the professional group are expected to speak more politely than people of the other occupation groups.

2) According to the strategic choice framework, the variations in polite behaviour are the function of the context specific strategies. We will expect no significant differences in polite behaviour between the various social (age, gender, occupation) groups in similar contexts. Instead, we will expect a general increase of politeness by people of all social groups, as we shift from contexts marked by low speaker-hearer power and distance differences to contexts marked by high speaker-hearer power and

distance differences.

3) According to the ideological conflict framework, the variations in polite behaviour relate to the differences in native ideologies, structured by the relationships of inequality between the social classes. From this perspective, it will be expected that the relationships between the social variations of politeness, the speaker's social identities, and the speaker-hearer power and distance differences are not uni-dimensional and straightforward as they seem to be in the socio-cultural and the strategic choice frameworks. The complexity of their relationships should be illuminated in relation to the ideological opposition between the social groups in their reconstruction of the native pragmatic models of power structures.

The question now is how should we explain the variations in polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers? Are they a function of social and cultural differences (the socio-cultural framework), of situation-specific strategies (the strategic choice framework), or of ideological opposition structured by differences in power and social values (the ideological conflict framework)?

In order to answer these questions, in the remaining part of this chapter, I will examine the social variations in polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers, through an analysis of the correlations between the linguistic variables of politeness, the speaker's social characteristics, and the power and distance parameters of the situational context.

5.2 The Social Variations of Politeness

5.2.1 The Social Variations of Politeness in Directives

The research question of this part is, how politeness in directives is applied in relation to the speakers' social identities, and the speaker-hearer status and solidarity differences? The linguistic variable of concern here are the 2300 directives, identified from the corpus of natural conversations, and coded in terms of their politeness levels (chapter 3). These directives are also coded in terms of the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships (chapter 4), and further coded in terms of the speakers' social variables (age, gender, occupation). The average index scores of politeness invested in directives by each social group, in each of the six situations, are computed. The index scores are calculated by assigning 1 for each polite directive, 0 for each neutral directive and -1 for each impolite directive. The scores for a group are then summed up and divided by the total number of instances to give the group politeness mean score: the index score of 1 shows that speakers of the group consistently use polite directives, the index score of 0 shows that speakers of the group consistently use neutral directives, and the index score of -1 shows that speakers of the group consistently use impolite directives. In other words, the more index scores are close to 1, the more polite the group is, the more index scores are close to -1, the more impolite the group is. The politeness index scores, classified by the speaker's social variables and situations, are presented in Tables 22a-b and graphically

represented in Figures 4 (a,b,c) and Figures 5 (a,b,c).

Table 22a: Politeness index scores classified by age, sex and the situations

| AGE | SEX | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 |
|-------|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| >60 | M | .66 | .25 | .18 | .90 | .64 | .42 |
| | F | .80 | .64 | .24 | .92 | .77 | .46 |
| 40-60 | M | .53 | -.04 | -.26 | .74 | .13 | .34 |
| | F | .72 | .06 | .11 | .84 | .27 | .48 |
| <40 | M | .51 | .30 | .30 | .65 | .39 | .38 |
| | F | .73 | .08 | .11 | .82 | .40 | .54 |

Table 22b: Politeness index scores classified by occupation, sex and the situations

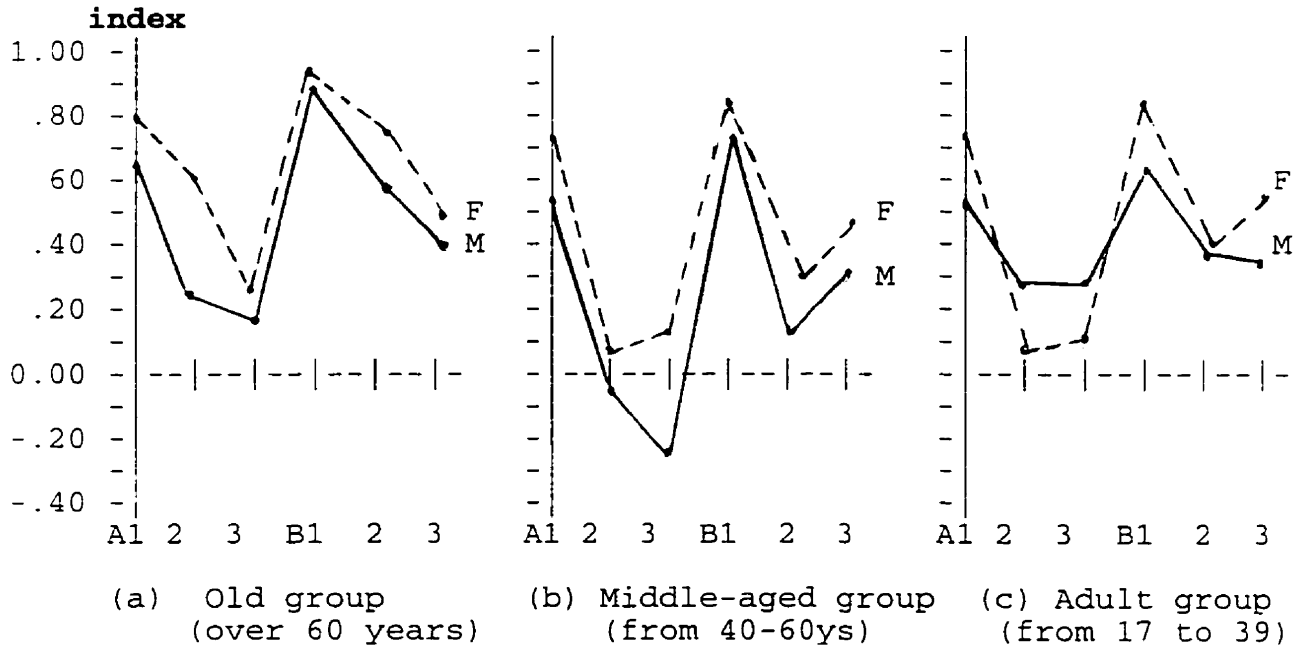
| OCP | SEX | A1 | A2 | A3 | B1 | B2 | B3 |
|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| I | M | .59 | .39 | .18 | .85 | .44 | .47 |
| | F | .83 | .71 | .40 | .92 | .50 | .57 |
| II | M | .57 | .29 | .25 | .78 | .40 | .38 |
| | F | .75 | .08 | .14 | .87 | .53 | .56 |
| III | M | .53 | -.18 | -.22 | .67 | .33 | .28 |
| | F | .77 | -.04 | -.08 | .79 | .43 | .35 |

M: male F: female OCP: occupation
 I: professionals II: workers III: self-employed
 A1: superior family address. B1: superior non-family address.
 A2: equal family addressees B2: equal non-family addressees
 A3: subordinate family addr. B3: subordinate non-family addr.

Figures 4 (a, b and c) give a graphical representation of politeness investment differentiation by age, sex of the speakers and the situations; Figures 5 (a, b and c) give a graphical representation of politeness investment differentiation by occupation, sex of the speakers and the situations. In each graph, the vertical axis is the politeness index, the horizontal axis represents different situations, ranging from informal (family interactions) on the left, to more formal (non-family interactions) on the right. The data reported in Tables 22a-b, and graphically

represented in Figures 4-5, will serve as the basis for testing the hypotheses of the three theoretical perspectives.

Figures 4: Politeness investment differentiation by age and sex of the speakers, and the situations



Figures 5: Politeness investment differentiation by occupation and sex of the speakers, and the situations



According to the sociocultural perspective, there is a correlation between linguistic behaviour and the speaker's social characteristics. That is, it should be expected that in any identical situation, women are generally more polite than men, old people are more polite than young people, professionals are more polite than people of the working and the self-employed groups. However, the data reported in Tables 22 a-b indicate that these expectations are not fully met.

Let us take the sex of the speakers as the controlling variable, and compare the politeness scores by male and female speakers of the same age group, or same occupation group, in the same situation. Female speakers of all age and occupation groups are more polite than male speakers only when speaking to superior family members (A1: $p < 0.05$), and when speaking to non-family members (B1-3: $p < 0.1$). When speaking to equal and subordinate family members (A2-3), the male-female differences vary with ages and occupations. With regard to age, when speaking to equal family members (A2), women are significantly more polite than men in the old group ($p = 0.02$), and less significantly in the middle-aged group ($p = 0.2$), but are less polite than men in the adult group ($p = 0.03$). When speaking to subordinate family members (A3), women are significantly more polite than men in the middle-aged group (0.0001), insignificantly more polite in the old group (0.5), but are significantly less polite than men in the adult group (0.00001). With regard to occupation, professional women are more polite than professional men both in speaking to equal (A2:

p=0.004) and subordinate (A3: p=0.008) family members. These differences are insignificant for the self-employed group (A2: p=0.05; A3: p=0.25). Working-class women, in contrast, are significantly less polite than working-class men (A2: p=0.05, A3: p=0.0001).

If we take the age of the speaker as the controlling variable, and compare the politeness scores by men of different age groups, or by women of different age groups, in the same situation, we also notice some unexpected patterns. While the old group speakers (over 60yrs.) are significantly more polite than speakers of the middle-aged and adult groups taken together, the behaviour of the middle-aged group in comparison to the adult group does not fully meet our expectations. Middle-aged men are less polite than adult men when speaking to equal and subordinate family members (A2: p=0.1, A3: p=0.001). Yet, their behaviour is insignificantly different when they speak to equal and subordinate non-family members (B2: p=0.04 with 50% of cells having expected frequencies smaller than 5; B3: p=1). Similarly, women of the middle-aged group do not differ from women of the adult group in all 3 situations of family interactions (A1, A2, A3: p>0.9).

If we take the speaker's occupation as the controlling variable, and compare the politeness indices by men of different occupation groups, or by women of different occupation groups, in the same situations, we also notice one unexpected pattern: professional men are less polite than working-class men when speaking to subordinate family members (A3: p=0.005), or there is

an insignificant difference between them in some other situations (A1, B2: $p=1$).

The analysis above thus indicates that there is no consistent correlation between the speaker's social identity and the polite behaviour. If in some situations there seems to be a positive correlation, yet in some other situations, the differences are insignificant, or the correlation seems to be negative. This cannot, therefore, confirm the sociocultural hypothesis that women are always more polite than men, old people are always more polite than young people, professionals are always more polite than the people of other occupation groups. This suggests that the sociocultural perspective alone cannot provide us with an appropriate interpretation of the variations in polite behaviour.

Distinct from the sociocultural framework, the strategic choice framework suggests differences in polite behaviour are the function of situation-specific strategies (politeness positively co-varies with the speaker-hearer power and distance differences) rather than of the speaker's social characteristics. If this hypothesis is correct, we should expect no significant differences in politeness scores between different social groups in identical situations, but an increase of politeness as we shift from low-power difference situations to high-power difference situations, from low-distance difference situations to high-distance difference situations. However, the analysis above indirectly indicates a partial inappropriateness of this hypothesis: although different social groups may have similar behaviour in one situation, and

distinctive behaviour in another, the differences, in many cases, seem to correlate consistently with the speaker's social identity (for instance, women are consistently more polite than men when they speak to superior family members, or to non-family members). Moreover, if we compare the politeness scores for different situations, we also notice some unexpected patterns. For instance, both men and women of the adult group do not differ in their polite behaviour when they speak to equal and subordinate family members (A2, A3). Similarly, both men and women of the middle-aged group are more polite to subordinate non-family members than to equal non-family members (B2, B3). Both men and women of the self-employed group do not differ in their polite behaviour when they speak to equal and subordinate family member (A2,A3). Professional women are more polite to equal family members than to equal non-family members (A2, B2). Some significant differences in politeness scores by different social groups in identical situations, and some unexpected correlation between politeness and the speaker-hearer power and distance relationships, indicate that the strategic choice framework alone is insufficient to offer a systematic explanation of the social variations of politeness.

How should we explain the relationships between the politeness scores, the speaker social variables, and the contextual variables? The ideological conflict framework suggests to examine the social variations of polite behaviour not only in relation to the speaker's social identity, or in terms of situation-specific strategies, but also as an integral part of the ideological

conflicts between different social groups through the construction of different pragmatic models. Through an analysis of the diversity in pragmatic implications in the use of personal reference terms, Luong (1988, 89, 90) suggests a coexistence of the two opposing models of native ideology, namely, the organic unity model with its emphasis on hierarchy and formal solidarity, and the alternative model of *communitas*, with its emphasis on equality and informal solidarity. From this perspective, the variations in polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers can be considered as a reflection of a conflict between the organic unity model, and the alternative model of *communitas*, in the ideological consciousness of different social groups, under the influences of different situational, and socioeconomic conditions.

Let us first explain, why the politeness indices by all social groups in speaking to superior people are higher than when speaking to equal and subordinate people, both in family interactions (A1, A2, A3), and in non-family interactions (B1, B2, B3). The use of speaker-hearer power and status differences as an explanatory factor leaves some cases unexplained, as shown in the analysis above. But if we put polite behaviour in the context of the two native ideological models, the high politeness indices in A1 and B1 suggest that the organic unity model (with an emphasis on hierarchy and formal solidarity) tends to dominate in the contexts of speaking to superior family and non-family persons. In contrast, the lower politeness indices in the contexts of speaking to equal and subordinate persons (A2, A3, B2, B3) suggest a rivalry between

the organic unity model and the model of *communitas*. The high power and distance differences, characteristic of A1 and B1, require speakers to express and reinforce the hierarchical relationships (an important version of the organic unity model), and to diminish the neglect of status differences (a characteristic of the model of *communitas*). The low power differences do not impede the existence of the organic unity model, but they also favour the *communitas* model. The data seem to suggest that despite the socialist emphasis on equality and solidarity, the effects of this ideology are confined to the interactions with equal and subordinate persons. In interactions with superior persons, it is the elite-centered behavioural principle of the organic unity model that dominates.

The next step is to explain the differences in polite behaviour by different social groups in each of the above-mentioned situations. The high politeness indices by all groups in speaking to superior persons (A1, B1) suggest that they follow the elite-centered principle of the organic unity model. However, the differences between different groups in the same situations suggest that there is a certain difference between them in their attitudes toward the organic unity model. Specifically, with regard to gender, women of almost all age groups and occupation groups have their politeness indices in speaking to superior persons (A1, B1) significantly higher than those of men ($p < 0.05$). One exception is that old women do not significantly differ from old men in speaking to superior non-family members. With regard to age, old speakers

(women and men) always have their politeness indices when speaking to superior persons (A1, B1) higher than those of the middle-aged and adult groups, although the significant levels are low ($p < 0.1$). This suggests that in situations marked by high speaker-hearer power differences, women and old people are more bound to the upward principle of the organic unity model than the other sex and age groups. Although these differences are described in terms of age and sex groups, but age and sex are not the determining factors of these differences, because as indicated in the analysis above, the politeness indices of age and sex groups in other situations (A2, A3, B2, B3) give many unexpected patterns. These differences, however, could be explained as a reflection of the different attitudes by the different social groups toward the elite-centered principle of the native ideology. The old speakers may see in the observance of this principle a way of displaying their moral quality, while middle-aged, adult, and male speakers may see in it a sign of subordination. Similarly, women seem to be more loyal than men to the organic unity model of behaviour in speaking to the superior persons, because they believe that this behaviour helps to bring them the social values of **ngôn, hạnh** (impeccable speech and behaviour). And perhaps due to this similar attitude toward the elite-centered principle of the organic unity model, women and old speakers also share consensus in evaluating that old people and women usually speak politely (questionnaire 6). Thus, despite the common tendency of all social groups to invest a greater degree of politeness in speaking to superior persons (A1, B1), the

differences in the politeness indices by different sex and age groups seem to be the function of the various social meanings of the organic unity model. Distinct from the age- and sex-based differentiations, there seems to be no significant differences between occupation groups in the politeness indices in speaking to superior persons. This indicates that the social stratification in society (based on occupations rather than on incomes) is not strong enough to lead to differences in their perceptions of the traditional organic unity model.

Let us continue to explain the differences in polite behaviour by different social groups in speaking to equal and subordinate persons, both in family interactions (A2, A3), and non-family interactions (B2, B3). It is suggested above that in these situations, the speakers are jointly constrained by the organic unity and the *communitas* models. The differences in politeness indices by different social groups, therefore, can be explained as a competition between the two opposing models. To highlight this point, I will analyze the polite behaviour by different social group in A2, i.e., in spousal interactions. The data reported in Table 22a indicate that old men have their politeness indices significantly lower than those of old women ($M=0.25$, $F=0.64$, $p=0.03$), while in the middle-aged group, women do not significantly differ from men ($M=-0.04$, $F=0.06$, $p=0.2$). In the adult group, however, while women's politeness indices remain almost the same as those of middle-aged women, men's scores have significantly increased ($M=0.30$; $F=0.08$, $p=0.03$). Thus, adult men, in contrast

to old men, are more polite than women of their same age group when speaking to equal family members. If we compare the scores of each sex group across age categories, we notice that women's scores decrease from the high level in the old group (much higher than that of old men in A2), to the low level in the middle-aged group (as low as those of men in the same age group), and remain at the same low level in the adult group. In contrast, men's scores decrease from the high level in the old group (although their scores are much lower than those of old women), to the low level in the middle-aged group, and rise to the highest level in the adult group (which makes adult men significantly more polite than adult women). These differences in polite behaviour across age and sex groups in spousal interactions seem to relate to the conflicts between the male-oriented and non-male-oriented behavioral models. The high politeness scores of old women as compared to those of old men indicate a strong observance, by both men and women in this age group, of the male-oriented behavioral model (a version of the organic unity model in family interactions). The low politeness scores, as well as the insignificant male-female differences in the middle-aged group (which is most influenced by the socialist ideology of equality and solidarity), indicate a strong competition between the male-oriented model and its alternative non-male-oriented behavioral model in spousal interactions: we still see an evidence, albeit weak, of the male-oriented model (men's scores are still lower than those of women, although the significant level is low: $p=0.2$), we also see a strong evidence of the bilateral model

(through a significant decrease in politeness scores by both men and women as compared to those of the old men and women). In the adult group, the fact that women's scores remain at the same level as that of middle-aged women, and men's scores rise to a level higher than that of adult women, and highest for all men, indicates that the male-oriented behavioral pattern is challenged, predicting a change in male-female power structure. This statement is supported by the household's decision-making patterns, reported by Nguyen Thi Bich Diem (1990). In the old families, most of the domestic chores are done alone by the wives, while in the young families, they are done jointly by the husbands and the wives. This analysis indicates that this change in polite behaviour by women and men across age categories in spousal interactions, is a part of the on-going competition between the two opposing male-oriented and bilateral behavioral models in the native gender ideology. To have a better picture of this conflict, let us observe the male-female differences in spousal interactions across occupation groups. The analysis of the politeness scores in A1 (speaking to superior family members) indicates no occupation-based differentiation, both for men ($p=0.8$), and for women ($p=0.85$), although women in all occupation groups are significantly more polite than men, demonstrating their observance of the traditional male-oriented behavioral pattern. In contrast to A1, in A2 (spousal interactions), the politeness indices of both men and women considerably vary across occupation groups. In the professional group, the indices of both men and women are

relatively high, and women's indices are significantly higher than those of men ($p=0.004$). In the self-employed group, the politeness indices of both men and women drop to a very low level ($M=-.18$, $F=-.04$), albeit women are still relatively more polite than men ($p=0.05$). In the working-class group, while women's scores remain as low as those of self-employed women, men's scores rise to such a level that makes them significantly more polite than working-class women. This, again, gives an impression that the male-oriented and non-male-oriented models of the native gender ideology have different effects on the three occupation groups in spousal interactions. If the high politeness scores of professional women, and their significantly higher politeness level as compared to that of professional men indicate the dominance of the male-oriented behavioral model, the low politeness scores of working-class women, and their significantly lower level as compared to that of working-class men, in contrast, indicate a decline of the male-oriented behavioral model. Distinct from the professional group and the working-class group, in the self-employed group, the low scores by both men and women, and the insignificant male-female difference indicate a strong competition between the male-oriented and non-male oriented models. This rivalry between the two behavioral patterns will be better highlighted if we situate it in the context of the power structures in family context, in the form of financial contributions, and participation in domestic chores by family members, across occupation groups. As discussed in 5.1.2, in professional families, the husbands usually have higher incomes,

the percentages of sole decisions by the husbands on important issues are also higher than the percentages of sole decisions by the wives, the husbands' participation in domestic chores is also low (Nguyen Thi Bich Diem, 1990). In contrast, in working-class families, the wives always have higher incomes, the percentages of sole decisions by the wives on important issues are greater than those of men, and they also participate in domestic chores less often than professional women (Pham Van Khoat, 1990). With regard to the self-employed group, the information collected from 77 sampled Hanoi speakers indicates no significant male-female differences in financial contributions and decision-making patterns. Due to the instability and low incomes of their jobs (private tailors, small retailers, artisans), both husbands and wives have to share the responsibilities for the business and domestic chores. I would suggest that the differences across occupation groups in their adoption of the male- or non-male-oriented behavioral patterns in spousal interactions are engendered in the context of the different spousal power structures across occupation categories.

The differences in polite behaviour across the social groups, reflecting the various degrees of dominance of the organic unity model and the alternative communitas model in speaking to equal and subordinate persons, do not only manifest in one situation, but also across situations. In all occupation groups, there is a general decrease of politeness from speaking to equal persons (A2, B2) to subordinate persons (A3, B3), indicating

a dominance of the organic unity behavioral model rather than of the model of *communitas* in speaking to equal persons. However, this pattern collapses in the age groups: while old men and women follow the same pattern as that of the occupation groups, middle-aged and adult men and women have their politeness indices in speaking to equal persons either insignificantly different from their indices in speaking to subordinate persons, or significantly lower. This suggests that while they treat the older and the younger addressees according to the rules of the organic unity model (with an emphasis on hierarchy and formality), they treat their peers according to the rules of the *communitas* model (with an emphasis on solidarity and equality). This behaviour pattern could be explained along the same line as the decrease of the politeness levels by these age groups in speaking to the superior persons: under the influences of the socialist emphasis on equality and solidarity, these age groups see in politeness more a sign of powerlessness and formality, than an expression of their cultural values.

To sum up, the relationships between politeness, the speaker's social identity, and the speaker-hearer power and solidarity differences, in the social variations of politeness are rather complicated and multidimensional. These relationships do not only reflect the speaker's social identity, or represent a function of situation-specific strategies, but also result from the rivalry between the two opposing native behaviour models of organic unity and *communitas*.

5.2.2 The Social Variations of Politeness through the Use of Polite Indirectness

In this section, we will examine the social variations of politeness through the use of polite indirectness. The basis for analysis are the occurrences of polite indirectness in competitive directives, because indirectness in convivial directives does not have polite effects (see Chapters 3 and 4). Two contextual situations are being studied, namely A (speaking to family members) and B (speaking to non-family members), ignoring thus the power differentiation for two reasons, first, due to the limited occurrences of polite indirectness, and second, because the speaker-hearer power differentiation, as argued in Chapter 4, is not as influential as the speaker-hearer distance differentiation, in the use of polite indirectness. The percentages of polite indirectness over the total occurrences of competitive directives issued by each social group in each situation, are reported in Tables 23a-b.

Table 23a: Percentages of polite indirectness applied by sex and age groups in each situation

| AGE | SEX | A | B |
|-------|-----|------|------|
| >60 | M | 10.5 | 0.0 |
| | F | 9.3 | 2.4 |
| 40-60 | M | 11.5 | 23.5 |
| | F | 14.0 | 13.3 |
| <40 | M | 4.2 | 15.4 |
| | F | 5.4 | 10.5 |

The data reported in Table 23a indicates that with regard to age, both men and women of the old group tend to apply polite

indirectness mainly to family members ($p < 0.0001$). In the middle-aged group, speakers tend to apply polite indirectness in both situations, but men apply it in formal context more often than in family context ($p = 0.005$), while for women, there is no significant difference ($p = 1$). In the adult group, in contrast to the old group, both men and women tend to apply polite indirectness mainly in non-family interactions ($p < 0.005$). In other words, as the ages of the speakers decrease, they tend to apply polite indirectness in non-family interactions more often than in family interactions. Although this is a common tendency for both men and women, it seems to manifest itself in men's behaviour more clearly than in women's behaviour. The limited occurrences of polite indirectness leave us with insufficient basis for judging whether the increased application of polite indirectness by the middle-aged and the adult groups, is the function of only the speaker-hearer distance differences, or also the function of the speaker-hearer power differences. However, we need to keep in mind that, without taking the speaker's sex, age, and occupation into consideration, the application of polite indirectness, as demonstrated in Chapter 4, is dependent upon the speaker-hearer power differences to a much lesser extent than upon the speaker-hearer distance differences, and the degrees of impositions of the utterances.

Continuing to consider the correlations between the speaker's gender and occupation, and the application of polite indirectness, the data reported in Table 23b also indicate an interesting pattern. With regard to occupation-based differentiation, if the

self-employed group tends to apply polite indirectness mainly in family interactions ($p < 0.05$), the worker group applies it in both

Table 23b: Percentages of polite indirectness applied by sex and occupation groups in each situation

| OCP | SEX | A | B |
|-----|-----|------|------|
| I | M | 6.2 | 13.4 |
| | F | 7.0 | 10.8 |
| II | M | 11.5 | 21.3 |
| | F | 10.0 | 12.5 |
| III | M | 7.3 | 2.0 |
| | F | 14.0 | 5.5 |

I: professionals II: workers III: self-employed
 A: family interactions B: non-family interactions

situations, and the professional group applies it in non-family interactions more often than in family interaction. If we take the speaker's sex into consideration, this occupation-based differentiation pattern manifests itself in men's speech more obviously than in women's speech. If both men and women of the self-employed group apply polite indirectness to family members 3 times more often than to non-family members (for M: $p = 0.05$, for F: $p = 0.001$), the worker and professional men, in contrast, apply it in non-family interactions twice more often than in family interactions ($p < 0.001$). The difference, however, is insignificant for the worker and professional women ($p > 0.7$). Thus, the analysis of the use of polite indirectness across age, sex, and occupation groups indicates a decrease of polite indirectness in family interactions, and an increase of it in non-family interactions, from the old group to the adult group (with the middle-aged group being an intermediary), from the self-employed group to the

professional group (with the working-class group being an intermediary). These changes manifest themselves in men's speech more clearly than in women's speech (that is, men apply polite indirectness to non-family members more often than women). How should we explain these differences?

As discussed in the previous chapters, politeness is just one of the possible functions of indirectness, and this function is perceived differently in different social groups. For instance, informants of the old group and the self-employed group often think that the indirect time request "Can you tell me what time it is" is superpolite, therefore, is not used as a time request. In contrast, some informants of the adult and professional groups think that this is a polite time request, especially in non-family interactions. Similarly, some informants of the old group think that the question "Excuse me, do you have a watch?" cannot be used as a time request, both in family and non-family interactions. This question, however, is comfortably accepted by young informants as a normal or even a polite time request for some particular situations (for example, when the addressee is busy or is a stranger). For this reason, I suspect that the differences in the use of polite indirectness by different social groups, across different situations, seem to relate to the functional ambiguity of indirectness, and the different views on polite indirectness by different social groups. Specifically, I suggest that adult women and men (with regard to age differentiation), and professional men and women (with regard to occupation differentiation), tend to see

in indirectness a means, with the help of which they can tactfully and delicately express their communicative intents (an instrumental view on the politeness function of indirectness), and therefore they apply polite indirectness in non-family interactions more often than in family interactions. Men and women of the old and the self-employed groups do not seem to share this view on the function of indirectness, in contrast, they tend to apply indirectness in family interactions more often than in non-family interactions, because indirectness helps to enhance their authority. Men and women of the middle-aged and working-class groups seem to recognize both functions of indirectness, and they apply indirectness in family interactions to express their authority, in non-family interactions to express their tact and delicacy. Thus, if we shift from the old group to the adult group, and from the self-group to the professional group, we notice a change in the use of indirectness across situations. This change, however, is not a simple reflection of the differences in the speakers' social identities, but closely relates to differences between the social groups in their perceptions of the politeness functions of indirectness.

I have so far analyzed the social variations of politeness in directives taken from a corpus of natural conversations, and in the application of polite indirectness in competitive directives, by a sample of Hanoi speakers. The analysis clearly demonstrates that there are no consistent correlations between the social variations of the two linguistic variables of politeness and the speaker's

social variables of age, gender, and occupation. This, in turn, indicates that the speaker's age, gender, and occupation, as independent social variables, albeit relate to, do not directly shape the speaker's polite behaviour, as assumed by the socio-cultural perspective. On the other hand, the relations of the politeness indices and the use of polite indirectness by the different social groups to the parameters of power and distance of the situational context, do not fully justify the hypothesis which considers the variations in polite behaviour as the function of situation-specific strategies. The analysis shows a complicated interrelationships between the linguistic behaviour, the speaker's social variables, and the variables of the contextual situation, proving that polite behaviour is simultaneously a function of the speaker's social identity, and a function of situation-specific choice. An explanation for these complicated interrelationships is found in the distinctive perceptions by different social groups of the meanings of linguistic elements, and in their varying observance of the native behavioral models. In other words, the social variations of politeness as we see in these data, do not represent a homogeneous behavioral model. Instead, they result from a coexistence of and rivalry between opposing behavioral models in the ideologies of individual speakers, and of different social groups. The most important thing in this study of the social variations of polite behaviour is not to describe the surface differences relating to the speaker social variables, and the variables of the situational context, but through this

description, to achieve a better understanding of the ongoing changes in the native ideologies and the power structures.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of a critical review of the three main approaches to linguistic politeness, the thesis has examined the native politeness conceptions, the manifestations of politeness in directives and its expressive means, the two aspects of politeness with distinctive functions, rules/strategies, and the socio-situational variations of politeness in Hanoi. The work has brought an empirical and theoretical contribution to the debates on the politeness definitions (is politeness a social norm of behaviour, or an individual strategy? a universal phenomenon, or a culturally specific concept?), on the realizations of verbal politeness (the maxims and the rules of linguistic politeness, the roles of linguistic elements in expressing politeness, the relationship between indirectness and politeness), and the effects of socio-contextual factors (the speaker-hearer relationships, the illocutionary forces of speech acts, and the speaker's social variables) on polite behaviour.

Through a study of the native politeness conceptions, elicited from a sample of Hanoi speakers, the thesis discusses the semantics and the functions of politeness in Hanoi. Of special attention is the question of whether or not politeness is a universal phenomenon, intimately linked to individual intention-based communicative acts (the view which considers politeness as a tool of communicative intentions), or a cultural concept contingent upon socially prescribed norms of behaviour (the view which considers

politeness as the social norms of behaviour), or a special phenomenon encompassing both the social and the individual, the normativeness and the instrumentality. The interview and questionnaire data on the metapragmatics of politeness indicate a coexistence of two aspects, differing in terms of semantics and functions, which are called by Hanoi speakers as lịch sự tối thiểu (minimal/respectful politeness) and lịch sự xã giao (formal/strategic politeness). An analysis of the data permits us to determine that respectful politeness is tied to the concepts of lễ phép (respectfulness), and đúng mực (propriety), i.e., to showing proper respect to the speaker-hearer power and distance differences, and strategic politeness is linked to the concepts of khéo léo (tact) and tế nhị (delicacy), i.e., to minimizing the degrees of face threat of the utterances. These two aspects of politeness jointly affect linguistic behaviour of speakers. The respectful politeness is considered as a manifestation of one's morality and personality, and is therefore especially emphasized in social interactions. The coexistence of the two aspects of politeness, and the emphasis on the respectful politeness in the native speakers' politeness consciousness, suggest that the universal model, which considers politeness as a means in service of the speakers' communicative purposes, is not generalized enough to become a universal theory. On the other hand, the presence of the strategic politeness also suggests that we cannot reduce the various manifestations of politeness in Hanoi to the patterns of ritualized behaviour, as suggested by some politeness researchers

for other Asian languages. Therefore, it is suggested that the politeness in Hanoi should be better considered as an integration of the normativeness and the instrumentality, of the social and the individual, which have various correlations in the aspects of respectful and strategic politeness. At a more abstract level, relating to the cross-cultural determination of the functions of politeness, the data on the metapragmatics of politeness attest to the hypothesis suggested by Hill et. al. (1986) about the coexistence of discernment and volition.

The second issue discussed in the thesis is the relative importance of linguistic means, especially of indirectness and pragmatically supportive elements, in the expressions of politeness in directives. Contrary to the expectations of the instrumental perspective, which considers indirectness as an absolute correlate of politeness, (Lakoff 1973, 75; Brown & Levinson 1987; Leech 1983), the data indicate that there are no simple and straightforward relationships between indirectness and politeness in Hanoi, and the main politeness device for directives of this dialect is not indirectness, but supportive elements with polite effects, such as address terms, modal words, mitigating elements, etc. This does not imply that indirectness in the Hanoi dialect is not used as a politeness means, but it emphasizes that politeness is just one of the possible functions which indirectness may perform. The politeness function of indirectness is constrained by many different factors, such as the illocutionary force of the speech act (it is demonstrated that indirectness in Hanoi may

increase politeness for competitive directives, but can not increase politeness for convivial directives), or the pragmatic effects of other linguistic elements (an indirect competitive directive is not polite if it contains an element, which is an impolite indicator), or the presence of other conversational implications (such as irony, reproach, threat). On the other hand, an analysis of the correlations between linguistic means (address terms and indirectness) and the parameters of situational context (the speaker-hearer power and distance relationships, and the degrees of impositions of the utterances), indicates that the application of polite indirectness depends on the degrees of the utterances' face threat more than on the speaker-hearer status and solidarity relationships. The use of polite address terms, in contrast, depends on the speaker-hearer relationships more than on the degrees of the utterances' face threat). Thus, in relation to the two politeness aspects differing in terms of functions, indirectness has its main function to express strategic politeness rather than to express respectful politeness. And polite address terms have their main function to express respectful politeness rather than to express strategic politeness. The fact that the instrumentalists identify the function to minimize the utterance's imposition by indirectness with the function to give deference by polite address terms, and attribute to them the negative politeness function, has effaced the functional distinction between these different politeness means. This has also simplified the relationships between politeness and its expressive means in

general, and between politeness and indirectness in particular. This also corroborates that the idea to distinguish the aspects of respectful and strategic politeness in Hanoi (or discernment and volition in other cultures), is not only justifiable at the level of language ideologies, but also at the level of manifestations.

From an examination of the differences between respectful and strategic politeness in terms of their semantics, their functions, and their expressive means, the thesis proceeds to discuss the pragmatic systems (the underlying rules and maxims of politeness in Hanoi), and to explain their different relations to the notion of face. In accordance with the two aspects of respectful and strategic politeness, two series of politeness rules and maxims are distinguished. The rules of respectful politeness guide polite behaviour on the basis of regulating the respect for a person's social status (respect rule) and solidarity (solidarity rule). The maxims of strategic politeness guide polite behaviour on the basis of regulating the cost/benefit to the speaker and the hearer: the tact maxim is applied in competitive directives, and the generosity maxim is applied in convivial directives. These two types of politeness rules and maxims are suggested to be closely linked to the notion of face. While sharing the idea about a close link between politeness and face, however, the thesis argues that the universal notion of face as a self-image of the personal self (consisting in the positive face and the negative face), does not seem to fit the Vietnamese notion of face. In accordance with the aspects of respectful and strategic politeness, the respectful

politeness rules and the strategic politeness maxims, the thesis proposes a construal of the Vietnamese face, which includes not only the personal, but also the social sides of the self. The personal side covers the internal self, and the social side covers the self-in-relation-to-others. By reconstructing the Vietnamese notion of face as an integration of the social and the personal sides of the self, and by linking them to the aspects of respectful and strategic politeness, the thesis attests to the plausibility of the hypotheses about the cultural variations in the notion of face, and about the cultural values underlying the notions of face in the different systems of politeness (Matsumoto 1988; Blum-Kulka 1990).

Finally, the thesis discusses the social variations of politeness in Hanoi. Through an analysis of the complicated relationships between the polite behaviour, the speaker's social variables, and the parameters of the contextual situation, the thesis suggests that the variations in the polite behaviour of Hanoi speakers is not only a direct reflection of the speakers' social identities, or a function of a situation-specific strategy, but an outcome of the interaction between these different variables. And the reasons underlying these variations are to be sought in the rivalry between the opposing behavioral models adopted by the different social groups, and in the functional ambiguity of the linguistic forms.

The conclusions of this thesis are drawn from an analysis of the interview, questionnaire, and natural conversation data (mainly directives), collected from a sample of Hanoi speakers. Given the

complexity of the issues addressed in the thesis, and the limited scopes of the data, not all questions are satisfactorily answered. For example, to define the politeness conceptions of Hanoi speakers, as well as to distinguish respectful from strategic politeness in terms of their semantics and function, the data need to be collected from a larger sample of informants, and from many different geographical areas. Similarly, to study the expressive means of politeness, and to distinguish respectful from strategic politeness in terms of the manifestations, the analysis needs to be expanded to other linguistic means besides address terms for hearers and indirectness. The positive and negative correlations between indirectness and politeness also need to be studied more systematically and carefully to determine whether they are characteristic of the Hanoi dialect, or of the other dialects in the Vietnamese language as well. Moreover, the verbal realizations of politeness, and its correlations to face, to the speaker's social attributes, and to the parameters of the situational context, also require a more comprehensive study, which goes beyond the directives, covers many different situational contexts, which have the speakers belonging to many different social groups. At a cross-cultural level, it is also desirable to compare Vietnamese speakers' politeness concepts, the rules of respectful and strategic politeness, and their expressive means in the Vietnamese language, with other languages in the area, such as the Chinese, the Japanese, and other languages of South-East-Asia, or with languages belonging to other traditions, such as those of Western

Europe or North America. In this context, I would like to state that the results and methods revealed in this thesis constitute just the very first step for subsequent research on a series of interrelated issues of politeness.

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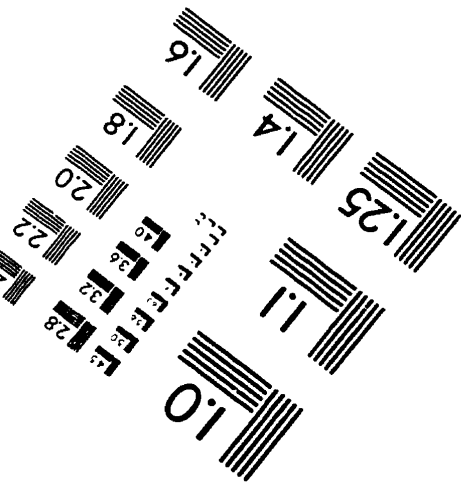
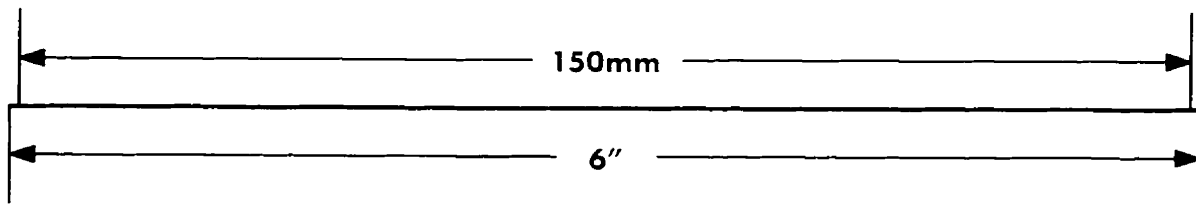
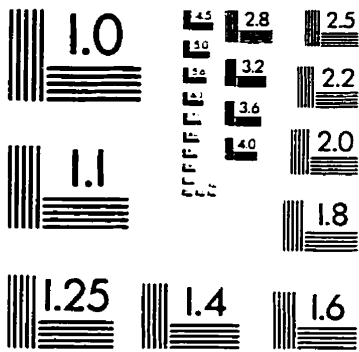
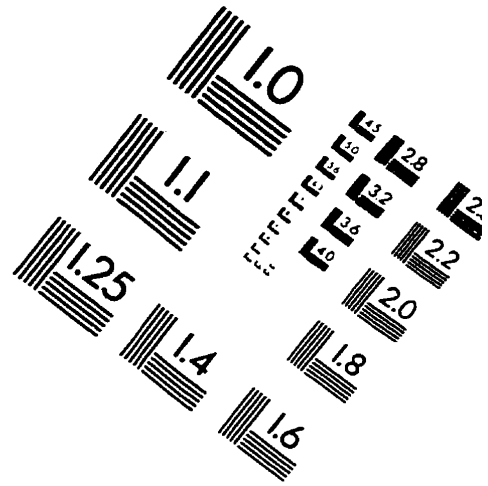
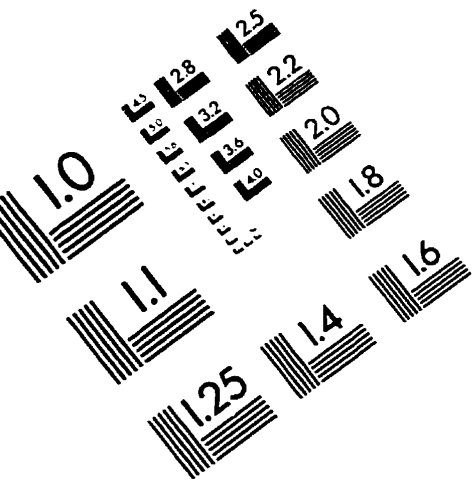
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