**Transnational Variation in Linguistic Politeness in Vietnamese:
Australia and Vietnam**

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

Over the past three decades, the Vietnamese language has undergone substantial changes, both in Vietnam, and in diasporic contexts such as Australia. Yet the nature of the variation resulting from those changes at the sociopragmatic level in expressing politeness is little researched.

The question of whether there are differences in the politeness expressed by Vietnamese speakers living in Vietnam and Australia is the focus of this research, which aims to investigate:

- sociolinguistic/pragmatic variation in how politeness is expressed in everyday service encounters within Vietnamese-speaking communities in Australia and Vietnam

- how intercultural contact and socio-political change assist in accounting for differences between the communities of Vietnamese speakers in the way in which politeness is expressed in Vietnamese.

Naturalistic speech data was recorded in everyday public contexts, including shops and markets, where the Vietnamese vernacular is used in Australia and Vietnam. The data corpus for each national context is more than 1000 turns at talk, and was transcribed and analysed in relation to four independent variables: national context, gender, role and generation.

Through the data analysis, 21 categories of politeness marker are identified, defined and discussed in conjunction with general linguistic politeness theory concerning the interlocutor's "face wants" and two concepts of politeness in Vietnamese: (1) strategic politeness (*lịch sự*) and (2) respectful politeness (*lễ phép*).

The main findings emerging from the analysis are that Vietnamese living in Australia are more linguistically polite than those living in Vietnam, using significantly more politeness markers (7 of 10) across 21 categories. Further in-depth exploration reveals how the usage of specific categories of marker is similar and different across the national contexts, and possible explanations for these differences in relation to intercultural contact and socio-political change are presented.

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I, Le Thien Phuc, declare that the PhD thesis entitled *Transnational variation in linguistic politeness in Vietnamese: Australia and Vietnam* is no more than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

Signature: ....   Date:................................

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1PSR	First-person singular referent
2PSR	Second-person singular referent
3PSR	Third-person singular referent
c.	Category
CLA	Classifier
CLOTE	Community language other than English
COPU	Copula
CP	Cooperative principles
FTA	Face threatening act
H	Hearer/addressee
HON	Honorifics
L1	First language
INTJ	Interjection
L2	Second language
NEG	Negative function word
PLU	Plural marker
PRT	Particle (politeness marker)
PST	Function word indicating past time
Q.	Question marker
REL	Relative
S	Speaker

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   RESEARCH BACKGROUND

During my first visit to Vietnam in 1999, having lived in Australia for twenty-one years, I became aware of a politeness stereotype: Vietnamese who have been living overseas are more "polite" than local Vietnamese in their speech behaviours. In social conversations with friends, and with other local Vietnamese, this politeness stereotype was confirmed with words such as *cám ơn* (thank you) or *làm ơn* (please), which are rarely used by local Vietnamese people, but noticeably used by Vietnamese living overseas. On this occasion, further comments on the politeness stereotype suggested that politeness routines were no longer attended to within the Vietnamese educational system, as the subject of *Đức dục* (Ethics education) has not been taught in schools since 1975.

Despite being impressionistic and having no scientific validity, this stereotype of politeness instigated the researcher's curiosity to know more about the value of linguistically "polite" behaviour attached to the "natural" speech of Vietnamese living overseas, including Australia. Other questions subsequently came to the researcher's mind, such as "does the Vietnamese spoken in Australia in any way differ from the language spoken in Vietnam? If it does, then "what is the difference? And "how has it happened?" Such interesting questions eventually led to this research.

In this study, two national cultures are examined: Vietnamese and Anglo-Australian. However, the Vietnamese culture can be loosely segmented between pre-communist and communist-oriented periods, including the period of "*Doi moi*" or reform initiated in late 1986, to mainly achieve socio-economic stabilisation and development in Vietnam (Nguyen Loc 2006:1-2; Kinley & Nguyen 2008:13). Therefore, in this study, we are loosely dealing with three systems of cultural values, which potentially affect the way in which politeness

is expressed in Vietnamese: pre-communist Vietnamese, communist-oriented Vietnamese, and Anglo-Australian, to be discussed in Chapter 2.

The research focus is Vietnamese, the Austro-Asiatic language spoken by its native speakers in both Vietnam and Australia. The term "Vietnamese" refers to the language and its native speakers, as distinguished from non-native speakers. In this study, Vietnamese spoken in Vietnam is abbreviated by "VV", as opposed to Vietnamese spoken in Australia (AV). However, VV and AV are also referred to as the two national groups respectively.

This research has been carried out approximately thirty years after the fall of Saigon to the communist regime in April 1975. Vietnamese was spoken by about 64.4 million people in Vietnam at the time of the 1989 Census,[1] and as at 1 January 2008, the Vietnamese population was 86,210,800[2] with a diaspora of over 3 million Vietnamese settlers spread throughout 94 countries and territories worldwide (Truong et al. 2008:253). At the time of the 2006 Australian Government Census, there were 194,900 Vietnamese speakers in Australia, ranked seventh among speakers of the top ten languages other than English spoken at home (ABC 2007[3]).

From a cross-national perspective, during the past three decades, the Vietnamese language has evolved with sociopolitical change in Vietnam, and concomitantly, the influence of Anglo-Australian cultural values in multicultural Australia. In Vietnam, soon after the fall of South Vietnam's regime in 1975, the southern part of the newly unified Vietnam underwent major social change in which the new communist-oriented government adopted a similar strategy to that previously employed in China against the "evil ideology" and legacies of the old society (Liftson 1961:14). Since then, many Vietnamese traditions, including Confucianism, have been either discouraged or diminished under the Communist government (Duiker 1995:186). In contrast, in Australia, Vietnamese speakers are exposed to the influence of Anglo-Australian culture and multiculturalism interacting with their ongoing commitment to the

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1   Vietnam Population Census 1989, Statistical Publishing House, Hanoi, 1992.
2   Source: General Statistics Office of Vietnam, publicised on its internet web page license number: 454/GP-BC, issued on 18/10/2004. http://www.gso.gov.vn/
3   Under Ancestries and languages, http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2914.0.55.002/

maintenance of Confucian heritage and values. These contrasting and evolving contexts could be expected to have led to differences in the way that Vietnamese is spoken in Vietnam (VV) and in Australia by its "native" speakers (AV), as mentioned above.

The initial thinking about the politeness stereotypes of expatriate Vietnamese and the changing contexts of Vietnamese speakers partly coincides with what Myers-Scotton (2002:237) points out in a study on bilingual encounters, that is, the "sociolinguistic history of the speakers" should be considered as an essential starting point for discussion about language contact. This made me think further, not only about the situation of language contact in Australia, but also about the vast, rapid and ongoing sociopolitical change in Vietnam post the Vietnam War.

1.1.1   VIETNAMESE IN HISTORICAL TRANSITION

As mentioned earlier, soon after the fall of the Saigon Regime in 1975, the southern part of the newly unified Vietnam underwent major social change in which the new communist-oriented government opted for a similar strategy to that previously employed in China (Liftson 1961:14, Nguyen 1991:198-199). Since then, many Vietnamese traditions, including Confucianism, have been discouraged. Indeed, as Duiker (1995:186) reports, the Communist Party of Vietnam has imposed its hegemony over everybody and everything in Vietnam. This hegemony is clearly stated in the 1980 constitution ratified by the National Assembly:

> Marxism-Leninism is the ideological system guiding the development of Vietnamese society. The state broadly disseminates Marxism-Leninism, the line and policies of the Communist Party of Vietnam. It preserves and develops the cultural and spiritual values of the nation, absorbs the best of the world culture, combats feudal and bourgeois ideologies and the influences of imperialist and colonialist culture; criticizes petty-bourgeois ideology; builds a socialist way of life, and combats backward life-styles and superstitions. (cited in Duiker 1995:186).

Duiker (1995:192) points out that in the process of performing this revolution, the new Vietnamese Government dedicated itself to destroying all vestiges of the traditional culture, described in official sources as "reactionary", "feudalist", and "oppressors of the masses". Betz (1977:46-47) documents how these sweeping changes in the traditional society, moving towards absolute

political control, had been introduced into North Vietnam from 1945. He points out that the new Vietnamese communist regime aimed to alter not only the political base, but also the entire economic and cultural foundation of the Vietnamese people (Betz 1977:94-96). This reflects the cause and direction of sociopolitical change in Vietnam post the Vietnam War in April 1975, but does not necessarily explain how these changes had occurred leading to the current situation.

Cultural change and inculcation of new values were a high priority for the new regime in the South. In what Duiker (1995:186) describes as a major campaign against "decadent" influences, literature, music, and art were targeted. Jamieson (1993:362-363) reports, for example, that approximately four months after the seizure of power in South Vietnam, the new communist government announced its first order: to confiscate and prohibit the circulation of all "reactionary books and journals", which had been used by the Vietnamese people over the past four decades. The extant list of forbidden works was then expanded in subsequent orders in March 1976 and May 1977. Accordingly, the works of 129 of the most popular authors in the South were banned or confiscated in an attempt to "sweep away completely all remains of the enslaving, reactionary culture of the enemy" (Jamieson 1993:362-363). This goal was supported and facilitated by all public channels of communication operated and controlled by the new government such as radio, television, newspapers and journals to facilitate the new orthodoxy. By various means and methods, the communist orthodoxy was praised while its "virtues" were taught, and its values explicated. Schools were temporarily closed while educators were sent from Hanoi to assist in educating Southern students in the new ideology through revised school curricula and replacement of textbooks with new ones shipped from Hanoi. Jamieson (1993:364) further reports that parallel to this "old remains sweeping" campaign, more than one million people in South Vietnam were ordered to report for "re-education" to become "new people" (*người mới*) with newly oriented beliefs, values and personalities, thought to better suit the new socialist society. New creative works were also produced to meet the standards of socialist idealism (Duiker 1995:186).

In a personal interview, one educator in Can Tho, suggests that soon after the communist regime took power in South Vietnam, the Confucian-reflected subject *Đức dục* (ethics education) no longer existed in the curriculum of both primary and secondary schools. It was replaced by *Giáo dục công dân* (civic education), which covered new content such as Marxism-Leninism and materialism (Huynh 2008; Duong 2009).

With its socialist idealism, the new government tried to establish an egalitarian society in South Vietnam by means of a political strategy that sought to abolish the hierarchical class system of Confucianism, which had profoundly influenced Vietnamese culture for thousands of years (Marr 1981:101-135; Duiker 1995:81). This ideology of an "egalitarian" society reflects the early ideas of Ho Chi Minh, the founder of the Vietnamese Communist Party, reflected in his proclamation of independence borrowed from the American Declaration of Independence and Bills of Rights in 1945:

> All men are created equal. The Creator has given us certain inviolable Rights; the right to Life, the right to be Free, and the right to achieve Happiness. (cited in Nguyen et al. 1981:x)

The concept of egalitarianism as adopted by the communist regime can be interpreted to mean that everyone in the communist society is equal in regard to the right to life, to freedom, and the achievement of happiness. Because of these equal rights translated from the concept of egalitarianism, individual members in the communist society are assumed to be in distance themselves from their families as opposed to the hierarchical classes of Confucian-based society.

Immediately post the Vietnam War, the people of Vietnam also were subject to collectivisation through the process of socialist transformation towards state ownership (Nguyen 1983: 22-26), practically meaning "all properties were placed in the hands of the Party" (Nguyen et al. 1981: xv).

There is evidence to suggest that the political strategy of reform led to the emergence of new linguistic norms, first in the North and subsequently in South Vietnam. Such imposed linguistic norms, associated with notions of standardisation and such "correctness", were institutionalised by being

prescribed by the national authorities through the writing system, the educational system and other agencies (Milroy 1992:81).

In the process of socialist transformation, new terminologies were introduced into communist vocabulary such as "comrade" (đồng chí) and "cadre" (cán bộ) (McHale 2004:110-116, Nguyen et al. 1981:x), which are used to replace the respective kinship terms in given contexts. While the term "comrade" (đồng chí) is normally used as a form of address among members of the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP), its usage may be extended to the populace when the speaker is a retired communist member, at least to some extent. The term "cadre" (cán bộ) was especially familiar to those who had been in "re-education" (Nguyen et al. 1981:xv) camps in Vietnam. It was used obligatorily by an internee to address a security guard in a "re-education" camp (Nguyen 2003: 436):

(1) *Báo-cáo   cán-bộ,   tôi   tên   là   Nguyễn Hữu Lễ*
     Reporting cadre,   my name COPU Nguyen Huu Le
     "My name is Nguyen Huu Le".

Despite its restricted context, *cán-bộ* (cadre) is evidently a new form of address, which was qualified as a new revolutionary ethic, under the Vietnamese communist regime (Nguyen 1974: 52).

From a different perspective, the same informant interviewed in Cantho City (see above) suggests that the new linguistic norms were imposed by the new regime in a bid to replace the canons of neo-Confucianism with those of Marxist-Leninism. Consequently, many Sino-Vietnamese terms (*Hán-Việt*) were replaced with new indigenous Vietnamese terms. For example, *nhà hộ sinh* (maternity hospital) was replaced with *xưởng đẻ* (literally, birth factory), *nhà vệ sinh* was replaced with *phóng tiêu* (toilet) and *nhi đồng* (children) was replaced with *trẻ em* (children). The main idea in this linguistic change at the lexical level seems to entail a de-Sinocisation strategy in an attempt to eradicate certain aspects of Vietnamese traditions. An example of the practice of de-Sinocisation, is that during the early days after the new government took power

in the South, the late Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, in a statement about the Southern land, used the terms "*vùng đất chín rồng*" (land of nine dragons) with "*chín rồng*" being an indigenous Vietnamese meaning nine dragons instead of "*vùng đất Cửu Long*", whereas the term *Cửu Long* had been usually used in Sino-Vietnamese terms by people in the South referring to the "dragon delta" or the plain of "*Cửu Long*" river in South Vietnam[4].

The main idea of de-Sinocisation practised by the new Vietnamese government seems to be twofold: on the one hand, it aims to exclude what has been left from the previous regime to redirect the people's morality in seeking their loyalty to the new government. On the other hand, it reflects a response to conflicting issues, which may be related to national border issues (e.g. with China), to marine interests, and to international relations post the Vietnam War (Amer 1999:69-77). Indeed, as previously mentioned, after the fall of Saigon's regime in 1975, the usage of Vietnamese is, to some extent, influenced by sociopolitical change towards a communist-controlled society (Thomas 1999:9), diminishing the influence of Confucian heritage as discussed earlier (see subsection 1.1.1). This, however, is not to say that the government's linguistic policy results in the government's intended long-term language change, because there may be linguistic resistance among the public, as was the case with some of the newly introduced terms (mentioned earlier), which have gradually returned to common use in their original forms.

Soon after taking control of the South, the new government found that the perception of family as the primary unit of accountability in state-society relations was no longer as effective in social management as it was in the earlier era, as the values of family had decreasing relevance in state-society relations. Today the family in Vietnam is not as closely knit as it was and its members now live at greater distances from each other due to sociopolitical changes (Koh 2007: 31-32).

Thus collective values in Vietnam have gradually changed in line with the communist doctrine. Since 1945, when the government of President Ho Chi

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[4] Examples of de-Sinocisation were given by Lam Phi Hung, Vice-Principal of Cahu Van Liem High School in Cantho City in a personal interview conducted by the researcher.

Minh took power in the North, the situation of women gradually improved in accordance with the principle, "achieve equality between the sexes" as Ho Chi Minh stated in the Declaration of Independence. After the country became reunified in 1975, major changes were introduced in Vietnam that directly or indirectly influenced the activities and status of men and women (Tran 1995:188-89). Tran (1995:191) further points out that the Vietnamese communist government sought to "ensure equality between men and women" in its legal system to enhance women's social status, and to ensure that "men and women are equal in all aspects of the economy, politics, society, and family life".

In a sense, the strategies of collectivisation through the process of socialist transformation[5] employed by the communist government seem inconsistent with what the communist superior leader, Ho Chi Minh, stated in his Declaration of Independence "All men are created equal" cited earlier. However, the idea that "All men are created equal" can be interpreted in terms of "collectivised equality", attempted by successive communist leaders in their plans for socialist transformation. This includes the more recent reform (*doi moi*) policy, which led to major changes in every aspect of Vietnamese society in the late 1980s (Nguyen Loc, 2006:1). Whilst the first and foremost focus of the *doi moi* policy is the economy and economic policies (Nguyen et al. 2000:147), it has also resulted in cultural, lifestyle and behavioural changes in urban areas. For example, while trying to adapt to the lifestyle of an industrialised society, people are more concerned with formal laws and regulations to guide behaviour instead of moral norms (Vu et al. 2000:61). This may somehow impact language use and language change.

The situation of historical transition described and reported above highlights how sociopolitical change in Vietnam may have affected how the Vietnamese language was used by native speakers within that country over time.

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[5]   i.e. Land reform implemented in North Vietnam in 1950s leading to the deaths of between 50,000 and several hundred thousands peasants who had been classified as rich landlords because their ownership of land exceeded the permissible limit of one-quarter of an acre. Thousands of these people were buried alive to death (Joes, 2001:36).

While native Vietnamese has undergone changes in communist-oriented society, Australian Vietnamese has been exposed to the influence of Anglo-Australian cultural values.

1.1.2   AUSTRALIAN VIETNAMESE

As mentioned previously, the term "Australian Vietnamese" (AV) refers to both Vietnamese Australians and their native language. As Vietnamese culture cannot be dissociated from its "bearers" (Mey 2004:33), the history of Vietnamese speakers in Australia therefore provides us with valuable resources for the present study.

The existence of Vietnamese speakers in Australia can be traced to the 1950s, when the first group of Vietnamese students arrived in Australia to attend university under the Colombo Plan.[6] According to Coughlan (1989:13), most of these students remained in Australia, while some of them returned to their home country after completing their studies. Overall, though, the number of Vietnamese background migrants was small at the time. Coughlan (1989:14) documents 938 Vietnamese speakers living in Australia before 1975 including 537 orphans adopted by Australian families, 205 Colombo Plan students, 130 Vietnamese students under private schemes and 41 diplomats. This group of early-settled Australian Vietnamese is also reported in other studies, such as Martin (1981:156) and Facer (1985:152; Mackie (1997:14); Thomas (1997:274).

The present study is mainly concerned with the presence of Vietnamese speakers in Australia, resulting from the large influx following the Vietnam War in 1975, with some 125,000 people being "hurriedly evacuated to Wake Island, Guam, and the Philippines" (Nguyen 1994:45). For the purpose of this study, the point of influx is considered to be when the first group of 201 Vietnamese refugees arrived in Sydney on 20 June 1975. Another group of 323 people

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[6]   Created by Commonwealth foreign ministers at their meeting in January 1950 in Colombo, Ceylon. Under this Plan, bilateral aid flowed to developing countries in South and Southeast Asia, including financial support for Asian students to study in Australian tertiary institutions. Source: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. http://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/colombo_plan/index.html

followed and arrived in Brisbane on 9 August, and another group of 8 arrived on a Japanese freighter on 3 September 1975 (Martin, 1981:156), comprising a total of 532 Vietnamese refugees who had been officially accepted by the Australian Government within the first 4 months of the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975. From a global perspective, this group of 535 refugees represents a very small portion of approximately 140,000 Vietnamese refugees that fled their home country just before the end of the Vietnam War (Lewins & Ly 1985:10).

The majority of Vietnamese that settled in Australia can be generally defined in relation to three waves of postwar arrival, principally from southern regions of Vietnam (see Figure 1.1). As Thomas (1997:279-80) reports, the "first wave" included mostly people associated with the South Vietnamese Government who left their home country soon after the end of the Vietnam War (those discussed in the previous paragraph). The "second wave" moved out of the country, mainly in boats, ending up in refugee camps in neighbouring Asian countries for years before they were granted refugee status to settle in Australia. The "third wave" mainly arrived after 1987; most were family members of Vietnamese-born Australian residents, and migrated under the family reunion program. During the immediate postwar period, arrivals of Vietnamese-born people in Australia increased rapidly, from a modest 539 in 1975-76 to a peak of 12,915 in 1979-80 (Thomas 1997: 275). This rapid increase of Vietnamese-born settlers in Australia is clearly indicated in the leap in numbers from 2,427 in the 1976 Census to 41,096 five years later in the 1981 Census.

Figure 1.1 Vietnamese-born Australians, waves of arrival until 2001
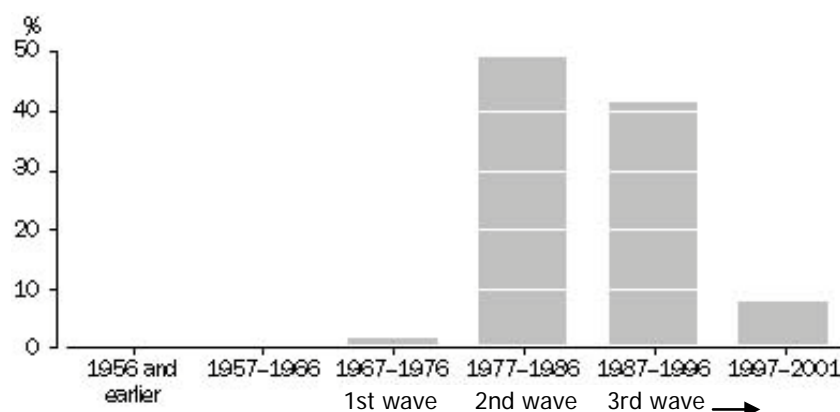
Source: ABS data, 2001 Population and Housing Census

As a part of the total migrant population in Australia, Vietnamese Australians are not isolated from the rest of the Australian population and they participate in most domains of Australian life. However, their distinctive cultural qualities or values do not disappear in the process of assimilation into Australian society, as once was assumed from a government and scholarly perspective (Lewins & Ly 1985:22-23), and they faced many problems in their resettlement. In a study of post arrival experience faced by the early arrived Vietnamese refugees in Australia, Lewins and Ly (1985:30) report that of 537 individuals, 88.7% "spoke little or no English". This reflects a primary problem of the language barrier faced by Vietnamese native speakers upon arrival in Australia. This has forced them to embrace their own language communities to find their own way of living within the Anglo-Australian dominant society. Most Australian Vietnamese tend to preserve their traditional customs, including sending their children to Vietnamese ethnic schools (Lewins & Ly 1985:62).

In three of the most recent Australian Census, Vietnam is reported as one of the top five countries of birth, from which migrants in Australia have originated (see Table 1.1). As shown, during this decade (1996-2006) the number of Vietnamese-born Australian residents has steadily increased, despite the rank order decreasing by one in the 2006 Census.

Table 1.1: Top overseas countries of birth in Censuses 1996 -2006

1996 Census			2001 Census			2006 Census		
Countries of birth	Person	%	Countries of birth	Person	%	Countries of birth	Person	%
England	872,100	4.39	England	1,036,245	5.22	England	856,900	4.32
New Zealand	291,400	1.47	New Zealand	355,765	1.79	New Zealand	389,500	1.96
Italy	238,200	1.20	Italy	218,718	1.10	China*	206,600	1.04
Viet Nam	151,100	0.76	**Viet Nam**	154,831	0.78	Italy	199,100	1.00
Scotland	146,300	0.74	China*	142,780	0.72	**Viet Nam**	159,800	0.80
Greece	126,500	0.64	Greece	116,431	0.59	India	147,100	0.74
China*	111,000	0.56	Germany	108,220	0.55	Scotland	130,200	0.66
Germany	110,300	0.56	Philippines	103,942	0.52	Philippines	120,500	0.61
Philippines	92,900	0.47	India	95,452	0.48	Greece	110,000	0.55
Netherlands	87,900	0.44	Nertherlands	83,324	0.42	Germany	106,500	0.54
Total population	**17,752,829**			**18,972,350**			**19,855,289**	

Source: ABS
* excludes Taiwan
% Proportion of total population

Note: Vietnam as a country is written as one word throughout this thesis; but it is composed of two words in this table as it is in the original source.

In the most recent 2006 Census, the number of Vietnamese-born Australians was 159,800, while the number of people who reported speaking Vietnamese at home was ranked seventh among the top ten languages spoken in Australia, with 194,900 speakers (see Table 1.2). This numerical difference represents approximately 35,100 Australian-born Vietnamese who are assumed to have acquired and speak their mother tongue at home.

Table 1.2: Top ten languages spoken at home in Australia

Language	Persons	%
English	15,581,300	78.47
Italian	316,900	1.60
Greek	252,200	1.27
Cantonese	244,600	1.23
Arabic	243,700	1.23
Mandarin	220,600	1.11
Vietnamese	**194,900**	0.98
Spanish	98,000	0.49
German	75,600	0.38
Hindi	70,000	0.35
Total population	**19,855,289**	

Source: ABS - 2007 on 2006 Census

Vietnamese migrant families in Australia live primarily in the large urban centres in New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria. At the closure of the 2006 Census, there were 65,880 Vietnamese settlers living in NSW, concentrated in Cabramatta, Fairfield and parts of Marrickville. In Victoria 63,643 Vietnamese settlers congregated in the suburbs of Richmond, Footscray and Springvale with their commercial activities, where the primary data for this study was mainly recorded.

A survey conducted in Victoria, Australia (Rado 1987: 15-16) suggested that a large majority (80%) of respondents among the Vietnamese speakers supported the idea that Vietnamese Australians should learn and maintain their native language. There are various ways in which the Vietnamese language is maintained in Australia. Apart from support and encouragement given by parents in Vietnamese families for their children to use the language at home, Vietnamese is taught in different schools throughout Australia. For example, in Victoria since 1979, as reported in Le (1993:9-10), Vietnamese classes were established in areas where Vietnamese residents are concentrated such as

Springvale, Richmond, Broadmeadows, Maribyrnong, Altona, Brunswick, Collingwood and Box Hill. Since 1980 Vietnamese has been taught at several primary schools and since 1982 Vietnamese classes have been delivered in some Australian public secondary schools. In the same study Le (1993) also reports that according to official information supplied by the Victorian Department of Education, by July 1992 there were 9,325 students in Victoria who spoke Vietnamese at home. The break down is: 4,117 students were in primary schools, 4,659 in secondary schools, 57 in special schools and 492 in language centres. In another study, Merlino (1988:48) reports that in 1983 a committee was set up to design a Year 12 Vietnamese language course for submission to the Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA) for accreditation as a Group 1 subject in Victorian high schools.

Today, despite demographic change leading to increased diversity, the major institutions in Australia and the political, legal, administrative and communication systems remain predominantly Anglo-Celtic (Hartley, 1995:1), hereafter referred to as Anglo-Australian. According to Kunz and Costello (2003:38-39), Anglo-Australians represent 69.6% of descendent parents, but on the basis of English spoken exclusively at home, this increased to 84.1% of the Australian population at the time of the 2001 Census. On this basis, despite multiculturalism being embraced since the 1970s, Anglo-Australians remain dominant in terms of language and culture. Therefore, the Vietnamese language in Australia is evolving in the context of intercultural contact, especially with Anglo-Australian culture and English. Hartley (1995:27-35) argues that Australian society has experienced a value shift towards greater personal autonomy since the 1960s, while Ketcham (1987:34) claims that the concept of personal autonomy has been developed from Aristotle through the Stoics and the Epicureans to the Roman moralists. This value shift supports the extension of rights to individuals as opposed to the limitation of those rights in the collective interest, reflected in the Eastern philosophies such as Confucianism. Anglo-Australian and Vietnamese, Confucian-based cultural values will be further discussed in subsequent chapters.

1.2   RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RATIONALE

1.2.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questions that this research aims to address are:

(1)   Are there differences in the expression of politeness in Vietnamese employed by its native speakers across two national contexts, Australia and Vietnam, today?   If so,

(2)   What is the nature of the differences?

(3)   How do social factors such as gender, role and generation contribute to the differences in linguistic politeness behaviours?

The focus in examining differences between the two national speech contexts is pragmatics, the study of language in use, and specifically, how politeness is expressed linguistically in everyday verbal interactions in service encounters. The key issue addressed relates to the concept of politeness, examined in Chapters 2 and 3, and treated as a conceptual mechanism in data analysis to identify language variation as an indirect manifestation of language contact and cross-cultural influences on the usage of Vietnamese.

In this research, Vietnamese native speakers are defined in terms of the speaker's main language used at home, regardless of their possible use of other languages including English outside their homes.

1.2.2 PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

The purpose of this research is to contribute to further academic understanding and knowledge of processes and mechanisms of language contact and variation. It also aims to promote a better understanding of differences in the usage of Vietnamese as a result of language contact and cross-cultural influences in Australia, in contrast with sociopolitical change in Vietnam. The terms "language contact" and "cross-cultural" refer to the situation where people who have different mother tongues and cultural backgrounds are in contact, such as Vietnamese native speakers living in Australia who are in contact with Australian English speakers, most of whom use English as their first or main language. Accordingly, Australian Vietnamese

are subject to the influence of Anglo-Australian cultural values. The dichotomy between cross-cultural contact in Australia and social-political change in Vietnam, however, is not intended to suggest that there are only two causes necessarily contributing to language change in either context, or society, more generally. It is acknowledged that sociopolitical changes also have been taking place in Australia and cross-cultural exchange and influence has also been occurring in Vietnam (e.g. between people of Chinese and Vietnamese native backgrounds). A language constantly evolves within each context in which it is used for communication and is dynamic (Aitchison 1991:221), with change occurring as a result of many different social, geographic, economic and cultural influences. However, there are important factors which may particularly distinguish sociocultural change in language use in different contexts within the same time frame and whose influence is worthy of being considered in greater depth. In the case of this research, it is argued that the dominant social changes influencing language usage within Vietnamese society over the 30 year period from when South Vietnam was taken over by the Communist regime of the North to when the data collection for the research took place are those associated with government-initiated sociopolitical changes. In contrast, in Australia, for the equivalent period, the dominant changes that have impacted on languages usages are those associated with multiculturalism and mass migration and the associated cross-cultural contact that has arisen between migrant languages and the dominant language of English.

The objectives of this study are to examine and identify:

- sociolinguistic/pragmatic variation in terms of politeness strategies found in everyday service encounters within Vietnamese-speaking communities in Vietnam and Australia; and

- how social factors such as generation (older and younger adults), gender and role within encounters (as customer or seller), are related to differences in speech patterns expressing politeness between Vietnamese living in Vietnam and in Australia when they use their native language.

The Vietnamese-speaking communities in Australia include young Vietnamese speakers who have grown up bilingual or who may use English as their main language.

The research will investigate the effects of language contact of Australian English (L2) into Vietnamese (L1) through "semantic transference" in terms of adopting or incorporating meanings of L2 in the usage of L1 without the lexical form of L2 (Clyne 1967: 19). This semantic transference is interrelated with "pragmatic transference" in terms of how the speaker adopts L2 routines and strategies for expressing pragmatic meaning in their usage of L1. For example, an L1 speaker may use the L1 lexical equivalents of English "please" or "yes please" as a positive reply to an offer (Clyne 1982: 105), even though such usage would not be typical among native speakers of that language in the context where their L1 is the main and dominant language and the influence of one or more other contact languages is absent (e.g. Vietnamese in Vietnam).

At the time this research was planned and commenced, there was a considerable and growing body of literature on language contact in immigrant contexts (Clyne 2003). This revealed how language contact affected the speaker's use of their L1 in terms of code mixing/switching. For example, the Vietnamese language used in the Australian context:

(2)   *YOU ALWAYS bận a, ME nói em H TAKE ME THEN.*
      you always busy PRT me ask younger-sibling H take me then.
      'you're always busy I'll ask H to take me then'.
      (Clyne 2003:218)

The further dimension of comparing AV and VV provided an opportunity to explore the dynamics of Vietnamese as a living language that is subject to different influences contributing to its variation in different sociocultural contexts.

Despite Vietnamese being a notable community language in Australia, representing the largest group of migrants from Asia prior to 2006 (Clyne 2003:14), the question of whether and how the Vietnamese language used by its native speakers is influenced by Australian English language and culture still

remains to be fully explored in various studies (Lewins & Ly 1985; Viviani 1996; Thomas 1997).

Previous studies have primarily focused on syntactic aspects of the Vietnamese language (Shum 1965; Thompson 1965; Duong 1971; Buu 1972; Le 1976), with some focused on other aspects, such as contrastive phonology (Nguyen 1970a), and idiomatic expressions (Nguyen 1970b). More recently some research has included consideration of sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects of Vietnamese, including two studies in Australia: Nguyen (1995) studied the "Politeness markers in Vietnamese requests", and Ho (1996) investigated issues related to language contact and code-switching. There are also two studies in the Canadian context: Luong (1990) mainly explored the Vietnamese system of person reference including kinship terms and address forms, and Vu (1997) researched "politeness in modern Vietnamese" focusing on Vietnamese speakers in Hanoi. The most recent study conducted on Vietnamese linguistic politeness (Pham 2008) focuses on how Confucianism influences the usage of modern Vietnamese in an Anglo cultural environment. Nevertheless these studies do not involve a multinational comparative approach, as has been employed in this research, influenced by three cultural value perspectives: Confucian-based, communist-oriented and Anglo-Australian. This clearly marks how the current research differs from other research in this field.

1.3 SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF THESIS

1.3.1 SCOPE OF STUDY

This research investigates variation in the usage of politeness markers and politeness strategies in Vietnamese in relation to social factors, including national context, generation, gender and role.

The focus is on the usage of Vietnamese language in the domain of service encounters within Vietnamese speech communities in Vietnam and Australia. As the focus is on South Vietnam and southern varieties of Vietnamese, the data for this study is limited to the South, especially the cities of Saigon (now called Ho Chi Minh City) and Cantho. In Australia, the focus is

on Sydney and Melbourne, especially suburbs such as Footscray, Richmond, Springvale and St. Albans, where there is a large concentration of stall holders and/or business owners and customers, where service encounters are most likely to occur in Vietnamese.

The main feature in this research is the expression of politeness, which may vary from one cultural context to another. One cultural context, as epitomised by mainstream Anglo-Australian dominant culture, is distinguished as being oriented towards personal autonomy, in contrast to Eastern-oriented Vietnamese culture, which is characterised as being more oriented towards collective interests as influenced by Confucianism tradition (Wong 2004:239; Márquez 2000:35,39), which has also been influenced by the impact of the communist regime and Marxist-Leninist ideology since the fall of Saigon in 1975.

1.3.2   STRUCTURE OF THESIS

This chapter has briefly introduced the research in relation to the historical contexts of Vietnamese in Vietnam and Australia, the theoretical approach to the project and previous research on Vietnamese pragmatics. Chapter 2 presents a literature review to establish a theoretical framework for the study. It mainly focuses on language contact, pragmatics and linguistic politeness. Chapter 3 extends the literature review by specifically exploring aspects of Vietnamese language and culture, including person reference systems and concepts of politeness in Vietnamese. Chapter 4 outlines the methodology employed in collecting data on current usage of Vietnamese in Vietnam and Australia through audio recording and observation of naturalistic service encounters.

Working with a data corpus of 1064 turns at talk in each national context, Chapter 5 focuses on analysis of politeness markers in Vietnamese. It specifies each category of politeness marker with examples mostly drawn from the data. The politeness markers identified from the data are defined in conjunction with Brown and Levinson's framework (1978/1987), Thompson's analysis of Vietnamese (1965/1987), and Confucian perspectives on either proper social

relationships (Jamieson 1993:16-17) or on correct social order (Feibleman 1976:95). Chapter 6 presents the results of quantitative analyses on the choice and usage of politeness markers in the two national contexts. It focuses on the extent to which there is variation within and across national contexts, and related social factors of generation, gender and role of speakers. Following the presentation of the data analysis, Chapter 7 discusses variation in Vietnamese from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives, focussing on the usage of particular politeness markers. The final chapter summarises the research findings, highlighting the main areas of difference within and across national contexts. These differences are further interpreted in view of influences from communist-oriented, Confucian and Anglo-Australian cultural values, prior to considering the practical implications and some suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter sets out to establish a theoretical framework for the thesis by reviewing relevant previous studies. It reviews a range of literature with a focus on language contact, pragmatics, language variation and linguistic politeness, particularly in bilingual and cross-cultural environments. The key areas of study being reviewed are related to differences in speech behaviours in relation to gender, context, cultural values, generation and role.

2.1   LANGUAGE CONTACT

According to Myers-Scotton (2002:5), the phenomenon of language contact occurs when speakers of one language meet speakers of another language. Due to the need to communicate in these new environments, the two groups in contact may learn each other's languages in one way or another. As a consequence of language contact, the two languages abut and are adjacent to each other within the speaker's mental lexicon. As such they may influence each other in aspects of the speaker's linguistic production.

Myers-Scotton (2002:3) suggests that in a bilingual situation, a "less dominant language" is likely to be influenced by a "more dominant language" in the speech community. This is true, for example, for a minority language, such as Vietnamese in Australia, where the mainstream language is Australian English. However, language contact may have a two-way effect on the first language, including leading to enhancement or attrition for L1 by the use of L2. For example, the Hungarian children in Cook's study, having attained a certain degree of English competence, were able to use more complex sentences in their first language than those who had no English (Cook 2003:11). In other cases, the use of L2 may lead to language loss or attrition in L1. Clyne (1991:42) suggests that the dominant language has some impact on a minority language such as Vietnamese and many others used in Australia. Ho (1996:2) also points out that Vietnamese, as a minority language, is inevitably subject to

the influences of Australian English as a dominant language through pragmatic transference.

2.1.1   PRAGMATIC TRANSFERENCE

Pragmatic transference occurs in a multilingual context when speakers of community languages other than English (CLOTE) (Clyne 1991:3) adopt habitual expressions from the host community and apply them in their native languages. This speech strategy involves pragmatic transference, which can sometimes be problematic for the CLOTE speakers concerned. Clyne (1982:105) suggests that certain pragmatic English rules have penetrated CLOTE discourse in Australia. For example, when accepting an offer, a German speaker uses "Ja, danke" (Yes, thank you); or "Danke" (thank you), instead of "Bitte" (please) or "Ja, bale" (Yes, please) as in standard German. Danke is normally related to a negative response in standard German. Clyne further points out that many migrants adopt the Australian way of addressing each other by using the hearer's first names. This pattern is widely accepted in Australia, whether the hearers are colleagues, workmates or new acquaintances. However, the transfer of this pattern may place CLOTE speakers at odds, especially when both speaker and hearer come from the same country of origin.

Myers-Scotton (2002:17) offers an abstract analysis of pragmatic transference. She sees pragmatic transference as involving the relations between the morphemes used in a CLOTE utterance and the lemmas, which are abstract elements in the CLOTE speaker's mental lexicon that underlie the morphemes. In her view, lemmas represent the main link in an intellectual channel that begins with the speaker's intentions and ends with superficial linguistic forms. Clyne (1991:190) points out that pragmatic transference can be viewed as a mark of change in the rules of social interaction among CLOTE speakers in Australia. For example, younger Polish-English bilinguals in Australia tend to adopt the Australian English rule in making a request more frequently (1) than the older group (2):

(1)   Mamo czy mozèsz mi pros dác soku?
         (Mummy, can you please give me a drink of juice?)

(2)   Mamo daj mi proz dác soku?
          (Mummy, give me please a drink of juice)
          (Clyne 1991:190) citing Wierzbicka 1985: 202)

According to Clyne (1991:190) the request in (1) reflects negative politeness that the CLOTE speaker has adopted from Australian English. Pragmatic transference from Australian English into CLOTE is also evident in other expressions expressed in CLOTE, borrowing from opening routines, "Nice meeting you" and "How are you", as well as the farewell formula "see you later".

Cenoz (2003:76) says that pragmatic transference can be related to various factors, which include proficiency in L2 and/or length of residence in the host country. As mentioned earlier, pragmatic transference operates on the basis of bi-directional interaction between the two participating languages. It involves transference potentially from L1 to L2, or conversely from L2 to L1, but only the latter is of interest in the present study.

Clyne (1967:19-20) suggests there are speech situations when meanings in the source language are transferred for use in the recipient language by a speaker who lives in a community in which a dominant language is spoken as the mainstream language, a process involving semantic transference. For example, Vietnamese spoken in Australia by its native speakers is a recipient language when the speakers adopt the meanings of English in their use of Vietnamese:

(3)   *Anh*   *có*   *khoẻ*   *không?*
          Elder-brother   have   well   Q.
          "How are you?"

The action of transferring the meaning of "How are you?" into Vietnamese represents an instance of semantic transference, but how or in what situation it is used in Vietnamese may be related to "pragmatic transference". This highlights subtle interactions between semantic and pragmatic transference.

In view of Asian cultural values reflected in pragmatic transference, Clyne (2003:218) points out a typical case associated with the complicated reference system in Vietnamese, in which common nouns, proper nouns and personal pronouns are used to address. They are alternatively used for the addressor, the hearer and a third-party reference, depending on the intended meanings in given social contexts. The following example illustrates pragmatic transference from the English YOU and ME into Vietnamese:

(4)   *Phỏng vấn* TÔI *à   mà* YOU *muốn* ME *TALK ABOUT WHAT?*
         interview me PRT but you want me talk about what?
         "you want to interview me but what do you want me to talk about?"
         (Ho 1996:218; MV65M80F)

YOU and ME are especially interesting in this example. From a lexical point of view, (4) represents an instance of code switching but it reflects a pragmatic transference in the usage of YOU and ME in this situation. Like English, Vietnamese also has YOU and ME generally serving as second- and first-person personal pronouns respectively; however, the interpretation of these two pronouns in Vietnamese is completely different from that of English, in accordance with Vietnamese lexical alternatives, which are appropriately used for expressing politeness and solidarity that is similar to the concept of TU/VOUS (T/V) proposed in the expression of solidarity (Brown & Gilman 1972:157). This concept is adopted in Vietnamese (see section 3.3 for further details). The code switching (from TÔI to ME) contains the underlying pragmatic transference because the speaker has not decided the patterns of reference in an attempt to avoid possible violation to the rules of politeness in Vietnamese. In this case, the pragmatic transference seems to have a connection between ideas in Australian English and word choice in Vietnamese. This represents the "Abstract Level model" of pragmatic transference (Myers-Scotton, 2002:19) which relates to the process of splitting and combining abstract lexical structure, also known as mental lexicon or lemma. The pragmatic transference in example (4) depends mainly on the interpretation of the personal pronouns "you" and "me" in Vietnamese. From a surface level, it

appears to involve lexical transference, but, as argued, it also involves pragmatic transference.

2.2   LANGUAGE VARIATION

The subject of language variation has been widely discussed such as Aitchison (2001), Milroy (1992) and Dussias (2004) with pioneering studies by Labov (1982).

According to Milroy (1992:81) linguistic variation is assessed or considered on the basis of linguistic norms associated with notions of standardisation and "correctness" according to the hierarchical dimensions of social structure prescribed by authority through the educational system and other related agencies. Labov (1982:14) suggests that many linguistics scholars have contributed to the study of language in its social context. This suggests that social context is central to the study of language variation, which also needs to be taken into consideration in terms of variety of languages within a country, such as, in Vietnam and Australia. In the geographical area of Vietnam alone, for example, there are at least five languages spoken - Vietnamese, Tay, Nung, Dao, Chinese and Phu La (Nguyen 2002:266); whilst there are more than one hundred languages other than English, apart from 150 Aboriginal languages, spoken in Australia (Clyne 1991:1). It is notable that language is unquestionably an integral part of culture (Saville-Troike 1982:34); therefore, discussion of language use inevitably involves the aspect of cultural values which will be further discussed in terms of linguistic politeness later in this chapter in relation to Australian English, and in the following chapter in relation to Vietnamese respectively.

From a Confucian-based cultural perspective, as mentioned earlier, linguistic behaviour may be determined by gender, role and age in a given context (Le 1986:84).

2.2.1   VARIATION IN RELATION TO CONTEXT

The important role of context in language use is widely recognised. As Hall (1976:86) suggests, the meanings of words do not lie in the linguistic code but in the context, and this often creates problems in verbal communication.

Hall (1976:91) identifies at least two types of verbal communication: high-context (HC) and low-context (LC). In HC communication, most of the information is conveyed either in a physical context or internalised, while very little meaning is to be found in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. In LC communication the information or message of the utterance is vested in the explicit code. From another point of view, Kreckel (1981:20) outlines the context of discourse which includes external context and psychological context, or the context of experience. External context includes surrounding events and entities related to a given speech situation. The context of experience determines what becomes noticeable or important for the participant, corresponding to his/her past experiences. It involves the social and physical environment in which the participant is predisposed to attend to certain features and ignore others. In this regard, Kittay (1987: 40) suggests that language can be interpreted by linguistic and contextual conditions in accordance with its surrounding discourse, which can be understood as the context of discourse described earlier.

Thomas (1983:92) refers to the role of context in terms of pragmatic competence, which is the ability to use language effectively in order to understand language in context. Holmes (1992:1) suggests that the way in which people talk is influenced by social context and thus different styles of talk in turn are determined by different social contexts. For example, a different linguistic style may be employed to fit a context for social reasons (Holmes 1992: 9). Accordingly, a linguistic style employed in specialised communication practices can be understood as a language register determined by cultural rules. In Australia, for example, people neither address a judge with "G"day mate", nor call a friend "Your honour" (Gallois & Callan 1997:11).

Previous studies on variation in language use and linguistic behaviour (Labov 1982:14; Ellis & Beattie 1986:93; Aitchison 1991:34) suggest that

linguistic variation is related to geographical variation, as people from different geographical areas are more likely to employ a different pattern of speech. In a sense, geographical variation can be viewed as a form of contextual variation. Wierzbicka (1991:67) suggests that contextual variation reflects the different ways in which people from different countries or societies use different linguistic codes and lexicons, as well as different syntactic structures to denote whatever they want to refer to in the same language. These different ways of speaking represent a type of linguistic variation across national contexts examined in-depth in Chapter 6.

2.2.2   VARIATION IN RELATION TO GENDER

Variation in relation to gender has been looked at from various perspectives by Hudson (1980: 122); Trudgill (2002:122) and others.

Gallois and Callan (1997:71) note that many languages mark gender in style and register very clearly and in a range of ways. For example, in Japanese, different linguistic forms are used for addressing men and women.

In a study related to American society, Holmes (1987:59) suggests that women are inferior and subordinate to men; therefore, they are not to offend, but express politely in their verbal communication. This suggestion was affirmed by Holmes (1995:6-8, 19) in a later study on gender and politeness in which she points out that women are subordinate to men and less powerful, hence they are more polite in their verbal interactions. This highlights an awareness that women are more polite than men in an English speaking society.

Matsumoto and Britain (2003:137) point out that in Japanese, the variation in speech behaviour is identified in terms of females generally talking more often than men, regardless of their linguistic competence. Bayyurt and Bayraktaroglu (2001:216), focussing on address, suggest that men in service encounters utilise terms of endearment to female customers such as "honey", "love", "sweetheart", while male customers are often addressed with "Sir". In addition, Beeching (2002:8-9) found that women have a larger repertoire of variants and a wider range of speaking styles than men in the same social

groups. It is suggested that the differences in men's and women's speech may derive from differences in cognitive functioning. At the same study, Beeching also finds that women's speech is generally more polite than men's in the sense that women tend to avoid swearing and stigmatised expressions. This can be interpreted as women conforming to the conventions of conversational rules more closely than men. In contrast, men, and especially young men, tend to use taboo language including swear words, when they interact with each other. The assessment of linguistic behaviour in the context of Beeching's study (2002) is based on the everyday notion of the "social norm" that constitutes what is considered polite and rude. Beeching (2002:13) further found that men normally dominate conversations and tend to interrupt women more often than women interrupt men. In this sense, men are generally considered more impolite than women. Considering the following utterances, one should be able to decide which sex is speaking:

(5)   Oh dear, you've put the peanut butter in the refrigerator again.
(6)   Shit, you've put the peanut butter in the refrigerator again.
        (Lakoff, 1975:10)

Lakoff (1975:10) points out that the difference between swearing and stigmatised expressions such as "shit" or "damn" opposed to "oh dear," or "goodness" reflects the contrast between "stronger" and "weaker" expletives in men's and women's speech respectively. The "oh dear" in (5) reflects a "soft tone" in women's language opposed to the coarse "shit" in (6), which is often avoided by women. From a "social norm" point of view in terms of what constitutes politeness in our everyday language, the "oh dear" in (5) clearly suggests that women are more polite than men in avoiding swearing and stigmatised expressions (Beeching 2002:9). This suggestion is consistent with findings from a previous study by Labov (1966: 288), showing that women tend to produce more careful speech and use fewer stigmatised forms than men.

From a different perspective, Lakoff (1975:18) further points out that women tend to employ the strategy of tag questions, seeking H's agreement more frequently than men, contributing to their speech being judged more "polite" than men's. For example:

(7) The current rise of prices is horrendous, isn't it?

From a different perspective which suggests that women are more linguistically polite than men, Beeching (2002:34) claims that women tend to suggest actions in their linguistic behaviours and thus their language is more polite; whereas men use language to display their power and skills and defend themselves against attacks others might make on their claims to power and status. Similarly, Matsumoto and Britain (2003:129), in referring to the work of Labov (1990), suggest that women use more conservative forms of stable linguistic variables than men; for example, women in New York use a greater proportion of the incoming prestige [r] variant than men.

As this review has highlighted, it has been well documented that women are generally more polite than men in their verbal interactions. From a different perspective, Holmes (1995:35-36) suggests that overall women tend to contribute more to the discussion in each context. However, it is also acknowledged that language use is not static over time. This may not necessarily be true as language evolves with other changes in society.

2.2.3   VARIATION IN RELATION TO ROLE

The role of the speaker is discussed in the sense that everyone has many different roles in life, such as customer, seller, father, teacher, friend, husband, wife or mother. For example, a father might say "shut up and sit down" to his young son when he wants him to eat, but will say "Gentlemen, please be seated" to colleagues at a formal dinner (Aitchison 1991:36). This indicates that language variation is determined by the social role of the speaker in relation to the hearer. This also concurs with "The Rectification of Names" in Confucianism, mentioned in Chapter 1.

Stubbs (1983:45) suggests that the speaker's social roles determine how language is used and that everyone is different in the sense that the style of speaking is readily adapted to suit the social setting in which the utterance takes place. For example, a teacher does not speak in the same way to his wife, his mother-in-law, his colleagues, his headmaster, or his students. Furthermore, the way of speaking to students will also change according to the

subject matter: teaching an academic subject, organising the school concert, or handing out punishments. Stylistic variation in language use reflects the social role of the speaker and the subject matter. Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989:3) suggest that people at a greater social distance (strangers) tend to be more polite in verbal interactions than people who are more familiar with and closer to each other, such as friends or family members. This suggestion coincides with Beeching (2002:36) who points out that in verbal interactions, the greater the social distance between the interlocutors, the more politeness is observed. For example, young children use more imperatives when talking to mothers than to fathers, and give orders to siblings but make requests politely to strangers. From a different perspective, Thomas (1983:104-105) argues that social distance can be viewed in terms of relative power, which is culturally determined, and hence varies from culture to culture. In this sense, social distance is defined as the relationship between speaker (S) and hearer (H) who can be classified as strangers, friends and intimates on a social distance continuum.

The important features of participants are sociological attributes, which may determine their relative roles, such as employer/employee, husband/wife; and in specific social settings, such as hostess/guest, teacher/student, customer/seller (Ervin-Tripp, 1964:87). These roles account for variation in patterns of communication. For example, a teacher has different ways of speaking to that of a lawyer, a doctor, or an insurance salesman; a father's speech is different from that of a mother or child in the family (Saville-Troike 1982:13). In this regard, conversational behaviours may be determined by the hearer's social role at the moment of speaking; for example, a second-person singular referent is used in speech at a particular event, where S is inferior to H, such as Your/her Majesty, Your/his Highness, Your Lordship, Mr. President, Sir/Madam, Chairman, etc. These respectful forms of address are widely used in English (Bayyurt & Bayraktaroglu 2001:216). These titles do not include names, but identify roles or social positions, thus to some extent, they are impersonalised. And children addressing adults will sometimes use Mr. or Mrs. (Allan & Burridge 1991: 41).

2.2.4   VARIATION IN RELATION TO GENERATION

Although social status is closely associated with generation in cultures where seniority in age is respected and highly valued, in some cultures the generational factor may give way to social status. For example, a nephew may be older than his uncle but the uncle is more highly ranked; therefore, the uncle will speak before his nephew (Albert 1964:40). In this case, the priority of turn taking in conversation is considered to be polite. Thus if the "rule" of politeness is observed, the higher ranking interlocutor speaks first. This rule is especially applicable in Vietnamese Confucian-based culture (Clyne 1994:178) in relation to the notion of "respect" (*kính-trọng*) as reflected in the popular saying "*Kính trên nhường dưới*" (Show deference to the superiors, yield to the inferiors) (Nguyen 1995:57).

 While different cultures may have different prescriptions of social status, in Vietnam, according to Thompson (1965:4), social status is based partly on social position and partly on relative age. In this regard, young persons are inferior to older persons. However, this is not always the case if younger persons hold a higher career position. They may be considered superior to older persons, who hold a junior position, regardless of age. For example, a doctor may be considered senior to a nurse, who may be older than the doctor.

In Vietnamese Confucian-based culture, old people are considered more senior in rank to younger ones, and job seniority may yield to seniority in age, especially in speech behaviour. Le (1986:86) suggests that difference in age determines variation in addressing or speaking styles. He further elaborates that Vietnamese speakers have no constraint in revealing their personal information, including their age, to other people because it is a normal practice in attempting to express politeness in Vietnamese. This reflects the fact that the relative age of interlocutors is an important factor that determines an appropriate word choice in Vietnamese to express politeness in verbal interactions; and this is traditionally applicable to Vietnamese in any context.

From a cross-cultural point of view, difference in the domain of intergenerational communication, to a certain extent, can be viewed in terms of potential cross-cultural differences. For example, the doctrine of katanyu

katawedi (indebtedness of children to parents) is profoundly associated with Confucian teachings of filial piety (xiao in Chinese), which focuses on care and respect for the aged. This doctrine requires the younger person's speech behaviour towards an older person to be respectful at all times. This behaviour reflects a difference in cultural values (McCann & Giles 2006:79), that impact on how age is viewed in the social context.

In the situation of cultural context, as Brick (1991:43) points out, many Chinese students are reluctant to call their teachers by their given names when they come to Australia. This is because status difference tends to be more clearly marked in Chinese than English. Brick (1991:43) further points out that in Chinese culture, the use of given names is confined to family in addressing younger members and very close friends. Family members are often addressed using a kin title that signifies the relationship between the interlocutors; for example, "younger sister" or "younger brother". Separate terms are available for referring to paternal and maternal relatives, with paternal relatives being considered closer. Nicknames are often used for young children. Parents are never addressed by their names, always by their kin titles such as "mother" or "father". Outside the family, occupational titles such as Shi (Teacher), Wang (Engineer) and Gao (Director), are extensively used together with the family name. Using a name alone without any form of address or kinship terms is considered impolite; therefore many students, including Vietnamese, are reluctant to call their teachers by their given names when they come to Australia. This reflects the influence of Confucianism discussed in Chapter 1.

2.3 PRAGMATICS

In this study, pragmatics is defined simply as the study of "speaker meaning" as opposed to "linguistic meaning" or literal meaning (Schiffrin 1994:191; Neil 1996:34). For example, "It is hot here" may not necessarily have anything to do with temperature (literal meaning), but it may be a request to open the window, turn on the air-conditioner, or turn off the heater; all of which denote the "speaker meaning" of the utterance.

From a pragmatic point of view, speech functions are determined by what the speakers want to talk about in their references; therefore, the critical issue in pragmatics is how to identify correctly referential meanings in given speech events. This is because in any speech situation, there are two kinds of meaning – one is inside the head of the speaker and the other is in the language-in-use during the act of communication. More precisely, these types of meaning can be phrased as we "mean something" by what we say, or what we say "has some meaning". The first can be called intended meaning, speaker meaning, utterance meaning or pragmatic meaning, which is what the speaker (S) really intends to say at the moment of speaking, while the second is literal meaning, which is understood or realised by the hearer (H), based on the properties of utterance at the lexical level (Fisher 1987:87). For example, with an utterance such as "It hot here!" the speaker's meaning may constitute a request for turning on the air-conditioner; but it may also serve as a report describing the temperature. However, due to the restrictions of the present study, only the first intended meaning is of interest and will be further discussed.

In an introduction to principles for pragmatics, Leech (1983:6) suggests that meaning in pragmatics is defined relative to a speaker or user of the language, whereas the meaning in semantics is defined purely as a property of expression in the language without concern about factors such as the speech situation, the speaker and/or the hearer. Thus, in short, pragmatics can be defined as a study of meaning in relation to speech situations which includes at least the speaker (S), hearer (H), the goal of speaking and the context in which the language is used. Following this point of view, Leech (1983:14) defines pragmatics as a branch of linguistics that concerns itself with utterance meaning. Therefore, pragmatics has to do with people's use of language in context, a part of what Searle (1965:136) calls linguistic performance. In other words, pragmatics deal with the meaning of verbal acts or performances which take place in particular situations, hence it deals with utterance meaning; but what a speaker means by a given utterance might be different from what the hearer interprets (Leech 1983:35). This phenomenon is often referred to as misunderstanding or miscommunication. In this sense, the use of a word or a phrase can lead to various interpretations (Evans 1985:8), but the best

interpretation is the one that can convey exactly what the speaker wants to say. In this case, the best interpretation of an utterance equates the best understanding conveyed in the interpretation.

Wierzbicka (1991:5) suggests that in order to understand human interaction, the hearer must understand interactional or pragmatic meanings expressed in speech. Wierzbicka (1991:70) further points out that pragmatic meanings are sometimes referred to as intended meanings or speaker's meanings, which are often not only different, but mutually incompatible; thus, the same ways of speaking are understood and described differently from one author to another. Pragmatic meanings are based on the meaning of sentences in context or the meaning of the utterances, with the contextual factors being taken into account, while semantic meanings are solely based on the lexical factors in the utterances (Onodera 2004: 13).

From another perspective, Labov (1970:297) suggests there are two important elements in verbal communication: social meaning and affective meaning. The former is based on certain social characteristics of speakers and situations from the character of the language used. The latter meaning is the emotional connotation attached to words and utterances. In this regard, language may be considered as a neutral instrument used to express certain meanings, which are only meaningful based on how they are interpreted by the hearer. Fisher (1987:88) suggests that social meaning is created through its use in social interaction; but its interpretation will depend on a specific social context in which the speech event occurs. Therefore, the language in use must be conventional (typical and widespread) within a social context. Scollon and Scollon (1995:19) provide the following examples of how a person on a street could ask for the time:

(8)   What time is it?

(9)   Could you tell me the time?

(10)   Excuse me, do you know the time?

(11)   Pardon me, do you have a watch?

Although the utterances in (8), (9), (10) and (11) serve the same purpose, the choice may vary depending on the given context or speech situation. For example, (8) may be used between close friends, (10) or (11) are used when asking a stranger, (9) may be used by someone superior in a specific speech situation. This lexical choice is determined by the psychological context, or experience (Kreckel 1981:20) mentioned earlier.

In view of the pragmatics discussed above, utterance meaning, speaker meaning, intended meaning, and pragmatic meaning, are hereafter used interchangeably. How the speaker meaning is interpreted from an utterance is really a critical question to be raised here. This question is addressed by inferential pragmatics, which aims to explain how the hearer infers the speaker's meaning on the basis of linguistic evidence provided in a given utterance.

Inferential pragmatics works on the basis of Grice's central claim in what is called "Relevance Theory", that is, that "utterances automatically create expectations which guide the hearer towards the speaker's meaning". These expectations are described in terms of a Co-operative Principle and maxims of Quality (truthfulness), Quantity (informativeness), Relation (relevance) and Manner (clarity), all of which speakers are expected to observe (Grice 1989:368-72). According to Relevance Theory information provided in an utterance is precise and predictable enough to guide the hearer towards the speaker's meaning (Wilson & Sperber 2004:250). Unger (2001:22) suggests that verbal communication involves both coding and inference operating in a circle of interaction. This circle begins with an utterance functioning as a stimulus, in terms of a linguistically decoded logical form. Based on this decoded logical form, the hearer interprets the speaker's meaning as what the speaker intends to convey.

2.3.1   INTENDED MEANING AND ITS DETERMINING FACTORS

Intended meanings or speaker's meanings, are in fact associated with reference, which is an act in which S uses linguistic forms to enable H to identify, realise or understand something. Thus, reference is tied to S's beliefs or assumption that H can understand what S has expressed in the use of language. However, a successful reference depends on the role of inference that H assumes during the speech event. Because there is no direct link between the referents and linguistic forms in use, H must correctly infer the referent that S intends to encode by using a particular referring expression. Yule (1996:20) gives an example in a restaurant, with one waiter asking another waiter:

(12)   Where's the cheese sandwich sitting?

Later on, in the same context, a report may be made:

(13)   The cheese sandwich left without paying (Yule 1996: 21).

The referent in (12) and (13) must be the person who ordered the cheese sandwich and left without paying. In this case, there is no direct link between "the person" (referent) and "the cheese sandwich" at the lexical level, but (H) can understand what (S) infers in terms of intended meanings. Obviously the above examples are only meaningful to someone involved in a particular speech situation; but they are not actually meaningful sentences without this contextual cue. Accordingly, intended meanings are not the same for everyone as they are often interpreted differently from one person to another (Wierzbicka 1991:70). According to Grundy (2000:7), in order to understand indirect meaning in utterances (see examples 12 or 13), one must not only decode the information received from the utterance but also draw an inference as to what is conveyed beyond the literal meaning of the utterance. Grundy gives the following example to be considered:

(14)   I am a man.

Without the contextual cue, nothing is remarkable in the above statement, except that the speaker was a woman, who uttered "I am a man." In this case, the literal meaning is not important or even appropriate to consider, but the intended meaning is significant. In order to understand the statement (14), the inference is drawn, based on the context in which the utterance took place. Thus, the inference would be associated with a man's attributes or behaviours in particular situations. The message could get across to H through inference from utterance (14) that either S has a particular attribute to that of a man, or S behaves like a man in certain ways. In this respect, Grundy (2000:8) points out that every utterance seems to require an inference, so that H can understand whether an utterance, such as the one below, is sincere or ironical:

(15)   I really like your new haircut.

The question of inference, which enables H to arrive at what is actually being referred to in (15) above, has been left unexplained, although the role of inference has been acknowledged. Despite the lack of knowledge about the process of inference, some linguistic scholars argue that inference operates on the basis of common or shared knowledge that one has previously acquired (Saville-Troike 1982:138).

According to Kreckel (1981:25-29), shared knowledge is gained from mutual interaction in the past or from past experiences of two or more individuals. In this sense, shared knowledge differs from common knowledge, which is developed from knowledge gained separately by each individual. From this point of view, common knowledge can be shared knowledge, but in the reverse, this is not necessarily true.

While the distinction between common knowledge and shared knowledge is not often highly regarded, Gibbs (1985:98) argues that in a given speech event, S and H must share common knowledge in order to keep their

interaction going in the same direction. Both S and H depend on their shared knowledge of a specific social setting to determine what each says and how they understand each other through intended meanings conveyed.

Yule (1996:85) perceives shared knowledge in terms of background knowledge and suggests that one's ability to arrive automatically at the interpretation of new experience must be based on pre-existing knowledge, which functions like a familiar pattern from previous experience. The most general term for this pattern is a schema, which is a pre-existing knowledge structure, embedded in our memory. According to Brown and Yule (1983:248), schemata can be seen as the organised background knowledge which leads us to expect or predict aspects in our interpretation of discourse. Therefore, in a certain speech event, for example, when the interlocutors do not share background knowledge but share the same speech conventions, the hearer would become lost in a mass of words and ideas, resulting in misunderstanding (Gumperz et al. 1979:6). For example, in a public talk, the speaker may focus on some topics based on prior knowledge; but among the audience, there may be some whose knowledge does not relate to the speaker's topics. In this case the speaker and the audience do not share background knowledge, and what the audience understands of the talk may not be what the speaker intended.

However, as Yule (1996:87) suggests, schemata are culturally determined, and they differ from one person to another depending on one's cultural background. This is called cultural schemata, which represent a part of the large field of investigation generally known as cross-cultural pragmatics. A situational example for cultural schemata is that in an Australian factory, a supervisor assumed that factory workers would know that during Easter the factory would be closed and they would all have time off for religious celebrations. However, to Vietnamese workers, Easter is just a few days off, and it is not a religious holiday. They have no plans to celebrate or enjoy Easter in the same way their Australian colleagues do.

From a sociolinguistic point of view, Trosborg (1995:38) suggests that speech events are interpreted differently in different social contexts and situations, as well as in different social groups within a speech community.

Differences in the interpretation of verbal interactions may result from social variation, including the setting in which the verbal interactions occur, the aim of communication, the power relationship of interlocutors and the amount of contact previously established between them. It is the social context that accounts for variation in the interpretation of intended meanings in given speech events. In interpersonal communication, however, intended meanings are also interpreted from some syntactical elements merged in an utterance, for example, person reference and form of address.

2.3.2 PERSON REFERENCE AND FORM OF ADDRESS

This section will discuss the concept of person reference, research about the different ways by which an individual is referred to or addressed (Stivers et al. (2007:1). According to Deng (1989:30-31), person reference and form of address may vary from one culture to another; while Yule (1996:10) defines person reference in terms of person deixis represented by the pronouns for first person (I), second person (you) and third person (he, she). This person reference is associated with the speaker's social role. However, Stubbs (1983:8) points out that the speaker's social role is perceived differently, reflected in specific conversational behaviour through which social distance between the interlocutors can be realised or interpreted.

In their seminal work on person reference, Brown and Gilman (1972:254) distinguish two European singular pronouns of person reference beginning with the Latin tu and vos, which are represented in different forms in different languages. For example, in Italian, tu and voi (Lei later displaced voi); in French, tu and vous; in Spanish, tu and vos (vos later replaced by usted); in German, du and Ihr (Ihr eventually gave way to er then Sie). Native English speakers originally used "thou" and "ye" and later replaced "ye" with "you", which has continued. For convenience in further discussions, the two symbols T and V (from the Latin tu and vos) will be used as generic forms for the expression of politeness, which are applicable in many European languages.

According to Brown and Gilman (1972:257), for many centuries French, English, Italian, Spanish and German native speakers followed the rules of non-

reciprocal T-V between individuals of unequal power and mutual V or T between persons of relatively equivalent power. The latter rule has gradually developed into a distinction between the T of intimacy and the V of formality, which is now called solidarity. The person reference in European languages seems to focus primarily on two ways of referring to H in terms of "you" in the T or V form, and plays down the reference of "I", which refers to an ordinary individual, differing from royalties who refer to themselves as "we" (Brown & Gilman 1972:254). Even with these alternates, the address systems of European languages seem to be far simpler than those of Asian languages. For example, in Hindi, there are three forms of second-person pronouns and in Thai, speakers normally have to choose from a long list of personal pronouns for you and I to ensure the appropriate expression of politeness (Fasold 1990:2). Indeed, many Southeast Asian languages have a number of elaborate substitutes for you and I to be used appropriately in different circumstances.

Apart from personal pronouns, Sifianou (1992:65-66) suggests that occupational titles, such as "Doctor" and "Professor", and positional titles, such as "President" and "Director", can also be used as forms of address in English and other languages. The latter titles are used for person reference and as a form of address, depending on the context and speech situation.

2.3.3   LINGUISTIC NORMS AND THEIR CONNOTATIONS

This section explores potential linguistic norms and their connotation employed in a given culture. Overall, linguistic norms are associated with notions of standardisation and "correctness" in speech that are usually thought to be institutional in terms of being prescribed by authority through the educational system and other agencies in a country (Milroy 1992:81). Native speakers often unconsciously acquire sociolinguistic communicative competence with respect to appropriate language usage, whilst not necessarily realising these norms that guide their sociolinguistic behaviours (Fishman 1969:49). However, as Wong (2004: 232) suggests, cultural norms are not always embraced by every member in the society, although they can be identified discretely from one culture to another, and everyone in a culture would be familiar with its norms and values. The following examples were given by

Wong (2004: 232) in relation to the use of the interrogative-directive that reflect Anglo-English cultural norms:

(16)   Girl, would you give me change for this please?

(17)   Polly, would you get Mr Firkins' bill please?

(18)   Polly, give Mrs Richards this, would you?

(19)   Manuel, could you lend Mrs Richards your assistance in connection with her reservation?

(20)   I've got to check the laundry. Could you keep an eye on reception for me?

Despite their interrogative forms, the above utterances do not serve as a question, but rather as a request. In these cases the interrogative-directive forms "would you" and "could you" represent Anglo English norms encountered in everyday verbal interactions.

So, what is a cultural norm? The answer may involve two related notions: On the one hand, it can refer to common practice, that is, normal, usual or habitual behaviour; on the other hand, it can refer to a set of rules and regulations, in terms of socially approved patterns of behaviour (Escandell-Vidal 2004:348). Therefore, in order to be successful in communication, the speaker or the user of a language must be aware of the linguistic norms in a given context or speech situation.

In order to ensure that what S says is understood by H, a number of principles in verbal communication have to be complied with. For this purpose, Grice (1975: 45-6) offers the "Cooperative Principles" (CP) described in terms of four maxims as follows:

1.   Maxim of Quantity

> Speakers are expected to give as much information as is necessary for their interlocutors to understand their utterances but to give no more information than necessary.

2. Maxim of Relevance

   Speakers are expected to organise their utterances in such a way that they are relevant to the ongoing context.

3. Maxim of Manner

   Speakers are expected to be orderly and clear in utterances.

4. Maxim of Quality

   Speakers are expected to say only what they believe to be true and to have evidence for what they say.

It is important to attend to these maxims to ensure successful communication in conversations. However, there are certain kinds of expressions that speakers use so they may be in danger of not fully adhering to the above maxims. These kinds of expressions can be explained in terms of "hedges" or evasive statements. Hsu (1980:192) suggests that the linguistic form for hedges can be a word or a phrase, which serve either as cautious notes to H about the accuracy of the main statement, or to mention some potentially unconnected information during a conversation (Yule 1996:38). However, a hedge can also refer to a speaker's meaning in an utterance that implies H's refraining from the responsibility for the truth of what S is about to say. This speaking strategy can be conveyed with the use of certain terms such as "think", "believe" or "assume" (Hsu 1980:192). For example:

(21)   I *think* (believe, assume) that it will be cold next Sunday.

The use of "think" in (21) suggests that the speaker does not accept responsibility for the truth of "it will be cold next Sunday". This hedge-based utterance gives room for a difference from what has been said in the utterance, i.e. it may not be cold next Sunday.

Brown and Levinson (1987:145) also make a similar suggestion of quality hedges with the use of "suppose", "guess" and "think" to avoid responsibility in whether what has been said in an utterance is true or not. For example:

(22)   I suppose (or guess, think) that Harry is coming.

Furthermore, hedges are also used to give notice that the speaker is not providing sufficient information as expected in the utterance. Terms used as hedges for the maxim of quantity can be "to some extent", "basically", "well", you know" or "I mean" (Hsu 1980:193). For example:

(23)   *Well*, it's too far to walk.
         or
(24)   *I mean, you know*, it's a long way!
         (Hsu 1980:193)

In addition, hedges can serve to specify the degree of accuracy in referential meanings that the main statement conveys with regard to the maxim of quality. The italicised text in the following examples serve as quality hedges (Yule 1996:38):

(25)   *As far as I know*, they are married.

(26)   He couldn't live without her, *I guess*.

However, from a different perspective, hedges can be used to soften the directness in a request or to reduce the degree of the illocutionary force in a request. For example:

(27)   I *have to* ask you to move the car.
         (Kasper 1989:46)

In example (27), the illocutionary force is a request to move the car. Therefore, "illocutionary force" can be simply understood as the purpose of an utterance or the function in the mind of the speaker. A speaker may make an utterance for the purpose of making a statement, a request, an offer, an explanation, or for some other communicative purpose. However, illocutionary force can create an imposition on H or hinder H's freedom of action (Brown &

Levinson 1987:129). This can be avoided by the use of hedges as a negative politeness strategy. The use of modal verbs such as could, would, as well as the fall-rise intonation, tag questions, lexical adverbs such as perhaps, conceivably, and pragmatic expressions – sort of, I think, all serve to soften the directive, or reduce the strength in the utterance (Holmes 1995:74-75). All of these serve negative politeness strategies in that they either reduce the imposition on H, or serve H's want to be unhindered in his/her action. For example:

(28)   Could you make a cup of tea?
         or
(29)   Make a cup of tea would you.

While the function of hedges employed in negative politeness strategies is much more substantial and will be further discussed in the next section under "linguistic politeness", the hedging devices also serve to reduce the chance of miscommunication because the source of miscommunication may be located in disparate interpretation of the illocutionary force of indirect speech (Milroy 1984:25). Milroy (1984:25) provides the examples of an utterance such as (30) which can, in some situations, be interpreted as a directive – a simple comment with no particular illocutionary force – while (31) might be interpreted either as a request for information, or a request for action:

(30)   It's dinner time and I'm hungry.

(31)   Can you play the *Moonlight Sonata*?

Milroy (1984:25) further points out that misinterpretation of the illocutionary force in indirect speech acts can occur, even between persons who know each other well, and provides these examples:

(32)   Wife: Will you be home early today?

(33)   Husband: When do you need the car?

(34)   Wife: I don't, I just wondered if you'd be home early.

According to Kasper (1989:46), the illocutionary force in any utterance varies according to the level of directness. For example, the level of directness in a request includes direct, conventionally indirect, and indirect. With direct requests, the illocutionary force is indicated in the utterance by grammatical, lexical or semantic means; conventionally indirect requests express the illocution via fixed linguistic conventions established in the speech community; and indirect requests require the addressee to compute the illocution from the interaction of the locution within its context. In linguistics, talking about illocution may involve the intentional function of the language in use, or what the speaker has intended to say, rather than the utterance being interpreted literally (Arnovick 1999:3).

In view of directness and indirectness in speech, Kasper (1989:46) classifies direct requests into five levels and indirect requests into two categories. The five levels of direct request include Mood Derivable, Explicit Performative, Hedged Performative, Obligation Statement and Want Statement. The following examples have been cited from Kasper (1989:46):

(35)   Move your car!
         (Mood Derivable: the grammatical mood of the utterance signals illocutionary force).

(36)   I'm asking you to move your car.
         (Explicit Performative: the illocutionary force is referred to by a performative verb).

(37)   I have to ask you to move your car.

(Hedged Performative: as (45), with the performative verb modified by a hedging expression).

(38)   You have to move your car.

(Obligation Statement: the hearer's obligation to perform the act referred to in the proposition is stated).

(39)   I want you to move your car.

(Want Statement: the speaker's wish that the hearer carries out the act referred to in the proposition is stated)

The two categories of indirect request consist of (a) conventionally indirect, and (b) indirect. The conventionally indirect requests are formed in terms of "Suggestory Formula" and "Preparatory" while the indirect requests are constructed in terms of "Strong Hint" and "Mild Hint". For example:

(40)   How about moving your car!

(Suggestory Formula: illocutionary force is indicated by a semantic formula expression).

(41)   Can/would you move your car?

(Preparatory: a preparatory condition for performing the request is referred to, such as the hearer's ability or willingness to carry out the act).

(42)   Your car is in the way!

(Strong Hint: the requestive force has to be inferred from the context; however, at least one element pertaining to the proposition is explicitly mentioned).

(43)   We don't want any crowding!

(Mild Hint: the requestive force has to be inferred from the context; no mention is made of elements relevant for the proposition).

Obviously the examples of direct and indirect requests proposed by Kasper (1989:46) above (35-43) are employed, according to context or speech situation, with some other determinants involved such as age, gender and role.

Grundy (2000:62) suggests that direct speech acts seem to be "straightforward" in the procedure of inference for understanding; indirect speech acts however may be problematic in relation to the literal meaning in a certain utterance. Grundy (2000:62) gives an example:

(44)   Who cares!

This example denotes at least two meanings: (a) literal meaning – someone cares – who is it; (b) pragmatic meaning – no one cares.

From H's perspective, how one arrives at a determination of which meaning is to be taken in an utterance (44) involves inference theories based on the speech situation or the context of discourse (Kreckel 1981:20) discussed earlier. Wierzbicka (1991:67) points out that in a different country people speak in a different way, not only because they use different linguistic codes involving different lexicons and different grammars, but also because their ways of using the codes are different. In the sense of "Code" known as "language" or "variety" (Clyne 2003:70), the best example for the difference in ways of using it can be thought of in relation to the lexical forms substituting the English "thank you" in various cultures. For example, in response to a compliment, someone may say "thank you" but those from a different culture may just smile to express their gratitude (Herbert 2003:79). In this regard, differences in the usage of language can be discussed from a cross-cultural perspective. Therefore, linguistic norms and their connotations represent an important part of this study, because they are related to cross-cultural pragmatics and linguistic politeness.

2.3.4   CROSS-CULTURAL PRAGMATICS

According to Wierzbicka (1991:69), the term "cross-cultural pragmatics" has been used in the study of language that focusses on several communicative aspects including the way people speak differently in different communities; and how different speech styles reflect different cultural values and priorities. These ideas are adopted in the most recent study on "politeness strategies as

linguistic variables" (Holmes 2009:699), which acknowledges that "different cultures have different ways of expressing consideration for others".

Wierzbicka (1991:70) suggests that the term "cross-cultural" is used for describing not only native-non-native interactions, but also any communicative pattern employed between two people who, in any particular domain, do not share a common linguistic or cultural background.

In view of native-non-native interactions, when people arrive in a new country, they carry their past experiences with them. They interpret the new situation on the basis of what they have experienced in their own culture. Therefore, the interpretations they reach are frequently inappropriate in the new cultural environment. What they interpret does not necessarily match the interpretations reached by members of the new society. This may lead to miscommunication. For example, in a grocer's shop operated by Australians or by migrants who have lived in Australia for a long period, a newly arrived Vietnamese migrant might make requests in English as a second language:

(45)   Give me a packet of cigarettes, or
(46)   I want a kilo of pork
          (Brick 1991:2)

To the Vietnamese customer, the direct translation of such utterances as in (55) and (56) may be totally appropriate. However, in Australian shopping environments, a lack of softeners such as "Could I have …", "Have you got …", "please" and "thank you" is construed as being rude (Brick 1991:2-3). In order to avoid or lessen the degree of cross-cultural problems in verbal interactions, non-native speakers need to gain an understanding of the linguistic norms in the host country. However, from the hearer's point of view, specific linguistic norms, such as the use of softeners in English, are subject to complex inferential processes in order to understand the speaker's intended meaning in a given utterance. The inferential processes can be explained by means of a cognitive approach. Moeschler (2004:50) suggests that because speakers can convey more than what they say, the hearer must infer not only from what is

said in the utterance, but also from other accessible information in the context in order to arrive at the speaker's intended meaning, giving as an example:

(47)   Jacques: Axel, please go and brush your teeth!

(48)   Axel: Dad, I'm not sleepy.

In this case, through the inferential process, H understood S's informative intention in utterance (47) that S wanted H to go to bed, and such an understanding was demonstrated in the response (48), based on shared knowledge as mentioned earlier.

By means of data collected for a study in Australian English and Finnish service encounters, Ventola (1987:47-48) finds that embarrassment and communication breakdowns experienced in everyday activities restrain non-natives adjustment to the new linguistic environment. The lack of knowing how to linguistically conduct basic social interaction may well result in rejection of the new host society, or in reverse, rejection of newcomers to the society.

Holmes (2009:708) points out that there is a good deal of variation in the commonsense understanding of what is polite or socially appropriate behaviour and intercultural issues. In the intercultural context, the same behaviour may not be considered desirable to people from a different cultural background (Brislin 1981:6). An example to support this idea is that in Greece, Americans are often annoyed by personal questions about one's religion, political views, and salary. These questions are considered rude by Americans, but quite normal by Greeks. Brislin attributes this difference in perceptions to what Greeks and Americans consider an "in-group" and "out-group". Brislin (1981:48) found that when people interact with out-group members, they are likely to experience unfamiliar behaviours; hence they may feel uncomfortable and prefer to interact with members of their own cultural group. In an attempt to look for what they were familiar with in the past, people living in another country tend to use the services provided in their native language. This psychological tendency is certainly the case for Vietnamese who live in Australia

(AV) with a wide range of business and services provided in Vietnamese (Thomas 1999:17).

Ide (1989:238) suggests that formal expressions are used in addressing out-group people, whereas non-formal expressions are used in addressing in-group members. In other words, formal expressions are used for hearers with high power and distance, while non-formal expressions are used for hearers with little power and distance relative to the speakers. These perceptions of in-group and out-group dynamics are determined by cultural values and beliefs in verbal communication. This suggests that linguistic behaviour is essentially related to the culture of which the person, whose linguistic behaviour is mentioned, is a member. In this regard, the following section discusses the role of culture in linguistic behaviour.

2.3.5   THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN LINGUISTIC BEHAVIOUR

Despite abstractness and invisibility in nature, culture is often talked about as if it were a physical entity that can be taken along with people when they move away from their home countries. In a sense, culture can be taken away from its source country, but not from the people who bear it (Mey 2004: 32). This suggestion highlights the fact that culture is embedded in each individual.

According to Edgar (1980:129-30), the concept of culture arises from past actions and consists of patterns of shared ideas, of rules, expectations and motives. In this sense, culture is an organised, shared, and meaningful interpretation of reality. However, this only makes sense to a particular group of people who have shared the same experience, or have been involved in the same actions in the past. Although culture may involve a variety of contextual domains, native language can be considered a marker of cultural identity that differentiates one culture from another.

Taking an example from a Chinese cultural perspective, Kao (1998:2) claims that culture influences many facets of human communication and facilitates how one's speech behaviours are determined in terms of "appropriateness". Kao argues that there are two important, culturally

determined constructs that differentiate many Asian cultures from those in the West:

> (a) Low and high-context communicative styles. In individualist cultures, self-actualization and individual's achievement are highly valued with a focus on an "I" identity, an individual's rights including independence and freedom; (b) individualist versus collectivist value orientations. In collectivist cultures people consider themselves belonging to the in-group and focus on a "we" identity (Kao 1998:3).

Whilst low- and high-context communicative styles were originally introduced by Hall (1976) as mentioned in 2.2.1, the approach to individualist versus collectivist values was examined by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) in their comprehensive study based on data collected in the late 1960s and covering more than 70 countries, of which national cultures were measured in four dimensions: power distance (from small to large), collectivism versus individualism, femininity versus masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance (from weak to strong) (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005:23). From evidence in their research, Vietnam at the time of the data collection, was one of the most collectivist societies and quite distinctive from Australia as an individualist society. According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005:74-75), in collectivist societies, the group's interest prevails over the interest of the individual; whereas in individualist societies like Australia the opposite situation exists.

Individualist versus collectivist values have also been examined by other sociolinguists. Brislin (2000:53) suggests that in an individualist culture people reserve their own goals and act toward their own interests; but in a collectivist culture, people are more likely to downplay their own interests in favour of the group's interests such as those of the extended family. In this sense, people in a collectivist culture, such as Vietnamese, tend to depend intimately on each other more substantially than those in individualist cultures such as Australia and other Western countries. Bayraktaroglu and Sifianou (2001:6) claim that in a collectivist society, power is more tolerated than in an individualist society. For example, in a comparison of the role relationships along the parameters of power and distance/closeness, the relationship between a student and a professor in China (collectivist society) is not egalitarian but socially close, whereas in England (individualist society) it is egalitarian but distant.

With regard to the relationship between culture and language, Goody and Watt (1963:313) point out that when one generation transfers its cultural heritage to the next, the most significant elements of any human culture involved are undoubtedly channelled through words, and reside in the particular range of meanings and attitudes which members of any society attach to their verbal symbols. Many previous studies (i.e. Hymes 1964; Kramarae et al. 1984; Clyne 1985; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Wierzbicka 1991; Trosborg 1995; Gallois & Callan 1997) suggest that cultural values influence the way language is used to ensure it is desirable to the interlocutors in the speech event. A way of speaking is determined by cultural norms and assumptions that lead to variation in usage. Therefore, cultural values are reflected in communicative events that can be examined from speech behaviours. This suggestion implies that every culture has its own interactional styles, representing different preferences for different modes of speech behaviour.

Clyne (1985:12) points out that cultural difference plays an important role in variation in the rules of communicative competence. These rules extend beyond the sentence level and determine what is said, how it is said, and who says it in particular scenarios. Wierzbicka (1991:69) and Trosborg (1995:45) both make a similar claim about cultural difference: in different societies people speak differently; and the difference in the way they speak profoundly reflects different cultural values. For example, English requests may be realised differently in other languages such as Greek, Hebrew, Danish, German and French (Trosborg 1995:46). The strong link or intrinsic relationship between language and culture is widely accepted by linguistics (Hymes 1964; Gumperz 1968:223; Gregory and Carroll 1978:64; Saville-Troike 1982:34; Levinson 1983; Wierbicka 1991, 2001:203; Holmes 1992, 2009: 285; Trosborg 1995:42; Kramsch 1998). In particular, Wierzbicka (2001:203) claims that in most, if not all languages, there is important evidence for the reality of culture as interrelated patterns of thinking and living.

Overall cultural values can be further interpreted in the distinction between personal or individual autonomy vs. collective or family autonomy, which are reflected in linguistic behaviour, an issue that should not be overlooked in this research.

2.3.6   INDIVIDUAL AUTONOMY vs. COLLECTIVE AUTONOMY

This part of the literature review will focus on cultural values typically reflected in individualist, western, Anglo Celtic cultures, including Australia's, as distinct to those characteristic of collectivist, Oriental Asian cultures, including Vietnamese with some differences between the Confucian-based and Communist-oriented cultural values. The distinction between Western Anglo and Oriental Asian cultures is made here only for the purpose of discussions in relation to the issues of cultural values affecting verbal interactions. It does not suggest the existence of any homogeneous cultural group based on a nation. Although Australia is characterised as an individualist culture, the researcher is fully aware of the cultural diversity that exists in Australia.

Apart from the issues of in-group and out-group perceptions discussed earlier, in intercultural contact, there are also problems arising from difference in attitudes towards personal autonomy as opposed to collective autonomy. Through typical examples of interrogative-directives and tag questions as discussed briefly in 2.3.3, Wong (2004:237) points out that people with Anglo (individualist) and Singapore (collectivist) values are not only different, but sometimes they are at odds with each other, although both speak English. The following examples from Wong (2004:237) indicate that Singaporeans generally place much less emphasis on personal autonomy than their Anglo counterparts from an Anglo-cultural perspective.

(49)   Could you keep it just tonight? (Anglo English)

(50)   You write your mobile phone here (Singapore English)

(51)   Can you spare me two pieces of paper? (Singapore English)

The difference between Anglo English and Singapore English in the above requests indicates distinctive connotations associated with individualist and collectivist cultures respectively. One of the culturally distinctive connotations is reflected in the concept of personal autonomy, which is highly regarded in

Anglo culture. The other is collective autonomy, which is considered a core value in Asian cultures in countries such as Singapore, China and Vietnam (Wong 2004:237-39). In asking someone to do something, Anglo English speakers often think that the hearer has the right not to comply with the request. This mindful attitude is reflected in the use of interrogative-directives instead of imperative forms for making a request. The interrogative-directives are used by Anglo English speakers such as "Could you do this? Would you do this? In case the hearer decides to comply with the request, he/she is obliged to express acknowledgement of the hearer's autonomy by saying "thank you" or other associated expressions.

From Chinese (as well as Japanese and Vietnamese) perspectives, the existence of the individual is hardly as an independent entity, but must be seen as a member of a group or family in particular because "family" (jia) is the central, perceptual element in the culture and serves as the primary and ongoing unit of socialisation (Kao 1998:13). Growing up in such a culture, Malay English speakers in Singapore seem more concerned with the possibility of getting things done, rather than the willingness of H. This perception reflects the difference of an individualist culture as in (49) above from a collectivist culture as in (50) and (51) above.

While the concept of personal autonomy has been elucidated and argued as a core value in Anglo culture, reflecting individual interest in Western cultural values, the concept of collective autonomy is considered to be more in line with Oriental cultural values. In this study, personal autonomy and collective autonomy are considered in relation to Anglo Australian and Confucian-based cultural values respectively with regard to linguistic politeness.

2.4   LINGUISTIC POLITENESS

Although most of the behaviours considered "polite" accompany language (Lakoff et al. 2005:2), the term "linguistic" is used here as a modifier for "politeness" mainly to emphasise that the concept of politeness posited in the present study is necessarily related to verbal interaction, which is different from

non-verbal behaviours defined in terms of social norms or etiquette, such as giving a seat to an elderly person on a bus (Márquez 2000:22).

In her most recent study on politeness strategies as linguistic variables, Holmes (2009:699) points out that the expression of linguistic politeness is one of many functions served by language. In this regard, this part of the literature review concerns the core aspect of the theoretical framework for the present study. This section will begin with Brown and Levinson's approach to linguistic politeness, and follows with the concept of "face" and "face wants", which all theories of politeness are essentially based on.

2.4.1   BROWN AND LEVINSON'S APPROACH TO POLITENESS

Despite some disagreement, it is undeniable that the work of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) on politeness has been most influential in providing a paradigm for the study of linguistic politeness (Watts et al. 1992:7). Indeed, Brown and Levinson (1987:101-210) offer a significant framework of politeness with in-depth analysis to distinguish between what they call "positive politeness" and "negative politeness". The analysis involves fifteen strategies for positive politeness, and ten strategies for negative politeness. The distinction between positive and negative politeness is the most prominent characteristic in Brown and Levinson's view of politeness.

Developed from Goffman's (1967:5) notion of "face", the concept of politeness was first systematised as a linguistic theory by Brown and Levinson (1978). Later they extended ideas from Grice's "Cooperative Principles" of verbal communication to carry out a comparative study of the way in which speakers of three unrelated languages – English, Tamil and Tzeltal – identify different politeness strategies employed in these languages. Brown and Levinson identify many similarities in the linguistic strategies employed by speakers of these languages as motives for politeness. The same strategies were also employed in other languages as regulative factors in verbal communication. This empirical evidence was eventually accepted as the basis on which to assume universality of politeness.

In order to account for linguistic similarities in the study, Brown and Levinson relied on the linguistic behaviours of an assumed Model Person (MP), who is a fluent speaker of a natural language, and capable of rationality related to the concept of "face" as discussed earlier. Brown and Levinson assume that every adult member of a society is concerned about his/her "face", which is a conceptualised self-image presented to others. Simultaneously, one recognises other people have similar "face wants". Based on this assumption, Brown and Levinson distinguish two aspects of "face" to be universal, and refer to two basic desires of any person in any speech situation: "negative face" and "positive face". The former is one's desire to be unimpeded by others, to be free to act without being imposed upon. The latter is one's wish to be desirable to others who will appreciate and approve one's self and one's personality.

Brown and Levinson's distinction between "negative" and "positive" politeness is closely related to Goffman's (1967) concepts of "avoidance/presentational rituals", which concern the distance and involvement respectively in a verbal interaction performed by the speaker. This represents two ways of expressing politeness as mutually exclusive. This is because "positive politeness" is oriented toward H's positive face, characterised by the expression of approval and appreciation of H's personality, making H feel part of S's in-group.

Positive politeness is defined as being approach-based in the sense that H is treated as an in-group member, such as a friend, whose wants and personality traits are known and liked (Brown & Levinson 1987:70). This approach-based perception of politeness is realised by S in a way of speaking that is presumed to be pleasant to H. However, how this way of speaking is actually achieved depends on S's judgement and knowledge of H. How to make an accurate judgement and obtain good knowledge about H involves S's experience of the relationships between S and H, but such an experience cannot be guaranteed as a workable criterion (Brown & Levinson 1978:107). Examples of "positive politeness" strategies posited by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) are: paying attention to H, showing exaggerated interest, approval and sympathy, use of in-group identity markers, seeking agreement and common ground with H. These strategies aim to accommodate H's positive

face, to be well thought of or admired by others. It is the desire to be treated as a friend and confidant.

"Negative politeness", on the other hand, mainly concentrates on redressing H's negative "face", which concerns the desire not to be imposed upon and is characterised by self-effacement and formality. They are oriented mainly toward partially satisfying H's negative face, which is conceptualised as the basic "face want" claimed to be H's own territory and self-determination. Negative politeness is, therefore, essentially avoidance-based and negative politeness strategies are applied so that S recognises and respects H's negative face wants, hence not interfering with H's freedom of action (Brown & Levinson 1987:70). Brown and Levinson's examples of "negative politeness" relate to etiquette, avoidance of disturbing others, indirectness in making requests or in imposing obligations, acknowledgement of debt to others, showing deference for others, overt emphasis or showing acknowledgement of other's relative power. In this sense, their strategies aim to accommodate H's negative face, which includes the desire not to be imposed on by others, and to be free and self-determined in their actions.

Overall, as previously mentioned, Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness comprises 15 positive strategies and 10 negative strategies, summarised as follows:

Positive politeness
Notice, attend to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods)
Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H)
Intensify interest to H
Use in-group identity markers
Seek agreement
Avoid disagreement
Presuppose/raise/assert common ground
Joke
Assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern for H's wants
Offer, promise
Be optimistic
Include both S and H in the activity
Give (or ask for) reasons
Assume or assert reciprocity
Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation).

(Brown & Levinson 1987:101-129)

Negative politeness

Be conventionally indirect
Question, hedge
Be pessimistic
Minimize the imposition
Give deference
Apologize
Impersonalize S and H
State the "Face-Threatening-Acts" (FTA) as a general rule
Nominalize
Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H
    (Brown & Levinson 1987:132-210)

These strategies of politeness as mentioned will be used as a framework for data analysis in this research, with 21 categories of politeness markers being assigned and discussed (from Chapter 5 onwards).

In communication with each other, one's utterances may be oriented to the positive or negative face of H. Grundy (2000:156) gives the following example to discuss the concept of politeness in relation to the positive or negative face:

(52)   Got the time mate!

The form of address expressed by "mate" and the informality of elliptical "Got" indicate that the utterance is oriented to the "positive face" of H with a suggestion that H is being treated as a friend who is of an equal status. Therefore, the utterance in (52) is an example of "positive politeness" (Grundy, 2000:156). In contrast, Gundy cites the following example of "negative politeness":

(53)   Could I just borrow a tiny bit of paper?

The model expression with "could", the minimizing impositions expressed by "just" and "a tiny bit", and the euphemism "borrow" are all oriented to H's "negative face" and seek a compensation by playing down the imposing obligation on H in the request for a piece of paper (Grundy 2000:157).

How are "positive face" and "negative face" related to the concept of politeness will be discussed in the following section.

2.4.2   THE NOTION OF "FACE" AND "FACE WANTS"

The notion of "face" is adopted from Goffman's (1967) theory as a starting point to interpret polite behaviours in verbal communication. According to Goffman (1967:5) the notion of "face" can be viewed as the "positive social value that a person effectively claims for him/herself by the line others assume he/she has taken during a particular contact". In other words, "face" can be perceived as an image of self, which is described in terms of approved social attributes and may be shared by others. This means everyone claims to have a "face" and as Goffman (1967:8-9) suggests, when a person realizes that he/she is in wrong "face" or out of "face", he/she is likely to feel ashamed and inferior. Thus, in the Anglo-American society, as well as in some others, the phrase "to lose face" may mean to be in wrong "face", to be out of "face", or to be shamefaced.

Adopted from Goffman's notion of "face" and the English terms "losing face" and "saving face", Brown and Levinson (1987:61) define "face" as "the public self-image" that every member wants to claim for oneself. Compared to the two concepts of "face" (i.e. Goffman's Vs. Brown and Levinson's), Fraser (1990: 239) observes that in Goffman's definition, the public image is an intrinsic constituent whereas in Brown and Levinson's the public is seen as an "external modifier" assigned to individuals by others upon their interactional behaviours. This has led many scholars to refer to Brown and Levinson's theory as having an "Anglocentric bias" or underlying Western individualist interactional dynamics (Wierzbicka 1985; Mao 1994).

From a speaker's point of view, the notion of "face" can be viewed in terms of "face wants" or the content of "face", which are positive social values

that everyone in the society desires or places strong emphasis on. According to Shih (1986:19), everyone wants to be accepted by others and to be treated with respect, dignity and intimacy. In this sense, individual's achievement is desired to be noticed and kindness is expected to be appreciated by others. These desires or wants constitute "face wants", which originates from Brown and Levinson (1978) in a suggestion that every member of a society claims to have "face"; so "face wants" can be considered as the products of human nature. In this view, "face" and "face wants" can be considered universal. While "face" can be considered as a human moral product, which exists in one's perception or imagination. In this sense, "face wants" seems to come from one's expectation of moral rewards such as recognition of achievement or good conduct. Expectation of being addressed with the use of correct titles is also a form of "face wants" that speakers usually attend to by employment of various politeness strategies in order to avoid "Face-Threatening-Acts" (FTA) as mentioned earlier.

In supporting the cultural notion of "face", Brown and Levinson (1987:13) argue that "face", consists of two specific kinds of desires or "face-wants" attributed by interlocutors to one another: (a) The desire to be un-impeded in one's actions (negative face), and (b) the desire to be approved of (positive face). This notion of "face" is universal, but it is subject to cultural elaboration. Thus, Brown and Levinson (1987:62) identify that the two related aspects of "face" - "positive face" and "negative face" - arise from the speaker's assessment of the hearer's reflection on the speaker's values in conversation.

Shih (1986:20-21) suggests that "face wants" are culturally-oriented; hence they vary from one culture to another because each culture places various levels of emphasis on specific "face wants". For example, privacy and equality are highly regarded in many Western countries, but not in Asian countries. Instead, Asian cultures concern more of deference and modesty. "Face wants" are treated as psychological and social needs of human beings, and basic "face wants" include deference, modesty, formality, intimacy, respect of privacy, praise, agreement, approval, appreciation, concern, care, and generosity, equality, status, sincerity and acceptance.

From a speaker's point view, however, Brown and Levinson (1978:66) suggest that "face" is something that is emotionally invested; hence it can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction. For example, when people feel they are "losing face", they are embarrassed or humiliated. In this regard, Shih (1986:19) points out that although "face" can be gained or lost by one's own conduct, the gain or loss of "face" is determined by other people's judgement or feeling. This means one's gain or loss of "face" occurs essentially in sociolinguistic contexts.

As the "face wants" of one person may be in conflict with others" - this is occasionally named as a conflict of interests, one may employ different politeness strategies to avoid the conflict especially in cross-cultural environments as Shih (1986:21) finds in her work on conversational politeness.

From another perspective, Allan and Burridge (1991:6) suggest that everyone is supposed to desire "saving face" rather than "losing face". This means everyone desires to "save" or "protect" one's own "face". Access to appropriate face-saving strategies may help avoiding offence or friction in a particular situational context. Like politeness, "face" has two aspects – "positive" and "negative". As mentioned earlier, an individual's positive face is reflected in his/her desire to be liked, approved of, respected and appreciated by others. A negative face is a desire not to be impeded or to have the freedom to act as one chooses. Therefore, politeness strategies are employed to address these two aspects of "face" respectively: A positive politeness strategy is used to address the "positive face" and a negative politeness strategy is used to address the "negative face". It is clear that "face" is closely related to politeness and involves necessary linguistic devices to meet and satisfy the "face wants" of the hearer.

Gallois and Callan (1997:11-12) suggest that the notion of "face" used to be thought of mainly as a phenomenon of Asian culture, but has in more recent years been shown to apply equally well in Western and other cultures, especially with regard to communication that functions to enhance and maintain respect and esteem, as well as to avoid threatening the self-esteem of others. Gallois and Callan say that people in different languages and different dialect

groups may have different ways of maintaining and repairing "face". Within one speech community, depending on the speakers" social attributes and on the situation itself, they will have to adjust the line they take during a conversation and adopt different face-saving strategies accordingly; that is, they will have to choose their language expressions, tone, and quality of speaking to satisfy the desired "face" or "face wants" (Allan & Burridge 1991:6). In this sense, the "ways of maintaining and repairing" "face" is in fact associated with language choice and way of speaking, which represent the ultimate goal of politeness strategies.

Brown and Levinson seem to view politeness as a linguistic device to address or to redress "Face-Threatening-Acts" (FTAs), as FTAs may damage H's two aspects of "face" (negative and positive). However, they do not see the need of "Face-Satisfying-Acts" (FSA) in politeness strategies as in Chinese and other Asian cultures (Shih 1986:22). It is thus not surprising to find comments like Goffman's view - "face" is a public, interpersonal image which is "on loan from society". It is a public property assigned to individuals by others upon their interactional behaviours.

When it comes to another source of interpretation, Ho (1976: 867) points out that the English terms "losing face" and "saving face" are translated from Mandarin miànzi and liân, which carry a range of meanings based upon the concept of "honour". Mao (1994: 454) argues that Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness fails to identify the original source of "face", and to consider its impact upon their formulation of face in their claim of universality. Watts and his colleagues challenge Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) notion of "face" on the ground that the term "face" is taken from the metaphorical expression "to lose face". In English there is no equivalent expression like "to gain face" or "to enhance face", but people can say "to save face" (Watts et al.1992:9).

2.4.3   POLITENESS PERCEIVED IN DIFFERENT WAYS

In this study, politeness is categorized as either norm-oriented politeness and strategic politeness. While the former is prescriptive and normative and performed as a norm in social interactions, the latter is manipulative and

strategic. However, both are perceived to be culturally and socially appropriate (Lee-Wong 2000:27).

Pizziconi (2009:695-96) suggests that there are two approaches to the study of "politeness" - pragmatic and social constructivist. In the "pragmatic approach", "politeness" is defined in conjunction with three rules: "don't impose"; "give opinions" and "make the other person feel good, be friendly"; whereas, in "Social constructivist approach", "politeness" is referred to as "a first-order politeness", based on "folk and commonsense notions", and "second-order politeness", being a "technical notion for use in scientific discourse". From a theoretical point of view, the study of politeness developed from the notion of face (Goffman 1967) and from the English folk terms "losing face" and "saving face".

From an Asian perspective, Pan (2000:7) suggests that there are two main approaches to the study of politeness: language-based and society-based. However, this present study focuses mainly on linguistic politeness rather than the society-based approach, despite the two being interrelated in terms of social context to be considered as a potential influence on linguistic politeness behaviour.

Allan and Burridge (2006:30) suggest that linguistic politeness behaviours depend on a number of factors, including relationship between the verbal interactants, the audience, the subject matter, speech situation; and in this sense, politeness is expressed in a way that pleases the hearer. The theories of linguistic politeness, which are generally based on the concept of face, are well documented in the relevant literature. See for example, Lakoff (1975); Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987); Leech (1983); Hill et al. (1986; Green (1989); Sifianou (1992); Holmes (1992); Thomas (1995); Nguyen (1995); Yule (1996); Gallois & Callan (1997) and Watts (2003).

In view of politeness as a universal concept, Pan (2000:7) claims that the language-based approach treats politeness as part of pragmatic knowledge and as the linguistic realization of pragmatic rules in communication. In this regard, Shih (1986:22-23) suggests in conjunction with the rules of politeness that apart from "Face-Threatening-Acts" (FTA), which is referred to by Brown and

Levinson (1978:65), some speech acts such as accepting a request enthusiastically or making an offer or a compliment may satisfy the hearer's "face wants". These kinds of speech acts can be referred to as "Face-Satisfying-Acts" (FSA). Accordingly, the rules of politeness can be summarized as: "(R1): Do FSAs sincerely; (R2): Don't do FTAs; (R3): If one has to do an FTA, minimize it with redressive actions".

From a similar point of view, Hill et al. (1986:349) point out that politeness is one of the constraints on human verbal interaction that considers others' feelings to establish certain levels of mutual comfort, and promote rapport between the participants in verbal communication. However, Sifianou (1992:29) emphasizes though that when we talk about politeness, what we have in mind is relative politeness based on what we think is appropriate in a particular speech situation. Sifianou (1992:49) further suggests that the concept of politeness is most probably universal, but what differs from culture to culture are its specific connotations and manifestations, and that different socio-cultural norms and values are reflected in all levels of the linguistic code.

More recently Haugh (2007: 299) points out that in Australian English, politeness seems to be associated with "(a) being friendly, approachable, kind and attentive, (b) respect and consideration, (c) appropriate use of language, and (d) being modest, indirect and humble". More precisely, Australian English speakers express politeness in verbal communication by showing formality in the use of appropriate titles, "please" and "thank you", formal greetings and closings. They also make friendly greetings, carefully choose appropriate words and use respectful endings in their verbal interactions.

Lakoff (1975:64) believes that linguistic politeness is developed by societies in order to reduce friction in verbal communication; but, the problem is that politeness rules are realised differently depending on the situation or culture in which they are applied. Therefore, what is considered polite may not be the same in all cultures or in all situations (Gallois & Callan 1997:68). With regard to the concept of culturally-dependent politeness, Lakoff (1975:65) establishes three politeness rules, which may be applied in different languages and cultures:

1. Formality: keep aloof or in distance
2. Deference: give options, be humble
3. Camaraderie: show sympathy, make H feel good.
   (Lakoff 1975:65).

Lakoff (1975:66-67) further explains that in Rule 1, the speaker keeps distance from both hearer and what he/she is saying, implying that there is no emotive content in the utterance. The first-person plural pronoun "we", titles (e.g. Mr., Dr., Sir) and impersonal pronoun "one" are used as mechanisms for Rule 1. Rule 1-performed behaviours might imply that the speaker's social status is superior to that of the hearer. Rule 2 politeness conveys an opposite suggestion that the superiority of the hearer is over the speaker, whether really or conventionally. Question intonation, tag questioning and hedges are practical devices for Rule 2 politeness. The purpose of Rule 3 is to make the hearer feel good by giving an impression that S likes H, is friendly with H and is interested in H. In practice, Rule 3 and Rules 1 can be combined with Rule 2; but Rule 3 and Rule 1 are mutually exclusive.

Márquez (2000:20) suggests that a polite verbal act has to be well fitted to a standard, which lies beyond the act itself but must be recognised by the interlocutors in a given speech event. This standard is based on collective values or norms that the interlocutors have acquired through their socialisation process, such as deference towards elderly people, the physical distance maintained between the interlocutors while they are talking in order to feel comfortable and so on.

In a study of politeness and pragmatic particles, Beeching (2002:36) points out that there are at least two common contextual conditions in which the speaker tends to be more polite in verbal interaction: (1) When H is socially superior to S or when H is considered socially important such as the boss, the vicar, the doctor, the president; (2) when H is a stranger, who is somehow socially distant. In the first context, the politeness strategy seems to focus on a "one-way-upwards speech" in nature - an inferior to a superior; while in the second context, the politeness strategy seems to be more commonly shared by

the interlocutors. This suggestion of common contextual conditions helps to explain the frequent use of politeness markers by the younger groups, especially in a culture where superiority can be determined by age.

From another perspective, Grundy (2000:146) suggests that there are two sociological variables that particularly determine language choice in the domain of politeness: power and imposition. The power variable represents the power-distance relationship of the interlocutors and the imposition variable is the extent to which a speaker imposes on or requires something of an hearer.   As Hsu (1980:175) points out, when S and H are relatively equal in power, social distance would be an important variable that determines the choice of strategies for linguistic politeness. For example:

(54)   Excuse me, would you by any chance have a match?

(55)   Got a match mate?

The utterances in (54) and (55) can be assessed in terms of social distances between the interlocutors. In Australian English, both utterances (54) and (55) denote a request for a match, but the social distance between the interlocutors reflected in (54) differs from that in (55). This suggests a difference in politeness strategy in relation to the degree of formality; that is, (54) is more formal than (55) in which, the form of in-group language - "mate" is used as a form of address (Sifianou 1992:73).

Despite the variation in the expression of politeness, there is universal agreement that politeness is not something one is born with, but something one has to learn and be socialised into (Watts 2003:9). This principle of politeness seems to be universal but, according to Watts (2003:12), dealing with the concept of politeness is still problematic because of ambiguity in the use of the terms "polite" and "politeness" in English.

The possible solution in dealing with politeness is that as Watts (2003:14) suggests, if we do not want to relinquish the claim for universality in the concept of politeness, our attention should be redirected away from the constrained English meanings and definitions of "polite" and "politeness". These

meanings should only be conceptualised within a cultural perspective, as they vary from one culture to another. In this way, universal linguistic politeness can be at least realised in accordance with Lakoff's (1973) rule (3) Make H feel good or be friendly. When an utterance successfully meets the criteria of this politeness rule, the universal characteristic of linguistic politeness is successfully conveyed by the utterance.

So far throughout this chapter, it has been widely accepted (e.g. Thomas 1983:104-105; Holmes 1995:6-8,19; Grundy 2000:146) that power relationships between interlocutors are a very important factor which determines the degree of politeness in verbal interactions. It is crucial to recognise what confers power in a speech situation with regard to age, gender, or social status.

Among the dimensions of cultural values, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005:43-44) measure power distance in 74 countries and regions, and according to the values in their Power Distance Index (PDI), Vietnam was ranked between 22 and 25 with a score of 70, while Australia ranked 62 with a score of 36. As mentioned earlier, the study by Hofstede and Hofstede undertaken in 2005, was based on data collected in the late 1960s (1991:ix) when Vietnam was assumed to belong to the pre-communist culture. The result of this study suggests that in Vietnam power distance is larger than in Australia. The concept of power distance is interpreted to mean that in smaller countries the dependence of subordinates on their superiors is limited, and interde-pendence between subordinates and superiors is preferred. In larger countries, in contrast, the dependence of subordinates on their superiors is substantial (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005:45). Sifianou (1992:42) suggests that in societies where people depend on each other more substantially, observation of certain politeness rules become less necessary than in societies where an individual's independence is highly valued. This suggestion can be interpreted to mean that people in a culture with greater power distance, such as Vietnam, are generally less concerned about the expression of politeness in their verbal interactions than those in a lower power distance culture such as Australia.

Based on concepts of personal autonomy, collective autonomy (Wong 2004:237-39) and power distance difference (Thompson, 1965:3-4; Pan 2000:146; Hofstede & Hofstede 2005:43-44), having been so far discussed, a comparison of linguistic politeness behaviours can be made to predict that people in an individualist culture are likely to be more linguistically polite than those who belong to a collectivist culture. Indeed, it is well documented that in an individualist culture of Anglo English speakers, people prefer not to impose on others or be imposed on by others in their verbal interactions (Wong 2004:235).

2.4.4   AUSTRALIAN POLITENESS AND CULTURAL VALUES

While Australian English is the national language of Australia (DIAC, 2007:32), Australian culture is associated with the Australian way of life and cultural values are considered officially to be characterised by "egalitarianism that embraces tolerance, mutual respect and compassion for those in need" (DIAC 2007:4). Similarly, Cousins (2005:4) suggests that the "Australian way of life" is reflected in "traditional virtues of egalitarianism, classlessness, a fair go, stoicism and mateship". It is also referred to as the "national ethos" whereby the lifestyle is typical for the whole Australian community or society; but by no means suggests that Australian culture is monogenetic. Australian culture is discussed here only on a macro level from a national point of view, as opposed to a micro perspective in the context of there being more than one hundred languages spoken in Australia, with continuing academic and political debates on multiculturalism (Clyne 1991:1-2).

In addition, Australia is considered to be "a very egalitarian society", in which all Australians see themselves much the same, at least in spirit (Western & Baxter 2007:216). Bessant and Watts (2001:278) also suggest that Australia is an egalitarian society, elaborated in the 'commonsense' view that "Australia is a classless society" with various groups being either very rich or very poor. This suggests there are still some inequalities resulting from intrinsic differences in intelligence, talent, skill and the preparedness to work effectively and hard. Furthermore, social differences and inequalities in Australia are redressed through a welfare state, funded by taxpayers, to ensure that everyone is more

or less equal. Encel (1987:143) points out the fact that "Australia is an egalitarian and largely classless society, one of the basic myths of Australian social history".

The concept of Australian egalitarianism is argued to have its origins in the early days of the white settlement, in which English convicts struggled against authority and the Australian environment, developing a form of brotherhood, or mateship among the early Australians (Poleg, 2004). Hofstede & Hofstede (2005:72-74) suggest that in an individualist culture, the concept of egalitarianism is held as a core principle in human relations. As previously mentioned, when someone is asked to do something in an individualist culture, the speaker often thinks the hearer has the right not to comply with the request. This conceptual attitude is reflected in the use of interrogative-directives instead of imperative forms. For example:

(56)   Polly, give Mrs Richards this, would you? (Anglo English)
         (Wong 2004:237)

The interrogative-directive form "would you" in (56) represents Anglo English norms used in everyday verbal interactions that reflect socially approved patterns of speech behaviour (Escandell-Vidal 2004:348). Further these norms do not create an imposition on the hearer (H) or hinder H's freedom of action (Brown & Levinson 1987:129). It is also performed in line with the most formal politeness rule, that is, "Don't impose" (Green 1989:142). This reflects Anglo Australian cultural values and it is an example of the cultural influences that may affect pragmatic norms of Vietnamese in Australia.

Gender appears to be an important cultural distinction in Australia. Pauwels (1987:10-11) highlights this from a linguistic perspective, and demonstrates how women tend to use standard linguistic forms more frequently than men. This can be interpreted to mean that Australian women are more polite in their verbal interactions due to powerlessness or their inferior position in society. Pauwels (1987:14) also points out that men "have a large range of derogatory terms available for denigrating women" and not the other

way around. However, recent social relations between men and women show that this trend is changing.

Holmes (1992: 255) suggests that people use their language in a way that converges towards the speech of their audiences, or of the person they are talking to. This speech behaviour is usually performed as a politeness strategy, regarding different aspects of speech behaviour including the choice of pragmatic particles, such as sort of, you know and you see, to provide a pleasantly acceptable speech pattern to the hearer. However, difference in speech behaviour reflects the underlying cultural values embedded in language that users are often unaware of.

In view of pragmatic variation, in most English-speaking families, some kinship terms, such as Dad, Nan, or Grandpa, are used for lineal kin; and for lateral kin, a title like Auntie plus a given name (e.g. Auntie Jemima) are used, and this reflects the social norms in Western societies (Allan & Burridge, 1991: 46). Brown and Levinson (1987:182) suggest that probably all languages encode deference in generalised forms of address for strangers. These forms of address may be borrowed from kinship terms in Tamil and Tzeltal such as "father'", "mother'", "elder brother".

Australian forms of address can be classified in terms of name, title and nominal group. Thus naming and forms of address arguably reflect aspects of Australian cultural values. According to Poynton (1989:57-58) Australians use either personal names (Maria, Barry), family names (Robinson, Nguyen, O'Farrell) or a combination of both (Maria Rontidis or Barry Robinson) as forms of address, depending on the context in which the verbal interaction occurs.

Poynton (1989:62-66) further points out that in Australian English, personal names can be used in contracted or truncated forms in addressing such as, for example, Brad(ley), Su(san), Cath(erine), Phil(ip). However, such usage is culturally determined by various factors including gender, class, age, power and social distance. For example, Mummy and Daddy as diminutive forms of names are used by a child. In relation to gender difference, females tend to use nicknames less frequently than males, but instead use endearments such as love, dear, sweetheart. Males have a lexical range which explicitly

denigrates women, but generally these are not used by women to denigrate men.

In recent years the Australian Government has become more explicit about its expectation of acceptable behaviour for new immigrants, reflecting the importance placed on this in the value system. DIAC (2007:28-29) sets out a range of "polite behaviours" for new migrants. It includes for example, "please" and "thank you" when people buy goods or use services provided by another. It is considered linguistically polite behaviour to say "yes please", or just "please" in answering a question such as "Would you like a cup of coffee?"; but "no, thank you" when the offer was declined. When receiving something, it is also a linguistically polite behaviour to thank the person by saying "thank you". In this case, what has been received may be a gift or anything merely being passed over by another person. From another perspective, Australians often say, "excuse me" to get attention from another or other person(s) and "sorry" if they accidentally touch someone. They also say "excuse me" or "pardon me" if they belch in public or in someone's private home. This signifies politeness strategies which are determined by Australian cultural values including the concepts of "mateship" and "a fair go" (DIAC 2007:31-32). These linguistic symbols of cultural values have historically evolved from tough battles for survival by Australia's early settlers against a strange, harsh or hostile environment.

The Australian tradition of "mateship", in which people provide help to others, especially those in difficulty, is also a government objective (DIAC 2007:7). In conjunction with the attempt to include the concept of mateship in the Draft Constitutional Preamble, on 13 September 1998, Prime Minister John Howard expressed the view that mateship is part of the Australian culture including the qualities of classlessness and fairness that distinguish Australians from Americans, Europeans, Englishmen and Asians[1]. In Australia a mate is a friend but can also be a spouse, partner, brother, sister, daughter or son. A mate can also be a total stranger, which reflects a strong tradition of voluntary community service. Accordingly, some expressions can be considered as

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1 Online source: www.australianbeers.com/culture/mateship.htm

politeness markers in terms of "In-group language" (Brown & Levinson 1987:110-111) in Australian English, for example, "Go for your life" meaning something like "yes, go ahead"; "G"day" meaning "Hello, how are you?"; "fair go" suggesting equitable treatment in a sense that what someone achieves should be resulted from his/her talents, work and effort, rather than a birthright, or favouritism (DIAC 2007:32). The word "G'day" (DIAC 2007:32) is most often used between friends, practically assigned as "mates" by Australians. This is the basis for the most commonly used terms in Australian's everyday language. "G'day mate!" is a popular casual greeting, particularly between individuals who have already established a cordial acquaintance. It means "Hello friend". It is also commonly used when the speaker does not recall the hearer's name, for instance, those who have met only a few times. However, visitors using the greeting "G'day mate!" may be at risk of being perceived as making fun.

"How are you?" (Clyne 1991:190), another way of saying "Hi", does not require an answer. It is just another form of greeting in Australian everyday language. However, a response to this greeting is often: "I'm fine, thank you, and you?" as an expression of politeness from H's point of view.

As Wong (2004:239) suggests, Australian cultural values have been adapted to Australia's unique setting, shaped and modernised through the settlement in Australia of millions of people from all over the world. Today, Australian culture signifies the Australian way of life with its unique qualities and values that distinguish Australia from other countries, especially in linguistic behaviours and politeness strategies. Australian identity is clearly expressed in a way of speaking that makes Australian English different from American English or British English, let alone the non-native English attached to other cultures such as Malaysian, Chinese, Japanese and Arabic.

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This chapter has focussed on issues related to language contact, language variation, pragmatics and linguistic politeness. The reviewed literature provides a theoretical framework from which my research will be built drawing on service encounter data from the two national contexts, Vietnam and Australia. What

research to date has highlighted is that language contact impacts on language usage, but that there is comparatively little known about the nature and extent of such impact, particularly at the pragmatic level in the expression of politeness. In addition, it is evident that the expression of politeness is strongly influenced by cultural values, but these values are dynamic and how they impact in different contexts, such as those of the Vietnamese language in a diaspora, such as in Australia, and the evolving indigenous Vietnamese language context in Vietnam, is little researched. My research aims to contribute to this gap in knowledge and, thus, to enhance understandings about language contact and cultural influences in the expression of politeness in Vietnamese by its native speakers across these two national contexts.

In the next chapter the discussion will specifically focus on features of Vietnamese language and culture and how these impact on how politeness can be and is expressed.

Chapter 3

VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND POLITENESS

This chapter provides a further literature review on Vietnamese language, culture and concepts of politeness. Despite the distinctive aspects of language, culture and politeness, in this chapter, a discussion of one may involve the other, especially in culture and language relations as they are intrinsically related (Saville-Troike 1982:34).

3.1 THE VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE

The Vietnamese language consists of three main regional dialects – Northern, Central and Southern – with some clear phonetic differences. These differences however do not prevent Vietnamese people from understanding one another, though they can identify the geographical area from which the speaker originates (Huynh 1987:25). Despite the inevitable involvement with all three dialects, this research is designed to focus on the Southern dialect. The reason for this is primarily because the researcher was born in the South and is therefore more familiar with southern environments. In addition, the major institutions of the Saigon pre-communist regime were based on the Southern dialect and were subsequently abandoned with the mass exodus of people post the Vietnam War (Lewins & Ly 1985:10). As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1 (1.1.2), overwhelmingly, Vietnamese migrants to Australia have come from the South. They are defined as Australian Vietnamese (AV), from whom data was partly collected and recorded for this study.

Spoken Vietnamese is a language which has a long and rich history, and it is believed to have existed since the fourth century BC. Its primary linguistic affiliation has remained an issue of debates, associated with the not as yet fully resolved question of whether the Vietnamese language belongs to (1) the Austronesian group of languages including Malay and various dialects of South China, (2) the East-west Austroasiatic group of Mon-Khmer languages, or (3) the Sino-Tibetan family, including Thai (Marr 1981:139). Clark (1978:3) suggests that the Vietnamese language belongs to the Austro-Asiatic language

family, closely related to Muong, a language spoken in the mountain areas of North Vietnam. This position is also supported by the Summer Institute of Linguistics' Ethnologue database.[1] Diffloth's (1992:126-27) view also supports this position, but is more specific, pointing out that Vietnamese is a member of a North-Eastern subdivision of the Mon-Khmer family, including several languages within the Vietic branch, such as Mường, Thavưng, Maleng, and Tum. This view has been argued primarily drawing on phonological and lexical features. Other linguists argue that Vietnamese may also belong either to Sino-Tibetan or to the Thai language family (Shum 1965:1-2). However, and in contrast to all the above, Do (1994:169-70) suggests that there is historical evidence showing that the Vietnamese people have had their own language since the early days, with the convergence of Melanesian ethnics from the South (still living in the Northern region of New Guinea today among the Polynesian islands and other islands scattered in the Pacific Ocean) and the Mongoloids from the North.

In a study on community languages in the late 1980s (Clyne 1991:44), there were 65,856 Vietnamese speakers in Australia who used their mother tongue. However, the number of Vietnamese speakers in Australia had almost tripled by the 2006 Census as mentioned in Chapter 1. Clyne (1991:61) concludes that Vietnamese speakers in Australia have the highest rate of native language maintenance when compared to other speakers of community languages other than English (CLOTE) in Australia. According to the 2001 Census, Vietnamese was among the five most popular community languages in Australia's multicultural society.

The type of native language used by Vietnamese speakers in Australia is not necessarily the same as that currently used by Vietnamese speakers in Vietnam. The Vietnamese used in Vietnam has undergone changes with Communist influence, especially post the Vietnam War in April 1975 (see Chapter 1). The Vietnamese spoken in Australia (AV) may also differ from that spoken in Vietnam (VV) over three decades ago, as it may have been influenced by Anglo Australian cultural values.

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1   http://www.ethnologue.com

In view of the variation in usage of Vietnamese, various studies have attempted to investigate how Vietnamese is spoken in different situations. Some works have looked at pragmatic problems that Vietnamese speakers faced with verbal communication because their speech was influenced by their cultural background in contact with Australian cultural environments. For example, Jamieson (1993:17) finds that unlike most Western children, those children growing up in traditional Vietnamese families learned dependence and nurturance, not independence. They learned the importance of hierarchy, not equality. They learned the rewards of submission to seniors, not assertiveness. All these are expected to have some linguistic bearing in the expression of politeness in their spoken Vietnamese. Meanwhile, these linguistic habits may maintain aspects of cultural values stemming from the influence of Confucianism, which has contributed some unique features to Vietnamese language and linguistic expression.

3.1.1 COMPLEXITIES IN VIETNAMESE PERSON REFERENCE SYSTEM

The Vietnamese person reference system will be analysed and discussed in relation to possible interlocutors in a speech event that may include the speaker (S), addressee or hearer (H) and third-person referent, with S and H being normally involved in the utterance. In relation to these potential participants in a given speech situation, discussions on person reference in Vietnamese necessarily involve issues that relate to forms of address. This is because a person reference and a form of address are essentially interrelated in speech. For example:

(1) *Chị   lựa   áo   dây   hôn?*
     elder sister choose jacket stripe   Q.
      "Do you like the jacket with stripes?"

In this example, *chị* (elder sister) is a person reference referring to a female H; however, this person reference can also be used as a form of address using the kinship term *chị* meaning elder sister in Vietnamese.

In this regard, we will see that the Vietnamese language has different facilities to express politeness in relation to all three dimensions of person reference (S, H, and third party) in a speech event. In contrast, some European languages such as Italian, French, Spanish, German, have two singular pronouns for H, originally developed from the Latin *tu* and *vos*, which are later referred to as "T" and "V" (T/V forms) to indicate two types of reference: familiar and polite. This distinction is said to be applicable in many European languages (Brown & Gilman 1972:252-54), but it has been lost in English, where personal pronouns seem to be the main mechanism employed in the reference system (Clyne 2003:218).

By contrast, the person reference system in Vietnamese should be analysed and discussed in two discrete categories: kinship related and non-kinship related.

3.1.2   KINSHIP-RELATED PERSON REFERENCE IN VIETNAMESE

In Vietnamese culture, kinship is quite an extensive network of relationships and serves as a very important framework for social relations in verbal communication (Haines 2006:31-33).

Indeed, in everyday practices, person references in Vietnamese are determined by the degree of solidarity or intimacy in a given context or speech situation. However, it is often unclear as to which lexical form is appropriate to denote the correct degree of solidarity or intimacy determined by the speaker's awareness of the Confucian name rectification doctrine (Luong 1990:38). According to this doctrine, role references such as king, father and child must be denoted in relation to the social role of the verbal interactants and everyone is expected to speak in a proper way to maintain the role one holds (Luong 1988:241; 1990:6; Ho 1996: 205).

In view of the name rectification, each individual in the society has more than one role to play. For example, a person can be a man, a teacher, a student, a manager, a father, a son, or a worker. In verbal interactions, these roles are referred to by using the kinship terms listed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Vietnamese kinship terms

	Kinship terms	Literal references
Consanguineous		
1	*anh*	elder brother
2	*chị*	elder sister
3	*em*	younger sibling
4	*ba, bố, cha, tía*	father, male parent
5	*mẹ, má*	mother, female parent
6	*con*	child (son or daughter)
7	*cháu*	grandchild, nephew, niece
8	*bác*	uncle, father's elder brother/sister (senior referent)
9	*ông bác*	a parent's bác
10	*chú**	uncle, father's younger brother (junior uncle)
11	*ông chú*	father's chú
12	*cô**	auntie, father's sister (either senior or junior)
13	*bà cô*	father's cô
14	*ông nội*	paternal grandfather
Affinal		
15	*anh rể*	elder sister's huband
16	*chị dâu*	elder brother's wife
17	*em rể*	younger sister's husband
18	*em dâu*	younger sister's wife
19	*ba vợ/chồng*	father in-law
20	*mẹ vợ/chồng*	mother in-law
21	*con rể*	son in-law
22	*con dâu*	daughter in-law
23	*cháu rể*	nephew in-law
24	*cháu dâu*	niece in-law
25	*thím*	wife of chú
26	*bà bác*	wife of ông bác
27	*bà thím*	wife of ông chú
28	*cậu*	uncle, mother's brother (either younger or older)
29	*mợ*	wife of cậu
30	*ông cậu*	mother's cậu
31	*bà mợ*	wife of ông cậu
32	*dượng*	husband of cô or dì
33	*ông dượng*	husband of bà cô or bà dì
34	*dì*	auntie, mother's sister (either younger or elder)
35	*bà dì*	mother's *dì*
36	*bà nội*	paternal grandmother
37	*ông ngoại*	maternal grandfather
38	*bà ngoại*	maternal grandmother

(Developed from Nguyen, 1995:106-107 and Luong,1990:173-175)
* Pragmatic meaning can be younger brother or younger sister respectively

All kinship terms in Vietnamese can be used for person references as address terms including first-person singular referent (1PSR), second-person

singular referent (2PSR) and third-person singular referent (3PSR) (Luong 1988:241; Pham 2002:285). Chapais et al. (2004:4) suggest that kinship is one of the important factors structuring social relationships, but reflects the complexities in Vietnamese kinship relations (Haines 2006:6).

In a study of language use, Allan and Burridge (1991: 46) claim that kinship terms are borrowed from kin titles, which are used in most English-speaking families. For example, in English, speakers use the terms dad, nan, or grandpa for lineal kin; and auntie, or kin title plus given name.

In Vietnamese, lateral kin are clearly distinguished by means of kinship terms, for either maternal or paternal kin. Despite this distinction, Vietnamese kinship is not limited to the two types of kinship - consanguineous and affinal kinship, that Rodseth and Wrangham (2004: 390-94) pointed out in their discussions on human kinship. Consanguineous kinship denotes people descended from the same ancestor, while affinal kinship relates to or results from marriage that can also be expressed by a modifier "in-law" in English, such as mother in-law, father in-law, brother in-law, etc. Associated with affinal kinship, there are maternal and paternal kinship terms in Vietnamese kin system. For example, *cậu* (maternal uncle) and *chú* (paternal uncle). These represent the maternal and paternal kins in Vietnamese that extend to members of other generations addressed and referred to by the usage of various kinship terms listed earlier in Table 3.1.

For the sake of politeness in verbal interactions, Vietnamese kinship terms are widely used beyond the kin system to members of the community (Dixon 1980: 107). Indeed, Vietnamese kinship terms such as "uncle", "auntie", and "grandpa" are not only used within the family, but frequently extended and used to address a person who is considered or ranked as an equivalent member of the speaker's family. This extended usage of kinship terms in Vietnamese could easily be misinterpreted by a Westerner as an uncomfortable over-friendly act, especially when the hearer is not a very close friend of the speaker's family (Le 1986:84).

In a study on Vietnamese kinship, Haines (2006:19) suggests that Vietnamese kinship is ranked by seniority, in relation to generation and gender,

and may be expressed by appropriate kinship address terms. In this regard, from a ranking point of view, kinship terms in Vietnamese can be classified as being either junior or senior. For example, younger elder brother (*em*) is a junior kinship term, while elder brother (*anh*) is a senior kinship term. According to Haines (2006:38), Vietnamese kinship terms are used for pronominal reference, not only among the family members, but also among those who are not kin. Therefore, to engage in conversation with non-kin, initially one needs to find a set of appropriate kinship terms that can be used for the references "I" and "you", which are not straightforward in Vietnamese.

According to Buu (1986:103) kinship terms are used extensively as forms of address because the Vietnamese people are rarely emotionally neutral in communication. Kinship terms are widely used by Vietnamese people in their daily interactions, not only with family members but also with friends and strangers. The choice of kinship terms in Vietnamese is determined not only by various social factors related to S and H, such as age, gender, and social status, but also by intimacy and acquaintance. Therefore, a speaker must first know where his/her social position is, relative to the hearer, with regard to those determinants in order to choose an appropriate kinship term for addressing. With relative age and gender one can immediately judge the differential positions between S and H. The judgement of someone's age, social status and level of intimacy and acquaintance between S and H, however, can face potential difficulty because it would depend on the interpersonal relationship between S and H, in terms of whether they know each other well, or they are strangers. If they are strangers, the speaker usually relies on gender and judgement of H's age to choose an appropriate kinship term for addressing on first contact. In subsequent contacts with the same hearer, an adjustment can be made in accordance with the determinants that S may have obtained from the first contact through social acquaintance and established talks.

As a preliminary test on the choice of kinship terms, a pilot group discussion among Vietnamese native speakers was organised in June 2003 in Melbourne under the instruction of the researcher. This was a role-play, focussing on the topic of "kinship terms and forms of person reference used in

address". There were 18 Vietnamese speaking students with an age range between 25 and 60, with 10 females and 8 males. The discussion began with an elicitation of the usage of kinship terms and person reference forms addressing a close friend in different social contexts. The main variables involved in this group discussion were limited to age and gender. The students were assigned in male/female pairs to discuss "how do you address your very close friend?" The discussion was carried out in Vietnamese (the participant's native language) in the classroom. In this context, participants were grouped in three age ranges (a, b, c) and in three sex groups (1, 2, 3 in each age group) as follows:

(a)   Adolescent speakers (1) male vs. male; (2) female vs. female; (3) male vs. female;

(b)   Middle-age speakers (1) male vs. male; (2) female vs. female; (3) male vs. female; and

(c)   Speakers aged 60 or over: (1) male vs. male; (2) female vs. female; (3) male vs. female.

After discussion in pairs for about 15 minutes, the group was brought together for feedback collectively. Consensus outcomes were reported as follows:

In the (a) scenarios, the Vietnamese person reference forms *tao/mẫy* (I/you) were used as the forms of address regardless of difference in sex. In the (b) scenarios, the same person reference forms *tao/mẫy* were used only when the speaker and hearer were of the same sex, with some exceptions. In (b2), female vs. female, the kinship terms *anh/chị* (elder brother/elder sister) were occasionally used. In (b3), male vs. female, the kinship terms *anh/chị* were always used. In the (c) scenarios: the person reference forms *tao/mẫy* (I/you) were still used by male speakers in addressing each other, but in (c2), female vs. female and (c3), male vs. female, the kinship terms *anh/chị* (elder brother/elder sister) were always used. It appears that younger speakers and

male speakers of all ages, when speaking to another male speaker, used more person reference *tao/mầy* than their female counterparts. The feedback obtained from this role-play suggests the importance of kinship address terms as part of the person reference system in Vietnamese everyday language. However, the validity of this suggestion will be assessed with the corpus of data appropriately recorded in this research. This will be presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

The form of address in Vietnamese varies with the hierarchy in social status, personal relationships, the degree of intimacy or solidarity, and the local custom. Apart from the T/V form in many European languages (Brown & Gilman 1972:157) as discussed in Chapter 2, Vietnamese people have many lexical forms for person references, including first-person reference (1PSR), second-person reference (2PSR) and third-person reference (3PSR), which mainly depend on who the speaker is and who is addressed or referred to (Do, 1994:49).

From a pragmatic point of view, for 1PSR and 2PSR, the Vietnamese language has many words for "I" and "you", and the choice of such words depends a great deal on social factors. A young child, when speaking to an old lady, uses a different form for the concept of "I" and the old lady uses a different "I" in talking to the child (Le 1986:85). For example, the child may use the word *cháu* (grandchild), while the old lady may use the word *cô* (auntie) for self-reference "I", referring to either a younger or elder sister of H's father. In this context, gender, age (or generation), social distance and the degree of solidarity reflected in the relationship between S and H are the determinants in the choice of kinship terms or forms of address.

According to Luong (1990:2), "*I*" and "*you*" in English have dozens of corresponding linguistic forms in Vietnamese. For example, kinship term *cháu* can be used to refer to either "grandchild", "nephew" or "niece" in Vietnamese. In use, kinship term *cháu* is not limited to the reference to either granddaughter or grandson in the kin system. From a grammatical point of view, it can serve as a 1PSR or 2PSR, equivalent to the English *I* and *you*; but from a pragmatic point of view, it can be a referent as a daughter or son of the

speaker's children, brothers, sisters or even friends. In this case, the usage of kinship terms in Vietnamese is extended beyond the kin system. The following examples demonstrate the differences in use of kinship term *cháu*, which is translated as "grandchild" in the gloss but may have a non-kin referent pragmatically. This means the referents are not necessarily kinship related to the speaker, regardless of English meaning of the literal gloss:

     Used as a 1PSR:

(2)   *Thưa bà,   cháu   mới đi chợ   về   rồi.*
       Hon. Grandmother, grandchild [1PSR] just go market return already
       "Grandmother, I have just returned from shopping".

     Used as a 2PSR:
An old lady addresses a young child, saying:

(3)   *Cháu   có   mua cho bà   cái túi xách tay hay không?*
       Grandchild [2PSR] have   buy for grandmother CLA handbag or Q
       "Have you bought the handbag for me?"

In another event related to the same speaker in (3), when a neighbour young boy considered in the same age range as the speaker's grandchild, comes looking for her grandchild, Tung, she says:

(4)   *Cháu   tới   chơi với thằng Tùng đó   hả?*
       Grandchild [2PSR] come play with CLA Tung PRT   Q.
       "You are coming to play with Tung, aren't you?".

     In a gender-specific usage as a 3PSR, the speaker reports:

(5)   *Cháu gái   của tôi đã   đi chợ   về   rồi.*
       Grand-daughter [3PSR] my   PAST go market return already
       "My grand-daughter has already returned from the market"
       (Luong 1990:36).

In practice, in addition, Vietnamese native speakers use *cháu* to refer to a young person who is considered equivalent to either their niece or a nephew in age. This is, however, not gender-specific and neither kinship-related, from a pragmatic perspective. In case of being gender-specific and kinship-related, for 3PSR, further information on gender and kinship is required in the utterance. For example, in utterance (6), the additional information on the 3PSR has been added with "paternal" to specify the kinship relation to the speaker:

(6) **Cháu nội gái**   *của tôi đã   đi chợ   về   rồi.*

Paternal grand daughter [3PSR] my   PAST go market return already

"My paternal grand-daughter has already returned from the market"

Therefore, "*cháu gái*" (grand-daughter) in (5) is not necessarily a kinship-related reference, despite its kinship-related reference in the English gloss, which can be replaced with "niece" (instead of grand-daughter). This sounds confusing simply because the referent of "niece" in Vietnamese is not the same as in English. It is not always a daughter of the speaker's brothers or sisters but can be a daughter of the speaker's friend as well.

The pragmatic reference of *cháu* (and other Vietnamese kinship terms) is determined by whether it is intended to be specific or non-specific, and by other factors, including the context of utterance and the speaker's emotional status.

In a close, affectionate situation, for example, kinship term *cháu* (grandchild) can be substituted by another kinship term *con* (child) in addressing or in self-reference. Therefore, it is not wrong in Vietnamese to substitute *cháu* (grandchild) in example (3) by *con* (child) as appeared in the following question:

(7)   **Con**   *có   mua cho bà   cái túi xách tay hay không?*

Child [2PSR] have buy for grandmother CLA   handbag or   Q

"Have you bought the handbag for me?"

In fact, *cháu* (grandchild) in (3) and *con* (child) in (6) are among a few kinship terms in Vietnamese that are interchangeable and can be applied to either sex as 1PSR and 2PSR, depending on the context and especially the level of intimacy that S wants to express. In a sense, the level of intimacy can be realised in terms of social distance, that is, the closer in social distance, the higher the level of intimacy. Accordingly, the two possible answers to the question in (3) that appear in (7) and (8) below can be explained, in that the answer in (8) would represent a higher level of intimacy than (7). This interpretation is based on the relative kinship distance: *con* is closer than *cháu* from a Vietnamese cultural point of view.

(8) *Dạ   cháu   có   mua cho bà   cái xách tay   rồi.*
     Hon. grandchild [1PSR] have buy for grandmother CLA handbag already
     "Yes, I have bought the handbag for you already"

(9) *Dạ   con   có   mua cho bà   cái xách tay   rồi.*
     Hon. child [1PSR] have buy for grandmother CLA handbag already
     "Yes, I have bought the handbag for you already"

In Vietnamese, the kinship terms *con* and *cháu* are employed by a junior or an inferior as self-reference (S), to convey politeness when addressing a senior or superior. In this case, both kinship terms can be regarded as politeness markers.

Although there is no clear boundary in the measurement of politeness from a pragmatic point of view, Vietnamese speakers would prefer to use *con* (child) rather than *cháu* (grandchild) if they were serious about linguistic politeness behaviours, because the use of *cháu* encodes greater distance than *con.* This perception of kinship distance perhaps derives from the kinship hierarchy in Vietnamese culture.

In terms of biological relationships, the kinship title *con* links with parent-child relationship, while *cháu* remains outside the parent-child relationship. Therefore, *con* is more intimate or closer than *cháu* in Vietnamese kinship

hierarchy. When *con* is used for self-reference in addressing a senior or superior, S should have established a relationship with H, although nothing stops S from using *cháu* for self-reference in a first meeting with the hearer. However, the usage of these kinship terms does not encode a clear difference in linguistic politeness behaviour. That is, it is difficult to differentiate the level of politeness between them when addressing a senior or superior (H). In a sense, this does not support the assumption that linguistic politeness behaviours are determined by social distance. That is, the further the social distance, the more polite S will encode his/her utterance (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989:3; Holmes 1995:13-14; Beeching 2002:36). However, it seems true in Vietnamese culture (and perhaps in many other cultures) that the further the social distance, the more formal the speech produced by S. Therefore *cháu* is used in a more formal situation and *con* is less formal.

Other kinship terms in Vietnamese are: *em* (younger-sibling), and *bác* (elder uncle). They are commonly used by Vietnamese speakers in everyday language. For example:

(10) *Em*   *làm   lương   đở   hông?*
      younger-sibling [2PSR]   work   salary   fair   Q.
       "Do you get a fair earning for the work?"

(11) *Mà* **bác**   *mua ở Úc   nẫy hay ở đâu?*
      but elder uncle [2PSR] buy in Australia here or elsewhere
      "But have you bought it in Australia or elsewhere?"

The utterance in example (10) represents an exchange between an older speaker and a younger hearer, while in (11) the generational difference between S and H is indicated by the kinship term *bác* (elder-uncle) as a superior in Vietnamese. The kinship terms in both (10) *em* (younger-sibling) and (11) *bác* (elder-uncle) are used for 2PSR just like "you" in English. However, in Vietnamese self-reference (1PSR) can be expressed by different kinship address terms, depending on the context of the utterance. For example:

(12) *Hông thì*   **em**   *mua à nghen.*
      No   then   younger-sibling [1PSR] buy   PRT
      "If not, then I"ll buy it, OK?" (v447)
A possible answer to question in (8) can be:

(13) **Bác**   *mua ở Úc.*
      elder-uncle [1PSR]   buy in Australia
      "I bought it in Australia"

We can see that the self-reference (1PSR) in (12) is *em* (younger-sibling) and *bác* (elder-uncle) in (13).

All 38 kinship terms listed in Table 3.1 reflect gender; but gender is not the only criterion which determines the choice of kinship terms in Vietnamese, as it depends on several factors involved in a given speech event. For example, it may also depend on context, age and role.

All kinship terms listed in Table 3.1 and generic terms such as *tao/mày* (I/you, the equivalent to mate, pale, honey, etc.) in Vietnamese can be treated as "in-group identity markers", or as politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson 1987:107).

The kinship system in Vietnamese culture reflects the way of life, in which treating outsiders as family members is highly valued among Vietnamese people, probably because "Vietnamese society is inherently family-based" (Haines 2006:30). Accordingly, the core value of Vietnamese is the family, which, as in other Southeast Asian cultures, is considered the basic unit of society (Wong 2004:239). This is why, in a study on Vietnamese kinship, Haines (2006:9-10) suggests that the core value of the Vietnamese family helps people "live in an organized and cultural way" in harmony, affection and responsibility shared among family members, relatives and co-villagers.

Adding to the complexity of the Vietnamese kinship system, there are some coincidences with forms of personal title and kinship terms that need to be distinguished. For example, titles such as Miss, Mrs. and Mr. have nothing to do with auntie, grandmother and grandfather respectively, despite that the same lexical structure and pronunciation. In Vietnamese, Miss is *cô* as a

personal title but "auntie" is a kinship term, which has the same lexical structure and pronunciation (*cô*) in Vietnamese. Mrs. is *bà* as a personal title but "grandmother" is a kinship term. Finally, Mr. is *ông* as a personal title but "grandfather" is a kinship term. From a pragmatic perspective, the difference between these terms and titles is related to the way in which they are used: kinship terms are used in an in-group language whereas titles are used in the context where the social distance between S and H is emphasised.

Most kinship terms in Vietnamese can indicate the close relationship among Vietnamese people, but the choice of term very much depends on the context, or speech situation. For this reason, some kinship terms are more commonly used than others.

In Vietnamese, there are at least two function words, which can be used as attributives or plural markers (PL) to encode more than one person, referred to by kinship terms: *chúng* and *các.* For example, if a 1PSR includes more than one person, a function word can be added to a kinship terms:

(14)   *Dạ*   *chúng   cháu*   *về*   *rồi.*
       Yes [HON]   PL   1PSR   return   already.
       "Yes, we have already returned"

In (14) the compound *chúng cháu* (we/us) refers to more than one person, so the plural marker *chúng* is used for the 1PSR *cháu.* This plural marker can also be used with most other person reference terms listed in Table 3.2, including *tao* (rare), *tôi, mình, ta, mầy, bây* and *nó.* The other plural maker *các* is used restrictively compared to 2PSR (15) and can never be used in 1PSR, as Cooke (1968:136) mistakenly refers to. The following utterance is an example that can be found in the everyday language of Vietnamese native speakers.

(15)   *Các   anh*   *đi vui vẻ*   *nghen.*
       PL   2PSR   go happy   PRT.
       "Enjoy your trip"

The Vietnamese plural marker *chúng* can be used with a 1PSR to form a plural expression, such as *chúng tôi, chúng mình* (exclusive we/us), *chúng ta* (inclusive we/us). It can also be used with 3PSR such as *chúng nó* (they/them). The second plural marker *các* is used with a 2PSR for a plural expression. For example, *các anh* (elder-brothers), *các chị* (elder-sisters), *các em* (elder-siblings), *các chú* (younger paternal uncles).

In sum, all the kinship terms listed in Table 3.1 can be used for either first, second or third person references to meet the traditional requirement for expression of politeness. Of these kinship terms, one is used more frequently than another depending on context of utterance and on traditions and norms of speech in Vietnamese culture. Vietnamese kinship terms in are widely used in non-kinship related references for the expression of politeness; and they are expected to be appropriately used in addressing. Therefore, a wrong usage or non-use of kinship terms in an utterance may be considered impolite or even rude in Vietnamese culture.

Along with the kinship related person reference discussed so far, there is another important system of reference in Vietnamese; that is, the non-kinship related person reference.

3.1.3 NON-KINSHIP-RELATED PERSON REFERENCE IN VIETNAMESE

The non-kinship related person reference in Vietnamese includes references for S, H, and third party as represented by a set of lexical forms such as common nouns, proper nouns and personal pronouns.

From a pragmatic point of view, a form of person reference does not guarantee what the speaker refers to in all speech situations, simply because what the speaker means is what is in his/her mind at the time; therefore it may not be necessarily the same for everyone (Wierzbicka 1991:70). It could create conflicts or chaos in human relations if a speaker spoke in a way that was not appropriate for the role he or she played at the moment of speaking.

In the discussion of non-kinship related person references, at least two issues are involved, lexical form and intended meaning, which is what the speaker means in an utterance and may be assigned as a pragmatic meaning.

For the lexical form, the current discussion is based on the forms of person reference that are used in the Vietnamese vernacular, excluding forms of register used especially in either religious or political groups. For example, kin type nouns such as *đồng chí* (comrade) (Cooke 1968:124-25), used among members of the Vietnamese Communist Party only, and not generally used among ordinary Vietnamese people.

In this study, non-kinship related person references are listed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Non-kinship related person reference terms in Vietnamese

1PSR	2PSR	3PSR
tao (I/me)	mầy (you),	*nó (he/him/she/her)*
	*bây** (you)	*thằng* (he/him)
tui (I/me)	*various*	*hắn (he/him)*
tôi (I/me)	various	*bọn** (they/them/gang)
mình (I/me)	*mình* (you)	*tụi, lũ** (they/them/gang)
	bồ (you)	*họ** (they/them)
ta (I/me)	*mình* (you)	*người* (respectful he/she)
proper name	proper name	
qua (I/me)	*various*	

* Can be used as a plural person referent (PLR)
PSR = person singular referent

The usage of these non-kinship person reference terms varies with many factors, but discourse context is the most important one. According to Leech (1983:13), discourse context may include various aspects of the physical or social setting of an utterance. It is generally known as background knowledge and assumed to be shared between S and H that contributes to H's interpretation of what it means by a given utterance. Therefore, those who have the relevant background knowledge can best interpret the pragmatic meaning of person reference in a given utterance.

With regard to the discourse context discussed above, each term of person reference listed in Table 3.2 will be discussed in connection with how it is used. For example:

(16)   *Tao đã mua cái mũ   cho **mầy**   hôm qua   rồi.*
         1PSR past buy CL. hat   give 2PSR   day   past   already
         "I already bought the hat for you yesterday" (Luong, 1990:12).

The use of non-kinship markers for 1PSR, tao (I/me), and for 2PSR, mầy (you) as in (16), indicates either (a) S has a higher status than H, (b) S and H have an equal status, or (c) S and H have a close friendship (i.e. an in-group member). The two forms of person reference, tao (I/me) and mầy (you), substitute a type of in-group language possibly equivalent to what is called "mate" in Australian English. For example:

(17)   *Tao đặt   lên bàn thờ cho **mầy**   một ly   rượu.*
        1PSR place on altar   for 2PSR   one glass   alcohol
        "I left the glass of alcohol for you on the altar"
        (Bang Giang, 1997: 62).

The terms *tao* (I/me) and *mầy (*you) in (16) and (17) above reflect a degree of closeness, solidarity or intimacy between S and H. This referential meaning is realised or understood by Vietnamese native speakers in the same way as Australian native speakers, with a fairly sophisticated grasp of speech style when addressing their friends, who would understand "G'day mate" (Gallois & Callan 1997:11). Unfortunately, there is no equivalent of *mầy* (you) in English as a "polite" form corresponding to the T-form. In Vietnamese the person reference forms *tao* (I/me) and *mầy* (you) serve polite reference functioning as an in-group language employed in casual or informal situations. In this case, the use of *tao/mầy* (I/me/you) reflects a sense of equality, both in age and status, regardless of some difference in the verbal interactants' real life. This means the strategy of addressing each other by the use of *tao/mầy* (I/me/you) to enhance solidarity can work perfectly, even if one participant is a couple of years older than the other, or one may have a higher status than the other, because when S and H are close friends, they tend to put all the factors of age and status aside when talking to each other. The use of *tao/mầy* (I/me/you) in (16) and (17) above encodes the close friendship, at least at the moment of speaking.

Within the Vietnamese speech community, the *tao/mầy* (I/me/you) form is always treated as a singular pronoun. It is used by close friends among

speakers of both sexes, but normally in in-group environments to reinforce solidarity. The style of speech that uses *tao/mầy* (I/me/you) is often adopted among schoolmates, members of an alumni organisation, or verbal interactants of a training course. The speakers may adopt this stylistic strategy as present or past in-group members when they meet one another in casual circumstances. However, in Vietnamese, the first- and second-person references are not always identical in pairs, except for *tao/mầy* (I/me/you). This means that another form for first-person reference is not necessarily *mầy* (you) in Vietnamese.

Luong (1990:3) suggests that the forms of first- and second-person reference in Vietnamese varies with context, and depends on a particular native model of speech performance, with regard to the degree of familiarity, and to the relative solidarity or intimacy between verbal interactants. In particular, the first- and second-person pronouns, *tao* (I/me) and *mầy* (you) respectively, may be informally used by children in the playground, or by adults when they are angry, or when solidarity is not observed. Ho (1996:215) suggests that the usage of such Vietnamese personal pronouns *tao* (I/me) and *mầy* (you), can occur either with underlying incongruence and hostility, or in reinforcing solidarity or intimacy between verbal interactants, again depending on context. This suggestion appears to present an exceptional antithesis in the pragmatics of Vietnamese in a sense of "hostility" vs. "solidarity"; but it is quite true from a Vietnamese point of view. The concern is how these two opposite references are realised in a given context; but this problem may be a minor one for Vietnamese native participants in the speech event, relying on their background knowledge.

Kreckel (1981:20) suggests that in a given speech event, there are two types of context: external and psychological or the context of experience. The former includes all surrounding events and entities that relate to a speech situation. The latter context is related to the participant's past experiences, or existing knowledge about the social and physical environment, in terms of what the particular participant attends to or ignores in the environment. Every speech event necessarily involves both types of context, which facilitate the

appropriate choice of forms, so far discussed as first-person and second-person references in Vietnamese.

Apart from *mầy* (you), Vietnamese has another similar form for 2PSR *bầy* (you), used with *tao* (I/me) for the first-person reference. However, *bầy* (you) is not appropriate for use in the expression of politeness. It is neither solidarity nor intimacy but imperative instead. The use of *bầy* (you) for the second-person reference implies that the speaker is superior to the hearer. Both *mầy* (you) and *bầy* (you) can be used for the second-person reference in conjunction with *tao* (I/me).

As we proceed with 1PSR listed in Table 3.2, *tui (I/me), tôi (I/me), mình (I/me), ta (I/me),* proper noun and *qua (I/me)*, we will find each may have a different form for the second-person reference.

Following *tao* (I/me) discussed earlier, *tui* is also used in referring to self, but in the situation where the level of solidarity or intimacy is less intense than the *tao* (I/me) form. In this case, *tui* (I/me) can be considered as a familiar reference. That is, it is used among people who have been well acquainted with one another in casual or informal situations. For example:

(18)   *Thôi để **tui**   gọi   cháu   nó   tới   chở.*
       No,   let 1PSR call   grandchild [3PSR] who   come carry
       "No, let me call my son to pick me up" (Ho, 1996:208).

Obviously, *tao* in (16) and (17) functions as a subject, and *tui* in (18) as an object to a verb; but these syntactical functions do not require any change in Vietnamese lexical forms. That is, *tao* and *tui* (I/me) as well as all other lexical forms of 1PSR reference, can be used both as subject and object. The usage of these forms of person reference may be determined by familiarity, age and gender difference. Similar to the usage of *tao* (I/me), *tui* (I/me) is also used in casual or informal situations. In (18), the use of *tui* (I/me) indicates that S and H have been well acquainted with each other, but the level of solidarity or intimacy between them is not as high as in *tao* (I/me) form. In addition, *tui* (I/me) tends to be preferred by female speakers, while *tao* (I/me)

is used by male and female speakers when addressing same sex close friends or when addressing someone especially inferior, or when S is angry. When addressing in anger, male speakers often use the person reference form *tao* (I/me) more frequently than female speakers. The complexity in the usage of *tao* (I/me) and *tui* (I/me) as 1PSR is not easily elucidated, although there is no doubt that native Vietnamese speakers use these forms of 1PSR in casual or informal situations to show or enhance solidarity and intimacy in their daily verbal interactions. The usage of these two forms of 1PSR varies with the level of solidarity or intimacy between S and H, and often determined by S's judgement according to the social context in which the utterance occurs.

In everyday use, Vietnamese has its first-person pronoun *tôi* (I/me), which is compatible with English "I/me". For example:

(19)   *Người   ấy   là   ai?   **Dạ, tôi***   *không biết.*
         Person   that   COPU who   Hon. 1PSR   NEG   know
         "Who is that person? I don't know" (Thompson 1987:260).

Despite a polite responsive utterance to the question with the use of *dạ* (polite Yes), the choice of the neutral form, first-person personal pronoun *tôi* (I/me), signals a social distance between S and H. As indicated in Table 3.2, the possible corresponding second-person reference of *tôi* (I/me) appears in various forms, including kinship terms as discussed in the previous section (3.1.2).

Returning to the non-kinship related person references in Vietnamese, we still have a few more terms to discuss; *mình* (I/me/we/us/you), *bồ* (you), *ta* (I/me), proper noun, and *qua* (I/me).

Notably *mình* has dual functions in Vietnamese, as it can be used for both first- and second-person references. While *mình* normally has its meaning as "I" or "me" in English, its literal meaning is "body". However, because the focus is pragmatics in the present study, *mình* in Vietnamese can be referred to as *I, me, we, us* and *you* in English. This seems to be the most complicated person reference in Vietnamese because it can serve so many functions. For example:

(20)   *Có   mặt   **mình**   ăn   muối cũng vui.*
          Have face   2PSR   eat   salt   also happy
          "When you are at home, I am happy even having meal with salt"

          *Vắng mặt **mình**   một bữa   chẳng vui   chút nào.*
          Absent face you [2PSR] one occasion not   happy at:all
          "With you, I am happy even eating with salt; without you, I am not happy even for only one meal" (Proverb, Do 1994:49).

The term *mình* in (20) represents in-group language, which is commonly used between husband and wife in Vietnamese vernacular. It is used by either party as a form of address, and in this case refers to the hearer 2PSR, denoting a high degree of intimacy in the marital relationship. This form of address does not exist in formal situations, but it is often found in daily conversation. In a different speech situation, *mình* is used as a first-person singular reference (1PSR) towards another non-kinship term, *bồ* (you), referring to 2PSR, which is normally used when addressing a close friend within the same age range. For example:

(21)   ***Mình**   đợi   **bồ**   ngày:mai   tại đó   nghen.*
          1PSR   wait 2PSR   tomorrow   at there   PRT
          "I will wait for you there tomorrow"

So far we can see *mình* (body/self) can be used for 1PSR as in (21) and for 2PSR as in (20). This non-kinship reference term can also be used as a first-person plural reference (1PPR). In this case *mình* refers to "we" or "us". For example, a home tutor might speak to his/her pupil to elicit a review of a previous lesson:

(22)   *Bữa trước **mình**   làm   gì   há?*
          Day before 1PPR   do   what Q.
          "What did I do on that day?" (Luong 1990:14).

The term *mình* (we/us) in (22) refers to both S and H; but a difference in social status between the interactants is quite possible, despite close social distance.

Another example for *mình* (we/us) in a different situation:

(23)   **Mình**   *kiếm gì*   *ăn*   *rồi*   *về*   *nghen em?*
       1PPR   find what   eat   then   go home PRT   younger sister
       "Let's find something to eat before going home darling"

Without the adequate capacity to conceptualise discourse context at a native level, one could hardly realise that the utterances in (23) are related to a young couple who love each other; and this is quite different from the context where a middle age or older husband and wife communicate with each other (20). The difference in speaking contexts between (20) and (23) can only be judged by the skilfulness and experience of a native speaker.

In all cases (singular and plural), *mình* (1PSR/1PPR) represents an endearment, or a kind of in-group language; therefore, this term is considered a politeness marker.

In the following examples, *mình* and *ta* go together as the forms of 2PSR and 1PSR respectively in Vietnamese as listed in Table 3.2. These person reference forms are found in literature and poetry, which are not used in vernacular but can be understood by ordinary, adult Vietnamese.

(24)   **Mình**   *về*   *mình*   *nhớ*   *ta*   *chăng?*
       2PSR   return   2PSR   miss   1PSR   Q.
       "Would you miss me after you went home?"

Or

(25)   *Ta*   *về*   *ta*   *nhớ*   *hàm*   *răng*   *mình*   *cười.*
       1PSR   return   1PSR   miss   CLA   teeth   2PSR   laugh
       "I would miss your teeth as you laugh after I went home"
       (Proverb – Bang 1981:18).

In the context of Vietnamese young people speaking to each other, proper nouns can also be used as a form of address (2PSR), and for self-reference to show certain levels of solidarity and intimacy in the relationship between S and H. Besides, proper names can also be used by an inferior as a self-reference when speaking to a superior, but not the other way around, especially when S wants to establish a closer relationship with H covertly. For example:

Speaker:

(26) *Thúy   đi   chợ   về   rồi   à?*
      Thuy [2PSR] go   market return already Q.
      "Have you (Thúy, grandchild) already returned from the market Thuý?"
      (proper noun, Luong 1990:3).

Addressee:

(27) *Dạ   Thuý   về   rồi.*
      Yes [HON]   Thuý [1PSR]   return   already.
      "Yes, I have already returned"

In written language, because the answer in (27) is the polite honorific particle *dạ* (polite yes), a Vietnamese native speaker would be able to predict that the speaker must be younger than the hearer. Such a prediction is based on the context of experience as mentioned earlier, or on what made sense to a Vietnamese native speaker. If the utterance (27) occurred without the polite honorific particle *dạ* (polite yes), it might happen in a peer group's speech situation. Proper nouns (first names) can also be used with kinship terms such as *cô Thuý* (auntie Thuý), *chị Thuý* (sister Thuý); but in a formal situation, full names are used, with either kinship or professional titles in address, such as sister *Trần Thị Hoa* or Dr. *Trần Thị Hoa*.

In addition, there are some other alternatives such as *qua* (I/me) and third-person references (3PSR) such as *nó* (he/him/she/her), *thằng* (he/him), *hắn* or *hắn ta* (he/him), *bọn* (they/them/gang), *tụi, lũ* (they/them/gang), *họ*

(they/them), and *người* (respectful he/she). Examples of their usage are as follows:

(28) *Qua* nói   hổng *qua*   rồi   *qua* lại   qua.
      1PSR said   no   come   then   1PSR but   come
      "I said I would not come, but I came" (Do 1994:26).

The term *qua* (I/me), in utterance (28) is used as 1PSR. Once again, this term is used strictly in casual or informal situations, normally by an older speaker to a younger speaker among people who are well acquainted. It is interesting to note that the term *qua* has been used four times in (28); but only two serve as 1PSR, whilst the other two same lexical form (*qua*) serves as a verb (come). For 3PSR, Vietnamese has several lexical options as listed in Table 3.2. For example:

(29) *Nó*   không   còn   ở   nhà   nẫy nữa.
      3PSR   no   remain   live   house this any:more
      "He/she has no longer lived in this house"

In this utterance *nó* (he/she) does not by any means encode politeness. However, without further information, the utterance cannot be interpreted as a contemptuous implication. Although in (29) *nó* refers to either a male or female third-person, it can be used for a non-human reference, referring to a thing or animal, equating "it" in English.

For a 3PSR, Vietnamese non-kinship term is used in various contexts. For example:

(30) *Thằng đó* ai   mà   chả   biết.
      3PSR   who   but   not   know
      "Who doesn't know that person/him – everyone knows him"
      (Do 1994:37).

In (30) the term *thằng* is a male personal classifier in singularity, being used with the relative pronoun *đó* (that) to serve as a 3PSR. It can also stand alone (without *đó*) to serve the same grammatical function. For example, utterance (30) can become (31) without changing the referential meaning:

(31) **Nó**   **là**   **thằng** *mà*   *ai*   *cũng* *biết.*
      3PSR COPU one   but   who   also   know
      "He is the one everyone knows"

Despite the same reference 3PSR, as *thằng* (him), when it serves as a subject in the sentence as in (30), a different form of 3PSR can be used such as *hắn* or *hắn ta* (he/him):

(32) *Hôm qua*   **hắn**   *đã*   *tới*   *đây*   *rồi.*
      Day   pass 3PSR   PST   come here   already
      "Yesterday he came here already"

In (32) *hắn* can be followed by *ta* to become a lexical compound *hắn ta* (he/him), serving the same function as a 3PSR.

A plural reference for 3PSR associated with *nó* (29) and *thằng* (30) can be expressed by using alternative terms such as *bọn, tụi, lũ* (they/them) for plural reference (3PPR). For example:

(33) **Bọn**   *ác ôn thì*   *rõ*   *là*   *giọng ghét* *đắng* *ghét* *cay.*
      3PPR cruel CONJ clearly   COPU tone   hated bitter hated hot
      "The tone of cruel persons is very hateful" (Do 1994:37).

The term *bọn* in example (33) can be replaced by *tụi* or *lũ* to make the utterance understood as the same as its original in a sense of contemptuous reference. However, when the two terms *bọn, tụi* (they/them) are used as attributives to first-person references, they will become a kind of in-group language appropriate for politeness expression in the same situation. In this

case, the terms *bọn, tụi* (they/them) become a plural marker combining with a 1PSR to become a first-person plural reference (1PPR). This seems to be the most complicated part of person reference in Vietnamese. For example:

(34) **Bọn/tụi** *mình* *đã* *từng học chung* *lớp* *với nhau.*
       3PSR   1PSR PASS used study same   class   together
       "We used to be in the same class"

In (34), with the combination of *bọn/tụi, mình* (3PSR+1PSR) becomes a compound for a first-person plural reference (1PPR).

The non-kinship reference has two more terms that can be used for third-person plural references (3PPR) to show respect toward the referent: *họ* (they/them) in (35) and *người* (he/she) in (36). For example:

(35) **Họ** *là* *những* *anh:hùng* *không tên tuổi.*
       3PPR COPU PLU   heroes   anonymous
       "They are anonymous heroes" (Do 1994:36).

The term *họ* (they/them) in (35) serves as a third-person plural reference (3PPR). It is a term of respect, and in this case, a polite reference. *Ho* however can be used as a contemptuous 3PPR as in (33). The last non-kinship term for third-person singular reference (3PSR) used as a term of respect (Luong, 1988:243) is *người* (he/him). For example:

(36) **Người** *đã* *hy sinh* *cả* *cuộc đời cho* *con cái.*
       3PSR   pass sacrifice whole life   for   children
       "He has sacrificed his whole life for his children"

In (36) người denotes a 3PSR as a respectful "he"; but there is no exact equivalent in English.

Apart from those non-kinship terms listed in Table 3.2, in the folk literature there are quite a few more non-kinship terms, such as *ai* (lit. who),

đấy (lit. there), *đây* (lit. here), *người ta* (lit. people), which are still used in Vietnamese vernacular today. For example:

(37) *Khi   xưa ai   biết   ai   đâu,*
      when past who know who   where
      "In the past I did not know you"
      Chỉ   vì   điếu thuốc,   miếng trầu nên   quen.
      only because CLA cigarette, CLA   betel hence acquainted
      "I have got to know you in the course of family's arrangement"
      (Bang 1981:19).

(38) *Gió   bên đông, động   bên tây,*
      wind   side east, provoke side west
      "The wind from the East affects the West"
      Tuy rằng nói   đấy, nhưng đây động lòng.
      Although speak   there, but   here move heart
      "Although you were criticized, I was hurt" (Bang, 1981:33).

From a pragmatic perspective, in (37) the first *ai* (lit. who) is a 1PSR (I); whilst the second *ai* is a 2PSR (you). In (38), the non-kinship term *đấy* is used twice: the former is a 2PSR (you) and the latter is a 1PSR (I). Obviously the non-kinship person reference in both (37) and (38) is not straightforward to non-native Vietnamese speakers.

The following examples of other non-kinship person references are even more complex, as Pham (2002: 293) has documented (see examples 39 and 40).

(39) *Hôm qua không   tới   làm   người ta chờ mãi !*
      day   pass not   come make people   wait always
      "I (people) waited (for you) for a long time yesterday but (you) did not
        come".

(39) *Tôi đâu có đẹp như **người ta** để được **người ta** ngó tới!*

I not have beauty like people in order to gain people look at PRT

"I know that I am not as beautiful as her (people) to gain your (people's) attention"

(Pham 2002: 293).

It is interesting to note the pragmatic reference in the usage of *người ta* (people) in Vietnamese. In (38) *người ta* (lit. people) is used as a 1PSR (I); whilst in (39), the first referent of *người ta* (lit. people) is a 3PSR (her) and the second referent is a 2PSR (you). In fact, all the non-kinship person references in the above examples (37-39) are complex, but they are used by Vietnamese native speakers in their everyday language.

3.2 AN OVERVIEW OF VIETNAMESE CULTURE

As mentioned in Chapter 2, culture is embedded in each individual (Mey 2004: 32); but it is often discussed as the "commonsense" entity of a society, country or its people, such as Chinese, Japanese or Vietnamese culture. In this research, culture is distinguished further between Confucian-based and Communist-oriented cultures (Nguyen 2008:275). In this chapter, the focus will Confucian-based culture, as the influence and impact of Communist-oriented culture was discussed in Chapter 1 (section 1.1.1).

Traditionally, in Vietnam, the family rather than the individual is the basic unit of society. Harmony in interpersonal relationships is thus valued more highly than personal achievement (Pham 2008:79). Physical beauty and grace are important attributes for both men and women, but virtue is praised. Filial devotion, brotherly love, and conjugal fidelity are also highly valued. Vietnamese people possess inwardness, a well-developed virtue that keeps their true feelings hidden; hence their desires are expressed by indirection, by hinting or "talking around" the subject, but they think carefully before speaking (Nguyen 1987:103).

The notions of family, harmony, virtue, filial devotion, brotherly love, and conjugal fidelity are profoundly embedded in Vietnamese culture and language. Most of these cultural values reflect Confucianism that has been present in

Vietnamese society for thousands of years (Marr 1981:101-135; Duiker 1995:81). Vietnamese culture has been mainly influenced by China for centuries because of its geographical proximity and contact arising from political and economic conflicts (Nguyen 1995:56). According to Duong (1968:1), Vietnamese society underwent Chinese domination for more than one thousand years, between 207 BC and 939 AD. More significantly, as early as 111 BC, when the Han conquest left Vietnam with the Confucian heritage, Confucianism has profoundly influenced Vietnamese culture (Duiker 1995:81).

Before gaining their independence in 939 AD, the people of Vietnam had been deeply influenced by China in every aspect of life during that period. For example, in education particularly, Vietnamese people learnt Chinese characters, followed Confucius teachings and adopted Chinese thought and culture. For almost another thousand years post independence to the end of the nineteenth century, via several Kingdoms including Ngo, Dinh, pre-Le, Ly, Tran, post-Le and Nguyen, Chinese characters were still used by all government institutions and in all official documents (Duong 1968,1-2). As the Vietnamese education system had relied mainly on Confucianism, the Chinese writing system used for teaching Confucianism, gradually became known as *chữ nho* (Confucian script), and scholars in Confucianism were known as *nhà nho* (Confucian scholars) or *thầy nho* (teachers of Confucianism) at the time. Since Confucianism has deeply influenced Vietnamese thinking, it leads to the common belief among Vietnamese people that *nhà nho* represents Vietnamese traditional scholars and *chữ nho* is a kind of Vietnamese traditional character. This is why nowadays *chữ nho* (Confucian script) is still used, especially for display in Vietnamese traditional contexts and ceremonies such as "Tết"[2] and other traditional rituals.

The influence of Confucianism reached its pinnacle in Vietnamese society in 1075 AD, when King Ly Nhan Ton recruited officials among the educated people (Dao 1951:254, Duong 1968:81, DeFrancis 1977:14). According to Jamieson (1993:11), beginning in the late fifteenth century, Neo-Confucianism

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[2] Vietnamese traditional celebrations are well planned in advance of the new year (lunar calendar) and follow with various traditional rituals. It is a very important event in Vietnamese culture, falling approximately in late January or February.

came to be a dominant influence on Vietnamese society. The term "Neo-Confucianism" is used by Jamieson when referring to contemporary Confucianism, which focuses on social relationships and the influence of self-cultivation as a force in government. From this perspective, Jamieson (1993:16-17) further suggests that, first and foremost, Vietnamese children were taught filial piety *(hiếu)*, to obey, respect and honour their parents, not only in behaviour, but also in language.

Nevertheless, central to Confucianism is the teaching of correct naming by means of language. That is, it is necessary to have the right words in order to please, to convince or to influence others (Vu 1997:58). What Confucius called "the rectification of names", was intended primarily to have a moral effect in interpersonal order to maintain a correct social order (Luong 1988:241). To Confucius, this correct social order meant keeping all classes in line (Feibleman 1976:95).

According to Nguyen Xuan Thu (1986:67), people who mastered education were highly valued in Vietnamese society. Scholars in the past used to be leaders in the society, motivators of social development and mirrors of moral life. The former social stratification which was "scholar first, farmer second, worker third, and trader fourth" is still embedded in the minds of many Vietnamese, especially the older generation. However, although "scholar" was ranked first in the social stratification, in Vietnamese traditional education, the "ritual/propriety" *(lễ)* was still ranked first. That is, prior to becoming a "scholar", one should first be well educated in "ritual/propriety" *(lễ)*, which is likely to be associated with politeness.

From another perspective, Wangdao (1997:75) points out that one of Confucius' major virtues is "propriety" (an alternative term for "ritual" or "*lễ*" in Vietnamese), which means the observance of rites including ceremonies, institutions, customs, norms, and rules of behaviour. These rites are devised to guide and restrain relations among people in the family and society, such as princes and ministers and fathers and sons, aiming to ensure social order and stability. Furthermore, within the family, a son should be filial or be respectful to his father or elder brother; in political life, he should be loyal to his father or

elder brother. In this way, filial piety became loyalty, and a filial son might also be a loyal assistant (Wangdao 1997:91). This is why filial piety (*hiếu*) and loyalty (*trung*) are considered as two virtuous attributes a son is expected to have in Vietnamese society.

Le (1986:84) suggests that having permeated Vietnamese society for centuries, Confucianism offers Vietnamese people profound social insights about human relationships. For example, according to a Confucian structure, each member of the family has a complex or ordered role to play. The role corresponds to personal attributes such as age, gender and kinship hierarchy. An elder brother has more responsibilities and power than his younger brother. He is the father figure of the family after his father has passed away. This applies to the husband–wife relationship as well. When the husband is alive, the wife obeys him, but when he dies, she has to follow her eldest son's opinion. However, this does not exempt the eldest son's filial piety toward his parents. Vietnamese family structure is reflected in speech behaviours among family members. For example, a younger sibling is expected to speak gently and obediently to his/her elder sibling; children are not expected to argue with their parents. The husband–wife relationship is also reflected in the three dependence relationships (*tam tòng)* in Confucianism for women: *Tại gia tòng phụ* (at home when not married, submit to the father), *xuất giá tòng phu* (upon marriage, submit to the husband), *phu tử tòng tử* (when the husband dies, submit to the eldest son) (Le & Le 1970:1344; Luong 2003:203).

Marr (1981:101-135) suggests that the historical influence of Confucianism in Vietnam cannot be ignored. Indeed, the Vietnamese people can hardly ignore the Confucian heritage, as it has been embedded in their culture, profoundly influencing their values and judgment in everyday life and activities. However, Confucian influences are not always overt and visible in what is normally called "Vietnamese tradition". This tradition reflects social status, which is based partly on social standing and age in the community (Thompson 1965:3-4): Young persons are considered inferior to older persons, women to men, subordinates to superiors. For this reason, Confucianism also influences the verbal behaviours in interpersonal relations among Vietnamese people, according to the differences in age, gender, social status or power

distance; for example, female speech is expected to be softer, hence more polite than male speech. A junior is expected to be polite in verbal communication with a senior. The same expectation applies to an inferior toward his/her superior.

In hierarchical Vietnamese society, feelings of thankfulness or apology are not normally expressed via verbal expressions such as "thank you" or "I'm sorry", but by non-verbal behaviour (such as silence or a smile). People of a higher social status, such as parents and teachers, never thank their inferiors (i.e. children or students) for a small service done, such as closing the window or passing a book around (Huynh 1987:30). Thus, whilst in Anglo-Australian culture the routine use of 'please' and 'thank you' is considered to be socio-pragmatically appropriate or linguistically polite in various situations; in Vietnamese culture, it can be regarded as insulting behaviour to thank a close family member for performing a routine task (Yates 2004:5). This is because it contradicts the virtuous conduct in Confucian doctrine of the five human relationships (*ngũ luân*), which allocate a role to each member in the family (Marr 1981:58). These relationships constitute five codes of ethics, namely "subjects are loyal to the king, children are obedient and filial to their parents, wives are dutiful to their husbands, the younger are obedient to the older, and friends are faithful to each other" (Pham 2008:103). Accordingly, linguistic politeness behaviours are produced in Vietnamese culture, therefore linguistic politeness is culturally determined (Holmes 1992: 285). It also partly explains that in Asian Confucian cultures, Vietnamese in particular, excessive use of thanks and apologies often renders uncomfortable feelings toward the hearer in an utterance (Pham 2008: 78).

In sum, central to Vietnamese Confucian-based culture are notions of correct naming by means of language to acknowledge social and family position in order to please, to convince or influence others.

3.3 THE CONCEPTS OF "FACE" AND "POLITENESS" IN VIETNAMESE

Similar to what is conceptually realised as "face" or "face want", as discussed at length in Chapter 2 (2.4.2), the notion of "face" in Vietnamese culture is also central to the concept of "politeness".

3.3.1 THE CONCEPT OF "FACE" IN VIETNAMESE

Nguyen (1995:59) suggests that in Vietnamese face (*thể diện or mặt*) refers to self-respect or dignity, which is attained by one's relative position and status in society. In this sense, the Vietnamese face, or *mặt*, is hereafter referred to. This is similar to what we find in English (Goffman 1967:5). The content of "face" includes "face wants", which represents the positive social values that everyone wants to claim for him/herself in a social context. Despite variation from one culture to another, as mentioned in Chapter 2, "face wants" can be treated as psychological and social needs for human beings and may include, for example, deference, modesty, formality, intimacy, respect of privacy, praise, agreement, approval, appreciation, concern, care, and generosity, equality, status, sincerity, and acceptance (Shih 1986:20).

In Vietnamese Confucian-based culture, some "face wants" are more valued than in Anglo-Australian culture. For example, Pham (2008:50) suggests that in Anglo cultures, including Australian, a politeness strategy aims to minimise the individual's face loss; whereas, in Confucian-based culture, politeness is more concerned with enhancing the mutual face of those involved in verbal interactions. Anglo-cultural politeness tends to enhance the pursuit of personal autonomy; whilst in a Confucian-based culture, like Vietnamese, imposition is accepted and interpersonal harmony is highly regarded in verbal communication. Pham (2008:77) further points out that people in a Confucian-based-culture tend to speak modestly about themselves and reluctantly take pride in their own achievements. In Vietnamese Confucian-based culture, *khiêm,* "modesty" and "self-restraint", is one of the most important virtues that everyone is encouraged to acquire, and *khiêm* is taught to young children at school.

The properties of Vietnamese *mặt* (face) are not only closely linked with an individual, but also with his/her family, village, community and country (Nguyen, 1995:60), depending on the situation in which *mặt* (face) is referred to. For example, the family of the individual who suffers from face loss will also have to endure public ridicule. This highlights the importance of *face*

beyond the individual's public image, and confirms the two systems of moral values: individual and family or collective values.

Vietnamese people often have a fear of "losing face", particularly the effect on the family, and as such avoid friction in verbal communication. Teaching encoded proverbs encourages them to be on good terms with one another (Huynh 1962:113). For example:

(40) *Một sự nhịn   là   chín   sự lành.*
      One endurance   COPU   nine   goodness
      "If you avoid debate once, you will receive nine rewards of happiness"
      (Huynh 1962:113).

When people feel they are "losing face", they are embarrassed or humiliated (Brown & Levinson 1978:66), and this feeling may result from different causes including subjective perception and misunderstanding through verbal interactions. Subjective perception leads to arbitrary judgement, stereotyping and misinterpretation in given speech situations.

In this sense, *mặt* (face) is closely associated with honour, dignity or reputation, which can be earned or enhanced through achievements. *Mặt* can also be lost like the concept of "face" in English (See discussion in section 2.4.2).

The essence of *mặt* (face) in Vietnamese is reflected in the popular proverb: *chọn mặt gởi vàng* (Le & Le 1970:85), meaning "choose face to deposit gold"; but more importantly, it pragmatically implies the moral value of face in terms of personal character. The abovementioned proverb basically advises that one should choose good people to deal with or be entrusted with. The term "good" may mean different things, but here it refers to ethical attributes, attached to a person who always observes and maintains his/her own dignity by not being involved in inappropriate verbal interactions including lying, for example.

As Brown and Levinson (1978:66) suggest, "face" is something that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced. In Vietnamese culture, this notion of "face" is

also valid in a conceptualisation, as Nguyen (1995:60) points out, *nâng cao thể diện* (lit. enhance face) or *đẹp mặt gia đình* (lit. enhance one's family face); that is, to enhance pride, dignity or reputation for the individual or the family. Regarding the same concept, Pham (2008: 113) uses the term *nở mặt* (lit. expanding face) to express pride or reputation from a Vietnamese Confucian cultural perspective. Obviously the opposite *nở mặt* (lit. expanding face) or *nâng cao thể diện* (lit. enhance face) is *mất mặt* or *mất thể diện* (losing face) as mentioned earlier. While *mất mặt* (losing face) can be expressed in different terms such as (*bể mặt*) "broken face" or "*méo mặt*" (twisted face); there is also another term used for *nở mặt,* that is, *lên mặt* (raising face). For example:

(41) *Từ   ngày làm quản lý   thấy   nó   **lên**   mặt hẳn !*
     From   day   do manager see   3PSR **rise**   face clear
     "Since she worked as a manager, she has been clearly showing off"
     (Pham 2008: 112).

However, *lên mặt* (raising face) is often used for self-enhancing the expression of one's pride, regardless of whether the pride is real or not, whereas the referent of *nở mặt* (lit. expanding face) is more objective and real. For example, Vietnamese students receiving high distinction results in their studies or people occupying a high social status in their careers, do not necessarily respond to their achievement with *lên mặt* (raising face), but with pride for the individual's *nở mặt* (lit. expanding face) and for *đẹp mặt gia đình* (lit. enhance one's family face), especially for their parents. This reflects collective values in Asian cultures such as Chinese and Vietnamese (Wong 2004:239).

From a pragmatic point of view, Vietnamese *face* is considered as the central part of the physical body that represents all moral aspects of a person. It is best described by the Sino-Vietnamese folk term *thể diện* (body face), which is defined as a kind of overt triumph and honour (Nguyen 1960:954). This is why *mặt* (face) is considered as dignity or reputation, judged as being high or low. For example, in Vietnamese culture, an individual's *mặt* can lose

precedence to a collective *mặt*, in the sense that the former is considered less important than the latter. For this reason, an offence to a family's *mặt* (i.e. family's dignity) is considered a more serious insult than an offence to an individual.

Similar to the notion of *face* in English (see 2.4.2), it is central to Vietnamese politeness and the key focus of this research.

3.3.2 THE CONCEPT OF "POLITENESS" IN VIETNAMESE

Some key theories of politeness have been discussed at length in the previous chapter from different points of view. This section focuses on how "politeness" is realised and expressed in Vietnamese. It attempts to provide a fundamental basis for arguments on Vietnamese concepts of politeness in verbal interactions. Therefore all the arguments here are limited to linguistic politeness in accordance with the values of socially acceptable and unacceptable behaviour (Watts 2003:11) in Vietnamese culture.

While an expression of politeness may involve many strategies as suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987:103-210), some of these strategies may be realised with a greater focus than others in Vietnamese culture. For example, Vietnamese speakers place a great deal of weight on the use of kinship terms as forms of address when expressing their deference or respect. This linguistic phenomenon is used sparingly in the English speaking world.

The term "politeness" is generally referred to as a norm, based on what speakers think is appropriate in a particular situation. This norm, however, varies from culture to culture, leading to stereotypical comments of what is characterised as polite or impolite (Sifianou 1992:29). Because of this cultural variation, the concept of politeness in Vietnamese culture needs to be examined independently from Western culture.

In a study of politeness in Vietnamese, Pham (2008:41) suggests that the practice of linguistic politeness is seen as an "accommodative approach" to bring people closer in enhanced mutual understanding through communication. Vietnamese linguistic politeness is heavily based on Confucian cultural values, in

which, communication encourages deference towards others by means of respectful speech and deferential attitudes (Pham (2008:86).

Overall the concept of politeness in Vietnamese Confucian-based culture is profoundly embedded in the link between one's morality and one's linguistic expression of politeness reflected in three main aspects: (1) sincerity in emotional expressions; (2) modest self-expression; and (3) deferential speech (Pham, 2008:90). Yet it might be expressed by different terms such as "*lich sự, thanh lịch, lễ phép, lễ độ, khéo léo, tế nhị*" (Vu 1997:57).

In this research, two types of politeness have been distinguished: *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness), which serves as an overarching connotation of gentleness, delicacy and tact (Vu 1997:58). The distinction between these concepts is mainly determined by differences in relative age and social status of verbal interactants in given speech events. While relative age is defined in terms of younger and older groups, social status is referred to as either superiority or inferiority, which can be considered as two common contextual conditions in verbal interactions (Beeching 2002:36).

The concept of *lễ phép* or *lễ độ* (respectful politeness), in particular, reflects the codes of conduct embedded in Vietnamese tradition through oral teachings by means of proverbs such as "*Tiên học lễ, nhi hậu học văn*" (Vu 1997:59; Pham 2008:103) meaning, first, learn "propriety", later, learn "literateness". This proverb has existed in Vietnamese folk education, which emphasises the importance of conforming to the standard of speech behaviour, and the first priority in any attempt to obtain formal education in school. The *lễ* (propriety) can be defined as conventionally accepted behaviour with regard to the appropriateness or rightness of speech in a particular situation or context. It is the ethic quality that can be learnt not only at school, but also from parents. The *văn* (literateness) means general education, despite its literal meaning, which is normally learnt at school.

In concurrence with the oral teaching that emphasises the priority of learning *lễ* (propriety) before *văn* (literateness), the *lễ phép* or *lễ độ* (respectfulness) is taught and enhanced by parents in bringing up their young children. The parents may use an orally transferred proverb such as *Đi thưa về*

trình (Le & Le 1970:116), roughly meaning, "Politely tell the superior before you go, report your presence when you come back".

In practice, when a junior Vietnamese is speaking to a senior Vietnamese, in order to meet the Vietnamese face wants, the junior will follow the conventions of *lễ phép (respectful politeness)* and the senior will follow those of *lịch sự* (strategic politeness).

Respectful politeness (lễ-phép) in Vietnamese

Respectful politeness (*lễ-phép)* in Vietnamese is considered as "one-way speech", that is, from an inferior to a superior. Therefore, this type of politeness essentially promotes respect for the hearer, reflected in verbal communication. This concept of politeness is enhanced by the proverb *Kính lão đắc thọ* (Respect for old people, your life will last long). The compound noun *lễ phép* (respectful) is a synonym of *lễ độ* (Vu 1997:63, Nguyen 1960:535), which denotes a kind of politeness in Vietnamese, possibly reflected in the following contexts:

(a) Students speaking to their teachers;

(b) Children speaking to their parents, or younger siblings speaking to elder silblings; and

(c) Younger persons speaking to their elders.

In context (a) the expression of politeness is based on superiority in social status, while in contexts (b) and (c) it is based on seniority in age.

The (c) context always occurs in Vietnamese speech communities by way of addressing one another outside the family as family members. This means Vietnamese speakers use kinship terms in addressing one another in their everyday language to express politeness, as if they were in-groups or interaction within the family.

From a cultural perspective, respectful politeness (*lễ phép* or *lễ-độ*) seems be associated with the concept of *lễ* (ritual/propriety) derived from the Confucian orthodox prescribing behavioural principles. Vu (1997:59) suggests that these behavioural principles especially emphasise the obligations of inferiors (including women) towards superiors in different terms of behaviour:

subjects have to be loyal to the King, children must show filial piety to their parents, students are expected to obey their teachers. The Confucian orthodox also designs another moral recipe for a woman to follow – "four virtues" (tứ đức): labour (công), physical appearance (dung), appropriate speech (ngôn), and proper behaviour (hạnh). In labour, a woman is expected to be skilful in cooking, sewing, embroidery. In physical appearance, she should learn how to be attractive to her husband, but not to others. In speech, she should be self-determined and rigidly polite, rather than assertive. Finally, in relation to appropriate behaviour (hạnh), the woman should always be honest and loyal to her superiors including her husband (Marr 1981:192).

It is notable that the difference in linguistic politeness behaviour may be determined by the social setting of verbal interaction and the speaker's intent in the utterance. Leech (1983:13) refers to social setting as including relevant aspects of physical environments that may relate directly or indirectly to an utterance and can be known as "context". For example, in service encounters where a customer wants to buy a piece of merchandise at a lower price than it is marked, in dealing with a male seller to gain a lower price in purchase, a female customer might have more advantage than a male customer, and a younger, attractive female customer might have more advantage than an older one. This may relate to what Kreckel (1981:20) defines as psychological context in discourse. In this situation, the politeness strategy of *lễ phép* is favourably enhanced by the psychological context, in terms of psychological shift in the interlocutor's mentality that a Vietnamese native speaker usually understands without difficulty.

From a different perspective, Hall (1976:91) distinguishes two types of context between high and low contexts and suggests that Vietnamese is one of the Asian high context languages, in which speaker meaning is embedded in the physical context or internalised in the speaker. This suggestion is interpreted in terms of *ý tại ngôn ngoại*, meaning outside the utterance (Pham 2008:81). In contrast, meanings in the lower context language are explicitly coded through the lexical mechanism.

Strategic politeness (lịch-sự)

The compound noun *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) is often used in expressing one's gracious behaviours, though it can be further analysed under two separate terms, *thanh* (gentle) and *lịch* (gracious), which are often used as synonyms in Vietnamese proverbs and idioms to refer to persons and their characteristics, such as Vu's (1997:58) example "*Trai thanh, gái lịch* – Gentle men, polite ladies". This example seems to suggest that the values of these terms are similar but used discretely with men and women respectively. These two words have become a compound noun: *thanh-lịch*, a synonym of *lịch-thiệp*, and *lịch sự* (gracious). Among these synonyms, *lịch sự* is most commonly referred to by modern Vietnamese speakers (Vu 1997:62), hence it is used in the present study to denote one of the two major concepts of "politeness" in Vietnamese.

In Vietnamese *lịch sự* or strategic politeness, is related to linguistic politeness behaviours towards an inferior or in utterance when the speaker (S) and the hearer (H) are of equal status, but are not well acquainted with each other (Thompson 1965:3). This can be illustrated in a Vietnamese speech situation, which reflects differences in politeness strategies, as follows:

Situation 1: A young male teacher speaks to an adolescent female student:

(42)   *Tôi   sẽ gặp   em   vào Thứ Sáu tuần sau.*
       1PSR will   meet young:sibling   on Friday   week next
       "I will see you next Friday"

Situation 2: A young man speaks to a newly acquainted young woman:

(43)   *Anh   sẽ gặp   em   vào Thứ Sáu tuần sau.*
       Elder-brother will   meet young:sibling on Friday week next
       "I will see you next Friday"

The only difference between the two examples above is in the first-person singular reference (1PSR) that in (42), a neutral first-person pronoun *tôi* (I) is

used, while in (43), the kinship term *anh* (elder brother) is used. A shift in 1PSR as such makes a difference in Vietnamese linguistic politeness behaviour. That is, the use of the kinship term *anh* (elder brother) in (43) can be interpreted that S has shortened the social distance between them, hence increased the degree of politeness towards H.

Strategic politeness (*lịch-sự*), in particular, can be viewed as a social etiquette in Vietnamese culture. It serves as a safeguard for what is acceptable between S and H in speech behaviour, and operates to motivate and guide language choice (Grundy 2000:146), which is reflected in the Vietnamese popular proverb "*Lời nói không mất tiền mua, lựa lời mà nói cho vừa lòng nhau*" (Words cost no money to buy, make a word choice to satisfy one another) (Bang 1981:13; Vu 1997:58). The essence of this popular proverb can also be applied to respectful politeness (*lễ phép*) as it encourages one to ensure H's face wants are adequately accommodated when making language choice. It seems to lie in one of the four Confucian "virtues" (*tứ đức*), appropriate speech (*ngôn*), mentioned earlier. From a linguistic point of view, "appropriate speech" includes an appropriate choice of words in a given speech situation and employment of politeness strategies. In both cases, "appropriate speech" may accommodate H's wants or at least afford H a pleasant feeling in the speech event.

The two concepts of politeness in Vietnamese *lễ phép* or *lễ độ* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) correspond to the Vietnamese traditional axiom of "*phép lịch sự* (rules of politeness), which is observed in expressing kinship intimacy (Le 1987:114-115) and politeness outside the family.

Whilst the difference between *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) is mainly determined by superiority in terms of age and social status, gender is not a major basis for differentiation; although in practice some politeness markers tend to be more frequently used by female than by male speakers, regardless of H's gender, especially some affective particles. For example, the final particle *nha* (politeness marker) used by female speakers is replaced with *nghe* (politeness marker) when used by a

male speaker, without incurring any change in meaning. These markers, however, are not gender related from a lexical point of view, but they are gender differentiated from a pragmatic perspective. That is, they are different in usage but not in lexical form, with both applied as an expression of politeness, regardless of whether the hearer is male or female. Differences in the usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese will be further discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

Despite the distinction between the two concepts of politeness in Vietnamese so far discussed, in addressing a mixed age audience, Vietnamese speakers opt to employ the strategy of *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) instead of *lịch sự* (strategic politeness). This reflects Confucian cultural values in Vietnamese in terms of *khiêm tốn* (modesty) and *khiêm nhường* (humbleness), in which the terms of address are often "upgraded" towards the audience; for example, senior kinship terms are used for second-person reference (Pham 2008:91-91).

An investigation of politeness in Vietnamese should involve both concepts of politeness, which are often related to age, power and social status, but in linguistics, power is often determined by age and social status (Pan, 2000:146, Thompson, 1965:3-4). Here we are discussing power in relation to social roles of the speaker in specific speech situations as determined by variation in the pattern of verbal communication, such as husband, wife, teacher and student, customer and seller (Ervin-Tripp 1964:87). However, we are not discussing power in the sense of what Ervin-Tripp et al. (1984:117) point out in a specific situation, that is, where a parent yields to a three-year-old child demanding attention and goods, while the parent is assumed to have absolute power over the child.

Both *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) have the same power in motivating and guiding language choice; but in application, each should be interpreted discretely in accordance with the social relationship between S and H in terms of inferiority and superiority, especially with those politeness markers used without specific person reference such as *thưa* (polite vocative particle) as used in (44):

(44) ***Thưa*** *ông bà   có ở nhà   không?*
    Sir [HON]   grandmother have at home Q.
    Q. "Sir! is Madam home?" (Thompson 1965:172).

The honorific form of *thưa* (polite vocative particle) in utterance in (44) is applicable in both concepts of politeness, but how to identify which politeness type can be a critical question here. The distinction between two types of politeness in Vietnamese is best described in terms of superiority and inferiority as mentioned earlier. In a normal situation (not in a situation where a difference of emotional or psychological behaviour is involved), if the speaker is the inferior, the utterance is expected to involve respectful politeness (*lễ phép* or *lễ- độ*); if the speaker is the superior, then strategic politeness "*lịch-sự*" (strategic politeness) would be involved. Because the types of politeness in Vietnamese are mainly defined in accordance with situations in which S may be related to H, the utterance in (44) cannot be distinguished in terms of respectful politeness or strategic politeness in Vietnamese unless the speaker can be identified as superior or inferior. If, for some reason (not in a normal situation), *thưa* (polite vocative particle) was used in addressing an inferior, the utterance would become either ironic or inappropriate. This situation is more commonly seen with *dạ/dà* (polite yes), that is, the speaker decides whether this polite honorific term is appropriate in a given context.

In relation to the work on politeness markers in Vietnamese, Nguyen (1995:57) suggests that the concept of politeness is enhanced by the notion of "respect" (*kính-trọng*). Taking both concepts of politeness into consideration, the concept of "politeness" in Vietnamese culture is reflected in the popular saying *"Kính trên nhường dưới"* (Show deference to the superiors, yield to the inferiors). This saying reflects the adherence to conventional social standards of good behaviour. Thus, it serves as the guideline for appropriately polite behaviour that has been influenced by Confucianism in Vietnamese culture for centuries. In this regard, for example, children are expected to respect their parents or teachers, but never the other way round, that is, parents or teachers do not respect their children, but possibly, they should behave in a gentle manner towards the children, hence strategic politeness (*lịch sự*) is involved.

In general, as Sifianou (1992:49) suggests, politeness is a universal concept but it is subject to different cultural connotations and manifestations in terms of sociocultural norms. In English, some particles are considered as politeness markers when they stress that the speaker is committed to the truth of what has been said; and this complies with Grice's (1975) Conversational Maxims (Hsu 1980:192). For example:

(45)   I *absolutely* believe that John will come tonight.

In addition, as Brown and Levinson (1987:106) suggest, "*absolutely*" is considered a politeness marker as it serves the function of exaggerating interest with H, and such an utterance denotes an expression of positive politeness. However, the Vietnamese equivalent of "*absolutely*" alone may not be considered a politeness marker; but in support of another particle in the utterance, it may have a politeness function. For example:

(46)   *Tôi*   **chắc chắn** *tin*   *rằng John sẽ   tới   tối nay* **mà !**
       1PSR   *absolutely* believe that John   will come tonight PRT
       "I *absolutely* believe that John will come tonight really"

In this case the expression of politeness is not achieved by the particle *chắc-chắn* (absolutely), but by the final particle *mà* (insistent contradiction), articulated in a soft tone (Thompson 1965:167; Le & Nguyen 1998:475). However, the utterance (46) may send a different pragmatic message opposing politeness if the tone of *mà* (insistent contradiction) is raised to be short and sharp. Probably in most cases, monitoring the level of tone in speech is an important component in politeness strategies, especially in Vietnamese culture, because the same linguistic form may send different pragmatic messages to H. In this regard, the form of particle *mà*, like those of many other politeness markers in Vietnamese as listed in Table 5.1, may serve various functions such

as emphatic and communicative. All the politeness markers in Vietnamese will be discussed at length in Chapter 5.

In sum, I would argue that there are at least two types of conceptual politeness: *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness). This has been accepted in Vu's study on "Politeness in Modern Vietnamese", a sociolinguistic study based on data recorded in the Hanoi Speech Community:

> ...**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. (Vu 1997:85)

Despite the geographical difference in the focus in the Hanoi speech community to that of this research, Vu's concept of politeness seems also to be related to "Confucian-based ritual behaviour" (1997:57). This evidently gives further support to the concept of politeness being posited and discussed in this chapter, at least to some extent.

The following section points out politeness markers identified from the corpus of data. Some of these politeness markers can be used as both strategic politeness and respectful politeness in Vietnamese.

3.3.3   VIETNAMESE HONORIFICS AS POLITENESS MARKERS

In general, as McAuley (2001:48) points out, there are three basic types of honorifics in any language: referent, addressee and bystander. Referent honorifics are concerned with things or persons which are referred to in given utterances. In this view, the speaker (S) can indirectly convey respect for the hearer (H) by either humbling oneself or elevating things connected with H. Alternatively, with hearer honorifics respect is given directly to H by elevating H's actions, or by S's humble speech behaviour. Finally, bystander honorifics convey respect to the participant who is not actually taking part in the conversation between speaker and hearer. In this case, bystander honorifics do not convey any connotation that may be unpleasant to the passive, non-communicative participant in the speech event. Smyth (2002:126) suggests that all honorifics are culturally determined and serve to express politeness; but one may be more complex than another in use, as they involve language choice in accordance with context, cultural values, power and gender. The form

and use of honorifics are also different from one language to another, despite possible similarities. According to Coulmas (1992:305-307), the recognition of social rank is central to the choice of honorific terms, and the social hierarchy is conceived first and foremost in terms of superiors and inferiors. That is, honorific forms are based on whether H's position or social status is above or below S's. In this case, the relations between S and H determine the honorific forms. The form and use of honorifics are also different from one language to another despite possible similarity in some aspects.

In Vietnamese, honorific forms or particles are normally used in conjunction with person references to denote respect and politeness in a given context. This is applicable in Vietnamese, for example, *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness). According to Do (1994:168), there are specific linguistic elements that can be used to express politeness and deference towards H (the hearer). The usage of honorific forms or particles in Vietnamese is different, depending mainly on the context of utterances and the social relations between S and H.

Do (1994:44, 168) and Thompson (1987:258-266) suggest that typical honorific forms and particles (HON) in Vietnamese include: *Dạ/dà* (or *vâng* polite yes), *thưa* (polite vocative particle), *dạ thưa* (Sir/Madam, respectfully humble), *kính* (respectfully), *kính thưa* (respectfully humble), *xin* (supplicate, please/would you), *xin thưa* (humbly urging). These honorific forms are used in formal situations, especially in response to superiors who are considered equal to one's father or uncle, for example.

As the focus is placed on the Southern region, all discussions on Vietnamese politeness markers in the present study will not include lexical forms or usages associated with regional variations, employed in places other than South Vietnam. Therefore, the term *vâng* noted in the first politeness marker will not be included because it is used mainly by speakers in the North, despite its equivalence to the South, for example, *dạ/dà* (polite yes). This variation in Vietnamese geographical variety is observed from a Vietnamese native speaker's point of view.

While most instances of *dạ/dà* (polite yes) are in response to questions, variation in the usage of these honorific forms is unpredictable, as it normally varies with the context of utterance or the speech situation. It may also be determined by the setting (formal vs. causal) of the conversation, the social distance between the verbal interactants (distant vs. intimate), the role of the interactants and the purpose of the communication. However, these two forms of honorific particles are interchangeable without substantially altering their meanings. Therefore, they are treated as one in this study. This means when one form is discussed, the rules are applicable to the other.

According to Thompson (1987:260), *dạ* (polite yes) is a polite responsive particle, which is used to signal a courteous reaction to the previous utterance by the speaker. For example:

(47)   Q: *Người   ấy   là   ai?*
           Person   that   COPU who
           "Who is that person?

(48)   A: ***Dạ,***   *tôi   không   biết.*
            yes [HON]   I   NEG   know
            "I don't know" (Thompson 1987:260).

The answer in (48) is qualified as a polite utterance because it is constructed with the use of *dạ* (HON), but the degree of politeness in this utterance seems to be reduced to a certain extent by the use of the first-person reference *tôi* (I/me), which is not a polite reference form in Vietnamese. As the use of *tôi* (I/me) helps to create a social distance between S and H, it makes the utterance (48) far less polite than one which uses a kinship term for self-reference such as *em* (younger sibling), *con* (child) or *cháu* (grandchild), used to replace *tôi* in the utterance. It would be even worse in terms of contempt, if the non-polite *tôi* (I) was used in the answer without ***dạ*** or any kinship terms. The term "non-polite" is intentionally used here to distinguish from "impolite" because the usage of *tôi* (I) is not necessarily always impolite

in Vietnamese. Without *dạ* (HON), the answer in (48) would become (49), for example:

(49)   A: *Tôi không biết.*

            I   NEG   know

            "I don't know".

In Vietnamese the answer as in (49) may be considered impolite if S is younger than H, unfriendly or distant if S and H are equal in age, or if S is older than H. This is likely to be the case when S is upset and speaks regardless of generational difference.

From a pragmatic point of view, the term *dạ* (polite Yes) in (48) serves as a politeness marker meaning something like "I am attending politely". It is not communicative by itself, but serves as a polite answer (Thompson 1965:67, 1987:260). The function of *dạ* (polite Yes) is not the same as "Yes" in English, at least to some extent. In English, "Yes" is often used in an affirmative answer; whereas, in Vietnamese *dạ* (polite Yes) is used in both affirmative and negative answers. For example:

(50)   *Em*   *thích*   *cái*   *nón*   *nẫy*   *không?*
        younger-sibling like   CLA   hat   this   Q.
        "Do you like this hat?"

(51)   *Dạ thích.*
        HON (yes) like.
        "Yes please"

(52)   *Dạ*   *không.*
        HON (yes)   no
        "No thanks"

For an affirmative answer, *dạ* (polite Yes) in (51) corresponds to the principal verb *thích* in (50). For a negative answer, the *dạ* (polite Yes) in (52) corresponds to the negator (NEG) *"không"* (no). Both instances encode a polite response to the preceding question. This politeness encoding is somehow similar to that in English: "please" and "thank you".

When *dạ* (polite Yes) is used in affirmative and negative utterances, the politeness expression can be enhanced by adding another honorific particle *thưa* (polite vocative particle), which is the second most commonly used honorific particle in Vietnamese. According to Thompson (1987:266), *thưa* (polite vocative particle) is a "polite vocative particle", which is an expression of politeness in terms of humbleness, addressing social equals and superiors. It is used in a manner similar to the respectful address "Sir" in English, which is widely employed in service encounters (Bayyurt & Bayraktaroglu 2001:216). In Vietnamese the honorific particle *thưa* (polite vocative particle) is used as a prefix to an appropriate form of address or kinship term. For example: *thưa ông* (Sir/grandfather, humbly), *thưa bà* (Madam/grandmother, humbly), *thưa chú* (Sir/younger paternal uncle, humbly), *thưa bác* (Sir/elder paternal uncle, humbly)" (Do, 1994:52). The appropriate usage and interpretation of these honorific particles demands on a high level of competence in Vietnamese. For example:

(53) **Thưa   bác   Tư,   Ba   con   *đi vắng.***
Sir [HON] elder-uncle Tư [2PSR],   Father [3PSR] child (my) go absent

Con   sẽ **thưa**   *với* **ba   con**   *có* **bác**
1PSR shall tell [HON] (to) Father [3PSR]   child (my) have elder uncle [2PSR]

lại   thăm.
come visit

"Sir Uncle TU, my father is not home, I shall tell him you have come to visit him"

(Do 1994:52).

However, it should be noted that *thưa* (polite vocative particle) can also be used to denote the meaning of "humbly telling" such as in the second part of (53). In this case, *thưa* is a polite communicative term, which can be understood as "tell politely or humbly"; therefore, it should not be confused with the same lexical form of *thưa* used in the first denotation in (53). In Vietnamese there are different terms for the English verb "tell". Apart from *thưa* (tell politely or humbly) all other terms are preceded by a pre-verbal politeness particle, as in *kể lại, nói lại, trình lại, thuật lại,* of which the verbal roots (*kể, nói, trình, thuật*) are equivalent to the English verb "tell".

It should be further noted that in (53) there are three kinship terms: *bác* (paternal elder uncle), *ba* (father) and *con* (child). These kinship terms can be used for first-person singular (1PSR) second-person singular (2PSR) or third-person singular (3PSR) references. But from a pragmatic point of view, the usage of these kinship terms may vary to meet different needs in any given speech event; for example, *bác* (paternal elder uncle), *ba* (father) and *con* (child) can also be used for self-reference or 1PSR in a politeness situation.

In addition, the politeness function of kinship terms is intensified by a polite vocative particle, which may be labelled as an honorific prefix (such as the first *thưa* in (53), which serves to enhance the degree of politeness. In (53) the kinship term *bác* appears twice. Both serve as 2PSR, but the first serves as an address and follows the honorific prefix *thưa*, while the second serves as 2PSR, but does not serve as an address. This however, does not necessarily suggest that an honorific prefix always emerges in addressing; *thưa* is used instead, with or without a modifier. A modifier in this case is another honorific prefix used with *thưa* to intensify the degree of politeness in the utterance. For example, the first utterance in (53) can become (54):

(54) **Dạ thưa bác   Tư,   Ba   con   đi vắng.**
Sir [HON] elder-uncle Tư [2PSR], Father [3PSR] child (my) go absent
"Sir Uncle TU, my father is not home".

The *dạ* in (54) serves as a polite vocative particle or as an honorific prefix in this example. It has two lexical forms *dạ/dà,* serving the same function. In this case, *dạ* is a modifier for *thưa* to intensify the degree of politeness in the utterance. Thus an utterance with *dạ thưa* (54) is considered more formal and polite than *thưa* (53).

Other honorifics in Vietnamese consist of *kính* (respectfully), *kính thưa* (respectfully humble), *xin* (supplicate-please/would you), *xin thưa* (humbly urging), which are also "polite vocative particles" serving similar politeness functions in addressing as *thưa*. These utterances that accompany the compound particles, *kính thưa* and *xin thưa*, are more formal and polite than those accompanying the single honorific prefix *kính* or *xin*.

Although the honorific particles normally serve to express politeness in formal situations, they are widely used in daily speech situations among strangers or newly acquainted people in any social distance, such as customers and shop assistants, clients and service providers. In such situations, the social relationship between S and H is determined by how often they meet, or the closeness associated with each other (Thompson 1965:3).

Do (1994:49) suggests speakers employ those honorific particles to express politeness or deference (in either concept of Vietnamese politeness) in different speech situations. The choice of honorific particles is determined by various factors including the age, status and relationship between S and H and the gender and role of S and H, regardless of which concept of politeness in Vietnamese.

Variation in honorific forms is an important factor that determines the degree of politeness in Vietnamese. The scale of politeness is established in conjunction with what Do (1994:44, 168) and Thompson (1987:258-266) have defined as politeness markers in Vietnamese. It ranks from the most polite expression in a descending order (see Table 3.3).

While the honorifics listed in Table 3.3 are normally used by an inferior when addressing a superior in a formal situation to convey politeness behaviours.

Table 3.3 Scale of politeness in Vietnamese

	Most polite	Denotation	Modifier to kinship terms
1	*dạ kính thưa*	polite, respectfully humble	honorific prefix
2	*kính thưa*	respectfully humble	honorific prefix
3	*kính*	respectfully	honorific prefix
4	*xin thưa*	humbly urging	
5	*dạ thưa*	Sir/Madam, respectfully humble	honorific prefix
6	*dạ/dà*	polite yes	
7	*thưa*	polite vocative particle	honorific prefix
8	*xin*	supplicate/please/would you	
	Least polite		

In order to achieve the highest degree of politeness, Vietnamese native speakers have to choose not only appropriate honorific forms, but also appropriate kinship terms in addressing, or in self-reference. Thus, apart from the usage of honorifics, as discussed earlier (in section 3.1.2), the choice of kinship terms in addressing H or in self-reference is another important factor in Vietnamese politeness; because it encodes the degree of politeness and level of social distance between S and H.

This chapter has discussed issues relating to Vietnamese language and culture and the concepts of face and politeness in Vietnamese, with emphasis on the complexities of the person reference system including kinship and non-kinship references. The chapter has established a theoretical framework of Vietnamese language and culture for the research that was carried out in line with the methodology described in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research paradigm and provides a contextual overview and details of data collection adopted for the research. This is undertaken in the context of the research questions stated in Chapter 1 and the literature review presented in Chapters 2 and 3. The research paradigm has been partly adopted from works by other linguistic scholars in the field, and also represents the researcher's own model, tailored to the sociolinguistic context of this study.

4.1 CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW

This research is primarily based on data collected through audio-recordings of what speakers actually say to each other in naturally occurring social settings within the domain of service encounters. Ventola (1987:47-48) suggests that service encounters are appropriate for a large scale investigation due to three reasons. First, text recordings represent everyday social activities in a community. Second, service encounters are convenient as a starting point because they seem more "uniform" than, for example, casual conversations. The term "uniform" is used here to emphasise the "same base" or category required in the comparison of speech behaviours. Whilst it is recognised that language use varies with social contexts (Hall 1976:86; Holmes 1992: 9), in this study, service encounters are considered as a "common" context for VV and AV from which data were recorded for analysis, discussion and comparison. Finally, as service encounters are "public" (Ventola 1987:48), they are not considered intimate or private and thus permission to record such conversations is relatively easy to obtain in most situations. Furthermore, because service encounters occur in the public domain, anyone can listen and all assume their conversations are being overheard.

For both national contexts, Vietnam and Australia, the actual settings of service encounters in which the data was recorded include retailing shops with clothing, jewellery, books, flowers, as well as restaurants and open markets,

which are large, open areas where fruit, vegetables and fish are displayed for sale. The participants in these settings assumed one of two roles: the customers and sellers, regardless of whether a sales transaction actually took place. Verbal exchange might occur when the customers seek information about particular goods or when the sellers introduce the goods or invite potential customers to purchase certain goods. Apart from the roles of the speaker, other social factors relating to participants were also taken into account such as gender and the age of the speaker (as defined by the older or younger generation).

The data were actually recorded in specific geographical areas and contexts in Vietnam and Australia. All recording contexts involved service encounters, but given the differences between the two national contexts in which such service encounters commonly take place in Vietnamese, there were differences in the actual service activities, for example, in Australia, immigration services regularly take place; whereas, this is not the case in Vietnam.

In Vietnam we chose the cities of Cantho and Ho Chi Minh, hereafter referred to as Saigon (its former name), for the following reasons:

(a)   Cantho and Saigon are the most populous cities in South Vietnam. Until 1975 Saigon was the capital city of the former regime opposed to the communist regime. These two cities were considered as being relevant because a large majority of Vietnamese-born residents in Australia come from the Southern regions of Vietnam (as described in 1.1.2), and there is no major dialectal difference between these two cities.

(b)   Cantho is the researcher's previous hometown and this is considered to be an advantage as the researcher is familiar with the local settings and geographical environments, and could easily locate himself unobtrusively to observe and record (Labov 1972:44).

(c)   Saigon is the biggest city in Vietnam and represents the national economic hub and centre for the Southern dialect of Vietnamese, which differs somewhat from Hanoi's dialect in the North.

In these two cities, data were recorded from 19 different settings, which involved various transactional activities as mentioned earlier (see Table 4.1). The length of recording varies from one setting to another depending on the extent of transactional activity and the use of "pause". Table 4.1 summarises the recording settings with the length of recording in terms of the number of turns at talk which took place in each setting.

Table 4.1: Recording settings in Vietnam

Setting	Turns	Activities and location
1	1-115	At a clothing shop in Cantho
2	116-260	At a tailor's shop in Cantho.
3	261-318	At a fruit market in Cantho
4	319-347	At a clothing store in Cantho
5	348-370	At a hardware store in Cantho
6	371-378	At a kitchen ware store in Cantho
7	379-385	In a restaurant in Cantho
8	386-468	At a fruit shop in Cantho
9	469-549	At a bookshop in Saigon
10	550-580	At a watch shop in Saigon
11	581-638	At a refreshments kiosk in Saigon
12	639-649	At a photo shop in Saigon
13	650-674	In a supermarket in Saigon
14	675-870	At a watch shop in Saigon
15	871-922	At a general store in Saigon
16	923-932	At a furniture display home in Saigon
17	933-970	At a supermarket in Saigon
18	971-981	At a restaurant in Saigon
19	982-1064	At a different general store in Saigon

The official publication[1] obtained online from the General Statistics Office in Vietnam shows that by 1 January 2008, the population of Saigon was 6,611,600 and the population of Cantho was 1,171,100 respectively.

In Australia, the two largest Vietnamese diaspora cities were chosen for data collection: Melbourne, Victoria with 63,643 Vietnamese-background

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[1]   Publicised under the Decision 1682/QD-BTNMT of 26 August 2008 and signed by the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment. http://www.gso.gov.vn/

speakers, compared with 65,880 the same background speakers in Sydney, New South Wales, according to the 2006 Census.

In Melbourne, there are at least five Vietnamese trading centres including Footscray, Richmond, Springvale, Sunshine and St. Albans, where service encounters take place every day. Most encounters are in Vietnamese as the customers are predominantly Vietnamese speakers.

In Sydney there are also a number of Vietnamese trading centres, including Cabramatta, Bankstown, Fairfield and Canley Vale. Service encounters in these centres also took place mainly in Vietnamese.

In these two capital cities, data were recorded from 16 different contextual settings, which involve a similar variety of transactional activities as those in Vietnam.

Table 4.2: Recording settings in Australia

Setting	Turns	Activities and location
1	1-129	At an Immigration Service office in Melbourne
2	130-142	At a grocery in Melbourne.
3	143-177	At a different Immigration Service office in Melbourne
4	178-197	At a curtain shop in Melbourne
5	198-412	At a different curtain shop in Melbourne
6	413-443	In a open market in Melbourne
7	444-537	In a open market in Sydney
8	538-599	At a grocery in Sydney.
9	600-620	At the Post Office in Sydney
10	621-662	At a hairdressing shop in Sydney
11	663-681	At a travel agent in Sydney
12	682-742	At a curtain shop in Sydney
13	743-990	At a different curtain shop in Sydney
14	991-1006	At a different grocery in Sydney
15	1007-1053	At a different grocery in Sydney
16	1054-1064	At a butcher shop in Sydney

Because the method of data collection involved anonymous sampling, the size of selected samples in this research could only be measured on the basis of speech identified in terms of turn at talk in each speech event or context.

4.2 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected by means of audio recording in two stages. The first stage took place in Melbourne between 15 October 2002 and 10 December 2002, and in Sydney in March 2003. The second stage involved a field trip to Vietnam between 5 December 2003 and 10 January 2004. It was carried out by means of audio recording within the Vietnamese speech communities in both national contexts.

The recording was performed in public places accompanied by anonymous observations with the objective of recording what and how people use their language in everyday contexts (Labov 1972:44). As the method of collecting data was anonymous, the precise number of individuals whose speech was sampled is not available. As mentioned, the main unit of analysis of speech sampling was the recorded turns at talk.

In order to meet university ethical requirements, a notice in Vietnamese was displayed in every recording setting: *"Vùng nầy có thể thu âm với mục đích nghiên cứu"* (Translation: "Your voice may be recorded in this area for study purposes"). This notification was deemed to be a substitute for informed consent, providing clear and comprehensive communication (Faden 1986:274-275; Sieber 1992:26); and this represents a major element in the ethical requirements for sociolinguistic research with human subjects involved. At the outset of planning for data collection, the researcher was aware that a similar approach had been regularly adopted in other research, with the assumption that ethics principles in terms of respect, justice or fairness and public trust (Froehlich 2000:266) were not violated. In this regard, the data collection complied with the Code of Conduct for Research issued by Victoria University in 1995 and received ethics approval from the Faculty Human Research Ethics Committee prior to data collection that commenced in late 2002.

In practice, the public notification of recording seemed to work well as it was noted that participants did not show any objection after they had read it, although in busy, open market places the notices did not attract much attention due to the crowded situation. Nobody expressed concern about recording taking place given the public context of the recordings.

Saville-Troike (1982:119-120) suggests that observation is the most common method of collecting ethnographic data, as the researcher can enter various speech events relatively unobtrusively. In this study, observation was adopted as an adjunction to the recording. According to Stubbs (1983:220-224) audio recording is the most common method of data collection in sociolinguistics, where data can be obtained from speakers in naturally occurring social settings that represent the most crucial factors for success in any analysis of speech behaviour.

In his groundbreaking sociolinguistic research, Labov (1972:209) highlighted the challenges in capturing vernacular speech, introducing the concept of the "Observer's Paradox". More recently, Grundy (2000:221) also points out that if someone is asked to answer certain questions in the process of collecting data, it is highly unlikely they will present their natural speech styles. This suggests that systematic interviews are not appropriate as a principal method for sociolinguistic investigations, which aim to obtain natural speech styles from certain groups of speakers.

With the method of audio recording with observation, the researcher took on the role of participant that other participants would recognise as contextually appropriate without feeling threatened (Lindlof 1995:4). For example, the researcher took on the role of a customer in the service activity context but did not participate in verbal interactions. This method involved the researcher acting as an "insider" within Vietnamese speaking communities when collecting primary data by means of audio recording (Milroy 1980:45).

The operation of data collection using a compact audio recorder was controlled covertly by the researcher to ensure conversations between customers and service providers were recorded unobtrusively. This skill required rehearsal well before the actual recording took place. Rapid note taking immediately followed each short recording session to mark the participant's gender, role and estimated age. This was done outside recorded settings to make it less obvious. Abbreviations were employed to mark all the information required for later reference in data transcription.

As briefly mentioned above, a technique of surreptitious recording was

employed to ensure that vernacular speech data was obtained. This practical method has routinely been adopted by researchers in sociolinguistics (e.g. Clyne 1967; Labov 1972; Stubbs 1983; Akindele 1988). Clyne (1967:22) notes that although audio recording took place with the use of a small, portable tape-recorder being "usually concealed under a chair or table, it did affect the language of some informants". Labov (1972:44) suggests that "rapid and anonymous speech events could be used as the basis for a systematic study of language". Stubbs (1983:224) reports that even in the 1980s with available audio recording devices, there was no difficulty in recording speakers either face-to-face or on the telephone.

For this research, the audio recordings were well planned in advance for each recording event. The same preparatory procedures were applied in all contexts in Australia and Vietnam in the process of data recording. For example, outside the shop an audio tape had been inserted in the pocket recorder. The recording function had been turned on in "pause" mode. Having entered the shop, the researcher covertly operated the recorder by releasing the "pause" button to record the customer's interactions with the shopkeeper when appropriate. The frequency of visits to a recording setting was carefully planned to ensure that the researcher's attendance in one place was not so obviously unusual as to arouse suspicion that he was not a genuine customer. In open market places, the data recording procedure was also applied in an unobtrusive manner, similar to that carried out in other settings mentioned earlier, to enable the recording to proceed smoothly and without participants noticing.

In this research, the random selection of the samples is realised in the sense that in a given data recording setting, everyone speaking within our recording ranges "has an equal and independent chance of being chosen" (Hatch & Lazaraton 1991:42). Therefore, the corpus of this primary data is considered as a product of random samples within 1064 turns at talk (Hatch & Lazaraton 1991:393-94; Connor-Linton 2003:4-5). This figure has been treated as a sample space or corpus, within which the frequencies of using politeness markers are documented. Wardhaugh (1986:148) suggests that random

selection represents the best method of data collection, when everyone in the population has an equal chance of being selected in particular contexts.

Although audio recording is considered one of the most suitable methods for gaining an accurate record of naturally occurring speech, problems still cannot be avoided. Stubbs (1983:228) points out that even with good, audible recordings the transcriber is still subject to the tricks played by his own ears. For example, whole words or overlaps sometimes cannot be heard, even after repeated listening. These issues are mentioned here as a disclaimer that the researcher was aware of these problems; but they were minimised in the process of transcription.

4.3 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

This section first looks at the method of data analysis based on the primary data recorded from natural speaking activities in service encounters among Vietnamese native speakers living in Australia and Vietnam. In total, the recorded data took up to 190 minutes of continuous recording. The transcription took more than one hundred pages for each national group, with a total of 55,000 words approximately, including a direct gloss into English and a separate English translation (samples of data in transcribed form are provided in Appendix).

The first part of data analysis involved transcription of the recorded data. Data transcription was done by means of standard orthographic scripts in the formats adopted from Grundy to denote how people actually talked in service encounters. For example, "hesitations" are denoted by "er" or "um"; other filters and uptake signals can be denoted by either "uh", "uh-uh" or "yeah"; "pause" is transcribed by the use of parentheses with the length of pause indicated in tenths of a second; for example, "(2.5)" would represent a pause of two-and-a-half seconds. "(..)" is equivalent to a two-syllable length pause (Grundy 2000:224-225). For example:

(1)   *Song hôn (..) song:hôn ở tù   6 năm.*   (a1)
       Bigamy ...   bigamy   imprisoned 6 years
       "Bigamy is likely to be imprisoned for 6 years"

Experience in conversational flow in service encounters could help the transcriber distinguish the role of different speakers. For example, when playing back an audio tape, the transcriber would be able to distinguish the speaker in terms of role, that is, seller or customer.

The transcription was made from three separate tapes for each national group. It involved the use of an electronic transcribing machine and a personal computer, beginning with the audio tapes for one national group until it reached the end of the third tape. The procedure of transcription for the other national group was conducted in the same manner. However, for the purpose of data analysis, the overall length of talk produced by each group was equalised. The equal number of turns for each national group was 1064 turns, which marks the end of total recording for one national group. For the other group, equally the data transcription was 1064 turns.

With information drawn from notes regarding the participants' age, role and gender, the transcribed data were presented in the form of a corpus design adopted from Eggins and Slade's (1997:190) formula including three columns with the headings "Turn", "Speaker" and "Talk". In order to distinguish the sample data in Vietnam (VV) from that of Australia (AV), the prefix "v" is attached to the turn number for VV and the prefix "a" for AV.

(2) Transcribed sample 1 for VV.

Turn	Speaker	Talk
v59	CM60	*giày (.) giày (..) quần có* shoes shoes pants have "I choose the shoes as I have got the pants"

(3) Transcribed sample 2 for AV.

Turn	Speaker	Talk
a32	SM60	*Thôi được rồi (.) bây giờ <u>con</u> hẹn ngày trở lại với chồng <u>con</u> (..) với hai người chứng* stop gain already, now child promise date return with husband child (..) with two people witness "That's OK, now you need to come back with your husband and two witnesses"

In the "speaker" column, the prefix "C" represents "customer"; but the other prefixes "S", "M" and "F" may appear throughout the transcribed corpus representing "seller", "male" and "female" respectively. The preceding number represents the estimated age of the speaker. In the "Talk" column, the contents include the orthographic scripts in Vietnamese, the glosses and the meanings in Standard English.

Stubbs (1983:67) has noted that discourse analysis may involve data recording with a focus on the underlying functions of utterances while superficial utterances can be neglected. However, in this research, these utterances were examined at the outset of data analysis to identify politeness markers as defined from Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese perspectives. From the transcribed data, identified politeness markers were identified and classified into 21 categories (see Chapter 5) based mostly on Brown and Levinson's formula of politeness strategies (1987:104-190).

Overall, data analysis involved assessment of variation in linguistic politeness behaviours based on a comparison in relation to two indices: the turn and occurrence of politeness markers. While a politeness marker is counted as one token, the turn, also referred to as "turn at talk", has been adopted as the basic unit of linguistic analysis in line with common practice in conversational discourse analysis (Saville-Troike 1982:21,138; Coulthard 1985:59; Eggins & Slade 1997:25; Tanaka 2000:1). In these analyses, differences in the usage of politeness markers per turn at talk produced by the two national groups (VV and AV) and their subgroups have been examined to see how one group or subgroup differs from another in linguistic politeness behaviours.

In more detailed analyses comparing performance within subgroups, adjustment to the number of turns has been made to generate the "equivalent" incidence of markers when the number of turns per subgroup are equalised across each national corpus. This equal number of turns is obtained simply by adding all the turns of the compared subgroups and dividing the total turns by the number of subgroups compared. For example, there are two gender subgroups of Vietnamese living in each national

context, Australia and Vietnam. Their respective numbers of turns are 488 (AM) and 576 (AF) in Australia, and 493 (VM) and 571 (VF) in Vietnam. The mean number of turns at talk across the two subgroups in each context is 532 (i.e. half of 1064 overall turns in each case). The 'equivalence' figures for the more detailed analysis therefore involved adjusting the number of markers by category on the assumption of what would have occurred for each gender subgroup if there had been 532 turns in each sample. Further analyses in relation to all independent variables – gender, role and generation, will be based on the mean number of turns at talk (532) for all the respective subgroups, with data generated from it, hereafter referred to as "equivalent data".

While similarity and difference are effectively two sides of the same coin, my data analysis will focus mainly on "difference" because the primary research interest is to explore the nature of variation in the usage of Vietnamese in two contexts (Australia and Vietnam) and across and within subgroups in these contexts. In this regard, it is also necessary to address the underlying questions while analysing the data:

(1) Is there a difference in linguistic politeness behaviour between the two national contexts being compared?

(2) Within and across contexts, is there a difference in the usage of politeness markers by subgroups defined in relation to gender, role and generation?

(3) How much do groups/subgroups differ from one to another in terms of proportional usage and is this difference large enough to be statistically significant?

(4) Is there a significant correlation between the two groups or subgroups being compared in the rank order of preference in the usage of politeness markers across the 21 categories?

In the data analysis, frequency in terms of token per turn at talk in the usage of politeness markers has been used as a measuring unit in all comparisons from a quantitative point of view. There are two methods of

statistical assessment employed in all data analyses with two non-parametric statistical procedures involved: the Chi square test of difference and the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation (Rho) with "R" representing the correlation value of Rho (Plonsky 2006). In both cases, "p" indicates the level of probability (Hatch & Lazarathon 1991-396-97).

A Chi square test, including "goodness of fit" assesses the relationship between variables in terms of how well the comparitive variables go together, rather than how one variable affects the other (Hatch & Lazaraton 1991:394). It has been chosen as an appropriate method of statistical assessment for data analysis because the data meet the following requirements: (1) The data is nominal in the sense that it can be sorted into categories such as Vietnamese, Australian, male, female, seller, customer, older and younger; (2) it can be measured and counted with frequencies of occurrence; and (3) it has been drawn (recorded) from random samples as mentioned earlier.

The Spearman Rank-Order Correlation (Rho) tells us whether there is a significant correlation between the two ranking orders of preference in the usage of each politeness marker category. It basically tells how the rankings of data being compared are related. Rho has been chosen as the preferred second method of statistical assessment because the rank ordering categories are ordinal (Hatch & Lazaraton 1991: 451).

All Chi square tests are subject to the conventional requirements, that is, the expected frequencies in all cells must be at least 5 (Connor-Linton 2003:6). For categories of politeness marker that meet the conventional requirements, two outcomes may be expected of a Chi square test: significant and not significant. On the usage of each individual category, a significant outcome suggests the difference between the two groups or subgroups involved is statistically significant. The individual category tested with a significant outcome has been referred to as a significant category. Therefore, the result of a Chi square test on the usage of each individual category determines which categories are statistically significant or not

significant in their degree of difference and how many categories are statistically different.

In data analysis, national context, gender, role, and generation are taken into account as the crucial factors. With generation, for example, the comparisons involved generational difference between the younger group and the older group. The younger group includes speakers judged to be no older than 40 years old, while the older group refers to those judged to be 50 years old and over. This judgment of generational groups is applied to both Vietnamese living in Australia and Vietnam. The allocation of each participant in the sample age group is a critical issue as it relies on the researcher's judgment employed in the field. Despite no guarantee of accuracy of estimated age in this research, as the researcher had grown up in the same culture as those in the samples, his experience in estimating someone's age in personal contact allows him to claim that his estimation would be reasonably accurate. However, to allow for some margin of error, and based on the historical background of the samples as described earlier in Chapter 1, the researcher decided to exclude all data drawn from samples in the middle ages (MA) ranging between 41 and 49 years old in data analysis on the generational difference. The exclusion of MA aimed to ensure that the two generational groups (younger and older) were clearly distinct. Therefore, in the data analysis, the turns at talk for MA have been excluded; despite 1064 turns being treated as the full sample space incorporating all respondents in each national group. The exclusion of data drawn from MA was made in the assessment of generational differences with an assumption that AV began arriving in Australia due to the exodus of Vietnamese refugees as a result of political and social change in South Vietnam following the fall of Saigon's regime in 1975 (see Chapter 1 for further details). With this assumption, at the time the data were collected, the oldest of those in the younger AV (AY) group, if they had arrived in the decade immediately post-1975, would have been no more than 12 years old when they arrived in Australia. In this case, the younger AV are most likely to have received most of their education in Australia where they were exposed to contact with Anglo-Australian culture. Applying the same assumptions, when the data were collected in Australia,

the youngest in the older AV (AO) group would have been at least 22 when they arrived in Australia, meaning that most of their schooling and initial adult social activities had occurred in Vietnam. Table 4.3 summarises the age range of participants in this research. In relation to the determination of the participant's age range, there are two key time points to be taken into consideration: 1975, considered as a starting point for social and political change and the exodus of Vietnamese refugees; and 2003 when the bulk of the primary data was recorded. The time span between the two points in time is 28 years, which is used in the calculation of age for both younger and older groups. In 2003 when data was recorded, a person who was judged to be 60 years old would have been 28 years younger (i.e. 32 years old) in 1975.

Table 4.3 Age range of informants in research

Research plan	Age in 1975		Age in 2003	
Younger group	12		40+under	
Older group	22		50+above	
Research findings	Youngest	Oldest	Youngest	Oldest
VV	unborn	32	20	60
VA	unborn	39	22	67

In order to provide an overview of participants in this research, Table 4.4 summarises the numbers of turns at talk of participants involved, including the numbers of turns of middle age speakers (MA) being excluded from the analysis for generational groups. The exclusion of MA data will be subsequently explained further.

Table 4.4 Overall breakdown of turns at talk

	Gender		Role		Generation		
VV	VM	VF	VC	VS	VO	VY	MA
	493	571	623	441	602	317	145
Percentage	46.33%	53.67%	58.55%	41.45%	56.58%	29.79%	13.63%
AV	AM	AF	AC	AS	AO	AY	
	488	576	546	518	665	295	104
Percentage	45.86%	54.14%	51.32%	48.68%	62.50%	27.73%	9.77%
Total turns	1064		1064		1064		

On gender, it is notable that female speakers participated more than male speakers in both national contexts; but across both contexts, the comparative participation of male vs. female speakers is similar.

On role, the distribution of participants is also similar to that of gender; that is, the participation of customers is higher than sellers in both national contexts. In view of the role comparison, there is a difference across the national contexts; that is, in Vietnam, the participation of customers is higher than in Australia; whereas, in Australia the difference in participation between customers and sellers is less pronounced.

On generation, the same generational difference exists across the national contexts; i.e. the younger group's participation is smaller than the older group's. However, in comparing generations, there is a difference across the national contexts, i.e. in Vietnam the older group's participation is lower than in Australia; while the younger group's participation in Vietnam is a little higher than in Australia.

One factor that is important to consider in making comparisons between the two national corpora is how the turns in each are distributed when all the distinguishing factors for each turn taker are considered. The full detail of the actual distribution of turns at talk in the raw data is summarised in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Distribution of turns at talk from raw data

VV	MCO	MCY	FCO	FCY	MSO	MSY	FSO	FSY
Percentage	35.81%	4.32%	13.53%	2.16%	3.29%	1.13%	3.95%	22.18%
Total turns	381	46	144	23	35	12	42	236
AV								
Percentage	18.33%	4.04%	4.23%	20.21%	18.98%	0.47%	20.96%	3.01%
Total turns	195	43	45	215	202	5	223	32

Note: M=male; C=customer; O=older; Y=younger; F=female; S=seller
Data of midle-age informants with 145 turns for VV and 104 turns for AV excluded
% values are based on 1064 turns

This table highlights that across the two national corpora there are some clear differences in composition at this level of detail. For example, there are twice as many older male customer turns in the Vietnam corpus as in Australia, and higher numbers of turns contributed by younger female sellers and older female customers. In contrast, the Australia corpus has a much higher number of turns contributed by older female and male sellers

and younger female customers. The nature of sampling and approach to data collection means that these differences were unavoidable as they reflect differences in social and economic structure between service encounters in Vietnamese in the two contexts, indigenous and diasporic. They will therefore need to be further considered in interpreting the results.

This chapter has outlined in detail three major areas of the methods adopted in collecting and analysing the research data. The next chapter will provide a full range of analysis and explanation of the politeness markers identified from the recorded data.

Chapter 5

POLITENESS MARKERS IN VIETNAMESE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter constitutes an analysis of the 21 categories of politeness markers identified from the data recorded. The linguistic data has been drawn from the natural speech of Vietnamese communities in Vietnam and Australia. The analysis exclusively focuses on politeness particles (PRT), excluding some lexical forms which serve non-politeness functions.

The categories presented in Table 5.1 are defined in reference to previous studies and each category is assigned a name, following the terminology used by Brown and Levinson (1978). As assignment to the categories of politeness markers, listed in Table 5.1, are based on pragmatic function, some lexical forms have been assigned in different contexts to different categories. The appropriateness of this assignment was carefully drawing on the expertise of the supervisors and an independent expert on Vietnamese language and culture, Dr. Tuan Nguyen, who has been teaching Vietnamese at tertiary level for more than 20 years and widely recognised internationally for his publications on the Vietnamese language and literature.

Examples for every category of politeness marker is assigned a turn code "v" for VV and "a" for AV and the attached ordinal number within 1064 turns. For example, v45 represents 45th turn for VV; a50 is 50th turn for AV and so on.

While the extant transcript of recordings is not fully provided in Appendix (as it is too bulky to accommodate in this thesis), data of the politeness markers listed in Table 5.1 serves as the most fundamental resource on which to base further analyses and discussion.

5.2 CATEGORY 1: AFFECTIVE PARTICLES

This first category of politeness markers consists of the following particles in the data: *à, nghen, nghe, nhen, nha, à nghen, á nghen, á, đó, đó k ia, nữa kìa, nè,*

hết, kìa. However, further discussions on these particles are not necessarily in the ordinal sequence listed above.

Table 5.1 Identified politeness markers in Vietnamese

Categories of Politeness marker	Possible Usage
Affective particles (c1) *à, nghen, nghe, nhen, nha, à-nghen, á-nghen, á, đó, đó kìa, nữa kìa, nè, hết, kìa*	Softening hedges on performative force with an affective tone (Thompson, 1965:173, Le P.T.K & Nguyen K.O, 1998:23, Tran T.K. et al., 1980:139; Nguyen, 1997:166; B&L, 1987:147)
Kinship terms (c2) *anh, chị, em, con, cháu, cô, chú, bác, dì …*	Kinship terms used in the expession of effective bond among kinship members such as grandchild, auntie, uncle, etc. (B&L,
Gift giving/Thanks (c3) *cám ơn*	Used as linguistic norms to express politeness in daily context (Watts, 2003:4, B & L., 1987:96, 101)
Hedging opinions (c4) *chắc, tưởng, nghĩ, có thể, đại khái, khoảng, khoảng chừng, chừng, chắc chừng, phỏng, nói chung*	To soften one's own opinion. The speaker takes no responsibility in the meaning of the utterance (ref. B&L, 1987: 117, 153, 164) - 'Perhaps, I'm thinking, maybe, I suppose'.
Softened hedges/please (c5) *đâu, đi, hà, đi mà, quá hà, hè/tự hỏi, mà, được mà, vậy mà, rồi mà, giùm, xin, làm ơn, thôi mà*	To express a 'mild exhortation', negation or insistency, in terms of an earnest request - 'please' (ref. Le P.T.K & Nguyen K.O, 1998:92, Thompson, 1965:172, B&L, 1987:132-133, 147)
Repetition (c6) *lập lại*	To stress an emotional agreement with H (ref. B&L, 1987:113)
Honorifics (c7) *da, dà, kính, thưa, dạ thưa*	Honorifics used in expression of politeness (Buu, K., 1972:205) or giving defence (B&L, 1987: 178-81)
Common ground (c8) *đúng rồi, đúng vậy, được rồi, phải rồi, rồi, rồi thôi*	Claiming common ground with H as an 'underlying agreement' (ref. B&L, 1987:112)
Minimising imposition (c9) *hà or hè, thôi, thôi hà, thôi hè, vậy thôi, một chút, chút, chút xíu, nhỏ xíu*	Minimizing imposition on H 'not much, little, inexpensive, nothing else no more' (ref. Thompson, 1965:172, B&L, 1987:177)
Seeking agreement (c10) *hé/hén, chớ /chứ, đó chớ/đó chứ*	Seeking agreement with H by means of question (ref. Tran Trong Kim, et al., 1980:136, B&L, 112)
Exaggerate interest (c11) *lận, lắm, lắm đó, tuyệt vời*	Exaggerate interest with H in terms of boasting, implying expensive, much or plenty (ref. Tran T.k., et al., 1980:139, B&L,
Assertive hedges (c12) *luôn, mới, thật ra*	Emphatic hedges, stressing a conditional implication in a sense of 'inclusively', 'by the way', completely, fully etc. (ref. Buu,
Inclusive "we" (c13) *để coi, mình, chúng mình, chúng ta, để coi*	To include both S and H in the activity using inclusive "we" to refer only to 'you' or 'me' (ref. A32B&L, 1987:127)
In-group language (c14) *ngay, trân, trơn, rói*	Used in effective expressions as an in-group member (ref. Tran et al, 1980?:141, B&L, 1987:110-111)
Tag question (c15) *hả, sao, phải không, phải hông, không, hông, hôn*	To draw H into the conversation (ref. B&L, 1987:107)
Pseudo-agreement (c16) *rồi/thôi/rồi thôi, vậy là, thì/vậy thì, bởi vậy, như vậy, vậy đó, được rồi, biết rồi, vậy/vậy thôi, thôi thì, vậy đi, thì đó*	Expresses the speaker's agreement with H using 'then' 'so' 'OK' as a marker of acceptance (ref. B&L, 1987:115)
Relevance hedges (c17) *vậy, vậy đó, rồi đó, thôi, thôi thôi, quá trời, trời, trời ơi, ơi, ủa, xin lỗi*	Mark a change of topic to reduce imposition on H's face and express the speaker's underlying agreement with H (ref. Le & Nguyen,1998:199, B&L, 1987:169; Watts, 2003:4)
Giving/asking for reasons (c18) *vì, tại/tại vì, bởi vì, là do (because), sao, tại sao, mà sao, là sao, làm sao, vậy sao (why)*	Simply give or ask for reasons (ref. B&L, 1987:128)
Token agreement (c19) *vậy hả, vậy à, vậy đó hả*	'Is that so?' - token agreement to S's preceding utterance (ref. B&L, 1987:114, Vuong, 1975: 51)
Intensifying interest to H (c20) *thấy hông/không, biết hông/hôn/không, biết hả, biết sao hôn, hiểu hông*	Used in persuasive expressions to draw H into the conversation (ref. B&L, 1987:107)
Joke (c21) *nói đùa*	Used with expected shared knowledge to put H at ease (ref. B&L, 1987:124)

Note: B&L = Brown and Levinson

Category 1 (Affective particles) of politeness markers are defined as softened hedges on performative force with an affective tone to perform various functions in a politeness linguistic environment (Thompson, 1965:173, Le & Nguyen, 1998:23, Tran et al., 1980:139, Brown & Levinson, 1987:147).

The affective particles are "expressive" in nature; hence they mainly provide affective meanings, like endearments in English, related to the speaker's moods, feelings and attitudes. For example:

(1)   *Khâu đó   hổng muốn nói   à!* (a20)
        Part that NEG want talk   PRT
        "I don't want to talk about that"

(2)   *Nút   nầy là   nút của Mỹ   à.* (v217)
        Button   this COPU. button of   American   PRT
        "These are American buttons"

The particle *à* in (1) performs a function of softening the illocutionary force in the rejection of an offer or invitation, but the rejection was expressed in affection in that S wants to maintain relations with H. In other words, the use of particle *à* helps to maintain solidarity or friendship with H, despite rejecting H's offer or invitation.

In (2) particle *à* serves as a softened hedge on the illocutionary force with a suggestion that the product is of high quality according to the stereotype that American products are always good. This suggestion also reflects an exaggeration of interest with H (Brown & Levinson, 1987:104). The function of particle *à* is not limited to (1) and (2) above. For example:

(3)   *Mà có   nhiều người làm   gỗ   bự anh   à.* (a281)
        But have many   people make   timber big elder brother PRT
        "But there many people who use big timber"

The particle *à* in (3) also serves as a politeness marker in giving opinion in an affective manner. The same form of politeness markers *à* again serves a different function:

(4)   *Để   lâu nó héo à !*   (v417)
         Leave long it   dry PRT
         "If it is left like this, it will become shrivelled up"

The utterance with the *à* in (4) pragmatically suggests a warning or advice in an intimate manner, which can occur in conversational interaction among people who have just come to know one another, but they treat one another nevertheless as a close friend.   How to manage one's speech in the most appropriate way depends on how accurately one judges the acceptable level of affection in the social relations between S and H.   Excessive affection towards another within a relatively short acquaintance may be annoying rather than pleasant. How to satisfy the face want of the hearer in a manner of speaking most likely depends on how appropriately one employs a politeness strategy in speech.

There are more affective particles, which have been identified as politeness markers (members) in category 1. For example:

(5)   *Khoan ở   chờ tý nghen ! (or nghe!)* (v534)
         Wait   stay wait bit   PRT
         "Wait for me a moment, will you"

This utterance denotes a request for patience when an interruption occurs in the course of conversation. However, with the use of *nghen*, the utterance softens and suggests a kind of "natural" affection. The particle "*nghen*" is sometimes replaced with "*nghe*", but the former seems to be softer than the latter. For example:

(6)   *Mua cái nào   nữa thì mua để chúng ta đi nghe !* (v464)
         Buy CLA which more then buy   let   us   go PRT
         "If you want to buy anything else, do it so that we can go"

The particle *nghe* in this utterance also conveys a suggestion with a hedge provided by the suggestive particle that helps H to feel comfortable, due to the softness.

In making an offer, Vietnamese speakers use *nhen*, which conveys an affective tone to satisfy H's face want, that is, to feel comfortable for Vietnamese and perhaps for people of other cultures as well. For example:

(7) *Nè cái nầy là (..) khui ra cho anh coi nhen !* (v479)
     Here this   COPU. open out for elder brother see PRT.
     "Here this is (..) let me open it to show you"

In the above example, S offers to open some concealed container, such as a parcel or a box, to show its contents to H. The first part of the utterance "*Nè cái nầy là (..)*" (here it is...) serves as an introduction of something that has not yet been clearly specified. The politeness marker in (7), particle *nhen,* produces a softer, affectionate tone that is likely to attract H's pleasure. Pragmatically, utterance (7) conveys a dual function: in the first part (*Nè cái nầy là)* is an offer and the rest is a question. Although there is no sign of a question here, with the Vietnamese particle *nhen*, it would be understood pragmatically as "do you like me to open it for you to see?" However, despite the form of question, an answer is not expected before the action of opening is undertaken. This kind of utterance in Vietnamese implies an offer of doing something in favour of H. In this way, linguistic politeness behaviour is created in verbal communication.

In the context of Vietnamese language and culture, the utterance in (7) also conveys an underlying question that draws a response from H. From a pragmatic point of view, S's statement suggests an intention to open the box to show something to H, but it may be subject to H's approval. Again this assumes a question without appropriate markers, but it also contains a sense of exploring H's reaction, or opinion, in a polite and affective manner.

Two other politeness markers in category 1 worth mentioning are *à nghen* and *á nghen.* Their usages are illustrated in the following examples:

(8)   *Hông thì   em   mua   à nghen !* (v447)

No   then   younger sibling buy   PRT

"If not, then I'll buy it, OK?"

(9)   *Lựa   cái nào   mới á nghen !* (v418)

Choose one which new PRT

"Choose a new one only"

As for example (8), the politeness marker *á nghen* in (9) also conveys an underlying question that draws a response from H. Following the beginning of the utterance "*Hông thì*", utterances like (9) reflect a contrasting opinion to that of H, which is expressed in the previous utterance (8). The politeness marker *à nghen* was used to soften this contrast and simultaneously explore H's opinion. In contrast to the politeness marker in (8), *á nghen* in (9) produces a stronger tone in the imperative mood, indicating a sense of authority, but the affective bond with H is still maintained in the utterance *á nghen.*

Other affective particles classified as members in category 1 include *á, đó, nè, quá, hết, kìa, ơi, ạ*. They function mainly as emphatic hedges on the performative force from Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese perspectives (Brown & Levinson 1987:106, Buu 1972:103, Thompson 1965:170). For example:

(10)   *Thì có   cái loại thuốc đánh răng   á !*   (v984)

Then there:is CLA   type medicated:tooth:paste   PRT

"Then, there is a type of medicated toothpaste (for it)"

In this example, particle *á* serves an emphatic hedge on the performative force that addresses the question raised in the previous utterance during the course of conversation recorded. It places an emphasis on the existence of the particular type of medicated toothpaste in the market to satisfy H's interest; hence it is assumed to be H's pleasure. A similar emphatic hedge can be expressed by the use of the particle *đó* as in the following example:

(11)   *Cái   kia cũng dãn   nữa,   cho cô   dễ mặc   **đó !*** (v96)
      Cla   that also elastic PRT,   for auntie easy wear   PRT

      "That one is also elastic. It is comfortable for you to wear"

The particle *đó* in this example performs the function of emphasising the illusionary force that exaggerates H's interest (Brown & Levinson 1987:106) in terms of being "really comfortable to wear". The particle could encode "indeed", (in English) as it seems to assert the validity of the whole statement being made.

Analyses and discussion on politeness markers in category 1 continue with particles *nè, quá, hết* and *kìa*. These particles are also used as emphatic hedges on the performative force for various functions. For example:

(12)   *Hông phải (1) nói   ở ngoài   nầy **nè !***   (v603)
      Not right ... talk   outside   this PRT

      "No, I'm talking about outside here"

(13)   *Cái đó lâu dài   chắc   bị   hư   **quá!*** (a187)
      Cla that over time perhaps suffer damage PRT

      "Perhaps it would be damaged over time"

(14)   *Nó rộng lắm và bán   đủ thứ **hết** !*   (v1025)
      It large very and sell everything   PRT

      "It is very large and sells almost every thing!"

(15)   *Hỏi chủ   tiệm **kìa !*** (v178)
      Ask owner shop   PRT

      "Ask the shopkeeper there"

The *nè* in (12) simply emphasises what is really being said to intensify H's interest, while *quá* in (13) reinforces the prediction denoted by the use of *chắc* "perhaps" in the same sentence to convince that it is very likely to be true (damaged over time). Particle *quá* conveys a pragmatic meaning as in the degree of expression such as *too, very* or *extremely* in English. Therefore, the possible attributes made by this particle are twofold, conveying denotations for one of the

two opposite "extremes of the relevant value scale" (Brown & Levinson 1987:116). Despite incomparability with English, in Vietnamese, this affective particle is used as in politeness strategy 2 that Brown and Levinson (1987:104) propose. A stronger form (such as "will") was not used here, partly because the speaker did not want to commit to the truth in the utterance, and partly because, as a norm in the speech situation, S wants to maintain a softened tone in the utterance, and partly because S does not want to turn the prediction into an affirmative statement.

In (14), the particle *hết* strengthens the illocutionary force in giving the information of available stock in terms of exaggeration to intensify H's interst, while particle *kìa* in (15) emphasises direction in a suggestion expressed in the utterance.

In Vietnamese some vocative particles are used in polite addressing or respectful expression, especially at the end of the sentence. Those particles include *ơi, ạ,* also classified as politeness markers in category 1. For example:

(16)   *Dạ   hông dì   ạ !* (a1040)
       Hon. no   auntie PRT
       "No, it's not, Madam."

(17)   *Dạ   hết   rồi   dì   ơi! cái   đó hàng   trưng bày.* (v317)
       Hon. finish already auntie INTJ CLA   that goods   display
       "No, it has finished auntie, that's for display only"

In utterance (16) the final particle *ạ* is used merely to express a polite attitude (Nguyen Dinh Hoa, 1997:166). Furthermore, the particle helps to mitigate the negative response in the utterance, adding respect. Similar to many other affective particles that have already been discussed, *ạ* has no equivalent in English, hence English translation is not possible.

Apart from the use of the kinship term *dì* (auntie) as a norm in expressing politeness by a junior speaking to a senior, particle *ơi* in (17) serves as an emphatic hedge on the illocutionary force to upgrade the expression of politeness

by the use of a kinship term in the sense of respect. This particle was used in a way that served to promote the function of *dì* (auntie) into the rank of referent honorifics. For this reason, the kinship term *dì* (auntie) in (16) as well as (17) might be pragmatically converted into English as "Madam", giving respect to H (Brown & Levinson, 1987:181). In this sense, *ạ* in (16) and *ơi* in (17) are similar in function but the latter is expressed as an interjection to convey politeness and respect to H. On this basis, both *ạ* and *ơi* serve as politeness markers to perform negative politeness strategies in terms of "giving deference" to H (Brown & Levinson 1987:178).

The next section turns to category 2, politeness markers that involve the use of kinship terms, which are considered to be the most relevant to Vietnamese culture.

5.3   CATEGORY 2: KINSHIP TERMS

In Vietnamese culture, all kinship terms listed in Table 3.1 (Chapter 3) are used substantively in addressing. Most of them are used as politeness markers in various contexts. The usage varies from one kinship term to another, depending on the context or speech situation. However, it is very difficult, especially for non-native speakers, to realise when kinship terms serve as form of addresss or politeness markers.

The usage of kinship terms in Vietnamese requires effective, flexible judgment, especially the relative age between interactants by their choice of suitable kinship terms in addressing. Suitability in the use of kinship terms is determined on the basis of H's age compared with S's. The determinant of relative age in the usage of kinship terms has resulted from the influence of Confucianism, which teaches correct naming by means of language in conjunction with what Confucius called "the Rectification of Names". As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, this "rectification of names" is intended primarily to have a moral effect to maintain correct social order, meaning to keep all social classes in line (Feibleman, 1976:95). Accordingly, the interpersonal relationship in Vietnamese culture stems from the heart of Confucian doctrine that lies in the cultivation of virtuous conduct in view of the aforementioned five human relationships (*ngũ*

luân) including kinship relations such as father–son, husband–wife, elder brother–younger brother.

In terms of politeness markers, the starting point for discussion is that Vietnamese kinship terms are used in the English expression "I" or "you". Since Vietnamese kinship terms can be used either for "I/me" or "you" as in English, each of them can, in fact, be used as a replacement for the first- or second-person personal pronoun. However, at least 10 affinal kinship terms in Vietnamese are used exclusively as third-person references: *anh rể, chị dâu, em rể, em dâu, ba vợ/chồng, mẹ vợ/chồng, con rể, con dâu, cháu rể, cháu dâu* (see terms 15-24 in Table 3.1). When these affinal kinship terms are used as a first- or second-person reference, a respectful form of consanguineous kinship is used. This means in addressing that involves first- or second-person references, affinal and consanguineous kinship terms are not distinguishable from a lexical point of view.

However, in Vietnamese, the use of personal pronouns varies and depends on different factors such as relative seniority in age or social status, and gender of participants in a speech event. For example:

(18) *Dà,*   **em**   *sẽ*   *gọi cho* **anh**,   *dạ !* (v574)
Hon.   younger sibling   will   call for   elder brother, Hon.
"Yes, I will call you"

(19) **Em**   *làm*   *lương đở*   *hông?*   (v1061)
Younger sibling work   earning fair Q.
Q. "Do you get a fair earning for the work?"

In (18) the kinship term *em* (younger sibling) was used for self reference (S) and it indicates S younger than H. In (19) *em* (younger sibling) was used for the second-person reference (H). In this case, H is younger than S. The functional difference of the kinship term *em* depends on who it refers to. Therefore, like any other kinship terms in Vietnamese, *em* can be used either as a first-person personal pronoun for self reference (S), or as a second-person personal pronoun for second-person reference (H) in addressing. In this case, *em* can be used by a

male or female speaker.

The kinship term *anh* (elder brother) in (18) serves a similar function to that of *em* (younger sibling); but it is a male generic term, hence it always refers to a male person, whether for the first- (S) or second-person (H) reference.

Vietnamese kinship terms can also be used with a proper name; for example, in a grocery shop, a female seller told a younger female customer:

(20) *Qua bển đi   cô   tính   với anh   Thuận.* (a549)
       Go there PRT auntie calculate   with elder brother *Thuận*
       "Go there auntie, pay it to elder brother **Thuận**"

In collaboration with the English "I/me" and "you", *em* (younger sibling) and *anh* (elder brother) may have a role to play, but their communicative functions do not always match their English counterparts, because these first- and second-person personal pronouns may have a range of equivalents in a complex system of person reference in Vietnamese as discussed in Chapter 3. However, in the discussion on use of kinship terms as politeness markers, we are not working through the list of Vietnamese kinship terms (Table 3.1), which may be treated as politeness markers, but it should be kept in mind that the kinship terms represent a kind of in-group language in Vietnamese culture.

According to Ide (1989:229), kinship terms can be used as a strategy to express politeness in terms of in-group language. Furthermore, as Brown and Levinson (1987:107) suggest, kinship terms can be used as politeness markers as they constitute "in-group identity markers". However, in Vietnamese culture, kinship terms are not only limited to the terms used within the nuclear family, such as "sister" and "brother", but also include a long list of terms used in extended families and outside the family as shown in Table 3.1. Vietnamese kinship terms can thus be used extensively, whether directly or indirectly in conversation.

Because most kinship terms are treated as politeness markers, in particular situations, utterances that are devoid of kinship terms are likely to be considered "impolite" in Vietnamese Confucian-based culture. This obviously does not include

a situation in which an alternative form of address is used, for example, professional or social titles such as doctor, teacher, president, prime minister, etc.

At this stage the question of "when do kinship terms serve as politeness markers?" seems to have an answer. Whenever a proper kinship term is used in addressing it represents a politeness marker in Vietnamese. This is because there are alternative terms depending on the speaker's temporary emotional state as Vu (1997:183) suggests. Let's take the utterance in (18) above into consideration. In this example, S is younger than H, hence the kinship terms *em* (younger sibling) and *anh* (elder brother) were used. In this case, S addressed H by *anh* (elder brother) to denote solidarity and respect towards H who has higher status (i.e. S is polite). If S wants to be distant and equal with H (i.e. H is not polite), then H will be addressed as *anh* (elder brother), and *tôi* (I/self) is used for self reference (S). For example, a younger male customer spoke to an older male seller:

(21)   *Ờ, anh   làm đi, tôi giao hết cho   anh.*   (a16)
         Yes elder brother do PRT, self give all for   elder brother
         "Yes, go ahead, I assign all to you"

In the context of this study, kinship intimacy is defined as a kind of affection or sympathy that occurs within the family and all other relatives by blood. Therefore, kinship is valued as the highest point on the intimacy scale of social distance, which accounts for differences in politeness behaviour. Holmes (1995:13-14) defines this social distance in terms of the relationship between the speaker (S) and the addressee, ranging among the three groups, namely strangers, friends and intimates, on a social distance continuum.

From a speaker's point of view, this social distance continuum is considered in terms of intimacy scale ranking to be from the closest kinship relation towards friendship and estrangement. Therefore, the negative extreme of intimacy or the opposite of kinship is estrangement. Accordingly, if politeness is a moral constraint on human interaction that observes H's feelings, establishes levels of mutual comfort, and promotes rapport (Hill et al. 1986:349), then kinship intimacy can be employed as a politeness strategy in Vietnamese culture. For

example, in a clothes shop in Vietnam, a younger female seller spoke to an older female customer:

(22)   ***Chị***   *lựa*   *áo*   *dây*   *hôn?*   (v8)
Elder sister choose jacket stripe Q.
Em   *lấy ra*   *cho* ***chị***   *lựa.*
younger sibling   take out for   elder sister choose
"Do you like striped jacket? I'll take them out for you to choose"

The kinship terms *chị* (elder sister) and *em* (younger sibling) are used in the above example as a second-person personal pronoun (you) and first-person personal pronoun (I) respectively. Similar to those used in (22), there are a lot more kinship terms that can be used for person references to express politeness in Vietnamese. For example, in a clothes shop, a younger female seller said to an older male customer:

(23)   *Hàng cao cấp là*   *thứ đồ*   ***anh***   *cầm.*   (v41)
Goods high class Copu type goods elder brother   hold
"The high class is the one in your hand"

(24)   *Cái áo*   *đó*   *chín mươi lăm ngàn*   ***cô.*** (v39)
Cla jacket   that   ninety five thousand   auntie
"That jacket is ninety five thousand, auntie"

(25)   *Dạ*   *cái nẫy thì*   *quần dài* ***chú !*** (v92)
Hon. Cla   this COPU   pants long uncle
"Yeah, this is long pants, uncle"

(26)   *Dạ   hông* ***dì***   *ạ!* (a1040)
Hon. no   auntie   PRT
"No, auntie"

As mentioned earlier, Vietnamese kinship terms are gender generic, but some are bi-gender while most others are mono-gender generic, and they can be

used either for first- or second-person references. It should be noted here that (also see the endnote in Table 3.1) *cô* in (24) may also refer to a younger sister and *chú* in (25) may refer to a younger brother, in both kinship and non-kinship related situations, when the speaker is a male who is older than the addressee. However, if the speaker is an older female, the referent is her husband's younger sister or brother respectively. This represents another complex aspect in relation to kin system and the usage of kinship terms in Vietnamese that is not easy to be understood by non-Vietnamese native speakers.

Choosing the right kinship term to suit H's age at the beginning of a conversation requires S's judgment and linguistic skills. At times, when speakers take addressing seriously, they ensure the use of the right kinship term by asking H's age in a skilfully subtle way, which is not considered to be an intrusion into one's private life or personal information. This, however, may be easily achieved in Vietnamese culture, but it can be problematic in Anglo-Australian culture for asking someone's age. In this case, the speaker usually relies on his or her own judgment on the other's age in order to employ an appropriate form of address.

Asking someone's age is a sensitive issue, but it occurs in an acceptable situation such as in medical services. However, in Vietnamese culture the acceptable situation may extend to speech domains where there is a need to ensure politeness. In this situation, how to ask is more important than what to ask, hence asking someone's age can be done in a way that conveys the purpose of politeness expression. When speakers convey politeness in speech, or speak in a way that is pleasant to H, they have to observe the entire course of conversation, which not only includes the use of appropriate kinship terms, but the right way of asking for information. In certain situations, speakers can switch kinship terms during the course of conversation to ensure they use the right one. For example:

(27)　*Cái đó thì   con   hổng biết.* (v985)
　　　CLA   that then child NEG know
　　　"That thing I don't know"

(28)   *Tuần   sau   là   **cháu**   có   visa.* (a41)
          Week next COPU   grandchild   have   visa
          "Next week I will have visa"

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the term *con* (child) in (27) and *cháu* (grandchild) in (28) are mostly interchangeable. This is because the use of kinship terms in Vietnamese requires flexible judgment, especially regarding H's age, by which the choice of kinship terms is determined in the form of address. Suitability in the use of kinship terms is determined on the basis of H's age compared with S's. In this regard, kinship terms such as "uncle", "auntie", "grandpa" are normally used outside the family to address a person who is considered or ranked equivalent to the speaker's kinsfolk.

At a pragmatic level, the kinship term *cô* (auntie) can be used differently in many situations outside the kinship system. First, *cô* (auntie) is used by a male speaker (S) in addressing a female hearer (H) who can be S's younger sibling. Second, *cô* (auntie) is used by a married woman in addressing a female hearer (H) who is assumed to be as young as a younger sibling of the speaker's husband. Third, *cô* (auntie) is used by students in addressing their female teachers. Fourth, *cô* (auntie) is used by a male or female S in addressing a female H who is assumed to be a younger sibling of S's father. The gender factor is strictly applied in the usage of the kinship term *cô* (auntie) as expressed in the above four speech situations. For example, in a clothes shop, a younger female seller spoke to an older female customer:

(29)   *Cái   áo   đó   chín   mươi lăm ngàn   **cô!*** (v39)
          CLA   dress that   nine   ten five   thousand   auntie
          "That dress costs ninety-five thousand"

In the same speech situation, an older male customer asked and requested a younger female seller as in (30) and (31) respectively:

(30)   *Cái   nầy   có   số   nhỏ   không **cô?*** (v63)
          CLA   this   has   number small NEG   auntie
          "Do you have small size for this shirt?"

(31)   *Đâu*   *cô lấy số*   *nhỏ hơn tôi coi thử.*
       How about   auntie take   number   small   more   1PSR see   try
       "Let me see a smaller size" (v65).

In (29) *Cô* (auntie) was used in addressing H with an assumption that H was in the same age range as that of the speaker's father. In (30) and (31) *Cô* (auntie) was used in addressing H with an assumption that H was in the same age range as that of the speaker's younger sibling. In this way, the speaker employed a "politeness" strategy towards H by the expression of an intimate relationship with H at the time of speaking. The intimate relationship is expressed by the use of kinship term *cô* (auntie) as if H was a member of S's family. By such an inference, S treated H with the solidarity and intimacy that S's younger sister deserves. In this way, the in-group identity in the relationship between S and H was expressed as a politeness strategy as in Brown and Levinson's (1987:107) positive politeness.

Because the kinship term *cô* (auntie) was used (30, 31) in an inference that H was considered to be as young as S's younger sister, *cô* can be replaced by *em* (younger sister) as S considers H as one of his younger sisters in the situation, where the social relationship of the same generation between S and H has become more intimate. In this case the utterances in examples (30) and (31) can become (32) and (33) respectively:

(32)   *Cái áo sơ mi* *nầy có   số*   *nhỏ   không* **em***?*
       CLA   shirt   this has   number   small   NEG   younger sibling
       "Do you have small size for this shirt?"

(33)   *Đâu*   **em***   *lấy số*   *nhỏ hơn* **tôi** *coi thử.*
       How about   younger sibling   take   number smaller   1PSR   see   try
       "Let me see a smaller size"

Thus the form of address using *cô* (auntie) has been replaced by *em* (younger sister) as the social relationship between S and H becomes closer. In this case, the form of address is determined by the social relationship between S and

H in order to express politeness adequately. In the example (33) *tôi* (I) is used as a first-person personal pronoun for self reference; but if the relationship between S and H is even more intimate, S may use the kinship term *anh* (elder brother) for self reference instead of the first-person personal pronoun, and by doing this, the degree of politeness in the utterance will be enhanced. The utterance in (33) can become (34):

(34)   *Đâu*   **em**   *lấy số*   *nhỏ hơn* **anh**   *coi thử.*
    How about younger sibling take number smaller elder brother   see try
    "Let me see a smaller size"

So, a change in the form of addresss means a change in politeness strategy that reflects a shift in the emotional state of the speaker along the social distance continuum between S and H. The emotional shift may be negative or positive, corresponding to social distance in the relationship between S and H. The positive emotional shift indicates an increase in the level of intimacy toward H before further intimate relationships can be established between the verbal interactants.

Although kinship terms in Vietnamese are used with or without first names attached, those kinship terms denoting superiors such as *ông* (grandfather) and *bà* (grandmother), are used without proper names, but the referents will be either paternal or maternal to specify the kinship relation. For example:

(35)   *Ông ngoại*   *cho con cây viết*   *nầy.*
    Maternal grandfather give child CLA pen   this
    "I give you this pen" (a grandfather talks to his grandchild)

(36)   *Bà nội*   *đi chợ một lát*   *sẽ*   *về.*
    Paternal grandmother   go market one   moment   will   return
    "I am going to the market and will return shortly"

However, in terms of vernacular, within the kinship system, Vietnamese speakers may not specify the modifier prefixes "maternal" and "paternal" in their direct speech, but will use the kinship terms "grandfather" or "grandmother"

instead.

In Vietnamese culture, kinship terms are often used without proper names, but possibly with the referent's sibling hierarchical number (SHN) in relation to date of birth or rank order according to age in the family. However, the SHN system itself is rather complicated and varies with geographical regions. For example, in South Vietnam, it starts with the "second" (*Hai*) as in *anh Hai* (brother "second"), not with the "first" for the eldest sibling reference. In Central Vietnam, the eldest sibling is referred to as "One" (*Một*) as in *anh Một* (brother "first"). In Northern Vietnam, the eldest sibling is referred to as "Big" (*Cả*) as in *anh Cả* (big brother). Therefore, the form of address using SHN as such is often heard in Vietnamese speaking communities. Once the SHN for the sibling in the family has been established, the other siblings can be addressed by the next SHN in terms of orderly sequence: sister third, uncle fourth, auntie fifth, for instance.

The usage of SHN may become a problem in the case of conversation outside the family. For the sake of appropriate addressing in the first social meeting, adult speakers may ask about H's SHN and age. Obviously this routine question is not asked at the very beginning of the conversation, but shortly after the conversation has begun, to ensure the appropriate form of address is used.

Addressing an older H using H's proper name alone/without a kinship title is considered taboo in Vietnamese culture. Violation of this taboo may be considered "impolite" in verbal communication. This is why the SHN also plays an important role with regard to the use of kinship terms in Vietnamese culture. The use of SHN is still popular nowadays, especially among middle-age or older generations in South Vietnam. For example:

(37) ***Bác Năm*** *đi đâu   mới về   đó?*
       Uncle fifth   go where   just   return there
       "Where have you returned from?"
       (a young S asks a middle-age person, regardless of sex)
Or

(38)   *Bữa qua **anh***   ***Tư***   *đi câu cua được nhiều không?*
       Day past elder brother fourth go fish crab get many/much Q.
       "Yesterday, did you catch a lot of crabs from the fishing?"

The younger generation may use first names in addressing, but kinship titles are always attached. For example, *anh Bình* (elder brother Bình), *chị Thu* (elder sister Thu) and so on. As a form of address, *anh* (elder brother) and *chị* (elder sister) are used commonly in Vietnamese daily speech for referring to a male or female hearer, who is assumed to be more or less in the same age range as S. To an assumed younger hearer, regardless of gender, the kinship title *em* (younger sibling) is used, with or without the attachment of H's first name. For example:

(39)   ***Em***   *đi*   *đâu*   *mới*   *về*   *đó?*
       Younger sibling   go   where   just   return   there
       "Where have you come back from?"

(40)   ***Em***   ***Thu*** *đi*   *đâu*   *mới*   *về*   *đó?*
       Younger sibling   Thu   go   where   just   return   there
       "**Thu**, where have you come back from?"

In (40) and (41) only the age factor is taken into account, i.e., S must be older than H, while the form of address is not determined by the gender of S and H in this situation.

5.4   CATEGORY 3:   GIFT GIVING/THANKS

The politeness marker *cám ơn* (thank) is presented here as an expressive particle, which can be used with or without referring to an hearer. It can be used to denote either a response to a compliment (Herbert 2003:77), or an expression of gratitude as an intangible gift (Brown & Levinson 1987:96, 101; Watts 2003:4). However, in Vietnamese culture, the latter is more popular in use, while a response to a compliment is not often verbally expressed, but may be conveyed by an action such as smiling or a glimpse. For example:

(41) *Vậy cám ơn anh!*   (a354)

So   thank   elder brother

"So then so thank you"

The utterance in this example denotes an expression of gratitude referring to the addressee, which is referred to by means of the kinship term *anh* (elder brother). According to Brown and Levinson (1987:129), "thank you" is considered as a politeness strategy in terms of "giving gifts to H". It can be considered as an offer of intangible gifts to satisfy H's positive elder face want.

Vietnamese speakers in Australia use "thank you" in their native language to express gratitude to someone who offers minor assistance, because it is a linguistic norm in Australian English. The adoption of such a linguistic norm is a phenomenon of semantic transference in language contact, and it occurs through literal translation as follows:

(42) *Hai trái nầy hai ký lô   rồi,   cám ơn!* (a437)

Two fruit   this   two kilograms already, thank you

"These fruit weigh two kilos, already, thank you"

In this example, the literal translation of "thank you" in English as "*cám ơn*" in Vietnamese has been identified from the corpus of data among Vietnamese speakers in Australia.

In Australia, people say "thank you" either in expressing gratitude or in responding to a compliment. In view of "prescriptive norms", parents also teach their children to say "thank you" when receiving a gift (Herbert 2003:77). According to Kleifgen (1989:84), utterances such as "thank you" arise in the affective relationship between S and H, for example, or to observe the norms of politeness in particular contexts. Previous studies on English politeness responses found that saying "thank you" was frequently employed in response to compliments (Herbert 2003:78-80). This finding suggests that saying "thank you" in response to a compliment is widely accepted in the English-speaking world, but it may pose a problem in Vietnamese speaking communities.

In Vietnam, parents and teachers never say "thank you" to their children or students for a small service such as closing the window or passing the book around. For a big service, the receivers do not verbalise their thankfulness, but instead non-verbal behaviours such as smiling or even silence are exprerssed (Huynh 1987:30). This phenomenon may elicit criticism that an appreciative response is basically neglected by Vietnamese people. However, this is not true from a Vietnamese cultural point of view, as Vietnamese is a high context language (Hall 1976). Thus body language should be taken into consideration.

5.5   CATEGORY 4:   QUALITY HEDGES

The politeness markers defined in category 4 include *chắc*/chắc sẽ(perhaps/would), *tưởng* (think/believe), *nghĩ* (suppose), *có thể* (could*)*, *đại khái (*roughly*)*, *khoảng* (approximately)*, khoảng chừng* (approximately)*, phỏng* (guess) *nói chung* (general speaking), *chừng* (about), *chắc chừng* (perhaps about), *chắc quá* (perhaps very). This group is defined as "Quality hedges", suggesting that the speaker does not take full responsibility for the truth of the utterance.   In this way, the addressee is invited to share opinions in the conversation (Brown & Levinson 1987: 117, 153 & 164). For example, in an service encounter, a younger female customer spoke to an older female seller, using the politeness marker of "Quality hedges" *chắc* to suggest that does not fully commit to the truth of what she has said, but left room for the addressee to give opinions in the utterance:

(43)   ***Chắc***   con   *phải làm như vầy!* (a831)
Perhaps/would child must do like this
"Perhaps I would do like this"

The utterance in this example is straightforward, as it is expressed in English with the use of *chắc* "perhaps/would" to suggest that S is not sure of what has been expressed in the utterance. In the context of example (43), S wants to make a choice, but the decision is not made and the choice is not finalised as it conveys an underlying suggestion that H's opinion is being sought. The suggestion of being unsure can be expressed with other particles in the same group of

politeness markers as follows:

(44)   *Con **tưởng** là   ổng già rồi   mới kêu bằng bác!*   (a986)
Child think   COPU he   old already PRT call by   uncle
"I thought he is called uncle because he is old".

(45)   *Con **nghĩ**   bên nây nè!* (a1015)
Child suppose   side this PRT
"I suppose this side here"

(46)   ***Có thể*** *ngày mai đó!*   (a26)
Could tomorrow   PRT
"It could be tomorrow"

The particles in *tưởng* "think" (44), *nghĩ* "suppose" (45) and *có thể* "could" (46) were used as Quality hedges, which serve to soften the illusionary force by suggesting that the truth in the utterance is not assured (Brown & Levinson 1987:153). More precisely, the particles of Quality hedges *tưởng* in (44), *nghĩ* in (45) and *có thể* (47) represent what Brown and Levinson define as performative hedges encoded in the form of particles to express politeness, based on their studies of Tzeltal softened particles. This also holds true in Vietnamese language and culture.

In category 4, some other particles serve a similar function: *đại khái/khoảng* carrying the meaning "roughly". These particles were used as Quality hedges to note that the information which S has provided in the utterance is an approximation, as it may be expected (Brown & Levinson 1987:166). For example, in a curtain shop, a younger male customer gave information and asking for information to an older male seller, using particle of Quality hedges as in (47) and (48):

(47)   ***Đại khái*** *là   nó có ba   cái cửa   với một cái cửa slide door.*
Roughly, COPU it has three CLA windows with a   CLA sliding door"
"Roughly, it has three windows with a sliding door"   (a285)

(48) *Dạ dạ **khoảng*** *bao nhiêu?* (a311)

Hon. roughly   how much

"Yes, roughly how much?"

From a Vietnamese point of view, examples 43 to 48 employ softer tones with particles of Quality hedges to mitigate potential imposition on H in the utterances. In a sense they imply that S was in a humble position with the knowledge of the subject matter in the conversation. By means of being self-humble or self-abased as such, S employs a politeness strategy deferring to H thus treating H as superior (Brown & Levinson 1987:179).

This politeness strategy is employed in a similar way to the Japanese people who express their humble and respectful attitudes towards their hearers by using *sonkeigo* (respectful forms), *kenjogo* (modest or humble forms) and *bikago* (beautifying or soft terms) (Coulmas 1992:313).

5.6   CATEGORY 5:   SOFTENED HEDGES/PLEASE

This category includes softened hedges to soften the negation or insistence in the utterance. Ultimately, these softened hedges serve to hide disagreement with H (Brown & Levinson 1987:147; Le & Nguyen 1998:92). In Vietnamese there are quite a few words used in this way, which consist of *đâu, đi, hà, đi mà, quá hà, hè/tự hỏi, mà, được mà, vậy mà, rồi mà, được rồi, giùm, xin, cho xin, làm ơn, thôi mà, được rồi mà.* As in other categories, those words listed above are not always used as "softened hedges" in terms of lexical forms; they may overlap depending on various speech situations and contexts.   For example:

(49) *Chớ không   phải màu   kem   **đâu !*** (a199)

But NEG   right colour   cream PRT

"It's not the cream colour"

(50) *Họ không muốn thuê **căn   nhà   nầy đâu !***

"They don't want rent CLA house" this   PRT [for sure]

(Le Pham Thuy Kim & Nguyen Kim Oanh, 1998:92)

With a similar function to that of *đâu* in (49) and (50) above, another politeness marker in the same category is *đi*, but this polite particle serves as a softened hedge on imperatives with "mild exhortation" (Thompson 1965:172; Brown & Levinson 1987:147). With the softened hedge, the illocutionary force in the imperatives becomes softer and the imposition on H is weakened. For example:

(51)   *Đây nè,   cho vô bọc   nầy đi !*   (v421)
        Here PRT, put into bag   this PRT
        "Here it is, put into this bag"

(52)   *Lấy   thêm một chục xanh cho đủ   một ký   đi !* (v424)
        Take more one ten   green for enough one kilo PRT
        "Take another ten of the green ones to make up one kilo"

The illocutionary forces in both utterances (51) and (52) are imperative in nature, but they are mitigated with the use of the softened particle *đi* to reduce the level of imposition on H. Consequently this changes the imperative into a mild suggestion.

Particle *đi* used in (51) and (52) reflects the two functioning groups: (a) provides softened hedges on imperatives with "mild exhortation" and (b) provides softened hedges on the performative force without "mild exhortation".

So, the difference between these functioning groups is determined by the illocutionary force of "mild exhortation" in the utterances. With (a), the utterances have a certain level of imposition on H, while the utterances in (b) produce no imposition at all. Since all utterances in either (a) or (b) are attributed by the softened hedge encoded in the particle *đi*, they are viewed as politeness expressions.

Apart from the above functioning groups, the particle *đi* can also express "disappear", "away", or "being worse" (Buu, Khai, 1972:103; Tran Trong Kim et al. 1980:106; Le Pham Thuy Kim & Nguyen Kim Oanh 1998:288). This may be named as functioning group (c) of particle *đi* in Vietnamese politeness strategies.

For example:

(53)   *Cho trả   tiền   đi !* (v884)

         Let pay   money PRT
         "Please let me pay"

(54)   *Bệnh   tim   làm   cho ông ấy gầy   đi   và   yếu   đi !*
         Disease heart   make for him   slim PRT and weak   PRT
         "The heart disease makes him slimmer and weaker"
         (Le Pham Thuy Kim & Nguyen Kim Oanh 1998:288)

Still, there are a few more particles used as politeness markers in category 5 such as mà, *được mà, vậy mà,* which serve as softened hedges on the illocutionary force to mitigate the suggestion of insistence in the utterance (Brown & Levinson 1987:147; Le & Nguyen, 1998:475). For example:

(55)   *Cái đó   do thợ   làm mà !*   (a283)
         CLA that   by trademan   do PRT
         "That one has been done by the trademan"

(56)   *Ở trong nầy   đó hả? (1) nhưng   ở ngoài   xài   được mà !* (v672)
         Inside   here Q.   ... but   outside   usable   PRT
         "In here, isn't it? But it may be usable outside!

(57)   *Cậu Lũy lên   ở   đở   một ngày hai ngày   vậy mà !* (v568)
         Uncle Luy come stay temporary   a:few:days   PRT
         "Uncle Luy comes and stays only for a few days"

In utterances (55) to (57), the particles are compounds with *mà* at the end of the sentence, which constitute assertive particles but they are pronounced in a soft tone in order to serve as a politeness strategy in Vietnamese.

In utterance (55) *mà* emphasises the particular part of the job done by a tradesman. This implies that the job has been done professionally. The sense of insistence in this utterance, produced by the softer particle *mà,* is to convince H

that the job is good quality. Meanwhile, the insistence encoded is modified and less imposed.

In (56) the sense of insistence is more clearly emphasised, although the speech situation seems complex. The conversation occurred in a service encounter, where one of the currency notes was identified with a minor mark by the shop assistant, who demanded an exchange as she commented that the note could not be used. The customer pragmatically attempted to convince the shop assistant that the note was disposable. The convincing attitude is expressed by the question of why the note was unacceptable here but it could be accepted elsewhere in the supermarket.

In (57) the particle *vậy mà* could be interpreted to mean something that is temporary, simple, humble and short-term. It is usually positioned at the end of the sentence and expressed in a soft tone, to convey the illocutionary force showing that S is committed to the truth of the utterance.

In addition, the politeness category 5, labelled as "softened hedges", also shares the strategy of "being conventionally indirect", as Brown and Levinson (1987:132-133) define with the use of "please" in English (or "*làm ơn*" in Vietnamese). For example:

(58)   Can you *please* pass me the salt?

According to Yule (1996:63), expressions like "please" and "would you" which serve to soften the demand in imperative forms are called mitigating devices. For example, the illocutionary force of a demand in an imperative form like "Give me the pen" would be softened when they occur with these mitigating devices. For example:

(59)   Give me the pen *please!*

(60)   Give me the pen, *would you?*

However, those mitigating devices ("please", "would you") may have their

counterparts in Vietnamese from a pragmatic point of view. For example:

(61)   *Tính   tiền **giùm đi**   cô !* (a548)

      Work out money PRT   PRT   auntie

      "Please give me the bill, auntie"

In this example, *giùm* is translated from "please" in English to soften or mitigate the illocutionary force of request. This type of translation is realised in view of the Relevance Theory, which generalises the notion of "less-than-literalness", which is represented as an interpretive expression of a speaker's thought (Andersen 2001:241). The Relevance Theory has been adopted here in a sense that the *giùm* or *làm ơn* is translated as "please" in English. In this sense, *hộ/giúp* (help) in Vietnamese also serves a similar function.

In the context involving the participation of a customer and a waitress or sales assistant (61), regardless of whether the "*giùm*" is used in a sense of either "help" or "please" in English, the utterance still performs its communicative function perfectly in view of politeness. In the sense of "help", it conveys the speaker's humble attitude in the request "Give me the bill", as if the customer asked for help in handing over the bill, instead of giving an instruction, which is the norm for Vietnamese service encounters.

According to Vu (1997:86), the particles *hộ/giúp/giùm* "help" and *làm ơn* "do a favour" are employed in the expression of strategic politeness in Vietnamese. (For more details, see the related discussion in Chapter 3).

5.7   CATEGORY 6:   REPETITION

Like people in the English-speaking world, Vietnamese speakers also partly or wholly repeat what has been said previously in order to stress S's emotional agreement with H (Brown & Levinson 1987:113). However, this kind of agreement is only realised from a pragmatic point of view. For example:

(62)   Shop assistant:

      *Cái áo   đang   mặc đó   **hai trăm ba.***   (v24)

      CLA dress current wear that   two hundred three

      "The dress you are wearing is two hundred and thirty"

(63)   Customer:

       Hai trăm ba !   (v25)

       Two hundred three

       "Two hunded and thirty"

In (63) the shop assistant answered a question about the price of a particular commodity. In (63) the customer responded with a repetition of the price given by the shop assistant in the previous utterance. From a pragmatic point of view, such a repetition implies an agreement with H in terms of neither objection nor comment about the price. In this situation, however, there is no guarantee that the price would be accepted and the transaction would proceed, as the repetition may also be a mark of thinking about the price and about what decision S would be making in the service encounter.

5.8   CATEGORY 7:   HONORIFICS

Honorifics can be understood as three basic types: (1) referent honorifics concerned with what the speaker (S) refers to and indirectly connected to H; (2) hearer honorifics expressing respect directly to H; and (3) bystander honorifics expressing respect to people present when S is addressing H, but not actually taking part in the conversation (Brown & Levinson 1987:180; McAuley 2001:48). However, honorifics in Vietnamese seem to focus on hearers.

In Vietnamese culture, honorifics as a category of politeness markers are expressed by a limited number of words and compound words including *dạ, dà, kính, thưa, dạ thưa,* to convey deference towards H. They are employed to express politeness at different levels of formality, strength and weakness, depending on the honorifics selected in the utterance.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Do (1994:168) proposes a range of particles which are used in the expression of politeness and deference towards senior or superior hearers in Vietnamese. They are honorific particles such as *dạ* or *dà* (polite markers), *dạ thưa* (Sir/Madam, respectful humble), *kính* (respectfully), *thưa* (Sir/Madam, politely telling), and *xin* (supplicate/please). For example:

(64) **Dạ** con không lấy   củn !   (v17)

HON child NEG   take   skirt

"No, I am not taking the skirt"

(65) **Dà**, một trăm   rưởi. (v338)

HON. one hundred half

"Yes, one hundred and a half"

(66) **Dạ**   cái quần   nào?   (v22)

Hon.   CLA pants which?

"Which pants?"

(67) **Dạ**, năm mươi sáu ngàn.   (v314)

HON. fifty six   thousand

"It's fifty-six thousand, please"

(68) **Dạ**, ảnh   có số   đo   kìa! (a225)

HON. That elder brother   have number measurement   PRT

"He has the measurement there"

In many situations, honorific forms can be used to express politeness in their own right. These forms were drawn from the data including *dạ* and *dà* as illustrated in the above examples (64) to (68). These two polite honorifics, which can be simply referred to as "polite markers", are interchangeable and can be commonly used to express politeness in Vietnamese. They can stand alone, at the beginning or end of an utterance. Apart from the "polite" function, they have no referential meaning in their own right. Therefore, the utterance does not change in the absence of these polite makers, but its pragmatic meaning does change in terms of politeness; that is, without polite markers, the utterance may be considered not polite in Vietnamese. In a sense, it is similar to Australian English. For example:

(69) **Dạ**, làm giùm cái   nẫy.   (a333)

Hon.   do help CLA   this

"Yes, please do this one"

From a pragmatic point of view, all the honorific forms used in examples (64) to (69) serve as politeness strategies in part of the responding speech function. These honorific forms are also considered as politeness strategies even when they stand alone in a turn at talk. For example:

(70)   a. Customer:

Cái   nẫy người ta gởi   mua. (v480)
One this people   send   buy
"This one is bought for someone"

b. Shop assistant:
Dạ !   (v481)
Hon.

(71)   a. Service provider:

Rồi   mấy   cái   kia mới chôn vô nè ! (a385)
PRT   several   CLA   that PRT   insert in PRT
"Then, the others will be overlapped"

b. Customer:
Dà ! (a386)
HON.

The use of *dạ* in (70) and *dà* in (71) can be viewed as an indication of agreement to a previous utterance in a polite manner. Alternatively, Vietnamese speakers use non-politeness particles *ừ* or *ờ* to replace *dạ* or *dà* in situations where politeness is neither the focus nor the concern. However, the replacement of non-politeness for a politeness particle will remove the politeness strategy from the utterance. For example, (71) will become (72):

(72)   ***Ừ*** *năm mươi sáu   ngàn.*
      Yes, fifty-six   thousand
      "It's fifty-six thousand"
      Or

(73)   *ờ năm mười sáu   ngàn.*
        Yes, fifty-six   thousand
        "It's fifty-six thousand"

Both politeness particles *dạ, dà* and non-politeness particles *ừ, ờ* can be used interchangeably in any situation, depending on the speaker's emotional states (Vu 1997:83). However, with the use of these non-politeness particles as in (72) and (73), the aspect of politeness no longer exists in the utterances; but it does not necessarily mean the utterances have become impolite in view of everyday acceptable language, especially in service encounters among Vietnamese speakers. The choice of particles between *ừ* (72) and *ờ* (73) is a matter of choosing the tone in speech, which is not consciously made by the speaker. It is more than likely determined by the context in which the utterance occurs; but nothing can be guaranteed as it seems to be related to the speaker's emotional states.

That is, according to Kreckel (1981:20), the choice of particles or words in speech acts is determined by the context of discourse, which consists of two types of context: external and psychological. The former includes accompanying and surrounding events and entities that relate to a speech situation. The latter derives from past experiences and existing knowledge about the social and physical environment, as the individual is predisposed to attend to certain features in the environment and to ignore others. In this view, the psychological context may be related to a personal mood, which, for example, can be joyful or angry, irritable, or sullen. With the involvement of this psychological context, the choice of words in speech acts is subject to further investigation, which is beyond the scope of this research.

From a pragmatic point of view, honorific particles in Vietnamese correlate with the general system of Japanese honorifics, which are categorised into three functions: (1) polite (2) respectful (3) humble (Coulmas 1992:313). For example, the polite honorific *dạ thưa* (Sir/Madam, respectful, humble) or *thưa* (Sir/Madam, politely telling) is used as a prefix to a form of address, with an attempt to express a degree of politeness towards the hearer in a speech situation where the addressor and hearer are relatively equal in ranking, or where the hearer is ranked

higher in terms of age and social status, based on the speaker's judgment. For example:

(74) **Dạ thưa chị** *sáu mươi ba chín mươi lăm. ($63.95)* (a591)
    HON.   elder sister six ten three nine ten five
    "It is sixty-three dollars and ninety-five cents, Madam"

(75) **Dạ thưa** *có   số   điện thoại   **rồi.***   (a708)
    HON.   have   number   telephone   already
    "Sir/Madam, the telephone number is available now "

(76) **Dạ thưa** *không   **anh**   **ơi !*** (v606)
    HON   no   elder brother   PRT
    "No, thanks"

The polite honorifics *dạ thưa* (Sir/Madam, respectful, humble) used in the above utterances (74) to (76) can be well contracted by using either *dạ* or *thưa*; however the pragmatic meanings of the utterances would remain the same, but with the "double" honorific terms *dạ thưa*, the force of politeness expression increases twofold.

The last polite honorific used as a politeness marker in category 7 is *xin* "supplicate; please", which is employed as a politeness strategy (to mitigate the verb involved) in Vietnamese. For example:

(77) *Chú   cho   em   **xin**   bán   cây   thuốc.*
    Uncle   give   younger sibling HON   sell   CLA   cigarettes
    "Please let me sell a carton of cigarettes uncle"   (a544)

The *xin* takes a preverbal position and carries the meaning "please" as in English to mitigate the imperative that follows. In (77) *xin* is used to express politeness in the utterances and convey the speaker's humble attitude towards the hearer. Besides, as Vu (1997:284) suggests, the particle *xin* defined in terms of begging for permission is used as a strategic politeness device to diffuse the

degrees of imposition of utterances and this particle is used in the same manner as other polite particles such as *cám ơn* (thank), *xin lỗi* (apologise), *làm ơn* (do a favour), *hộ/giúp/giùm* (help).

5.9   CATEGORY 8:   COMMON GROUND

In expressing an agreement with H, Vietnamese speakers can opt for a number of particles as emphatic hedges which stress emotional agreement like "yes", "uhuh" or "really" in English (Brown & Levinson 1987: 113). These particles have been identified from the corpus of data as politeness markers in category 8 such as *đúng rồi, đúng vậy, phải rồi, được rồi, rồi.* For example:

(78)   ***Đúng rồi***   *cái nầy*   *coi*   *hay hơn.*   (v120)
         PRT   this   see   better
         "That's right, this one looks better"

(79)   *Ừ*   ***đúng vậy*** *(..)*   *tháo*   *ra*   *rồi*   *cắt*   *một*   *cái.* (v79)
         Yeah, PRT   remove   out   then cut   one   CLA
         "Yes, it's right. Remove it, then cut off"

(80)   ***Phải rồi*** *hèn chi!*   *ảnh thấy*   *tiếc*   *đó*   *chị !* (v156)
         PRT   no:wonder   he feels   regretful PRT elder sister
         "That's right already, no wonder, he feels wasteful of money"

(81)   *Thôi,*   ***được rồi*** *(.)*   *bây giờ*   *con hẹn*   *ngày trở lại với*   *chồng*   *con.*
         Anyway PRT   now   child promise day return with husband child
         "Anyway, OK, now let's make an appointment to come back with your husband" (a32)

(82)   *Dạ*   *được, dạ*   *con*   *biết ,*   *dạ*   ***rồi*** *để*   *con*   *bàn*   *với*   *vợ*   *con.*
         HON. OK   Hon. child know HON. PRT let child discuss with wife child
         "Yes, OK, I know, it's OK, let me discuss with my wife" (a735)

Despite different forms, the particles in examples (78) to (82) above encode a claim of common ground with H in terms of emotional agreement embedded in the utterances. The sense of agreement with H in (78), (79) and (80) is

self-interpreted in the acknowledgement of being "right" as suggested by the particles *đúng rồi* (it's right) *đúng vậy* (it's right so), *phải rồi* (it's right). In (81) the agreement with H may be interpreted as approval as *được rồi* (it's OK) suggests. However, in (82) the agreement with H requires a reference to the whole context of the discourse, as *rồi* in Vietnamese can be used for various referential functions. Despite its literal meaning equivalent to "already" in English, the use of *rồi* in this context (82) can mean that S has already accepted H's offer without any argument. In this sense, the interpretation can arrive at a conclusion that S has expressed an agreement with H pragmatically.

It is worth noting that Vietnamese particles can be used for different performative functions depending on the context in which they are used. This is because, as mentioned ealier, Vietnamese is a high-context language.

5.10   CATEGORY 9:   MINIMISING IMPOSITION

The politeness markers in category 9 serve as another type of softened hedges on the illocutionary force to mitigate the imposition on H in a sense of "being limited, not much, little, inexpensive, or nothing else" conveyed by the respective particles (Thompson 1965:172, Brown & Levinson 1987:177).

The first two particles in this category are *hà* and *hè*, which can be used interchangeably in any context, but their meanings vary with the relative category of politeness markers; for instance, the same particle *hà* or *hè* is used, but the utterance meanings are different between those in category 5 and those in category 9:

(83)   *Có   chín trăm   hà !*   (v254)
      Have nine hundred   PRT
      "Only nine hundred"

(84)   *Bây giờ người ta   xài hai nút   hè !*   (v299)
      Now   people   use two buttons PRT
      "Nowadays one uses only two buttons"

While *hà* (83) and *hè* (84) pragmatically mean something like "really" in

English, the same particles in different contexts send different messages. That is, *hà* was used to suggest the price is not high. In (84) *hè* was used to covey the literal meaning of "only" and simultaneously to denote a softened hedge on the illocutionary force with a suggestion that one uses only two buttons on jackets. However, the literal meaning of "only" in this context is realised in the absence of its lexical existence in the utterance. With a softer tone in the illocutionary force, the utterance also aims at maintaining an acceptable level of affection in human relations, or in the relationship between the customer and service provider.

It is noted that in Vietnamese *hà* (83) is sometimes replaced with *hè* (84) to serve the same function. In this case, the choice between *hà* and *hè* is a matter of rhyming coincidence in the utterance, and it does not affect intended meanings.

Other politeness markers in category 9 serve a similar function by aiming to mitigate the potential imposition from H in the utterance. These markers are *thôi, thôi hà, thôi hè, vậy thôi.* For example:

(85) *Vậy là   phải làm   giấy ly dị   **thôi !*** (a56)
      So COPU must do   paper divorce   PRT
      "So then all you have to do is to apply for a divorce certificate"

(86) *Cửa   em   thì   nhỏ **thôi hà !*** (a273)
      Windows younger sister COPU. small PRT
      "My windows are only small"

(87) *Giống như đã   nói   **thôi hè !*** (a666)
      Same as   past say   PRT .
      "It is only the same as what has been said"

(88) *Chỗ   nào   nó cũng   **vậy thôi !*** (a96)
      Where which it   also   PRT
      "Everywhere is the same"

The rest of the politeness markers in category 9 consist of *một chút, chút, chút xíu, nhỏ xíu,* which are used to mitigate the imposition associated with the

activity encoded by the verb, and suggest a short duration of the requested activity (as in 89), or to a minor degree as expressed in examples (90), (91) and (92).

(89) *Cuốn   Nhập Bồ Tát Hạnh thì   anh   chờ **một chút** nữa !*
      CLA   Nhập Bồ Tát Hạnh then elder brother wait a little   more
      "Would you wait for a little while to get the book of Nhập Bồ Tát Hạnh"
      (v507)

(90) *Giữ gìn   **chút** chứ!*   (a521)
      Take:care   little   PRT
      "Take little care of it!"

(91) *Bắt   con   lớn lớn **chút xíu** nghen!* (a388)
      Make pleats   big big   little:bit   PRT
      "Make the pleats a little bit bigger"

(92) *Ổng **nhỏ xíu** hà !*   (a987)
      He   a:little   PRT
      "He is a little young man only"

Despite the same function as to mitigate the imposition on H, the polite particles in category 9 denote various meanings from a Vietnamese speaker's point of view. In general, there are two groups of referential meaning suggested by the politeness markers in category 9: (a) being limited, nothing else or inexpensive; (b) not much or very little. The referential meanings in group (a) are produced by *hà* or *hè, thôi, thôi hà, thôi hè, vậy thôi* in examples (85) to (88); while the referential meanings in group (b) are provided by *một chút, chút, chút xíu, nhỏ xíu* in examples (89) to (92). The following analysis is based on these two groups of meaning.

In group (a), the particles are interchangeable in all contexts. It is also worth noting that they can be defined as assertive particles, to mean literally "no more" or "it's all about". The auxiliary particles *hà, hè, thôi,* provide a softened hedge on the illocutionary force to make the utterance more pleasant to H. The use of these

particles reflects a suggestion of being "nothing else" or "no more". This suggestion means the burden in the task for H is limited, hence the imposition on H seems to have been relieved in this sense.

In group (b), the particles denote the literal meaning as being a little or a bit. These particles were used as softened hedges on the illocutionary force suggesting a limitation of burden for H in terms of being little or not much. In (89) *một chút* suggests the time of waiting is not long (a little time), while in (90) *chút* suggests the task of taking care does not require a great effort. In (91) and (92) *chút xíu, nhỏ xíu* suggest something that is tiny or not much; but in (91) the use of *chút xíu* suggests the size of pleats to be slightly increased, while in (92), *nhỏ xíu* suggests that the man is very young.

5.11   CATEGORY 10:   SEEKING AGREEMENT

There are three particles used as politeness markers in this category, *hé/hén, chớ/chứ, đó chớ* /đó chứ, which can be used to imply an underlying question to seek agreement with H. Despite the differences in lexical forms, *hé* and *hén*, *chớ* and *chứ*, respectively have the same meaning in use. For example:

(93)   *Cái nầy size 26   dì   Cúc   vừa   **hé ?***   (v74)
       One this size 26   auntie Cuc   fit   PRT
       "This one is size 26, which fits you doesn't it?"

In (94), the particle *hé* (or *hén*) was used to convey a suggestion in the form of a question that was expected to receive an affirmative response from H. This utterance often occurred in a situation where S and H had already engaged in a course of conversation discussing H's preference (e.g. about the size of garment that H was looking for). Through this conversation, as S had known what garment size H wanted, S offered the information required (such as the size of garment had been found, and the offer), which may also be understood as a suggestion, and expressed it in an affirmative manner with an expectation that H would accept it. Although the utterance (as in 98) denotes a suggestion, that is, the fitting size of the garment for H, the imposition on H can be mitigated by the form of question

which seeks H's agreement.

The particle *chớ* also serves a function of seeking an agreement from H in a statement as follows:

(94) *À (.) Hồng Kông   phải   rẻ   chớ !* (v29)
     Yeah, Hong Kong   must   cheap PRT
     "Oh, Hong Kong's goods must be cheap, isn't it?"

The politeness marker *chớ* (or chứ preferred by North Vietnamese) was used to serve the function of an underlying tag question, which is not necessarily a "real" question, but rather a strategy of imposing S's opinion in a polite manner to elicit an agreement from H. In the context of (94) the statement was a stereotype, that is, Hong Kong's goods are always cheap.

The particle *chớ* with *đó* added will perform a hedging function on the illocutionary force to convey a similar meaning, but S's opinion is stronger:

(95)   *Vậy mà bả cũng thắng đó chớ !* (a576)
     So then she also won   PRT
     "So then she also won the case!".

In this statement, *đó chớ* emphasises a positive outcome from a personal point of view. It reflects a contrast between a surface form of utterance and the underlying value it encodes. It implies an unpredictable outcome of the event in question. In (95) the pragmatic meaning of the utterance is about a woman winning a case that she doesn't deserve, according to the context that has been mentioned immediately before the utterance. In view of this pragmatic meaning, the particle *đó chớ* may be equivalent to "despite" or "although" in English; however, it may not be compatible in use. This seems both intelligible and confusing because language use and norms for appropriate behaviours vary from culture to culture and from one context to another (Kleifgen 1989:84). In Vietnamese, at the surface level, the form of this particle varies from the Southern to the Northern dialect, that is, *đó chớ* versus *đó chứ* relatively. Among Vietnamese native speakers, one distinguishes *chớ* (Southern dialect) from *chứ*

(Northern dialect), while these particles may serve the same function. For example:

(96) *Giữ gìn chút **chứ** !* (a521)
Take care little PRT
"Take care a bit!"

The particle *chứ* in (97) can be replaced with *chớ* if the speaker is South Vietnamese. It serves as an emphatic hedge on the illocutionary force to strengthen the utterance (Brown & Levinson 1987:147) and carries a meaning like "make sure". In this sense, the illocutionary force in the utterance (96) is again, more strongly, S's opinion.

5.12 CATEGORY 11: EXAGGERATING INTEREST

The politeness markers of exaggerating interest in category 11 include *lận, lắm, lắm đó, tuyệt vời.* These are assertive particles as defined in reference to Searle's (1979:13) alternative taxonomy of illocutionary acts. As politeness strategies, these particles are used to perform the function of exaggerating interest with H (Brown & Levinson 1987:104).

In reference to earlier literature on Vietnamese, this group of particles has been interpreted as boasting, in the sense of expensive, much or plenty (Tran et al. 1941:139 They function mainly as emphatic hedges on the performative force aiming to increase the interest to H (Thompson 1965:170; Buu, 1972:103; Brown & Levinson 1987:106). The particle *lận* can be used to exaggerate interest with H in terms of suggesting the value of something being great, much or plenty. For example:

(97) *Hàng Pháp thì nó là mấy triệu **lận** !* (v30)
Fabrics French then they COPU PL millions PRT
"French fabrics is as expensive as several millions"

(98) *Năm trăm rưởi hà (.) mà bộ của chị hai thước tám **lận** !*
Five hundred half PRT.. but suit of elder sister two meter eight PRT
"Only five hundred and a half as your suit requires 2.8 meters" (v249)

In the context of service encounters utterance (97) intends to highlight that the French fabrics are more expensive than those locally made. In (98) the intended meaning is to convince the customer that the price is reasonable because the amount of fabric is much more than what was originally thought.

However, the speaker's intended meanings can be expressed in different ways according to the speaker's mood. For example, intended meanings can be associated with hyperbole, irony, metaphor, or metonymy (Moore 1982:8). Wierzbicka (1991:70) suggests that intended meanings are not the same for everyone. They are often not only different but mutually incompatible.

It is notable that in Vietnamese, the usage of the particle *lận* (97) may provoke a psychological counter effect on H as a customer, who may interpret the utterance as follows: *As it is a French product, it costs up to several millions; hence it is beyond your affordability".* If this is the case, S may add the particle *mà* (softened hedge, see section 5.6) to avoid the possible psychological counter effect in (98).

In (98) *lận* suggests the opposite meaning to *hà* (see 5.10), which suggests that the price is reasonably low compared with the amount of fabric required.

It is interesting to use particles such as *hà* and *lận*, which convey a contrast between two respective meanings in the same utterance (98). *Hà* suggests the price is reasonably cheap, while *lận* suggests the amount of fabric required for the set of garments in the potential transaction is substantial. This contrast was attempted by the seller to convince the potential buyer that it was a good deal.

In addition, with the support of *hà* in (98), the politeness strategy seems to be convincing for two reasons. First, with particle *hà*, the imposition of price was mitigated making H feel it was inexpensive ("only five hundred and a half"). Second, in contrast, the customer would benefit because the suit requires as much as 2.8 meters of fabric. The sense "up to; as much as" is provided by the particle *lận* in the utterance (98) from a pragmatic point of view. This sounds like "pay less, get more" in the deal! In this way, S exaggerates interest with H in the politeness strategy.

Other politeness markers in category 11 include three particles *lắm, lắm đó*

and *tuyệt vời,* which are used to exaggerate interest, approval, or sympathy with H such as the use of "incredible", "marvellous", "fantastic" in English (Thompson 1965:174; Brown & Levinson 1987:104). For example:

(99) *Bớt hổng được đâu... tại gì công nhiều **lắm !***
      Discount NEG OK PRT   because work much PRT
      "Discount is impossible, because enormous work is involved" (a931)

(100) *Cái kia cũng dãn nữa, cho cô dễ mặc **lắm đó !***
       CLA that also elastic PRT, for auntie easy wear very PRT
       "That one is also elastic that makes very comfortable for you to wear really" (v96)

(101) *Bỏ tủ lạnh ăn thì ngon **tuyệt vời** luôn !* (v311)
       Put refrigerator eat then delicious marvellously PRT
       "It will be marvellously delicious after refrigerated"

The particle *lắm* (99) serves as an adverb of degree, which contributes to the meaning of "enormous". The particle *lắm đó* (100) performs the function of emphasising the illusionary force to encode a sense of "indeed", which aims to increase the validity of the whole statement. The particle *tuyệt vời* (101) is used as an emphatic hedge on illocutionary force to maximise the meaning of being delicious in the utterance. In this way, it exaggerates interest with H (Brown & Levinson 1987:106).

5.13   CATEGORY 12: ASSERTIVE HEDGES

In this category, there are three particles serving as assertive hedges to attract H's attention, similar to the politeness markers in category 11, but different in connotation and usage to some extent.   These hedges are defined in Vietnamese as *luôn, mới* and *thật ra.* Each has a discrete characteristic in serving the expression of "truthfulness" in the illocutionary force to attract H's attention and possibly increase interest. These particles give support to the performative function in a speech event. For example:

(102)   *Tại vì   có   một size Yến   thử* **luôn** *đi   Yến   ơi ! (..)* (v83)
        Because   have   one size   NAME   try   PRT   PRT   NAME   INTJ.
        "Because we have only one size, try it here by the way, Yen?"

(103)   *Trâm   mở* **luôn** *mấy   cái cửa sổ.*
        NAME open   PRT   several   CLA windows
        "Trâm opened several windows incidentally"
        (Buu Khai 1972:103).

In (102) and (103) *luôn* is used as an emphatic hedge on the performative force suggesting something is done in one go or on the same occasion (Buu Khai 1972:103). The closest interpretation of this particle's function can be described as "by the way" in English. In both (102) and (103), *luôn* is committed to expressing the state of affairs in which a person takes one action immediately after another, by chance, or by convenience. The interesting aspect is that more than one task is performed in one go. In this sense, *luôn* fulfils a positive politeness strategy in offering a piece of information thought to be of interest to H; in this way, H's face want is fulfilled.

The function of particle *luôn* may also be interpreted as "on the same occasion", which is likely to be acceptable to most Vietnamese speakers in short forms such as *luôn tiện* or *luôn thể* or even *tiện thể,* which are familiar particles in Vietnamese everyday language. For example, the utterance in (103) may become (104):

(104)   **Luôn tiện** *Trâm   mở   hết mấy   cái cửa sổ !*
        PRT   NAME open   all   several   CLA windows
        "By the way, Trâm opened several windows"

The assertive hedges *luôn* in utterances in (102) and (103) and *luôn tiện* in (104) basically convey the same meaning, "several tasks performed in one go", but the choice may vary depending on the context or situation in which they occur.

Although the phrase "by the way" seems to be the best match for *luôn* in

Vietnamese; such phrases are interchangeable in one bilingual situation, but not in another, probably because *luôn* has a wider variety of referential meanings than "by the way". This may be why Thomas (1983:91) describes it as "sociopragmatic failure", which arises from different cross-cultural perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour. Sociopragmatic failure goes beyond the reach of this study and is not pursued in this thesis as it requires further investigation; for example, on the issue of cross-cultural mismatches in the assessment of social distance, what constitutes an imposition, and evaluating relative power, rights and obligations.

Apart from the abovementioned referential meaning, in view of possible matches with "by the way" in English, *luôn* in Vietnamese may also be interpreted in another way, based on the context of data collected for the present study. For example:

(105) *Cô   kéo muốn chết **luôn**   đây   nè !* (v69)
         Auntie pull   deadly   PRT   here   PRT
         "You have truly pulled too hard here!"

(106) *Ngon   quá nè, ngon   lắm, ngọt   ngay **luôn** !* (v310)
         Delicious very PRT , delicious   PRT,   sweet   PRT   PRT.
         "It's genuinely delicious, very delicious, and sweet honestly"

In (105) and (106) *luôn* is used as a quality emphasising adverb to modify the performative in a sense of what is described in English as "truthfully", "honestly" or "genuinely" (Brown & Levinson 1987:166; Le & Nguyen 1998:115). In this way, *luôn* stresses S's commitment to the truth in performatives. Furthermore, *luôn* in (105) stresses "truthfulness" in terms of the action of "pulling", that is, the pulling is so hard that its effect can be felt or detected. In (106) *luôn* serves a similar function as that in (105). It affirms the degree of sweetness that makes the fruit being purchased delicious. In the same sense, *luôn* in (106) also stresses the "truthfulness" of the whole utterance that the fruit is very delicious. On this basis, *luôn* (in 105 and 106) fulfils a positive politeness strategy as it seems to satisfy H's positive face want – to know about something.

The next politeness marker in category 12 is expressed by *mới* in Vietnamese. According to Buu Khai (1972:114), *mới* can be interpreted as what may be understood in English to be "thereof", "as", "lead to", "enable". However, none of these terms can be considered as the exact counterpart of *mới* in Vietnamese. Therefore, the above suggestion can only be realised as a clue for the interpretation of utterances with the use of *mới* in different contexts. For example:

(107) *Ổng nói đâu cả   tháng nữa **mới** về   mà !* (v676)
       He said PRT whole month more PRT   return PRT
       "He said he would probably come back in one month"

(108) *Chừng nào **mới**   xin   giấy   độc thân được?* (a77)
       When   PRT apply paper single   OK?
       "When can I apply for a single status certificate?" .

From a linguistic point of view, *mới* can be interpreted as an assertive particle in terms of suggesting a condition for an action to be undertaken (Leech 1983:105). In (107) *mới* implies a condition, expressed previously in the same utterance, that is, "whole month", and this condition applies to the action to be undertaken. In other words, the illocutionary force in the utterance stresses the conditional factor, one whole month, on which the future action of returning would be taken. This mainly mitigates the force of statement or question in the sense that S is in a humble position, suggesting less knowledge about the topic of utterance. This humble attitude is intended to make H feel good or pleasant in the conversation. In (108) *mới* can also be interpreted as an assertive particle suggesting a condition for an action to be undertaken (Leech 1983:105). In this utterance the condition is a waiting period, which is expected and accepted by S.

The last politeness marker in category 12 is expressed by the compound particle *thật ra,* which is equivalent to "in fact" and used as an "adverbial-clause hedge" in English (Brown & Levinson 1987:162). This is a negative politeness strategy to mitigate the imposition in a previous utterance in the same course of conversation. It is a redress for a suggestion in terms of opinion being subtly

added in the course of conversation. In Vietnamese, this form of hedge is commonly used in various speech situations. For example:

(109) *Làm ăn* **thật ra** *á (..) ăn thua cái tiếng đồn là quan trọng.*
 Doing:business in:fact PRT depend CLA words:of:mouth COPU important
 "In fact, word of mouth is very important in doing business" (v812)

In this example, particle *thật ra* serves as an emphatic hedge on the illocutionary force of the utterance to invite H's attention, as S is going to say something important which relates to a concern in H's interest.

5.14 CATEGORY 13: INCLUSIVE "WE"

The politeness markers in this category are defined according to the concept of "including both S and H in the activity" that Brown and Levinson (1987:127) propose as a politeness strategy.

However, as suggested in the previous chapter, there is more than one form of inclusive "we" in Vietnamese, for example, "*mình, chúng mình, chúng ta*". These forms are commonly used by Vietnamese speakers in different contexts. For example:

(110) *Sao* **mình** *không đăng ký?* (v588)
 Why we NEG register
 "Why don't you register?"

(111) **Để coi** *trái nẫy có hư hôn !* (v272)
 Let's:see fruit this have damage NEG
 "Let me see if any damage on this fruit"

In Vietnamese the term *mình* (self/body) is understood as "self" or "body" in its literal meaning, but it is widely used to denote many pragmatic referents depending on the context in which the utterance occurs. It may be a self-referent as "I" in English, a second-person personal referent as the single "you", or even a

referent of an inclusive "we" as in (110), which can be further analysed.

In this utterance, the term *mình* was used in referring to H, despite its literal meaning. Such a pragmatic reference reflected the in-group membership that S wanted to establish in order to reduce the social distance and reinforce solidarity between S and H. Instead of using "you" as a normal reference, the self-reference was used as an inclusive "we" in this context (110) to indicate that S shared H's concern as if it was S's. In this way, the illocutionary force of pragmatic reference in the utterance is intended to make H feel that his want is shared with S, with the use of the politeness strategy.

In (111) the phrase "*để coi*" is equivalent to "let's see", which constitutes another inclusive "we" as a politeness strategy. If the utterance (111) were more complete, *mình* (self/body) could be inserted in the middle of its lexical structure and serve the same function:

(112)   ***Để mình coi*** *trái nẫy có hư hôn !* (v272)
        Let's:see   fruit this have damage NEG
        "Let me see if any damage on this fruit" .

However, in Vietnamese, the interpretation of this utterance is twofold: *Để mình coi* can be either "let me see" or "let us see". In this case only the latter interpretation is associated with the inclusive "we"; hence it can be treated as a politeness strategy as it is more polite to use "we" instead of "I".

Despite the availability of other forms for the inclusive "we", such as *chúng mình* and *chúng ta,* the lexical form for the inclusive "we" were more often identified from the singular form *mình* (self/body) than its plural forms (*chúng mình* or *chúng ta*). This poses a problem in the interpretation of politeness markers in category 13, especially with the use of the singular form *mình* in referring to both S and H (inclusive "we"). For example, in a situation involving a young Vietnamese couple walking along a sandy beach at noon; one of the two said:

(113) *Trưa rồi,   mình đi kiếm gì   ăn rồi về nhà.*
     Noon already, SELF go find something eat then go home
     "It's noon now, let's find something to eat then go home"

The term *mình* in this context refers to both S and H, hence the most appropriate interpretation is "let's", which means literally "*chúng mình*" or "*chúng ta*" (inclusive "we") in Vietnamese. The single form *mình* (self/body) in (113) refers to both S and H because the utterance occurred in the context where S and H were the only two participants. The utterance was a suggestion made by one participant but in this situation the reference must be made to both of them. The interpretation of verbal communication in this context is achieved by an inference process as discussed in Chapter 2.

At this stage, one may still wonder why the single form *mình* (self/body) was used rather than *chúng mình* or *chúng ta* (inclusive "we") in this context. Answering this question would be complex in order to justify why the singular form *mình* (self/body) was used instead of the plural forms *chúng mình* or *chúng ta* in the context of (113). First, the utterance in (113) not only involves the external context in which the utterance occurs, but the psychological context, or the context of experience; and second, in order to understand the use of *mình* (self/body) in context, one must know the norms for appropriate behaviour, and the interpretive conventions to be applied. The question in relation to the use of *mình* (self/body) in (113) can be further elaborated.

First, the external context of utterance (113) is a beach at noon where a couple of young Vietnamese were walking with or without other people. The context of experience is associated with the shared knowledge that S and H have employed in the conversation. Shared knowledge is gained from mutual interaction in the past or from past experiences that two individuals have shared (Kreckel, 1981:25). In this case, shared knowledge helps the two individuals understand that the term *mình* (self/body) is appropriately used in the proposed shared activity, due mainly to an understanding of the current situation and past experience.

Second, understanding why the singular form *mình* (self/body) was used

instead of the plural forms *chúng mình* or *chúng ta* (inclusive "we") requires some knowledge of the norms for appropriate behaviour, and of the interpretive conventions to be applied. According to Kleifgen (1989:84), interpretive conventions are generally assumed to be shared by speakers within a given culture. Therefore, from a Vietnamese cultural point of view, the term *mình* (self/body) is used in utterance (113) because it reflects a closer social distance between S and H than either *chúng mình* or *chúng ta.* Moreover, *mình* also represents a language of intimacy, which is especially used by male and female adults or adolescents to show intimacy towards each other in their everyday life activities. Perhaps *mình* is used to express a close distance between S and H in intimacy because of its pragmatic meaning, which suggests a close relationship between two individuals as if it was one's self. In Vietnamese culture, *mình* (self/body) is also used as a form of address between husband and wife in their everyday interactions.

In sum, the politeness markers in category 13 were examined in view of the contrast between the surface forms and their pragmatic meanings. They were only considered as politeness markers when a single form of *mình* (self/body) was used to refer to the inclusive "we", which is pragmatically different from "we" expressed by English speakers.

5.15   CATEGORY 14:   IN-GROUP LANGUAGE

In this category, politeness markers identified from the data include the postpositive particles *ngay, trân, trơn*, *rói*, which are defined as inserted words (*tiếng đệm*) in Vietnamese (Tran et al. 1941:141). These particles can be defined in terms of jargon, a kind of in-group language, which is used to promote in-group solidarity (Allan 1991:196). For example:

(114)   *Ngon   quá   nè,   ngon   lắm, ngọt   **ngay**   luôn !* (v310)
       Delicious very   PRT , delicious very, sweet PRT   PRT
       "It's delicious, very delicious, very sweet"

(115) *Tháo   ra cái cắt ngay **trân** cái (1) cái cạnh   đó !* (v81)

    Remove out CLA cut right PRT CLA, CLA edge PRT

    "Remove it out then cut right at its edge"

(116) *Hổng có bớt   gì   hết **trơn**   hả?* (v367)

    No   discount whatsoever PRT   Q.

    "No discount given at all?"

(117) *Đây   xoài tươi **rói** nè ! cô   ơi !* (a420)

    Here   mango fresh   PRT PRT   auntie INTJ

    "Auntie, mango is fresh perfectly here!"

In examples (114) to (117) above, the postpositive particles *ngay, trân, trơn, rói* have no meaning by themselves, but they represent in-group language, jargon, or slang (Brown & Levinson 1987:110-111) and further serve to strengthen the tone of utterance. Therefore, without these particles the utterances do not change their basic meanings, but their sound may change and become awkward, or appear to be lacking in vividness in utterances. With the postpositive particles, which are called "*tiếng đệm*" (inserted word) in Vietnamese, the utterances would become more complete in speech and this reinforces in-group membership and intimacy between participants.

The English gloss (inserted word) for *tiếng đệm* however poses a problem in understanding related postpositive particles from a linguistic point of view. A postpositive particle may be a suffix morpheme because it occurs after another word to form a compound particle or phrase with the meaning of the word to which it has been attached, having been slightly modified. Let's take a closer look at these phrases formed with postpositive particles in (114), (115), (116) and (117), that is, *ngọt ngay, ngay trân* and *hết trơn, tươi rói* respectively.

In (114) the meaning of *ngọt ngay is* provided by the antecedent *ngọt* (sweet). Both *ngọt ngay* and *ngọt* literally mean "sweet", but the former sounds more vivid and intimate than the latter. The meaning of *ngay trân* in (115) is the same as *ngay,* that is, "accurately"; but it is stronger with *trân.* The same explanation applies to *hết trơn* in (116), that is, the meaning of *hết trơn* is primarily determined by the antecedent *hết* meaning "finish". In all these

examples, the meaning of phrases formed with the postpositive particle is determined by the antecedent which it follows. However, with the postpositive particles, the illocutionary forces in the utterances become stronger.

In Vietnamese there are many postpositive particles that enrich speech styles in various contexts. For example, *nhịp nhàng* describes rhythm as in music or actions; *thanh thao* describes voice or sweet taste; and *vui vẻ* describes happiness or joyfulness. This is just one example to better understand the postpositive particles listed in category 14. In this research, they are classified as in-group language because they are used as a vernacular in casual situations, rather than used as a standard form or in formal situations.

In sum, the postpositive particles in the context of examples (114) to (117) do not have a meaning when they stand alone, but serve as modifiers to their antecedents. Without postpositive particles, the utterances would become unfriendly and boring. Like any other aspects of language, the use of in-group language with regard to postpositive particles in Vietnamese is very subtle and profound. Realisation of pragmatic meaning in utterances with postpositive particles requires a certain degree of competence in the language involved. It is notable however that the postpositive particles in the above examples may denote a literal meaning, which has not been analysed here, when they stand alone.

5.16   CATEGORY 15: TAG QUESTION

In order to draw H into the conversation, S can employ a politeness strategy in form of a tag question (Brown & Levinson 1987:107). Wong (2004:240) points out that a tag question reflects respect for possible differences between individual points of view; hence it observes personal autonomy, which allows H to decide whether to give an affirmative answer to a tag question. In Vietnamese, there is a similar strategy expressed by politeness markers, which have been identified from the corpus of data and classified as in category 15 including *hả, phải không, phải hông, không, hông* and *hôn.* For example:

(118) *Trời ! đẹp   quá mà **hổng** lấy **hả?***   (v18)
       God   beautiful very PRT but NEG   take Q
       "God, it's so beautiful, you don't take it, do you?"

(119)   *Mục đích thuốc xả   là   để cho bóng tóc **phải không?*** (v653)
        Purpose   conditioner COPU   let   for gloss hair Q.
        "The conditioner works for hair glossing, isn't it?"

(120)   *Nhưng mà hai năm   là   đủ   rồi   **phải hông?*** (a161)
        "But   two years COPU. enough already   Q.
        "But two years time is enough, isn't it?"

The particle *hả* in (118) is used as a tag question with a negation particle (NEG) in the utterances. The NEG in (118) is *hổng.* In (119) and (120) the tag questions are formed with the postpositive particles *không* and *hông*, and these postpositive particles are used as tag questions with the prepositive particle *phải*; but they can be used alone as question markers. As question markers, particles *không* and *hông* are interchangeable and can be replaced with a shorter form particle *hôn,* which serves the same function without changing the meaning of the utterance. For example, *không* (119) and *hông* (120) can be replaced by *hôn* without changing the meanings of the utterances:

(121)   *Mục đích thuốc xả   là   để cho bóng tóc **phải hôn?*** (v653)
        purpose   conditioner COPU   let   for gloss hair Q.
        "The conditioner works for hair glossing, isn't it?"

(122)   *Nhưng mà hai   năm   là   đủ   rồi   **phải hôn?*** (a161)
        "but   two years Copu. enough already   Q.
        "But two years time is enough, isn't it?"

In sum, tag questions in Vietnamese as in English are constructed with negation particles (NEG), some of which are found from the data such as *không*, *hông, hổng* and *hôn*. These particles can be used as question markers regardless of whether they are involved in a tag question. The most popular in Vietnamese include *phải không* (right or not), *được không* (OK or not), *được chứ* (OK or not), *chứ hả* (isn't it), NEG + *sao*, NEG + *hả*.

The choice of tag questions in Vietnamese is like language choice, which depends on social norms and varies from situation to situation and from community to community (Gumperz 1968:227). However, according to Saville-Troike (1982:52), language choice may be determined by setting and including locale, time of day and participant's age, sex, and social status.

5.17 CATEGORY 16: PSEUDO-AGREEMENT

In a course of conversation, when S wants to draw a conclusion showing an intention to cooperate with H, what Brown and Levinson (1987:115) have called a "pseudo-agreement", S employs a speech strategy that can be interpreted as an agreement in advance with H. This kind of agreement is not clearly and directly expressed, but it may be understood from H's point of view. For example, "I'll see you in the airport tomorrow morning, then (or so), when can I be there?"

From a pragmatic point of view, "then" and "so" in the above examples serve the same function, that is, to express an agreement between S and H in the course of their previous conversation. In Vietnamese there are a few particles that serve similar functions to "then" and "so" in English. However, they seem far more subtle in use. Such particles are classified as politeness markers in category 16, consisting of a few identified from the corpus of data such as *rồi/thôi/rồi thôi, vậy là, thì/vậy thì, bởi vậy, như vậy, vậy đó, được rồi, biết rồi, vậy/vậy thôi, thôi thì, vậy đi, thì đó.* For example:

(123) ***Rồi***   *lấy bốn trái luôn !* (v270)
      PRT (OK) take four Cla together
      "All right, let me take these four fruit"

(124) ***Thì***   *khi nào xong xuôi rồi   về   đây ở.* (v532)
      PRT (then) when   ready   PRT   return here live
      "Then, return here to live when you are ready"

(125) ***Thôi thì*** *cổ   tròn   tay   dài !* (v107)
      PRT   (then) collar   round   sleeve long
      "It's OK, then short, round collar, long-sleeve jumpers"

(126)   **Vậy**   *hai người may, hai người may đi !* (v138)

     PRT (so)   two people sew   two people sew   PRT

     "Then you two go ahead making an order for the garments"

(127)   **Vậy thì** *...*   *có   gì   em*   *gọi   giùm.* (v573)

     PRT (so then)   have what younger sibling   call   help

     "Then help me by calling me (when it is available)"

     All the particles in (123) to (127) respectively, suggest an indirect agreement on a previous topic, that is, issues that have been discussed or mentioned in the course of conversation. For example, in (123) the previous issues may involve bargaining or making a bid for a better price, an offer by the seller, or discussions on quality. On this basis, *rồi* reflects S's agreement in terms of acceptance. In example (124), the previous issues reflected in *thì* (then) may be related to H's problems mentioned earlier in the course of conversation. *Thì* (then) reflects S's agreement to what H has mentioned earlier. In example (125), the previous issues may have something to do with the discussion on garment style. *Thôi thì* (it's OK then) implies that S has agreed with H, based on the earlier discussions. In example (126), *vậy* "so" implies S's agreement to the previous issue as a conclusion to the conversation. Finally, *vậy thì* "so then" (127) reflects the previous issues that may relate to the discussions on the availability of goods – S shall notify H as soon as S has the information.

(128)   **Vậy**   **thôi**   *khỏi tua,*   **rồi** *chị*   *viền cho cái   nẫy nè!* (a191)

     PRT (so   OK) NEG   fringe,   then elder sister hem for CLA   this   PRT

     "So, no fringe; let me do the artwork on the hem for you"

(129)   *Dà ,*   **vậy đi** *... gặp trực tiếp thì   thương lượng giá   nó dễ hơn !* (a980)

     HON. PRT (so go) meet direct then negotiate   price   it   easier

     "Yeah, so it would be easier to negotiate the price when we meet".

     In examples (128) and (129), the particles *Vậy thôi* (so it's OK) and *vậy đi* (so go) basically suggest that S has agreed with H on the previous issues; but the

agreement was then reinforced with a new suggestion. For example, in (128) S made a suggestion for artwork on the hem, while in (129) the suggestion made by S was that a direct meeting with the boss would be easier for negotiation on the price.

(130) ***Vậy là***   *mình   thu   cái   đó ... hay làm sao?* (v634)
        PRT (so is)   self/body   collect CLA those   or   Q. (how)
         "So, you collect them or what can be done?"

(131) ***Như vậy*** *trong hội chợ   nầy thiếu gì quán nước có   chai hả?*
        PRT   in   festival:market this lack what kiosk,   have bottles Q.
        "So, in this market festival there are many kiosks having bottles, aren't there?" (v632)

(132) ***Được rồi***,   *đâu   có   nhận   thì   đi qua bển !* (v785)
        PRT (it's OK then)   where have accept   then go to there
        "It's OK, then go to where you can do the exchange"

(133) ***Rồi   thì***   *mình   chạy xuống đó   rồi   mình   qui.*
        PRT (it's OK then) self/body   run down   there then self/body convert
        ra   cái   mình   lấy (v784)
        out CLA   self/body   take
        "Then we go down there, to have it converted into Vietnamese currency"

In (130) to (133) the particles perform an initiating speech function in the sense of "OK" in English. They basically imply an agreement with H on some previous issues, and the initiating speech function serves to introduce a new idea, which may be performed in terms of a question or a suggestion. For example, in (130) the intended meaning was related to the question "How do you collect them?", and (132) conveys the suggestion "Go to the place where currency exchange service is provided".

(134)   ***Bởi***   ***vậy*** .. *mà lâu   rồi   phải hông?* (a61)
        PRT (because so) but long   PRT Q.
        "That's so, but it is long time already, isn't it?"

(135)   ***Vậy mà***   *bả cũng thắng đó chớ!*   (a576)
        PRT (So   but)   she also won   PRT PRT
        "So anyway, she also won the case!"

In (134) and (135) the agreement with H is realised in the depth of
pragmatic meaning without a clue. *Bởi vậy* (because so) and *vậy mà* (so but) in
these utterances can be interpreted at several profound levels. For example, in
(134) *bởi vậy* (because so) indicates S agrees with what H has said, but there is no
clue or hint at the surface level in the utterance. This type of interpretation strictly
requires a contextual knowledge in relation to the discourse. In (135) the
agreement with H is also realised in the same way as in (134). These two particles,
bởi vậy (because so) and *vậy mà* (so but) represent the most difficult to interpret
among politeness markers in category 16. However, they are difficult only from a
linguistic or pragmatic point of view and they do not render any difficulty in
understanding from the perspective of everyday language in Vietnamese culture.

Finally, the other three particle compounds, *đó thì, vậy đó, thì đó* have been
identified from the corpus of data and analysed in terms of the abovementioned
pseudo-agreement. For example:

(136)   ***Đó thì***   *cái   nầy là   tiền   công.* (a318)
        PRT   CLA   this COPU money labour
        "Then this is our labour charge"

(137)   ***Vậy đó***   *rồi bố trí cho cái   vòng   giữa   nổi   lên!* (a383)
        PRT   then arrange for CLA   swag middle   merge up
        "So then, we place the middle swag standing out"

(138) ***Thì đó*** *nó đang như vầy, kiểu   tay   dài vậy thôi !* (v3)
 PRT   it current like this   style   sleeve long PRT
 "That's it, it is the style for long sleeve"

All the particle compounds in (136), (137) and (138) as well as other particles analysed, using the "pseudo-agreement", reflect an agreement with H or H's comments in the previous utterances. In this way, they fulfil the politeness strategies to achieve the "camaraderie" rule, making H feel good (Lakoff 1975:65).

5.18   CATEGORY 17:   RELEVANCE HEDGES

The first two particles used as politeness markers in category 17, *vậy* (so) and *vậy đó* (so it is), serve as emphatic hedges on the performative force to provide the vividness of the utterance (Bui 1967:406). However, these two politeness markers may be considered, in view of what Brown and Levinson (1987:146-147) suggest in their study as performative hedges, encoded in words or particles such as "really", "sincerely" or "certainly", which can be used as a politeness strategy as in "relevance hedges". For example:

(139) *Cái đó làm giống như   cái   cửa sổ* ***vậy.***   (a921)
 CLA that made same   as   CLA window   PRT (so)
 "That one is made the same as the window really"

(140) *Dà (.) thì   nó mới ngộ   **vậy đó !*** (a561)
 Hon. then it   Prt interesting   PRT (so it:is)
 "Yeah, it's so interesting certainly"

From a Vietnamese point of view, the particles *vậy* (so) and *vậy đó* (so it is) relatively speaking in (139) and (140) serve as supplementary elements hedging on the illocutionary force to provide the vividness of the utterance. Therefore, without them, the meanings do not change, but the utterance will become bored and stagnant. However, from a pragmatic point of view, the references of those

particles in two different languages, Vietnamese and English, are not always based on literal meanings because the "surface forms" used in speech acts to perform a speech function may differ from language to language as Wierzbicka (1991:6) suggests in her study on cross-cultural pragmatics.

The next group of politeness markers in category 17 has been identified from the data including *thôi, thôi thôi, trời, trời ơi, ơi, ủa.* These particles are defined as relevance hedges, which mark a change of topic, partly implying an apology to mitigate the imposition on H in an imperative suggestion (Le & Nguyen, 1998:199, Brown & Levinson, 1987:169). However, their interpretation can vastly exceed their superficial meaning in English. For example, the first particle *thôi* can be literally translated into English as a negative suggestion "no more" but its pragmatic meaning seems to be "anyway", which is a preferred use in the present study, as it fits quite well with this category of politeness markers in Vietnamese. For example:

(141) **Thôi**, *chị*   *ốm, không nên đi bưu điện hôm nay.*
      Anyway, elder sister sick, NEG   should go post:office   today
      "Anyway, as you are sick; you should not go to the post office today"
      (Le Pham Thuy Kim & Nguyen Kim Oanh, 1998:199).
Or
(142) **Thôi**,   *cái nầy ăn   hổng   hết   đâu !* (a438)
      Anyway,   CLA this eating NEG   finish   PRT
      "Anyway, this is too much to eat" .

The literal translation of *thôi* (anyway) into English is "no more" but its pragmatic meaning is equivalent to "anyway". This seems confusing but in Vietnamese *thôi* fits quite well in the utterances in (141) and (142). It makes sense in the way in which Vietnamese use their everyday language. However, in the English version, what happens if "anyway" is replaced with "no more", which has been literally translated from *thôi*? Well, if "no more" replaces "anyway", then the utterance will become a strong imperative in speech. In this case, the utterance in (142) may be "no more, this is too much to eat!" which far exceeds the original politeness strategy. The meaning "anyway" should instead be

appropriately used in the context of utterance, which involves the use of the particle *thôi* (anyway) in Vietnamese. Therefore, in Vietnamese *thôi* can be used as a relevance hedge that marks a change of topic and simultaneously implies an apology to mitigate the imposition on H (Brown & Levinson 1987:169). Greater stress can be placed on this particle by duplicating the particle. For example:

(143) *Thôi thôi, được rồi,*   *ít ít*   *thôi !* (a434)
      PRT   OK   already bit bit PRT
      "Anyway, that's OK, a bit only"

In the same category of politeness markers, Vietnamese speakers also have expressions that are interjections or expletives in English, such as "oh!", "God", or a form of apology like "sorry". These include *ủa, trời, trời ơi* (expetives), *xin lỗi* (excuse me/sorry), which can be used as politeness markers in Vietnamese. They are defined in reference to the politeness strategy "relevance hedges" (Brown & Levinson 1987:168-169). For example:

(144) *Ủa!* *trên báo*   *Việt Luận hả?* (a579)
      INTJ   on   newspaper   Viet Luan Q.
      "Oh! it was in the *Viet Luan* newspaper, wasn't it?"

(145) *Trời !* *đẹp*   *quá*   *mà*   *hổng*   *lấy hả?*   (v18)
      God   beautiful   very   PRT NEG   take Q.
      "God, it's so beautiful, you don't take it, do you?"

(146) *Trời ơi!* *thôi*   *nhỏ*   *nhỏ*   *mới*   *bận*   *được !* (v110)
      INTJ.   anyway small small PRT   wear   OK
      "God! Anyway, it should be a little bit smaller to fit me"

Finally, particle *xin lỗi* (excuse/sorry) has also been assigned a politeness marker in terms of "minimising imposition". For example:

(147) ***Xin lỗi***   *anh*   *tên*   *chi?*   (a341).

    Excuse (sorry)   elder brother name   what

    "Excuse me, what is your name?"

The linguistic items *ửa, trời, trời ơi* (expletives) in (144) to (146) serve as politeness strategies in terms of relevance hedges that note the change of topic because they also include partly an apology for the change (cf. Brown & Levinson 1987:169). The utterance in (147) serves as a question with an overt apology included. The question asked H's name, but it was attached with an apology beforehand (presented literally by particle *xin lỗi*); hence it obviously became a politeness strategy in terms of providing H with a pleasant feeling. The apology was employed here to mitigate the imposition on H because of the question asking H's name, which may be considered "private property" and is normally performed by an authorised officer such as the police.

Although in English "excuse me" is distinctive from "sorry" and in Vietnamese *xin lỗi* seems to serve both. Yule (1996:53) defines the expression "sorry" as what the speaker feels. Bergman and Kasper (1993:83) suggest that in English, "excuse me" is used to signal a territory invasion (e.g. prior to asking directions) or upon virtual or real intrusion of another person's physical space (e.g. passing somebody in a narow hallway). The Vietnamese particle *xin lỗi* seems to be comparable with "excuse me" in English, used to mitigate the potential imposition on H in the utterance.

5.19   CATEGORY 18: GIVING/ASKING FOR REASONS

With "giving or asking for reasons" as politeness markers (Brown & Levinson 1987:128), Vietnamese speakers use many particles to express them, such as *vì, tại/tại vì, bởi vì, là do* (because), *sao, tại sao, mà sao, là sao, làm sao, vậy sao* (why). In giving reasons, for example:

(148) ***Vì***   *mình*   *căn cứ theo chiều ngang.* (a312)

    Because   self/body   base   on   width

    "Because we base on the width"

(149) ***Tại vì*** *có một size Yến thử luôn đi Yến ơi !* (v83)
Because have one size NAME try PRT PRT NAME INTJ.
"Because we have only one size, try it here, Yen?"

(150) ***Bởi vì*** *cái luật mới.* (a553)
Because CLA law new
"Because of the new law"

(151) *Cái nẫy* ***là do*** *của thằng builder nó đưa cho mình.* (a268)
CLA this because of CLA builder he give for self/body
"This is because the builder has given us"

In asking for reasons, for example:

(152) ***Sao*** *làm lâu quá vậy?* (v297)
Why do long very Q.
"Why does it take so long to do?"

(153) ***Tại sao*** *hổng mua đồ đậm đậm á?* (v232)
Why NEG buy fabrics dark dark PRT
"Why don't we choose a little bit darker fabrics?"

(154) ***Mà sao*** *hổng còn nữa được?* (a92)
Why NEG remain longer OK?
"Why has it no longer been available?"

(155) *Thuốc nhuộm một thời gian nó ngã nâu* ***là sao?*** (a625)
Dying:chemical a while it fall brown why
"Why the dying chemical changes into brown after a while?"

(156) ***Vậy sao*** *con Thuỷ nó nhắn chị mua cho Đức một bộ?*
Why child NAME who message elder sister buy for NAME one suit
"Why Thuy (.) gave me a message to buy for Duc a suit?" (v134)

Like any other politeness markers that have been identified from the corpus

of data, those in category 18 do not necessarily represent all politeness markers in Vietnamese. The frequency of Vietnamese politeness markers varies not only across categories but within a category. For example, among the politeness markers in category 18, some may be more commonly used than others.

Despite a variety of form in Vietnamese, the politeness markers in (148) to (151) can be translated into "because" and the politeness markers in (152) to (156) can be interpreted as "why" in English.

While the interpretation of these examples is straightforward, the politeness markers in category 18 vary widely. Among the politeness markers for giving reasons, *vì, tại vì, bởi vì* (because) are interchangeable, while among the politeness markers for asking for reasons, *sao, tại sao* (why), are also interchangeable. These examples have been chosen because of the preferred rhymes in the discourse rather than their referential meanings, since from a pragmatic point of view, change in forms does not lead to change in meaning.

5.20   CATEGORY 19:   TOKEN AGREEMENT

In this category, there are particles identified from the data such as *vậy hả, vậy à,* and *vậy đó hả,* which are used as politeness markers. Brown and Levinson (1987:114) define them as "token agreement" (TOK), which is performed in the form of a question or tag question to conceal a disagreement with H in response to a previous utterance. It is this nature of concealing a disagreement that helps the speech become a politeness utterance. For example:

(157)   *Mắc dữ   vậy hả?*
       Dear very   TOK
       "It's too dear, isn't it?"   (v250)

In this example, the "token agreement" was expressed in terms of a tag question regarding the price, which was considered very expensive by S. However, instead of the use of a comment or criticism, a form of question was used, not to seek an answer, but to conceal a disagreement about the price, or to be seen as not having disagreed with H in relation to the information given by H

about the price.

The politeness strategy of "token agreement" is more clearly demonstrated in the following examples:

(158) *Vậy à* ?
       TOK
       "Is that so?" (v530)

(159) *Ờ,* *vậy đó hả?*
       Yeah, TOK
       "Oh, is that so?" (v773).

In examples (157) to (159) the politeness markers are expressed in terms of simple questions to conceal the disagreement between S and H; but of course the disagreement is not overtly expressed. Therefore, the function of such questions is to respond to H's previous utterance and meanwhile minimise potential FTAs (face-threatening-acts) by incorporating politeness, rather than seek an answer.

In Vietnamese, politeness markers in category 19 as illustrated in the above examples are used extensively, and at times, they can be classified as phatic speech in terms of affective value that S wants to express in the conversation (Wardhaugh 1986:275). The phatic connotation in these examples of token agreement in Vietnamese however may only be true in terms of expressing solidarity and empathy with others in the course of conversation (Holmes 1992: 285). It is quite different from phatic expressions in English such as "How are you?", "Hello", "Good morning", or "Have a nice day", and verbal "fillers" such as "er", "well", "you know", which do not convey any communicative information (Ellis & Beattie 1986:127).

Despite this different use, Vietnamese speakers employ forms of token agreement in (157) to (159) to express politeness in their everyday language.

5.21 CATEGORY 20: INTENSIFYING INTEREST TO H

Vietnamese speakers perform the same expression as that in English, "you

know" or "see what I mean", which Brown and Levinson (1987:106-107) define as a politeness strategy to intensify interest to H in terms of drawing H into the conversation. This form of expression involves the use of question particles such as *thấy hông/không, biết/hiểu hông/không/hôn/hả, biết sao hôn,* which may be called "polite question markers" (PQM) here. These markers are identified from the data and used in category 20. They form questions but do not function as direct questions because an answer is not expected in the utterance. For example:

(160) ***Thấy hông****, một cái nằm trọn vẹn (1) ngay chính giữa nè !* (a368)
     PQM   one Cla lie competely right middle   PRT
     "You see? One item lies competely in the middle here!

(161) *Cô   ****thấy không,*** *con   còn quên nữa !* (a89)
     Auntie PQM   child   still forget even
     "You see, I even forgot it"

The particle *thấy hông* in (160) and *thấy không* in (161) are basically the same, despite a variation in the form and phonology of the postpositive constituents (*hông* and *không*). These constituents are in fact negation markers (NEG), which are used with an antecedent word to serve as question markers. All the negation markers are interchangeable without altering the meaning. That is, the meaning in each utterance will remain exactly the same if *hông* or *không* replace one another. The same principle applies to other politeness markers in category 20. For example:

(162) ***Biết hông****, con nhỏ   nầy có nhà bao nhiêu năm nay rồi !* (a945)
     PQM   CLA little   this has house   how many year now PRT
     "You know, this girl has had the house for many years already"

In addition, some other particles have also been analysed in terms of token agreement such as *biết hả, biết sao hôn and hiểu hông.* For example:

(163) *Tại gì hồi đó con c ũng ăn cái nầy, cô* ***biết hả****, con mới làm đó !* (a109)
     Because time that child also need CLA this, Auntie PRT, child PRT do PRT
     "Because at that time I also needed this, you know, therefore I did it"

(164)   *Dì*   ***biết sao hôn****,*   *mấy đồ*   *nẫy của*   *Hồng Kông !* (v20)

        Auntie PQM (know how) things   this of   Hong Kong

        "Auntie, you what, these stuffs are from Hong Kong?"

(165)   *Tại vì*   *con*   *lấy tấm*   *nẫy rồi,*   *con*   ***hiểu hông****?* (a126)

        Because   child   take piece this already, child   know Q.

        "Because you have already taken this, don't you know?"

All the examples that have been introduced in terms of polite questions for "intensifying interest to H" can be translated with the English phrases "you know" and "you see". They have involved two basic question markers in Vietnamese *hông* and *không*; but as a matter of rhythm in articulation, the Vietnamese question marker *hông* is pronounced as *hôn.* Therefore, these question markers are used interchangeably in Vietnamese; especially in Vietnamese vernacular.

5.22   CATEGORY 21:   JOKE

Politeness markers with a joke are classified in category 21 in the present study. There is no fixed or consistent form of joke made among speakers within one culture, let alone people from different cultural backgrounds. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 124), jokes are performed on the basis of shared background knowledge and values. Making a joke may be viewed as a positive politeness technique because it can relieve stresses and put H "at ease". For example:

(166)   *Cái áo*   *với (.) mang đôi giày được*   *rồi ! (cười)*   (v60)

        CLA jacket with   wear pair shoes OK   PRT [laugh]

        "It is fine enough to wear a jacket with a pair of shoes!"

(167)   *Dạ tên Bát [laugh],* ***bởi vây ổng cha người ta không !***   (a985)

        HON. named Bat   therefore, he father others   PRT

        "Yes, his name is Bat; hence he is often senior to others!"

Statement (166) occurred in a shopping context, in which the garments and the shoes are sold, and the shop has fitting rooms for customers to try on selected items. The joke followed a customer's answer that he had chosen a shirt and a pair of shoes. It was realised as a joke based on the shared background knowledge and values that everyone wears shoes with pants and a shirt. One who goes out without pants is exposed and will attract attention and ridicule. The statement was: "It's OK with a jacket and a pair of shoes" (for the man intended to buy them). It provoked an imagined man going out without wearing pants!

Statement (167) was realised as a joke because the man's name (Bat) is pronounced as in the kinship term *bac* (uncle). Therefore as a joke, the man mentioned in the statement is always an uncle, who is more senior than many others who can be assigned to by junior kinship titles such as younger brother, child, grandchild, etc.

In Vietnamese culture (as well as some others, perhaps), joke making is one of the subtlest techniques, which does not only require linguistic skills but also requires sensibility to the context and speech situation. It is not conventionally restricted to any condition, but difference in age, social status and context may affect joke making, as a joke may be undesirable if it is inappropriately made. In certain situations, joke making can be regarded as a lack of respect towards superiors. For example, a joke may not be suitable to be made by a school boy to his teacher, or to the elderly. Joke making towards superiors may result in accusations of being impolite.

Moreover, joke making is also dependent on the degree of social distance or the status of intimacy and solidarity in the relationship between S and H. Close friends can normally joke with each other, but people who are recent acquaintances do not joke with each other. Making a joke normally aims to bring about happiness or pleasure as benefits H in accordance with a proverb in Vietnamese: *Nụ cười bằng mười thang thuốc bổ !* (a laugh equals ten packs of tonic medicine!). However, attempting to make a joke in an inappropriate situation may be undesirable and can sometimes provoke anxiety for H; for instance, when H is in a bad mood, due to a personal reason.

Making a joke can also result in misunderstanding simply because it is not

understood as a joke. This is a problem in making a joke, because it normally occurs without a signal or indicator to ensure it will be understood as a joke. From a speaker's point of view, the problem in making a joke is also associated with uncertainty in predicting H's psychological state, which determines an attitude or a reaction to a joke. A person with something to worry about may respond to a joke undesirably or unpleasantly, while the same joke may be received differently with tolerance by a person with no worries.

In sum, Politeness markers in 21 categories in Vietnamese have been identified, analysed and discussed on the basis of data collected from Vietnamese speakers in Australia and in Vietnam. These politeness markers have been defined on the basis of various politeness strategies proposed from different perspectives.

Among these markers, some are used on a regular basis, but others may only be used occasionally in particular contexts. In a way, the use of politeness markers is affected by cultural values shared by the speakers, but it is also affected by many other factors, such as the context of utterances, including the participants, their relative ages, social distance, gender and roles.

The politeness markers which have been introduced and discussed in this chapter constitute common patterns of expressing politeness among Vietnamese speakers in Australia and in Vietnam because they are based on the data drawn equally among Vietnamese speakers in both national contexts (AV and VV).

However, because the usage of politeness markers is determined by different factors including those related to Vietnamese language and culture in Vietnam and Australia, there are differences in the usage of politeness markers between the two groups of Vietnamese speakers relative to context. The differences may arise from the effects of language contact and cross-cultural influence for Vietnamese speakers in Australia, and from political and social changes affecting Vietnamese speakers in Vietnam.

All 21 categories of politeness markers in Vietnamese have been discussed with examples extracted from the data; the next chapter will further analyse and discuss differences in their usage in relation to the four independent variables involved.

<div align="center">

Chapter 6

RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

</div>

6.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the findings of the study addressing the research question and the subsidiary questions stated in Chapter 1 with two sample populations: native Vietnamese living in Vietnam (VV) and Vietnamese living in Australia (AV). Within these two national groups, there are subgroups created in relation to the independent variables under investigation; that is, gender, role, and generation. For example, the subgroups assigned in relation to gender for VV are the male speakers (VM) and the female speakers (VF), while for AV, the gender subgroups are labelled AM and AF, for male and female speakers respectively. For role, the subgroups defined are based on whether the speaker is a customer or seller. For generation, the subgroups defined are based on whether they are members of the younger or older generation.

From the corpus of data, the politeness markers in Vietnamese have been identified and assigned to 21 different categories, ranging from c1 to c21, as outlined and discussed in Chapter 5. For all the independent variables, including national context, difference in the usage of politeness markers is assessed to determine their significance in overall usage when considered together and individually.

The most challenging part of the data analysis has been how to interpret defined politeness markers with regard to difference in cultural values to enhance the understanding of research findings. The analysis in section 6.2 examines differences and correlations between the two national groups before moving on to consider the impact of other independent variables including gender, role and generation in sections 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5.

6.2   ANALYSIS OF CROSS-NATIONAL LINGUISTIC POLITENESS

This section reports on the initial assessment of politeness markers by Vietnamese living in Vietnam (VV) and those living in Australia (AV) to establish

a basis for discussion as to their extent and how they differ from one another.

For assessment of overall difference in relation to national context, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to total frequency counts, hereafter referred to as "tokens", across all 21 categories of politeness markers listed in Table 6.1, to address the null hypothesis:

H_o1: *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese native speakers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the result X^2 = 81.241 and with df = 1, H_o1 can be rejected at p = .01 level of probability (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991:603) to reach a conclusion that there is significant difference, with AV's overall usage of politeness markers being 405 tokens greater than VV's in 1064 turns at talk. Throughout this chapter, the symbol X^2 is used to indicate the result of a Chi-square test in data analysis.

On the usage of each specific category of politeness marker, the same format of one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to address the null hypothesis:

H_o2: *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese native speakers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the usage of each specific politeness marker category in Vietnamese.*

The result of this test indicates that 11 categories are not significant (ns) and 10 categories are significant (**) as listed in Table 6.1.

Based on this result, H_o2 can be rejected in these categories, namely Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), Repetition (c6), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), Assertive hedges (c12), Pseudo-agreement (c16), Giving or asking reasons (c18) and Joke (c21). Accordingly, a conclusion can be made that there is significant difference between Vietnamese native speakers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the usage of categories (listed above). Most of these categories were used by AV more than VV, except for Repetition (c6), Assertive hedges (c12) and Joke (c21)

being used by VV more than AV. This finding of individual difference together with the overall difference revealed by Chi-square tests supports the stereotype of Australian Vietnamese being more linguistically polite.

Table 6.1 VV's and AV's analysed data in relation to national context

Cross-national assessment	Original data		Category by category results	
Politeness markers Category	**VV**	**AV**	**X^2**	**Status**
Affective particles (c1)	102	165	14.87	**
Kinship terms (c2)	159	340	65.65	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	4	10	2.57	ns
Quality hedges (c4)	14	46	17.07	**
Softening hedges/please (c5)	87	90	0.05	ns
Repetition (c6)	9	1	6.4	*
Honorifics (c7)	51	85	8.5	**
Common ground (c8)	19	9	3.57	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	43	99	22.08	**
Seeking agreement (c10)	20	30	2	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	32	26	0.62	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	55	25	11.25	**
Inclusive "we" (c13)	29	21	1.28	ns
In-group language (c14)	5	7	0.33	ns
Tag question (c15)	48	53	0.25	ns
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	51	109	21.03	**
Relevance hedges (c17)	30	20	2	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	25	42	4.31	*
Token agreement (c19)	12	23	3.46	ns
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	3	9	3	ns
Joke (c21)	9	2	4.45	*
Overall usage	807	1212		
National group's turns at talk	1064	1064		

*Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01*
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

The significant categories are further illustrated in Figure 6.1, in which Kinship terms (c2) clearly stand out as the category with the most significant difference and much higher usage by Vietnamese living in Australia (AV). Their usage per turn is more than double that of VV.

Figure 6.1   Significant differences between VV and AV

Significant categories of politeness markers
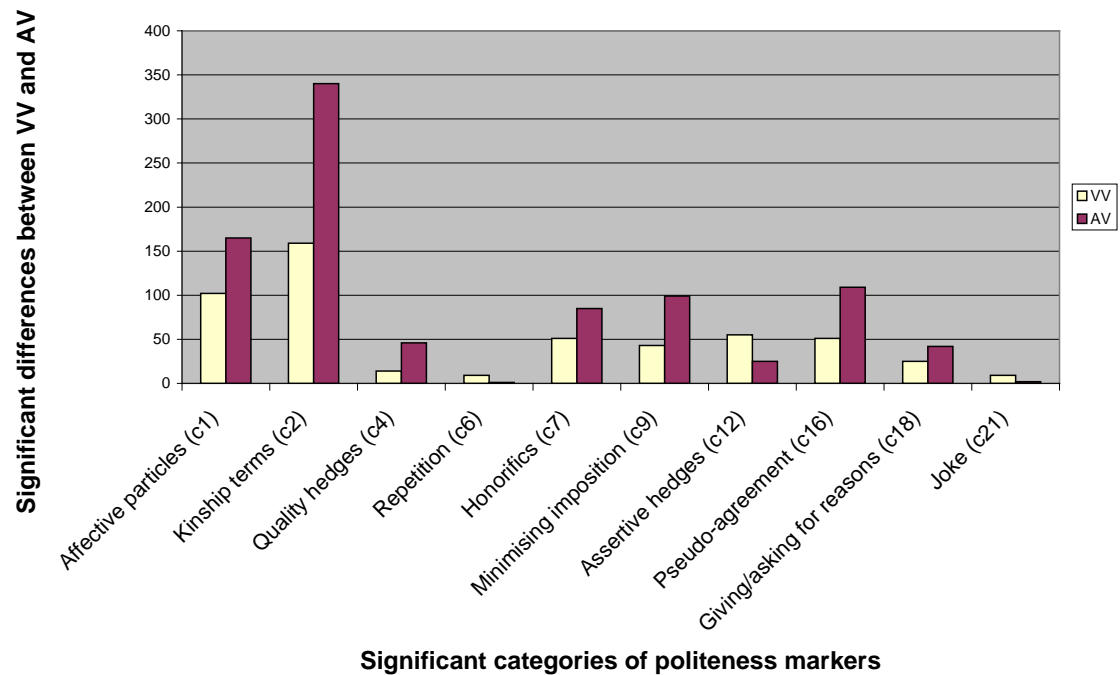
In the second approach to statistical analysis, Spearman's Rank-order Correlation (hereafter Rho) was applied to examine the extent to which the rank order in preference across national groups correlates. The degrees of correlation are defined in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2   Scale of magnitude for effect statistics

Correlation Coefficient	Descriptor
0.0-0.1	trivial, very small, insubstantial, tiny, practically zero
0.1-0.3	small, low, minor
0.3-0.5	moderate, medium
0.5-0.7	large, high, major
0.7-0.9	very large, very high, huge
0.9-1	nearly, practically, or almost: perfect, distinct, infinite

Electronic source: Hopkins (2002)

For assessment of order of preference in the usage of politeness markers in relation to national context, a Rho test was carried out to address the null hypothesis:

H_o3:   *There is no significant correlation between VV and AV in their rank order*

of preference in the usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.

With N = the number of categories of politeness marker (21) and the the sum of squared differences (260.5) indicated in Table 6.3, the obtained value of Rho is R = 0.830. With this result, H_o3 can be rejected at p = .01 level of probability to conclude that there is a significant correlation between VV and AV in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers in Vietnamese. The level of significant correlation is classified as very high according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics (Hopkins 2001). The significant difference in rank order of category preference is in Assertive hedges (c12) and Quality hedges (c4), reflected in its square value of rank difference.

It is quite striking that the most preferred categories are the same for VV and AV, with Kinship terms (c2) and Affective particles (c1) being ranked 1 and 2 respectively for each national group.

Table 6.3 Correlation between VV and AV in preference order

Politeness markers Category	VV		AV		Differences	
	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	102	2	165	2	0	0
Kinship terms (c2)	159	1	340	1	0	0
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	4	20	10	16	4	16
Quality hedges (c4)	14	15	46	8	7	49
Softening hedges/please (c5)	87	3	90	5	-2	4
Repetition (c6)	9	17.5	1	21	-4	12.25
Honorifics (c7)	51	5	85	6	-1	1
Common ground (c8)	19	14	9	17	-3	9
Minimising imposition (c9)	43	8	99	4	4	16
Seeking agreement (c10)	20	13	30	10	3	9
Exaggerate interest (c11)	32	9	26	11	-2	4
Assertive hedges (c12)	55	4	25	12	-8	64
Inclusive "we" (c13)	29	11	21	14	-3	9
In-group language (c14)	5	19	7	19	0	0
Tag question (c15)	48	7	53	7	0	0
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	51	6	109	3	3	9
Relevance hedges (c17)	30	10	20	15	-5	25
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	25	12	42	9	3	9
Token agreement (c19)	12	16	23	13	3	9
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	3	21	9	18	3	9
Joke (c21)	9	17.5	2	20	-3	6.25
Overall usage	807		1212			
National group's turns at talk	1064		1064		$d^2=$	260.5
d=difference in ranking. Score = proportional usage per 1064 turns					Rho=	0.830

So far we have analysed differences in the usage of politeness markers in

relation to national context from both perspectives of frequency count and rank order of preference, concluding that AV are more prolific in their usage of politeness markers overall and specifically in 7 categories, whilst largely having a similar order of preference to VV. Further analyses are carried out in subsequent sections with gender, role and generation to explore differences and correlations in greater detail.

6.3 ANALYSIS OF GENDER-BASED LINGUISTIC POLITENESS

Gender is one of the main independent variables explored when analysing the national data corpora, given the potential influence of gender differences in speech as discussed in Chapter 2. Further analyses for gender will be based on the "equivalent data"[1] in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4   VV's and AV's analysed data in relation to gender

Category of Politeness Marker	Raw data				Equivalent data#			
	VM	VF	AM	AF	VM	VF	AM	AF
Affective particles (c1)	41	61	66	99	44	57	72	91
Kinship terms (c2)	37	122	73	267	40	114	80	247
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	1	7	3	3	1	8	3
Quality hedges (c4)	9	5	11	35	10	5	12	32
Softening hedges/please (c5)	40	47	33	57	43	44	36	53
Repetition (c6)	4	5	1	0	4	5	1	0
Honorifics (c7)	2	49	34	51	2	46	37	47
Common ground (c8)	10	9	6	3	11	8	7	3
Minimising imposition (c9)	13	30	48	51	14	28	52	47
Seeking agreement (c10)	8	12	13	17	9	11	14	16
Exaggerate interest (c11)	7	25	12	14	8	23	13	13
Assertive hedges (c12)	22	33	7	18	24	31	8	17
Inclusive "we" (c13)	12	17	12	9	13	16	13	8
In-group language (c14)	2	3	0	7	2	3	0	6
Tag question (c15)	38	10	19	34	41	9	21	31
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	23	28	41	68	25	26	45	63
Relevance hedges (c17)	10	20	7	13	11	19	8	12
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	14	11	12	30	15	10	13	28
Token agreement (c19)	12	0	14	9	13	0	15	8
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	3	1	8	0	3	1	7
Joke (c21)	4	5	0	2	4	5	0	2
Overall usage	311	496	417	795	336	462	455	734
Sub-group's turns at talk*	493	571	488	576	532	532	532	532

within each national context

 # data generated with the subgroup's mean number of turns at talk

---

[1] As explained in section 4.3 on how it is generated for all further analyses in relation to the independent variables involved in this research.

These assessments involve both intra-national and cross-national comparisons. The former examines the pattern of linguistic politeness behaviours produced by male and female speakers of Vietnamese within each national context; whereas the latter explores how different or similar Vietnamese are within the same gender category using politeness markers across national contexts.

The statistical assessment of gender will involve male (VM) and female (VF) speakers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam (VV), and male (AM) and female (AF) speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia (AV).

6.3.1   INTRA-NATIONAL ASSESSMENT ON GENDER FOR VV

To assess the overall usage of politeness markers produced by males and females of VV, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to total occurrences of frequency in their overall usage to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o4: *There is no significant difference between male (VM) and female (VF) speakers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam in the overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the result of this test, using the "equivalent data" in Table 6.4, $X^2 = 20.066$, and df $= 1$, H_o4 can be rejected to conclude that there is significant difference between male and female speakers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam in the overall usage of politeness markers, with VF's overall usage of politeness markers 127 tokens exceeding VM's in every 532 turns at talk.

In order to substantiate whether the usage of each specific category of politeness marker is or is not significantly related to the gender of speakers, a one-way Chi-square test (Witte & Witte 1997:400), was applied separately to each category of politeness marker, using a 2x1 design on one independent variable, gender, and one dependent variable – the specific category of politeness marker. This test aims to address the following null hypothesis:

H$_o$5:   *There is no significant difference between male (VM) and female (VF)
          speakers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam in the usage of each specific
          politeness marker category in Vietnamese.*

With five invalid categories excluded from the test, the result is that as
indicated in Table 6.5, there are 6 categories, each with a different usage of
politeness markers significantly related to gender; while difference in the usage
of the other 10 categories is not significant.

Table 6.5   VV's analysed data in relation to gender

Category of Politeness Marker	VM	VF	X^2 value	Status
		Category by category X^2 results		
Affective particles (c1)	44	57	1.568	ns
Kinship terms (c2)	40	114	35.403	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	1		invalid
Quality hedges (c4)	10	5	1.777	ns
Softening hedges/please (c5)	43	44	0.005	ns
Repetition (c6)	4	5		invalid
Honorifics (c7)	2	46	39.568	**
Common ground (c8)	11	8	0.302	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	14	28	4.617	*
Seeking agreement (c10)	9	11	0.328	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	8	23	8.03	**
Assertive hedges (c12)	24	31	0.901	ns
Inclusive "we" (c13)	13	16	0.29	ns
In-group language (c14)	2	3		invalid
Tag question (c15)	41	9	19.955	**
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	25	26	0.032	ns
Relevance hedges (c17)	11	19	2.09	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	15	10	0.931	ns
Token agreement (c19)	13	0	12.949	**
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	3		invalid
Joke (c21)	4	5		invalid
Overall usage	336	462		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

The 6 significant categories are namely Kinship terms (c2), Honorifics (c7),
Minimising imposition (c9), Exaggeration of interest (c11), Tag question (c15)
and Token agreement (c19). Therefore, H$_o$5 can be rejected in these categories
to conclude that difference in the usage of politeness markers in these specified
categories for Vietnamese living in Vietnam is significantly related to gender. Of
these categories, VM used politeness markers more than VF in Tag question

(c15) and Token agreement (c19); whilst VF used politeness markers more than VM in Kinship terms (c2), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9) and Exaggeration of interest (c11).

The significant differences between VM and VF in each category are further illustrated in Figure 6.2. This highlights the strikingly significant differences and higher usage by females of Kinship terms and Honorifics.

Figure 6.2   Significant differences between VM and VF

Categories of significant politeness markers
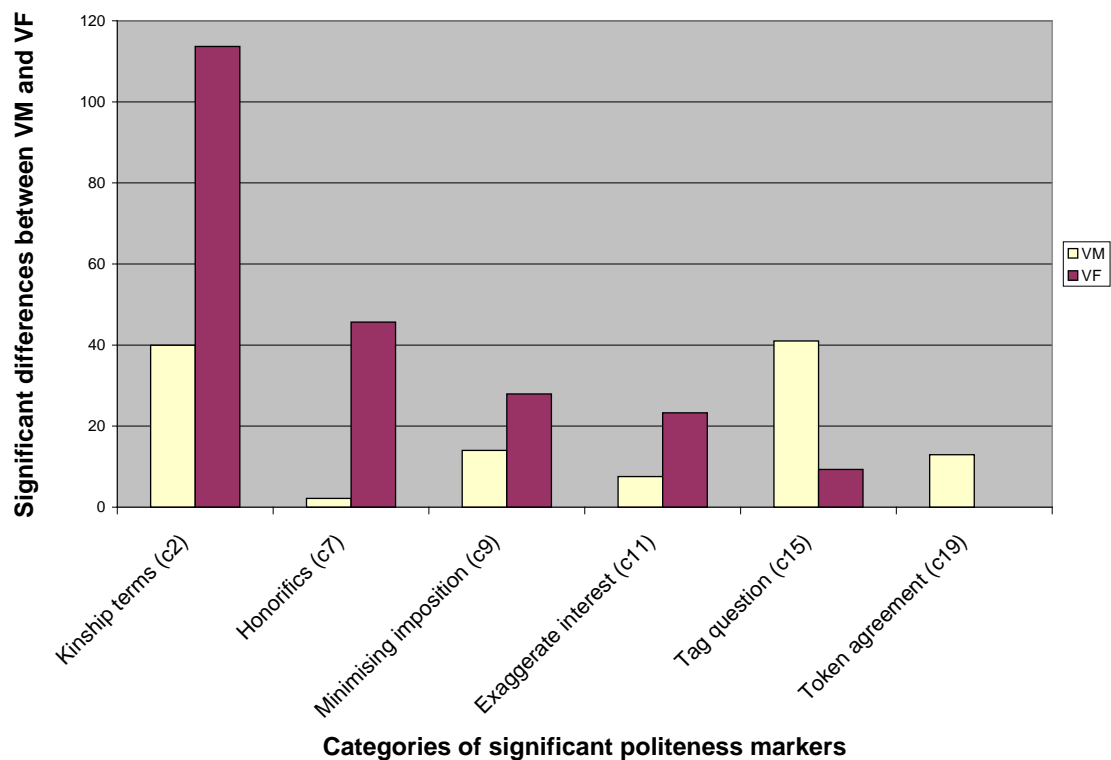
A further assessment of VV's gender-based (VM versus VF) linguistic politeness behaviours was undertaken to determine whether there is a significant correlation between VM and VF in the rank order of preference across the 21 categories. The null hypothesis for this assessment is:

H_o6: *There is no significant correlation between male and female speakers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam in their rank order of preference in the usage of categories of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the sum of squared differences $\sum d^2 = 644$ (see Table 6.6) applied to the formula for Rho (Hatch & Lazaraton 1991:453), the obtained value is R = 0.582.

With N = 21 and R = 0.582, H_o6 can be rejected at p = .01 level of probability (Butler, 1985:181; Hatch & Lazaraton 1991:605) to conclude that there is a significant correlation between male (VM) and female (VF) speakers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers in Vietnamese. The level of significant correlation is considered to be high according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics (see also Table 6.2). The largest contributions to differences in rank order of preference are Honorifics (c7), Token agreement (c19) and Tag question (c15). The rank orders of preference for VM and VF are illustrated in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 Correlation between VM and VF in preference order

VV's gender	VM		VF		Difference	
Category of Politeness Marker	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	44	1	57	2	-1	1
Kinship terms (c2)	40	4	114	1	3	9
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	18	1	20	-2	4
Quality hedges (c4)	10	13	5	16	-3	9
Softening hedges/please (c5)	43	2	44	4	-2	4
Repetition (c6)	4	16.5	5	16	0.5	0.25
Honorifics (c7)	2	19.5	46	3	17	272
Common ground (c8)	11	11.5	8	14	-2.5	6.25
Minimising imposition (c9)	14	8	28	6	2	4
Seeking agreement (c10)	9	14	11	11	3	9
Exaggerate interest (c11)	8	15	23	8	7	49
Assertive hedges (c12)	24	6	31	5	1	1
Inclusive "we" (c13)	13	9.5	16	10	-0.5	0.25
In-group language (c14)	2	19.5	3	18.5	1	1
Tag question (c15)	41	3	9	13	-10	100
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	25	5	26	7	-2	4
Relevance hedges (c17)	11	11.5	19	9	2.5	6.25
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	15	7	10	12	-5	25
Token agreement (c19)	13	9.5	0	21	-12	132
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	21	3	18.5	2.5	6.25
Joke (c21)	4	16.5	5	16	0.5	0.25
Overall usage	336		462			**644**
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			

VM/VF   r= 0.582

6.3.2   INTRA-NATIONAL ASSESSMENT ON GENDER FOR AV

Statistical assessments similar to those in section 6.3.1 above are applied for Vietnamese living in Australia, using a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test

to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o7:   *There is no significant difference between male (AM) and female (AF)*
speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia in the overall usage of
politeness markers in Vietnamese.

The result is X^2 = 65.791. With df = 1, H_o7 can be rejected at p = .01
level of probability to conclude that there is significant difference between male
(AM) and female (AF) speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia in the overall
usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese. This significant difference is
highlighted by AF's overall usage of politeness markers 280 tokens more than
AM in every 532 turns at talk. This significant difference is reflected in Table
6.7.

Table 6.7   AV's analysed data in relation to gender

Category of Politeness Marker	Category by category X^2 results			
	AM	AF	X^2 value	Status
Affective particles (c1)	72	91	2.324	ns
Kinship terms (c2)	80	247	85.523	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	8	3	2.271	ns
Quality hedges (c4)	12	32	9.33	**
Softening hedges/please (c5)	36	53	3.136	ns
Repetition (c6)	1	0		invalid
Honorifics (c7)	37	47	1.197	ns
Common ground (c8)	7	3	1.526	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	52	47	0.274	ns
Seeking agreement (c10)	14	16	0.078	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	13	13	0.001	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	8	17	3.335	ns
Inclusive "we" (c13)	13	8	1.063	ns
In-group language (c14)	0	6	6.465	*
Tag question (c15)	21	31	2.193	ns
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	45	63	3.05	ns
Relevance hedges (c17)	8	12	0.975	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	13	28	5.245	*
Token agreement (c19)	15	8	2.049	ns
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	1	7		invalid
Joke (c21)	0	2		invalid
Overall usage	455	734		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

*Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01*
X^2 *: Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers*

The assessment of difference in the usage of each category of politeness markers between Vietnamese males (AM) and females (AF) living in Australia addresses the following null hypothesis:

H_o8:   *There is no significant difference between male (AM) and female (AF) speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia in the usage of the specific politeness marker category in Vietnamese.*

As shown in Table 6.7, with 3 invalid categories excluded from this test, there are 4 significant categories in which the null hypothesis can be rejected, with 14 categories being not significant.

Based on the result, H_o8 can be rejected in 4 significant categories, namely Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), In-group language (c14) and Giving or asking reasons (c18) to conclude that there is significant difference between male (AM) and female (AF) speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia in 4 of 21 categories of politeness markers in Vietnamese. This statistically significant difference is further illustrated in Figure 6.3, with AF's usage being higher than VV's.

Figure 6.3   Significant differences between AM and AF
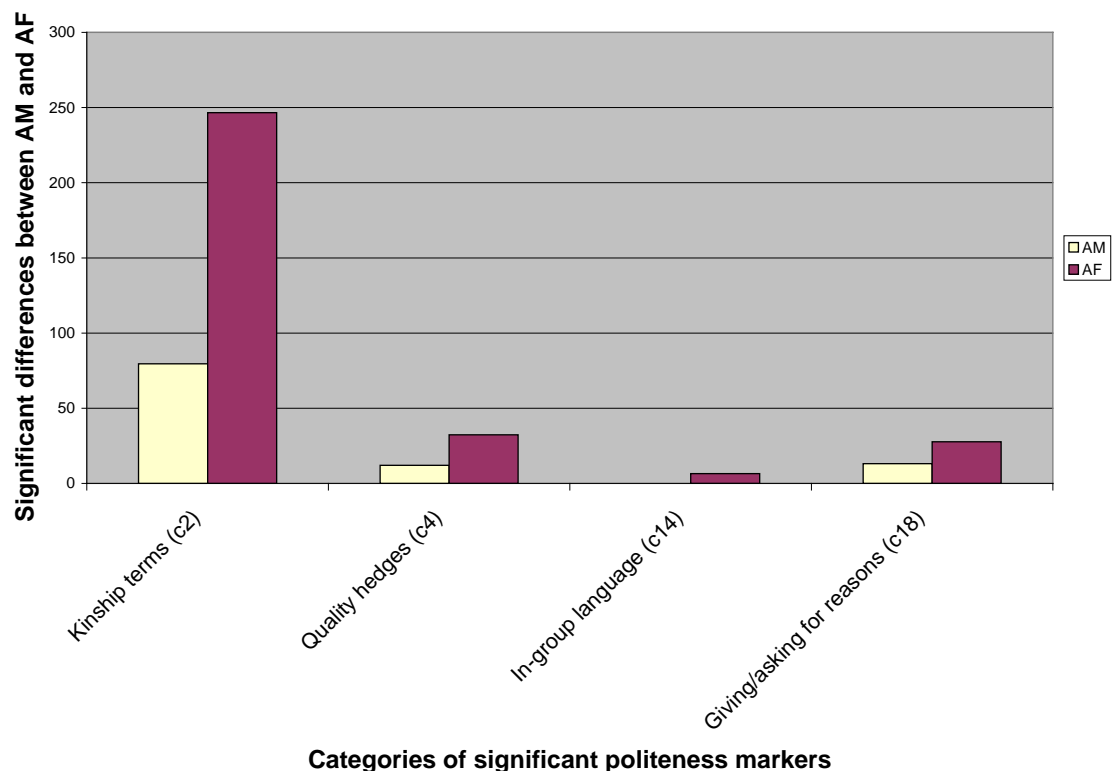
The second type of statistical assessment was employed using Rho to determine whether there is a correlation between AM and AF in the rank order of preference across 21 categories of politeness markers identified from the data corpus. This test aims to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o9: *There is no correlation between male and female speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia in their rank order of preference for politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the sum of squared differences d^2 = 180.5 (shown in Table 6.8) applied to the formula for Rho, we found that the value is R = 0.883.

Table 6.8   Correlation between AM and AF in preference order

	AM		AF		Difference	
Category of Politeness Marker	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	72	2	91	2	0	0
Kinship terms (c2)	80	1	247	1	0	0
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	8	15	3	18.5	-3.5	12.25
Quality hedges (c4)	12	13	32	7	6	36
Softening hedges/please (c5)	36	6	53	4	2	4
Repetition (c6)	1	18.5	0	21	-2.5	6.25
Honorifics (c7)	37	5	47	5.5	-0.5	0.25
Common ground (c8)	7	17	3	18.5	-1.5	2.25
Minimising imposition (c9)	52	3	47	5.5	-2.5	6.25
Seeking agreement (c10)	14	9	16	11	-2	4
Exaggerate interest (c11)	13	11	13	12	-1	1
Assertive hedges (c12)	8	15	17	10	5	25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	13	11	8	14.5	-3.5	12.25
In-group language (c14)	0	20.5	6	17	3.5	12.25
Tag question (c15)	21	7	31	8	-1	1
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	45	4	63	3	1	1
Relevance hedges (c17)	8	15	12	13	2	4
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	13	11	28	9	2	4
Token agreement (c19)	15	8	8	14.5	-6.5	42.25
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	1	18.5	7	16	2.5	6.25
Joke (c21)	0	20.5	2	20	0.5	0.25
Overall usage	455		734			**180.5**
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			

Rho=   0.883

Based on this test, H_o8 can be rejected at p = .01 level of probability to conclude that there is a significant correlation between male and female speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia in the rank order of preference across

all categories of politeness markers. With the critical value of Rho, R = 0.883, the level of significant correlation is considered very high according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics. The largest contributions to differences in rank order are Token agreement (c19) and Quality hedges (c4).

There are evident similarities across genders for most categories, with Kinship terms (c2) and Affective particles (c1) being ranked 1 and 2 respectively by both male and female Vietnamese living in Australia as their most preferred categories.

In view of cross-national differences, further assessments were carried out to compare same gender subgroups in the usage of politeness markers across national contexts. Two separate statistical procedures were employed: Chi-square tests (X^2) and Rho.

6.3.3   CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS FOR GENDER WITH X^2

This assessment involves two cross-national comparisons: males (VM versus AM) and females (VF versus AF) in Vietnam and Australia.

Male speakers

A Chi-square test was applied to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o10:   *There is no significant difference between male native Vietnamese across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the square value $X^2 = $ 17.920 and df = 1, H_o10 can be rejected at p = .01 level of probability to conclude that there is a significant difference in the overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese produced by the male speakers living in Vietnam compared to those living in Australia. As reflected in Table 6.9, the Australian males used politeness markers 119 tokens more than the males in Vietnam in every 532 turns at talk.

For cross-national assessment by categories of politeness markers, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to each category produced by male speakers of Vietnamese across the two national contexts (VM and AM) with outcomes indicated in Table 6.9. This test for cross-national assessment aims to

address the following null hypothesis on a category by category basis:

H_o11: *There is no significant difference between male native Vietnamese across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the usage of each specific politeness marker category in Vietnamese.*

Table 6.9 Cross-national differences between VM and AM

Male's differences	Category by category X^2 results			
Category of Politeness Marker	VM	AM	X^2 value	Status
Affective particles (c1)	44	72	6.607	**
Kinship terms (c2)	40	80	13.158	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	8	1.776	ns
Quality hedges (c4)	10	12	0.239	ns
Softening hedges/please (c5)	43	36	0.653	ns
Repetition (c6)	4	1	1.925	ns
Honorifics (c7)	2	37	31.066	**
Common ground (c8)	11	7	1.042	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	14	52	22.106	**
Seeking agreement (c10)	9	14	1.345	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	8	13	1.481	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	24	8	8.272	**
Inclusive "we" (c13)	13	13	0.001	ns
In-group language (c14)	2	0		invalid
Tag question (c15)	41	21	6.672	**
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	25	45	5.684	*
Relevance hedges (c17)	11	8	0.542	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	15	13	0.146	ns
Token agreement (c19)	13	15	0.19	ns
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	1		invalid
Joke (c21)	4	0		invalid
Overall usage	336	455		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

The analysis shows that 7 categories are significant, 11 are not significant and 3 are not valid (hence being excluded from the test). Based on this result, H_o11 can be rejected in the 7 significant categories, namely Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), Assertive hedges (c12), Tag question (c15) and Pseudo-agreement (c16) to conclude that there are significant differences between male native Vietnamese across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the usage of 7 (of 21) politeness

marker categories in Vietnamese. The significance is at $p = 0.01$ level of probability in 6 categories indicated with (**) and at $p = 0.05$ in 1 categories (*). Of these 7 significant categories, VM used more Assertive hedges (c12) and Tag questions (c15) than AM; while AM used the other 5 categories more than VM. Figure 6.4 further illustrates these significant categories of politeness marker.

Figure 6.4   Significant differences between VM and AM
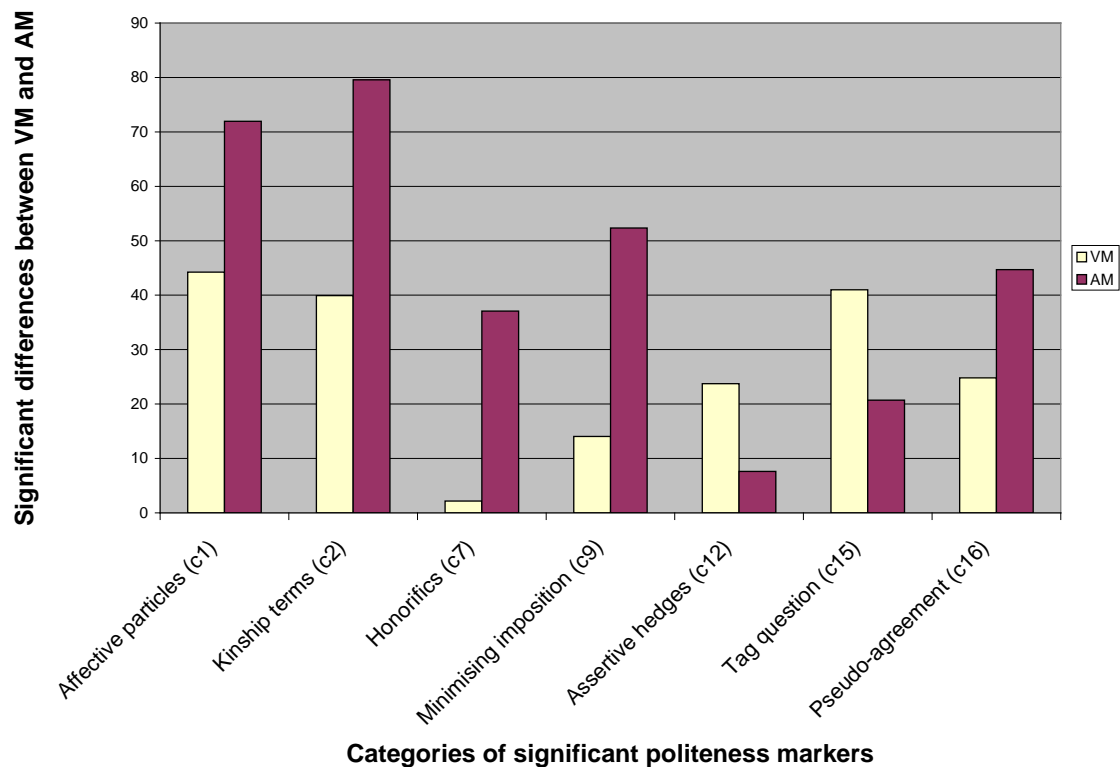
Female speakers

For female speakers, similar cross-national assessment has been carried out.

Cross-national analysis of the overall usage of politeness marker by female speakers living in Vietnam (VF) and in Australia (AF) using a one-way Chi-square test aims to address the null hypothesis:

H_o12: *There is no significant difference between female native Vietnamese across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the result of X^2 = 61.907 and df = 1, H_o12 can also be rejected at p = .01 level of probability to conclude that there is significant difference between female native Vietnamese across national contexts in the overall usage of politeness markers. AF overall used 272 politeness marker tokens more than VF in every 532 turns at talk. This statistically significant difference between VF and AF is reflected in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10 Cross-national differences between VF and AF

Female's differences	Category by category X^2 results			
Category of Politeness Marker	VF	AF	X^2 value	Status
Affective particles (c1)	57	91	8.076	**
Kinship terms (c2)	114	247	49.053	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	1	3	0.914	ns
Quality hedges (c4)	5	32	20.698	**
Softening hedges/please (c5)	44	53	0.813	ns
Repetition (c6)	5	0		invalid
Honorifics (c7)	46	47	0.023	ns
Common ground (c8)	8	3	2.826	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	28	47	4.888	*
Seeking agreement (c10)	11	16	0.76	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	23	13	2.964	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	31	17	4.209	*
Inclusive "we" (c13)	16	8	2.345	ns
In-group language (c14)	3	6		invalid
Tag question (c15)	9	31	11.979	**
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	26	63	15.167	**
Relevance hedges (c17)	19	12	1.433	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	10	28	8.031	**
Token agreement (c19)	0	8	8.313	**
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	3	7	2.072	ns
Joke (c21)	5	2		invalid
Overall usage	462	734		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

On difference, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to determine whether there was significant difference in specific categories between female speakers across national contexts. This cross-national assessment aims to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o13: *There is no significant difference between female native Vietnamese across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the usage of each specific category of politeness marker in Vietnamese.*

As indicated in Table 6.10, 3 invalid categories are excluded from the test, 9 categories are significant, namely Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), Minimising imposition (c9), Assertive hedges (c12), Tag question (c15), Pseudo-agreement (c16), Giving or asking reasons (c18) and Token agreement (c19); with the other categories being not significant. The significant categories are further illustrated in Figure 6.5, which highlights the significant difference in Kinship terms and Honorifics.

Figure 6.5 Significant differences between VF and AF
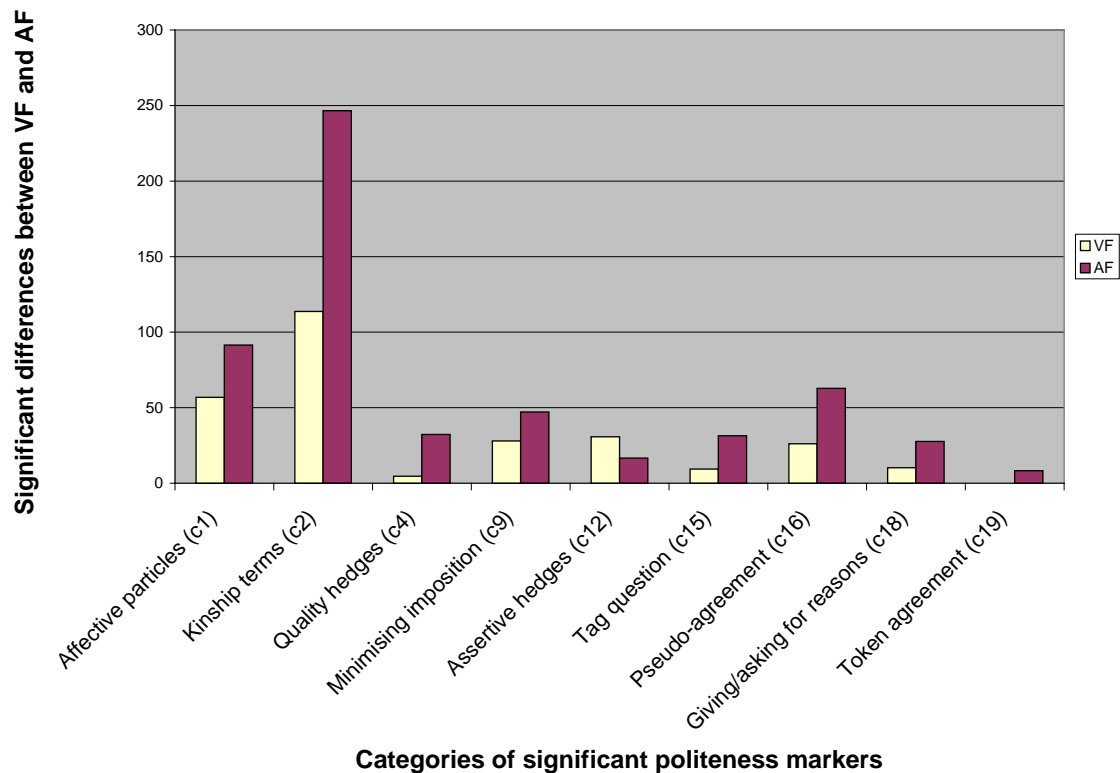
Of the 9 significant categories, only Assertive hedges (c12), was used more by female Vietnamese living in Vietnam (VF) than female Vietnamese living in Australia (AF); whilst the other significant categories were used by AF more than VF.

Based on the result, H_o13 can be rejected in significant categories to conclude that there is significant difference between female native Vietnamese

across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the usage of 9 (of 21) categories of politeness markers in Vietnamese.

6.3.4 CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS FOR GENDER WITH RHO

In this section further cross-national assessments are carried out using Rho to explore whether or not there is significant correlation between gender groups in the usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese as summarised in Table 6.11.

Table 6.11 Correlation between VM and AM in preference order

Category of Politeness Marker	VM		AM		Difference	
	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	44	1	72	2	-1	1
Kinship terms (c2)	40	4	80	1	3	9
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	18	8	15	3	9
Quality hedges (c4)	10	13	12	13	0	0
Softening hedges/please (c5)	43	2	36	6	-4	16
Repetition (c6)	4	16.5	1	18.5	-2	4
Honorifics (c7)	2	19.5	37	5	14.5	210.25
Common ground (c8)	11	11.5	7	17	-5.5	30.25
Minimising imposition (c9)	14	8	52	3	5	25
Seeking agreement (c10)	9	14	14	9	5	25
Exaggerate interest (c11)	8	15	13	11	4	16
Assertive hedges (c12)	24	6	8	15	-9	81
Inclusive "we" (c13)	13	9.5	13	11	-1.5	2.25
In-group language (c14)	2	19.5	0	20.5	-1	1
Tag question (c15)	41	3	21	7	-4	16
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	25	5	45	4	1	1
Relevance hedges (c17)	11	11.5	8	15	-3.5	12.25
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	15	7	13	11	-4	16
Token agreement (c19)	13	9.5	15	8	1.5	2.25
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	21	1	18.5	2.5	6.25
Joke (c21)	4	16.5	0	20.5	-4	16
Overall usage	336		455			**499.5**
Subgroup's turns at talk	532		532			

r= 0.676

On the rank order of preference for politeness marker categories across national contexts, Rho was employed for same gender subgroups across national contexts – VM versus AM and VF versus AF – to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o14: *There is no significant correlation between the same gender speakers across national contexts in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers.*

For male subgroups Rho was applied to data of Vietnamese males living in Vietnam (VM) and in Australia (AM). With the result of the Rho test, R = 0.676, H_o14 can be rejected at p = 0.01 level of probability to conclude that there is a significant correlation between the male speakers of Vietnamese across national contexts in the rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers. The level of correlation is considered significant according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics.

It is striking that the largest contributions to differences between VM and AM is Honorifics (c7) and Assertive hedges (c12), whilst Honorifics (c7) represent the largest contribution to differences as shown in Table 6.11. This highlights the significant role of Honorifics (c7) in the politeness strategy employed by Vietnamese speakers to be further discussed in subsequent chapters.

Table 6.12 Correlation between VF and AF in preference order

Category of Politeness Marker	VF		AF		Difference	
	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	57	2	91	2	0	0
Kinship terms (c2)	114	1	247	1	0	0
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	1	20	3	18.5	1.5	2.25
Quality hedges (c4)	5	16	32	7	9	81
Softening hedges/please (c5)	44	4	53	4	0	0
Repetition (c6)	5	16	0	21	-5	25
Honorifics (c7)	46	3	47	5.5	-2.5	6.25
Common ground (c8)	8	14	3	18.5	-4.5	20.25
Minimising imposition (c9)	28	6	47	5.5	0.5	0.25
Seeking agreement (c10)	11	11	16	11	0	0
Exaggerate interest (c11)	23	8	13	12	-4	16
Assertive hedges (c12)	31	5	17	10	-5	25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	16	10	8	14.5	-4.5	20.25
In-group language (c14)	3	18.5	6	17	1.5	2.25
Tag question (c15)	9	13	31	8	5	25
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	26	7	63	3	4	16
Relevance hedges (c17)	19	9	12	13	-4	16
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	10	12	28	9	3	9
Token agreement (c19)	0	21	8	14.5	6.5	42.25
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	3	18.5	7	16	2.5	6.25
Joke (c21)	5	16	2	20	-4	16
Overall usage	462		734			**329.0**
Subgroup's equivalent turns	532		532			

r=   0.786

For the female subgroups, another Rho test was applied and the result is R = 0.786 (see Table 6.12). Accordingly, H_o14 can also be rejected at p = 0.01 level of probability to reach a conclusion that there is a significant correlation between the female speakers' order of preference across national contexts. The level of this correlation is considered significant according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics.

As indicated in Table 6.12, Quality hedges (c4) and Token agreement (c19), have made the largest contributions to differences in the rank order of preference; whilst 4 categories, namely Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Softening hedges/please (c5) and Seeking agreement (c10) represent similarities between Vietnamese females living in Vietnam (VF) and in Australia (AF).

In sum, there is significant difference in the overall usage of politeness markers across genders in both national contexts. On the same gender comparison across national contexts, for males and females, there is a significant difference in the overall usage of politeness markers; but for male speakers there are significant differences in the usage of 7 categories (see Table 6.9) and for the females, significant differences have been found in the usage of 9 categories (see Table 6.10).

On the rank order of preference for politeness marker categories, a significant correlation exists between speakers of the opposite gender within national contexts and same gender speakers across national contexts. However, the level of correlation between opposite gender speakers in Australia (R = 0.882) is higher than that in Vietnam (R = 0.582).

There is also a small rank order discrepancy between same gender speakers across national contexts where the correlation between male speakers is considerably lower (R = 0.676) than that of female speakers (R = 0.786).

All gender-related correlations of rank order in the usage of politeness markers across and within national contexts are summarised in Figure 6.6. In this figure, we can see that the highest correlation is between the gender subgroups of Vietnamese living in Australia (AM and AF); whilst the second

highest correlation is between the female subgroups of Vietnamese across national contexts (VF and AF).

Figure 6.6   Gender-based correlation in preference order

	VM	VF	AM	AF
VM		0.582**	0.676**	
VF				0.786**
AM				0.882**
AF				

*** significant at p=0.01 level of probability*   1.0

The next analysis will be on the usage of politeness markers in relation to the role of speakers in service encounters.

6.4   ANALYSIS OF ROLE-BASED LINGUISTIC POLITENESS

Similar to gender, the role-related analysis is based on "equivalent" data calculated with an equal number of turns (532) for all subgroups. This analysis aims to examine how the role of speakers affects the usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese within and across national contexts.

6.4.1   INTRA-NATIONAL ASSESSMENT ON ROLE FOR VV

In this assessment, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test on how the role of speakers affect overall and individual difference in the usage of politeness markers across categories, based on data in Table 6.13.

For the overall difference, the test was applied to data of the overall usage of politeness markers addressing the following null hypothesis:

H_o15: *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese customers (VC) and sellers (VS) living in Vietnam in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

The result is X^2 = 11.156 and with df = 1, H_o15 can be rejected at p = 0.01 to conclude that there is a significant difference between customers and sellers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam in the overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese, with the sellers overall using politeness markers 96 tokens more than the customers in every 532 turns at talk.

Table 6.13   VV's & AV's analysed data in relation to role

Category of Politeness Marker	Raw Data				Equivalent Data#			
	VC	VS	AC	AS	VC	VS	AC	AS
Affective particles (c1)	48	54	57	108	41	65	56	111
Kinship terms (c2)	55	104	166	174	47	125	162	179
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	4	0	5	5	3	0	5	5
Quality hedges (c4)	10	4	25	21	9	5	24	22
Softening hedges/please (c5)	61	26	52	38	52	31	51	39
Repetition (c6)	5	4	1	0	4	5	1	0
Honorifics (c7)	3	48	74	11	3	58	72	11
Common ground (c8)	11	8	6	3	9	10	6	3
Minimising imposition (c9)	19	24	42	57	16	29	41	59
Seeking agreement (c10)	16	4	9	21	14	5	9	22
Exaggerate interest (c11)	15	17	12	14	13	21	12	14
Assertive hedges (c12)	23	32	11	14	20	39	11	14
Inclusive "we" (c13)	23	6	8	13	20	7	8	13
In-group language (c14)	4	1	2	5	3	1	2	5
Tag question (c15)	41	7	36	17	35	8	35	17
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	35	16	46	63	30	19	45	65
Relevance hedges (c17)	21	9	8	12	18	11	8	12
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	13	12	21	21	11	14	20	22
Token agreement (c19)	12	0	17	6	10	0	17	6
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	3	3	6	0	4	3	6
Joke (c21)	7	2	0	2	6	2	0	2
Overall usage	426	381	601	611	364	460	586	628
Sub-group's turns at talk*	623	441	546	518	532	532	532	532

 * within each national context
 # data generated with the subgroup's mean number of turns at talk

Another one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to the usage of every category of politeness marker to explore how customers may differ from sellers and whether the difference is significant or not. This test aims to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o16: *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese customers (VC) and sellers (VS) living in Vietnam in their usage of the specific politeness marker category in Vietnamese.*

The result reveals a significant difference between Vietnamese customers (VC) and sellers (VS) living in Vietnam in nine categories of politeness marker as shown in Table 6.14.

Table 6.14 VV's analysed data in relation to role

Category of Politeness Marker	Category by category X^2 results			
	VC	VS	X^2 value	Status
Affective particles (c1)	41	65	5.497	*
Kinship terms (c2)	47	125	35.73	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	0		invalid
Quality hedges (c4)	9	5	1.032	ns
Softening hedges/please (c5)	52	31	5.147	*
Repetition (c6)	4	5	0.034	ns
Honorifics (c7)	3	58	50.65	**
Common ground (c8)	9	10	0.003	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	16	29	3.586	ns
Seeking agreement (c10)	14	5	4.224	*
Exaggerate interest (c11)	13	21	1.779	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	20	39	6.174	*
Inclusive "we" (c13)	20	7	5.723	*
In-group language (c14)	3	1		invalid
Tag question (c15)	35	8	16.24	**
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	30	19	2.278	ns
Relevance hedges (c17)	18	11	1.739	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	11	14	0.445	ns
Token agreement (c19)	10	0	10.25	**
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	4		invalid
Joke (c21)	6	2		invalid
Overall usage	364	460		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

The nine categories of significant politeness markers consist of Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Softening hedges/please (c5), Honorifics (c7), Seeking agreement (c10), Assertive hedges (c12), Inclusive "we" (c13), Tag question (c15) and Token agreement (c19), with 4 invalid categories being excluded from the test and no significant differences in 8 categories (ns) (see Table 6.14).

Based on the result indicated in Table 6.14, H_o16 can be rejected in the 9 significant categories to conclude that there is significant difference between Vietnamese customers and sellers living in Vietnam in their usage of 9 politeness marker categories in Vietnamese. Of these categories, 4 were used more by the sellers (VS) than the customers (VC), namely Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Honorifics (c7) and Assertive hedges (c12), and the rest were used more by the customers (VC).

Figure 6.7 further illustrates the significant differences in the usage of each category of politeness marker between customers (VC) and sellers (VS) of Vietnamese living in Vietnam. In this figure, Kinship terms (c2) clearly stand out.

Figure 6.7   Significant differences between VC and VS

Categories of significant politeness markers
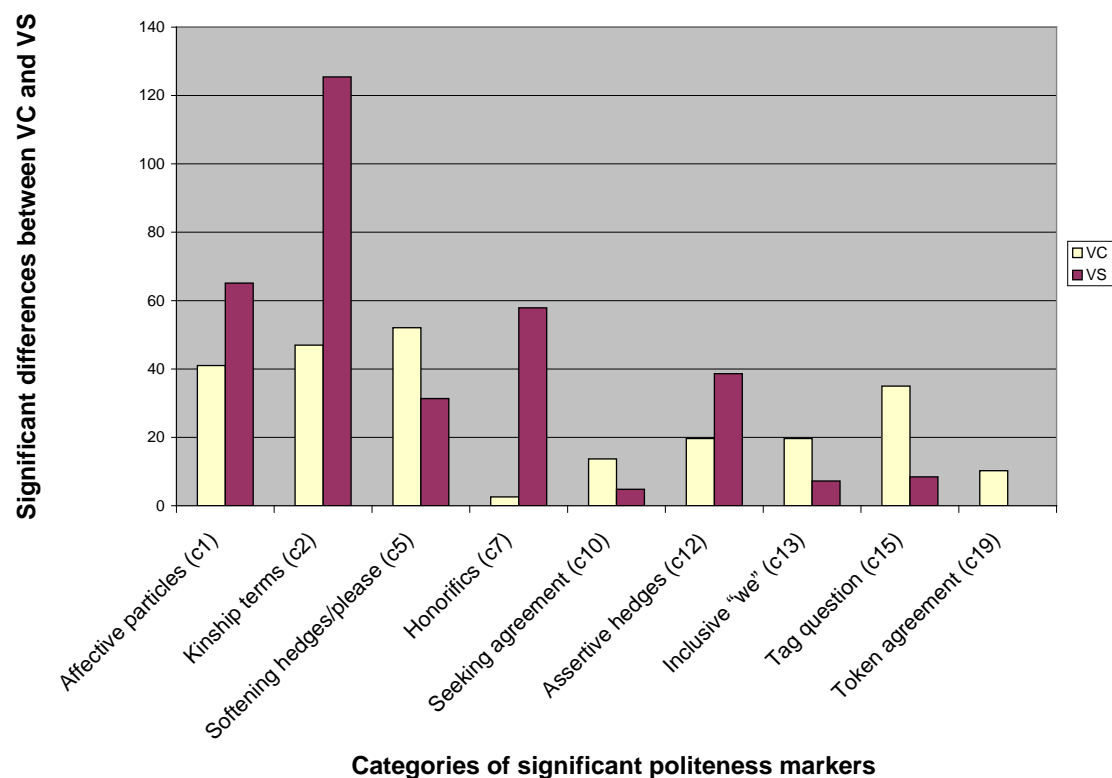
The second method of assessment, using the Rho test, was carried out to examine whether or not there is a correlation between Vietnamese customers (VC) and sellers (VS) in their rank order preference for categories of politeness markers. It aims to address the following null hypothesis:

H₀17:   *There is no significant correlation between Vietnamese customers (VC) and sellers (VS) living in Vietnam in their rank order of preference in the usage of politeness markers.*

With the the sum of squared differences $\sum d^2$ =553.5 (shown in Table 6.15) applied to the formula for Rho, the critical value is R = 0.641.

With this result and N = 21, Ho17 can be rejected at p = .01 level of probability to conclude that there is a significant correlation between customers and sellers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam in their rank order of preference for politeness markers. The level of significant correlation is considered high according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics.

Table 6.15   Correlation between VC and VS in preference order

	VC		VS		Difference	
Category of Politeness Marker	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	41	3	65	2	1	1
Kinship terms (c2)	47	2	125	1	1	1
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	19	0	20.5	-1.5	2.25
Quality hedges (c4)	9	14.5	5	15	-0.5	0.25
Softening hedges/please (c5)	52	1	31	5	-4	16
Repetition (c6)	4	17	5	15	2	4
Honorifics (c7)	3	19	58	3	16	256
Common ground (c8)	9	14.5	10	11	3.5	12.25
Minimising imposition (c9)	16	9	29	6	3	9
Seeking agreement (c10)	14	10	5	15	-5	25
Exaggerate interest (c11)	13	11	21	7	4	16
Assertive hedges (c12)	20	6.5	39	4	2.5	6.25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	20	6.5	7	13	-6.5	42.25
In-group language (c14)	3	19	1	19	0	0
Tag question (c15)	35	4	8	12	-8	64
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	30	5	19	8	-3	9
Relevance hedges (c17)	18	8	11	10	-2	4
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	11	12	14	9	3	9
Token agreement (c19)	10	13	0	20.5	-7.5	56.25
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	21	4	17	4	16
Joke (c21)	6	16	2	18	-2	4
Overall usage	364		460			**553.5**
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			

R=   0.641

Despite some variability in the rank order of preference, the customers (VC) and sellers (VS) commonly chose Affective particles (c1) and Kinship terms

(c2) among their most preferred categories of politeness marker (see Table 6.15). The most marked differences were evident in Honorifics (c7).

The next analysis will be on role for Vietnamese living in Australia (AV).

6.4.2   INTRA-NATIONAL ASSESSMENT ON ROLE FOR AV

For the overall usage of politeness markers, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was employed to address the null hypothesis:

H_o18:   *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese customers (AC)*
         and sellers (AS) living in Australia in their overall usage of politeness
         markers in Vietnamese.

The result is X^2 = 1.449. With df = 1, H_o18 cannot be rejected to conclude that there is no significant difference between AC and AS in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese; therefore, in Australia Vietnamese customers and sellers are similar in their overall usage of politeness markers across 21 categories.

On difference in the usage of each category of politeness markers, a one-way Chi-square test was applied to data in Table 6.16 addressing the null hypothesis:

H_o19:   *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese customers (AC)*
         and sellers (AS) living in Australia in their usage of each specific
         politeness marker category in Vietnamese.

With 5 invalid categories being excluded, this test revealed that in Australia there is a significant difference between Vietnamese customers (AC) and sellers (AS) in the usage of 5 categories of politeness markers, namely Affective particles (c1), Honorifics (c7), Seeking agreement (c10), Tag question (c15) and Token agreement (c19), whilst the other 11 categories are not significant (see Table 6.16).

Based on this result, H_o19 can be rejected to conclude that there are significant differences between Vietnamese customers (AC) and sellers (AS) living in Australia in their usage of categories of politeness marker in Vietnamese.

Table 6.16 AV's analysed data in relation to role

Category of Politeness Marker	Category by category X^2 results			
	AC	**AS**	**X^2 value**	**Status**
Affective particles (c1)	56	111	18.43	**
Kinship terms (c2)	162	179	0.845	ns
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	5	5	0.007	ns
Quality hedges (c4)	24	22	0.17	ns
Softening hedges/please (c5)	51	39	1.51	ns
Repetition (c6)	1	0		invalid
Honorifics (c7)	72	11	44.33	**
Common ground (c8)	6	3		invalid
Minimising imposition (c9)	41	59	3.12	ns
Seeking agreement (c10)	9	22	5.399	*
Exaggerate interest (c11)	12	14	0.277	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	11	14	0.534	ns
Inclusive "we" (c13)	8	13	1.46	ns
In-group language (c14)	2	5		invalid
Tag question (c15)	35	17	5.908	*
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	45	65	3.609	ns
Relevance hedges (c17)	8	12	1.02	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	20	22	0.029	ns
Token agreement (c19)	17	6	4.761	*
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	3	6		invalid
Joke (c21)	0	2		invalid
Overall usage	586	628		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01

X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

It is notable that of the 5 significant categories, 2 were used by AS more than AC, namely Affective particles (c1) and Seeking agreement (c10). The remaining categories were used more by AC.

Figure 6.8 further illustrates significant differences in the usage of 5 (of 21) categories of politeness markers.

Figure 6.8 Significant differences between AC and AS
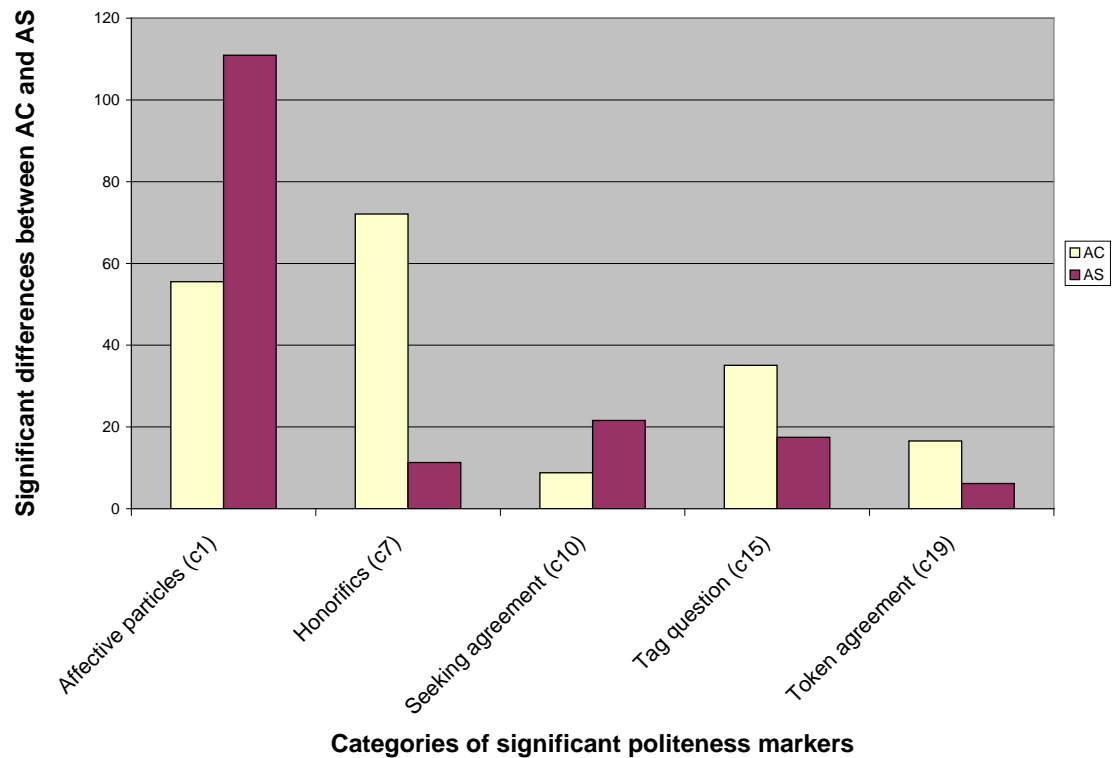
On the rank order of preference, for Vietnamese customers (AC) and sellers (AS) living in Australia, Rho was applied to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o20: *There is no significant correlation between Vietnamese customers (AC) and sellers (AS) living in Australia in their rank order of preference in the usage of politeness markers.*

With the sum of squared differences $\sum d^2 = 281$ (shown in Table 6.17) applied to the formula for Rho, we found that the critical value is R = 0.818. With this result and N = 21, H_o20 can be rejected at p = .01 level of probability to conclude that the correlation between Vietnamese customers (AC) and sellers (AS) living in Australia is significant.

Table 6.17   Correlation between AC and AS in preference order

Category of Politeness Marker	AC		AS		Difference	
	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d²
Affective particles (c1)	56	3	111	2	1	1
Kinship terms (c2)	162	1	179	1	0	0
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	5	17	5	18.5	-1.5	2.25
Quality hedges (c4)	24	8	22	6	2	4
Softening hedges/please (c5)	51	4	39	5	-1	1
Repetition (c6)	1	20	0	21	-1	1
Honorifics (c7)	72	2	11	14	-12	144
Common ground (c8)	6	16	3	19	-3	9
Minimising imposition (c9)	41	6	59	4	2	4
Seeking agreement (c10)	9	13	22	6	7	49
Exaggerate interest (c11)	12	11	14	10.5	0.5	0.25
Assertive hedges (c12)	11	12	14	10.5	1.5	2.25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	8	14.5	13	12	2.5	6.25
In-group language (c14)	2	19	5	18.5	0.5	0.25
Tag question (c15)	35	7	17	9	-2	4
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	45	5	65	3	2	4
Relevance hedges (c17)	8	14.5	12	13	1.5	2.25
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	20	9	22	6	3	9
Token agreement (c19)	17	10	6	15.5	-5.5	30.3
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	3	18	6	15.5	2.5	6.25
Joke (c21)	0	21	2	20	1	1
Overall usage	586		628			**281**
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			

R=   0.818

This Rho test has revealed that the level of correlation is considered very high, according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics. The largest contribution in order preference difference is Honorifics (c7), which are the second most preferred category for AC, but ranked 14th for AS.

So far we have examined the intra-national significant differences in relation to the role of the speaker. Assessment on the role-based linguistic politeness behaviours will now proceed to the cross-national context. Two separate statistical procedures will also be employed for these cross-national assessments involving Chi-square tests and Rho.

6.4.3   CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS FOR ROLE WITH X^2

Difference between Vietnamese customers and sellers across national contexts was assessed with the use of one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test

applied on their overall and individual usage of politeness markers across categories. This assessment has involved two comparisons for customers and for sellers across national contexts.

Customers

On the overall usage by Vietnamese customers across national contexts (VC and AC), the test was carried out to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o21: *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese customers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

The result of this test was obtained with $X^2 = 51.826$. Accordingly, with df = 1, H_o21 can be rejected to conclude that there is significant difference between Vietnamese customers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the overall usage of Vietnamese politeness markers. As indicated in Table 6.18, overall Vietnamese customers in Australia (AC) used politeness markers 222 tokens more than Vietnamese customers in Vietnam (VC) in every 532 turns at talk.

On the usage of each category of politeness markers for customers, the same tests were applied to explore in which categories that Vietnamese customers may have used the politeness markers significantly differently across national contexts. In order to achieve this, one-way 2x1 design Chi-square tests were applied to the analysed data of each category of politeness to address the following hypothesis:

H_o22: *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese customers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in their usage of each category of politeness marker in Vietnamese.*

Five invalid categories were excluded from this test. Of the remaining categories, the test revealed that the difference between Vietnamese customers across national contexts in their usage of 6 categories of politeness markers was significant, while difference between the two subgroups (VC and AC) in their usage of the other 10 categories was not significant (see Table 6.18).

Table 6.18 Cross-national differences between VC and AC

Cross-national - Customers	Category by category X^2 results			
Category of Politeness Marker	VC	AC	X^2 value	Status
Affective particles (c1)	41	56	2.193	ns
Kinship terms (c2)	47	162	63.12	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	5		invalid
Quality hedges (c4)	9	24	7.607	**
Softening hedges/please (c5)	52	51	0.02	ns
Repetition (c6)	4	1		invalid
Honorifics (c7)	3	72	64.769	**
Common ground (c8)	9	6	0.826	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	16	41	10.674	**
Seeking agreement (c10)	14	9	1.068	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	13	12	0.051	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	20	11	2.622	ns
Inclusive "we" (c13)	20	8	5.114	*
In-group language (c14)	3	2		invalid
Tag question (c15)	35	35	0	ns
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	30	45	2.985	ns
Relevance hedges (c17)	18	8	3.995	*
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	11	20	2.776	ns
Token agreement (c19)	10	17	1.488	ns
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	3		invalid
Joke (c21)	6	0		invalid
Overall usage	364	586		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

*Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01*
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

Of the 6 significant categories, namely Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), Inclusive "we" (c13) and Relevance hedges (c17), the latter 2 categories were used more by VC than AC. The first 4 categories were used more by AC. Based on the result of this test, H_o22 can be rejected in these 6 categories to conclude that there is a significant difference between Vietnamese customers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia. The significant differences between VC and AC in the usage of each individual category of politeness markers in Vietnamese are further illustrated in Figure 6.9.

Figure 6.9 Significant differences between VC and AC

Categories of significant politeness markers
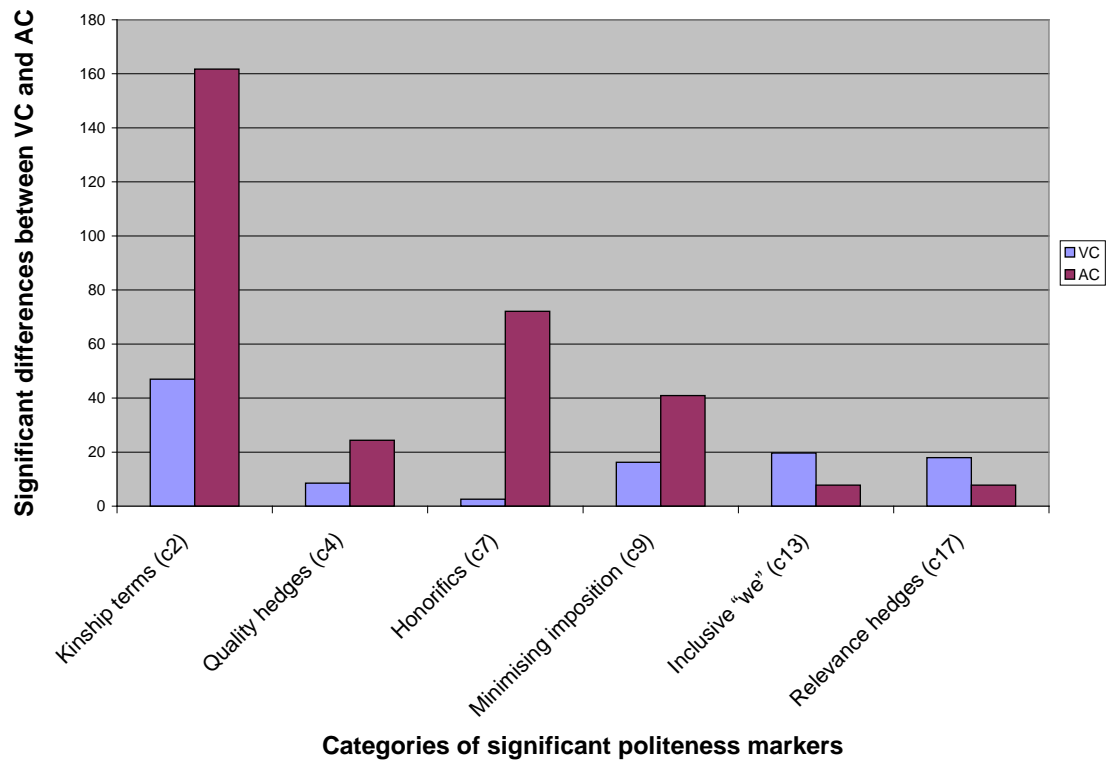
Sellers

For the sellers, similar tests were applied on the overall usage of politeness markers, and each category of politeness markers. For overall usage, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to politeness markers to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o23: *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese sellers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

This test has yielded the result $X^2 = 92.841$. With df = 1, H_o23 can also be rejected at p = .01 level of probability to conclude that overall the difference between Vietnamese sellers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in the usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese is significant, with Vietnamese sellers living in Australia (AS) using politeness markers 168 tokens more than the sellers living in Vietnam (VS) in every 532 turns at talk.

For the usage of each politeness marker category, another one-way 2x1

design Chi-square test was applied to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o24: *There is no significant difference between Vietnamese sellers across national contexts of Vietnam and Australia in their usage of each category of politeness marker in Vietnamese.*

The results of this test are indicated in Table 6.19. With 5 invalid categories being excluded from the analysis, there is a significant difference in 8 categories.

Table 6.19 Cross-national differences between VS and AS

Category of Politeness Marker	Category by category X^2 results			
	VS	AS	X^2 value	Status
Affective particles (c1)	65	111	11.902	**
Kinship terms (c2)	125	179	9.32	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	0	5		invalid
Quality hedges (c4)	5	22	10.62	**
Softening hedges/please (c5)	31	39	0.834	ns
Repetition (c6)	5	0		invalid
Honorifics (c7)	58	11	31.39	**
Common ground (c8)	10	3	3.39	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	29	59	10.006	**
Seeking agreement (c10)	5	22	10.62	**
Exaggerate interest (c11)	21	14	1.077	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	39	14	11.076	**
Inclusive "we" (c13)	7	13	1.815	ns
In-group language (c14)	1	5	2.434	ns
Tag question (c15)	8	17	3.137	ns
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	19	65	24.538	**
Relevance hedges (c17)	11	12	0.093	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	14	22	1.395	ns
Token agreement (c19)	0	6		invalid
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	4	6		invalid
Joke (c21)	2	2		invalid
Overall usage	460	628		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

*Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01*
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

The difference in the usage of politeness markers between the sellers across national contexts is significant, and the remaining categories (8 of 21) are not significant. This means that H_o24 can be rejected in the 8 significant categories, namely Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), Seeking agreement (c10),

Assertive hedges (c12) and Pseudo-agreement (c16).

The significant differences between VS and AS in the usage of each category of politeness markers in Vietnamese are further illustrated in Figure 6.10.

Figure 6.10 Significant differences between VS and AS

Categories of significant politeness markers
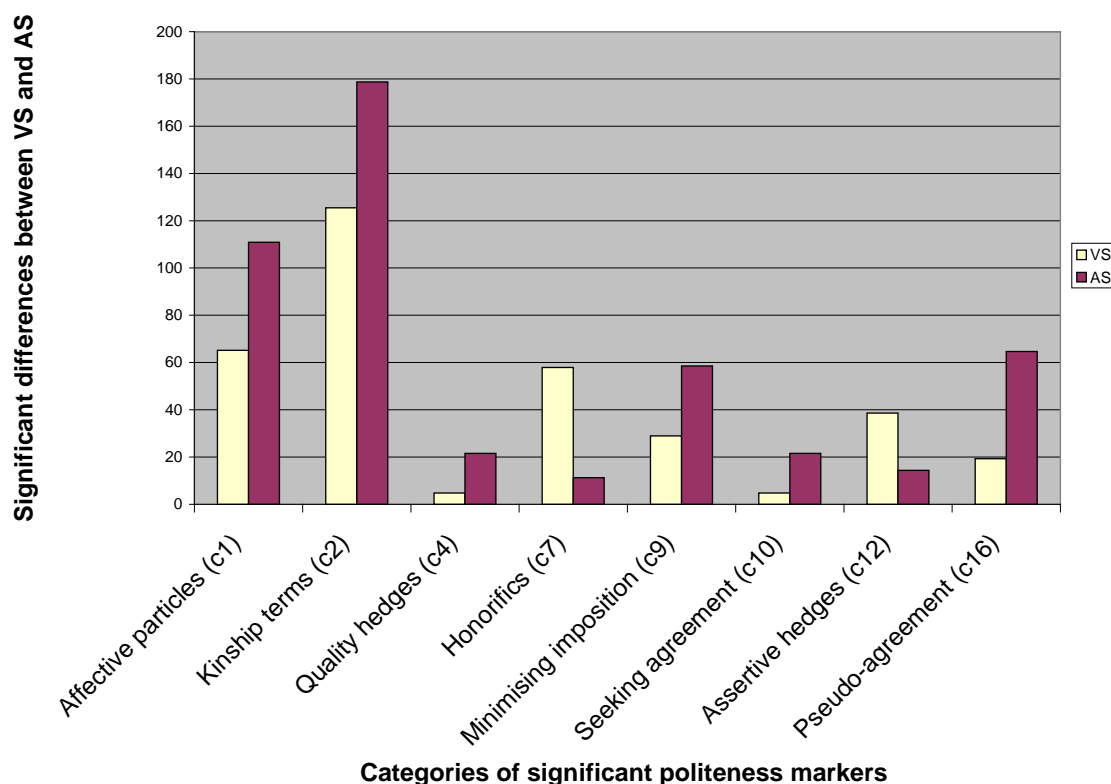
6.4.4   CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS FOR ROLE WITH RHO

For rank order of preference across 21 categories of politeness markers, Rho was employed to explore the correlation for speakers with the same role across national contexts, that is, customers and sellers. This Rho test aims to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o25: *There is no significant correlation between the same-role speakers of Vietnamese across national contexts in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers.*

As shown in Table 6.20, for customers (VC versus AC), the Rho value obtained is R = 0.629. Accordingly, with N = 21, H_o25 can be rejected at p = 0.01 level of probability to conclude that there is a significant correlation

between VC and AC in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers. The level of significant correlation is considered high according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics. The largest contribution made to the difference in rank order of preference is Honorifics (c7).

Table 6.20   Correlation between customers across national contexts

Category of Politeness Marker	VC		AC			
	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	41	3	56	3	0	0
Kinship terms (c2)	47	2	162	1	1	1
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	3	19	5	17	2	4
Quality hedges (c4)	9	14.5	24	8	6.5	42.25
Softening hedges/please (c5)	52	1	51	4	-3	9
Repetition (c6)	4	17	1	20	-3	9
Honorifics (c7)	3	19	72	2	17	289
Common ground (c8)	9	14.5	6	16	-1.5	2.25
Minimising imposition (c9)	16	9	41	6	3	9
Seeking agreement (c10)	14	10	9	13	-3	9
Exaggerate interest (c11)	13	11	12	11	0	0
Assertive hedges (c12)	20	6.5	11	12	-5.5	30.25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	20	6.5	8	14.5	-8	64
In-group language (c14)	3	19	2	19	0	0
Tag question (c15)	35	4	35	7	-3	9
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	30	5	45	5	0	0
Relevance hedges (c17)	18	8	8	14.5	-6.5	42.25
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	11	12	20	9	3	9
Token agreement (c19)	10	13	17	10	3	9
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	21	3	18	3	9
Joke (c21)	6	16	0	21	-5	25
Overall usage	364		586			572
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			

R=   0.629

For sellers (VS versus AS), the result of the Rho test is R = 0.677. With N = 21, H_o25 can also be rejected at p = 0.01 level of probability and a similar conclusion can also be made – there is a significant correlation between VS and AS in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers. The level of significant correlation between VS and AS is high according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics. The largest contribution to the difference in rank order of preference is again Honorifics (c7) (see Table 6.21).

Table 6.21   Correlation between sellers across national contexts

Category of Politeness Marker	VS Score1	Rank1	AS Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	65	2	111	2	0	0
Kinship terms (c2)	125	1	179	1	0	0
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	0	20.5	5	17.5	3	9
Quality hedges (c4)	5	15	22	7	8	64.00
Softening hedges/please (c5)	31	5	39	5	0	0
Repetition (c6)	5	15	0	21	-6	36
Honorifics (c7)	58	3	11	14	-11	121
Common ground (c8)	10	11	3	19	-8	64
Minimising imposition (c9)	29	6	59	4	2	4
Seeking agreement (c10)	5	15	22	7	8	64.00
Exaggerate interest (c11)	21	7	14	10.5	-3.5	12.25
Assertive hedges (c12)	39	4	14	10.5	-6.5	42.25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	7	13	13	12	1	1
In-group language (c14)	1	19	5	17.5	1.5	2.25
Tag question (c15)	8	12	17	9	3	9
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	19	8	65	3	5	25
Relevance hedges (c17)	11	10	12	13	-3	9
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	14	9	22	7	2	4
Token agreement (c19)	0	20.5	6	15.5	5	25
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	4	17	6	15.5	1.5	2.25
Joke (c21)	2	18	2	20	-2	4.00
Overall usage	460		628			498
Subgroup's turns at talk	532		532			

R=   0.677

It is striking that Vietnamese sellers, both in Vietnam and Australia, ranked 1 for Kinship terms (c2) as their most preferred category of politeness marker; whilst Affective particles (c1) was commonly ranked 2.

Figure 6.11 summarises all the role-based correlations in rank order of preference in the usage of politeness markers. In Vietnam, the correlation between customers and sellers across 21 categories is high (R = 0.641); but in Australia the correlation between customers and sellers is much higher (R = 0.818). The correlation between Vietnamese customers living in Vietnam (VC) and those living in Australia (AC) is similar to that between Vietnamese sellers across national contexts.

Figure 6.11 Role-based correlation in preference order

	VC	VS	AC	AS
VC		0.641**	0.629**	
VS				0.677**
AC				0.818**
AS				

1.0

* significant at p=0.05 level of probability
** significant at p=0.01 level of probability

So far we have examined differences in the usage of politeness markers in relation to national context, gender and role. Differences in relation to the last independent variable, generation or age, will now be examined.

6.5   ANALYSIS OF GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

In this section, data analysis involves two generational subgroups to explore generational differences and similarities. These subgroups consist of the younger and older members assigned according to their estimated age as described in Chapter 4.

Similar to the analysis of difference in relation to the other independent variables, all analyses including intra-national and cross-national assessments for generational differences will be based on the "equivalent" data in Table 6.22. Data for participants of middle age (MA), defined in Chapter 4, have been excluded from this table in order to ensure the two generational groups (younger and older) are clearly distinct.

Table 6.22   VV's & AV's analysed data in relation to generation

Generation	Raw Data*				Equivalent Data#			
Category of Politeness Marker	VO	VY	AO	AY	VO	VY	AO	AY
Affective particles (c1)	45	30	107	37	40	50	86	67
Kinship terms (c2)	55	68	130	164	49	114	104	296
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	2	0	5	4	2	0	4	7
Quality hedges (c4)	7	5	24	19	6	8	19	34
Softening hedges/please (c5)	59	21	50	31	52	35	40	56
Repetition (c6)	6	1	1	0	5	2	1	0
Honorifics (c7)	3	35	18	58	3	59	14	105
Common ground (c8)	10	5	6	2	9	8	5	4
Minimising imposition (c9)	19	20	75	16	17	34	60	29
Seeking agreement (c10)	17	2	23	6	15	3	18	11
Exaggerate interest (c11)	18	10	19	5	16	17	15	9
Assertive hedges (c12)	29	20	13	10	26	34	10	18
Inclusive "we" (c13)	21	4	8	3	19	7	6	5
In-group language (c14)	2	3	2	5	2	5	2	9
Tag question (c15)	38	7	28	18	34	12	22	32
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	34	9	71	29	30	15	57	52
Relevance hedges (c17)	20	6	7	11	18	10	6	20
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	16	5	26	10	14	8	21	18
Token agreement (c19)	12	0	14	8	11	0	11	14
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	3	5	2	0	5	4	4
Joke (c21)	6	3	1	0	5	5	1	0
Overall usage	419	257	633	438	370	431	506	790
Sub-group's turns at talk**	602	317	665	295	532	532	532	532

* Middle age's (MA) data excluded
** within each national context
\# data generated with the subgroup's mean number of turns at talk

6.5.1   INTRA-NATIONAL ASSESSMENT ON GENERATION FOR VV

For assessment of the overall difference, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to the overall usage of politeness markers for older (VO) and younger (VY) speakers of Vietnamese living in Vietnam to address the null hypothesis:

H_o26: *There is no significant difference between the generations of Vietnamese in Vietnam (VV) in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the result of this test $X^2 = 4.646$ and df = 1, H_o26 can be rejected at p = 0.05 level of probability to conclude that for VV, the overall usage of

politeness markers is significantly related to generational difference. From a quantitative point of view, younger speakers (VY) used politeness markers 61 tokens more than older (VY) speakers in every 532 turns.

On the usage of each politeness marker category, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o27: *There is no significant difference between the generations of Vietnamese in Vietnam (VV) in their usage of each specific politeness marker category in Vietnamese.*

Three invalid categories were excluded from the analysis. Across the remaining categories, this test revealed 8 categories in which the difference in usage of politeness markers between older (VO) and younger (VY) members of subgroups is enough to be significant; whereas, the difference in the usage of each of the other 10 categories is not significant (ns) (see Table 6.23).

Table 6.23 VV's generational difference

Category of Politeness Marker	Category by category X^2 results			
	VO	VY	X^2 value	Status
Category of Politeness Marker	40	50	1.242	ns
Affective particles (c1)	49	114	26.377	**
Kinship terms (c2)	2	0		invalid
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	6	8	0.334	ns
Quality hedges (c4)	52	35	3.267	ns
Softening hedges/please (c5)	5	2		invalid
Repetition (c6)	3	59	51.243	**
Honorifics (c7)	9	8	0.012	ns
Common ground (c8)	17	34	5.588	*
Minimising imposition (c9)	15	3	7.406	**
Seeking agreement (c10)	16	17	0.023	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	26	34	1.064	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	19	7	5.552	*
Inclusive "we" (c13)	2	5	1.569	ns
In-group language (c14)	34	12	10.517	**
Tag question (c15)	30	15	4.945	*
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	18	10	2.085	ns
Relevance hedges (c17)	14	8	1.467	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	11	0	10.605	**
Token agreement (c19)	0	5		invalid
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	5	5	0.007	ns
Joke (c21)	370	431		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

*Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01*
X^2 *: Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers*

The 8 categories of significant difference are Kinship terms (c2), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), Seeking agreement (c10), Inclusive "we" (c13), Tag question (c15), Pseudo-agreement (c16) and Token agreement (c19). In 3 of these 8 categories, VY used the politeness markers more than VO, namely Kinship terms (c2), Honorifics (c7) and Minimising imposition (c9), and in the remaining categories, VO used politeness markers more than VY. Based on the result, H_o27 can be rejected in the 8 significant categories, further illustrated in Figure 6.12.

Figure 6.12 Significant differences between VO and VY

Categories of significant politeness markers
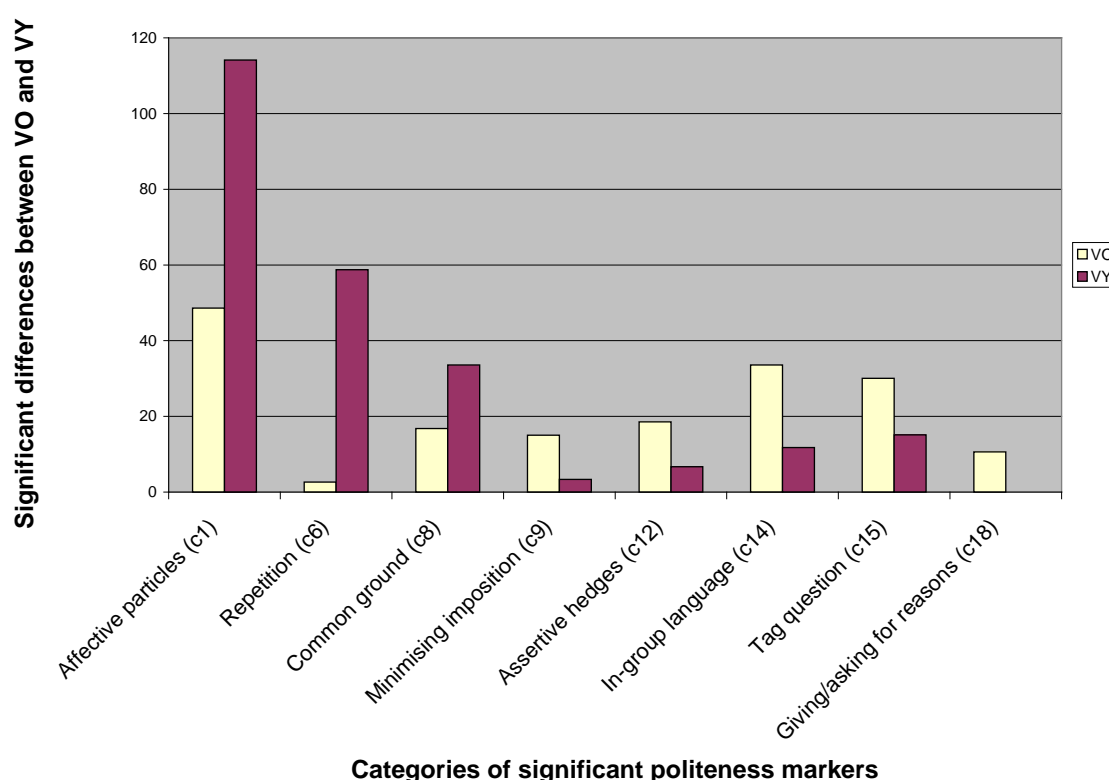
On the rank order of preference for older and younger Vietnamese living in Vietnam, Rho was employed to address the null hypothesis:

H_o28: *There is no significant correlation between the older and the younger speakers of Vietnamese in Vietnam in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers.*

With N = 21 and the sum of squared differences $\sum d^2$ = 537.5 (shown in Table 6.24) being applied to the formula for Rho, the obtained value is R = 0.651. Based on this result, H_o28 can be rejected at p = 0.01 level of

probability to conclude that there is a significant correlation between older and younger speakers of Vietnamese in Vietnam in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers. This level of correlation is considered high, according the scale of magnitude for effect statistics. The largest contribution made to differences in rank order of preference is Honorifics (c7); whilst the second largest contribution is Token agreement (c19). From a quantitative point of view, Honorifics (c7) were ranked second by younger speakers (VY) and 18th by older speakers (VO).

Table 6.24 Correlation between VO and VY in preference order

	VO		VY		Difference	
Category of Politeness Marker	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	41	3	50	3	0	0
Kinship terms (c2)	49	2	114	1	1	1
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	2	19.5	0	20.5	-1	1
Quality hedges (c4)	6	15	8	12	3	9
Softening hedges/please (c5)	52	1	35	4	-3	9
Repetition (c6)	5	16.5	2	19	-2.5	6.25
Honorifics (c7)	3	18	59	2	16	256
Common ground (c8)	9	14	8	12	2	4
Minimising imposition (c9)	17	9	34	5.5	3.5	12.25
Seeking agreement (c10)	15	11	3	18	-7	49
Exaggerate interest (c11)	16	10	17	7	3	9
Assertive hedges (c12)	26	6	34	5.5	0.5	0.25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	19	7	7	14	-7	49
In-group language (c14)	2	19.5	5	16	3.5	12.25
Tag question (c15)	34	4	12	9	-5	25
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	30	5	15	8	-3	9
Relevance hedges (c17)	18	8	10	10	-2	4
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	14	12	8	12	0	0
Token agreement (c19)	11	13	0	20.5	-7.5	56.25
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	21	5	16	5	25
Joke (c21)	5	16.5	5	16	0.5	0.25
Overall usage	371		431			**537.50**
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			

r=   0.651

It is notable that 2 of 3 most preferred categories are the same for VO and VY with Affective particles (c1) ranked 3 by both groups, and Kinship terms (c2) ranked 2 and 1 by VO and VY respectively.

6.5.2   INTRA-NATIONAL ASSESSMENT ON GENERATION FOR AV

Similar statistical methods for Vietnamese living in Vietnam (VV) were

employed for Vietnamese living in Australia (AV) to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o29: *There is no significant difference between the generations of Vietnamese in Australia (AV) in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the result of this test X^2 = 61.995 and df = 1, H_o29 can be rejected at p = .01 level of probability to conclude that there is a significant difference between generations of Vietnamese living in Australia (AV) in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese, with younger speakers (AY) using politeness markers 283 tokens more than older speakers (AO) in every 532 turns at talk (reflected in the overall usage shown in Table 6.25).

Table 6.25   AV's generational difference

Category of Politeness Marker	AO	AY	X^2 value	Status
			Category by category X^2 results	
Affective particles (c1)	86	67	2.339	ns
Kinship terms (c2)	104	296	91.982	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	4	7	0.921	ns
Quality hedges (c4)	19	34	4.245	*
Softening hedges/please (c5)	40	56	2.638	ns
Repetition (c6)	1	0		invalid
Honorifics (c7)	14	105	68.367	**
Common ground (c8)	5	4	0.169	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	60	29	10.917	**
Seeking agreement (c10)	18	11	1.966	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	15	9	1.579	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	10	18	2.05	ns
Inclusive "we" (c13)	6	5	0.083	ns
In-group language (c14)	2	9	5.181	*
Tag question (c15)	22	32	1.845	ns
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	57	52	0.186	ns
Relevance hedges (c17)	6	20	7.969	**
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	21	18	0.197	ns
Token agreement (c19)	11	14	0.406	ns
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	4	4		invalid
Joke (c21)	1	0		invalid
Overall usage	506	790		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01

X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

On the usage of each category of politeness marker, another Chi-square test was employed to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o30: *There is no significant difference between the generations of Vietnamese in Australia (AV) in their usage of each specific politeness marker category in Vietnamese.*

The result of this test indicates that difference in usage is statistically significant in 6 categories, with 3 invalid categories being excluded from the test, and difference in the usage of the other 12 categories was not significant (ns) (see Table 6.25).

In reference to this result, Ho30 can be rejected in 6 categories of significant difference, namely Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), In-group language (c14) and Relevance hedges (c17). Minimising imposition (c9) is the only category used more by older speakers (AO), while all other categories were used more by younger speakers (AY).

These significant differences are further illustrated in Figure 6.13, in which Kinship terms clearly stands out and is favoured by younger speakers.

Figure 6.13 Significant differences between AO and AY
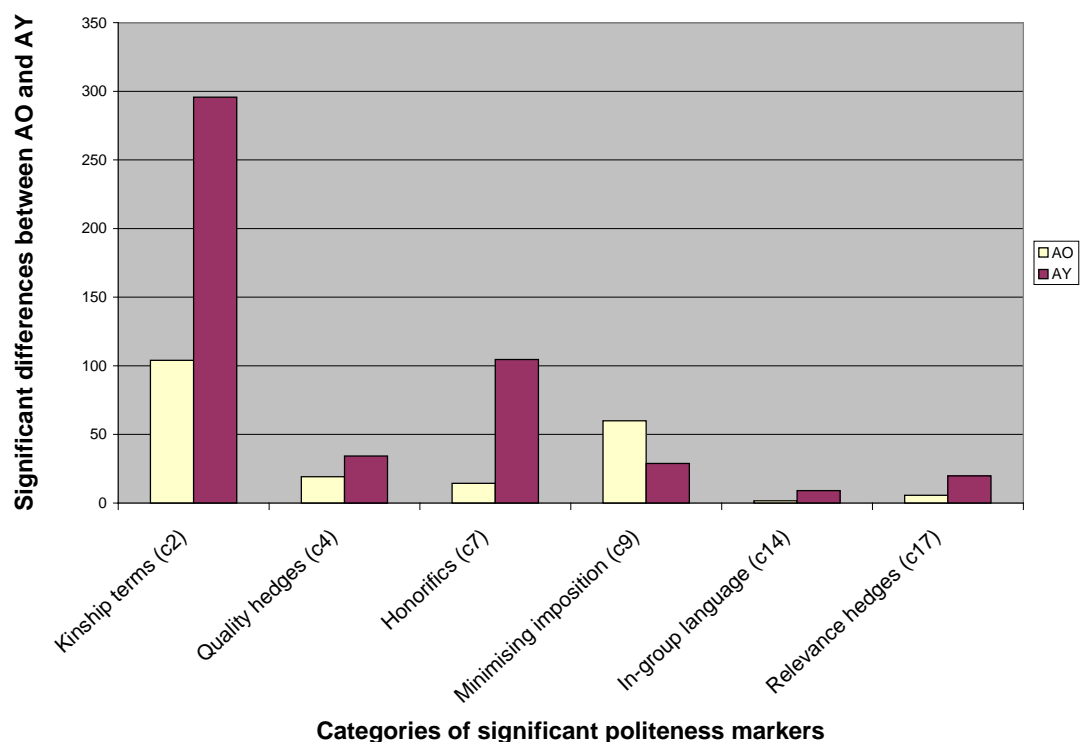
Rho was employed as the second method to assess the extent to which the rank order for categories of politeness marker was evident within generational subgroups, namely older (AO) and younger (AY) speakers of Vietnamese in Australia. This assessment aimed to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o31: *There is no significant correlation between the older and the younger speakers in Australia in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers.*

With N = 21 and the the sum of squared differences $\sum d^2$ = 235 (Table 6.24) applied to the formula for Spearman's correlation (Rho), the critical value of Rho is R = 0.847.

Table 6.26 Correlation between AO and AY in preference order

AV's Generations	AO		AY		Difference	
Category of Politeness Marker	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank1	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	86	2	67	3	-1	1
Kinship terms (c2)	104	1	296	1	0	0
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	4	17.5	7	16	1.5	2.25
Quality hedges (c4)	19	8	34	6	2	4
Softening hedges/please (c5)	40	5	56	4	1	1
Repetition (c6)	1	20.5	0	20.5	0	0
Honorifics (c7)	14	11	105	2	9	81
Common ground (c8)	5	16	4	18.5	-2.5	6.25
Minimising imposition (c9)	60	3	29	8	-5	25
Seeking agreement (c10)	18	9	11	13	-4	16
Exaggerate interest (c11)	15	10	9	14.5	-4.5	20.25
Assertive hedges (c12)	10	13	18	10.5	2.5	6.25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	6	14.5	5	17	-2.5	6.25
In-group language (c14)	2	19	9	14.5	4.5	20.25
Tag question (c15)	22	6	32	7	-1	1
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	57	4	52	5	-1	1
Relevance hedges (c17)	6	14.5	20	9	5.5	30.25
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	21	7	18	10.5	-3.5	12.25
Token agreement (c19)	11	12	14	12	0	0
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	4	17.5	4	18.5	-1	1
Joke (c21)	1	20.5	0	20.5	0	0
Overall usage	506		790			235
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			
					R=	0.847

Based on the result of this Rho test, H_o31 can be rejected at p = 0.01

level of probability to conclude that there is significant correlation between older and younger speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers. The level of correlation is considered very high according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics. The largest contribution made to differences in rank order of preference is Honorifics (c7).

It is striking that both generations of AV (younger and older speakers) ranked Kinship terms (c2) as their most preferred category of politeness marker.

6.5.3 CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS FOR GENERATION WITH X^2

In this section, the difference between older and younger speakers of Vietnamese across national contexts is measured with Chi-square tests and Rho. This cross-national assessment involves two comparisons across older and younger generations.

Older generation

This assessment examines how politeness markers in Vietnamese are used by older speakers of Vietnamese across national contexts.

For the overall usage of politeness markers, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was employed to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o32: *There is no significant difference between members of the older generations across national contexts in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With the result of this test $X^2 = 21.135$ and df = 1, H_o32 can be rejected at p = 0.01 level of probability. Accordingly, a conclusion can be made that difference in the overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese for older speakers of Vietnamese is significantly related to national context, with AO overall using politeness markers 136 tokens more than VO in every 532 turns at talk.

For assessment of the usage of each category, the following null hypothesis was applied:

H_o33: *There is no significant difference between members of the older generations across national contexts in their usage of each individual category of politeness marker in Vietnamese.*

With 4 invalid categories excluded, this test revealed that the differences between older speakers across national contexts are statistically significant for 9 categories, whilst differences in the other 8 categories are not significant (ns) (see Table 6.27).

Table 6.27   Cross-national difference in older generation

Category of Politeness Marker	VO	AO	Category by category X^2 results	
			X^2 value	Status
Affective particles (c1)	40	86	16.756	**
Kinship terms (c2)	49	104	20.108	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	2	4		invalid
Quality hedges (c4)	6	19	6.671	**
Softening hedges/please (c5)	52	40	1.599	ns
Repetition (c6)	5	1	3.322	ns
Honorifics (c7)	3	14	8.095	**
Common ground (c8)	9	5	1.195	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	17	60	24.313	**
Seeking agreement (c10)	15	18	0.341	ns
Exaggerate interest (c11)	16	15	0.016	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	26	10	6.436	*
Inclusive "we" (c13)	19	6	5.923	*
In-group language (c14)	2	2		invalid
Tag question (c15)	34	22	2.233	ns
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	30	57	8.242	**
Relevance hedges (c17)	18	6	6.264	*
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	14	21	1.27	ns
Token agreement (c19)	11	11	0.016	ns
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	4		invalid
Joke (c21)	5	1		invalid
Overall usage	370	506		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

*Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01*
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

Based on this result, H_o33 can be rejected in the significant categories to conclude that there are significant differences between members of the older generation across national contexts in the usage of 9 significant categories, namely Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4),

Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), Assertive hedges (c12), Inclusive "we" (c13), Pseudo-agreement (c16) and Relevance hedges (c17). VO used 3 categories more than AO, namely Assertive hedges (c12), Inclusive "we" (c13) and Relevance hedges (c17); whilst the other 6 categories were used more by AO.

The significant differences between members of the older generation across national contexts are further illustrated in Figure 6.14, which clearly shows Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Minimising imposition (c9), and Pseudo-agreement (c16) being favoured by older speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia. On the other hand, older speakers in Vietnam largely used Affective particles (c1) and Kinship terms (c2) although their overall usage is still less than AV's.

Figure 6.14 Significant differences between VO and AO

Categories of significant politeness markers
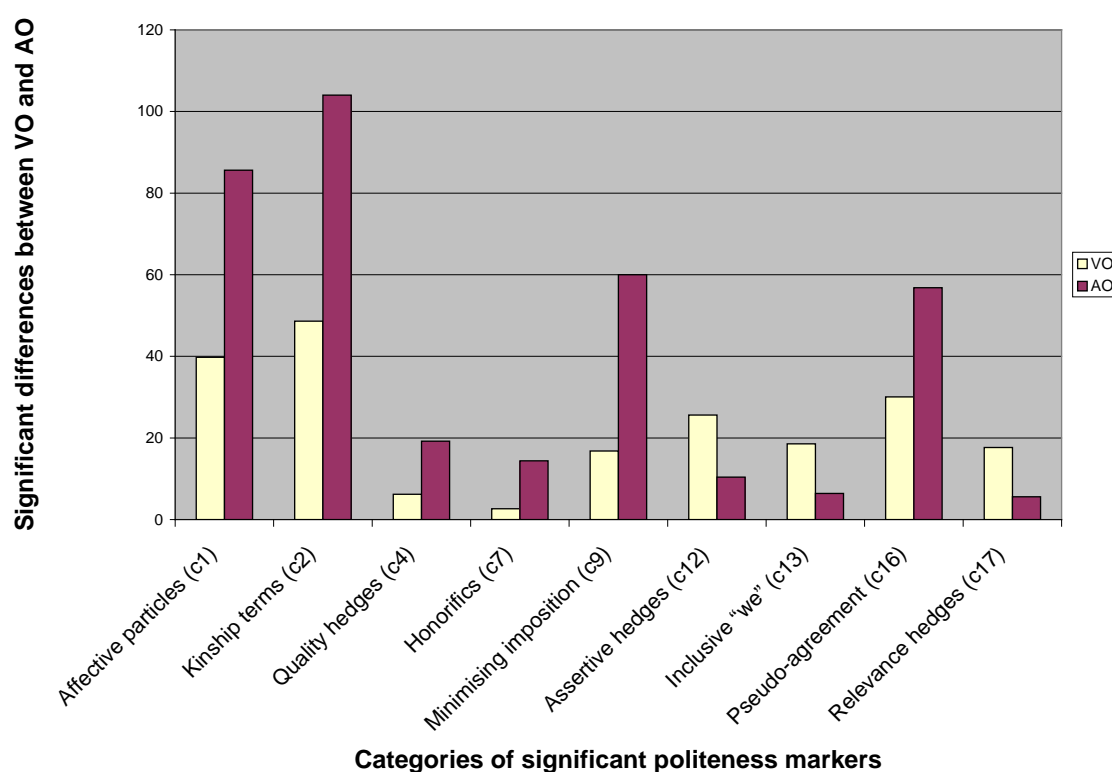
Younger generation

Similar to the assessment for older speakers, the cross-national assessment for younger speakers was carried out using one-way 2x1 design Chi-square tests for analysing differences in their overall usage of politeness markers in every category across national contexts.

For the overall usage, a Chi-square test was employed to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o35: *There is no significant difference between members of the younger generation across national contexts in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

The result is X^2 = 105.290, and with df = 1, H_o35 can be rejected at p = 0.01 level of probability to conclude that difference in the overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese produced by the younger speakers of Vietnamese is significantly related to national context. Based on the analysed data in Table 6.28, the younger speakers living in Australia (AY) used politeness markers overall 359 tokens more than those living in Vietnam (VY) in every 532 turns at talk.

Table 6.28   Cross-national difference in younger generation

Category of Politeness Marker	VY	AY	X^2 value	Status
			Category by category X^2 results	
Affective particles (c1)	50	67	2.291	ns
Kinship terms (c2)	114	296	80.492	**
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	0	7		invalid
Quality hedges (c4)	8	34	15.694	**
Softening hedges/please (c5)	35	56	4.684	*
Repetition (c6)	2	0		invalid
Honorifics (c7)	59	105	12.875	**
Common ground (c8)	8	4	1.908	ns
Minimising imposition (c9)	34	29	0.355	ns
Seeking agreement (c10)	3	11	3.93	*
Exaggerate interest (c11)	17	9	2.337	ns
Assertive hedges (c12)	34	18	4.675	*
Inclusive "we" (c13)	7	5	0.14	ns
In-group language (c14)	5	9	1.129	ns
Tag question (c15)	12	32	9.705	**
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	15	52	20.525	**
Relevance hedges (c17)	10	20	3.19	ns
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	8	18	3.519	ns
Token agreement (c19)	0	14	14.427	**
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	5	4		invalid
Joke (c21)	5	0		invalid
Overall usage	431	790		
Sub-group's turns at talk	532	532		

*Note: ns = not significant, *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01*
X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

For each category, a one-way 2x1 design Chi-square test was applied to determine in which categories of politeness marker the difference in the usage

of politeness markers produced by the younger subgroups across national contexts is significant. This test aims to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o36: *There is no significant difference between members of the younger generation across national contexts in their usage of each politeness marker category in Vietnamese.*

The results of this one-way Chi-square test are shown in Table 6.28, with 9 categories being significant, 8 categories not significant (ns), and 4 categories not valid.

According to these results, H_o36 can be rejected for 9 categories of politeness markers in Vietnamese: Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), Softening hedges/please (c5), Honorifics (c7), Seeking agreement (c10), Assertive hedges (c12), Tag question (c15), Pseudo-agreement (c16) and Token agreement (c19). Of these significantly different categories, only Assertive hedges (c12) was used more by younger Vietnamese living in Vietnam (VY); whilst the other 8 categories were used more by younger Vietnamese living in Australia (AY). The significant differences between VY and AY are further illustrated in Figure 6.15.

Figure 6.15 Significant differences between VY and AY

Categories of significant politeness markers
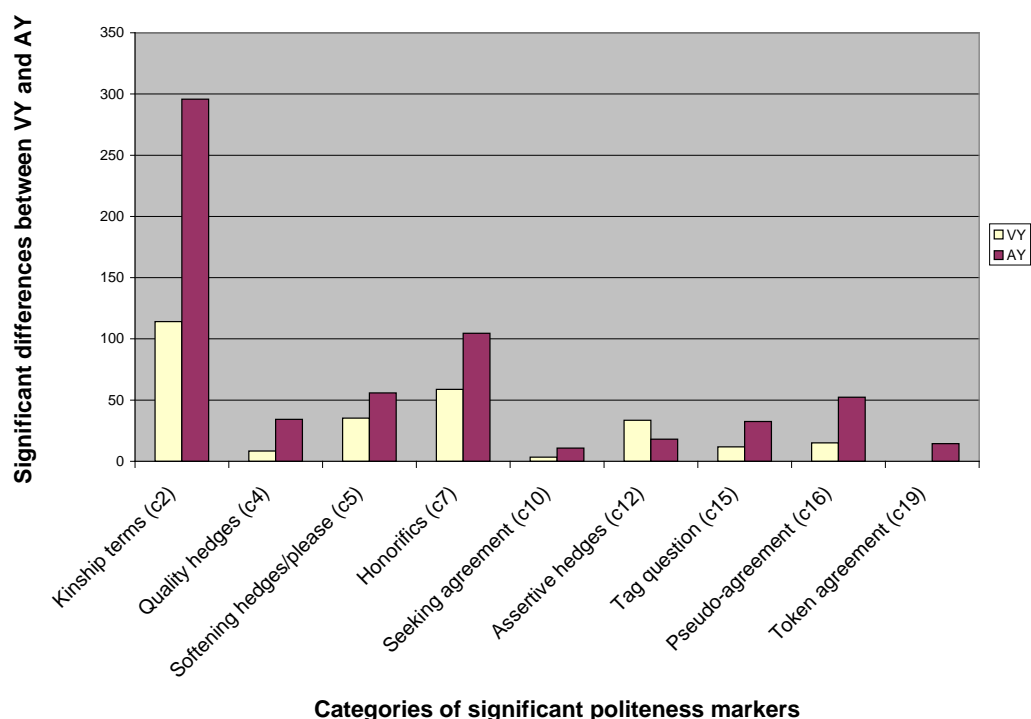
As indicated in Figure, 6.15, the most significantly prominent difference between members of the younger generation across national contexts is related to the usage Kinship terms (c2).

6.5.4   CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS FOR GENERATION WITH RHO

Rho was carried out to assess the correlation between the order of preferences of older and younger generations across national contexts. For the older generation, this Rho test aims to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o34: *There is no significant correlation between the older speakers of Vietnamese across the two national contexts in their rank order of preference in the usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese.*

With N = 21 and the result of this Rho test, R = 0.749 (as shown in Table 6.29), H_o34 can be rejected to conclude that there is a significant correlation between the older speakers across the two national contexts in their rank order of preference in the usage of politeness markers. The strength of this correlation is very high, according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics.

Table 6.29   Correlation between VO and AO in preference order

Category of Politeness Marker	VO		AO		Difference	
	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	40	3	86	2	1	1
Kinship terms (c2)	49	2	104	1	1	1
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	2	19.5	4	17.5	2	4
Quality hedges (c4)	52	1	40	5	-4	16
Softening hedges/please (c5)	6	15	19	8	7	49
Repetition (c6)	5	16.5	1	20.5	-4	16
Honorifics (c7)	3	18	14	11	7	49
Common ground (c8)	9	14	5	16	-2	4
Minimising imposition (c9)	17	9	60	3	6	36
Seeking agreement (c10)	15	11	18	9	2	4
Exaggerate interest (c11)	16	10	15	10	0	0
Assertive hedges (c12)	26	6	10	13	-7	49
Inclusive "we" (c13)	19	7	6	14.5	-7.5	56.25
In-group language (c14)	2	19.5	2	19	0.5	0.25
Tag question (c15)	34	4	22	6	-2	4
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	30	5	57	4	1	1
Relevance hedges (c17)	18	8	6	14.5	-6.5	42.25
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	14	12	21	7	5	25
Token agreement (c19)	11	13	11	12	1	1
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	0	21	4	17.5	3.5	12.25
Joke (c21)	5	16.5	1	20.5	-4	16
Overall usage	370		506			**387.00**
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			

R= 0.749

As indicated in Table 6.29, there are 5 categories making major contributions to differences in rank order between the older speakers across national contexts, namely Inclusive "we" (c13), Softening hedges/please (c5), Honorifics (c7), Assertive hedges (c12) and Relevance hedges (c17).

For the younger generation across national contexts, a Rho test was applied to address the following null hypothesis:

H_o37: *There is no significant correlation between the younger speakers of Vietnamese across the two national contexts in their rank order of preference for politeness markers.*

With N = 21, the obtained values from the test is R = 0.780. Accordingly, H_o37 can be rejected at p = 0.01 level of probability to conclude that there is a significant correlation between younger speakers of Vietnamese across the two national contexts (VY and AY) in their rank order of preference for categories of politeness markers. The degree of this correlation is classified very high, according to the scale of magnitude for effect statistics. As indicated in Table 6.30, the largest contribution made to differences in the rank order of preference are Token agreement (c19), Exaggerate interest (c11) and Common ground (c8).

It is quite marked that younger speakers in both national contexts have ranked the same most preferred categories, namely Kinship terms (c2), Honorifics (c7) and Affective particles (c1) being ranked 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

So far in this subsection, analyses for generation have revealed that there is significant difference between the older and younger generations in their overall usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese. The younger speakers use politeness markers more than the older speakers in both national contexts; that is, VY's usage is 61 tokens more than VO, and AY's usage is 283 tokens more than AO in every 532 turns at talk.

The cross-national assessments indicate that both generations of Vietnamese in Australia used politeness markers more than their counterparts: AO used politeness markers 136 tokens more than VO; whilst AY's usage is 359 tokens more than VY's in every 532 turns at talk.

Table 6.30   Correlation between VY and AY in preference order

Category of Politeness Marker	VY		AY		Difference	
	Score1	Rank1	Score2	Rank2	d	d^2
Affective particles (c1)	50	3	67	3	0	0
Kinship terms (c2)	114	1	296	1	0	0
Gift giving/Thanks (c3)	0	20.5	7	16	4.50	20.25
Quality hedges (c4)	8	12	34	6	6	36
Softening hedges/please (c5)	35	4	56	4	0	0
Repetition (c6)	2	19	0	20.5	-1.50	2.25
Honorifics (c7)	59	2	105	2	0	0
Common ground (c8)	8	12	4	18.5	-6.50	42.25
Minimising imposition (c9)	34	5.5	29	8	-2.50	6.25
Seeking agreement (c10)	3	18	11	13	5	25
Exaggerate interest (c11)	17	7	9	14.5	-7.50	56.25
Assertive hedges (c12)	34	5.5	18	10.5	-5	25
Inclusive "we" (c13)	7	14	5	17	-3	9
In-group language (c14)	5	16	9	14.5	1.50	2.25
Tag question (c15)	12	9	32	7	2	4
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	15	8	52	5	3	9
Relevance hedges (c17)	10	10	20	9	1	1
Giving/asking for reasons (c18)	8	12	18	10.5	1.50	2.25
Token agreement (c19)	0	20.5	14	12	8.50	72.25
Intensifying interest to H (c20)	5	16	4	18.5	-2.50	6.25
Joke (c21)	5	16	0	20.5	-4.50	20.25
Overall usage	431		790			**339.50**
Sub-group's turns at talk	532		532			

R=   0.780

On rank order of preference in the usage of politeness markers across 21 categories, there are significant correlations across the generational subgroups, both within and across national contexts; but the strongest correlation is that between older and younger speakers of Vietnamese living in Australia, and the lowest rank order correlation between younger and older speakers in Vietnam. All the significant correlations in rank order of preference produced by the generational subgroups are further illustrated in Figure 6.16.

Figure 6.16 Generation-based correlation in preference order

	VO	VY	AO	AY
VO		0.651**	0.749**	
VY				0.780**
AO				0.847**
AY				

** significant at p=0.01 level of probability   1.0
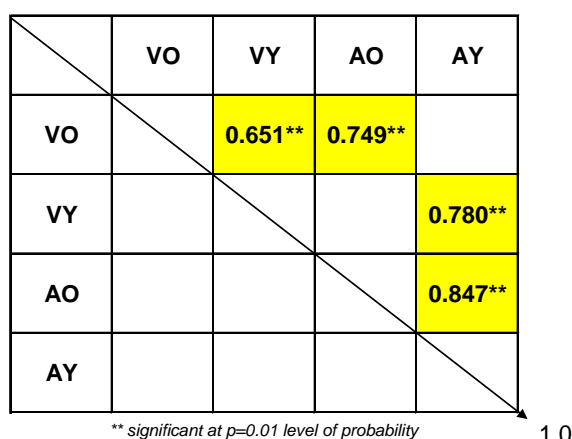
Summary

Throughout this chapter the research findings have been analysed in relation to national context, gender, role and generation. The analysis has highlighted overall trends in linguistic politeness behaviours of Vietnamese native speakers summarised below.

On national context:

- The overall trend of linguistic politeness behaviours in this research is that Vietnamese living in Australia (AV) used politeness markers more frequently than their counterparts in Vietnam (VV). On overall usage of politeness markers, AV's usage is 405 tokens more than VV's in 1064 turns at talk. On usage of each politeness marker category, there are significant differences in 10 categories, namely Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), Repetition (c6), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), Assertive hedges (c12), Pseudo-agreement (c16), Giving or asking reasons (c18) and Joke (c21).

- In view of rank order of preference, there is a significant correlation between VV and AV for categories of politeness markers with R = 0.830, considered a very high correlation.

On gender:

- In national contexts, there is significant difference between males and females in the overall usage of politeness markers across categories. For Vietnamese in Vietnam, female speakers (VF) used politeness markers 127 tokens more than male speakers (VM) in every 532 turns at talk. For Vietnamese in Australia, female speakers (AF) used politeness markers 280 tokens more than male speakers (AM) in every 532 turns at talk.

- On rank order of preference, there is significant correlation between the subgroups for categories of politeness marker in national contexts; but for the gender subgroups of Vietnamese in Australia, the correlation is much higher (R = 0.882) than for gender subgroups of Vietnamese in Vietnam (R = 0.582).

- On cross-national assessment, there are significant differences for both

male and female speakers across national contexts, with both male and female speakers of Vietnamese in Australia overall using politeness markers more than their counterparts in Vietnam; that is, AM's usage is 119 tokens more than VM's, and AF's usage is 272 tokens more than VF's in every 532 turns at talk.

On Role:

- There is significant difference between customers (VC) and sellers (VS) of Vietnamese living in Vietnam; but there is no significant difference between customers (AC) and sellers (AS) of Vietnamese living in Australia.

- On rank order of preference, in both national contexts, there is significant correlation between the role subgroups for categories of politeness marker. However, the correlation between subgroups of Vietnamese in Australia is much higher (R = 0.818) than Vietnamese in Vietnam (R = 0.641).

- On cross-national assessment, both customers and sellers of Vietnamese in Australia overall used politeness markers more than their counterparts in Vietnam; that is, AS's usage is 168 tokens more than VS's and AC's usage is 222 tokens more than VC's in every 532 turns at talk.

On generation:

- There is a significant difference between generations in both Vietnam and Australia in their member's overall usage of politeness markers; but from a quantitative point of view, the generational difference in Australia is much larger than in Vietnam. Both in Vietnam and Australia, younger Vietnamese used politeness markers more than older Vietnamese. In Vietnam, VY's usage is 61 tokens more than VO's; whilst in Australia, AY's usage is 283 tokens more than AO's.

- On rank order of preference, in both Vietnam and Australia, there is a significant correlation between older and younger speakers in the usage of politeness markers. The correlation between generations of Vietnamese living in Australia is much higher (R = 0.847) than Vietnamese living in Vietnam (R = 0.651).

All difference trends in linguistic politeness behaviours will be further discussed in chapter 7, with a focus on various features of difference identified from this research.

Chapter 7

VARIATION IN VIETNAMESE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to elucidate the research findings based on data analyses in Chapters 5 and 6 to address the research question: Are there differences in the expression of politeness between native speakers of Vietnamese in Australia and Vietnam? It also addresses the subsidiary questions: What is the nature of the differences? And how do sociocultural factors such as gender, role and generation assist in accounting for the differences in linguistic politeness behaviours across two national contexts?

The key areas of similarity and difference in the usage of politeness markers in Vietnamese were determined through tests and correlation. The analysis in Chapter 6 revealed two types of significant differences as shown in Table 7.1: (1) overall difference in the extent of politeness markers across 21 categories; and (2) differences in politeness markers within each specific marker category. In relation to correlations in rank order of preference, the key areas of focus is the most and least preferred categories of politeness marker, as well as the overall level of correlation across categories.

It should be noted that politeness markers are not always distinctive from one category to another in their lexical forms. This means a lexical form may be assigned to more than one category of politeness markers. This is because the assignment is strictly dependent on pragmatic referents and not on the lexical forms in Vietnamese. For example, *hà/hè*, which has characteristically been categorised as a Softening hedge/please (c5) can be used to serve the function of Minimising imposition (c9); *thôi*, which frequently has been categorised as Minimising imposition (c9), can also be used as either Pseudo-agreement (c16) or Relevance hedges (c17). However, in this analysis, one lexical form was counted only once according to its pragmatic referent.

Table 7.1 Difference in relation to all independent variables

OVERALL DIFFERENCE	DIFFERENCE IN THE USAGE OF EACH CATEGORY			
NATIONAL CONTEXT	AV used more		VV used more	
AV>VV (Table 6.1)	AV>VV (Table 6.1)	X^2	VV>AV (Table 6.1)	X^2
405 tokens/1064 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	65.65	Assertive hedges (c12)	11.25
(X^2=81.24)	Minimising imposition (c9)	22.08	Repetition (c6)	6.40
	Pseudo-agreement (c16)	21.03	Joke (c21)	4.45
	Quality hedges (c4)	17.07		
	Affective particles (c1)	14.87		
	Honorifics (c7)	8.50		
	Giving or asking reasons (c18)	4.31		
GENDER	VF>VM (Table 6.5)		VM>VF (Table 6.5)	
VF>VM (Table 6.5)	Honorifics (c7)	39.57	Tag-question (c15)	19.96
127 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	35.40	Token agreement (c19)	12.95
(X^2=20.07)	Exaggeration of interest (c11)	8.03		
	Minimising imposition (c9)	4.62		
AF>AM (Table 6.7)	AF>AM (Table 6.7)			
280 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	85.52		
(X^2=65.79)	Quality hedges (c4)	9.33		
	In-group language (c14)	6.47		
	Giving or asking reasons (c18)	5.25		
ROLE	VS>VC (Table 6.14)		VC>VS (Table 6.14)	
VS>VC (Table 6.14)	Honorifics (c7)	50.65	Tag question (c15)	16.24
96 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	35.73	Token agreement (c19)	10.25
(X^2=11.16)	Assertive hedges (c12)	6.17	Inclusive "we" (c13)	5.72
	Affective particles (c1)	5.50	Softening hedges/please (c5)	5.15
			Seeking agreement (c10)	4.22
AS~AC (Table 6.16)	AS>AC (Table 6.16)		AC>AS (Table 6.16)	
(not significant)	Affective particles (c1)	18.43	Honorifics (c7)	44.33
	Seeking agreement (c10)	5.40	Tag question (c15)	5.91
			Token agreement (c19)	4.76
GENERATION	VY>VO (Table 6.23)		VO>VY (Table 6.23)	
VY>VO (Table 6.23)	Honorifics (c7)	51.24	Token agreement (c19)	10.61
61 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	26.38	Tag question (c15)	10.52
(X^2=4.65)	Minimising imposition (c9)	5.59	Seeking agreement (c10)	7.41
			Inclusive "we" (c13)	5.55
			Pseudo-agreement (c16)	4.95
AY>AO (Table 6.25)	AY>AO (Table 6.25)		AO>AY (Table 6.25)	
283 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	91.98	Minimising imposition (c9)	10.92
(X^2=62.00)	Honorifics (c7)	68.37		
	Relevance hedges (c17)	7.97		
	In-group language (c14)	5.18		
	Quality hedges (c4)	4.25		

c1...c21 = category numbers; X^2 = values obtained from one-way Chi square tests

The key findings in relation to the usage of politeness markers will be further discussed taking into account the overarching social contextual influences: (1) sociopolitical change in Vietnam, and (2) the influence of Anglo Australian cultural values in Australia, which have been identified as two important influencing factors, which include a wide range of sociocultural variables such as power relationships, degrees of intimacy, social distance, the level of formality, gender, age (Holmes 2009:707). This study however focuses

on four main variables: national context, gender, role and age (based on generation), which have been included in the research design and analysis to determine differences in the usage of modern Vietnamese. Social context appears to be one of the most crucial factors affecting the way in which a language is used by its native speakers; hence it plays an important part in the study of language carried out by anthropologists, linguists, psychologists and sociologists (Labov 1982:14). From a national perspective, in its broadest sense, social context can be defined in terms of a society or a culture, which varies from one country to another.

7.2   DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion of findings draws on the Vietnamese concepts of politeness and the definitions of politeness markers as well as relevant studies mentioned in previous chapters. It is based on macro and micro analyses, and involves both quantitative and qualitative differences, with a focus on the former. Macro analysis highlights overall trends or patterns in the usage of politeness markers analysed in section 7.2.1; whilst micro analysis involves an in-depth examination of the main areas of significant difference reflected in the macro analysis.

7.2.1   MACRO ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES

Overall there is a significant difference in relation to national context, gender, role and generation, which will now be discussed at a macro level.

From a quantitative point of view, overall Vietnamese living in Australia used politeness markers 405 tokens more than their counterparts in Vietnam across 1064 turns at talk. In the usage of each politeness marker category, there is significant difference between VV and AV in 10 categories with AV using 7 categories more than VV; whilst VV used only 3 categories more than AV. All categories are listed in Table 7.1 above in descending order of significant differences for independent variables. The cross-nationally significant differences overall render strong support for the politeness stereotype posited earlier in Chapter 1: Australian Vietnamese are overall more linguistically polite than Vietnamese living in Vietnam. In the rank order difference, 8 categories of

politeness markers were chosen as the most and least preferred by Vietnamese speakers across national contexts as shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2   Categories most and least preferred

Preference order	Most preferred				Least preferred			
National context	VV		AV		VV		AV	
Values & Order	Used	Rank	Used	Rank	Used	Rank	Used	Rank
Kinship terms (c2)	159	**1**	340	**1**				
Repetition (c6)					9	17.5	1	**21**
Intensify interest (c20)					3	**21**	9	18
Gender - males	VM		VF		VM		VF	
Affective particles (c1)	44	**1**	57	2				
Kinship terms (c2)	40	4	114	**1**				
Token agreement (c19)					13	9.5	0	**21**
Intensify interest (c20)					0	**21**	3	18.5
Gender - females	AM		AF		AM		AF	
Kinship terms (c2)	80	**1**	247	**1**				
Repetition (c6)					1	18.5	0	**21**
Joke (c21)					0	**20.5**	2	20
Role - customers	VC		VS		VC		VS	
Kinship terms (c2)	47	2	125	**1**				
Softening hedges/please (c5)	52	**1**	31	5				
Token agreement (c19)					10	13	0	**20.5**
Intensify interest (c20)					0	**21**	4	17
Role - sellers	AC		AS		AC		AS	
Kinship terms (c2)	162	**1**	179	**1**				
Repetition (c6)					1	20	0	**21**
Joke (c21)					0	**21**	2	20
Generation - older	VO		VY		VO		VY	
Kinship terms (c2)	49	2	114	**1**				
Gift giving/thanks (c3)					2	19.5	0	**20.5**
Softening hedges/please (c5)	52	**1**	35	4				
Intensify interest (c20)					0	**21**	5	16
Generation - younger	AO		AY		AO		AY	
Kinship terms (c2)	104	**1**	296	**1**				
Joke (c21)					1	20.5	0	20.5

used: frequency counts marked by token per 1064 turns for national context and per 532 turns for all others.
Note: *VV=Vietnamese living in Vietnam; AV=Vietnamese living in Australia; VM=males of VV; AM=males of AV; VF=females of VV; AF=females of AV; VC=customers of VV; AC=customers of AV; VS=sellers of VV; AS=sellers of AV; VO=older of VV; AO=older of AV; VY=younger of VV; AY=younger of AV. Numbers in brackets are the categories of politeness marker.*

In relation to gender, role, and generation within each national context, there is an overall significant difference between the respective subgroups, with one exception for AS and AC as the difference between them is not significant.

As indicated in Table 4.5 (Chapter 4), in view of the actual participation reflected by the number of turns at talk for each subgroup, the difference

between the role subgroups, AS and AC, is quite small (28 turns or 2.63%) compared to the other subgroups. This may be due to the potential impact of differences in the number of turns in the intersection of subgroups. This can be interpreted to mean that differences in the usage of politeness markers between subgroups, reflected in the data analysis presented in Chapter 6, can also be influenced by the nature of the data, at least to some extent. For example, the actual participation of subgroups measured by the number of turns at talk recorded during data collection.

In the usage of each individual politeness marker category, there is a variation in the number of significant categories and the nature of difference. Hence the question arises: Which subgroups used which categories and how many times? The answers are provided in the relevant columns in Table 7.1 above.

Further investigations seek to identify the trends of preference in the usage of politeness marker across 21 categories with most and least preferred categories as a result of a Rho test summarised in Table 7.2. Accordingly, there is significant correlation between all comparison groups and subgroups assigned to independent variables in rank order of preference.

It is quite striking that Kinship terms (c2) were chosen by both national groups (VV, AV) and by 9 of the subgroups (VF, AM, AF, VS, AC, AS, VY, AO and AY) as their most preferred category; whilst the other subgroups (VM, VC, VO) chose Affective particles (c1), Softening hedges/please (c5) and Quality hedges (c4) as their most preferred categories respectively. This highlights the significant role of Kinship terms (c2) in Vietnamese politeness strategies through daily verbal communication in the majority of social contexts. It is notable though that among the generational subgroups in Australia, Kinship terms (c2) were chosen as the most preferred politeness markers by subgroups in both positions of superiority (higher status) or inferiority (lower status), while in Vietnam, these politeness markers were most preferred by the lower status subgroup. There are 4 least preferred categories identified from this study, namely Gift giving/thanks (c3), Repetition (c6), Token agreement (c19), Intensify interest (c20) and Joke (c21).

The significant differences revealed by macro analysis will be further analysed at a micro level in the following section.

7.2.2   MICRO ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES

This section focuses on the 10 categories of significant difference between Vietnamese living in Australia (AV) and in Vietnam (VV) listed in Table 7.1: Affective particles (c1), Kinship terms (c2), Quality hedges (c4), Repetition (c6), Honorifics (c7), Minimising imposition (c9), Assertive hedges (c12), Pseudo-agreement (c16), Giving or asking reasons (c18) and Joke (c21).

Micro analysis in the usage of politeness markers aims to explore how Vietnamese living in Vietnam and Australia are using these markers and the extent to which the nature of their usage is different.

Affective particles (c1)

The nature and usage of affective particles have been introduced in Chapter 5, so the focus here is on some salient features of how affective particles are used across national contexts in the data corpus.

The usage of affective particles in Vietnamese represents one of the most difficult aspects to comprehend for readers of non-Vietnamese cultural backgrounds. It should be noted that the intrinsic underlining force in the usage of Vietnamese affective particles is the affective connotation in an assertive utterance, which may be a statement, a suggestion, a boast, a complaint, a claim, or a report (Leech 1983:105). The closest interpretation of Vietnamese affective particles from an Anglo English perspective is a kind of endearment, an expression of affection.

The analysis in Chapter 6 has revealed that there is a significant difference between VV and AV in the overall usage of affective particles with AV using 63 tokens more than VV in 1064 turns at talk. These politeness markers have been identified and assigned to 6 lexical groups, which serve as hedges on the illocutionary force of the utterance to fulfil a politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson 1987:147-153). Of these 6 lexical groups of affective particles, VV's usage is more than AV's in *à/à nghen*; whilst the rest were used more by AV as indicated in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3   Identified Vietnamese affective particles

Affective particles	Description	VV	AV	AV-VV
á/á nghen	emphatic	9	19	10
à/à nghen	softening	21	11	-10
đó	emphatic	30	74	44
nè	emphatic	34	50	16
kìa	emphatic	3	4	1
nghen/nhen/nghe	softening	5	7	2
Overall usage		**102**	**165**	63
Difference in usage of emphatic hedges		76	147	71
Difference in usage of softening hedges		26	18	-8
Turns at talk		1064	1064	1064
Cross-national usage of emphatic hedges		223		
Cross-national usage of softening hedges		44		
Emphatic hedges commonly used more		179/1064turns (16.82%)		

As discussed in section 5.1, "Affective particles" are defined as modifying hedges on the illocutionary force with an affective tone to perform various functions Thompson 1965:173; Tran et al. 1980:139; Brown & Levinson, 1987:147; Le & Nguyen 1998:23). These particles are "expressive" in nature; hence they provide affective meanings related to the speaker's moods, feelings and attitudes.

In this study, affective particles have been categorised as serving two basic functions in modifying hedges, "emphatic" and "softening". The former provides a strengthening hedge to intensify H's interest (Brown & Levinson 1987: 105-106) and the latter serves as a weakening hedge to modify the illocutionary force in the utterance in order to minimize the imposition on H (Brown & Levinson 1987: 147). However, in practice, distinguishing between the two linguistic functions is not an easy task; it depends on the intonation that speakers produce according to their emotional status at the time the utterance occurs.

From a micro perspective, emphatic hedges are used substantially more than Softening hedges across national contexts (16.82%); but for each of these hedges, AV used emphatic hedges far more than VV; whereas, VV used Softening hedges slightly more than AV as indicated in Table 7.3.

Affective particles used as emphatic hedges consist of *á/ǎ nghen, đó, nè, kìa*; whilst Softening hedges consist of *à/à nghen, nghen/nhen/nghe*. It is particularly noticeable that *đó* is used by AV far more than VV.

Affective particles *á* and its compound *á nghen* are used to some extent interchangeably; but the emphatic force of politeness in the latter seems to be stronger than the former. For example, in answering a question about where to buy a gold watch band, a male Vietnamese seller living in Australia in an open market said:

(1)   *Trong   tiệm   vàng   á !* (a449)
          Inside   shop   gold   PRT (emphatic)
          "Inside the jewellery shop"

In this utterance, *á* serves as an emphatic hedge applied on the performative force in the question raised earlier during the course of conversation. It places an emphasis on the existence of the particular type of commodity in the jewellery shop. In this way, it satisfies H's interest; it is assumed to intensify H's interest.

In a grocer's shop, a female customer spoke to a female seller in the same middle-age range:

(2)   *Lựa   cái nào   mới á nghen !* (v418)
          Choose one   which   new PRT (emphatic)
          "Choose the new one only, please"

Both affective particles in (1) and in (2) serve as emphatic hedges on what has been said in the utterance; but the emphatic force of politeness in (2) seems stronger than (1) from a Vietnamese cultural perspective.

The emphatic affective particle *đó* represents the biggest difference in usage between VV and AV. In Vietnamese, this affective particle can be easily misleading from its lexical form, that is, the same form of *đó* can be used for various references in terms of both literal and pragmatic meanings. For literal meaning, *đó* can be considered equivalent to "that" or "there" in English. In the corpus of data, there are many cases where *đó* is used to denote a reference to "that", which will not be further discussed in this chapter (hence excluded from Table 7.3), as this usage is not considered to be functioning as a politeness marker from a Vietnamese cultural perspective. For example, in a clothes shop, a younger female seller talked to an older female customer:

(3)   *Cái   áo   **đó**   chin mươi lăm ngàn   cô !* (v39)
        CLA   jacket **that** nine ten   five   thousand   auntie
        "That jacket is 95,000 dong, Madam"

Therefore *đó* as used in (3) has not been counted as an affective particle. The same lexical form *đó* is an affective particle when it serves as an emphatic hedge on the illocutionary force in a Vietnamese utterance to express politeness. For example, in answering a question, in a watch shop a male customer living in Australia said to a male seller in the same age range:

(4)   *Có thể   ngày mai   **đó** !* (a26)
        Possibly[1]   tomorrow   PRT
        "Possibly I would come back tomorrow"

English does not seem to have an equivalent emphatic affective particle used as a mechanism to insert this kind of hedge on the illocutionary force in the utterance to enhance the pragmatic meaning in (4). Its meaning is like "Tomorrow I would come, please make sure it is available for me to pick up".

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1   As our focus in this section is on affective particles, in this example, "possibly" has been directly translated from *Có thể* as Quality hedges (c4), which will be discussed separately

The most difficult part in interpreting the affective particle *đó*, especially in (4), is that its pragmatic meaning is strictly determined by the context of utterance. Particle *đó* used in (4) also pragmatically conveys a friendly warning that "I will come tomorrow"! Such a warning can be either a friendly reminder or a threatening act, and obviously the former applies to the utterance in (4).

Let us have a look at other examples to see how *đó* is further used as an emphatic affective particle in Vietnamese. A younger female customer living in Australia talked to an older male service provider, using particle *đó* to serve an emphatic function on the illocutionary force in the utterance:

(5)   *Chồng   con cũng có   gia đình **đó** chú !*   (a43)
       Husband   child also have   family   PRT younger uncle
       "My husband had also been married before"

Utterance (5) occurred while discussing an application for a permanent visa in Australia when S provided her current spouse's personal information in relation to the documents being required. For a better understanding, special attention should be paid to the usage of kinship terms *con* (child), *chú* (younger uncle) and *gia đình* (family) in this utterance. *Con* (child) is used as "my" in English; whilst the usage of *chú* (younger uncle) is somehow likened to the address form for second person reference "Sir" in English. The *gia đình* (family) is pragmatically used in Vietnamese to denote marriage or getting married; probably because in Vietnamese culture, family is necessarily or expected to be formed through marriage.

In Vietnam, an older female customer also used the affective particle *đó* to pragmatically emphasise her friendly reminder to her younger female seller:

(6)   *Rồi, một lai   **đó** !* (v73)
       OK   one hem PRT
       "All right one hem"

In the same national context, a younger female seller said to her older female customer, using particle *đó* to convince that her proposal of fabric colour satisfies the customer's want:

(7)   *Cây nầy giống   hơn   đó !* (v170)
        Roll this similar more   PRT
        "This roll is more similar"

In Australia, a female seller used particle *đó* as a emphatic hedge on the illocutionary force in the utterance:

(8)   *Cám ơn chị,   gạo mới có   rồi   đó !* (a132)
        Thank   elder sister, rice new have   already PRT
        "Thank you, sister, the new rice has (arrived) already!"

The particle *đó* in (8) serves to attract attention to the customer that the new rice has arrived to convey pragmatically an invitation to buy it.

As the main area of difference between the national contexts, the question of why AV use *đó* far more frequently than VV is an interesting one. The gap between use by AV and non-use by VV of this affective particle (*đó*) is not easily explained from the data available in this study.

Despite alternatives for emphatic functions as indicated in Table 7.3, a direct equivalent for *đó* is not available. In a similar speech situation, whilst Australian Vietnamese use *đó*, Vietnamese in Vietnam do not. This contrasts with similar usage across national contexts of other particles such as *nè* and *kìa.*

Further examples are provided below, drawn from the corpus of data in the usage of the affective particle *nè* across national contexts with role, gender and generation being taken into account:

AV's utterance – An older male seller spoke to a younger female customer:

(9)   *Cái   giá   nầy   chưa   điều chỉnh   nè !*   (a889)
CLA   price   this   not yet   adjust   PRT
"This price has not been updated here"

VV's utterance – A younger female seller spoke to an older female customer:

(10)   *cái nầy đẹp   nữa nè   dì   Cúc !*   (v74)
CLA this beautiful more PRT   auntie   Cuc
"This one is also beautiful auntie   Cuc"

AV's utterance – A younger male customer spoke to an older male seller:

(11)   *Cái   bề cao là   bao nhiêu   nè !* (a231)
CLA   height COPU   how much   PRT
"How much is the height?"

VV's utterance – An older male customer spoke to a younger female customer:

(12)   *Cái   nầy mới   mát   nè !* (v2)
CLA   this PRT   cool   PRT
"This one is cool to wear here!"

The usage of the emphatic hedge *nè* is identical from one national context to the other in the sense that its pragmatic meaning serves to draw attention and intensify H's interest.

The affective particle *kìa* is used in both Vietnam and Australia as an emphatic hedge on the illocutionary force in the utterance; for example, an

older female customer of Vietnamese living in Vietnam talked to a younger female customer in a service encounter:

(13)   *Ý   cũng có cái nơ   ở nhà nữa kìa !* (v7)
         Auntie [S] also   have CLA bowtie at home also PRT (emphatic)
         "I also have such a bowtie at home"

A similar usage of the emphatic hedge *kìa* in the Australian context has also been identified from the corpus of data. For example, a female seller talked to a male customer in the same age range:

(14)   *Dạ, ảnh có số   đo   kìa !*   (a225)
         Hon. he has number measurement   PRT (emphatic)
         "Yes, he has the measurement information there!"

On the affective particles used as Softening hedges, the following particles and particle compounds will be further analysed: *à/à nghen, nghen/nhen, nghe.* For example, in a fruit shop, a male customer in his 60s spoke to a younger female seller:

(15)   *Để   lâu nó   héo à !* (v417)
         leave long   it   dry PRT (softening)
         "if it is left like this, it will become shrivelled up"

The utterance with *à* in (15) pragmatically denotes a "soft voice" warning or advising in an affectionate manner, which can occur in conversational interactions among people who may have recently come to know one another, but they are socially related as close friends. The "soft voice" in (15) minimizes possible imposition on H.

In a clothes shop, after an older female customer had tried on a jacket, she looked at it in a mirror and said to a younger female customer:

(16)   *Đẹp   à nghen; Ý   cũng có cái nơ   ở nhà nữa!* (v7)
       beautiful PRT   auntie also   have CLA bowtie at home as well
       "It's beautiful. I have a bowtie at home as well!"

The main message in (16) is the expression of the speaker's opinion that the jacket looks beautiful with a bowtie, which she also had at home. In this case, the particle *à nghen* serves as a softening hedge on the speaker's opinion, the jacket looks beautiful, to intensify H's interest, seeking an agreement from H.

Particle *à nghen* is also used without its compound element *à*, that is, *nghen* alone to serve a similar function as that of *à nghen*. However, in Vietnamese *nghen* and *nghe* are used as Softening hedges and they are interchangeable without changing the pragmatic meaning, to enhance politeness in the utterance. For example, in the Australian context, a younger female customer talked to an older female seller, giving an instruction with a softening hedge to reduce imposition on H as a politeness strategy:

(17)   *Bắt   con   lớn lớn   chút xíu   nghen !* (a388)
       Make   pleats   big big   little:bit   PRT (softening)
       "Make sure the pleats are little big"

In another Australian context, when a younger female seller has succeeded in a transaction dealing with an older female customer, the seller expresses her appreciation of her transactional achievement using a softening hedge *nghen* to mitigate the customer's assumed stress in accepting the deal reluctantly. This softening hedge serves as a means of comfort offered by the seller at the end of the transaction, for example:

(18)   *Rồi,   cám ơn nghen !*   (a443)
       then/OK   thank   PRT (softening)
       "OK, thank you"

In Vietnam, the softening hedge *nghen* is also used in a similar context. For example, an older female customer talked to her younger female seller:

(19)　　*Ừ,　hai nút　　đôm bầu　ở đây nghen　　　　chị !* (v200)
　　　　　Yes, two buttons　　insert round　here　　PRT (softening)　elder sister
　　　　　"Yes, insert two round buttons here, would you?"

Utterance (19) functions as an instruction given by the customer, using the softening hedge *nghen* to mitigate the imposition, which may have occurred on H in the instruction. A similar speech situation involved an instruction given by a younger female seller to her older male customer:

(20)　　*Khoan　ở　chờ tý nghen !*　　　(v534)
　　　　　Wait　　stay　wait　bit　PRT (softening)
　　　　　"Wait for me a moment"

Despite the majority of the abovementioned examples involving female speakers, the usage of *à nghen* and *nghen* as Softening hedges is not considered to be gender related. However, this may sometimes be the case when *nghen* is replaced by *nhen*, which tends to be seen as "female" language from a Vietnamese cultural point of view. For example, a younger female seller talked to an older male customer:

(21)　　*Cái nầy là (..)　khui ra cho　anh　　　　coi nhen ? (v479)*
　　　　　this　　COPU　open out for　elder-brother　　see　PRT
　　　　　"I shall open this for you to see, shan't I?"

Kinship terms (c2)

From a politeness point of view, kinship terms are expected to be used consistently with relative social status in terms of relative age and profession (Thompson 1965:3-4) between interactants. In this regard, kinship terms play a

very important role as they can be used to encode deference in address (Brown & Levinson 1987:182) and as such they are widely used in Vietnamese (Dixon 1980: 107; Buu, 1986:103; Haines 2006:19). However, in the communist-oriented culture (discussed in Chapter 1), the role of kinship terms may not be as important as in the Confucian-based culture, according to the Confucian name rectification doctrine (Ho 1996: 205, 211). This may partly explain why VV used kinship terms less than AV.

Because the data recorded for this study was for the most part outside literal kinship environments, kinship terms referring to a superior kin title such as *anh* (elder brother), *chị* (elder sister), *chú* (younger paternal uncle), *bác* (elder paternal uncle), *cô* (paternal auntie), *dì* (maternal auntie), *dượng* (uncle in law), *ông* (grandfather) and *bà* (grandmother), are assumed to be deferential referents to an older or senior person, who may be used as either a first-person singular referent (1PSR) or second-person singular referent (2PSR).

From a grammatical perspective, 1PSR and 2PSR can be expressed by all Kinship terms identified from the corpus of data. Most of these terms can be used for a third-person singular referent (3PSR) with a subsequent adjective *ấy* or *đó* (that) to specify a third person who does not participate in the conversation.

In this study, despite kinship terms being the most preferred category of politeness markers for both VV and AV, there are differences between these two groups in their overall usage. In 1064 turns at talk, AV used Kinship terms 181 tokens more than VV. Across 13 kinship terms identified from the corpus of data (see Table 7.4), two (*dì* and *chị*) were used substantially more by VV than AV. The rest were used by AV more than VV. These 13 kinship terms are among 38 in Vietnamese discussed at length in Chapters 3 and 5.

Table 7.4 Identified Vietnamese kinship terms

Kinship terms	Description	VV	AV	AV-VV
con	child (daughter/son)	18	114	96
chú	younger paternal uncle	13	54	41
cô	paternal auntie	19	56	37
anh	elder brother	39	58	19
em	younger sibling (male/female)	18	24	6
cháu	grand child (niece/nephew)	4	7	3
dượng*	uncle in law	0	2	2
ông	grandfather	0	1	1
bà	grandmother	0	1	1
bác	elder paternal uncle/auntie	5	4	-1
cậu	brother of one's mother**	1	0	-1
dì	maternal auntie	10	2	-8
chị	elder sister	32	17	-15
	Overall usage	**159**	**340**	181
	Turns at talk	1064	1064	1064
	Ranked	1	1	

* husband of cô or dì; ** either elder or younger

Apart from the contextual factors associated with each national context, the difference between VV and AV in the usage of kinship terms may be additionally explained by the imbalance of turns at talk across national contexts in relation to generation, gender and role. For example, as indicated in Table 4.5 (Chapter 4), younger female customers, older male sellers and older female sellers of AV took turns at talk more than those of VV: 18.05%, 15.69% and 17.01% respectively. This additional explanation reflects the differences related to who was actually addressing who in each corpus.

Further discussions will be limited to the specific kinship terms in which there is a marked difference between Vietnamese native speakers across national contexts (VV and AV). The main differences are in the usage of *con*, *chú* and *cô* with AV's usage being greater than VV's. Based on this analysis as shown in Table 7.4, *con* (child) is one of the most commonly used kinship terms for AV and accounts for half of the total difference in the overall level of usage of kinship terms by AV. It is a junior kinship term, which is occasionally replaced by *cháu* (grandchild) as a politeness marker and a form of address in Vietnamese.

Grammatically, *con* (child) is used as either a 1PSR or 2PSR pragmatically referring to a younger interlocutor who is regarded as one's child, the child of S

or H depending on which one is the referent. If it is 1PSR, the pragmatic referent is H's child. For example, in response to an older female customer, a younger female customer in a clothes shop in Vietnam replied:

(22)   *Dạ,*   ***con***   *không lấy*   *cửn !*   (v16)
       HON   child[S] NEG   take   skirt
       "No thanks, I am not taking the skirt"

In this case, *con* (child) is a 1PSR, which is pragmatically regarded as H's child in the utterance, meaning that the speaker has addressed herself as H's child, expecting to be accepted by H. This is a politeness strategy employed by Australian Vietnamese more frequently than Vietnamese in Vietnam in this study. For example, in a fruit market, a younger female seller invited an older male to buy fruit:

(23)   ***Chú***   *mua giùm* ***con***   *ký lô đi* ***chú !***   (a425)
       Junior uncle buy help child[S]   kilo   go uncle
       "Uncle, would you buy for me a kilo?"

As mentioned earlier, in Vietnamese, *con* (child) and *cháu* (grandchild) are interchangeable for the same pragmatic referent. In (23) the addressee has been referred by a kinship term of seniority, *chú* (junior uncle), to which, an expected corresponding kinship term is *cháu* (grandchild). For example, when *chú* (junior uncle) is used as a 1PSR, H is referred by *cháu* (grandchild), and when *chú* (junior uncle) is used as a 2PSR, S is referred by *cháu* (grandchild); but *con* (child) may be used in lieu of *cháu* (grandchild) although *con* (child) usually corresponds to a senior referent of mother or father in the utterance. However, in non-kinship environments, *con* (child) is widely used instead of *cháu* (grandchild), which is only used when there is a clear generation gap between S and H; i.e. when one is too young to be a child of the other in real life. In conjunction with hierarchy in the kinship system and from a pragmatic point of view, *cháu* (grandchild) is also more distant than *con* (child). This

means despite the same degree of politeness and formality, the usage of *con* (child) seems to be more intimate than that of *cháu* (grandchild). This is one of the most difficult aspects of understanding how Vietnamese kinship terms are used in daily verbal interactions.

Returning to the question of difference in the usage of *con* (child) between AV and VV, why does AV use *con* (child) far more frequently than VV? Without further investigations, any discussion of this relies heavily on the researcher's personal experience gained from different sources in connection with ongoing changes in speech behaviour occurring in Vietnam. The most likely explanation is the non-use of person referents observed in the Vietnamese vernacular in Vietnam. For example, in a marketplace, a verbal interaction took place between an older female customer and a younger female seller. In this interaction, there is no person referent in either of the utterances:

(24)   A female customer in her 50s. (v261)
        Trái nầy bao nhiêu?
        Fruit this how much
        "How much is this fruit?"

(25)   A female seller in her mid 20s. (v263)
        Dạ   cái đó hết   hàng   rồi.
        Hon.   Cla that finish goods   PRT
        "That has been sold out"

These two examples above clearly show that there is no person referent in the utterances. This, however, does not necessarily mean that speakers of VV do not use person referents in verbal communication. From a Vietnamese, Confucian-based cultural point of view (as discussed in Chapter 3), non-use of person referents or kinship terms in talk is regarded as lacking in politeness in many situations. The difference between use and non-use of kinship terms is one of the major contributions to the difference in linguistic politeness

behaviour in Vietnamese. This is reflected in the comparison between examples (24 and 25) for VV and for AV in (23).

The second largest difference between VV and AV is in the usage of *chú* (younger paternal uncle) reflected in Table 7.4 above. This kinship term is used for referring to a "senior uncle" representing a younger brother of one's father; but it can also be used as a junior male referent regarded as the speaker's younger brother (or younger brother in-law for a female speaker).

In (23) *chú* (junior uncle) emerges twice; but in the initial emergence, it is used as a 2PSR while in the second, it serves an honorific function similar to "Sir" in English. From this example, we can see that all kinship terms of seniority in Vietnamese can function as honorifics. This characteristic of kinship terms in Vietnamese has not been discussed and needs to be considered as a striking feature in relation to their usage in Vietnamese.

In its own right, *chú* (junior uncle) is used for a senior male referent. For example, an older male seller addressed a younger male customer:

(26)   *Cầm cái đó   đi, chú   cũng có   giữ   một cái   rồi!* (a726)
         Take CLA that PRT junior uncle [S] also have keep one CLA already
         "Take that one, I have already had one"

In (26) *chú* (junior uncle) is used as a 1PSR (self referent); but in (27) is used as a 3PSR. For example, while speaking to a younger female seller, an older female customer referred to her younger brother-in-law (3PSR).

(27)   *Ừ,   vậy hổng được, y thích bâu   hà. Chú Sáu á !*   (v108)
         Yes, so   NEG   OK   he likes collar PRT Uncle Six PRT
         "No, it is not acceptable because he (Uncle Six) likes collar"

In (27) the 3PSR has been conveyed by *chú* (junior uncle), accompanied by the name (*Sáu*), which is a position number[2] in the family that is traditionally used as a person referent within the kinship system in Vietnamese.

The third largest difference between VV and AV is *cô* (paternal auntie), which can be used for both senior and junior female referents. However, it is important not to be misled by the difference between "senior and junior referents" and "senior and junior kinship terms"; for instance, *cô* (paternal auntie) is a kinship term of seniority but can be used for a junior female referent, depending on the user, for example, an older male seller addressed a younger female customer, providing information about where to go to change a watch battery:

(28)   *Cô   qua bên tiệm   vàng   đây !*   (a445)
       Auntie   pass at   shop   jewellery here
       "You go across the jewellery shop near here"

In this case, *cô* (paternal auntie) is used as a junior female referent (2PSR). It does not denote deference, but rather *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) towards H in the traditional Vietnamese conventions of politeness. When a junior speaks to a senior, *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) is involved; whereas, when an older or senior person speaks to a younger or junior one, *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) is involved. Therefore, the concept of politeness in Vietnamese is founded on an understanding of the seniority relationship between interactants, which is then reflected in the specific choice of kinship term as a politeness marker.

In many other cases *cô* (paternal auntie) shows respect for H in terms of *lễ phép* (respectful politeness), such as when *cô* (paternal auntie) is used as a senior person referent serving an honorific function towards H as in the second *chú* (junior uncle) in (23) discussed earlier. For example, a younger female customer talked to an older female seller:

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[2]   Position numbering conventions in Southern Vietnam differ from those in North and Central Vietnam.

(29)   *Bởi vậy   đó, bây giờ làm sao   cô?* (a65)
         So,   PRT now   do   how   auntie
         "So, what to do now Madam?"

Australian Vietnamese also use the kinship term *cô* (paternal aauntie) in a similar situation for a similar purpose. For example, when a younger female seller spoke to an older female customer in a clothes shop:

(30)   *Cái áo   đó chín mười lăm ngàn   cô !*   (v39)
         CLA jacket that ninety-five   thousand   auntie
         "That jacket is ninety-five thousand, Madam"

In both cases, (29) and (30), *cô* (paternal auntie) are used to convey a pragmatic connotation of the honorific function, which is similar to the way that "Madam" is used in Australian English.

Finally, the fourth largest difference between VV and AV is in the kinship term *anh* (elder brother), which is also a commonly used kinship term of seniority and can be used either for a male 1PSR or male 2PSR. For example, in a transaction that occurred in a tailor shop in Vietnam, when two customers spoke to each other:

Customer 1, a female in her 50s, addressed an older male customer, using *anh* (elder brother) for male 2PSR:

(31)   *Vậy   thôi   anh   khỏi   may   hả?* (v141)
         So   stop   elder-brother   NEG   sewing Q.
         "So you are not going to place an order, are you?"

Customer 2, in response to (31), a male in his 60s used *anh* (elder brother) for 1PSR (self addressed):

(32)   *Ừ,   anh   hổng   may.*   (v142)
         Yeah   elder brother   NEG   sewing
         "That's right, I am not ordering (for the suit)"

Difference in the usage of *anh* (elder brother) in both male 1PSR and male 2PSR is straightforward for Vietnamese native speakers, but the identification of speaker in these utterances (31 and 32) may be problematic as it is essentially determined by the context of utterance.

Haines (2006:19) suggests that Vietnamese kinship is ranked by seniority, which lies in the relations of generation. Therefore, the use or absence of an inappropriate kinship term in an utterance may be considered as lacking in deferential politeness. For example, both utterances (31) and (32) would be considered impolite if the kinship term *anh* (elder brother) had not been used. A speaker may use kinship terms with the intention to either downgrade or upgrade him/herself in relation to the interactants' relative ages. For example, if *anh* (elder brother) were replaced by *em* (younger brother), the intention might be to downgrade; but if the replacement was *ông* (grandfather), it would be to upgrade.

However, in a speech situation where the interactants are new to each other, the speaker (S) may choose a junior kinship term for self-reference (1PSR) even though the addressee (H) may be judged younger. On a literal level, this represents the usage of an inappropriate kinship term, but it may be a cautious practice in addressing to ensure maximum politeness in the initial stage of conversation. Following the initial stage, change in the usage of kinship terms in addressing may be suggested by H, as soon as the difference in ages between S and H become obvious, in order to satisfy the politeness norms based on the concepts of politeness in Vietnamese discussed in Chapter 3. The following utterances were recorded from service encounters in Australia, in which both interactants used a kinship term of seniority addressing each other, despite obvious difference in their ages realised by the interlocutors. An older male seller used *anh* (elder brother) in addressing a younger male customer:

(33)   *Ử,   vậy thì   anh   cho tôi cái địa chỉ đi !* (a339)
        Yeah, so then   elder brother give me CLA address PRT
        "OK, then give me your address"

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The younger male customer responded:

(34)   *Dạ dạ số   70 **anh**,   Eward Street, Footscray.* (a340)
        HON.   number 70 elder brother, Eward Street, Footscray
        "Yes, it is 70 Eward Street, Footscray"

Similarly, an older male seller asked a younger male customer:

(35)   *Xin lỗi, **anh**   tên   chi ?* (a341)
        Sorry,   elder brother, name what
        "Sorry, what is your name?"

The younger male customer responded:

(36)   *Tôi tên   Danh **anh** !*   (a342)
        My name   Danh elder brother
        "My name is Danh"

From a grammatical point of view, the kinship term *anh* (elder brother) is used in (33) and (35) for 2PSR; but in (34) and (36), the same kinship term served as a polite marker, which may be labelled a "polite vocative particle" (Thompson, 1987:260) on the illocutionary force to express politeness in the utterance. Apart from the politeness function, the kinship term *anh* (elder brother) in (34) and (36) denotes no other meaning in the utterances, although they both serve as 2PSR. From a pragmatic point of view, the usage of *anh* (elder brother) in (34) and (36) is similar to that of Sir in English, but not as respectful and formal as Sir.

A similar usage of kinship terms in address where the relationship between seniority and juniority does not match, as in (33), has also been identified from the corpus of data collected in Vietnam. For example, in a tailor shop, a female customer in her 50s asked a female seller in her 40s:

(37)   *Ừ đặt cọc trước   bao nhiêu **chị** ?* (v244)
        Uh deposit advance how much   elder sister
        "Uh, how much deposit in advance is required?"

Female seller in her 40s replied to female customer in her 50s:

(38) *Đặc cọc hai bộ nầy chị   đưa một triệu rưởi đi.* (v245)
      deposit two suits this elder sister give one million half PRT
      "Give one and a half million deposit for these two suits"

In service encounters interactants often consist of people who are strangers; especially in initial transactions, the speaker would rather use a kinship term of seniority for 2PSR in addressing, even when the addressee's age may be judged to be younger than the speaker's. This practice seems to be common for VV and AV and even universal in politeness strategies towards strangers (Brown & Levinson 1987:182).

Apart from the quantitative and qualitative differences between VV and AV in the usage of kinship terms as politeness markers discussed so far, a small number of kinship terms have been identified in one national context, but not in the other. For example, kinship terms, *dượng* (uncle in law), *ông* (grandfather), *bà* (grandmother) were evident in AV's usage but not in VV's; whereas, *cậu* (either elder or younger brother of one's mother) is only used by one speaker in Vietnam.

As far as comparability could be achieved from the corpus of data, as mentioned in the previous section, especially in contrast to VV's utterances, where non-use of kinship terms occurred such as (6) and (7), and AV's utterances with the usage of kinship terms such as in (5) and (8); the significant difference across national contexts is due to non-use of kinship terms reflected in many of VV's utterances. Such non-use means that either there is no term used for person reference through the use of alternative grammatical means, or another alternative term is used for person reference in the utterance, but none have been identified in the Vietnamese corpus. In addition, non-use of kinship terms is similar to non-use of person referents as discussed earlier in relation to examples (24) and (25); and either case would be considered impolite according to either concept of politeness in Vietnamese (*lễ phép*) respectful politeness or (*lịch sự*) strategic politeness, whichever is applicable from a Vietnamese Confucian cultural point of view. To a certain extent, the significant difference in relation to the use (or non-use) of kinship

terms may result from a change in the concept of politeness in Vietnamese society post the Vietnam War.

In Australia, as mentioned earlier, kinship terms (c2) are used by the Vietnamese native speakers (AV) more frequently than their counterparts in Vietnam (VV). This may be explained by the fact that despite living in Australian Anglo society, Australian Vietnamese tend to preserve their traditional customs while their children are actively sent to ethnic schools (Lewins & Ly 1985:62). In addition, it is well documented that a large majority of Australian Vietnamese support the idea that Vietnamese children should learn and maintain their native language (Rado 1987: 15-16), and that Vietnamese classes are delivered in Australian public schools as mentioned in Chapter 1 (Merlino 1988:48) and at various local community centres (Le 1993). Vietnamese traditional customs including the usage of kinship terms are assumed to be maintained and enhanced through Vietnamese language programs as well as newspaper, radio and other forms of audiovisual media. In particular, Cunningham and Nguyen (2003:123-124) point out that diasporic video is one of the key means for the Vietnamese "pure" heritage maintenance through the "restoration and preservation of traditional Vietnamese music style". Cunningham and Nguyen's example (2003:126) of Confucian educational rectitude is the traditional dress (*áo dài*) worn by schoolgirls. This apparently involves the usage of kinship terms in relation to Confucian name rectification doctrine as mentioned in Chapter 3 (Ho 1996: 205, 211). In addition, the phenomenon of Australian Vietnamese using kinship terms far more frequently than Vietnamese living in Vietnam may be effectively enhanced by the pragmatic transference of the honorific function of "Sir/Madam" in English, with the usage of kinship terms of seniority in Vietnamese as discussed earlier.

Quality hedges (c4)

The essence of "Quality hedges" as politeness markers as defined in the research findings in section 5.5 is that the speaker does not take full responsibility for the truth of what has been said in the utterance (Brown & Levinson 1987:164). This suggests an acknowledgment of the possibility that with Quality hedges, the speaker leaves room for the addressee's opinion. In

this way, personal autonomy is respected, and is therefore consistent with cultural values in an individualist society, such as Australia.

The data analysis in Chapter 6 revealed that overall AV used markers of Quality hedges to a comparably small extent with 46 tokens, but far more frequently than VV (more than 4 times) in 1064 turns at talk. This difference has been further analysed at a micro level with 6 particles used for Quality hedges in Vietnamese listed in Table 7.5. From this table, we can see that the largest area of difference is in the usage of *chắc* and *có thể*, the focus of this section. As "Quality hedges", the best translation for *chắc* is "perhaps" and for *có thể* , "could" or "may be", used to convey similar literal meanings; for example, in Australia, an older female seller gave her opinion to a younger female customer:

(39)   *Cái   đó   lâu dài   **chắc** bị   hư   quá!* (a187)
          CLA   that long time   PRT   suffer   damage PRT
          "Perhaps it will be damaged over time"

Table 7.5   Identified Vietnamese "quality hedge" markers

Quality hedges	English translation	VV	AV	AV-VV
chắc	perhaps	3	20	17
có thể	could/may be	0	9	9
đại khái	roughly	2	4	2
khoảng/khoảng chừng	approximately	3	8	5
nghĩ/tưởng	think	3	5	2
nói chung	general speaking	2	0	-2
phỏng	guess	1	0	-1
Overall usage		14	46	32
Turns		1064	1064	1064

A similar usage of *chắc* has also been identified from VV's data corpus where an older female customer responded to a younger female seller:

(40)   ***Chắc***   *hai nút   coi   được hơn !* (v194)
          Perhaps   two button look OK   better
          "Perhaps it will look better with two buttons"

In (39) and (40) the Quality hedges with *chắc* (perhaps) serve the same function, expressing the status of probability in the utterance, just like *có thể* (could/may be). For example, an older male talked to a younger female customer:

(41)   *Hai người chứng **có thể** không đến đây cũng được !* (a34)
         Two witnesses   may be no   come here also OK
         "It may be OK without presence of the two witnesses"

An older female customer expressed her opinions to her younger female seller at a clothes shop:

(42)   *Nó **có thể** nằm   ở đây.*   (v71)
         It   could   lie   here
         "It could be placed here"

In both (41) and (42) *có thể* (could/may be) serve as Quality hedges, expressing a suggestion of probability that recognises or accepts H's opinions.

In Vietnamese, *chắc* (perhaps) and *có thể* (could/may be) are occasionally used in combination as a word compound to enhance the force of Quality hedges, to express a stronger probability or to minimize the speaker's authority and responsibility in what has been said. For example, an older female seller spoke to her younger female customer, expressing her opinion in a workplan:

(43)   *Cô   xếp cái đuôi   **chắc có thể**   được !* (a395).
         Auntie (1PSR) fold CLA tail   **probably** (PRT) OK
         "It would **probably** be OK if I made a tail here"

In (43) the speaker (S) gave her opinion on how the work should be done; but with the compound particle *chắc có thể* (probably), the potential

imposition on H could be mitigated to some extent, because what S suggested in (43) allowed room for a different opinion to be given by H.

Of seven particles used for Quality hedges in Vietnamese as identified from the corpus of data, 5 were used by AV more than VV, namely *chắc, có thể, đại khái, khoảng/khoảng chừng* and *nghĩ/tưởng* (see Table 7.5). Of these 5 particles, the largest difference is *chắc* (perhaps). The 2 hedge particles used by VV more than AV are *nói chung* and *phỏng* and they were not used by AV.

The pattern of significant difference reflected in this micro analysis of Quality hedges suggests the influence of Anglo Australian culture on Vietnamese spoken by its native speakers in Australia. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:145-171), making a statement or giving opinions involving various hedges can be considered a form of politeness. Wong (2004: 243) suggests that in Anglo culture the possibility of differences in opinions is more strongly acknowledged than in Asian cultures. This may help to explain why in Australian Anglo culture Quality hedges are used more frequently than in Vietnamese culture as revealed in the present study. The phenomenon of AV using Quality hedges more than VV thus appears to be a case that can be explained by pragmatic transference from English in the usage of Vietnamese in the Australian context.

Repetition (c6)

In Australia, Vietnamese speakers employed "repetition" in their politeness strategies, but only twice across the whole corpus of data. For example, in confirmation of a smaller amount to be paid, a female cashier repeatedly told her customer:

(44)   *Hai trăm   chín mươi, hai trăm   chín mươi !* (a612)
          Two hundred nine ten,   two hundred nine ten
          "Two hundred and ninety, two hundred and ninety"

The repetition of *hai trăm chín mươi* (two hundred and ninety) seems to satisfy H's want as it represents a smaller amount to be paid, compared with

the amount that appeared in the invoice, which had been produced previously to the cashier. In this case, the repetition is not what has been said previously, but what is said in favour of H (i.e. the cheaper price proposed now to be paid).

According to Brown and Levinson (1987:113), "repetition" is employed as a politeness strategy, which is expressed by repeating partly or wholly what has been said previously to stress S's emotional agreement to the previous utterance, which may have been produced by H or S. For example, in a clothes shop in Vietnam, an older male customer repeated (46) the price of a garment previously stated by a younger female seller (45):

Younger female seller:

(45)   *Cái áo   đang   mặc   đó hai trăm   ba.* (v24)
        CLA shirt presently wear that two hundred three
        "The shirt you are wearing is two hundred and thirty"

Older male customer:

(46)   *Hai trăm   ba !* (v25)
        two hundred   three
        "Two hundred and thirty".

Utterance (46) represents partly what has been said in (45) and expresses the emotional agreement of the male customer with the female seller's previous utterance of the price of the shirt. The repetition of the price without comment suggests that the customer has acknowledged the price stated by the seller, but is still doubtful about whether it was the right price or not, i.e. indirectly suggesting a price reduction. As a matter of politeness or courtesy, in this case, the customer does not directly ask for a reduction in price; and in this sense, repetition pragmatically represents a negative politeness strategy to avoid a face-threatening act towards the seller. In addition, the non-verbal attitude at least helps maintaining harmony between interlocutors in verbal interactions;

therefore it renders no imposition on H, and in this way, "repetition" is considered a politeness marker

Despite infrequent usage across the 21 categories of politeness marker in both national contexts, VV used Repetition 7 times more than AV. This can be interpreted as drawing on the nature of each national context involved. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, Vietnamese is one of the Asian high-context languages, in which speaker meanings are embedded in the physical context, or internalised in the speaker (Hall 1976:91). This may be further explained with the phenomenon of VV using more "repetition" than AV as a process of bargaining, which is accepted in Vietnamese culture. This bargaining strategy was implemented by means of "repetition" without discussing the price initially suggested by the seller. In this way, the seller was psychologically prompted to make an offer of price reduction, to ensure that the opportunity for selling the goods was not missed. This underlying process of bargaining is consistent with how a high-context language may encode a polite request for a price reduction; and in this case, with "repetition", the speaker's meaning is embedded either in the context of transaction or in the speaker's mind.

Honorifics (c7)

As defined in section 5.8 (Chapter 5), honorifics are used as politeness markers in Vietnamese to express politeness and deference towards senior or superior addressees. This definition suggests that honorifics are often used by a younger speaker towards an older addressee; but there are different lexical forms to convey different meanings that will be elucidated by this micro analysis.

As mentioned earlier, although some kinship terms are also used for honorifics to express respect in addressing or referring to another person, such terms have not been counted as honorifics in this micro analysis, which includes 3 honorific particles identified from the data (see Table 7.6).

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Vietnamese has a wide range of honorific particles (Thompson 1987:258-266; Do 1994:44, 168) including *dạ, dà* (polite yes) and dạ thưa (Sir/Madam, respectful humble), which have been identified from the data in this research.

Table 7.6   Identified Vietnamese honorifics

Markers	Function	VV	AV	AV-VV
dạ	Strengthening politeness markers	36	40	4
dà	Weakening politeness markers	14	43	29
dạ thưa	Formal politeness markers	1	2	1
Overall usage		51	85	34
Turns at talk		1064	1064	1064

In the two national corpuses, virtually all honorific particles consist of *dạ* or *dà* (polite responding "yes"), with the compound particle *dạ thưa* being barely used as indicated in Table 7.6. Both *dạ* and *dà* are used by AV more than VV; but the main difference between VV and AV is in the usage of *dà*, which conveys a softening hedge on the illocutionary force to fulfil a strategy of positive politeness similar to "adverbial clause hedges in English" (Brown & Levinson 1987:162). Whilst *dạ* and *dà* are used interchangeably without changing the degree of politeness expressed in the utterance; from a pragmatic point of view *dạ* seems to be more affirmative and stronger; while *dà* is more softening in the expression of politeness. Therefore these two honorific particles can be defined in terms of "strengtheners" and "weakeners" respectively (Brown & Levinson 1987:147). They do not differentiate the extent of politeness but, rather, how politeness is expressed. For example, in a clothes shop in Vietnam, a younger female customer responded to an older female customer:

(47) ***Dạ***, *con* *không* *lấy* *củn !* (v17)
         PRT   child   NEG   takes   kirt
         "No, I am not taking the skirt"

In a similar context, a younger female seller replied to her older female customer:

(48) ***Dà***, *hai trăm.* (v338)
         PRT   two hundred
         "Yes, two hundred please"

This utterance (48) was made in response to the previous question raised by an older female customer:

(49)   *Lấy gối   luôn   thì   hai trăm   hả?* (v337)
       take pillow as:well COPU   two hundred Q.
       "With the pillow the price is two hundred, isn't it?"

In both (47) and (48) *dạ* and *dà* were used as respectful politeness markers. The negative gloss in (47) is not related to particle *dạ*, but to the negative marker *không*, whilst the affirmative gloss in (48) is simply determined by the fact that there is no negative marker in the utterance. In addition, the English glosses in (47) and (48), "No" and "Yes" respectively, may be somehow associated with "no, thanks" and "yes, please" in terms of politeness. And they match the addressee honorifics in Vietnamese culture because their usage reflects respect directly to H in terms of a polite answer (Thompson 1965:67, 1987:260). Therefore, these honorifics have been defined as respectful politeness in this sense; and to some extent they are different from the responding "yes" in Australian English.

In the Australian context, a younger female customer responded to her older female seller:

(50)   *Dà , con nhớ   rồi !* (a49)
       Hon. child remember already
       "Yes, Madam, I have remembered it"

A younger male customer in concluding a business transaction said to his older seller:

(51)   *Dà , dà (.) vậy thôi, vậy cám ơn   anh !* (a354)
       Hon. hon.   so then so   thank   e-brother
       "Yes, so then, thank you"

As discussed earlier in Chapter 3, respectful politeness is considered "one-way speech" from an inferior to a superior, expressing deference towards the addressee who has senior status over the speaker. The qualitative similarity in the usage of honorifics, in terms of younger speakers using honorifics as politeness markers more than older speakers in both national contexts (see Table 7.1), substantiates the strong impact of respectful politeness in Vietnamese tradition, regardless of possible influences of social contextual factors across national contexts. However, as indicated in the data analysis, *dà* (lit. polite yes) is used by AV substantially more than VV. This polite particle is quite similar to the linguistically polite norms "yes please", institutionalised in Anglo Australian culture, mentioned in Chapter 2 (DIAC 2007:28-29). In this regard, the phenomenon of AV using *dà* (lit. polite yes) more frequently than VV can be explained in terms of pragmatic transference.

The compound particle *dạ thưa* conveys a higher level of politeness and is obviously more formal than the other two particles; and this can be considered equivalent to "Yes Sir/Madam" in English. Thus *dạ thưa* has been assigned to as formal politeness marker in this sense. For example:

(52) **Dạ thưa**   *có*   *số*   *điện thoại*   *rồi !* (a591)
       PRT   have   number   telephone   already
       "Sir/Madam, the telephone number is now available"

The honorific particle *dạ thưa* is also used to express politeness formally by Vietnamese living in Vietnam, although this politeness strategy is not as commonly used as *dạ* and *dà*; for example, when a younger female seller responded to an older male customer:

(53) **Dạ thưa**   *không anh*   *ơi !*   (v606)
       PRT   NEG   elder brother INTJ
       "Sir, the telephone number is now available"

It is notable that in utterance (53) the kinship term *anh* (elder brother) is used as a person referent, but it is reflected in the honorific gloss Sir, which is

more related to the particle compound *dạ thưa* as a politeness marker, rather than the person referent conveyed by kinship term *anh* in the utterance. This highlights the difference between Vietnamese and Australian English in the usage of Sir as honorific to express deference towards H. In Vietnamese deference towards H using the honorific Sir is expressed by the non-person particle *dạ thưa*; whilst in Australian English the honorific Sir refers to a respected male person. In case H is a female, a kinship term of seniority for female referents is used, such as *cô, bà, dì, chị* or bác (one's father's elder sister), instead of a male kinship term of seniority like *anh*.

Minimising imposition (c9)

"Minimising imposition" is another kind of softening hedge on the illocutionary force to mitigate the imposition on H in terms of "being limited, not much, little, inexpensive, or nothing else" conveyed by the respective particles (Thompson 1965:172; Brown & Levinson 1987:177).

In Vietnamese there are a few Softening hedges of this kind identified from the data such as *chút, chút xíu, một chút, hà/hè, thôi hà/thôi hè, thôi/vậy thôi*, which have been assigned as "Minimising imposition" markers in Vietnamese (see Table 7.7). Based on the lexical meanings conveyed in the English glosses, there are 3 groups of "Minimising imposition" markers discerned in this analysis: (1) *chút or xíu* and its compounds, (2) *hà* or *hè* and its compounds and (3) *thôi* and its compounds.

Table 7.7 Identified "minimising imposition" markers

Identified markers	English translation	VV	AV	AV-VV
chút xíu/nhỏ xíu (1)	a little bit	0	3	3
chút/một chút (1)	one bit	3	9	6
hà/hè (2)	only	13	30	17
thôi hà/thôi hè (2)	that's all	7	11	4
thôi/vậy thôi (3)	no more	20	46	26
Overall usage		**43**	**99**	56
Group 1 markers		3	12	9
Group 2 markers		20	41	21
Group 3 markers		20	46	26
Turns		1064	1064	1064

(1) Type 1 markers; (2) type 2 markers; (3) type 3 markers for minimizing imposition

Overall AV used the politeness markers of "Minimising imposition" 56 tokens more than VV in 1064 turns at talk. All "Minimising imposition" markers

were used by AV more than VV; but the largest differences are in *thôi/vậy thôi* with AV usage being 26 tokens more than VV and in *hà/hè* being used by AV 17 tokens more than VV in 1064 turns at talk.

It is notable that *hà/hè* consists of two lexical forms, *hà* and *hè*, which are interchangeable and can be used alone without changing the meaning conveyed in the utterance. For example, a male seller in his late 60s talked to his male customer in his early 60s:

(54)   *Bây giờ người ta xài   cái nẫy không **hà** !* (a507)
         now   one   uses   CLA this no   PRT
         "Nowadays only this one is used"

In another context, an older male seller spoke to his younger female customer:

(55)   *Hai vòng   sợ   cái   ly   nó nhỏ xíu **hè** !* (a405)
         two swags afraid CLA   pleat it small PRT PRT
         "With two swags, I am afraid the pleats will be very small"

Hà and *hè* in (52) and (53) convey the same pragmatic meaning that aims to minimize imposition on H in the respective utterances.

In Vietnam, similar utterances with the same markers of "Minimising imposition" have also been identified from the corpus of data. For example, a younger female seller spoke to an older female customer in a clothes shop:

(56)   *Giá   chín mười lăm ngàn   một cái **hà** !* (v35)
         price   nine ten five thousand   one each PRT
         "It is only 95,000 dong for each"

In another context, a female seller in her 50s spoke to a female customer in the same age range:

(57)   *Nó về   mỗi dây có   một số   hè !* (v87)

       it   come each CLA   have   one   number PRT

       "The supply has arrived with only one garment for each size"

All politeness markers of "Minimising imposition" *hà/hè* in (54) to (57) were used to highlight a minimal uniqueness of what has been talked about in the utterances. However, each may require a different interpretation to provide a proper understating of the related utterance. In (54) *hà* denotes the expression of "nothing else". In (55) *hè* attributes to its anterior particles *nhỏ xíu* to maximize little. In (56), *hà* pragmatically serves to convince that the price is cheap. Finally in (57) *hè* serves to enhance being unique.

The usage of particle *chút* and its compounds (*chút xíu, một chút*) seem to be comparable with the English idiom, *a bit* or *little bit*; for example, when talking about the waterproof quality of a watch, a male seller in his 60s said to a male customer in his 60s:

(58)   *Giữ gìn   chút   chứ !*   (a521)

       protect   a bit   PRT

       "Give it a bit protection!"

In another situation, when a younger female customer expressed her polite request to an older female seller, the customer said:

(59)   *Bắt   con   lớn lớn   chút xíu   nghen !*   (a388)

       make pleats big big   a little bit   PRT

       "Please make the pleats slightly bigger"

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Clyne (1967:55) suggests that word forms transferred from English usually retain the English meaning. This is reflected in (58) with the English meaning, *a bit*, for *chút*, and in (59) with the English meaning, *a little bit*, for *chút xíu*.

The next category of politeness markers in which there is significant difference between VV and AV is Assertive hedges (c12), which has been discussed at length in Chapter 5.

Assertive hedges (c12)

As indicated in Table 7.8, there are 3 particles serving as assertive hedges to attract H's attention. These function similarly to the politeness markers in the category of Exaggeration of interest (c11); but they differ in connotation and usage to some extent. In this study, assertive hedges were overall used as politeness markers by VV more than AV; and this difference is true for all 3 assertive hedge markers, namely *luôn, mới* and *thật ra* as listed in Table 7.8.

Table 7.8   Identified "assertive hedge" markers

Identified markers	English translation	VV	AV	AV-VV
luôn	by the way/together	48	24	-24
mới	conditional	6	1	-5
thật ra	in fact	1	0	-1
Overal usage		**55**	**25**	-30
Turns at talk		1064	1064	1064

Each of these assertive hedge markers has a discrete characteristic to express "truthfulness" in the illocutionary force to attract H's attention and possibly increase H's interest. Particle *luôn* serves 2 denotations expressed in English as "by the way" and "together". For example, in a market place, a female customer talked to a younger female seller:

(60)   *Bây giờ chị   lấy cái dây võng   màu đó rồi lấy*
          cái giá màu   nầy luôn.   (v368)
          Now   elder sister   take CLA string hammock colour that then take
          CLA rack colour   this PRT
          "Now I take the hammock string in that colour, then by the way, I will
          take the rack in this colour".

A female customer said to a female seller in the same age range using particle *luôn* in the second sense "together":

(61)   *Rồi   lấy   bốn trái luôn !* (V270)
         then, take four CLA PRT
         "OK, I take all four pieces of fruit"

In (60) *luôn* was used as an assertive hedge on the performative force suggesting something done in one go or on the same occasion (Buu, 1972:103). The closest gloss is "by the way" in English. It is committed to expressing the state of affairs in which a person takes one action immediately after another by chance or by convenience. The interesting aspect in this state of affairs is that more than one task is performed in one go. In this sense, *luôn* fulfils a positive politeness strategy in offering a piece of information thought to be of H's interest; in this way H's face want is fulfilled.

The function of *luôn* may also be interpreted as "on the same occasion", which is accepted by most Vietnamese speakers in a short form, *luôn tiện* or *luôn thể*, or even *tiện thể,* which are familiar particles in Vietnamese everyday language.

Utterance (61) has involved the same form of assertive hedge *luôn,* which denotes a sense of together or altogether. This implies a larger value in order to intensify H's interest. For example, in a Tailor's shop, a female seller said to an older male customer:

(62)   *Công   vải   luôn   chín trăm.*   (v256)
         labour fabrics PRT   nine hundred
         "It is nine hundred for labour and fabrics"

The implication of *luôn* in (62) is fulfilled in the sense of a larger value for price because the item in transaction includes labour and fabrics.

Although the phrase "by the way" seems to be the best match for the particle *luôn* in Vietnamese; they are interchangeable in one speech situation, but not in another, probably because *luôn* has a wider variety in its referential meanings than "by the way".

In addition, *luôn* in Vietnamese may also be interpreted in another way, based on the context of data collected for the present study. For example, an older female customer spoke to a younger female seller:

(63)   *Cô*   *kéo muốn chết* **luôn**   *đây   nè !*   (v69)
         Auntie (1PSR)   pull deadly   PRT   here   PRT
         "You has truly pulled too hard here!"

Another example, when a younger female seller talked to a female customer in the same age range at a fruit market:

(64)   *Ngọt* **hết xẩy luôn,** *hai đồng rưởi một ký,   mua giùm chị !*   (a423)
         sweet PRT   PRT   two dong half one kilo buy help elder sister
         "It is very sweet, only two dollars and fifty cents for a kilo, please buy"

In (63) and (64), *luôn* is used as an adverb to emphasise quality and to modify the performative in a sense of what is described in English as "truthfully", "honestly" or "genuinely" (Brown & Levinson 1987:166, Le & Nguyen 1998:115). In this way, *luôn* stresses S's commitment to the truth in performatives. Furthermore, *luôn* in (63) stresses "truthfulness" in terms of effect in the action of "pulling", that is, the pulling is so hard that its effect can be felt or detected. In (64) *luôn* affirms the degree of sweetness that may attract the customer. It also stresses "truthfulness" in the utterance (64) that the fruit is very delicious. On this basis, *luôn* in both examples fulfils a positive politeness strategy as it seems to satisfy H's positive face want to know something.

The largest area of difference in the usage of assertive hedges with VV's being greater than AV's is *luôn* (lit. by the way/together). This suggests that the style of expression using *luôn* (lit. by the way/together) is not very common in the Australian context. Despite its English gloss, this style of expression in Vietnamese seems to have no comparable expression in Australian English. From the AV data, there is no comparison where a completely different marker category is preferred, although lexical forms analysed as "assertive hedges"

may serve a different syntactical function in Vietnamese. This is also applicable to the other politeness markers; but it is outside the scope and focus of this research.

Another assertive hedge (c12) is expressed by the particle *mới* in Vietnamese. According to Buu Khai (1972:114), *mới* can be interpreted as what may be understood in English as "thereof", "as", "lead to", "enable", which are somehow associated with a condition; but this is not straightforward in Vietnamese. In Vietnamese, *mới* is used to convey various meanings; but in this analysis it is limited to a condition or some action expressed in the utterance. For example, in a clothes shop, a female customer talked to a younger female seller:

(65)   *Thôi,   nhỏ   nhỏ   **mới** bận   được !* (v110)
         No/stop small   small   PRT   wear   OK
         "No, only small size may fit me"

The condition expressed in this utterance (65) is about the size of the garment. In a different context, a female customer talked to an older female seller:

(66)   *Ổng nói đâu cả   tháng nữa **mới** về   mà !* (v676)
         He said Prt whole   month more PRT   return PRT
         "He said he would probably come back in one month" .

In Australia, Vietnamese speakers also use similar assertive hedges in their everyday speech; for example, a younger female customer talked to an older female seller recorded in a service encounter:

(67)   *Chừng nào **mới** xin   giấy   độc thân được?* (a77)
         When   PRT apply paper   single   OK?
         "When can I apply for a single status certificate?"

In (65) the expression is conditional on garment size; in (66) it is about time "whole month" and in (67) it is a question of "when". All of these examples reflect another form of "assertive hedges" in Vietnamese.

From a linguistic point of view, *mới* can be interpreted as an assertive particle in terms of suggesting a condition for an action to be undertaken (Leech 1983:105). In this utterance however the condition is a waiting period, which is expected and accepted by S.. In other words, the illocutionary force in the utterance stresses the condition on which the future action of returning in one month will occur. This mitigates the force of statement or question in the sense that S is in a humble position, suggesting less knowledge about the topic of utterance. It is hoped this humble attitude will make H feel good.

Pseudo-agreement (C16)

In the course of conversation, when S wants to cooperate with H, described by Brown and Levinson (1987:115) as a "pseudo-agreement", S employs a speech strategy that can be interpreted as an advanced agreement with H. This kind of agreement is not clearly and directly expressed, but it may be understood from H's point of view.

In this study 12 particles and their compounds have been identified and assigned as politeness markers in the category of Pseudo-agreement (c16) listed in Table 7.9 in descending order of difference. These politeness markers were overall used by Vietnamese in Australia (AV) 58 tokens more and twice as much as those used by Vietnamese in Vietnam (VV) in 1064 turns at talk.

Table 7.9   Identified "pseudo-agreement" markers

Pseudo-agreement (c16)	English translation	VV	AV	AV-VV
rồi/thôi/rồi thôi	then/OK/OK then	17	41	24
vậy là	so it is	9	15	6
thì/vậy thì	then/so then	3	15	12
bởi vậy	therefore	2	8	6
như vậy	so	0	4	4
vậy đó	that's it	0	3	3
được rồi	it's OK	6	8	2
biết rồi	known already	0	1	1
vậy/vậy thôi	so/so OK	10	11	1
thôi thì	OK then	0	1	1
vậy đi	that 's it	2	2	0
thì đó	then it is	2	0	-2
Overall usage		51	109	58
Turns at talk		1064	1064	1064

Across 12 groups of politeness markers defined as Pseudo-agreement (c16), only *thì đó* (then it is) was used by VV more than AV, whilst the other markers were used by AV more than VV (see Table 7.9).

In Vietnamese, politeness markers for Pseudo-agreement (c16) seem far more subtle than their English translation in the above table. However, all politeness markers in this category denote an underlying agreement with H, and in this way, they fulfil a politeness strategy.

As mentioned earlier, a lexical form in Vietnamese for Pseudo-agreement may be occasionally used in other categories depending on its pragmatic referent. When a particle is used to imply an underlying agreement with H however it is Pseudo-agreement. For example, an older male seller talked to a younger female customer:

(68)   *Thôi được rồi (.) bây giờ con hẹn   ngày trở lại với chồng con.* (32)
        PRT   OK already now   child promise day return with husband child
        "OK, now make an appointment to come back with your husband"

A similar form of pseudo-agreement is also used by Vietnamese living in Vietnam. For example, a middle-aged female customer talked to a female seller in the same age range:

(69)   *Thôi   để lấy   hai trái   nầy   đi !* (v392)
        PRT   let take two CLA (fruit) this PRT
        "OK, let's take these two pieces of fruit"

In utterance (68) *thôi* is used with an implication that "I have agreed to the deal with you and I suggested that you come back with your husband". In (69) the same particle *thôi* denotes an agreement to accept the deal.

Despite less usage overall, the main difference between AV and VV is in *rồi* (then) with AV's usage being greater than VV's. Apart from pseudo-agreement, like other lexical forms, *rồi* (then) can also be used to convey different connotations, which obviously are not counted as politeness markers.

As indicated in Table 7.9, *rồi* (then), was used by AV 21 tokens more than VV in 1064 turns at talk. Brown and Levinson (1987:115) point out that pseudo-agreement is initially expressed by "conclusory marker", which simultaneously serves as an indirect agreement in its pragmatic meaning. For example, in Australia an older female Vietnamese seller spoke to her younger female customer in her native language:

(70)   **Rồi**   *bây giờ làm   giấy   ly dị   đi !*   (a120)
        Then   now   make paper divorce PRT
        "Then, go ahead to obtain the divorce certificate"

In Vietnam, a similar marker for pseudo-agreement is also used. For example, an older female customer talked to her younger female seller:

(71)   **Rồi,** *cái   áo   nầy bao nhiêu?* (v36)
        Then CLA dress[3]   this how much
        "Then how much is this dress?"

In both (70) and (71), *rồi* pragmatically reflects an underlying agreement that the speakers accept what has been discussed in the course of conversation and propose the next move for further actions. In (70) the next move is a proposal for obtaining a divorce certificate; whilst in (71) the next move is a request.

Giving or asking for reasons (c18)

According to Brown and Levinson (1987:128), "Asking for reasons" are considered as politeness markers in the sense that they function as a helpful suggestion offered by the speaker or imply indirect cooperation; for example, "why don't we go to the seashore!" This utterance also reflects "why not?", that is, if there are no good reasons otherwise, why shouldn't H corporate? Similar

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[3] In Vietnamese, *áo* is also used for other types of garments; e.g. shirt, jacket, jumper.

cases of "Giving or asking for reasons" as politeness markers have been identified from the corpus of data (see Table 7.10).

Table 7.10   Identified "giving or asking for reasons" markers

Identified markers	English translation	VV	AV	AV-VV
sao/tại sao	why	9	11	2
là sao	why is it		1	1
mà sao	but why		1	1
làm sao	how to do	1	1	0
vậy sao	so why	2		-2
vì/bởi vì/tại vì	because	7	23	16
tại	due to/because	5	4	-1
là do	due to/because	1	1	0
Overall usage		25	42	17
Turns at talk		1064	1064	1064

In Vietnamese, there are some words and word compounds used as question markers and markers for giving reasons to serve as politeness markers as being identified from the data. It is notable, however, that the politeness aspect of these question markers and markers for giving reasons is strictly determined by the way in which they are used in a speech situation, as being further explained here.

Among these markers, five are used for "Asking for reasons": *sao/tại sao, là sao, mà sao, làm sao* and *vậy sao*. Others are used for giving reasons: *vì/bởi vì, tại vì, tại,* and *là do*. All serve as politeness markers by means of pragmatic meanings either to denote a helpful suggestion or imply indirect cooperation in the utterance.

The following examples illustrate how politeness is linguistically expressed by means of "asking for reasons":

In a clothes shop, a younger male customer asked an older female seller:

(72)   *Tại sao hổng   mua đồ   đậm đậm?* (v232)
         Why   NEG   buy   garments   dark dark.
         "Why don't you buy garments in little bit darker colour?"

In two other separate contexts, politeness markers for asking for reasons have been identified. An older male customer asked a younger female seller:

(73)   *Sao* *không xin vô*   *trong bán?* (v586)
         Why not   ask entry inside sell
         "Why don't you ask for entry inside to sell?"

At a fish shop, an older male customer asked a younger male seller:

(74)   *Lạnh quá hổng có hàng* *hay*   *là sao?* (a996)
         cold very no   have goods or   PRT
         "Are goods not available because it is too cold?"

In (72) the question about the colour of garments does not seek information, but rather implies a proposal in favour of the seller from the customer's point of view (i.e. the customer may prefer the darker colour).

In (73), again the question does not seek any information; rather it implies a proposal in favour of the seller, that being inside the commercial showground would be a better opportunity for success in business. It was asked with an understanding of H's business situation being disadvantaged because of its current position, being located outside the main market area. Finally in (74), similar to (72) and (73), it does not seek any information but implies emotional support by showing an understanding of the possible cause for the scarcity of fish in the shop.

The differentiation of politeness question markers from non-politeness question markers in Vietnamese is determined by the context of utterance drawing on the researcher's knowledge of Vietnamese culture. For example, while the question marker (*sao*) used in (73) has been classified as a politeness marker; the same marker used in the following utterance (75) has not been classified as a politeness marker. A younger female customer asked an older female seller:

(75)   *Sao* *tới* *500*   *đô*   *lận?*   (a85)
         Why   reach 500   dollars PRT
         "Why it costs 500 dollars?"

In (75) the question implied the item is not worth the 500 dollars being asked for by the seller.

"Giving reasons" is a politeness strategy that makes the addressee in an utterance "feel good" or comfortable (Lakoff 1975:65; Holmes 1992:296). This type of politeness marker has been identified in the corpus of data with words and word compounds: *vì, bởi vì* and *tại vì, tại* and *là do,* which are all translated as either "due to" or "because" (see Table 7.10). The main difference between AV and VV is in the first three politeness markers *vì, bởi vì* and *tại vì*. Despite relatively small usage compared with other categories of politeness marker, AV uses the politeness markers in this group 16 tokens more than VV of 17 tokens across 1064 turns at talk. For example, in a receptionist room, a female seller talked to a male seller in the same age range:

(76)   *Vì   không có thì giờ, khách ngồi đây muốn nói chuyện với anh liền!*
         Because no   have time, customer sit here want talk   with you PRT
         "Because there is not enough time, the customer wants to speak to you now" (a857)

In a tailor's shop, a female seller talked to a male customer in the same age range:

(77)   *Bởi vì   tính   vải   kiểu nầy nó hơi   tốn vải.* (a292)
         Because calculate fabrics style this it slightly cost fabrics
         "Because this style requires more fabrics"

At a clothes shop, a female customer in her 50s spoke to her female seller in about the same age:

(78)   *Tại vì   ở đây cũng nhập cảng từ   Hồng Kông.* (v53)
         Because here   also import   from Hong Kong
         "Because we also import from Hong Kong"

Despite minor differences in form, all particles for "Giving reasons" in (76), (77) and (78) serve as politeness markers in making the addressee "feel good". They serve to mitigate possible impositions on H by giving a good excuse for hurrying H (76) and justifying the possible high costs (77) and (78).

The rest of politeness markers in terms of "Giving reasons" consist of *tại* and *là do.* For example:

(79)   ***Tại***   *bữa hổm con xin thì*   *con   xin giấy độc thân?* (a56)
         Because day that child apply COPU child apply paper single
         "Because on that day I applied for certificate of single status"

(80)   *Cái nẫy **là do**   của thằng builder nó đưa cho mình.* (a268)
         CLA this because of CLA   builder he give for self
         "This is due to what the builder has provided me".

Joke (21)

As mentioned in Chapter 5 (section 5.22), there is no fixed or consistent form of joke made among speakers within one culture, let alone people from different cultural backgrounds. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 124), jokes are performed on the basis of shared background knowledge and values; and making a joke may be viewed as a positive politeness technique because it can relieve stresses and put H "at ease".

On making a joke as a category of politeness marker, there is only a few occurrence identified in this study. Overall there is a significant difference between VV and AV in the usage of the politeness marker for making a joke, with VV's usage of 9 tokens being larger than AV's in only 2 tokens in 1064 turns at talk.

It is the view of Brown and Levinson (1987: 124) that making a joke may occur in seeking pleasure to satisfy H's positive politeness wants, that is, to make H feel good. However, pleasure or happiness is an emotional response that can be determined by different factors, depending on the discourse

context, that is, the context in which jokes are made. Nevertheless, it is acceptable that making a joke can be seen as an attempt to bring about pleasure or happiness to the addressee; and this way, the speaker has employed the doctrine of Confucian responsiveness in terms of making others feel comfortable (Pham 2008:81). But this politeness strategy is internalised in the speaker as in the nature of high-context communication in Vietnamese (Hall 1976:91). This helps explain why VV make jokes a little more frequently than AV.

From a historical point of view, making a joke is seen as a social activity, involving the production of comic pleasure in a generally cheerful mood, while the joke maker is "inclined to laugh" (Carrell 2008:304). For example, in a shopping centre, a younger male customer responded to an older male customer:

(81)   *Cái áo   với (.) mang đôi giày được rồi ! (cười)*   (v60)
         CLA jacket with wear pair shoes OK   PRT [laugh]
         "It is fine enough to wear a jacket with a pair of shoes!" .

This statement in (79) cannot be recognised as a joke without awareness of the context in which it occurs. The context is a shopping centre, where garments and shoes are sold with fitting rooms available for customers to try on selected items. The joke followed a customer's answer that he had chosen a jacket and a pair of shoes to buy. It was realised as a joke based on the shared background knowledge and values that everyone wears shoes with pants and a jacket. As discussed in Chapter 5, one who goes out without pants is exposed to ridicule. The statement, it's OK with a jacket and a pair of shoes (for the man intended to buy them), provoked an imaginary man going out without pants!

In a different context, a female seller spoke to a male customer:

(82)   *Dạ tên Bát [laugh], **bởi vây ổng cha người ta không!***   (a985)
         HON. named Bat   therefore, he father others PRT
         "Yes, his name is Bat; hence he is often senior to others!"

This statement (80) was realised as a joke because the man's name is pronounced as a kinship term *bác* (uncle). Therefore, the man mentioned in this joke is assumed to be an uncle, that is, a senior to many others who can be identified by junior kinship titles such as younger brother, child, grandchild.

Joke making not only requires linguistic skills, but also sensibility to the context and speech situation. It is not conventionally restricted to any condition, but joke making may be determined by age, social status and context. In a certain situation, joke making can be regarded as lack of respect towards superiors. For example, a joke may not be suitable if it is made by a schoolboy to his teacher or to an elderly person. Joke making towards superiors may result in the schoolboy being blamed for being impolite.

In addition, joke making is necessarily appropriate depending on the degree of social distance or the status of intimacy and solidarity between S and H. Close friends normally joke with each other, but those who have only been recently acquainted do not joke with one another. Therefore, making a joke in a wrong situation may be undesirable and can sometimes provoke anxiety in H; for instance, when H is in a bad mood due to a personal reason. Finally, making a joke can lead to misunderstanding because it may lie outside H's realisation without a clear signal or indicator. This problem is also associated with uncertainty in predicting H's psychological state, which is more likely to be the case when the interlocutors have different cultural backgrounds.

7.2.3   ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DIFFERENCES

In this chapter macro and micro analyses of significant areas of quantitative difference in the usage of politeness markers across 21 categories to highlight the extent to which groups and subgroups differ in linguistic politeness behaviour have so far been discussed. This section will focus on preference order in the usage of politeness markers; and in this way, qualitative differences across national contexts will be examined.

In this analysis, qualitative differences are recognised by the most and least preference in the usage of politeness markers; therefore it goes beyond the significant differences analysed earlier in section 7.2.2.

As indicated in Table 7.2, among 14 groups and subgroups (VV, AV, VM, AM, VF, AF, VC, AC, VS, AS, VO, AO, VY, AY) involved in the cross-national assessment using Rho, Kinship terms (c2) is the most preferred category of politeness markers for 11 groups and subgroups; whilst Affective particles (c1), Quality hedges (c4) and Softening hedges/please (c5) are the most preferred categories for the other 3 subgroups, namely VM, VO and VC respectively. For the least preference, there are 6 categories involved: Gift giving/thanks (c3) (for VS, VY), Softening hedges/please (c5) (for AO), Repetition (c6) (for AV, AF, AS, AY), Token agreement (c19) (for VF), Intensify interest (c20) (for VV, VM, VC, VO) and Joke (c21) (for AC, AM). Thus, of these categories, 2 were chosen by 8 groups/subgroups, namely Repetition (c6) and Intensify interest (c20); 2 categories were equally chosen by 4 groups/subgroups, namely Gift giving/thanks (c3) and Joke (c21); whilst the other 2 least preferred categories were chosen by 2 groups/subgroups, namely Softening hedges/please (c5) and Token agreement (c19).

In this analysis as shown in Table 7.2, Kinship terms (c2) represent the most commonly favoured by 11 of 14 groups/subgroups across 21 categories of politeness markers; whilst Repetition (c6) and Intensify interest (c20) are the least commonly preferred categories for 8 of 14 groups/subgroups. This effectively substantiates the striking importance of Kinship terms as a politeness strategy adopted by Vietnamese speakers across national contexts, despite quantitative difference discussed earlier.

In sum, from a cross-national perspective, as revealed in Chapter 6, the preference for Kinship terms is distributed to VV sub-groups VF, VS and VY, and to AV subgroups AM, AF, AC, AS, AO and AY. Thus, in Vietnam, Kinship terms are most preferred by females, sellers and younger speakers; whilst in Australia, they are most preferred by males and females, customers and sellers, older and younger speakers.

In view of the rank order of preference from a Rho test, on the gender-based relationship (see section 6.3.4) the largest correlation is between AM and AF, that is, between VF and AF, VM and A and VM and VF. On the role-based relationship (see section 6.4.4), the largest correlation is between AC and AS,

preceding VS and AS, VC and AC and VC and VS. On the generation relationship (see section 6.5.4), the largest correlation in rank order of preference is between AO and AY, preceding VY and AY, VO and AO and VO and VY. In relation to gender, role and generation, the largest correlations in rank order of preference are the respective relationships of Australian Vietnamese.

So far in this chapter, macro and micro analyses of significant areas of difference in the usage of politeness markers in relation to 4 independent variables, namely national context (see section 6.2), gender (see section 6.3), role (see section 6.4) and generation (see section 6.5) have been discussed. Macro analysis examines overall differences across 21 categories of politeness marker to determine whether there is a significant difference between groups and subgroups or not. Micro analysis has focused on significant features of specific categories, whether they are most or least preferred in usage.

In the next chapter, a summary of findings from this research will be presented, with further discussions and interpretations towards some practical implications.

<div align="center">

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

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This research has investigated various aspects of the usage of modern Vietnamese to address the question of whether there are differences in politeness expressed by Vietnamese speakers living in Vietnam and Australia in their verbal interactions, and if so, how and why. It has been carried out in the wake of other research on Vietnamese language and culture, none of which has focussed on the above question.

In this research, the data analysis with social factors such as gender, role and generation taken into consideration, has revealed that Vietnamese living in Australia are more linguistically polite overall than those living in Vietnam. The rationale for this difference is argued within the framework of two factors that impact in different ways: (a) sociopolitical change in Vietnam; and (b) language and intercultural contact in Australia.

The areas of significant difference between Vietnamese speakers across gender, role, generation and national context, will be further discussed in this chapter to explore observed differences in linguistic politeness behaviour when Vietnamese is spoken by native speakers in Vietnam and Australia.

8.1   MAIN AREAS OF DIFFERENCES

Overall, the evidence adduced from ethnographic research shows that Australian Vietnamese (AV) are more linguistically polite than Vietnamese living in Vietnam (VV) based on the analysis of 21 categories of politeness markers. On the usage of each individual category of politeness markers, there is a significant difference between AV and VV in 10 categories, with Kinship terms (c2) being the largest difference among 7 categories used by AV more than VV (see Table 7.1 in Chapter 7). Despite this, Kinship terms (c2) were ranked 1 in order of preference by both VV and AV.

The main significant differences between AV and VV in relation to gender, role and generation are summarised in Table 8.1 for further discussion.

Table 8.1   Cross-national differences

OVERALL DIFFERENCE	DIFFERENCE IN THE USAGE OF EACH CATEGORY			
GENDER	**AM>VM** (Table 6.9)		**VM>AM** (Table 6.9)	
AM>VM (Table 6.9)	Honorifics (c7)	**31.07**	Assertive hedges (c12)	8.272
119 tokens/532 turns	Minimising imposition (c9)	22.11	Tag question (c15)	6.672
(X^2=17.92)	Kinship terms (c2)	13.16		
	Affective particles (c1)	6.61		
	Pseudo-agreement (c16)	5.68		
AF>VF (Table 6.10)	**AF>VF** (Table 6.10)		**VF>AF** (Table 6.10)	
272 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	**49.05**	Assertive hedges (c12)	4.21
(X^2=61.91)	Quality hedges (c4)	20.70		
	Pseudo-agreement (c16)	15.17		
	Tag question (c15)	11.98		
	Token agreement (c19)	8.31		
	Affective particles (c1)	8.08		
	Giving or asking for reasons (c18)	8.03		
	Minimising imposition (c9)	4.89		
ROLE	**AC>VC** (Table 6.18)		**VC>AC** (Table 6.18)	
AC>VC (Table 6.18)	Honorifics (c7)	**64.77**	Inclusive "we" (c13)	5.11
222 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	63.12	Relevance hedges (c17)	4.00
(X^2=41.69)	Minimising imposition (c9)	10.67		
	Quality hedges (c4)	7.61		
AS>VS (Table 6.19)	**AS>VS** (Table 6.19)		**VS>AS** (Table 6.19)	
168 tokens/532 turns	Pseudo-agreement (c16)	24.54	Honorifics (c7)	**31.39**
(X^2=31.56)	Affective particles (c1)	11.90	Assertive hedges (c12)	11.08
	Quality hedges (c4)	10.62		
	Seeking agreement (c10)	10.62		
	Minimising imposition (c9)	10.01		
	Kinship terms (c2)	9.32		
GENERATION	**AO>VO** (Table 6.27)		**VO>AO** (Table 6.27)	
AO>VO (Table 6.27)	Minimising imposition (c9)	24.31	Assertive hedges (c12)	6.44
136 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	20.11	Relevance hedges (c17)	6.26
(X^2=21.14)	Affective particles (c1)	16.76	Inclusive "we" (c13)	5.92
	Pseudo-agreement (c16)	8.24		
	Honorifics (c7)	8.10		
	Quality hedges (c4)	6.67		
AY>VY (Table 6.28)	**AY>VY** (Table 6.28)		**VY>AY** (Table 6.28)	
359 tokens/532 turns	Kinship terms (c2)	**80.49**	Assertive hedges (c12)	4.68
(X^2=105.29)	Pseudo-agreement (c16)	20.53		
	Quality hedges (c4)	15.69		
	Token agreement (c19)	14.43		
	Honorifics (c7)	12.88		
	Tag question (c15)	9.71		
	Softening hedges/please (c5)	4.68		
	Seeking agreement (c10)	3.93		

c1...c21 = category numbers; X^2 = values obtained from one-way Chi square tests

Gender

It appears that gender is a more important influence on how politeness is expressed by Vietnamese females in both national contexts; but gender-related politeness behaviour significantly differs between national contexts. In Australia, the overall significant difference between females (AF) and males (AM) is statistically greater than that between VF and VM. On quantitative differences in each category of politeness marker, Honorifics (c7) represent the largest difference between males and females in Vietnam; but the largest

difference across gender for AV is Kinship terms (c2) (see Table 8.1). In rank order of preference, Kinship terms (c2) were ranked 1 by female speakers of VV and by both AV males and females (see Table 7.2).

Role

There is an overall difference between sellers (VS) and customers (VC) living in Vietnam; but in Australia, the difference between sellers (AS) and customers (AC) is not significant. Across the categories of politeness markers, Honorifics (c7) represent the largest area of difference between sellers and customers in both Australia and Vietnam. However, in Vietnam, Honorifics (c7) were used more by sellers (VS) than customers (VC) (see Table 6.14, Chapter 6); whereas in Australia, customers (AC) used Honorifics (c7) more by customers (AC) than sellers (AS) (see Table 6.16, Chapter 6). Kinship terms (c2) were ranked as the most preferred category by sellers in Vietnam and by both AV customers and sellers (see Table 7.2).

Generation

Overall there is a quantitative difference between the generations of VV and AV analysed in Chapter 6. The difference between generations in VV is significant, with the younger speakers (VY) using politeness markers 61 tokens more than the older (VO) speakers in every 532 turns at talk. In Australia, the younger Vietnamese (AY) used politeness markers 283 tokens more than their older (AO) counterparts. This is significant and represents a far greater degree of difference between generations than in Vietnam. Kinship terms (c2) and Honorifics (c7) represent the largest categories of difference in both national contexts, despite variation in the nature of generational difference. In Vietnam, the largest difference between generations is Honorifics (c7); but in Australia, the largest generational difference is in Kinship terms (c2) (see Table 8.1). Kinship terms (c2) were ranked the most preferred category of politeness markers by younger Vietnamese living in Vietnam, and by both generations of Australian Vietnamese (see Table 7.2). From a qualitative point of view, generational differences in linguistic politeness with regard to the usage of Honorifics (c7) and Kinship terms (c2) reflect the respectful politeness (*lễ-phép)* in Vietnamese mentioned earlier in Chapter 3 (p.110), through which it is

expected that the junior shall follow the conventions of *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) towards the senior.

From a cross-national perspective, the overall picture is that all subgroups of AV overall used politeness markers more than those of VV; and these differences are statistically significant. The largest difference is between the younger generations across national contexts, with AY using politeness substantially more than VY; whereas, the difference between the older generations is much smaller. On the usage of each category of politeness markers, the largest category of significant difference is Honorifics (c7) between AM and VM, and between AC and VC. Kinship terms (c2) have the largest significant difference between AF and VF and between AY and VY (see Table 8.1). Accordingly, Kinship terms (c2) and Honorifics (c7) represent the most prominent differences across 21 categories of politeness markers in this research.

My argument on generational difference is twofold. First, it can be said that difference in the younger generations across national contexts has resulted from how politeness is focussed in their education in Australia and Vietnam. As mentioned in Chapter 1, in Vietnam, the Confucian-based politeness subject *Đức dục* (Ethics Education) does not exist in the curriculum of both primary and secondary schools, having been replaced by *Giáo dục công dân* (Civic Education), which covers new content such as Marxism-Leninism and materialism (Huynh 2008; Duong 2009). Second, differences in the older generations resulted from their experience in each national context. In Vietnam, many were subject to communist-oriented re-education. The older Vietnamese in Australia tend to observe Confucian-based cultural values; although these cultural values may have been degenerated to some extent as a result of communist-oriented re-education that many of the older Vietnamese had been subject to before they arrived in Australia.

The major differences between the subgroups within and across national contexts will now be further interpreted and discussed in view of the influences of Communist-oriented, Confucian and Anglo Australian cultural values on the Vietnamese language used by its native speakers in Vietnam and Australia.

8.2. EVIDENCE OF IMPACT FROM SOCIOPOLITICAL CHANGE

The focus of this section is generational difference in linguistic politeness behaviours within Vietnam.

Data was recorded for this research in a historical period after the informants of VV had been subject to sociocultural/political change. The degree of social-contextual influence on VV is assumed to be determined by generational differences in their experiences of two distinct historical periods pre- and post- the Vietnam War. That is, there is a difference between VO and VY in the social-contextual influences resulting from sociopolitical change in Vietnam.

Indeed, as older Vietnamese in Vietnam (VO) are directly subject to sociopolitical change through political strategies of "thought reform" and "re-education", despite "*Doi moi*" or renovation policy mentioned earlier, their Confucian repertoire has decreased to a considerable extent. The younger speakers (VY) have not directly experienced the same political influences as their older counterparts. However, their limited Confucian repertoire has been affected by communist-oriented policy imposed in schools and peer group activities as a consequence of sociopolitical change (Liftson, 1961:14; Duiker, 1995:186). The exclusion of *Đức dục* (Ethics Education) from the curriculum of primary and secondary schools[1] is one example of communist-oriented influence; because from a traditional Confucian point of view, the core value of *Đức dục* is to maintain social harmony in interpersonal relationships (Pham 2008:79). Under the former approach to ethics education all young Vietnamese first started their schooling through *tiên học lễ, hậu học văn* (first learn lễ, literacy comes second). In this proverb, *lễ* refers to the sense of respectfulness in Vietnamese politeness. It denotes the Vietnamese concern of showing proper respect for others, especially superiors (Pham, 2008:103). Under the Communist regime, *Đức dục* has been replaced by *Giáo dục công dân* comprising Marxism-Leninism and materialism, which are taught to young Vietnamese (Huynh, 2008; Duong, 2009). These topics obviously do not help

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[1] Suggested by Lam Phi Hung, Vice Principal of Chau Van Liem High School, Cantho, in a personal interview conducted by the researcher in January 2003.

schoolchildren to develop their traditional Confucian heritage because as Duiker (1995:186) suggests, Marxism-Leninism "combats backward lifestyles" implying traditional cultural values.

Overall, it appears that the influence of Communist-oriented cultural values can assist in accounting for differences in the usage of Kinship terms (c2) and Honorifics (c7) between the two generations of Vietnamese living in Vietnam (see Table 8.2). These categories of politeness markers are pragmatically interrelated as discussed in Chapter 7. Significant differences between older and younger generations in relation to the usage of other categories of politeness markers are also discussed in this chapter.

Table 8.2   Generational differences

Significant differences	VV				AV			
Category of Markers	VO	VY	X^2	Status	AO	AY	X^2	Status
Kinship terms (c2)	49	114	**26.38**	**	104	296	**91.98**	**
Quality hedges (c4)	6			ns	19	34	4.25	*
Honorifics (c7)	3	59	**51.24**	**	14	105	**68.37**	**
Minimising imposition (c9)	17	34	5.59	*	60	29	10.92	**
Seeking agreement (c10)	15	3	7.41	**				ns
Inclusive "we" (c13)	19	7	5.55	*				ns
In-group language (c14)				ns	2	9	5.18	*
Tag question (c15)	34	12	10.52	**				ns
Pseudo-agreement (c16)	30	15	4.95	*				ns
Relevance hedges (c17)				ns	6	20	7.97	**
Token agreement (c19)	11	0	10.61	**				ns
Overall significant difference	VY>VO		**4.65**		AY>AO		**62.00**	
Turns at talk	532				532			

Note: *=significant at p=.05; **=significant at p=.01; ns - not significant

X^2 : Results of 1x2 design chi square tests on each category of politeness markers

From a cross-national perspective, the overall difference between generations of Vietnamese in Australia and Vietnam is significant; but the degree of difference differs strikingly between national contexts (see Table 8.2). The generational difference of AV is over 13 times more than that of VV. Table 8.2 above reflects generational difference across national contexts.

Despite the variation in generational difference, Kinship terms (c2) and Honorifics (c7) represent the largest categories of difference in linguistic politeness behaviour of both VV and AV, with the younger speaker's usage being significantly greater than that of older speaker's in both national contexts (see Table 8.2); but the older generation in Australia also use kinship terms

twice as frequently as the older generation in Vietnam. Regarding the usage of Honorifics (c7), the statistically significant values indicate that generational difference of AV is greater than that of VV. From a within national context perspective, in Australia, the younger speakers (AY) used honorifics as politeness markers 91 turns at talk more frequently than the older (AO); whilst in Vietnam, the generational difference is that the younger speakers (VY) used this category of politeness markers 56 turns at talk more frequently than the older (VO) (on the basis of 532 turns at talk taken by speakers in each national context as a whole).

Based on definitions of politeness in Vietnamese presented in Chapter 3, generational difference in linguistic politeness behaviours is likely to be related to the concept of *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) reflected in speech behaviour, showing deference towards older people or superiors in verbal interactions. This can be further interpreted as suggesting that linguistic politeness is observed by younger speakers more frequently than older speakers in both national contexts, as argued earlier. Accordingly, in terms of politeness, *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) is overall employed (by the younger) more frequently than *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) (by the older). This suggests that both *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) are expressed in relation to the usage of politeness markers defined in this research (see Table 5.1 and definitions in Chapter 5); but there are significant differences as being analysed and discussed in the preceding chapters, with some significances being discussed in this chapter.

The usage of kinship terms and honorifics discussed here reflects the ways of addressing people in relation to culture-specific norms of politeness adopted by Vietnamese native speakers (Clyne 2003:216). This linguistic politeness behaviour is "determined by the speaker's awareness of Confucianist name rectification doctrine" (Clyne 2003:218) as discussed in Chapter 3. However, it appears that the differences cannot be solely accounted for by these culture-specific norms.

8.3. EVIDENCE OF IMPACT FROM LANGUAGE CONTACT

This section focuses on the influences of language contact, which inevitably involve intercultural influences on Australian Vietnamese in their linguistic politeness behaviours. In particular, it highlights differences between the generations of Australian Vietnamese in their linguistic politeness behaviours under the impact of Anglo Australian cultural values, which are best explained with supporting evidence obtained from previous studies.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Australian younger Vietnamese (AY) who use almost triple the amount of kinship terms as their older Australian Vietnamese interlocutors, have been explicitly taught and encouraged to maintain and enhance their Confucian-based cultural values through the support of their families and community language schools in Australia (Rado 1987: 15-16; Le 1993:9-10). In contrast, we know that Confucian-based cultural values had started to deteriorate under the communist regime (Duiker 1995:192; Betz 1977:46-47) in the absence of ongoing training to maintain and enhance the Confucian-based culture repertoire, and that this may have started to impact on the older speakers' adherence to these cultural values before they arrived in Australia. Nevertheless, AO use kinship terms twice as much as their VO counterparts, thereby demonstrating a stronger attachment to Confucian-based values than VO. This contrast in the generational difference of AV together with the preference for communist-oriented cultural values (Nguyen Loc 2006:1) imposed on younger Vietnamese in Vietnam (VY) (Huynh 2008; Duong 2009) is assumed to be the overarching cause of the generational differences in linguistic politeness behaviours within and across national contexts.

As a result of what Smolicz and Secombe (1999:63) call "pluralism of identity", research findings in Australia provide evidence that members of minority ethnic groups, such as Italian and Polish, tend to identify themselves as both Australian and their minority ethnic identities. Members of other minority ethnic groups in Australia, such as Australian Vietnamese (AV), experience a similar situation but younger members (AY) have more opportunities than people in the older generation (AO) to maintain and strengthen or augment the values that mark their dual identity through schools

and folklore ensembles. These values may then be reflected in their native tongue (Smolicz & Secombe 1985:12) with Anglo-Australian values adopted from pragmatic transference. Younger Australian Vietnamese (AY) are sent to Vietnamese language schools (as mentioned in Chapter 1), whilst they have more chances to speak English and adopt Anglo-Australian cultural values at their Australian schools and in their social activities with their English-speaking peer groups (Smolicz & Secombe 1999:64). Consequently, AY's Confucian-based cultural values are highly reflected in linguistic politeness behaviours far more than AO's (see Table 8.2).

In the situation of "pluralism of identity", Australian Vietnamese preserve their ethnic identity by devotedly enhancing Confucian-based cultural values, while conforming to Anglo-Australian culture in their outward actions, learning to adapt to the new way of life in Australia. This is most likely applicable particularly for younger Vietnamese in Australia; whilst in general, Australian Vietnamese tend to maintain close family links, cultural identity and membership of Vietnamese groups. Vietnamese children who are married are encouraged to settle their own families near their parents so they can meet as often as possible (Le 1993:29); and perhaps, this is also a way in which the traditional Confucian heritage is maintained within Vietnamese families living in Australia.

In addition, according to the 2001 Australian Census[2] figures, the proportion of young Vietnamese Australians who completed educational or occupational training was 29% compared with the Australian national average of 46%. This corresponds to Jakubowicz's (2004) report that the rate of university attendance is very high among second generation Australian Vietnamese; whereas, their parents are "more likely to be poorly educated". A more recent report also says that overall, "the overseas-born Australian Vietnamese adult population is better educated than the Australian-born population of the same age" (Jupp et al. 2007:116). Altogether, this suggests that younger Australian Vietnamese (AY) are more involved in Australian English and cultural environments than the older generation of Australian

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[2] Source: ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics), 2001 Census of Population and Housing.

Vietnamese (AO). Accordingly, AY is more influenced by Anglo Australian cultural values than AO.

Older Australian Vietnamese (AO) are less influenced by language and intercultural contact than younger (AY) whilst maintaining their Confucian-based, conservative cultural values. Generally AO did not attend school as regularly as AY because looking after their families was a higher priority (Nguyen 1994:76) including caring for their relatives in their previous home country (Nguyen 1986:70; Viviani 1996:69). Further, residential concentration affects AO more than AY. Based on the Australian 1996 Census, Viviani (1997) reports that Vietnam-born Australians tended to concentrate in the western suburbs of Melbourne and Sydney, basically because they "arrived poor, unskilled and did not speak English". Their resettlement began in cheap accommodation located close to unskilled work providers. Over time, their overseas family members joined them, leading to the increase of residential concentrations, which offered incentives for business and services to grow in a Vietnamese speaking environment. It is in this circle of resettlement that Vietnam-born Australians took advantage of their established concentrations in everyday life activities to meet most of their needs, from professional services to food and other material supplies. Eventually they ended up with regular contact with people from their own cultural background, rather than with Anglo-Saxon Australians. They shop in a Vietnamese speaking market places and buy food from Vietnamese grocers; they see their Vietnamese speaking dentists, doctors, pharmacists, accountants, lawyers, real estate agents and travel agents. Due to their lack of English (Lewins & Ly 1985:30), older Vietnamese tend to seek work in Vietnamese speaking environments, and are normally employed as unskilled workers in factories (Viviani 1980:14-16; Viviani 1997) where Australian English is not always spoken because the unskilled workers often speak English as a second language. This means at work, most older Vietnamese are effectively not influenced by Anglo Australian English and Australian individualist culture due to language barriers (Lewins & Ly, 1985: 30; Tran & Holton 1991:72; Jakubowicz 2004).

In the Australian language contact and cross-cultural environments, some examples of pragmatic transference identified in this study are reflected in the

usage of "Quality hedges" such as *có thể* (could) and *chắc/chắc sẽ* (perhaps/would), in which the speaker does not take full responsibility for the truth of the utterance. In this way, the addressee is invited to share opinions in the conversation (Brown & Levinson 1987: 117, 153, 164), a form of negative politeness that reinforces respect for the individual's right to their own opinions and actions. For example, at a grocery shop in Sydney, a younger female seller talked to her older male customer:

(1) *Anh   có thể giúp mang nó đến bưu điện   Footscray được hông?*
    Elder brother could help bring it to post office Footscray   OK Q.
    "Could you help bringing it to Footscray post office?" (a600).

In another context, the younger female customer talked to an older male customer:

(2) *Mỗi   lần   giặt **chắc   sẽ**   mệt lắm hả?* (a894)
    Each   time   wash perhaps would tired very Q.
    "Would you be very tired of washing it?"

In (1) the request using the interrogative directive "could you" (*có thể*) pragmatically indicates that the addressee has a choice of whether or not to comply. This clearly constitutes the acknowledgement of the addressee's personal autonomy from the Anglo speaker's point of view (Wong 2004:233). In example (2) the interrogative directive "would you" (*chắc sẽ*) serves the same function, reflecting the acknowledgement of the addressee's personal autonomy in Anglo Australian culture. In this research, all the interrogative directives such as "could you" (*có thể*) and "would you" (*chắc sẽ*) are defined as "Quality hedges", which are used by AV more than VV (see Table 8.1), evidently being the result of pragmatic transference. Notably though even the older Australian Vietnamese are using such hedges far more frequently than their equivalent generational counterparts in Vietnam.

From a linguistic politeness perspective, "quality hedges" are used in such a way that the speaker does not take full responsibility for the truth of what has been said (Brown & Levinson 1987:164). In this way, the addressee is given the opportunity to share his/her opinion; hence, personal autonomy is respected, and this is consistent with cultural values that have been influenced by norms in Australian society.

Overall, from a cross-national perspective, through pragmatic transference, AV employ politeness strategies, using markers of "kinship terms", "minimising imposition", "pseudo-agreement", "quality hedges", "affective particles", "honorifics" and "giving or asking reasons" more than VV. Of these, within Australian context, AY used "kinship terms", "honorifics" and "quality hedges" far more than AO. In contrast, only one category - "minimising imposition" was used by AO more than AY (see Table 7.1, Chapter 7). These differences across generations of Australian Vietnamese can be interpreted as resulting from the influence of Anglo Australian cultural values; for example, AY's minimal usage of "minimising imposition" markers in verbal interactions reflects the cultural values that concern not imposing on the individual and suggest that younger Australian Vietnamese are proactive, rather than humble (Pham 2008:83). From a Confucian, filial point of view, children "must not talk back" to their parents (Pham 2008:87). This can be further pragmatically interpreted that younger speakers are expected not to "talk back" to their elders; and in this regard, "talking back" is opposed to "minimising imposition" defined as a politeness marker category. In Australia, a society where more individually oriented cultural values are respected, the politeness strategy of "minimising imposition" is employed, as reflected in the data analysis, with AV using this category more frequently than VV (see Table 6.1, Chapter 6).

In all cases discussed so far, that relate to the usage of "Kinship terms", "Quality hedges", "Honorifics" and "Minimising imposition" as politeness marker categories, AV's usage is larger than VV's, reflecting the expression of politeness either in terms of "not imposing on H" (Brown & Levinson 1987:129) or "making H feel good" (Lakoff 1975:65) as discussed in Chapter 2.

8.4   PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

In addition to the other areas of significant differences mentioned above, this section focuses on the differences in the usage of Kinship terms (c2) and Honorifics (c7), considered in conjunction with the two concepts of politeness in Vietnamese - *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness), discussed in Chapter 3. These are considered to constitute a major and significant contribution to the research in the area of linguistic politeness behaviours among Vietnamese native speakers across both national contexts in Vietnam and Australia. The difference is assumed to have resulted from sociopolitical change in Vietnam in conjunction with language and intercultural contact, as well as other social-contextual factors in Australia, such as limited English and residential concentration. These cross-national factors overarch each other to impact on Australian Vietnamese when they speak their native language.

The usage of kinship terms and honorifics in Vietnamese can be further discussed in relation to the basic concept of human rights that "underlies the fundamental unity of all members of the human family, as well as the recognition of their inherent dignity and diversity" (Have 2006: 340), which is assumed to have been adopted in Anglo Australian culture. Members of the family necessarily assume various roles, which can be expressed by means of kinship terms, such as father, mother, brother, sister, etc. However, the individual autonomy of these members is prioritised differently between Anglo (like Australian) and Asian cultures such as the Vietnamese Confucian-based culture discussed earlier. In Anglo cultures, the concept of individual autonomy is highly regarded; whereas, the concept of collective autonomy is highly regarded in Asian cultures including Vietnamese (Wong 2004:237-39).

In Confucian-based Vietnamese culture, the usage of kinship terms and honorifics reflects the Confucian name rectification doctrine, which emphasises the social role of verbal interactants, that is, that everyone is expected to speak in a proper way to keep in line with the role one holds (Luong 1988:241; 1990:6; Ho 1996: 205). This can be interpreted in terms of social harmony in interpersonal relations essentially embedded as basic values in Confucianism

(Pham 2008:79). In addition, as discussed in Chapter 7, many kinship terms of seniority serve honorific functions in Vietnamese. In this sense, Kinship terms (c2) and Honorifics (c7) are pragmatically related to each other in politeness expressions addressing superiors.

The in-depth analysis of Kinship terms (c2) reflected in Table 7.4 (see Chapter 7), shows there is a large usage of *con* (child), *chú* (junior uncle), *cô* (auntie) and *anh* (elder-brother), which are all used more by Australian Vietnamese (AV) than Vietnamese living in Vietnam (VV). In addition, two honorific particles *dạ* and *dà* (lit. polite Yes) have been identified from the data as being consistently used by AV more than VV in their politeness strategies. These cross-national differences might well be attributed to contextual influence and pragmatic transference from Australian English into Vietnamese. The usage of kinship terms *con* (child), *chú* (junior uncle), *cô* (auntie) and *anh* (elder brother) and honorific particles *dạ* and *dà* (lit. polite Yes) reflect Confucian-based cultural values, which have been maintained and but also then further enhanced by AV.

As discussed in Chapter 7, *dạ* and *dà* are interchangeable and commonly used to express politeness in Vietnamese. The in-depth analysis of these honorific particles suggests that overall *dạ* has been used more than *dà* quantitatively. From a Vietnamese native speaker's point of view, the difference between *dạ* and *dà* is related to context and speech situation, which spontaneously evoke the usage of either lexical form in the utterance.

These honorific particles do not serve communicative function in the utterances; but they represent an important "polite" element to be inserted at the beginning of every utterance, as Vietnamese children are taught early (Pham, 2008:103).

In Australia, younger Vietnamese use honorific particles far more frequently (over 7 times more) than their older counterparts (see Table 8.2). This significant difference reflect the strategy of *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) in terms of a younger speaker addressing senior addressees. For example, *dạ* or *dà*, can be pragmatically understood as "please", a politeness routine in

English (Haugh (2007: 299). This occurred in response to an older speaker by a younger Vietnamese female seller recorded in an open market in Melbourne:

(3) **Dạ**, *hai ký hơn một tí đó* **con** *lấy 5 đô thôi* **chú** (a441)
Hon.. two kilos more   a bit   Prt child take 5 dollars Prt uncle
"It is little bit more than two kilos; five dollars only, Sir"

In (3) the honorific particle *dạ* (lit. polite Yes) serves to strengthen the usage of *con* (lit. child) to make the utterance complete in the expression of politeness towards senior addressees. This involves *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) as the speaker is a younger person addressing an older person. A senior kinship term is used to support the honorific particle in promoting the expression of politeness.

All strategies of *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) aim to minimize the imposition on H, and in this sense, it might also reflect pragmatic transference from the Anglo Australian culture. Further examples reflecting pragmatic transference follow. In a fruit market, a younger female seller spoke to an older male customer:

(4) **Dạ**, *cải tươi mà ngon* **Chú** *!* (a547)
HON   cabbage fresh but delicious uncle
"Yes Sir, the cabbage is fresh and delicious!"

From a Vietnamese Confucian cultural perspective, in (3) and (4), the level of politeness would be reduced to some extent if either the honorific particle or kinship term were not used. It is notable that, in (3) the kinship term *con* (child) has a grammatical function as a first-person referent; but in (4) the kinship term *chú* (lit. junior uncle) has no grammatical function and serves as an honorific function, similar to "Sir" in English. The English gloss "junior uncle" for *chú* should not be wrongly interpreted as a contradiction to its function as a senior kinship term, which instead refers senior status in relation to the speaker; whereas, "junior uncle" refers to a lower rank in the kinship hierarchy.

The strategy of *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) is considered to be employed by speakers of senior status addressing people with lower status or whose status is considered equal to the speakers, such as teachers addressing their students or their colleagues. This politeness strategy is also usually employed in addressing public audience, regardless of status relation. The most distinctive evidence of *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) politeness strategy is identified from the usage of kinship terms in first-person single references (1PSR). For example, in a service encounter, an older female seller spoke to her younger female customer:

(5)　*Của ổng cho chớ **cô**　　　　không có　biết đâu*　　(a838)
　　　 Of　him give but　auntie [1PSR]　NEG　have know PRT
　　　 "It has been given by him, I do not know about it"

The usage of *cô* (auntie) in (5) is considered as in a politeness strategy of *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) because in a non-politeness utterance alternatives of 1PSR can be used in Vietnamese such as non-kinship first-person referents – *tao* or *tôi* ("I") (see 3.1.2). In (5) *cô* (auntie) as a kinship term of seniority was used; but in practice, the same politeness strategy (of *lịch sự* - strategic politeness) is often employed where H can be judged to be older than S (specially in a first meeting). For example, an older male seller spoke to a younger customer:

(6)　*Anh　　　　　làm　　　hôn thú　　　　　trước*　　(a13)
　　　 Elder-brother　make　　marriage certificate　before
　　　 "You must have marriage certificate first"

As a matter of politeness (in this case strategic politeness) Vietnamese speakers always sacrifice their seniority status in order to make their junior addressees "feel good" in verbal interactions. In this way, the strategy of "positive politeness" is achieved.

From a cross-national perspective, Australian Vietnamese are overall more linguistically polite than Vietnamese in Vietnam and this appears to be due to

the two-way overarching effects in each context, most strongly reflected in generational differences. On the one hand, the Vietnamese in Vietnam (VV) are subject to sociopolitical change and change in the educational system; especially with the exclusion of *Đức dục* (Ethics Education) from the school curriculum as mentioned earlier. This might be the reason for VV moving away from Confucian cultural values, reflecting the difference in linguistic politeness behaviours across national contexts identified in this research.

On the other hand, Australian Vietnamese (AV) are exposed to the influence of Anglo cultural values through pragmatic transference in the usage of their native language; but the degree of Anglo cultural influence differs between the generations, and is mediated by the strong commitment in the diasporic context to preserving traditional values and showing respect. This however, does not exclude possible effects of irregular misapplication that AV strived consciously to show the politeness behaviour in their careful conversation to ensure it is appropriate in the context of Anglo cultural values, although it may not actually occur in their everyday native linguistic norms. This irregular misapplication might have occurred similar to what Labov (1972:126) describes as "hypercorrection" in his study on the contextual styles of the lower-middle-class speakers, who surpass the highest-status group in using "the forms considered correct and appropriate for formal styles". Accordingly, the "hypercorrection" of AV can be interpreted in the sense that speakers of AV strive to adopt the stereotype of Anglo-Australian cultural values through pragmatic transference into Vietnamese spoken by its native speakers in Australia. The adoption of Anglo-Australian cultural values by AV might exceed what actually is expected in relation to Anglo-Australian and Confucian-based cultural values and may partly account for the differences in linguistic politeness behaviour across the national contexts.

Despite findings of significant difference in linguistic politeness behaviours of Vietnamese native speakers across the national contexts, there are some limitations and shortcomings in this research that need to be acknowledged and that impact on the capacity to interpret the speakers' utterances and their intentions.

8.5   LIMITATIONS AND SHORTCOMINGS

The limitations and shortcomings are partly due to the scale of the research and the nature of the data and the possibilities this provides for its interpretation.

(1) The discussion of the effects of Confucian-based cultural values and Anglo Australian cultural values relies heavily on interpolation from the findings of other studies. Ideally, this interpretation should be supported with additional empirical evidence by undertaking further fieldwork with speakers in each context to unpack further, from their perspectives, the reasons for the choices they are making. For example, it would be beneficial in each context to collect further data on usage of kinship terms and honorifics to triangulate the interpretation that has been made from the current data corpora by interviewing speakers about the reasons for their choices of strategies and politeness markers and by posing specific scenarios, for example, through the use of a discourse completion task, to evaluate hypotheses derived from the speech corpora about how the two systems of cultural values account for the transnational variation. Whilst it was planned initially to do some additional fieldwork to extend this aspect of the analysis, it was not possible because of time and financial constraints within the current project.

A further advantage of having access to additional data, including historical material, would be that it would assist in unpacking the extent to which other socioeconomic, cultural and historic factors have contributed to the observed difference in usage across the two national contexts.

(2) Generational differences in linguistic politeness behaviour have been presented in this research without longitudinal data, meaning that inferences have had to be drawn from synchronic data about how speech patterns have changed over time. The use of generation as a proxy for the synchronous variation in language is inevitably fraught in that whilst there may be trends in the nature and extent of changes in speech style dependent on age these are not necessarily uniform across speakers. Regrettably, it was not possible to locate any comparable data source indicative of speech in service encounters in the period around 1975 for either national context. In addition, it proved to be

difficult to locate many authoritative linguistic sources about the expression of politeness in Vietnamese written in this period. This means that the assumptions about diachronic change in linguistic usage in each context have not been able to be confirmed historically as robustly as would have been hoped from other data sources. However, it is hoped that this study provides a baseline for ongoing exploration of how the expression of politeness in Vietnamese is evolving transnationally in different Vietnamese speaking contexts.

(3) Due to the nature of data corpora as naturalistic data collected in comparable, but distinct, national contexts, there are some differences in the distribution of actual turns at talk in the two national corpora (see Table 4.5 in Chapter 4) in relation to the three intersecting variables of gender, role and generation. It is important to acknowledge that these differences in balance of subgroups contributing turns to the corpora may have impacted on the patterns observed in politeness behaviours. The approach taken to analysis to account for these differences by adjusting to generate "equivalent" data based on the mean of the actual numbers of turns taken on a variable by variable basis may not have been statistically sophisticated enough to fully account for the interaction of these variables within the corpora. For example, among 8 subgroups of participants - older male customers (1), younger male customers (2), older female customers (3), younger female customers (4), older male sellers (5), younger male sellers (6), older female sellers (7) and younger female sellers (8), AV's corpus contains a clearly higher proportion of turns than VV's in 4 subgroups (1, 4, 5 and 7); whilst VV has a clearly higher proportion of turns than AV for two subgroups (3 and 8). This imbalance of proportionate participation at the level of the interaction of the three variables appears to reflect socioeconomic differences within the respective communities. For example, in Australia it is more common for older generation Vietnamese background people to be participating in the labour market as stallholders/shop assistants than it is in Vietnam, whereas in Vietnam younger females are more commonly employed as stallholders/shop assistants. The nature of the data and data corpus meant that it was not possible to fully explore statistically the

impact of these interactions in relation to the overall pattern of differences between the national contexts.

8.6   SIGNIFICANCE TO SOCIETY

Despite limitations and shortcomings presented above, this research has provided some significant insights into how language usage varies transnationally and how cultural value systems and changes in their influence may be impacting on this variation.

In relation to language and intercultural contact, there are different linguistic norms which may be pragmatically transferred from Australian English into Vietnamese as well as heightened expression of "respectful politeness" to signify acknowledgement of age and status differentials. This significance of the research findings is reflected in the usage of Kinship terms (c2) and Honorifics (c7) as politeness markers in terms of the most preference (see Tables 7.2 and 8.2). The significance features are interpreted in terms of the most preference decided by 12 subgroups of three independent variables (gender, role and generation). Accordingly, from a cross-national perspective, the significance features achieved by AV in their politeness strategies involve the usage of kinship terms and honorifics. For example, in service encounters, a younger female seller addressed her older customers:

(7)   *Dà,*   *cám ơn   cô   chú !*   (a598)
      HON.   thank   auntie,   uncle
      "Yes, thank you Sir, Madam"

Although in this utterance (7), senior kinship terms *cô* (auntie) and *chú* (uncle) were used, they could be considered equivalent to English incuding Anglo-Australian honorifics such as "Sir" and "Madam" (Bayyurt & Bayraktaroglu 2001:216) as a result of pragmatic transference.

From a politeness perspective, the usage of kinship terms and honorifics in Vietnamese were discussed at length in the preceding chapters. The usage of

kinship terms was particularly discussed in conjunction with the complexities in the Vietnamese person reference system (see 3.1.1). Kinship terms and honorifics represent a landmark in Vietnamese linguistic politeness that should be specially noticed here. Whilst kinship terms of seniority such as *cô* (auntie) *bác* (uncle), *anh* (elder brother) *chị* (elder sister), can be used for reference of respect similar to the usage of "Sir" and "Madam" mentioned earlier, honorifics play a significant role to enhance achievement of politeness strategies in various contexts. For example, the polite particle (*thưa*), apart from its polite reference to mean "tell", in address, this particle can go with all the kinship terms of seniority to accomplish perfect politeness strategies in Vietnamese; especially in public formal situations, in which a formal form of address – *quí vị* (ladies and gentlemen) is used. It would be even a higher level of politeness if the polite form of address *kính thưa* (respectfully humble) (Do 1994 and Thompson 1987) was used instead of *thưa* (polite particle) alone. It is notable that in formal public situation, non-kinship term *tôi* ("I") is often used for self reference (1PSR), regardless of generational difference between the speaker and the audience.

In addition, the most obvious examples of pragmatic transference, are the usage of *dạ* or *dà* (lit. polite "yes") which is similar to "please" (Haugh 2007: 299) and "thank you" or "yes please", which have been noted by Clyne as early as in 1982 (Clyne 1982: 105) as having penetrated into community languages in Australia. This politeness strategy may have been adopted in the community languages in the language contact environments more substantially than it is in their home countries. This prominent phenomenon of pragmatic transference may have effectively arrived from Australian English, but also may reflect the tendency of overcompensation produced by speakers in language contact environments such Australian Vietnamese to compensate the feeling of inferiority as members of a minority group in Australia.

The term "overcompensation" is used here to refer to a psychological trait as per the approach adopted by American sociologist, Willer (2005) in exploring how men who feel that their masculinity is being challenged modify speech behaviours intended to protect the masculine identity they feel is under threat. This process involves striving for dominance or self-esteem through emphasis

of certain linguistic traits. It is not dissimilar to what has been observed in situations of language contact between speakers of different language varieties in language contact environments where speakers of a particular variety feel insecure, such as observed by Adler (1980: 108) in relation to speakers of "Great" Russian in a context that this variety is competing with many other varieties of the Russian language. This can be considered as an additional rational factor, apart from the potential effect of pragmatic transference from Anglo-Australian cultural values, to interpret why Australian Vietnamese are more overall polite than their counterparts in Vietnam.

The new theoretical knowledge provided by this research relates to two distinctive concepts of politeness in Vietnamese, the complexity in the person reference system and the usage of Vietnamese kinship terms in Vietnamese, as discussed in Chapter 3 and further illustrated and discussed in Chapter 7. These concepts were particularly discussed in terms of *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness), which are significantly illustrated in the usage of kinship terms and honorifics as politeness markers. For example, junior kinship terms such as *con* (child), *cháu* (grandchild), *em* younger sister/, younger brother, are used by younger speakers in addressing older people with support of honorics such as *dạ* (polite yes), *thưa* (polite particle) that enhance the politeness values embedded in the Confucian-based traditions. The usage of kinship terms is also contributory to the values of *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) in different contexts and situations. Both *lễ phép* (respectful politeness) and *lịch sự* (strategic politeness) are considered as positive politeness in terms of making the addressee "feel good" in an utterance.

Despite considerable difficulty in the direct application of the knowledge generated from this research to enhancing intercultural communication with Australian English speakers, the new theoretical knowledge provided by this research is definitely useful at a conceptual level. Finally, with the theoretical knowledge provided by this research, and the limitations and shortcomings presented above, future studies can be carried out to contribute to a growing body of knowledge from an academic perspective. For example, further investigations can be carried out to examine how Vietnamese kinship terms and honorifics differ from politeness forms of address in Australian English. A further

study can also focus on what level of difference there is in the usage of the formal form of address – *quí vị* (ladies and gentlemen) and the kinship terms of seniority recently mentioned. The hypothesis of difference to be further investigated for example, can be the size of audience or the nature of speech situation. Such investigations may help us further in understanding variation that results from the differential impact of Confucian-based and Anglo-Australian cultural values. This understanding can help in bringing people from the two cultural backgrounds into greater harmony and reduce the potential for interethnic or intercultural miscommunication.

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Appendix 1 - Group VV: Sample transcribed data recorded in Vietnam

Part of data recorded at 19 different settings, with a total of 1064 turns of talk and 807 politeness markers counted.

Setting 1: At a clothing shop in Cantho, Vietnam (Tape 1 VN, side A)

Turn	Speaker	Transcribed Recordings
v1	CF35	*tay dài dữ-trời!* arm long PRT "Goodness, what the long sleeves !"
v2	CM60	*cái nầy **mới** mát **nè*** CLA this PRT cool PRT "this one is cool to wear!"
v3	CF50	***thì** đó nó đang như vầy, kiểu tay dài **vậy-thôi*** then there it current as such, style sleeve long PRT "that's it, then. It is just like that. It is the long sleeve style, that's all"
v4	CF35	***chị** lấy mấy kiểu ở trong thử coi **chị*** elder-sister take PLU styles at inside try see elder sister "take those ones inside for me to see"
v5	CF50	*kiểu đang định thử , có chỗ thử **nè*** style current intend try have place try PRT "the style I am intending to try on, there is the trial room here"
v6	CF35	*kiểu nầy, Ý₁ thử **đi*** style this, Auntie try PRT "try this on, Auntie Nhan"
v7	CF50	*đẹp **à-nghen**, Ý cũng có cái nơ ở nhà nữa **kìa*** beautiful PRT Auntie also have CLA bowtie at home also PRT "It's beautiful. I also have a bowrie at home"
v8	SF40	***chị** lựa áo dây hôn? **em** lấy ra cho **chị** lựa* elder sister choose jacket stripe Q. younger sister take out for eldersister choose "Do you like striped jacket ? I'll take them out for yo`u to choose"
v9	CF35	*áo dây hả?* jacket stripe Q. "Is it striped jacket?"
v10	CF50	*à, **chị** thích áo dây, lấy áo dây **đi*** yeah, elder sister like jacket stripe, take jacket stripe PRT "yes, I like striped jacket, take it out"
v11	CF50	*cái gì? có cái nơ mặc coi sao được! mà tay dài mệt **quá hà*** what? have CLA bowtie wear see how OK but sleeve long weary PRT "how can it look nice to wear, and the long sleeve looks too weary"
v12	SF50	*cái nầy dây.., cái nầy dây cũng bự, chớ đâu có nhỏ* one this stripe..., CLA this stripe also big, but NEG have small "this stripe is also big; it's not small"
v13	CF35	*dây nhỏ **rồi*** stripe small PRT "the stripe is already too small"
v14	SF40	***thì** đó có mấy loại **vậy*** PRT there have PLU types PRT "that's all the types we have"
v15	CF50	*nhưng mà cái màu nó khác, nó chỏi, bây-giờ nó khớp **rồi**, nó cùng tông **rồi** (1)* but Cla colour it different, it contradicts, now it match PRT, it same base PRT "but the colour is different; it contradicts, now it matches already, it has the same colour base already"

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¹   A popular kinship term transcribed from a Chinese dialect in the Southern region of Vietnam

v16	CF50	*Hằng à! lấy cái củn không Hằng?* Hang PRT take CLA skirt Q. Hang? "Hang, are you taking the skirt, Hang?"
v17	CF35	***dạ, con* *không lấy củn* HON child NEG take skirt "No (thanks), I am not taking the skirt"
v18	CF50	***trời !*** *đẹp **mà*** *hổng lấy **hả?** (1)* God beautiful PRT NEG take Q. 'God, it's so beautiful, you don't you take it, do you?''
v19	CF50	*(..) nó mắc **quá hà** !* it dear very PRT "it is really too dear!"
v20	SF40	***dì biết sao hôn,*** *mấy đồ nầy của Hồng Kông* auntie know how NEG, PLU things these of Hong Kong "aunie, you know why, these garments are orted from Hong Kong"
v21	CF35	***ủa*** *còn cái quần hồi nãy bao nhiêu vậy **chị**?* INTJ about CLA pants time past how much so elder sister? "Ohh, how much is the pants I have just seen?"
v22	SF40	***dạ*** *cái quần nào?* HON CLA pants which? "Which pants (Madam)?"
v23	CM60	*còn cái áo, cái áo đang mặc hả?* about CLA dress, CLA dress currently wear Q. "Is the dress being currently worne?"
v24	SF40	*cái áo đang mặc **đó** hai (.) hai trăm ba* CLA dress currently wear PRT two two hundred three "the dress you are waering is two hundred and thirty"
v25	CM60	***hai trăm ba*** two hundred thirty 'two hundred and thirty'
v26	CF50	*hai trăm ba với (.) với ba trăm hả? là năm trăm ba, năm trăm ba* two hundred and thee hundred Q. COPU. five hundred thirty, five hundred thirty "two hundred and thirty with three hundred, isn't it? That is five hundred and thirty, five hundred and thirty"
v27	CM60	*còn đồ nầy hàng gì?* about garments these goods what 'how about these? Where do they com from?''
v28	SF40	*Hồng Kông* Hong Kong
v29	CM60	*(.) Hồng Kông phải rẻ **chớ**!* Hong Kong must cheap PRT "Hong Kong's goods must be cheap, aren't they?"
v30	SF50	*hàng Pháp thì nó là mấy triệu **lận*** fabrics French then they COPU PLU millions PRT "French fabrics is expensive up to several millions"
v31	CM60	***vậy đó hả?*** so that Q. "is that so?"

Appendix 2 - Group AV: Sample transcribed data recorded in Australia

Part of data recorded at 16 different settings, with a total of 1064 turns of talk and 1212 politeness markers counted.

Setting 1:   At an immigration service office in Melbourne, Australia (Tape 1 AU, side A)

Turn	Speaker	Transcribed Recordings
a1	SM60	*song hôn (..) song hôn ở tù 6 năm.* bigamy … bigamy imprisoned 6 years "bigamy is likely to be imprisoned for 6 years"
a2	CM48	*thì bây giờ còn hai đứa con* then, now about two children' "then, now is about your two children"
a3	SM60	*bây giờ bả ly dị đây **rồi** !* now she divorced here already 'now she has divorced here already'
a4	CM48	*bả ly dị ở đây **rồi mà**!* She divorced here already PRT 'she has divorced here already'
a5	SM60	*ừ, đem hôn thú lại đây tôi làm giấy li dị cho bả (…)* yes bring marriage certificate here I make paper divorce for Mrs "yes, bring your marriage certificate here so that I can apply for divorce for you"
a6	CM48	*được phải hông?* OK Q> 'feasible is it?'
a7	SM60	*được* OK feasible
a8	CM48	***vậy** đem cái giấy (...)* so bring CLA paper "so bring the certificate…"
a9	SM60	*hôn thú* 'divorce certificate'
a10	CM48	*hôn thú thì hổng có đây* marriage certificate then NEG have here "I don't have marriage certificate"
a11	SM60	***vậy** biết ngày cưới hông?* So know date marriage Q "so, do you know the date of your marriage?"
a12	CM48	*tôi muốn làm cho đứa con tôi có giấy khai sanh* I want make for CLA child my have paper report birth 'I want to make birth certificates for my children'
a13	SM60	*anh làm hôn thú trước* elder brother make marriage certificate first "you have to obtain the marriage certicate first"
a14	CM48	*tôi làm ban đêm, (..) bữa nay nghỉ (...) để tuần sau **rồi chắc** phải làm gấp giùm (1)* I work nightshift today off let week after then perhaps must do urgent help "I work nightshift, today is off. Next week OK, but would you please do it urgently"
a15	SM60	*với lại tôi phỏng vấn để làm giấy tờ hôn thú* 'also I need to conduct an interview for marriage certificate'
a16	CM48	*ờ, **anh** làm **đi**, tôi giao hết cho **anh**, làm sao cho nó hoàn chỉnh **thôi*** yes, elder brother do PRT I give all for elder brother do how for it complete PRT

		'Yeah, please do it. I give you all. Do whatever you can to ensure it is completed"
a17	SM60	*ờ, **được rồi*** yes, OK already "yeah, it'll be OK"
a18	CM48	*tôi không muốn cho con nó bị rắc rối* I NEG want for child 3PSR suffer trouble "I don't want my children to be in trouble"
a19	SM60	*nhưng vợ quan trọng hơn! (cười)* but wife important more "but wife is more ortant!" (laugh)
a20	CM58	*Khâu đó hổng muốn nói **à**!* CLA that NEG want speak Q. 'you don't want to talk about it, do you?'"
a21	CM48	*nhưng làm hôn thú có phải vô nhà thờ không?* But make marriage certificate have must enter church Q. "but do I have to go to the church to make the marriage certificate?"
a22	SM60	*hông, tôi ký ở đây được* no, I sign here OK 'no, I 'll sign it here OK'
a23	CM58	*làm cái đó lâu hông? (...) Tới chừng một tiếng đồng hồ làm được mà hả?* do it long Q. up about one hour do OK Q. "does it take long time to complete the procedure? Is about one enough?'"
a24	SM60	*được, nửa tiếng đồng hồ làm **được rồi*** OK half hour do OK already 'OK, it needs only about half an hour"
a25	CM58	*ờ **vậy thì** tôi đi trước (..) tôi lấy xe ! Rồi **cám ơn** !* yes, so I go first I take car then, thank you "yes, so I am leaving now to take my car"
a26	CM48	***có thể** ngày mai **đó**!* Possible tomorrow PRT 'possibly it will be tomorrow'
a27	SM60	***dạ**, hổng sao,* HON. NEG how "yes, it's OK"
a28	SM60	***rồi** bây-giờ (…) hổm-rày có mua-sắm gì chung chưa **con***? then now days past have buy what common yet child "then, so far do you have bought anything together?"
a29	CF25	*chưa-có mua-sắm gì nhưng-mà đứng tên(..)* yet have buy what but stand name "We have not yet bough anything together but have used both names"
a30	SM60	*băng chung?* bank together 'have you had a joint bank account?"
a31	CF25	*thuê nhà **nè** ! nhà băng với (..) tiền điện tiền nước thì (..)* rent house PRT bank with mony electricity money water then 'we have had our names in house renting documents, joint bank account, electricity and water bills'
a32	SM60	***thôi, được rồi** (.) bây giờ **con** hẹn ngày trở lại với chồng **con** (..) với hai người **chứng** PRT OK now child promise date return with husband child, with two witnesses "OK, now let's make appointnment for you to come back with your husband and two witness"
a33	CF25	*Có cần hai người chứng hông?* Have need two witnesses Q. "do we need two witnesses?"