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Thesis for the Degree of Master of Arts

A Study On Requests and Politeness in Myanmar Language



by

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August 2018

A Study On Requests and Politeness in Myanmar Language

(마얀마어의 공손한 요청 표현에 대한 연구)

Advisor: Prof. Jee Won Hahn



by
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ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out how Myanmar people use polite language in daily life and investigate the use of request strategies under the factors of social distance status and age focusing on the use of request head acts strategies proposed by Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989). Many Myanmar conversations in different domains are noted and some examples are taken from the Myanmar popular novels. Then, the questionnaires are delivered to collect the data for analysis to twenty Myanmar native speakers. The data were elicited through the writing discourse completion test (DCT) adapted from the CCSARP project on request (Blum-Kulka, et al. 1989). Generally as a result, conventional indirect strategy (CI) is the most preference strategy and followed by the direct request (D) and the non-conventional indirect request strategy (NCI) respectively. Moreover, the result of the study shows that the factors of social distance status and age more and less affect which request strategy are chosen for producing a polite request by Myanmar.

미얀마어의 공손한 요청 표현에 대한 연구

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초록

본 연구는 미얀마 사람들이 공손 표현을 일상생활에서 어떻게 사용하는지 관찰하고 블럼 쿨카(Blum-Kulka)가 제시한 요청 전략(request head act strategies)을 중심으로 사회적 거리와 나이에 따른 요청 전략의 양상을 조사한다. 연구 자료는 서로 다른 관계에 있는 미얀마인의 대화 기록과 인기 있는 미얀마 소설 일부이다. 20명의 미얀마 사람에게 설문조사를 하여 자료를 수집하고 분석했다. 자료는 블럼 쿨카(1989)가 요청에 관해 연구한 CCSARP 프로젝트에서 채택된 담화 완료 테스트(DCT)를 통해 추출된 것이다. 분석 결과 미얀마인이 가장 선호하는 전략은 전통적인 간접 전략(CI)이며 직접 요청(DI)과 비전통적인 간접 요청 전략(NCI)이 각각 뒤를 이었다. 또한, 미얀마인이 요청 전략을 선택할 때 공손한 요청을 위해 사회적 거리와 나이가 고려되는 것으로 나타났다.

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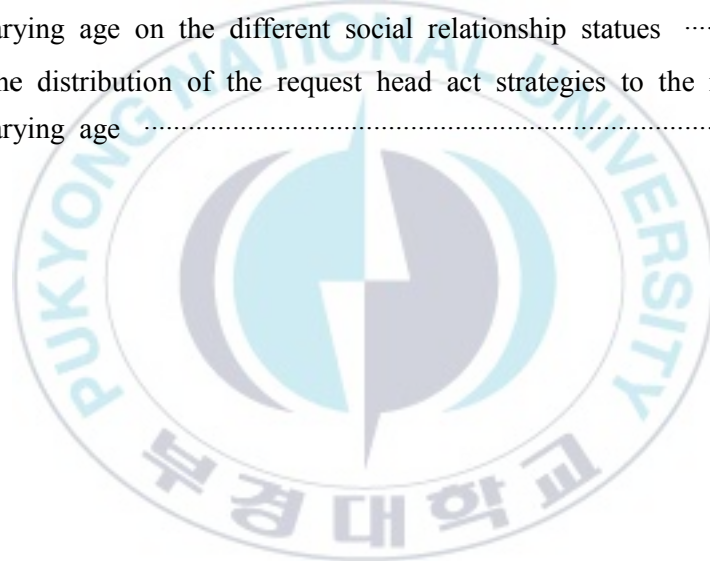


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I . INTRODUCTION

1.1 Language, Politeness and Request

People talk to exchange thoughts and information, have social interaction and sometimes for pleasure. People use language principally as a tool of communication as well as a “tool to do things” and the ability to use language “make us uniquely human” (Finegan, 1999:296). With the rapid development of globalization, communication is more and more important part in human life. Since the time people wake up in the morning till the time they lie down to sleep at night, they use language for various purpose. People use language to accomplish many things. People say things in alternative ways, either directly or indirectly to accomplish social and communicative goals. In daily social interaction, language can be used politely or otherwise by its speakers. The speakers choose words, utterances, tone together with paralinguistic features such as facial expressions and body movements in communicating with others. In performing a speech act, one can be seen as being polite or not and the choice of polite language usage shows the speaker’s feeling towards the other and his awareness of social norms and customs.

According to Wardhaugh (1998:278), “Politeness is a very important principle in language use and we must consider others’ feelings”. In other words, politeness is generally consideration for the other person according to the expected norms of that particular culture. The form of consideration to the other may be expressed differently in different cultures. This depends on the accepted norms of polite behaviour of the particular culture. Regardless of the culture, politeness has a number of universally common goals: to save face, to avoid conflict, to ensure cooperative interaction and to show deference (Brown and Levison 1987; Holtgraves and and Yang 1990).

According to Myanmar Dictionary (1993), the term ‘politeness’ is defined as

inclusive of these concepts: gentle manner, customs observed by individuals and social groups, ethics (moral principles, rules of conduct) and the art of speaking, acting, behaving sensibly. Depending on the languages and different cultures, the words or phrases that is used to be polite in language are different. It is believed that each country has its own distinctive features which learners should be paid much attention to. If the learners do not prepared for knowledge about one culture in which lots of misunderstandings will involve. Obviously cultural understandings benefit the interlocutors to become successful in communication. Making request is a good example and important in daily interaction.

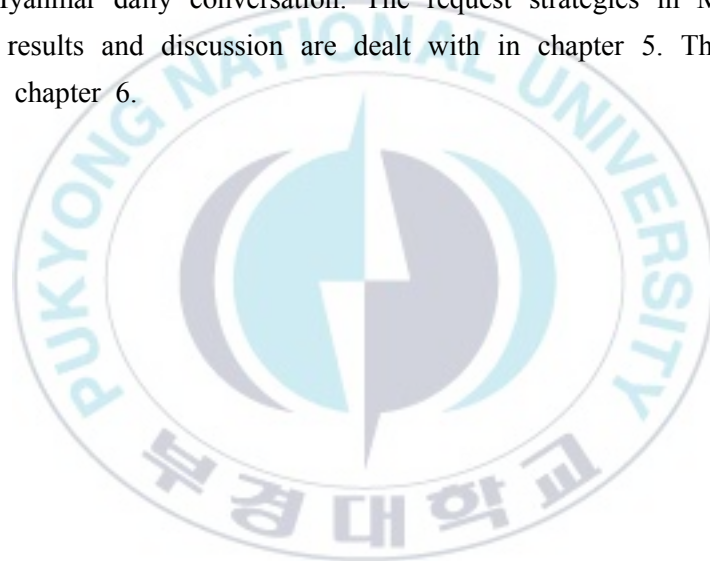
Requests are one type of the linguistics speech act and according to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), it is “rich in both linguistic repertoires an the social meanings attaching to their use”. Many works on request head acts strategies in the form of academic research have been done in the western countries, asian countries and some ASEAN countries. Like other languages, the Myanmar language has polite language and how Myanmar people produce a polite request in daily interaction will be expressed in this study.

1.2 Goals of the Current Study

Like the other languages which has abundant polite usages and honorific terms, the Myanmar language possesses a great deal of polite norms and polite language usages and to investigate request strategies employed by Myanmar. The objectives of this study are, therefore, to put Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989) to the Myanmar language and to investigate which request strategies commonly used by Myanmar people their daily interactions. It is obvious that the title of this thesis call for not only familiarly in both the Myanmar and English language but also the social and cultural aspects of the speaker of these two languages. In addition, it is hoped that this study will contribute to cross-culture understanding and serve as a helpful tool for second language learners of Myanmar language.

1.3 Organization of the Thesis

There are six chapters in the study. Chapter 1 is the introduction, and it explains why and how people want to choose the more favourable choice of polite language usage in request. The objectives and the organization of the dissertation are also presented in this chapter. Chapter 2 provides an overview of literature on the studies and linguistic phenomena related to politeness and request. It also presents the review of some theories on politeness as well as the previous research on politeness and requests. In chapter 3, the methodology used in the data collection is presented. Chapter 4 is about politeness request usage in Myanmar daily conversation. The request strategies in Myanmar and consequent results and discussion are dealt with in chapter 5. The conclusion appears in chapter 6.



II . LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of how the utterances have meaning in situation. It is the study of meaning in relation to speech situation. A lot of definitions of the term ‘pragmatics’ are found in Levinson’s Pragmatics (1983), some of which are noteworthy for the present study are as follows.

“Pragmatics is the study of language usage.”

(Levinson, 1983:5)

“Pragmatics is the study of those relations between language and context that are grammaticalized, or encoded in structure of a language.”

(Levinson, 1983:9)

“Pragmatics is the study of the ability of language users to pair sentences with the contexts in which they would be appropriate.”

(Levinson, 1983:24)

All the definitions focus on the language use and the different underlying meaning of the utterances spoken in different situations and contexts.

Yule (1996) explains pragmatics in a number of ways and each is noteworthy since my study needs the understanding of the utterance meaning in various contexts. His emphasis is on the point that more has been communicated than was said.

“Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader).”

“Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning.”

“Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning.”

’(George Yule, 1996:3)

Richards, et al (1992:284) define pragmatics as the study of the use of language in communication, particularly the relationships between sentences and contexts and situations in which they are used.

Pragmatics includes the study of

- a. how the interpretation and use of utterances depend on knowledge of the real world
- b. how speakers use and understand Speech Acts
- c. how the structure of sentences is influenced by the relationship between the speaker and the hearer.

Pragmatics is, therefore, sometimes contrasted with semantics, which deals with meaning without reference to the users and communicative functions of sentences. Leech (1983) defines pragmatics in the preface of his book *Principles of Pragmatics* as “the study of how language is used in communication.” Another interesting definition is proposed by Jacob L Mey (2001:1) who explains the subject from a social point of view.

“Pragmatics, as the study of the way humans use their language in communication, bases itself on a study of those premise and determines how they affect, and effectualize, human language use. Hence: Pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society.”

With reference to those definitions stated above, it is obvious that pragmatics is a very interesting aspect of studying the spoken forms of a particular

language and thus it calls for many empirical research works under that rubric.

Pragmatics was introduced to Myanmar language studies and the researcher found some articles and books on pragmatics in Myanmar. Khin Aye (2004) includes this area of study in his book, “အတ္ထုပ္ပတ္တိဒီဇိုင်း”, meaning “An Introduction to Semantics”. In the chapter, “အတ္ထုပ္ပတ္တိမှ အသုံးချအတ္ထုပ္ပတ္တိသို့”, meaning “From Semantics to Pragmatics”, the author explains the rubric of study and many of the sub-topic under the topic. He says that it is difficult to limit the scope of the study of pragmatics since it studies the implied meaning of the utterances and how it affects the addressee. He also explains that pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning in context as well as other social variables which are to be considered in the particular social context such as social distance between the interactants. Thus, it can be concluded here that pragmatics has been introduced to language study in Myanmar.

2.2 The Role of Politeness in Pragmatics

Leech noted that politeness is an important missing link between the cooperative principle of how to relate sense to force. Cooperative principles and politeness principles are coordinate principles and operate variably in different cultures or different language communities, in different social situations, among different social classes. In every society, it can be founded that people sometimes quite appropriately say things that are false or less informative than is required the politeness principles explain why they do so.

Cooperative principles are important but not sufficient to account for pragmatic interpretation. We need the CP to account for the relation between sense and force but the CP in itself cannot explain why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean. The CP defines as “unmarked” or socially neutral (asocial) framework for communication. It presumes “no deviation from rational efficiency without a reason”. However PP are just such reason for deviation. Perhaps polite motivations have a special status in social interaction.

Thus politeness becomes important when we consider pragmatic force of an utterance in broader, socially and psychologically oriented way. In society, politeness has to be communicated and the absence of communicated politeness may be taken as the absence of the polite attitude.

2.3 Politeness

Politeness is an important communication strategy which helps to maintain and develop relationships between speakers and hearers. When speakers want hearers to do their intended actions, the hearer's willingness to follow or not follow the speakers' wants depends on the speakers' authority and politeness to ask them to do the actions. Politeness is applied in making request in order to get the hearer's compliance and retain a successful communication.

According to Eelen(2001 cited in Shigemitsu, 2003;1), politeness has gained the status of one of the more popular branches of contemporary pragmatics and it widely used as a mean to study international communication. It is stated in that article that politeness has gained increasing popularity as an area of study not only in pragmatics but also in other disciplines in linguistics. Many scholars such as linguists, philosophers, anthropologists, pragmaticians and sociolinguists conduct a number of academic studies on politeness. Many linguists try to conceptualize the very term politeness in many of their books and reseaech works.

According to Hornby, A.S. (1981) the definition of politeness is 'the attitude of being socially correct, being refined and having good manners'. Hornby, A.S. (2005) defines 'polite' as 'having or showing good manners and respect for the feelings of others'. Lakoff (1977) states that politeness is something developed in societies in order to reduce friction in personal interaction and comprises three rules of politeness: don't impose, give options and make the receiver feel good. Brown and Levinson (1978) propose two types of politeness: positive politeness and negative politeness. Positive politeness is

showing solidarity with another and it is often described in terms of friendliness, whereas negative politeness is seen as a means of showing deference to the other.

2.3.1 Positive Politeness

One type of politeness as classified by Brown and Levison (1987) is positive politeness which is a means of showing solidarity to the addressee in the interaction. Some politeness has become one of the more popular research areas, many linguists try to define it in different ways. Yule (1996:132) defines positive politeness as “ Positive politeness is showing solidarity with another. In other words, it is showing the equivalent awareness when the other is socially close and it is often describe in terms of friendliness, camaraderie or solidarity.”

Brown and Levinson (1987:101) state that “Positive politeness is redress directed to the addressee’s positive face, his perennial desire that his want or the actions acquisitions values resulting from them should be thought of as desirable.”

From their cross-cultural research, Brown and Levison (1987) propose a model of positive politeness which comprise fifteen sub-strategies that the interlocutors use to show approval of their hearer’s wants and to convey that their own wants are similar. These strategies fall into three general groups: the speaker can claim common ground with the hearer; the speaker can claim that the speaker and hearer are cooperators; and the speaker can fulfil the hearer’s want from some X. These three types of positive redress are conveyed through fifteen different strategies (1987:102):

Claim ‘common ground’

1. Notice, attend to H (his interests, wants, needs, good)
2. Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H)
3. Intensify interest to H
4. Use in-group identity markers
5. Seek agreement

6. Avoid disagreement
7. Presuppose/raise/assert common ground
8. Joke
- Convey that S and H are co-operators
9. Assert or presuppose S's knowledge H's wants
10. Offer, promise
11. Be optimistic
12. Include both S and H in the activity
13. Give (or ask for) reasons
14. Assume or assert reciprocity
- Fulfil H's want (for some X) (S=the speaker, H=the hearer)
15. Give gifts to H (good, sympathy, and operation)

(Brown and Levinson, 1987:102)

From them, positive politeness is approach-based as it 'anoints' the face of the addressee by indicating the similarity between S's and H's wants (Brown and Levinson, 1987:70). It leads to achieve solidarity through offer of friendship, the use of compliments and informal language use. Thus, positive politeness strategies are used to show intimacy to imply common ground between the interactants by treating the addressee as in-group member or a friend. These strategies are seen as a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy or social accelerator within a particular culture.

Myanmar has such usage which shows the positive politeness as in the following Myanmar extract. A hostel student saw her room-mate coming back from the bath-room in a hurry. The latter was wearing the slippers of different colours. So, she teased her friend in a very friendly way, using the politeness strategy as follows:

“ဟာ၊ သူငယ်ချင်းရေ မိုက်တယ်၊ ဖိနပ်က နောက်ဆုံးပေါ်၊ အရောင်မတူပဲ”

“Ha, friend, you are smart, wearing the latest style of slippers in different colours.

The extract is the example of the use of politeness strategy (8) “Joke”. The speaker shows her solidarity towards the addressee by telling a joke.

2.3.2 Negative Politeness

Negative politeness manifests itself in the use of conventional politeness markers, deference marker, minimizing imposition, etc. Many scholars define this special phenomenon with elaborate explanation and they reveal its significance to a certain degree.

According to David A. Morand (2007 cited in Pen State News), the associate professor of management at Penn State Harrisburg, negative politeness seeks to minimize the sense of infringement implied in making a request, even when the request is justified or even necessary. This tactic also recognizes or establishes social distance between speaker and hearer.

The positive/ negative politeness distinction is closely related to two of the main forms inherent in Goffman's (1956 cited in Leech, 1983:36) 'deference', i.e. 'avoidance rituals' and 'presentational rituals'. Based on his concept, Leech (1983:83) states a striking comparison between 'absolute' and 'relative' politeness. They can be explained in term of "a positive and a negative pole. Some speech acts are intrinsically polite (e.g. offers) and some others intrinsically impolite (e.g. orders)."

According to Leech (1983:83-84), negative politeness is viewed as minimizing the impoliteness of impolite illocutions, and positive politeness as maximizing the politeness of polite illocutions.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), negative politeness is awareness of another's right not to be imposed on. It is showing awareness for another person's face when that other seems socially distant and it is often described in terms of respect or deference. "Negative politeness is redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face: his want to have his freedom of action, unhindered and his attention unimpeded" (Brown and Levinson, 1987:129). It is the need to be independent, not imposed on by others.

They assert that negative politeness is "the heart of respect behaviour and corresponds to rituals to avoidance. It is specific and focused" (Brown and Levinson, 1987:129). "Whenever the speaker wants to put a social brake on to the course of his interaction, he may use negative politeness" as it is useful for

“social distancing” (Brown and Levinson, 1987:130). Respecting other people’s needs for privacy demonstrates negative politeness. Thus, negative politeness is oriented towards a hearer’s negative face, which appeals to the hearer’s desire not to be impeded or put upon, to be left free to act as they choose. They proposed ten strategies of negative politeness. These strategies fall into five general types (a) Be direct (Strategy 1); (b) Don’t presume/ assume (Strategy 2); (c) Don’t coerce H (Strategy 3 to 5); (d) Communicate S’s want not to impinge on H (Strategy 6 to 9) and (e) Redress other wants of H’s, derivative from negative face (Strategy 10).

Be direct

1. Be conventionally indirect

Don’t presume/assume

2. Question, hedge

Don’t coerce H (where x involves H doing A) (both (1) and (2) are included here, too)

3. Be pessimistic

4. Minimize the imposition

5. Give deference

Communicate S’s want not to impinge on H

6. Apologize

7. Impersonalize S and H: Avoid the pronouns I and you

8. State the FTAs as a general rule (S=speaker, H=hearer)

9. Nominalize

Redress other wants of H’s, derivative from negative face

10. Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebteding H.

(Brown and Levinson, 1987:131)

Negative politeness is manifested in terms of deference, apology, indirectness and formality of language use. In Myanmar, there are also many instances that people make use of negative politeness strategies in daily life. The following example conveys the use of negative politeness strategy (1).

Strategy 1: Be conventionally indirect

ဒီစာအုပ်လေး သူ့ကို ပေးပေးနိုင်မလား။

Can you give him this book?

(‘လား’ /la:/, the finalizer word, is used between peer group and from the elder addresser to the younger addressee.)

In this example, the speaker requests the addressee to give someone a book in an indirect request form, i.e. putting the request in the question form, thus employing the negative politeness strategy 1: Be conventionally indirect.

Strategy 6: Apologize

ညီမလေး ပြောခဲ့တဲ့ စကားတွေအတွက် စိတ်မချိုဖို့ လေးလေးနက်နက် တောင်းပန်ပါတယ် မေတ္တာရပ်ခံ။

I deeply apologize to you not to be angry with me for what I have said, Ma Shwe Zin.

In this example, the younger sister is apologizing to her sister not to be angry with him for what she has just told her sister.

2.4 Requests

Request is defined as “an act of politely asking for something” (Hornby, 1995:996), belongs to the category of Directives. Requests can be linguistically realized with imperative, interrogatives and declaratives. However, Lyons (1968) states that the conversation requirements of politeness usually render it awkward to use imperatives for making request. Leech (1983) explains that imperatives are the least polite constructions since they are tactless in that they expose compliance by the addressee. In performing a request, the speaker should always adhere to the principles of politeness; no matter what his/her request is because requesting occurs among unequal participants. The requester always wants to get an object, which is lacking and he/she hopes that the requestee may provide it. A request occurs only when the speaker asks the

hearer to comply with his/her wish or to do something out of which the speaker usually gains profit.

According to (Blum-Kullka et al. 1989), there are nine level range from the most direct to the least direct described as types on following table. The first five sub-strategies belong to direct strategy and the last four belongs to indirect strategy. Indirect requests are divided into conventional indirect and non-conventional indirect. The following table shows that the request examples produced by Myanmar speakers in the daily life applying the request head acts strategy (Blum-Kulka, et at.1989).

Table (1) Request Head Acts Strategy (Blum-Kulka, et al. 1989) by Myanmar

Strategy Type	Sub-strategy	Explanation	Example
1. Direct (D)	Mood derivable	Utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb delivers illocutionary force as request.	အေးကြူရေ ညနေ ငါ့ဆီလာခဲ့အုံး။ Come to me this evening, Aye Kyu.
	Explicit performative	Utterances in which the illocutionary intent is explicitly expressed	နော်ဗြဲ အန်တီအိမ် သွားလိုက်အုံး။ I ask you to go Aunty Mu's house tomorrow.
	Hedge performative	Utterances in which the expression of the illocutionary intent is hedged	အစ်ကို သဘောပေါက်ပြီ..သိပ် ပြတာလောက်နဲ့ပေါ့ဟန် မေးချင်တယ်ကွာ။ I (brother) see. I would like to

		by using a modal auxiliary	ask you something I want to know.
	Obligation	Utterances which state the speaker's desire that the addressee perform the illocutionary act	သမီး တီချည်းဆီတော့ သွားသင့်တယ်နော်။ Thamee (daughter), you should go to your teacher.
	Want statement	Utterances which state the speaker's desire that the addressee perform the illocutionary act	အမေကတော့သမီးကို ပြည်ပြည်နဲ့အတူ ထိုင်းကို သွားစေချင်တယ်။ I(mother) would like you (daughter) to visit to Thailand with Pyae Pyae.
2. Conventionally Indirect (CI)	State preparatory or suggestory formula	Utterances which contain an assertion of a preparatory condition or a suggestion for the execution of the act	မေမေ သမီးတို့လည်း ဂင်မချီတို့ ထမင်းလိပ်တို့လို ကိုရီးယားစာတွေ လုပ်စားကြည့်ရင် မကောင်းဘူးလား။ May May (mother), isn't it a good idea if we cook and eat Korean foods like Kimchi or rice roll.
	Query preparatory	Utterances that	ဒီစာအုပ်လေး သူ့ကို

		are conditioned by the addressee's ability or willingness to accept the request, using conventionalized speech patterns.	ပေးပေးနိုင်မလား။ Can you give him this book?
3 Non-Conventionally Indirect (NCI)	Strong hint	Utterances which do not state the illocutionary point but contain a partial reference to the element needed for the implementation of the act	ရှေ့အပတ်ကျရင် ငါ့မွေးနေ့ရှိတယ်။ နင်နဲ့အတူရှိနေရရင် သိပ်ပျော်မိမှာပဲ။ It is my birthday on next week. If I will be with you, how happy I am!
	Mild hint	Utterances that have no reference to the illocutionary point but are interpretable as requests by context	အန်ကြီးက ပူလှိတ်တာ ကောင်းရယ်။ This room is very hot Kay Khine (name).

2.5 Politeness in Requests

In this section, some linguistic phenomena related to politeness in requests is

carried out since the study is to deal with the notions like ‘face, FTAs, PDR, honorifics, indirectness and hedges’.

2.5.1 Face

Face is best understood as every individual’s feeling of self-worth or self-image. Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory is based on the concept of face, a term referring to every individual’s sense of self-image. Brown and Levinson (1987) distinguish two aspects of face: ‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’. In fact, positive face is the want or desire to be liked, appreciated and approved of in certain respects, whereas negative face is described as the desire for freedom of action, freedom from imposition, and rights to non-intrusion into individual privacy.

2.5.2 FTAs

In everyday interaction, there is possibility of appearing some face threatening acts (FTAs) which are ‘those acts that by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/ or of the speaker’ (Brown and Levinson, 1987:65). Acts that appear to impede the addressees’ independence of movement and freedom of action threaten their negative face whereas those which appear as disapproving of their wants threaten their positive face. In their opinion, positive face threatening acts should be adjusted by positive politeness strategies in which the speakers should ‘claim common ground’, convey that speaker and hearer are cooperators’ and ‘fulfill hearer’s want for some X’ and negative face threatening acts should be solved by applying negative politeness strategies, some of which are convention and non-conventional indirectness: question, hedge that help to minimize the imposition.

When a request is made, the act may impose on the addressee, simply because the speaker wants the addressee to fulfil his or her request to do an action of some kind. Thus, it is possible to think that the speaker threatens the addressee’s negative face to a certain extent.

2.5.3 PDR

In doing the face-threatening acts (FTAs), there exist three social variables which are to be taken into consideration to determine the degree of politeness. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:74), these factors are the relative power (P) of hearer over speaker, the social distance (D) between speaker and hearer and the ranking of the imposition (R) of the particular culture. They appear to be the most crucial culture-based social variables to express FTAs and they are necessary for cross-cultural comparative study, especially in politeness area. In any language, these three factors will influence the interactants to choose the most appropriate forms of language.

2.5.4 Honorifics

In communicative events, there exist features which mark the social identity of the speaker or addressee, and the social relationship which holds between them. Brown and Levinson (1987:179) define honorifics as 'direct grammatical encodings of relative social status between participants, or between participants and person or things referred to in the communicative event'. The address forms or the vocative forms are used in most requests since they bring politeness to the addressee.

2.5.5 Hedges

According to Brown and Levinson (1987:145), "a 'hedge' is a particle, word, or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or noun phrase in a set: it says of the membership that it is partial, or true only in certain respects, or that it is more true and complete than perhaps might be expected". Yule (1996) states that hedge are cautious notes expressed about how an utterance is to be taken, e.g. 'as far as I know' used when giving some information. Lackoff (1972:213 cited in Brown and Levinson, 1987:145) also pays a special attention on the importance of this phenomenon and states that "hedges" modify the force of a speech act. Brown and Levinson's use o

the term 'hedge' is broader than that as 'hedging can be achieved in indefinite numbers of surface forms'. In general, hedges are assumed to soften the force of the face threatening acts (FTAs). Brown and Levinson (1987) distinguish between 'weakeners' and 'strengtheners'.

However, it is not at all clear that the basic function of hedge is to modify the propositional content or the illocutionary force in order to avoid or minimize interactional face threats. It is possible to think that there are other motivations to use a wide variety of linguistic devices as hedges in addition to mitigating impositions. It can be argued that lack of explicitness serves another important function to offer the addressee the opportunity to provide support, understanding, sharing, participation, etc. In other words, it aims to show that both speaker and addressee are on the same wavelength in a particular interaction in which they are engaged.

Furthermore, the speaker, for various reasons, may not want to minimize the impact of the act, but on the contrary to reinforce it. The 'weakeners' or softeners mitigate the force of the request and intensifiers aggravate the impact of the request. They include diminutives, tag questions, and a variety of other devices while intensifiers include such items as *for God's sake* and *come on*. Strengtheners or intensifiers are adverbs like 'exactly', 'precisely', 'absolutely', etc. They somewhat 'indicate something about the speaker's commitment towards what he/she is saying' and so 'modify the illocutionary force' and thus are crucial linguistic phenomena for performing request expressions politely (Brown and Levinson, 1987:147).

2.6 Previous Research on Politeness and Requests

One interesting study on politeness is done by Srichampa (2002:2) in the article "Politeness Strategies in the Vietnamese Language". It is based on politeness theories proposed by Lackoff (1973) and Kasper (1994), cited in Srichampa (2002:2), that is being clear and polite. In his study, the Vietnamese language and culture are analyzed in terms of politeness strategies. The data are collected by means of questionnaires, observation and

participation. The study investigates nearly all the speech acts such as 'greeting, leave-taking, introducing, thanking and making requests, refusals, complaints, compliments, apologies and disagreement'. The writer accepts the existence of words or notions of politeness in all cultures and languages which may be related to "a specific culture, a speech community, or even a dominant social class within a society". This work conveys the fact that the Vietnamese language is used differently to different addressees in different speech acts, regarding sociolinguistic factor: age, occupation, social status, familiarity, formality and informality.

A number of studies have been done in order to relate the relevance theory with the study of request. As a previous study, the researcher used the thesis a comparative study on making request in vietnamese by Phan Thanh Tan (2012). The writer describes how Vietnamese native speakers produced the request strategies under the impact of social distance and age and social status and factor of age more and less affect the selection of request strategies in Vietnamese language. It is base on the theory of request head acts strategies Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989) as a starting model for the study. The writer delivered the two versions of questionnaires: one for Vietnamese native speakers (VNS) 30 persons and the other for English native speaker (ENS) 30 persons to collect the data for analysis. The writer found that the preferences for direct or strategies for requests used by ENS and VNS under the influence of social status, age and gender. The writer shows that the majority of ENS use indirect request strategies to deliver the speech act of request to soften the impositions and VNS used the direct request strategies as Vietnamese come from a society where solidarity relations and dependence are more appreciated than distance and independence.

III . METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher describes two parts: the politeness usage and producing request strategies by Myanmar native speakers. To achieve the aims of this study, the researcher used two methods.

3.1. Observation and Participation

With regard to the politeness usage in Myanmar language, the data are collected by observation, participation, and by recording the interactions in the different contexts and situations. The interactions are recorded in various settings and domains. Some dialogues are recorded from the natural environment and some are taken from Myanmar novels. Some conversations took place among family members, colleagues, friends, and teacher and students. The recordings are made using a phone recorder and some conversations are noted on the book and the data are further transcribed. In Chapter 4 and 5, the example segments of Myanmar conversations are taken from my collected data.

3.2 Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

To be a scientific thesis, the researcher also use the discourse completion test (DCI) to collect the data. There is two reasons why the DCT is used in this study. According to Nelson Al-Batal, and Echols (2002), the DCT enables the researcher to control situation variables for all group of participants. By using this method, the researcher can compared directly the request strategies by each group of participants. As a another reason, in a short period of time, the researcher can gather a large amount of data and to control variables such as age group of participants (Blum-Kulka et al.1989).

3.2.1 Questionnaires

To collect data for analysis, questionnaire is the best and important way and

the researcher designs the first draft of the discourse completion test (DCT) in which there are seven situations related to making requests. A final revised DCI consists of two parts: the essential part for the participant's personal information and the discourse completion test consisting of seven different situations which are similarities and differences as well in making request. The seven situations are contrived as follows:

Situation 1: making request someone to borrow a pen

Situation 2: making request someone to reduce the volume or turn off TV

Situation 3: making request someone to borrow the money

Situation 4: making request someone to help for collecting some data

Situation 5: making request someone to make a phone call

Situation 6: making request someone to change the seat

Situation 7: making request someone to repeat what has just been said

All situation are designed to investigate the effect of social relationship status and factor of age when making requests.

3.2.2 Subjects

In this study, all 20 participants are Myanmar native speakers, some are working different professions in Yangon and some are students who are studying in Korea. All participants are asked to fill in their age, gender, occupations and to complete the DCT within two weeks and to send again with email or text message or photo from messenger application.

3.2.3 Data Coding

The data are analyzed according to the classification of three main request head act strategies by Blum Kuka (1989): the direct strategy, the conventional indirect strategy and the non-conventional indirect strategy to figure out which request strategy employed by Myanmar and how social distance status and factor of age influence on the ways of making requests. The researcher uses

the statistics method to list and count the number for the responses to the questions in questionnair



IV . POLITENESS IN MAKING REQUESTS IN MYANMAR LANGUAGE

4.1 Introduction of Myanmar Cultural and Myanmar Conversation

Myanmar people have been living in a highly cultured society for centuries since Buddhism arrived. The teachings of Lord Buddha influenced Myanmar culture so much that Myanmar culture and Buddhism have become intermingled. Myanmar people have to follow cultural rules concerning behaviour, manners and speech.

In speech, following the Lord Buddha's teachings, there are rules not only of how to talk but also of what to talk about and when to talk. The effects of good and bad speech and behaviour are also pointed out.

In Myanmar cultural, there is a speech that if one speaks rudely, it is because his mother is vulgar and if one behaves rudely, it is because of his father's vulgarity. In contrast, if parents are noble, their children will speak and behave politely. Therefore one's talk and behaviour can affect one's parents' dignity, and are controlled very strictly.

What to talk

As Myanmar proverb, "(If a person talks a lot, the talk itself reveals his/her origin.)", a person's talk can reveal his character and upbringing and so it is important for a person to choose the right kind of talk.

As a Buddhists have to keep the five precepts and one of the five precepts is to refrain from telling lies. The Lord Buddha preached of the speech which has five characteristics, which is good, blameless and not censured by the wise.

(1) The speech that is done at a suitable time and place.

- (2) The speech that is right.
- (3) The speech that is gentle.
- (4) The speech that is beneficial.
- (5) The speech that is spoken with loving kindness.

The Lord Buddha also pointed out the kind of speech which has four praise-worthy characteristics.

- (1) One that is said well.
- (2) One that is in accordance with the dhamma (reason).
- (3) One that rouses loving-kindness of others.
- (4) One that is right.

Out of the various talks that people use, Buddha praises the talk that is commonly used, one that is spoken after considering well and one that has sound reason.

In addition, choosing the type of talk according to age and status of the person is also important. Myanmar people usually pay respect to elders, parents and teachers. Special respect has to be given to “ monks and nuns”. If one doesn’t use suitable and polite speech, it is a disrespect and is censured by the wise.

Our everyday talk consists of only six kinds of which Lord Buddha approves of only two. The first is one that is true, beneficial and appreciated by the listeners. The second is one that is true and beneficial but not appreciated by the listeners. Other four, although people are using, are not appreciated by the Buddha. They are as follow:

- (1) One that is untrue, un-beneficial and unliked by the listeners
- (2) One that is true but un-beneficial and unliked by the listeners
- (3) One that is untrue, un-beneficial but liked by the listeners
- (4) One that is true, un-beneficial and liked by the listeners.

To conclude, the speech that Myanmar people or the Buddhists are traditionally taught to use is (a) one that is appreciated by every man and god, nice to hear, pleasant and that of decent citizens, (b) one that is apt, true, related with benefit and advice, that has good ending and that should be remembered for the whole life, © one that ceases the hostility of the two persons, that confirms the love of the two persons and that unite people, and (d) one that is related, trust-worthy, dignified and un-tricky.

How to talk

“It is not good to talk too much nor to be so quiet. One should talk in good order at suitable time.” (Lokaniti)...

Myanmar people always advise the young to have good manners, good speech and a good heart. To be polite in speech, one should also behave politely while speaking. Polite behaviour includes a soft voice, gentle tone and appearance. The words must also be polite in meaning. For instant, when a young girl invites an elder to come into house, she should say (Please do come in, sir) in a sweet-voice, soft tone and polite manners. Only then her speech can be considered polite.

Whispering, speaking loudly and very quickly and being talkative are the things that we should avoid when we talk as these could disturb others in various ways.

As the English people have the saying “ Think before you speak for you cannot unsay a word”, we also have proverb like “ We can take out the leg that falls into the crack of the floor but we cannot withdraw the word that has been said” and there is no eraser in mouth. They indicate that we should consider well before we speak. The benefits of speech that has been considered well are pointed out by the Lord Buddha. First, there cannot be falsehood, second, it will not be make mischief between two persons, third, there may not be rude talk, fourth, the talk may not be vulgar and thus one can go to heaven.

As people can know the character of one another from their talk, what they talk and how they talk are very important in Myanmar Culture.

4.2 The Use of Deference to the Addressee in Requests in Myanmar

In this part we will discuss the terms of address in the Myanmar language as only they are used in a dyadic conversation. A number of studies view deference as the level of appropriateness inherent in utterances, irrespective of context, and politeness which depends on the particular context. On the basis of Korean sociolinguistics, Hwang (1990) argues that 'politeness' and 'deference' should be considered different though interrelated concepts. Deference is seen as a social phenomenon established by the positions individuals occupy in the social structure.

In making a request, especially to someone superior in age or power, the speaker must show deference. The greater the social distance between the interactants, the more deference the speaker shows to the addressee. The speaker can show deference by means of some lexical choice. In Myanmar language, deference can be shown by the inclusion of occupational titles or simple vocative forms. Without them, a request is tactless or rude to the hearer. Deference can be shown by using some special choice of words. If one does not know how to address others and how to use the correct pronouns, he or she will misuse them and his or her talk will become impolite. Moreover, he will also be considered a person without good manners in Myanmar culture.

We have seen that English had only two forms of second person pronouns, namely "thou" and "you" before "thou" was dropped out of usages. In the Myanmar language however there are several forms used according to the sex, age and social status of the speaker and addressee and also to the relationship between them. They are "nin, shin, min, to, khinbja, nyi, dagar, dagama" etc. We have seen that while English has only one first person pronoun "I", the

Myanmar language has several alternatives: “nga, kjun do, kjun ma, kjou, thar, thamee, tabedaw, tabedaw ma, name” etc. The pronouns “nin (you) and nga (I)” are the terms used only among very familiar friends and if they are used to speak to elders or acquaintances, it is considered rude. In fact, Myanmar people do not use pronouns very much in conversation.

The speaker may use plural “dou”, for instance “ nga dou, nin dou”, meaning we and you to refer to a singular addresser as a means of showing deference to the addressee in the conversation. The plurality itself is the honorific feature and it is normally used particularly in a formal setting like a meeting or a workshop.

Besides the vocative forms ‘U’, ‘Ko’, ‘Maung’, ‘Daw’, and ‘Ma’, titles which are the most distancing and impersonal forms of address include those of occupation or position and respect. The Myanmar language has a distinct pronominal system and an elaborate system of address forms which include various word classes like kinship terms and endearment terms. Such terms of intimate address include one part of a name either in full form or in a variety of diminutive forms. It also marks a strong emotional bond between interactants because diminutive of names cannot be freely used by everybody. If they are not established as nicknames. Kinship terms are also used as term of address, alone or accompanied by a name. These can be used even in cases in which there is no relevant affiliation. Thus, older people can be called ‘uncle’ and ‘aunt’ though there is no actual relationship between the interactants. Likewise, ‘grandfather’ and ‘grandmother’ can be more freely used by the younger addressers, even in the absence of such a relationship. Thus, Myanmar kinship terms are commonly used in daily life as vocative forms despite the lack of actual relationship between the interactants. The flexibility of kinship terms and other endearment forms is extensive. The kinship terms with the names are found only to address the elder kins and not to address the younger kins. Terms of address can also be used in successive turns in an

encounter. The possessive pronoun is also used in English but it appears to be restricted to certain fixed expressions such as ‘my dear’ or ‘my love’. In Myanmar, expressions of endearment are also prevalent, especially among very intimate interlocutors like family members, sweethearts or close friends. The forms of address are outlined in table (2).

Table (2) Forms of Address in Myanmar

No	Terms of Address	Address forms for the Addressees	
		Myanmar	Explanation or Meaning
1.	Titles (a) Title Prefix	ဦး /u:/ U	-usually used to address middle-aged men and above
		ကို /kou/ Ko	- usually used to address middle-aged men
		မောင် /maun/ Maung	-usually used to address children and young men till graduate
		ဒေါ် /do/ Daw	-usually used to address middle-aged women and above
		မ /ma./ Ma	-usually used to address children and young women til graduate and middle-aged women
	(b) Title Prefix + Name	ဦးမျိုးမြင့်	U Myo Myint
		ကိုမင်းလတ်	Ko Min Latt
		မောင်ကျော်လွင်	Maung Kyaw Lwin
		ဒေါ်လှရီ	Daw Hla Yee
		မကေခိုင်လတ်	Ma Kay Khine Latt
	(c) Occupational Titles	ဆရာ/hsaja/	Saya (male teacher)
		ဆရာမ /hsaja ma/	Sayama (female teacher)
		ဒေါက်တာ /dau'ta/	Doctor
		ဗိုလ်ချုပ်/bou gjou/	Major General
		ဥက္ကဋ္ဌကြီး /ou'kahta.gji:/	Chairman
		ဝန်ကြီး /wungji:/	Minister
	(d) Occupational Title+ Name	ဆရာဦးတင်	Saya U Tin
		ဆရာမဒေါ်ချို	Sayama Daw Cho

		ဒေါက်တာညီညီ	Doctor Nyi Nyi
		ဝန်ကြီးဦးကျော်	Minister U Kyaw
		ဥက္ကဋ္ဌဦးဇော်ဇော်	Chairman U Zaw Zaw
		ဗိုလ်ချုပ်မှူးသူ	Major General Myo Thu
2.	Nouns	သူငယ်ချင်း /thange gjin:/	friend
		မိန်းကလေး /mein: khalei:/	girl
		ကောင်မလေး /kaun ma.lei:/	girl
		ကောင်လေး /kaun lei:/	boy
3.	Kinship Terms	အဖိုး /ahpou:/	grandpa
		အဖွား /ahpwa:/ မေမေကြီး/mei mei gji:/ အမေကြီး /amei gji/	grandma
		အဖေ /ahpei/ ဖေဖေ /hpei hpei/	father
		အမေ /amei/ မေမေ /mei mei/	mother
		ဘကြီး /bagji/ ဦးကြီး /u: gji:/	uncle who older than the speaker's parent
		ဦးလေး/u:lei:/လေးလေး /lei:lei:/	uncle who younger than the speaker's parent
		ဒေါ်ကြီး /do gji:/ ကြီးကြီး /gji: gji:/	aunt who older than the speaker's parent
		ဒေါ်လေး /do lei:/ အန်တီ /anti/	aunt who older than the speaker's parent
		သား /tha:/	son
		သမီး /thami:e/	daughter
		တူ /tu/ တူလေး /tulei:/	nephew
		တူမ /tu ma/ တူမလေး/tumalei:/	niece
		အစ်မ /ama/	elder sister
		ညီမလေး /nji ma lei:/	younger sister
		အစ်ကို/akou:/ကိုကြီး/kou: gji:/	elder brother
		မောင်လေး /maun lei:/	younger brother (the speaker is female and she uses to address her younger brother)
		ညီလေး /nji lei:/	younger brother (the speaker is male and he address the male who younger than him)
		မီးမီး /mie: mie:/	daughter (informal term used

			to refer to daughter especially a girl, also used to address oneself as endearment term)
		သားသား /tha: tha:/	son (informal term used to refer to son especially a boy, also used to address oneself as endearment term) (All these terms are used among kins or non-kins) “Kinship term+names” are used to address only the elder and not used to address the younger.
4.	Terms of Endearment	အချစ် /achit/	-usually used to address both male and a female lover
		အသဲ /athe/	-usually used to address a female lover
		ကိုကြီး /ko gji:/	-usually used to address a brother, a male lover or a husband who is older the addressor
		မောင် /maun/ ကိုကို /kou kou/ ကို /kou/	-usually used to address a male lover or a husband
		ယောက်ျား /jou kja:/	-usually used to address a husband
		မိန်းမ /mei:n ma/	-usually used to address a wife
		မ /ma/	-usually used to address a female lover or a wife who is older than the addressor
5.	Names	Kay Khine Latt	
		Zaw Min	
		Khin Htay Mu	
		Khin Maung Win	
		Moe Kyae	

Example 1

M: သူတို့ကားလေး ဆီပြန်သွားလို့တဲ့...လာ အကူအညီတောင်းကြတာပါ။ ရန်ကုန်က ဧည့်သည်တွေလို ပြောပါတယ်။

M: Their car ran out of petrol on the way. They came to ask for help. They said they are from Yangon.

F: ဒါဆို ခဏစောင့်ကြပါဦး...မိငယ် မေမေကြီးကို သွားပြောပြလိုက်ပါ့မယ်။

F: Well, wait for a moment. I (Mi Nge) will go and tell May May Gyi by myself.

In this conversation, the male speaker was telling the female addressee about the guests who came to their compound to ask for help. She requested them to wait for a while as she needed to report about it to the landlord. She used the kinship term May May Gyi, meaning 'grandmother' to address her landlord in a polite way although she was not the granddaughter of that lady.

Example 2

F: သမီး...ဒီနေ့အားလားကွယ်။

F: Daughter, are you free today?

M: ဖေဖေ့ကို မကြည့်နဲ့ သမီး...သမီး မေမေခိုင်းတာကိုသာ ဦးစားပေးပြီး လုပ်ပေးလိုက်။

M: Don't look at me, daughter. Just do what your mother asks you to do.

F: ဟုတ်ကဲ့ပါ ဖေဖေ။

F: Yes, Daddy.

In this daily conversation, mother asked her daughter if she was free on that day. The father and the daughter had planned to go to somewhere and so the daughter glanced at the father for a suggestion. The mother called her daughter by the kinship term and the father also call her in the same way.

The vocative forms and the address terms are manifested in the daily communicative acts.

Example 3

F1: စုစည်းလိုက်မယ်၊ နောက်လဲလယဝယ်နော် ညီမလေး။

F1: (I) will tie (all the flowers) for you. Come and buy again, Nyi Ma Lay (younger sister).

F2: ကောင်းပါပြီရှင်။

F2: Well. Ama (elder sister).

In this example, the flower seller requested the customer to come and buy flowers from her again. She addressed the customer by a kinship term, 'younger sister' as a polite request although the role relation, between them was just the seller and the customer. The use of kinship terms is also present in transaction.

Honorific terms convey the realization of showing deference to the hearer. The first type of honorific, addressee honorific, is associated with the social rank and occupational title of the addressee. One common addressee honorific in Myanmar is / lu gji: min:/, meaning gentleman. Different addressee honorifics are used in different social domains. In the religion domain, the speaker addresses himself or herself as /dabe.do/ or /dabe.doma/ while the novice or monk will be addressed as /koujin/ or /u: bazin:/ or /hsajado/ and /ashin hpa ja/. The monk and the nun will address the male donor /da ga gji:/, and the female donor /dagama gji:/. The young nun is addressed as /hsajale/ and the elder nun is addressed as /hsajagji:/. In the office domain, the speaker may address the addressee by occupational title. For example, /shei. nei gji:/ (Lawyer), /pa gjou gji:/ (Rector), /joun: ou' gji:/ (Head of the office) etc. are used respectively. In the Armed Forces, we address the addressee by his title

like /bou gji:/ (Captain), /bou hmu:/ (Major) or /bou gjou/ (Major General), etc.

Such kind of occupational titles are extensively used in various domains. One remarkable thing found is that such occupational addressee-honorific in the civil departments are used with the affix /gji:/ (meaning great or senior) as the ending word. The inclusion of such affix conveys deference to the addressee and so this affix is used to address one of higher social rank.

Another type of honorific is the referent honorific and it shows the relation of the speaker to the hearer. As to show deference to the addressee who is higher in social rank or order, a more polite lexical item is chosen when addressing him. The use of honorific terms is important to show deference to the addressee, especially when the speaker makes a request. In the Myanmar language the deference showing honorifics are found in some formal occasions and they are also used when addressing superior in daily interactions.

4.3 The Use of Hedges in Request in Myanmar

According to Brown and Levison (1987:145), hedges are particles, words or phrases that modify the degree of membership of a predicate or noun phrasing a set. Indeed, hedges are important as they modify the force of a speech act. The Myanmar language has a great number of hedges to use in request in daily conversation. A great number of hedges are used to soften the request action. Some action “တဆိတ်လောက်” /tahsei lau/, here meaning ‘please’, ‘if clauses’ like “ဖြစ်နိုင်ရင် ၊ ဖြစ်နိုင်မယ်ဆိုရင်” /hpji' nai' jin/ hpji' nai' mei so jin/, meaning ‘if it is possible’, “အပန်းမကြီးဘူးဆိုရင်” /apan: ma kji bu: so jin po./, meaning ‘it is doesn't bother you’, “မခက်ခဲဘူးဆိုရင်”, /ma khet ke bu: so jin/, meaning ‘if it isn't difficult’, “သိခွင့်ရှိရင်”, /thi khwin. shi jin/, meaning, ‘if you let me know’, “မရှိမသေ”, /ma jo ma the/, meaning, ‘with no intension to show respect’, etc. These expressions are used before or after the core of the requests and the inclusion of these hedges signify the politeness of the addresser towards the addressee. Myanmar tags and particles like ‘သလား’, /tha

la:/ ‘လား’, /la:/, ‘နော်’, /nau/ and expression like ‘...လား မသိဘူးနော်’, /la: ma thi. bu: nau/ , “...is it? (I don’t know)”, ‘ဟုတ်တယ် မဟုတ်လား’, /ho te ma ho la:/, “... isn’t it?” are often used as sentences finalizers and they can be regarded as hedges. Some tags like “...isn’t it?” and sentence final particles act like hedges.

Hedges may be of two kinds, strengtheners and weakeners. Strengtheners are used as emphatic hedges, whereas weakeners are used to soften what they modify. They all indicate something about the speaker’s commitment towards what is implied and modify the illocutionary force. Some polite finalizers can be used in utterances as strengtheners or weakeners. The particles such as “လေ” /le/, “ပေါ့” /po/ act as strengtheners whereas “နော်” /nau/, “ကွယ်” /kwe/, “ပါဦး” /pa u:/, etc. can change the utterance meaning a great deal as weakeners. The following myanmar examples signify the use of hedges in making polite requests.

Example 4

F: ကိုကြီး ဒီလက်ဆောင်လေး ဆရာတော့်ဆီကို သွားပေးပေးနိုင်မလား။ ဒီရက်ပိုင်း ညီမလေးမအားဘူးဖြစ်နေတာနဲ့။ ကိုကြီးအတွက် အပန်းမကြီးဘူးဆိုမှပါ။

F: Ko Gyi (elder brother) can you go and give this present to Sayardaw (Monk). I am so busy these days. If it is not much trouble to you.

M1: ရတယ်မိခိုင်။ ငါသွားပေးပေးမယ်။

M: Ok Mi Khine (name), I will do.

In the above example, the younger sister was making request her elder brother to go and give to monk her present. She included a hedge “if it is not much trouble to you” in the request to make her request sound less redressive.

Example 5

M: ကိုရီးယားစာသင်တန်း တတ်ချင်လို့။ ဘယ်မှာကောင်းလဲ နင်သိလား။

M: I want to attend Korean language class. Do you know where is good?

F: "မိရယ်"မှာ သွားတတ်လေ။ အဲဒီမှာ ငိုညီမလေး တက်ဖူးတယ်...ကောင်းတယ်။

F: (You) can attend Korean Language class at "Mirae" (language school). My younger sister attended once there. It is good.

M: ဟုတ်လား။ ဖြစ်နိုင်မယ်ဆိုရင် အဲဒီသင်တန်းကို တစ်ဆိတ်လောက် လိုက်ပို့ပေးပါလားဟင်။

M: Is it? If possible, would you please take me to the class?

This is an excerpt from the conversation between two friends. The male friend requested his female friend to take him to a Korean Language school. He expressed his impingement on her for his request by the inclusion of a hedge "if possible" before the core indirect request. Moreover, he tried to give the impression of a polite person by using another hedge "တစ်ဆိတ်လောက်" /tahesi lau/ , here meaning 'please' in his request. This hedge minimized the size of his request to the addressee.

Example 6

M: ဟာ...ကေ့ခိုင် ညနေစာ...ဘာမှမစားရသေးဘူး မဟုတ်လား။

တစ်ခုခုစားကြရအောင် ၊ ငါ တစ်ခုခုကူညီပေးလို့များ ရမလား။

M: You haven't had your dinner, have you, Kay Khine? Let's have something. Can I help you in any way?

F: ရှင်၊

F: Yes

M: နင် ဒီနေ့စိတ်မချမ်းသာစရာ တစ်ခုခုခံစားနေရတယ်လို့ ငါသိနေပါတယ်...

အဲဒါ သိခွင့်ရှိရင် သိပါရစေ...ကူညီခွင့်ရှိရင် ကူညီပါရစေဟာ။

M: I sense that you feel somewhat sad today.

May I know the problem? I help you if you kindly allow me to do so?

In this conversation, the male speaker requested the female speaker to let him help. He used a hedge saying that he sensed that the other felt miserable before his request to tell him her trouble. He tried to make her feel better.

Example 7

M: ကျေးတယ်လား၊ အားတော့နာတယ်လို့အရာရ အချိန်ဟုတ်တဲ့ စည်းစိမ်းပြန် ကျွန်တော်က လာသလိုဖြစ်နေတယ်။

M: Thank you. I am restrained by the fear of offending you, Sir. It seemend that I came to you at the wrong time.

In this example, the speaker expressed his impingement upon the doctor for having come to him very late at night. He expressed it by a hedge “အားတော့နာတယ်” /a:na pa te/, meaning “I am restrained by the fear of offending (you)”. He tried to please the addressee for his intrusion by the use of a hedge.

Example 8

F: ဒီမှာရှင့် တဆိတ်လောက် ဒါလေးတွေ အထဲသွင်းပေးခဲ့ပါဦးနော်၊ အားနာဖို့တော့ ကောင်းနေပြီ။

F: Excuse me...please...please take these(bags) inside. I feel restrained by the fear of offending(you).

This example is take from the novel “စိမ်းမြေရာ” , meaning, “Green(River) Aye Yar”, written by “ဒဂုန်တာရာ” /da gown taya/ (1994:9). In this line, the woman was making a request to another passenger on the same ship. He helped her in carrying the bags to her cabin. When he left the bags at the door of the cabin, she request him to move the luggage into the cabin. To make her

request sound polite, she used the hedge “တဆိတ်လောက်” /ta sei lau/, meaning “Excuse me” in her request. Then she also expressed her acknowledgement to her impingement on him by a phrase “အားနာဖို့တော့ ကောင်းနေပြီ” /ana: na bo to. kaun nei pji:/, meaning “I am restrained by the fear of offending(you)”.

With referenfce to the above-mentioned examples, it can be concluded that hedges are frequently used in making requests depending on social variables like social distance or relative power or degree of imposition between the interlocutors in the particular context. They are important linguistic means to satisfy the speaker’s want to be considered as a polite member of the community.

4.4 The Use of Finalizers in Myanmar

The ending of questions are also varied in the Myanmar language and the different sentence finals change the utterance meaning to a certain extent. Myanmar question finalizers carry some other information concerning social variables like the degree of familiarity, the social distance and the age difference between the interlocutors. Then, the sentence finals of the utterance which denote the gender of the addresser like (‘ရှင်’ /shin/ or ‘ခင်ဗျာ’ /khin bja/) can be found in the Myanmar language, but not in the English language, Korean language and some other language. The Myanmar language has miscellaneous sentence final particle which shape the intended meaning of the utterance or a questions. These endings are “တယ် /te/, ဟယ် /he/, လေ/le/, ရယ် /je/, ပါလား/ba la:/, ပါ /ba/, မလား /ma la:/, နော် /no/, ကွယ် /kwei/, ပေါ့ /po./ and ပါဦး /pa u:” which can change the utterance meaning a great deal.

The different final particles signify not only the gender of the addresser but also the age difference and the social distance between the interlocutors. Moreover, they act as politeness marker of the Myanmar language.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents findings and discussion on the request strategies and politeness employed by Myanmar native speaker (MNS). The results are reported as the direct request strategies, the conventional indirect request strategies and the non-conventional indirect request strategies. There is questionnaire which consists of seven situations which have 42 discourses totally for MNS. 20 questionnaire responses by MNS and there are 840 discourses (42 discourses in a questionnaire multiplied by 20 answering participants) are collected for this study.

5.1 An overview of results

In this section, the frequency of request head act strategies by MNS in varying social distance status and the factor of age are presented. Myanmar native speakers produce the request head acts in three levels according to Blum-Kulla et al.(1989). The proportion of different request acts used by Myanmar are shown in the following table.

Table (3) The Distribution of Three Main Request Head Acts Strategies Used by Myanmar Native Speakers

Request Strategies	Myanmar Native Speakers	
	n	%
Direct	278	33.1
Conventionally indirect	513	61.1
Non-conventionally indirect	49	5.8
Total	840	100

As shown in table , MNS produced a total of 840 request head acts, in which the direct request head act (DI) is 33.1%, the conventional indirect request head (CI) act makes up 61.1% and it is only 5.8% employed as non-conventional indirect request head act (NCI). Generally, these result indicated that CI is the most preference request head act strategy by MNS,

followed by DI and NCI respectively. The most frequently used indirect request forms in Myanmar are shown in the following examples.

Example 9

ကျမဝင်ခွင့်ရှိပါသလား။ ဆရာမ။

May I come in, teacher?

In the conversation, the young teacher was quite surprised to see her old friend unexpectedly at the entrance of the room she was sitting. She was gazing out of the window beside the table when all at once her friend appeared at the door. Her friend made an indirect request to let her come into the room into the room in a teasing manner.

Example 10

အစ်ကိုမနက်ဖြန်ကျရင် လာဦးမယ် မဟုတ်လားဟင်။

Brother, will you come again tomorrow, won't you?

The given extract is taken from the novel “ချစ်သည်သာဆိုရုံမျှနှင့်”, meaning “Just Loving You” written by “ငြိမ်းကျော်” /njein: kjo/ (2005:137). The speaker was making a request, asking the addressee to come to her again the next day in an indirect form. Due to the age difference between the interlocutors, the speaker requested the addressee indirectly like that instead of making a direct request like “Come here again tomorrow.”

Example 11

ဖေဖေ သမီးကို ဒီအထဲက ပုံပြင်တစ်ပုဒ်ဖတ်ပြမလားဟင်။

Dad, will you read me a story from this book?

This example is taken from the book “နှလုံးသားအာဟာရ” “Chicken Soup for the Soul volume-2” by “ဖေမြင့်” /hpei. mjin./ (1998:102). The little daughter begged her father to spare some time to read her a story. The father who was always

occupied with his work could not spare a moment for his daughter. She wanted him to care for her as her friends used to take pride in how loving their fathers are. She requested her father indirectly to comply with her request.

Example 12

ကျေးဇူးပြုပြီး ဒီစာအုပ်လေး သူ့ကို ပေးပေးနိုင်မလား။

Can you give him this book?

In this example, the speaker requests the addressee to give someone a book in an indirect request form, i.e., putting the request in the question form, thus employing the conventionally indirect strategy.

Example 13

ဝယ်မယ့်တိုက်က ဒဂုံမှာဆို တခါတည်း ဝင်ကြည့်လို့ရမလား ကိုအောင်ကို။

Shall we go and have a look at the house we are going to buy as it is at Dagon, Ko Aung Ko?

In this example, the man was making a request to Ko Aung Ko to take him to the house he was going to buy. He requested Ko Aung Ko using the indirect form of request, in the question form.

Example 14

အားတော့နာတယ်၊ အသံနည်းနည်းလောက် တိုးပေးလို့ရမလား။

I am so sorry. Can you reduce the volume?

In this example, one student has a exam and his/her roommate is watching TV and a big noise bother him/her. He/She requested his/her roommate using the hedge I am so sorry and indirect request question form to be polite request.

Such kind of indirect speech is also found in Myanmar and the most usual expressions for the indirect request are “မလာ့” /mala:/, “Will you...?” or “နိုင်းမလာ့” /nai mala:/, “Can you..?”. The speaker uses the indirect speech form of question for the request as the conventional indirectness is one way of making polite request.

This study also find some factors such as social relationship status and the factor of age affects more or less on the ways of requesting made by MNS. The following table shows that the frequency distribution of request head acts strategies on the different social relationship status: intimate relationship and distance relationship.

5.2 Requests making influenced by some factors of social relationship status and age

Each person from each society has different selection of politeness strategies for request-making. Obviously, cultural difference is the main reason for that. It is believed that some social factors such as social status, gender and age more and less affect the way of speaking in general and requesting in particular.

In Myanmar language, indirect strategies are most favored in all cases in all trends, the social relation status and the factor of age affect differently the ways of making requests by MNS.

Firstly, social relationship status were examined in all situations. The results took from the questionnaire are shown in the following table.

Table (4) The distribution of request head act strategies to the hearers on the distance and intimate relationship status

Request strategies	Distance relationship	Intimate relationship	Total
Direct strategy	132	146	278
Conventional indirect strategy	269	244	513
Non-conventional indirect strategy	19	30	49
Total	420	420	840

Obviously, CI is employed two times more than DI and NCI is used just a littel by MNS on the both distance and intimate relationship status.

In Myanmar culture, the factor of age effects significantly on the producing of the request strategies.

Table (5) The distribution of the request head act strategies to the requestees of varying age on the different social relationship statues

The requestee	Request Strategies	Distance relationship		Intimate relationship	
		n	%	n	%
Younger	DI	78	55.7	97	69.3
	CI	53	37.9	32	22.8
	NCI	9	6.4	11	7.9
Total		140	100	140	100
Same age	DI	35	25	37	26.4
	CI	99	70.7	91	65
	NCI	6	4.3	12	8.6
Total		140	100	140	100
Older	DI	19	13.6	12	8.6
	CI	117	83.5	121	86.4
	NCI	4	2.9	7	5
Total		140	100	140	100

Table (6) The distribution of the request head act strategies to the requestees of varying age

Request strategies	Requestee			Total
	Younger	Same	Older	
Direct strategy	175	72	31	278
Conventional indirect strategy	85	190	238	513
Non-conventional indirect strategy	20	18	11	49
Total	280	280	280	840

Firstly, in the both different social distance status, the speaker used DI 175 times as the majority when the requestees are younger than the speaker. It is rarely used DI when the requestees are same and older than the speaker. The most useful direct request form by Myanmar are shown in the following examples.

Example 15

သား...မေမေ့ကို ဒီအိတ်လေး ကူသယ်ပေးနော်။

Thar (Son)..help me (may may, meaning mother) carry this bag.

Example 16

ညီမလေးရေ ကျေးဇူးပြုပြီး ဘောပင်လေးပါရင် ခဏလောက်ငှားပါ။

Nyi Ma Lay(younger sister)...please borrow a pen just a moment.

In the above examples, when the speaker is older than the addressee, the most direct request form, imperative type, is frequently used consisting of the finalizers as politeness markers.

VI . CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made to investigate the politeness expressions in request in Myanmar and the use of request strategies under the factors of social relationship status and age in Myanmar. To summarize the study, I found more examples of the use of indirectness than the use of hedges in Myanmar in the collected data. Actually, requests are best expressed in indirectness to be polite and so the use of indirectness in Myanmar language.

In the Myanmar language, most of the requests are modified by the different question finals and Myanmar sentence or question finalizers not only decide the gender of the addresser but also denote the social distance and age difference between the interlocutors. For example, the sentence finals like ‘ရှင်’/shin/ and ‘ခင်ဗျာ’/khinbja/ in the indirect request denote the gender of the addresser. They also indicate that the addressee is older than the addresser or higher in social rank than the addresser. It is note-worthy that Myanmar sentence finals denote the social distance as well as the age difference between the interlocutors. This is a significant feature of Myanmar sentence finalizers. There is a wide choice of sentence finalizers for requests and questions and the speaker can choose the most appropriate one the best suited for the context he is engaged in.

Regarding vocative forms and address forms, Myanmar has abundant choice of address forms both for the first person pronoun and the second person pronoun. One more interesting point is the extensive use of the kinship terms in daily interactions. In Myanmar, these kinship terms are not restricted only to the kins but free to be used among non-kins.

On studying the request head act strategies, it was found that the most frequently used request head act strategies by Myanmar was conventional indirect strategy (CI), followed by direct strategy (DI), and non-conventional indirect strategy (NCI) is the least frequently used by Myanmar. In the Myanmar culture, the factor of age effects significantly on the producing of the request strategies.

For further research, there are a lot to do in the field of pragmatics such as analysing other speech acts such as refusal, compliment, greeting, etc. in different domains and contexts in the Myanmar language. More comparative studies can be preformed regarding politeness.



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APPENDIX

Situation 1:

In this situation, you urgently need a pen to note when you didn't take pen and you have to request to borrow a pen from someone who besides on you. How will you make a polite request?

*In a friendly relationship, if the hearer will be male or female who is

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

*In unfriendly relationship,

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

Situation 2:

You are preparing a presentation for final examination in your room. However, your roommate is watching TV and a big noise bother you. You want to stop it. What would you say?

*In a friendly relationship, if the hearer will be male or female who is

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

*In unfriendly relationship,

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

Situation 3:

You are on the school culture trip and you lost your wallet. You need money and you have to borrow it from someone. How will you make the request?

*In a friendly relationship, if the hearer will be male or female who is

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

*In unfriendly relationship,

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

Situation 4:

You are writing now the thesis and you need collect to some data for your thesis. Thus, you have to request to other students. How will you request?

*In a friendly relationship, if the hearer will be male or female who is

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

*In unfriendly relationship,

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

Situation 5:

You are waiting on your family members at the airport. They are late and you want to call them. But your phone bill is empty and you want someone to help you. What would you say?

*In a friendly relationship, if the hearer will be male or female who is

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

*In unfriendly relationship,

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

Situation 6:

You go to other city, you have to take a bus and it takes long about 5 hours. On the way, you are carsick and you want to change your seat with the window seat. You have to request someone who is sitting in window seat. How will you create a polite request to someone to change his/her seat?

*In a friendly relationship, if the hearer will be male or female who is

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

*In unfriendly relationship,

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

Situation 7:

In the company presentation room, you and other staff are discussing about the company's project. X speaks so fast that you can't follow him or her. You want X to repeat what has just been said and to speak slowly and clearly. What would you say ?

*In a friendly relationship, if the hearer will be male or female who is

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

*In unfriendly relationship,

1. younger than you...
2. same age with you...
3. older than you...

