Hierarchy politeness: What Brown and Levinson refused to see

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Abstract

Brown and Levinson's dichotomous (i.e., negative vs. positive) politeness system may be valid as a linguistic politeness system, but it is inadequate from a social psychological perspective, because it does not reflect sufficiently fundamental human desires. That is, it does not adequately treat the desire for admiration, which many believe to be a major force that has advanced human history. In fact, behaviors to gratify this desire have been endemic and have had the important function of maintaining societies. Brown and Levinson’s underrating of this desire may be a reflection of the Western tradition of the pursuit of equality and sincerity. This paper, in an attempt to confer on the desire for admiration its proper place in polite behavior, presents a trichotomous politeness system that consists of autonomy, fellowship, and hierarchy politeness, and visualizes their positions and amounts within the framework of social distance and power. Toward the end of the paper, the implications of this model in collectivistic and individualistic societies are discussed.

1. Introduction

The development of linguistic politeness studies over the last thirty years can roughly be divided into three stages. The initial stage is characterized by the search for universals in politeness behavior (Lakoff 1973, 1975; Brown & Levinson 1978, 1987; Leech 1983). This approach was criticized and gradually replaced by the search for linguistic and cultural relativity (Watts, Ide & Ehlich 1992; Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper 1989). Janney and Arndt (1992: 21) have called the two stages of development the first and second generations of linguistic politeness research. The recent trend in linguistic politeness research has shifted from that focused on rather static aspects of politeness to that focused on dynamic aspects of realizing
politeness. This "discursive approach," as Watts (2003: xii) has called
it, is skeptical of shared norms and emphasizes the importance of closely
examining how politeness is realized in specific contexts of interaction.
The new millennium was greeted by a series of publication of books
applying the new approach, such as Thornborrow (2002), Holmes and
Stubbe (2003), Watts (2003), Mills (2003), and Locher (2004). This trend
makes the search for the universal framework of politeness behavior
look anachronistic; however, the situation can be looked at differently.
Although searches for (semi-)universal frameworks and discursive dy-
namism are qualitatively different, they form complementary parts in
clarifying the complex phenomenon called politeness behavior. This
paper concentrates on depicting a more adequate universal framework
for politeness behavior by supplying what Brown and Levinson (1987)
ignored.

Recently, I classified the frameworks presented by Matsumoto (1988,
1989), Ide (1989), Watts (1992), and Blum-Kulka (1992)—which together
formed the most systematic attack on Brown and Levinson (1987)—as a
model based on the convention/volition parameter, arguing that it should
be regarded as a sub-framework for Brown and Levinson's, but not one
to replace it, and that the positive/negative parameter remains the more
fundamental framework (Yabuuchi 2002). I based my argument on the
assumption that human beings have two major socio-biological wants.
This assumption is consistent with those of Janney and Arndt (1992: 25)
and O'Driscoll (1996: 12–14). However, based on Maslow (1943, 1970:
chap. 4), I pointed out the problem of Brown and Levinson's positive
face consisting of two poorly compatible wants, that is, the desire for soli-
darity and the desire for admiration. This is what Jones (1975: 124) de-
scribed as follows: "The more impressive a person becomes, the more un-
approachable he becomes . . . and the more difficult it is to initiate social
interchanges with him[;] the tendency for respect and liking to be inver-
sely correlated—insofar as respect implies high impressiveness." Brown
and Levinson (1987: 62) combined the two wants into the single positive
face-want (i.e., "the want of every member that his want be desirable to
at least some others"). However, should the pride-sustaining act of admi-
ring the excellence of others and the fellowship-sustaining act of confirm-
ing common-ground be placed in the same category? Brown and Levinson
emphasize that their model is based on fundamental human face, "which
every member knows every other member desires" (1987: 62). Then, is
it right not to properly treat the desire for admiration? Brown and
Levinson often use the phrase "respect [positive or negative] face" in the
book. Respect is defined as "admiration for someone, especially because
of their personal qualities, knowledge, or skill" (Longman Dictionary of
Contemporary English 1995). This definition indicates that the primary meaning of respect concerns pride-sustaining.

Francis Fukuyama (2002: 182) has argued that megalothymia—“the desire to be recognized as superior to other people”—has been the cause of wars and the major force advancing history. The founders of modern liberalism, represented by British philosophers Hobbes and Locke, wanted to eradicate megalothymia and to replace it with a combination of worldly desire and reason (p. 185). That is, they proposed societies that consisted of “men without chest,” which was “what made man man” (p. 188). Many thinkers, including the German philosophers Hegel and Nietzsche, felt quite uneasy with what they saw as “the rise of an entire civilization of ‘men without chest,’ a society of bourgeois who aspired to nothing more than their own comfortable self-preservation” (p. 188). However, liberals’ efforts were successful in eliminating wars and realizing liberal democracy in many countries and, in this sense, history was over. However, societies are filled with people without thymos (strong self-esteem) who pursue economic benefits with reason, that is the “last men.” Indeed, they are the model persons in today’s democratic societies.3 However, this does not mean people have lost thymos in peaceful societies.

There have been at least three models that have properly treated the desire for recognition (or admiration). The first of these is Scollon and Scollon (1995: 33–49), who postulate involvement strategies, which can almost be equated with Brown and Levinson’s positive politeness strategies, and independence strategies, which can almost be equated with Brown and Levinson’s negative politeness strategies. Three types of politeness systems and their properties are given as follows:

Deference politeness system (−P, +D): equal social position (participants see themselves as being in equal social position) and distant, where independence strategies are used.
Solidarity politeness system (−P, −D): equal social position and close, where involvement strategies are used.
Hierarchy politeness system (+P, +D): unequal social position and distant, where independence strategies are used upward and involvement strategies are used downward.

In my opinion, Scollon and Scollon’s systems show only the typical conditions for using involvement and independent strategies. They do not attend to upward use of involvement strategies, such as praising or agreeing, or downward use of independent strategies, such as minimizing imposition or giving deference. Yet these uses occur frequently.

Another model is Lim (1994), who postulates three distinct face wants: autonomy-face, fellowship-face, and competence-face, which are defined as follows:
Autonomy-face is a person’s image that s/he is in control of their own fate, that is, s/he has the virtues of a full-fledged, mature, and responsible adult. This type of face includes such attributes as “independent,” “in control of self,” “initiative,” “creative,” “mature,” “composed,” “reliable,” and “self-sufficient.”

Fellowship-face is a person’s image that s/he is a worthy companion. It is concerned with the social aspect of a person, that is, how desirable a person is as a member of the group. Fellowship-face includes such attributes as “likable,” “accepted and loved,” “friendly,” “agreeable,” “cooperative,” “alike,” and “affiliated.”

Competence-face is the image that one is a person of ability. It is concerned with past accomplishments, good reputations, and the potential to perform successfully in the future. This type of face emphasizes such features as “knowledgeable,” “intelligent,” “wise,” “experienced,” “influential,” “prosperous,” “accomplished,” “attractive,” and “distinguished.” (Lim 1994: 211)

Lim’s autonomy-face corresponds to Brown and Levinson’s negative face, but their positive face is divided into two categories by treating the want for recognition independently from the want for friendship. While Lim’s model is preferable, what is lacking, in my opinion, is a consideration of how the three types of face fit into the framework of social distance and power. What I aim to do in this paper is to virtually reconstruct Lim’s three faces from a psychological viewpoint and to consider how the strategies to sustain each face are distributed in the framework.

The third model is O’Driscoll’s (1996: 12–14). He postulates three wants. The first two wants are positive and negative wants, and they are respectively the want for association, belonging, or merging, and the want for disassociation, independence, or individuation. O’Driscoll calls this paired opposition “want dualism.” Want dualism is shared by all the higher animals. However, “[f]or us it is not enough that our wants be satisfied; we want to feel that they have been, are, or will be satisfied. This additional want is self-esteem” (p. 12). He calls face the aspect of our self-esteem—“the part that depends on others’ attitudes toward us” (p. 12). The child by the “marriage” of face and negative want is negative face, and the child by the “marriage” of face and positive want is positive face. The third face, “the desire for a good face” is called culture-specific face, because “[w]hat attributes are considered praiseworthy and admirable, blameworthy and reprehensible, are a product of culture” (p. 14). My own view is that “culture-specific face” is a poor term because while positive face and negative face are both defined by highly universal socio-psychological features, culture-specific face is just characterized as non-universal. This face should have been named “face for admiration” or just “good face.” Moreover, the fact that the targets of admiration vary depending on culture belongs to another dimension. However, it is
significant that O'Driscoll presented a model based on the most fundamental human wants: wants for involvement, independence, and admiration. What is missing, in my opinion, is the perspective of the relationship of these wants with distance and power.

I believe that since politeness concerns the deepest parts of humans as communicative beings, the study of politeness behavior should involve not only inquiries into language usage but also inquiries into the intrinsic desires of humans as social beings. In this sense, Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory is to be commended. In the third section, I will postulate hierarchy politeness that is closely associated with the desire for recognition (or admiration) and discuss how it can be integrated into Brown and Levinson’s politeness framework.

2. Brown and Levinson’s politeness system

Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) postulated face as the central concept of their politeness theory. They define face as follows:

The public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself, consisting in two related aspects:

negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, right to non-distraction, i.e., to freedom of action and freedom from imposition.

positive face: the want of every “competent adult member” that his actions be unimpinged by others.

And further:

negative face: the want of every “competent adult member” that his actions be unimpinged by others.

positive face: the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others. (Brown & Levinson 1987: 62)

On the assumption that all interpersonal acts are potentially face-threatening to both addressee and addressee, which some scholars consider “paranoid” (Kasper 1990: 197) or “perverse” (Mills 2003: 60), Brown and Levinson (1987: 76) regard the redress to the face threatening act (FTA) as politeness, and present the following equation to show the relationships among the weightiness (W) of a particular FTA (Wx), the social distance (D) between the speaker (S) and the hearer (H), the power (P) that H has over S (P), and the ranking of imposition of the FTA in that culture (R): Wx = D(S, H) + P(H, S) + Rx.

Brown and Levinson comment on the concept of face as follows:
Our notion of “face” is derived from that of Goffman (1967) and from the English folk term, which ties face up with notions of being embarrassed or humiliated, or “losing face.” Thus face is something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction. (Brown & Levinson 1987: 61)

Goffman (1967: 10) describes face as one’s “most personal possession and the center of his security and pleasure.” Similar to this, and unlike Fraser and Nolen’s model (1981; and see Fraser 1990), which treats politeness in terms of only rights and obligations ignoring emotional aspects, or Lakoff’s (1973) and Leech’s (1983) models, which lack a socio-psychological theory on the deeper cause of conflicts (Watts 2003: 103–04), Brown and Levinson’s model is a holistic one that is based on the theory of the most fundamental desires of human beings.

Brown and Levinson highlighted stable aspects of politeness. However, they had recognized the context-dependent aspects of D, P, and R; that is, the cultural, contextual, and personal variability of D, P, and R, as well as the situationally changing rights and obligations (1987: 76–79). To reflect this recognition, their equation can be modified as follows: $W_x = a_1 D(S, H) + a_2 P(H, S) + a_3 R x$, where the $a_1$, $a_2$, and $a_3$ represent, respectively, the weights of D, P, and R in a culture. Culture here does not necessarily mean those major cultures associated with ethnology or nationality, but it embraces those conventionalized value systems of smaller communities, organizations, or even particular situations. The D, P, and R, respectively, embrace all components suggested by Spencer-Oatey (2000: 32–38).4 Therefore, power includes not only institutionalized power, but personal competence and skills, or economic wealth, which has a certain amount of influence over others even when there is no concrete promise of benefit for others. These are the components covered by Spencer-Oatey’s category no. 5 (i.e., referent power). The R is “culturally and situationally defined ranking of impositions by the degree to which they are considered to interfere with an agent’s wants of self-determination or of approval (his negative- and positive-face wants)” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 77). Therefore, when one is invited to dinner at his/her colleague’s home, both the host and the guest have obligation to entertain the other. The weight of obligation itself and the relative weight for each side will vary depending on the formality of the party, distance, relative power, historicity of the relationship of the host and guest, and so forth, as well as culture, which varies in the casualty of inviting others to one’s home.

What I find problematic with Brown and Levinson is, as has been mentioned, that two poorly compatible wants (i.e., the want for solidarity/fellowship and the want for recognition/admiration) are contained in
one want. It is not easy to sincerely admire someone with a higher competence or to congratulate an accomplishment of an equal unless s/he is a really close friend. This is because potential power difference drives a wedge into the common ground. What explains why Brown and Levinson combined these two incompatible wants into one category is probably related to the traditional adherence to sincerity (defined as a “congruence between avowal and actual feeling”; Stengel 2000: 18) in Western civilization since ancient Greece, especially in Protestantism (see Stengel 2000: chaps. 4, 7). In this regard, it is important to note Mills’s statement: “In relation to politeness, assessment of the degree of sincerity or commitment of the politeness or impoliteness is critical. However, within Brown and Levinson’s model we have to assume that all politeness is sincere” (Mills 2003: 60). That is, Brown and Levinson were only interested in highly sincere politeness. This explains why they added the words “at least some others” at the end of the definition of positive face quoted above.

Brown and Levinson stated this concerning sincerity in positive-politeness expressions:

Perhaps the only feature that distinguishes positive-politeness redress from normal everyday intimate language behavior is an element of exaggeration; this serves as a marker of the face-redressive aspect of positive-politeness expression, by indicating that even if S can’t with total sincerity say “I want your wants,” he can at least sincerely indicate “I want your positive face to be satisfied.” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 101)

This passage suggests the necessity of separating appropriate behavior from “positively marked appropriate behavior” (Locher 2004: 86). Watts, distinguishing polite behavior from politic behavior, characterizes linguistic politeness as:

… a marked extension or enhancement of politic behavior, as a conscious choice of linguistic forms which… are conventionally understood to be an attempt on the part of ego to enhance her/his standing with respect to alter… However, it is certainly marked, and its functions may easily be non-altruistic and clearly egocentric. (Watts 1992: 69)

Locher, although subscribing to the distinction of politic and polite behavior, observes: “Watts’ motivations for politeness are somewhat too egocentric, in that they underestimate the possibility that a speaker wishes to act altruistically…. Even though it [politeness] is marked, it still has to be appropriate in order to qualify as polite” (2004: 75, 90). That is, Locher considers that although politeness is a surplus, it must be within the range of appropriateness.
While Watts and Locher pointed out the necessity of distinguishing politeness as surplus (i.e., positively marked appropriate behavior) from politeness as ordinary appropriateness, neither of them paid adequate attention to the fact that the surplus, when in the context of power relationships, may expand to form a third important area of polite behavior to sustain the want of recognition/admiration. This type of polite behavior is generally called ingratiation or flattery, and it is not only endemic in societies since ancient times but it is also increasingly employed in the U.S. today (Stengel 2000: chap. 10). Watts, as well as Locher, seems to think that the surplus instantly becomes impolite when it passes over the border of appropriateness, but it is not always the case with ingratiation or flattery. Stengel stresses that everybody likes to be flattered, quoting from renowned writers:

“What really flatters a man,” said Barnard Shaw, “is that you think him worth flattering.” Even if we see through it, we are hardly outraged. Usually, we just say thank you. “We love flattery,” wrote Emerson, “even though we are not deceived by it, because it shows that we are of importance enough to be courted.” (Stengel 2000: 16)

3. Hierarchy politeness

In the previous sections, I argued that the want for freedom from imposition and the want for involvement are incompatible, especially among equals; that is, if we want to satisfy more of one want, we have to sacrifice the other want as much. Everyone takes a place on the continuum and maintains his/her niche. However, it is undeniable that everyone has a desire to satisfy, if possible, both wants as much as s/he wants to simultaneously (or rather, whenever s/he wants to). A way to satisfy this desire is to have power. Power makes people maintain a distance from the powerful person for fear of being controlled or attacked (i.e., deference), but at the same time power evokes admiration, respect, or envy toward the powerful person (i.e., sincere want for involvement), as long as people do not have negative feelings toward him/her. Of course, there are people who approach the powerful person only for personal gain (i.e., insincere want for involvement). People who seek involvement are not always conscious of whether their want is sincere or not. However, there is but a step from admiration and envy to jealousy, and flattery may contain poison. Therefore, powerful persons take care to be liked by less powerful people in order to maintain their power, whether they have formal or informal status.
It is for this reason that downward ingratiating is necessary. I am here referring to deference and ingratiating, which are closely associated with (or prompted by) power difference as hierarchy politeness, and it is this hierarchy politeness that I will shortly integrate into the framework of Brown and Levinson’s politeness system. In my opinion it is not necessary, or rather that it is impossible, to postulate strategies exclusively applicable to hierarchy politeness besides the positive and negative politeness strategies postulated by Brown and Levinson. Instead, positive and negative politeness strategies should, respectively, be divided into sincere and insincere uses to explain part of hierarchy politeness. This is because the desire for admiration (or respect, recognition) is nothing but the desire for a greater ability to arbitrarily control the balance of involvement and distancing directed toward ego.

Therefore, the strategies pertaining to hierarchy politeness ought to be the norms of use of negative and positive politeness strategies. If the super strategies for hierarchy politeness comparable to those for negative and positive politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson 1987: 102, 131) are to be suggested, the highest strategy (or norm) is something like, “Make your insincere use of politeness strategies look as credible as possible.”

Under this supreme norm come such norms as “Don’t give a compliment and ask for a favor at the same time,” “Flatter people behind their backs,” “Don’t flatter the obvious” (for other enhancement), or preemptive conformity (“Anticipate what the boss’s opinion will be and then state it before she does”), and “Make it seem that you are gradually persuaded to agree with the target’s views” (for opinion conformity).

We turn now to a brief review of studies on ingratiating and flattery. Ingratiation is defined by Jones, the pioneer of ingratiation studies, as “a class of strategic behaviors illicitly designed to influence a particular other person concerning the attractiveness of one’s personal qualities” (Jones 1975: 10). Ingratiation obviously belongs to the surplus claimed by Watts and Locher in the sense that it “departs from normative expectations” (p. 3). Ingratiation, in many cases, can be rephrased as flattery, which Jones defines as “a term which will be used more loosely when the security of attraction is less important than the security of benefit, and when over-generous praise is especially involved” (p. 2). Ingratiation and flattery are not highly appreciated especially in the West, as will be discussed below. However, neither are they rare acts in Western cultures, as is proved by the presence of many academic studies on the subject (e.g., Godfrey, Jones & Lord 1986; Vonk 1999, 2002; Watt 1993; Yukura 1998). Not only that, but positive effects of ingratiation are recognized today by many organizations and individuals, and “the need for ingratiation and likelihood of its occurrence rise with increasing power differentials.”
(Rosenfeld et al. 2002: 33). Kumar and Beyerlein (1991) constructed a 24-item instrument for measuring ingratiatory behaviors in organizational settings, which is useful to know what kinds of acts they had in mind as ingratiation. The 24 items are all regarded as positive politeness strategies. However, according to the above definition of ingratiation, there is no reason to exclude surplus negative politeness, whether upward or downward, from ingratiation. Upward negative politeness more than that one would give to his/her equals is essentially hierarchical and forms the core of hierarchy politeness. Downward negative politeness more than that normally expected can be regarded as ingratiation that is hierarchically motivated (discussed below).

4. A new classification of politeness

In this section, I will first present an outline of my hypothesis on the politeness system, and then provide examples. The hypothesis presents a new classification of politeness (i.e., autonomy, fellowship, and hierarchy politeness), their relative places and amounts in relation to social distance and power, as well as the psychological background behind their arrangement. The politeness strategies I have in mind are not limited to linguistic strategies, but include all types of strategies such as paralinguistic and non-verbal features, offer of goods or services, and so forth. In the present study, politeness is defined by combining the definitions in *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995) and *Collins COBUID English Language Dictionary* (1987):

Politeness: behavior or speech that is correct for the social situation you are in, and which shows that you are careful to consider other people’s needs and feelings, whether or not you mean them sincerely.

Here, the hearer’s evaluation is irrelevant. Only the actor’s behavior, which s/he expects will be evaluated as polite by the recipient, is dealt with. This accords with Brown and Levinson (1987). Their politeness strategies are speaker’s strategies, and do not include the recipient’s interpretations. However, there is a difference between Brown and Levinson’s linguistic model and my socio-psychological model. Politeness that is realized in unmarked contexts by Brown and Levinson’s negative and positive strategies are negative politeness (NP) and positive politeness (PP), respectively. My fellowship politeness is, in unmarked contexts, realized by Brown and Levinson’s PP strategies, autonomy politeness by NP strategies, and hierarchy politeness by both NP and PP strategies.
4.1. Models of politeness relationships

While admittedly somewhat simplified, two models proposed here should help to visualize the relationships among the various types of politeness. Figure 1 shows the amounts of NP and PP that vary in relation to social distance; that is, the amount of NP increases as social distance becomes greater, and the amount of PP increases as social distance becomes smaller.\(^{10}\) Figure 2 shows the relationships of autonomy, fellowship, and hierarchy politeness with power. The horizontal interrupted line in the center of this figure represents the position of ego. What I am principally interested in are these relationships, thus I will focus on Figure 2. It shows that the amount of NP increases upward and decreases downward. In the area of NP, the area enclosed by the line segments jb, bd, di, and ij (referred to as Area [jbdi], hereafter) represents sincere deference to alter’s autonomy (i.e., autonomy politeness). (Here, it should be noted that the present model presupposes as alter all sorts of people from infants or bed-ridden persons to very competent adults.) In the area of PP, sincere fellowship (i.e., fellowship politeness) is represented by Area [dfi]. What I call hierarchy politeness is represented by Areas [abj], [bcd], [def], and [fhi]. As discussed earlier, sincerity in politeness is a matter of degree and even the actors are not always conscious of it. Therefore, the distinctions between Areas [fhi] and [fik], [def] and [dfk], and [bcd] and [bdk] are highly symbolic in the following sense: It may be difficult to identify observable signs to distinguish between sincere and insincere politeness because insincere politeness must be performed very carefully so that insincerity is not detected. However, it is possible to distinguish them by administering a psychological test or by observing

Figure 1. Relationship between the amount of politeness and social distance
the actor’s everyday behavior for a certain period. While investigation into this area must be developed, I contend that there are signs, albeit very subtle, that show insincerity in interactions. Some have objected that ingratiators try to conceal insincerity even from themselves, so that psychological tests cannot always detect ingratiation (Jones 1975: 26). To this objection, I would reply that ingratiation still exists theoretically, that is, in the world of ideas, just as a perfect circle is only theoretical. Concerning Area [abj], there will be insincere deference, but deference is essentially hierarchical whether it is sincere or insincere. Area [ijbk] (i.e., upward autonomy politeness) is inherently sincere because it represents the recognition that a person who is more competent than ego is at least as competent as ego.

What patterns the amount of NP will exhibit is discussed first. This is because NP consists of deference to relatively simple wants, which can be classified as freedom from imposition. Previously, I reviewed a substantial number of empirical studies on the relationships of linguistic politeness level with social distance (D) and power (P) (Yabuuchi 2006). What should be noted first of all is that there are two different scales to measure the degree of linguistic politeness: elaboration and (in)directness. Wolfson (1981, 1983) found that the degree of politeness measured by elaboration (i.e., the number of strategies used for realizing a speech act, which is usually reflected as the total number of words) bulges in the middle sections of both horizontal (D) and vertical (P) axes. On the other hand, many studies represented by CCSARP (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper 1989) (see, e.g., for requests, Blum-Kulka 1987; Blum-Kulka & House 1989; Hill et al. 1986; Fraser & Nolen 1981; Lee-Wong 1994; for complaints, Olshtain & Weinbach 1993; for refusals, Beebe et al. 1990; for apologies,
Olshtain 1989, Wolfson et al. 1989, Holmes 1989, 1990) suggest that the degree of politeness measured by indirectness (in cases of inherently impolite speech acts like requests and denials) or explicitness (in cases of inherently polite speech acts like apologies and expressions of gratitude) does not bulge in the middle sections, but strongly skews toward strangers (D) or upward (P). These results, as a whole, endorse Inclination [ab] in Figure 1 and Inclination [ad] in Figure 2. The Inclination [ad] (Fig. 2) is also supported by the findings of real conversation analysis. Holmes and Stubbe (2003: 6), based on their analyses of real conversations at the workplace, observe: “[I]t is self-evident in the interest of a subordinate to express themselves politely or with deference to a superior. Our data provides a multitude of examples illustrating deferential politeness.”

In the Introduction of the present paper, I expressed my agreement with Lim’s (1994) face system and quoted the definitions of his autonomy-face, fellowship-face, and competence-face. Autonomy-face, characterized by such words or phrases as “in control of one’s fate,” “mature,” and “independent,” is one’s self-confidence that s/he has the competence to do everything that is necessary at least to maintain his/her current way of life. Fellowship-face, as characterized by such words as “likable,” “accepted,” “friendly,” and “cooperative,” presupposes that one has the competence and quality that at least do not harm or impede the group that s/he is a member of. In this connection, competence-face can be understood as the desire to seek recognition of one’s competence that is greater than others’. Therefore, the politeness one pays to someone else’s competence-face is deference and/or admiration to the competence that is greater than that of him/herself (ego).

Limiting the discussion to NP for the time being, it has been empirically found that the amount of NP toward others who are more competent than ego (i.e., upward NP) increases upward (represented by Area [abki]). Within this area, the amount of deference to the alter’s autonomy is theoretically postulated to be the same as the amount of self-esteem to the ego’s autonomy. It is represented by Area [jbki]. Area [abj], therefore, represents the deference toward competence greater than the ego’s, that is upward hierarchical negative politeness (or UHNP). In “vertical” (or collectivistic) societies, where hierarchy has a great affinity with closeness (Tannen 1993: 170), people tend to exaggerate UHNP to increase solidarity (discussed below). On the other hand, in individualistic societies, where hierarchy is associated with distancing (Tannen 1993: 171), people tend to suppress UHNP, and instead, they tend to exaggerate fellowship to their superiors: Jones (1975: 24) lists “self-presentation” as one of the four tactics of ingratiation. There are two types of self-presentation: the type of stressing one’s likability and the type of stressing one’s higher
competence. Both can be regarded as claiming to be in the same group with the superior person (i.e., a kind of exaggeration of fellowship).

On the other hand, deference to the autonomy of people who are less competent than ego theoretically decreases downward. However, it is difficult to think that the display of downward deference decreases downward closely following the downward decrease of sincere autonomy deference. Because, first of all, there is the moral taboo against bullying or depriving the weaker party. Second, there is a phenomenon that can be called “downward ingratiation.” Jones (1975: 124) describes a case in which a high-status person presents himself in a self-deprecating manner in order to demonstrate his approachability to his followers. Another method for a high-status person to demonstrate his approachability is to stress characteristics that are shared by his followers (p. 124). This is a usual case of self-disclosure, which is theoretically an NP strategy but often works as a PP strategy, as discussed above. Self-deprecation is at times an exaggerated form of self-disclosure. Jones says, “But the self-deprecation cannot be indiscriminate. The high-status person must not depreciate himself on those characteristics central to his status” (p. 124). Thus there are moral and practical pressures to increase downward NP, which was indicated by \( \leftrightarrow C \) in Figure 2. Downward ingratiation (or downward hierarchical NP) is represented by Area \([bcd]\).

4.2. Relationship between positive politeness and social distance/power

There are only a few statistical studies on the relationship between positive politeness and social distance (D), and there are even fewer studies on the relationship between positive politeness and power (P). Research on the relationship between PP and D includes Barnlund and Araki’s (1985) study on compliments and Boxer’s (1993) study on indirect complaints (IC) and indirect complaint responses. In the former study, the authors found a positive correlation between the directness of compliments and social distance; that is, the more distant, the more direct. In the latter, the sub-study on IC, which is basically an elaboration of the former, the outcomes are equivocal; that is, in some fields the peak skewed toward intimates and in the other fields the peak skewed toward strangers. The sub-study on IC responses includes data that shows the relationship between directness and social distance. The results were these: Commiseration ([+PP]) appeared more frequently for friends and strangers and less frequently for intimates. Contradiction [−PP] appeared most frequently for intimates, less frequently for friends, and least frequently for strangers. Both Barnlund and Araki (1985) and Boxer (1993) suggest positive correlation between D and linguistic PP (i.e., the
more distant, the more positively polite). This appears to be contradictory to what my Figure 1 shows (i.e., the closer, the more positively polite). However, as already stated, PP strategy in the present study is not limited to linguistic ones, but includes paralinguistic features and substantive acts of offering goods and services. To my knowledge, there has been no empirical study that has dealt with PP realized by so many strategies. However, again, since the meaning of good/service-offering is significant, it does not seem to require much discussion to predict negative correlation between D and PP in the present definition. The negative correlation will be stronger in collectivistic cultures, where people usually have a stronger sense of in-group/out-group distinction than in individualistic cultures. This strength of relationship is represented by the degree of inclination of Line [de].

The relationship between PP and power was investigated as part of Takahashi and Beebe’s study (1993). The percentage of positive remarks in disagreement situations was much greater upward than downward with Japanese subjects. It was slightly greater downward than upward with American subjects. In correction situations, the percentage of positive remarks was much greater downward than upward with American subjects. It was slightly greater downward than upward with Japanese subjects. Since the positive remarks investigated here are all those in disagreement or correction situations, they have a strong characteristic of mitigation of negatively impolite speech acts. However, positive remarks themselves are definitely a PP strategy. Takahashi and Beebe (1993), alongside positive remarks, investigated softeners in correction situations and expressions of regret in refusal situations. In both strategies, the percentages of upward use were much greater than those of downward use with both Japanese and American subjects, although the differences were significantly smaller with American subjects. The above results, taken together, suggest the following (the problem of sincerity aside): 1) In collectivistic societies, such as Japan, the amount of PP tends to increase upward, or in other words, the suppression on upward PP is weaker than individualistic societies; this potentially supports Inclination [fg]; 2) In individualistic societies, such as America, there is a pressure to increase downward PP; this potentially supports Pressure (B→); and 3) In both types of societies, the amount of NP increases upward and decreases downward, but the tendency is smaller in individualistic societies; this potentially supports the presence of Pressure (←C) in the universal movement toward recognizing individual’s right to freedom.13

Fellowship politeness (Area [dfi]) was postulated as respect for Lim’s fellowship-face, and it represents sincere fellowship in my definition. Lim’s definition of fellowship-face quoted above is elaborated thusly:
“When persons claim these values for themselves, they want to be thought of as a member of an in-group. Thus, fellowship-face brings about the want to be included” (Lim 1994: 211). Throughout his definition he uses words such as “agreeable,” “alike,” “affiliated,” “in-group”; that is, terms that offer the perception of closeness based on similarity. It is natural to assume that this perception is the greatest among equals, and decreases both upward and downward. Of the five components of social distance listed by Spencer-Oatey (see note 4 below), “Social similarity,” “Familiarity, or how well people know each other” and “Sense of like-mindedness” signify the perception of closeness based on similarity. This also corroborates the above assumption; that is, true perception of closeness is shared among equals the most, and it decreases both upward and downward. This is the reason why sincere fellowship is postulated as Area [dfi] in Figure 2. Perception of closeness (or affiliation) may be slightly different between collectivistic and individualistic societies. In fact, Spencer-Oatey (1997), in her research of British and Chinese conceptions of tutor-postgraduate students relations, “found that the variables power and closeness were significantly negatively correlated for the British respondents, but unrelated for the Chinese respondents” (Spencer-Oatey 2000: 35). However, this difference is a matter of the degree of inclination; that is, in collectivistic societies, the inclination of Lines [fi] and [df] will be more gentle than in individualistic societies. It is well-known that a person, no matter how powerful s/he becomes, will suffer from solitude and suspicion without true friendship. Therefore, his/her subordinates, who know this, try to cover their ingratiation with the appearance of true care. At the least, they know they can confirm the common ground of being a human. This passage from Goffman (1967: 61) can be read in the same light: “[A]n attendant in cheerfully addressing a doctor as ‘Doc’ may sometimes show respect for the medical role and yet male-solidarity with the person who fills it.”

The amount of politeness, regardless of its sincerity, can basically be hypothesized to increase upward, which is represented by the Area [adg] in Figure 2. This hypothesis is supported by the following observations by other scholars:

We have already accepted Thibaut and Kelley’s (1959) general approach to the definition of power and dependence, and is so doing have endorsed the assumption that power differences are relative differences in the ability of one person to move another through a wide range of outcomes. Inherent in this definition, then, are certain implications regarding the dependent position of the person low in power and his orientation to the resources which the high-power person commands. . . . [O]ne is more motivated to be ingratiating when he lacks resources than when he commands them. (Jones 1975: 118–119)
[W]here there is hierarchy and an asymmetry in power relationships, there will inevitably be techniques, behaviors, strategies—call them what you like—that help the individual advance up that hierarchy. One of those techniques is playing up to someone stronger in exchange for protection or some advantage. That’s the description of strategic flattery. (Stengel 2000: 38)

Flattery can occur without design or premeditation. We know, even without thinking, that when we praise someone we are more likely to be liked by that person. Studies from the 1950s among college students . . . showed that young men were more likely to like the people they helped if they perceived those people to be of higher status. But it was something that they were utterly unaware of. (Stengel 2000: 42)

However, these observations only suggest that people have an inherent urge to ingratiate upward. If they actually do so is another question. Jones (1975: 121) predicted the presence of some suppression on this urge by stating that “the low-status person is highly motivated to be liked by the high-status leader, but his position is so obvious in this respect that some of the more obvious tactics of ingratiation may seem risky and inopportune.” Then, he hypothesized: “Low-status subjects show a greater tendency to refrain from overtly flattering high-status subjects than do high-status subjects from flattering low-status ones. This is especially the case given high compatibility [i.e., solidarity] incentives” (p. 125, brackets mine). However, this hypothesis was “directly controverted by the data” (p. 135). On this outcome, he comments that “effect-oriented subordinates cannot resist expressing complimentary evaluations to a superordinate even though this may be an ineffective or damaging tactic for winning favor and approval” (p. 137). Up to this point, my hypotheses on the incremental urge for upward ingratiation (represented by (Line [fg])) and the presence of a pressure to suppress the urge (↔A) have been demonstrated.

Fellowship is easier to show downward than upward, or rather, it is risky to show fellowship upward, as Scollon and Scollon (1995) have suggested. This is also endorsed by Goffman (1967: 64): “Between superordinate and subordinate we may expect to find asymmetrical relations, the superordinate having the right to exercise certain familiarities which the subordinate is not allowed to reciprocate.” Goffman (pp. 64–65) explained: “[T]here are many organizations in America where differences in rank are seen as so great a threat to the equilibrium of the system that the ceremonial aspect of behavior functions not as a way of iconically expressing these differences but as a way of carefully counterbalancing them.” If counterbalancing the difference in rank is so important, it might be recommended that people show fellowship upward, but this is not generally the case. This is because the status difference that must be
maintained is actually so strict that showing fellowship upward is more threatening to the system than the other way around. Besides such a social reason, I think there is a more psychological reason, though they are closely related after all. This is the “ceremonial avoidance, a self-protective kind” (p. 70). “[It] may resemble deferential restraint but is analytically quite different from it. Just as the individual may avoid an object so as not to pollute or defile it, so he may avoid an object so as not to be polluted or defiled by it” (p. 69). This want for avoiding involvement with inferiors is a reversal of the want for involvement with superiors. These wants in relation to power are depicted by Lines [df] and [fg] in Figure 2. Since everybody knows everybody has these wants, people know it is shameful and immoral to avoid inferiors and try to get involved with superiors. Thus are created pressures to show more fellowship downward (B→) and to show less involvement upward (↔A). To sum up, the major component of Area [fhi] is insincere praise, which is a reflection of deference and therefore in many cases will be accompanied by any deference marker, and the minor component is insincere fellowship. The major component of Area [def] is insincere fellowship and the minor component is insincere praise.

5. Differences between politeness systems in the East and West

In this section, I will discuss the differences between politeness systems in the East (especially Japan) and the West (especially the U.S.).

Describing interactions between workers in different American organizations, Goffman observed:

In the research hospital under study, psychiatrists, psychologists, and sociologists were part of a single ceremonial group as regards first-naming, and this symmetrical familiarity apparently served to allay some feeling on the part of psychologists and sociologists that they were not equal members of the team, as indeed they were not. Similarly, in a study of a small business managers, the writer found that filling station attendants had the right to interrupt their boss, slap him on the back, rib him, use his phone, and take other liberties, and that this ritual license seemed to provide a way in which the manager could maintain morale and keep his employees honest. We must realize that organizations that are quite similar structurally may have quite different deference styles, and that deference patterns are partly a matter of changing fashion. (Goffman 1967: 65)

The interaction between the filling station employees and their boss is characterized by the fact that the subordinates first showed [+PP] to their superior, which may be problematic, and then the superior showed [+PP] in the form of permitting the problematic [+PP]. I have labeled both what
the employees and their boss did as [+PP], but actually, what the employees did is negatively impolite (i.e., imposition: [−NP]) and what the boss did is negatively polite (i.e., forgiving: [+NP]). The behavior of subordinates to show intimacy and dependence by committing a minor offense to their superior is a way of expressing amae (a type of dependence that was claimed to be peculiar to Japanese culture by Doi 1971) (Matsuzawa 1988: 409–410; Doi 2001: 28–32). The behavior of expressing intimacy by intentionally committing a minor offense is thought to be quite universal between equals (e.g., positive politeness strategy 11 [Be optimistic]): “for S to be so presumptuous as to assume H will cooperate with him may carry a tacit commitment for S to cooperate with H as well” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 126). What is interesting is that in American society too, behavior similar to amae functions to maintain solidarity between unequals.

Tannen (1993: 171) illustrates organizational relationships peculiar to various cultures on a grid formed by the axes of hierarchy—equality and closeness—distance. Japanese amae relationship is placed in the dimension of hierarchy-closeness while American employer-employee relationship is placed in the dimension of hierarchy-distance.14 I think Tannen’s view is basically correct. To put it in another way, in collectivistic societies, confirming or emphasizing power difference upward is a good means to create solidarity. This is due to the difference in the way the societies are structured. Typical strategies to confirm or emphasize power difference upward are the use of deferential expressions (which includes the honorific), self-denigration (which belongs to the modesty maxim of Leech), self-disclosure, apology, forgiving, and thanking. These strategies mainly belong to Brown and Levinson’s negative politeness strategies 5–10 (Brown & Levinson 1987: 131). Brown and Levinson’s negative politeness strategies 1–10 (p. 131) and positive politeness strategies 1–15 (p. 102) can be put together to form a continuum of strategies arranged by the strength of FTA-redressing power. Negative politeness strategies with relatively weak FTA-redressing power can be (and actually are) used as positive politeness strategy. Many scholars concur with this assumption: e.g., deference (Koutsantoni 2004: 120), gratitude and thanking (Eisenstein & Bodman 1993: 65), apology (Ji 2000: 1061; Gass 1996: 9), and indirectness (Kasper 1990: 200). Humor, which “serves to create and maintain solidarity” (Holmes & Stubbe 2003: 109), also has a “mitigating or hedging effect on ‘controlling’ speech acts, such as directives and criticisms” (p. 114), which is an NP effect. Brown and Levinson (1987: 245) state that Japanese culture is a negative politeness culture compared with British and American cultures. However, this is an assessment by the politeness scale they made (i.e., a would-be universal etic...
scale). If the Japanese politeness system is assessed by the Japanese emic scale, the amounts of positive and negative politeness are probably balanced. Otherwise, the society would fall apart at some time or would move toward balancing the amounts of the two types of politeness. I suggest that this balancing hypothesis applies to any society or organization that is naturally maintained without any strong pressure for solidarity, such as during war time where there is a common enemy or in the case of preparatory schools whose shared purpose is to prepare students for college entrance examinations, even though the students themselves are rivals.

Collectivistic and individualistic societies have a strong association with a large and small power difference, respectively (Hofstede 1991: 54). How does the size of these power differences influence the factors in Figure 2? As mentioned above, in collectivistic societies appropriate power difference is more of a contributing than a threatening factor to social stability. In such societies, upward ingratiation is less negatively evaluated, therefore the Areas [abj] and [fhi] will be larger than in individualistic societies. In this respect, Jones’s report that when solidarity was emphasized the subjects showed a greater amount of upward ingratiation is significant. On the other hand, in collectivistic societies, since superiors have less need to make their dominance look smaller, the Areas [bcd] and [def] will be smaller than in individualistic societies. However, it should also be stressed that these differences are surface phenomena. Looking more deeply at these interactions, at least in Japanese society, subordinates know their *amae* is allowed to a large extent. And, in fact, many Japanese institutions have decision-making systems that effectively solicit subordinates’ opinions. Also, superiors usually do not show much ingratiation to subordinates, but in fact many of them offer paternalistic care to their subordinates (Nakane 1967: 138–146). In contrast, in individualistic societies (especially the U.S.), superior-subordinate relationships look very egalitarian, but in fact the power differences between status positions are very rigorous, even more so than in French society (Platt 1998: 336).

The Area [abj] in Figure 2, which represents deference to people who are more powerful than *ego*, is inherently hierarchical and forms the core of hierarchy politeness. There is, of course, exaggerated deference, which corresponds to ingratiation as defined by Jones (see the above definition). What I propose as hierarchy politeness is therefore Area [abj] plus Areas [bcd], [def], and [fhi]. The last three areas symbolically represent the insincere part of polite behavior, although actually the sincere/insincere distinction is not clear even to the actors themselves. The difficulty of distinction is magnified by cultural factors. For instance, Westerners may perceive great insincerity from Easterners ingratiating upward, but Easterners who were socialized to value vertical solidarity may be doing it
with sincerity. Conversely, to Easterners’ eyes, downward ingratiation by Westerners may look quite insincere. Westerners have been very sensitive to insincerity and flattery since the time of ancient Greece as seen in the following statements:

They [ancient Greeks] didn’t like the idea that some people considered themselves more equal than others, and they didn’t like it when some people made themselves inferior to others. That’s why they loathed flattery. They saw it as a form of self-abasement. They thought it as deeply undemocratic. . . . In Hellenistic Greece and in Roman society, thinkers concerned themselves with the triad of flattery, frankness, and friendship. The subject “How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend” became a set piece among Greek and Roman thinkers. (Stengel 2000: 90–91)

About a thousand years later, the New England Puritans thought:

In a predetermined world, there was not much room for anything that might alter your destiny, much less something as trivial as flattery. If you believe in a wintry and unpredictable God who has decreed everyone’s divine destiny from the beginning of time, what is left for poor human flattery then? What good could a few smarmy compliments do you? Flattery is in part about manipulating your deserters, but if your cosmic destiny was already settled eons ago, what was the point? If you were saved, who needed flattery, and if you were damned, what did it matter? (Stengel 2000: 163–164)

However, “[t]he Puritans who came to New England were of two minds” (Stengel 2000: 163). They “had a heart that yearned for piety, but a head that was made for business” (p. 161). “Flattering in America was seen as unmanly. Truth was straight and hard and masculine, and anything that departed from it, like flattery, was regarded as effeminate. The act of flattering someone put you in an inferior position” (p. 162). On the other hand:

Americans had what the writer Margaret Fuller called “love of unity.” In America, flattery was not about charm or romance, it was a tool. Not that it didn’t have a similar function in the Old World, it’s just that Americans were explicit about it. It was the apparatus of ingratiation. It wasn’t something mysterious as it had been in the Old World; it was a way to get ahead, to make a deal, to get the corner office. (Stengel 2000: 162)

Thus, in America today “[f]lattery is not seen as bad or wrong because it is perceived as another tool for playing the game” (Stengel 2000: 19). It is probably because of the traditional loathing of insincerity that Western students of politeness have refused to give ingratiation and flattery its rightful place in politeness theory and have yet to develop a substantial theory that incorporates them. To conclude this section, the following quotation from Stengel seems appropriate:
In his last book, published shortly before he died, Jones quotes one of the wisest observers of human nature in history to the effect that flattery is not always strategic and not always such a bad thing. “To charge all unmerited praise with the guilt of flattery,” wrote Samuel Johnson, “and to suppose that the encomiast always knows and feels the falsehood of his assertions, is surely to discover great ignorance of human nature and human life. In determinations dependent not on rules, but on experience and comparison, judgment is always to some degree subject to affection. Very near admiration is the wish to admire.” (Stengel 2000: 240)

6. Summary

Based on the belief that Brown and Levinson’s dichotomous politeness system is not adequate from a socio-psychological perspective, this article has presented a trichotomous system that consists of fellowship, autonomy, and hierarchy politeness, and attempted to illustrate the places and amounts of each politeness in the framework of social distance and power. The most significant feature of this relatively new classification is its recognition of ingratiatory behavior—which has hitherto been largely ignored especially in the West—by positively evaluating insincerity and upward deference triggered by power difference.

Fellowship politeness is the expression of sincere politeness based on the recognition of various qualities held in common. Autonomy politeness is the deference to the alter’s self-confidence that s/he has the competence to do everything that is necessary at least to maintain his/her present status. Hierarchy politeness refers to the deference paid to the competence that is greater than that of ego, plus the insincere surplus of fellowship politeness and the insincere surplus of downward autonomy politeness. Upward deference tend to be exaggerated (therefore insincere) in collectivistic societies and minimized in individualistic societies. Upward praise, downward fellowship, and downward autonomy recognition that are exaggerated to curry favor or counterbalance power difference all pertain to hierarchy politeness, because they are all products of power difference.

It is true that since the signs of insincere politeness are at times hardly observable and people are not always conscious of their insincerity, the above distinctions are highly psychological or theoretical. Yet since these kinds of politeness behavior are endemic worldwide and have important functions in maintaining society, it is not advisable to postulate a politeness system that ignores those kinds of politeness behavior. It should be emphasized that I am not proposing that fellowship, autonomy, and hierarchy politeness each have their own exclusive strategies. Brown and Levinson’s positive and negative strategies, by which people create
involvement and detachment, do the work of realizing these three types of politeness.

Finally, with regard to potential differences and similarities in Figure 2 between collectivistic and individualistic cultures, I have emphasized the possibility that within so-called negative politeness societies, like Japan, some “negative politeness strategies” are used to create solidarity so that the amounts of positive and negative politeness are balanced within the society.

Notes

1. O’Driscoll (1996: 12) has stated, “Wants dualism is shared to varying extents by all the higher animals,” supporting this by the following footnote: “Janney and Arndt (1992: 25) cite neuroanatomical studies which show that ‘Feeling of attraction and repulsion … are triggered by the limbic system, which humans share anatomically with the other mammals.’ The contrast between attraction and repulsion is exactly that which the concept of wants dualism is intended to capture. Thus, there may be empirical evidence for the concept to support the deductive reasoning used in this paper.” Although relying on intuition, I have suggested elsewhere a socio-biological basis for negative and positive face as follows: Each individual within a gregarious animal species has a want to pursue fulfillment of its own instincts of feeding and mating without interference from others, but at the same time it knows instinctively the pursuit itself is made possible by its membership of the group, so it simultaneously has a want to be accepted by the group (Yabuuchi 2002). I further characterized the contention of negative/positive vs. convention/volition parameter as the difference between purpose (or principle) and process (or reality), and stressed the priority of the former over the latter. For example, the purpose of playing baseball, in our everyday lives, is to enjoy playing the game, not to engage the cooperation of fellow members or to express loyalty to the manager. Granted, the latter is a secondary purpose. Any player in any culture will follow the manager’s directions to a certain extent, suppressing his/her want to respond individually to the challenge of his/her opponent. How much the player is expected to follow the manager’s directions differs by culture. In individualistic cultures, responding honestly to the challenges is the way of enjoying the game and playing politely, while in collectivistic cultures they can enjoy playing the game by responding to the challenges only through following convention (i.e., following the manager’s directions and complying with the expectations of fellow players). Thus, their efforts to be polite is half spent on conforming to convention. That is, in individualistic societies, in particular, the U.S., which was founded on religious principles, principles are put into practice individually, but in collectivistic societies, in particular, Japan, where there is strong pressure to conform (Yabuuchi 2004), there are many additional regulations (i.e., secondary system; see Hamaguchi 1998: 115) based on cultural traditions and customs, and principles are realized only after passing the secondary system.

2. For a theory of human motivation, Maslow postulated five stages of human needs: physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, esteem needs, and the need for self actualization. These needs arrange themselves in hierarchies of pre-potency: “That is to say, the appearance of one need usually rests on the prior satisfaction of another, more
pre-potent need” (Green 2000: 1). Although Maslow does not remark on the incompatibility between love needs and esteem needs, it is significant that these two needs were distinguished from each other. Another corroboration is provided by Kawai (1976: 144–147), who explained the cause of anthrophobia, which is common with Japanese, as the conflict between the desire to be superior to others and the desire to be accepted and loved by others.

3. In this sense, Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory can be said to have developed from such an Anglo-Saxon mentality.

4. Spencer-Oatey (2000: 33–34) lists the following possible components for distance and power. Those for distance are: 1) social similarity; 2) frequency of contact; 3) length of acquaintance; 4) familiarity, or how well people know each other; 5) sense of like-mindedness; 6) positive/negative affect. Those for power are: 1) reward power; 2) coercive power; 3) expert power; 4) legitimate power; 5) referent power. As for Imposition, she comments as follows: “Message content also has a major influence on the choice of rapport-management strategies. Messages can vary in their likely degree of face-threat, and they can also have ‘costs’ associated with them. These cost are not necessarily financial (although they may be); they can be costs of time, effort, imposition, inconvenience, risk, and so on…. Conversely, messages can have ‘benefits’ associated with them. For example, offering to drive a friend to the airport can be beneficial to the friend in terms of time, convenience, financial costs, and so on’” (pp. 35–36).

5. The clause “all politeness is sincere” at the end of this quotation is semantically contradictory, because politeness usually implies that one is not saying exactly what he/she thinks or feels, especially when it is something negative to the hearer; politeness has a connotation of some redress or exaggeration. Therefore, this clause should be interpreted as “all politeness has high sincerity.”

6. These assumptions are generally endorsed by the following statement: “Flattery is strategic praise, praise with a purpose. It may be inflated or exaggerated or it may be accurate and truthful, but it is praise that seeks some result, whether it be increased liking or an office with a window. It is a kind of manipulation of reality that uses the enhancement of another for our own self-advantage. It can even be genuine praise” (Stengel 2000: 14–15).

7. Jones (1975: 24–45) postulates four classes of ingratiation tactics: 1) other enhancement; 2) opinion conformity; 3) self-presentation; and 4) gift-giving or favor rendering. He lists many do’s and don’t’s for making ingratiation successful. Throughout his advice, making ingratiation seem credible seems to be the most important norm. People from collectivistic cultures may find the third tactic, self-presentation, as odd. Jones defines self-presentation as “the explicit presentation or description of one’s own attributes to increase the likelihood of being judged attractive” (p. 40). However, when one considers that self-presentation has an aspect of self-promotion and that dictionary definitions of “ingratiation” are as follows, it still strikes us as odd; “ingratiation: to try hard to get someone’s approval, by doing things to please them, expressing admiration, etc.” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 1995); “Ingratiation: to gain favor or favorable acceptance for by deliberate effort” (Merriam Webster’s College Dictionary 1993). It turns out that this impression is not limited to authors from collectivist societies: Godfrey, Jones, and Lord (1986), examining the aspect of self-promotion in Jones’s definition of self-presentation, reached the conclusion that ingratiation (“want to be liked”; p. 106) and self-promotion (“more interested in being seen as competent”; p. 106) are achieved with different strategies: “In any event, the rating data give us greater confidence that the self-presentational
strategies of ingratiation and self-promotion clearly involve a different pattern of tactics” (p. 113).

8. These phrases are from Stengel (2000: chap. 9), borrowing from strategies suggested by Jones 1975, Jones and Wortman 1973, and Jones 1990.

9. The following are a few examples: 1) Impress upon your superiors that only s/he can help you in a given situation mainly to make him/her feel good about himself/herself; 2) Show him/her that you share his/her enthusiasm about his/her new idea even when you may not actually like it; 20) Offer to help your supervisor by using your personal contacts.

10. As explained just below, the term “the degree of politeness” or “politeness level” has been used ambiguously regarding the degree of (in)directness and the degree of elaboration. In the present paper, I use the term “the amount of politeness” to embrace both degrees. Concerning the (in)directness of non-linguistic features in terms of politeness, to my knowledge, there is no study that has investigated the relationship between politeness levels of non-linguistic strategies and social distance or power.

11. I have pointed out (Yabuuchi 2006) that although Olshtain and Weinbach (1993) claim that the data they obtained supported the bulge theory, what they actually investigated was not elaboration but indirectness, and the indirectness level in the data, when carefully looked at, is linearly correlated with both D and P. Also, I pointed out that what Wolfson et al. (1989) investigated is not elaboration but explicitness, and the explicitness levels of many strategies in their data conform to the linear hypothesis rather than the bulge theory.

12. Indirect complaints are complaints about someone or some situation in which “the addressee is not responsible for a perceived offense. ‘Griping’ or ‘grumbling’ are two native terms that are at times synonymous” (Boxer 1993: 106). IC and IC responses are both “solidarity establishing speech act[s]” (1993: 105), in the sense that their primary purpose is to confirm common ground.

13. Holmes and Stubbe (2003), based on their analyses of many workplace conversations, have stated: “Politeness towards a subordinate can be interpreted as an indication that the more powerful protagonist is concerned with constructing good workplace relations, and in developing rapport and maintaining collegiality (Spencer-Oatey 2000): that is, the expression of collaborative power vs coercive power” (2003: 6). Takano (2005) reports that Japanese women in leadership, compared with their male counterparts, use a significantly greater number of positive and negative strategies in order to effectively enforce their power over subordinates. This is a solution to “a sociolinguistic dilemma in choosing between the culturally prescribed feminine ways of speaking and the communicative need to talk powerfully from their occupational statuses” (p. 633). The pressures (B→) and (←C) represent the morally based or instrumentally motivated decree that we should give as much politeness as possible towards people who are socially lower than us. Both Holmes and Stubbe (2003) and Takano (2005) demonstrate the presence of the pressures that are accepted by the people who wish or need to improve work performance. However, as these two studies belong to the category of “discursive studies,” and discursive studies deal with interactions in specific settings, it may not appropriate to employ their findings to discuss general tendencies. Moreover, the discursive studies mentioned in the introduction of the present paper mainly concern negative politeness and downward politeness strategies, with scarce attention to upward positive politeness strategies. Nevertheless, I have not encountered any cases that obviously go against the hypotheses presented as Figure 2.
14. Following Yamada (1992), Tannen (1993: 171) describes the Japanese relationship of amae as follows: Amae “is typified by the parent-child or employer-employee constellation. It binds two individuals in a hierarchical interdependence by which both have power in the form of obligations as well as rights vis-à-vis the other.”

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