

Simultaneous Application of Negative and Positive Politeness

Yoko Hasegawa
University of California, Berkeley

1 Introduction

This paper addresses three problems with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness when applied to the Japanese honorific system, and it proposes some modifications to make it an improved analytical framework.¹ The organization is as follows: following a brief outline of B&L's model, Watts's (2003) dissent to their conceptualization of politeness is discussed. Because B&L's approach is vital to cross-cultural politeness research, it is defended here. Section 2 presents Ide's (1982, 1989) objections to B&L and introduces her concept of *discernment*. Section 3 summarizes three counter-arguments to Ide's thesis. Section 4 reflects upon the thorny relationship between honorifics and politeness, including whether or not the use of honorifics should be equated directly with politeness. I then discuss in Section 5 three problems with B&L's theory and present in Section 6 three approaches that may lead to their solution. Section 7 summarizes the paper.

1.1 Outline of Brown and Levinson's theory

B&L contend that politeness "presupposes that potential for aggression as it seeks to disarm it, and makes possible communication between potentially aggressive parties" (p.1). In their conceptualization, therefore, politeness is a manifestation of the speaker's strategic choice of linguistic expressions in order to minimize the risk of incurring a *face-threatening act* (FTA). They posit two types of *face* as universal notions: negative and positive. Negative face is defined as "the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others," and positive face as "the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others" (p.62).

They propose five politeness strategies: (i) to do an FTA without redressive action, (ii) to use positive politeness, (iii) to use negative politeness, (iv) to go off the record, and (v) not to do an FTA. The speaker makes a selection according to his/her calculation of the seriousness of the FTA, based on the social distance between the speaker and the addressee (abbreviated as D), the relative power difference between them (P), and the rank of imposition intrinsic to the FTA itself in a particular culture (R). The riskier the FTA, the higher the number of the politeness strategy the speaker is likely to employ. This is an extremely insightful approach to nebulous politeness phenomena, and, consequently, it has influenced virtually all research on politeness and related topics since its publication.

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1.2 Watts's objections to Brown and Levinson's theory

Following Eelen (2001), Watts (2003) distinguishes between politeness as a lay concept signifying a range of disputed notions of polite and impolite behavior (referred to as *politeness1*) and politeness as a technical term for discussion of particular features of language use in social interaction (referred to as *politeness2*). He considers that politeness must be taken as an emergent property from interactants' interpretations and evaluations of particular behavior, and that investigating politeness1 "is the only valid means of developing a social theory of politeness" (p.9).

Consequently, Watts rejects politeness2 *in toto*, proclaiming that B&L's use of the English term *politeness* to refer to a universal scientific concept is inappropriate and has caused a great deal of confusion. For example, he asserts that if a Japanese linguist discusses politeness2 with a German colleague in English, we have no way to verify whether or not they refer to the same set of ideas (p.13).

However, Watts's notion of politeness1 is even more problematic than B&L's term of politeness. He advocates turning "our attention away from setting up a notion of politeness2 to investigating the discursive nature of the social struggle over the terms available to native speakers of other languages that refer to 'polished' behaviour, socially (in)appropriate behaviour, etc. If we do not want to give up the claim for universality, we will need to define politeness1 in such a way that we can recognize it in verbal interaction in any language" (p.14). However, this essential definition is never provided. In some places he defines politeness1 as lay persons' perception of an utterance as polite or impolite. If we follow this characterization, politeness1 must then be language-specific and cannot exist in non-English speaking societies. However, he also claims that politeness1 is universal: "Cooperative social interaction and displaying consideration for others seem to be universal characteristics of every socio-cultural group. ... Native speakers of any language will have individual ideas about what sort of behaviour is denoted by the lexical terms available to them, and very often they will disagree. In general, however, we must assume that there is likely to be a core of agreement about the rough outlines of what is meant" (p.14).

Watts declares that B&L's defense of the universality of politeness "is made in relation to their conceptualisation of an idealized concept of politeness2, not in relation to the ways in which groups of participants struggle over politeness1 (*or whatever terms are available to them in their own languages*) in social interaction" (p.12, italics added). He then argues that "[a] rough translation equivalent of 'polite' in Japanese is *teineina*" (p.16). He reports the results of Ide et al.'s (1992) work in which Japanese and American subjects were asked to associate 10 adjectives with the most appropriate scene from 14 interactional situations. They found that these American subjects tended to associate *polite* with *friendly* whereas the Japanese subjects judged *teineina* 'polite' and *shitashigena* 'friendly' along a completely different axis. While 'politeness' and

'friendliness' are reasonably well correlated in American culture, the Japanese concepts *teineina* and *shitasigena* are not. He concludes: "This is strong evidence that the Japanese notion of politeness¹ as expressed in the adjective *teineina* is very different from the American notion" (p.17). Japanese may have politeness², as referred to as *poraitonesu*, but what, one wonders, is the Japanese notion of politeness¹ that can be expressed by *teineina*?

One of the most, if not *the* most, consequential contributions of B&L's model to politeness research is its provision of something to compare and contrast cross-culturally, i.e. what Watts refers to as politeness². True, the cross-cultural validity of politeness² has been intensely discussed; however, without politeness², we cannot meaningfully compare concepts derived from different languages and cultures. Across linguistic and cultural boundaries, politeness² delimits the range of concepts that are sufficiently similar and thus worthy of comparison. It is these considerations that motivated the present study.

2 Ide's objections to Brown and Levinson's theory

The inadequacy of B&L's theory in accounting for Japanese politeness phenomena has for decades instigated enthusiastic and intense debates. Ide (1982, 1989), for example, criticizes forthrightly their theory for dealing exclusively with politeness as a strategic move to minimize the impact of an FTA, while totally neglecting what she claims to be socially obligatory linguistic choices. She contends that the purpose in using honorifics is not exclusively to save face, because honorifics occur even when there is no FTA.

Ide uses the term *volition* to refer to the strategically-motivated practice of politeness and *discernment* to refer to the polite behavior of conforming to the culturally prescribed norm, which is "independent of the speaker's rational intention" (Ide 1989:242). For her, volition-based politeness serves to save face, in accordance with B&L, but discernment-based politeness is like a grammatical requirement, forming a socio-pragmatic concordance system. Therefore, she argues, B&L's model, which deals only with one aspect of the politeness phenomena, is incomplete. She considers that volition-based politeness prevails in Western society, while discernment does in Japanese society.

3 Counter-arguments to Ide's theory

Fukada and Asato (2004) refuted Ide's idea of discernment-based politeness as equivalent to grammatical concordance by demonstrating that discernment is not obligatory in the same sense that grammatical wellformedness is. By way of illustration, they showed that in a depiction of a person's dishonorable act, the use of honorifics is inappropriate even when the person is in a position customarily deserving of honorifics, e.g. (1):

- (1) ??*Sensee ga dookyuusee o gookan nasatta.*
'My teacher raped [honorific] my classmate.'

Fukada and Asato further argue that B&L's model can adequately account for Japanese politeness phenomena if one acknowledges that Japan is principally a vertical as well as hierarchical society. That is, power and distance in B&L's weightiness formula receive markedly high values, and thus the overall significance of an FTA is inevitably elevated regardless of the severity of imposition intrinsic to the FTA itself. This is why, they assert, honorifics are used in non-FTA utterances. For this and other reasons, Fukada and Asato argue, B&L's theory is superior to Ide's account, and, consequently, there is no need to set up a separate kind of politeness, such as discernment.

Another problem with Ide's dual-layered conception of politeness is pointed out by Eelen (2001). Ide, like most other researchers in the field, assumes impoliteness to be lack of politeness. Consequently, if an ability to use honorifics were like grammatical competence, then impoliteness would have no place in the Japanese speech community. That is, if one failed to use honorifics properly, it should then be taken as an indication of socio-pragmatic incompetence, rather than as deliberate impoliteness. This, of course, is rarely the case.

Taking a social constructionist perspective, Cook (2006) argues that the dichotomy between discernment and volition is simply irrelevant. She claims that politeness is an interactional achievement, and that discernment is "an active co-construction in which the grammatical structures and the sequential organization of talk serve as resources for the participants to construct their identities in the moment-by-moment unfolding of interaction" (p.269). According to Cook, social identities and social relationships are fluid, and every move the speaker makes is his/her own active choice.² There is no such thing as passive observation of social rules (i.e. discernment).

4 Honorifics and politeness

Although many aspects of Ide's objections to B&L's conceptualization of politeness as a universal notion appear refutable, the relationship of honorific language, as fossilized and grammaticized politeness, to B&L's modern, open-ended politeness strategies nevertheless merits further investigation, as B&L themselves acknowledge (p.25).

The Japanese honorific system consists of two orthogonal dimensions: one which regards the addressee in the speech situation, labeled *addressee honorifics*, and the other, which regards the referent of a linguistic expression, labeled

² Examining speech-style shifts in academic consultation between professors and students in Japanese universities, Cook claims that the students in her research have total freedom in selecting plain (non-honorific) forms. However, I argue that Cook's data do not support her claim. These students do not shift their speech to the plain form in their dialogic mode of discourse during the consultation sessions. Rather, her data support the analysis that the students are aware that an appropriate attitude in such an academic setting is to show deference to the advisor, and that deference cannot be expressed without the use of honorifics. They are not as free in their actions as Cook would have us believe.

referent honorifics.³ When addressee honorifics are employed, the speech is recognized as being in the *polite style*; otherwise, it is considered to be in the *plain style*.

While Ide essentially equates Japanese politeness with the polite style, many researchers have pointed out that the polite style does not necessarily index the speaker's polite intention towards the addressee, e.g. Ikuta (1983), Maynard (1991), Okamoto (1997), Pizziconi (2003), Cook (2006).

Ochs (1990) proposes an indirect mapping of honorifics to politeness. She considers honorifics to directly index (i.e. having as their pragmatic meaning the property of indexing) "affective dispositions of the speaker (e.g. humility, admiration, love)" and then, in turn, to indirectly index contextual information, e.g. the interlocutors' social relationships (p.297). Subscribing to Ochs's hypothesis, Okamoto (1997) emphasizes the role of linguistic ideologies that mediate indexical processes, arguing that the affective dispositions expressed by honorifics cannot be straightforwardly related to certain contextual features. The speaker selects linguistic forms based on his/her judgment about the appropriateness of such forms in a given situation, i.e. based on his/her language ideology, which may be deviant from the normative characterization of the usage of the form in question.⁴

While language ideology certainly influences the form of utterance, Okamoto's model (linking direct and indirect indexes of honorifics via ideology) is unsustainable because it presupposes Ochs's direct and indirect indexing, while honorifics do not necessarily index affection in the first place. This fact is crystallized in the 2002 film, *2LDK*.⁵ In this dark comedy, two aspiring actresses sharing an apartment provided by their agency are waiting for the result of the audition they both took for the same role in a motion picture. These two women are in many ways antithetical: Nozomi, the younger one, is a college graduate from a small town, a neat freak and new to acting, whereas Rana, the older one, is a sexually indiscriminate city-girl with considerable B-movie acting experience. Their hatred of each other eventually escalates to violence, leading to a fatal duel. Throughout the story, Nozomi addresses Rana with *senpai* 'senior' and keeps using addressee honorifics even during brutal fights. On the other hand, Nozomi's true thoughts are conveyed in a soliloquy in which she does not use honorifics at all.

This is a straightforward counterexample to Ochs's claim that the pragmatic meaning of honorifics is affection. Here, Nozomi's use of honorifics cannot be interpreted as indexing her affection for Rana. Nevertheless, one might wonder

³ See Hasegawa (2006) for further discussion of these two kinds of honorifics.

⁴ Absorbed in linguistic variations, Okamoto ignores the fact that there are strict rules that govern permissible ranges of variability. When such rules are violated, a rather common phenomenon among non-native speakers with inadequate pragmatic competence, native speakers of Japanese cannot meaningfully interpret the utterance.

⁵ I am indebted to Jonny George for drawing my attention to this example.

whether such a use could be analyzed as an instance of flouting Ochs's pragmatic meaning of honorifics, as evident, for example, in sarcasm. In other words, the speaker is supposed to be *pretending* to be affectionate. This interpretation might be plausible while Nozomi and Rana maintain a thin veneer of civility, but such an interpretation becomes absurd once they commence their ferocious brawling.

Is it still possible to maintain Ochs's model by replacing affection as a direct index of honorifics? Ikuta (1983:37) proposes that the basic meaning of addressee honorifics (polite style) is not *politeness* or *formalness*, but rather *distance* that may be social, attitudinal, or cohesional. However, analyzing polite style as associated directly with distancing is unsatisfactory for the following reasons: Normally, addressee honorifics in Japanese are employed when the speaker considers the addressee psychologically distant, and/or the speaker wishes to show deference to (exalt) the addressee. Linguistically, addressees are thus dichotomized into (i) distant and exalted, and (ii) intimate and not exalted. With (i), the use of the polite style is the norm; with (ii), the use of the plain style is the norm. In (B) situation below, where the speaker considers the addressee psychologically distant but exaltation superfluous, the plain style is normally used, and the speech may sound vulgar or impolite, e.g. *Dare da* 'Who are you?', *Hairu na* 'Don't enter!' (The situation labeled (A) is problematic and will be discussed in Section 6.)

Addressee	Intimate	Distant
Exalted	(A)	(i) Polite Style
Not Exalted	(ii) Plain Style	(B) Plain Style

Table 1: Intimacy and distance in addressee honorifics

As shown in Table 1, the notion of distance can be expressed by either the polite or plain style. Therefore, Ikuta's claim that the basic function of addressee honorifics is simply to indicate the speaker's conception of distance is inadequate.

In Hasegawa (2006), I believed Ochs's dual layered indexing mechanism was promising. However, unable to discover what honorifics directly index, I now consider that this hypothesis is invalid when used to analyze Japanese honorifics.

Although challenging for analysts, Nozomi's use of addressee honorifics does not seem peculiar nor puzzling for native speakers of Japanese; somehow, they easily interpret it. Everyone I consulted indicate that her use of honorifics is natural, and that it displays her proper upbringing, high self esteem, and/or standoffishness. These concepts are what addressee honorifics index in the movie *2LDK*.

Pizziconi (2003:1497) argues that "the constitution of social identities and affective stances can be carried out via a multitude of typically and non-typically 'polite' devices ... but also typically 'polite' devices such as honorifics neither uniquely nor directly index politeness." The question then is whether or not good

upbringing, high self esteem, and standoffishness are unrelated to or are separable from, the concept of politeness. The answer is no.

In modern times, linguistic politeness is considered a political behavior — a means to avoid conflict, tone down potential aggression, and ensure smooth interaction. In the 18th and 19th centuries, however, linguistic politeness in Western society was not generally correlated with a consideration for or deference toward other individuals (Watts 1992). ‘Politeness’ meant ‘prudence’, inextricably linked to social class and socio-political power. Politeness was considered a manifestation of a high degree of mental cultivation, elegant refinement, polished manners, and good taste; it was used to enhance one’s own social standing and signal membership in a particular social class (Sell 1992).

These characterizations are to some extent still in effect in modern usage, suggesting that Nozomi’s use of addressee honorifics should be included in the phenomenon of politeness. In fact, it appears that whenever honorific language is employed, some notion of politeness is necessarily involved. This observation partially supports Ide’s (1991:64) claim that “[f]or the Japanese people, linguistic politeness is mainly a matter of conforming to social conventions for a choice of linguistic forms.” However, in order to deliver politeness, the speaker must consider much more than simply whether or not to use honorifics. Taking into consideration the addressee’s positive and negative face is also indispensable in understanding Japanese politeness.

5 Problems with Brown and Levinson’s theory

Japanese honorifics, and possibly honorifics in most languages, index the concepts of distance and deference together. They are used with an unfamiliar addressee based on psychological distance, or with an addressee of a higher social ranking based on deference. While exhibition of deference is undoubtedly relevant to the central meaning of politeness, distancing is not inherently a polite behavior. Distancing can nevertheless be combined with deference to enhance the speaker’s politeness. More on this topic in Section 6.1.

5.1 Blending positive and negative politeness

When interpreted as a reflection of polite intent, distancing (avoidance of intrusion into the addressee’s space) can properly be categorized as a negative politeness strategy—but giving deference is problematic. B&L generally consider deference to be associated with negative politeness, but they also acknowledge that it satisfies an addressee’s positive want to be treated as superior. In fact, when honorifics are not utilized in the way the addressee anticipates, it is arguably the addressee’s positive face that is damaged. Thus, unequivocally associating deference with negative politeness renders their theory contradictory. If distancing indexes negative politeness but showing deference indexes positive politeness, then the use of honorific language necessarily mixes these two strategies. This is why honorifics are problematic in B&L’s theory. If one regards honorifics to be

direct manifestations of politeness, as Ide does, B&L's theory is judged forthrightly inadequate.

5.2 One strategy per FTA

Another problem with B&L's theory, not unrelated to the first problem, is the dichotomization of positive and negative politeness along a single dimension, and on a per-FTA basis. Recall their ranking of the politeness strategies: (i) to do an FTA without redressive action, (ii) to use positive politeness, (iii) to use negative politeness, (iv) to go off the record, and (v) not to do an FTA. According to them, the riskier the FTA, the higher the strategy the speaker tends to select.

However, when honorific language is available, positive and negative politeness strategies are frequently, even typically, simultaneously implemented. For example, the pre-sequences of making a request in the following utterances demonstrate use of positive politeness in form and of negative politeness in content in (2), and vice versa in (3).

- (2) *Aki-chan, itsumo itsumo tanonde bakkari de gomen ne. Demo kooyuu kototte Aki-chan igai, chotto tanomenain da yonee. Sorede, ...*
'Aki, I'm awfully sorry to ask you to do favors for me all the time, but I don't have anyone else. So ...'
- (3) *Kondo no kooshoo wa, nankoo ga yosoku sarerun desu yone. Sokode, yuuben de, katsu kado ga tatanai kata to naru to, yahari Yamada-san de wa nai ka to ...*
'We expect problems with our next negotiation. So, we need someone who is effective but civil. So, as you know, it ought to be Yamada-san ...'

In the first sentence in (2), the use of the plain form as well as the hypocoristic *-chan* indexes the speaker's desire to display positive politeness (intimacy). By contrast, its semantic content indexes negative politeness, viz., apologizing for intrusion. In (3), the use of honorifics and *kata* 'person (honorific variation)' indexes negative politeness (distancing), but the content aims at positive politeness, viz., praising Yamada's tactfulness.

Mixing positive and negative politeness strategies is normal in Japanese. This fact raises a serious question regarding the fundamental conceptualization of B&L's positive and negative politeness strategies. Dichotomizing positive and negative politeness as mutually exclusive concepts is unjustifiable because there is no intrinsic reason for the speaker to appeal to only one facet of the addressee's face-maintenance wants.

B&L themselves acknowledge this problem; they are aware that their strategies can be mixed in discourse, e.g. positive politeness markers within negative politeness strategies as well as indirect requests or going off-the-record in positive politeness utterances (p.17). Their defense consists of pointing out that a segment of talk might contain more than one FTA with different R values (the

rank of imposition intrinsic to the FTA) which, in turn, motivate multiple strategies. They also caution that hint-like utterances might actually be on the record, if there is no ambiguity or vagueness of their interpretation in particular contexts.

“[O]ne possible source of confusion here is this: when describing positive politeness, ... we included the use of ‘markers’ of social closeness, like intimate address forms; and when describing negative politeness, ... we included the use of ‘markers’ of deference like honorifics. Now, although address forms and honorifics may ... be FTA-sensitive, ... on the whole such elements are tied relatively directly to the social relationship between speaker and addressee. The consequence of such direct ‘markers’ of social relationship is that they may occur with an FTA of any R-value, and thus equally with markers of positive and negative politeness; if shifts are permissible at all, we should merely expect a shift towards a more ‘formal’ address form than normally used ... when R-values increase between the same interlocutors. Thus, certain aspects of, for example, positive politeness like ‘intimate’ address forms may happily occur in off-record usages motivated by high R factors. What we did not expect, and have not found, is that there might be a shift to more ‘intimate’ address forms with an increase in R.” (p.18)

B&L insist that the speaker must select one and only one strategy per FTA from their ranked super-strategies:

“One problem encountered in assessing the ‘ranking’ of positive as opposed to negative politeness is the different nature of the two. ... However, while acknowledging the fundamental differences between positive and negative politeness, we do not see them as incompatible with a systematic use in one case versus another ...” (p.18)

They assert that in order to refute their unidimensional and mutually exclusive ranking of strategies, one needs to show that an opposing ranking is possible:

“Despite the various deviations from our expected hierarchy that have emerged from some of these experimental tests, no one (to our knowledge) has come up with clear evidence of a counter-ranking: where (for example) positive politeness is used for greater FTAs, negative politeness for smaller ones, or where off record is used for smaller FTAs (or to lower-status Hs [hearers]) than negative or positive politeness.” (p.20)

Genuine counterexamples do exist:

(4) [A response to the survey question on how to call one’s mother]

Ima demo soo desu keredo, “okaasan” desu. Okane o nedaru toki dake, “X-chan” to yobimasu.

‘I still call her *okaasan* (‘mother’). Only when I ask her for money, I call her *X-chan*.’ (<http://matsuri.site.ne.jp/taro/taro106.htm>, 6/13/2007)

For the sake of our discussion, let us assume that the respondent in (4) is a male and his mother’s name is Michiko. He usually (i.e. for FTAs with a lower R) addresses his mother as *okaasan* ‘mother’, but when he asks her for money (a higher R), he calls her *Michiko-chan*, which is a less formal and a more intimate address form than *okaasan*.

Next, let us consider examples in (5):

- (5) a. [A response to the question on how to address your wife]
Kihon yobisute, tanomu toki dake “chan”zuke nanode, kanji warui desu ne, hai.

‘Normally, I address her with just her name. But I add *-chan* when I ask her a favor, so I may be obnoxious, I know.’

(<http://yume.livedoor.biz/archives/50254466.html>, 6/13/2007)

- b. [From a blog]

Asa kara attama kitaa!!! Ii kibun de pasokon hiraitetara, danna ga “X-chaan, tabako kattedee” tte nekonade-goe de iu kara (yatsu wa hito ni mono o tanomu toki dake “chan”zuke shiyagaru) “yada!” tte itteyatta kedo ...

‘I’ve been going mad since this morning!!! When I was playing with my PC, my husband said “X-chan, go buy me cigarettes” in a wheedling tone of voice (the guy uses *-chan* only when he’s asking me for a favor), so I said “No way!”, but ...’ (<http://plaza.rakuten.co.jp/petitandtiwawa/diary/200704080000/>, 6/13/2007)

In these cases, the go-bold strategy (i.e. *yobisute* ‘calling someone by their plain name’) is used for lower R, and the positive politeness address form (*-chan*) for higher R, so that, unlike (4), the examples in (5) are in accordance with B&L’s strategy ranking. As a native speaker of Japanese, however, I find no different motivations between (4) and (5). As B&L themselves acknowledge, address terms are fairly stable; therefore, it does not matter how the speaker normally calls the addressee, more formal or less formal than the use of *-chan*. What is significant here is that this positively marked address term, *-chan*, can be used when a higher R is involved, rather than a negatively marked (i.e. distancing) address term, e.g. *-sama*, which is also possible, as B&L predict. I argue that B&L’s unidimensional and mutually exclusive ranking of strategies is untenable because there is no *a priori* reason to assume one strategy per FTA.⁶

⁶ Russell Lee-Goldman drew my attention to the possibility that the same type of FTA addressed to the same person might have different R values depending on some factors not considered by

5.3 Risk avoidance as the sole motivation for politeness

Politeness is a complex phenomenon. Therefore, positing minimization of the risk of an FTA as the sole reason for striving to be polite appears over-simplified. As a language user, I may apply a politeness strategy driven by affection, particularly when I select a positive-politeness strategy, e.g. (6):

- (6) [To a person who recently lost her spouse]
Hontoo ni otsurai koto de gozaimashita nee. Demo, doozo oki o shikkari omochi ni natte, ganbatte kudasaimase.
'It must be really difficult for you. I hope you are able to keep your spirits up.'

When I say (6), I have likely to have been overwhelmed by a devastating situation and am trying to express my sympathy towards the addressee; minimizing the potential risk of the FTA would be the least of my concern in this situation. This stance directly contradicts Fukada and Asato's contention. They argue that because Japan is a hierarchical society, every utterance may possibly create a risky situation, and therefore the Japanese exhibit politeness based solely on their desire to minimize the risk of an FTA.

6 Suggested solutions

I have pointed out that B&L's theory poses three problems when applied to Japanese politeness phenomena. First, identifying the use of honorifics categorically with negative politeness is untenable because honorifics typically index both distance and deference. While distancing can properly be considered a negative politeness strategy, showing deference satisfies the addressee's positive want. Second, dichotomizing positive and negative politeness as mutually exclusive concepts is unjustifiable because there is no inherent reason for the speaker to appeal to only one facet of the addressee's face-maintenance wants. Third, positing minimizing the impact of an FTA as the sole motivation for politeness is too simplistic as well as counter-intuitive. Positive politeness can naturally be triggered by affection. The following subsections will discuss three approaches that appear to be useful to resolve these problems.

6.1 Robin Lakoff's theory

One potential solution is adoption of R. Lakoff's (1973, 1990) theory of politeness. It regards politeness as an attempt to make the addressee feel good. She posits three rules to accomplish this goal: (a) don't impose, remain aloof (distance); (b) give options (deference); (c) make the addressee feel good, be friendly (camaraderie). This captures the insight that while distance and

B&L, e.g. asking one's mother for money to buy a luxurious good vs. a necessary article, or requesting the same when the mother is well off or when she has economic difficulties.

camaraderie are mutually contradictory by nature, distance and deference can be applied together, and can so deference and camaraderie.

In this framework, the use of honorifics can be regarded as triggered by either the distance rule or by the deference rule. Therefore, utterance (2) in Section 5.2 can be analyzed in such a way that its form signals the speaker's observation of the camaraderie rule, whereas its content signals the deference rule. In (3), the form signals the deference rule, and the content signals the camaraderie rule.

In this way, the dichotomy of positive and negative politeness strategies, which cannot satisfactorily accommodate honorifics, can be avoided. In adopting Lakoff's theory, however, the term *camaraderie* needs to be extended to *intimacy*, for the former strongly evokes the notion of rapport among friends. Recall that *politeness* and *friendliness* are well correlated in American culture, but the Japanese concepts *teineina* and *shitasigena* are distinct, and frequently contradictory. The term *intimacy*, on the other hand, does not have to be limited to rapport among equals.

Although I do not in the present paper explore further the solution along this line, Lakoff's theory sheds light on the fundamental problem of Japanese honorifics. In Hasegawa (2006), I point out that a serious defect of the Japanese honorific system is its inability to express deference and intimacy simultaneously. As shown in Table 1 in Section 4, the polite style is used when the speaker considers the addressee psychologically distant, and/or the speaker wishes to show deference to the addressee. In (B), where the speaker considers the addressee psychologically distant but exaltation unnecessary or undesirable, the plain style is used. A serious problem arises in situation (A), when the speaker wishes to convey deference and intimacy simultaneously, because in the Japanese honorific system, these two affective stances are morphologically incompatible. Developing Lakoff's idea may lead to a meaningful cross-cultural comparison that B&L's theory fails to facilitate.

6.2 Honorifics as a different channel of politeness

The second possible solution is to consider honorifics as a different channel of politeness, i.e. one that is neutral with respect to B&L's open-ended negative and positive politeness strategies. In this conceptualization, honorific language can be employed independently of positive or negative politeness strategies. B&L allude to this idea in the passage above: they assert that honorifics are associated more directly and tied more strongly to the social relationship of interlocutors, and, therefore, they are more stable and less sensitive to R values.

This remedy is superficially identical with Ide's proposal of separating volition-based and discernment-based politeness. However, their psychological underpinnings are quite different. Ide considers that these two types of politeness are triggered by different motivations: volition politeness is used strategically to minimize the impact of an FTA, while discernment politeness is used to show one's willingness to conform to the culturally prescribed norm. By contrast, Brown and Levinson would argue that they are both motivated by the same

principle, viz. the speaker's desire to minimize the risk of an FTA. The latter is compatible with Cook's social constructionist analysis mentioned in Section 3. These two are certainly legitimate arguments and merit further scrutiny.

6.3 Modification of Brown and Levinson's theory

The third possible solution is the one I will explore in the balance of this paper. As stated earlier, my stance is essentially to advocate maintenance of B&L's framework of politeness. Specifically, I contend that their claim regarding negative and positive face is universally valid. However, as discussed earlier, attributing all senses of politeness to a single motivation, minimizing the risk of an FTA, is unwarranted parsimony.

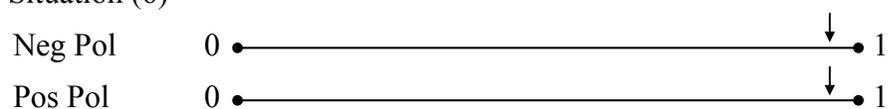
Furthermore, allowing one and only one strategy per FTA from their ranked super-strategies is an unreasonable restriction. We acknowledge that all competent members of society have both negative and positive faces. However, they are also aware that being totally free from impediment from others hinders attainment of positive face. Therefore, people normally somehow balance these competing wants. Given this fact, it is more natural to assume that speakers consider both types of addressees' desires together. Consequently, if there are linguistic resources available to perform negative *and* positive politeness simultaneously, it is logical for them to combine the two.

I hypothesize that at the beginning of a conversation, the speaker considers heuristically the addressee's as well as the speaker's own positive and negative face wants and the degree to which such wants should be attended based on affection towards the addressee, the speaker's own desire regarding how to present him/herself, what the social norm for the particular situation is, and the potential risk of the FTA, if any, etc. Such a decision on the overall politeness can be fairly stable within the stretch of the conversation, or the speaker can modify it at a Transition Relevance Place.⁷

The next step that the speaker needs to make is how to express his/her decision about the degree of politeness, during which B&L's positive and negative politeness strategies become relevant. Here the speaker's linguistic sophistication as well as social and regional standards undoubtedly come into play. While the speaker may have various concerns, s/he has to plan his/her speech to manifest some of them while hiding others.

The situation represented in (6) is close to the maximum in both negative and positive politeness.

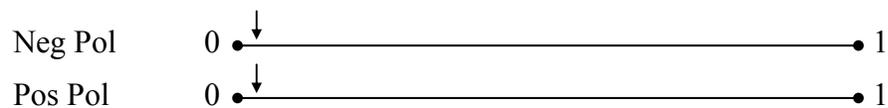
(7) Situation (6)



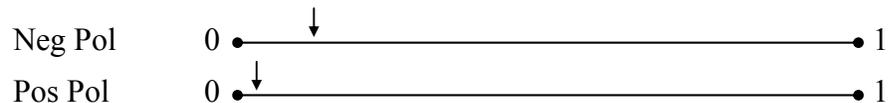
⁷ Transition Relevance Place: a point of possible completion of the current utterance in a conversation, so that a transition from one speaker to another is possible.

On the other hand, if one wishes to be impolite, positive politeness will be determined minimum, although negative politeness might vary, attributable mainly to the speaker's self image. Some persons do not mind being boorish, e.g. (8a), while others prefer to maintain a certain level of politeness in order to represent themselves as refined persons and/or because they may have found that in social intercourse, civility is frequently more effective, e.g. (8b).

- (8) a. *Urusai! Dete ike!*
 'Shut up! Get out!'



- b. *Sonna koto wa kiku mimi mochimasen. Dete oikinasai.*
 'I have no intention of listening to such a story. Get out!'



Regarding the relationship of honorifics to the use of their open-ended politeness strategies, B&L point out that in Tamil some direct requests of low R may occur from subordinates to superordinates, if such requests are mitigated with appropriate honorifics. This might suggest that in some languages politeness might be carried more by honorifics and less by matters of open-ended politeness strategies. However, B&L conclude that this inference is not generally correct; there is not "a certain quantity of politeness to be conveyed by one channel (the grammaticalized honorifics) or another (strategic language use) – politeness is usually redundantly expressed in both" (p.25).

Their conclusion appears premature. What I propose is very different from what B&L describe. I suggest that negative and positive politeness strategies are considered separately, and that they can be used simultaneously, contrary to their strategy ranking.

7 Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have pointed out that B&L's universal theory of politeness as it stands cannot account for Japanese politeness phenomena, which heavily incorporate and depend on the use of honorifics. I consider Ide's objections to their theory to be significant, although I do not agree that politeness has two separate components of volition and discernment. Rather, what needs reevaluation in B&L's theory are the concepts of negative and positive strategies. They contend that negative and positive politeness are mutually exclusive, and that the speaker must select one and only one strategy for each FTA. However, because these strategies take into account the two types of face that people constantly

present, they must not be ranked linearly and exclusively. I claim that, whenever resources are available, the speaker is sufficiently rational to make simultaneous use of both strategies. Furthermore, Japanese honorifics have grammaticized negative politeness (distancing) and positive politeness (showing deference) simultaneously. This fact supports the idea that these two strategies are not mutually exclusive.

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