‘POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA AND MILD CONFLICT IN JAPANESE CASUAL CONVERSATION

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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June, 2001
ABSTRACT

Casual conversation is a very common type of interaction in everyday life. However, a relatively small amount of work has actually been done on this type of interaction in linguistic studies, especially in Japanese. Thus, data for this study is selected from approximately 13 hours of taped conversations between close friends who are native speakers of Japanese. The investigation uses a qualitative empirical method of analysing casual conversation.

This study uses a modified version of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory (1978, 1987) as a theoretical framework for the data analysis, and focuses on ‘politeness’ phenomena and mild conflict in the data.

The thesis argues three points. First, during non-goal-oriented interaction, the nature of ‘politeness’ phenomena and ‘face threatening acts’ is different from those in goal-oriented interaction. Second, according to the ‘politeness’ phenomena found in the data, the interactants are continuously adjusting the ways they interact in the conversation. Finally, ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena may not be clearly separable in interaction. ‘Politeness’ phenomena and ‘face threatening acts’ can be seen as two sides of the same coin.

This thesis contributes to linguistic research in a number of ways. It explores some aspects of the nature of Japanese casual conversation in relation to ‘politeness’ phenomena and conflict: how the interactants facilitate conversation, how the interactants prevent conflict, how conflict occurs, and how the interactants repair conflict. Research of this nature fills a significant gap in Japanese linguistic studies. There has been little work done utilising this type of data, involving non-goal-oriented interaction. Furthermore, very few studies have been conducted on the way in which close friends converse focusing on ‘politeness’ phenomena.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study, which is my doctoral thesis, could not have been written without the support of a number of people. I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness and gratitude to them all.

First of all, I am extremely grateful to Dr Nerida Jarkey, my supervisor, for her continuing support and encouragement throughout the entire period in which this thesis was written. She has been witness and guide in my every struggle and every happiness I have experienced during these years.

My gratitude also goes to Professor Hugh Clarke, my associate supervisor, for all his wise encouragement and useful comments during my candidature.

To Dr Rod Gardner I would also like to express my sincere thanks. Dr Gardner gave me crucial technical advice on the transcription method, and repeatedly and patiently, asked me the vital question ‘How do you know?’ His generosity with his time and expertise has shown me an example of supportive egalitarian academic exchange which I admire and appreciate greatly.

I would also like to express my thanks to Jackie Godwin, Gawaine and Robyn Powell Davies, and Nicholas McNeill for their comments, for their support in the process of proof-reading, and for their friendship.

Last, but by no means least, I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to my friends (and their friends!) who participated enthusiastically in recording their conversations, thus providing the invaluable data which constitute the foundation of this thesis.

I also received most welcome financial support from the University of Sydney by way of Faculty of Arts Postgraduate Field Work Allowance and a University of Sydney PhD Completion Scholarship.
In order to indicate the pronunciation of sounds in Japanese loan words in the most transparent way possible, I have used a modified version of Hepburn system for romanisation (eg. ti:chingu, fasshon, fo:ku etc.).

**Sequencing symbols**

**Simultaneous utterance**

Where utterances begin simultaneously, double left-handed brackets are used.

\[
\begin{align*}
9 & \text{Y shikatanaku ne:} \\
10 & \text{(gap)} \\
11 & \text{D } \{(\text{ett chi:saku matomatte shimatta no? sonomanma}} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
12 & \text{Y } \{\} \\
13 & \text{Y sonomanma matomatte shimatta yo}
\end{align*}
\]

**Overlapping utterances**

The point at which the current speaker’s talk is overlapped by another speaker’s utterance.

\[
\begin{align*}
114 & \text{T ‘yatotte kudasai’ } \texttt{tte} \\
115 & \text{K } \{\text{‘yatotte kudasai’ to wa ikanain da yo ne:}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
114 & \text{T } \textit{‘Please hire me’}. \\
115 & \text{K } \textit{It's not possible to ask ‘Please hire me’}.
\end{align*}
\]

Note: In English translation, the precise place of overlapping cannot be indicated, since the translation does not exactly correspond to the Japanese word order. Therefore, the placement of the marker [ in the current speaker’s utterance is not marked, and the placement of the marker [ in the other speaker’s utterance is somewhat arbitrary in the English translation.

**Continuous utterances**

When one utterance runs on from a prior utterance without an interval, an equals sign links the two continuous utterances.

\[
\begin{align*}
26 & \text{K kekko: kyonen ichi-nenkan wa=} \\
27 & \text{R } \text{−un} \\
28 & \text{K baransu no torikata ga sa=} \\
29 & \text{R } \text{−un}
\end{align*}
\]

---

1 This study largely uses the transcription conventions found in “Talk and Social Organisation”, 1987, Graham Button and John R. E. Lee (eds.), pp 10-17.
- When the current speaker’s utterance continues for more than two lines with the other speaker’s overlap underneath or above, his/her utterances are joined by a hyphen.

47 K ma: i: ya tte omotte ne: [: (. .) hora watashi dochira ka tte-
48 R ] un
49 K -iu to sa: chotto ko: un kibishi: ka na: tte omou tokoro o:

**Intervals of no speech**

- (. .) micro pause
- (. ..) pause slightly longer than micro pause
- {gap} pause longer than (. .)
- {silence} pause longer than {gap}

**Characteristics of speech delivery**

**Intonation**

- ? rising intonation

43 R A::: (. .) A NARUHODO NE: [: ?

**Sound**

- CAPS relatively high volume

43 R A::: (. .) A NARUHODO NE: [: ?

- underline stressed part of syllable

49 K -iu to sa: chotto ko: un kibishi: ka na: tte omou tokoro o:

- :: noticeable lengthening

43 R A::: (. .) A NARUHODO NE: [: ?
**Transcription difficulties**

( ) inaudible utterance

11 D ([ett chi:saku matomatte shimatta no? sonomanma
12 Y (((

**Transcription descriptions**

{laugh} sounds other than utterance

81 no ka na: {sound of fingers snapping} o:to: o da na:

’sonna’ the marked change in voice quality that occurs when the speaker quotes another’s speech or thoughts

10 ‘chotto kyo:: ohanashi ga atte:: u uukagatterun desu kedo’ tte
11 hanashi o kiridashitara:(.) oka:san no ho: wa:(.) [‘ma: nani
12 kashira:’ tte

**English translation**

In this study, the main focus in the data is the choice of topic, the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening, and the organisation of the utterances, so the data are presented without a word for word English gloss.

A general English paraphrase is provided at the end of each Japanese data set. The position of the English translation in terms of the line number does not accurately correspond to the Japanese original and also the precise place of overlapping cannot be indicated in the English translation. This is because the English translation does not exactly correspond to the Japanese word order.

we Ellipsis in Japanese, which cannot be tolerated in the English translation is struck out.

7 G well,(.) I’ve done an amount of work which is equivalent to about three years of work.
8 so my wife and I think I shouldn’t have to work any more this year.(.) This is what we keep saying at home.
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Bibliography
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This introduction has three aims. First, it clarifies some key terms in this study: ‘politeness’ and ‘casual conversation’. Second, it explains the thesis of this study. Third, it gives the outline of the study.

1.1 TERMINOLOGY

This first section introduces two terms used in this study: ‘politeness’ and ‘casual conversation’. It is crucial to define these at the start since they are terms which appear so frequently in this study.

1.1.1 THE TERM ‘POLITENESS’ IN THIS STUDY

One problem with the term ‘politeness’ in linguistic studies is whether or not researchers use the term in the same way (cf Fraser, 1990; Kasper, 1990). There have been a number of attempts to try to categorise politeness into two types in the literature. For instance, Hill et al. (1986) claim that there are two factors that generate politeness, ‘discernment’ and ‘volition’. According to Hill et al., ‘discernment’ is a linguistic rule in which the speaker almost automatically chooses appropriate expressions according to the prevailing circumstances. Honorifics in some languages are typical examples. On the other hand, ‘volition’ refers to individual strategies that the speaker uses to achieve his/her communicative goal. Hill et al. (1986) state that most of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ strategies correspond to the latter type of politeness.

Another attempt to distinguish two kinds of politeness is made by Watts et al. (1992). They introduce the notions of ‘first-order politeness’ and ‘second-order politeness’. ‘First-order politeness’ is defined as ‘the various ways in which polite behaviour is perceived and talked about by members of socio-cultural groups’ (p. 3). The use of the term ‘politeness’ in first-order politeness is identical to the everyday sense of the word ‘politeness’ within the speaker’s language and culture. On the other hand, ‘second-order politeness’ is defined as ‘a theoretical construct, a term within a theory of social behaviour and language usage’ (p. 3). This use of the term ‘politeness’ does not quite equate to the everyday sense in any given language.

Despite various attempts to categorise politeness into two groups in linguistic studies, there is no consensus about this. However, it seems clear that different concepts of politeness do exist in linguistic studies. Therefore, it is important to define the term ‘politeness’ as it is used here in order to avoid confusion.

This study uses the term ‘politeness’ in basically the same way as it is used in the theory of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), that is as in ‘second-order politeness’ in Watts et al’s terms (see above). This study defines ‘politeness’ as the way in which the interactants

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2 This study always refers to ‘politeness’ in this sense with single quotation marks.
satisfy each other’s ‘face’ in interaction. ‘Face’ has two aspects: 1) ‘positive face’, and 2) ‘negative face’. Following Brown and Levinson (1987: 61), this study defines ‘positive face’ as the positive and consistent self image people have of themselves, and implies their desire for approval, and ‘negative face’ as ‘the basic claim to territories, personal preserves and rights to non-distraction’. Once again following Brown and Levinson, this study introduces two types of ‘politeness’. 3 ‘Positive politeness’ can be expressed in two ways to satisfy the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’:

1) by indicating similarities amongst interactants, or
2) by expressing an appreciation of the interlocutor’s self-image.

‘Negative politeness’ can be expressed to satisfy the conversational partner’s ‘negative face’ and/or ‘positive face’ by indicating respect for the conversational partner’s right not to be imposed on.

1.1.2 The Term ‘Casual Conversation’ in This Study

The next task in this section is to define the term ‘casual conversation’ since this study chooses casual conversation as the source of its data. A number of attempts to define ‘conversation’ can be found in linguistic studies. For example, Levinson (1983) defines conversation as a ‘familiar predominant kind of talk in which two or more participants freely alternate in speaking, which generally occurs outside specific institutional settings like religious services, law courts, classrooms and the like (p. 284)’. Eggins and Slade (1997) also define ‘casual conversation’ as talk ‘simply for the sake of talking itself (p. 6)’. They exclude interaction which accomplishes pragmatic tasks, such as buying and selling goods and finding out information.

Following the definition of Eggins and Slade (1997), the present study treats ‘casual conversation’ as a type of interaction in which the interactants do not have predetermined pragmatic goals. When the interactants engage in casual conversation, they are not trying to achieve a pragmatic task with words such as find out certain information, borrow a book, or prohibit some act. Rather they get together and talk ‘for the sake of talking itself’. In this sense, casual conversation can be seen as a form of non-goal-oriented interaction.

However, during the development of the interaction, casual conversation may start to involve certain communicative goals. This study finds that casual conversation often includes speech acts which express the speaker’s opinions or feelings such as agreeing, disagreeing, or giving assessment. On the other hand, speech acts such as those which direct the addressee to do or not to do certain acts are not very common. For example, the speaker does not often make a request or does not prevent the interlocutor from doing something. In this sense, then, casual conversation can be seen as basically a form of non-goal-oriented interaction.

---

3 However, in order to adapt it to this study, some significant modifications to Brown and Levinson’s theory are essential. These modifications will be discussed in Chapter 3.
1.2 ‘Politeness’ in Casual Conversation

The previous section defined the terms ‘politeness’ and ‘casual conversation’ in this study. This section illustrates the role of ‘politeness’ in casual conversation in relation to some expectations in this type of interaction.

According to the data examined in this study, two types of discourse can be identified in casual conversations between close friends. One is a narrative in which the distinction between the principal speaker and the principal hearer is clear. The other is a dyadic exchange in which the distinction between the principal speaker and the principal hearer is not very clear, but rather both interactants exchange utterances about a certain topic.

The vast majority of the casual conversations in the data examined for this study consist of the former type of interaction: one participant’s communication of his/her story, opinions, or feelings, and the other participant’s reception of them. Thus, this study often focuses on the two roles of principal speaker and principal hearer. However, this does not mean that the principal speaker keeps talking, and the hearer just listens to him/her quietly. Both principal speaker and hearer indicate mutual participation. In addition, these roles are not fixed, but rather alternate between two interactants as the conversation progresses.

At the same time, this study is aware of the fact that this type of mutual participation and exchange between the speaker and the hearer may not be universal. For example, Walsh (1994) presents an interactional style in an Australian Aboriginal community in which the interactants do not normally take turns. Rather the speech tends to be a monologue with the speaker broadcasting utterances to non-specific hearers. The hearer picks up only that information in which he/she is interested, and may or may not choose to comment on it. Silence is common when people get together in this community.\(^4\)

During casual conversation in Japanese (and may other languages), however, the interactants are engaging in two main kinds of activities: saying what one wants to say or responding to the other, and listening to what the other is saying. Consequently, two roles, a speaker and a hearer, can be often identified at particular points of time in casual conversation in the data examined.

There seem to be two kinds of expectations about how the interactants should attend to conversation in the data: 1) to involve oneself; and 2) to listen to what the other is saying. These two kinds of expectations significantly overlap with the focus of this study, ‘politeness’ in casual conversation. These are explicitly stated in the data by one of the subjects, so I would like to cite these segments in the following sections.

1.2.1 Involving Yourself in the Conversation

Starting from the first kind of expectation, in the following segment, one of the interactants explicitly states his expectation that his partner should involve himself in the conversation. In

\(^4\) Scollon (1985) also refers to the value of silence in Athabaskan culture.
the previous part of this segment, Yamamoto told Doobayashi that he had left two of his CDs in his office at university. Doobayashi’s response was simply to repeat Yamamoto’s utterance, saying ‘ni-mai hodo (two CDs)’. Yamamoto points out that this response of Doobayashi’s is very typical of him and explains to him how inappropriate he feels this response is in this segment.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

73 Y: a: ni-mai hodo
74 {gap}
75 D: {laugh}
76 Y: [sorede(.) ni-mai hodo(..) sorede?(.). to iu yo: na sa:(.). to
77 D: so: ka:.
78 Y: [ano: hanashi no dandori janai(.). de ni-mai hodo de(.). ore ore
to shite wa sa: ano nani?(.). do:bayashi-kun no toriaexu: nante iu
79 no ka na: {make sound by fingers} o:to: o da na:
80 D: un
81 Y: gai( .). sochira no o:to: ga areba:--
82 D: =un
83 Y: ko: kyatchiboru: de mata bo:ru ga kaette kimashita to
84 D: un
85 Y: {...}
86 Y: de( .). do:bayashi-kun no ba:i wa( .). bo:ru o( .). shu:: to ko:
87 kyu:shu:-shite shimatte:( .). sa: mata mata do:zo( .). to iu yo: na
kanji da ne
88 D: iwayuru(.). hanashi no
89 {...}
90 Y: ho:ne o otte nai yo( .). ko koshi nante zenzen otte nai yo( .).-
91 D: [koshi no hone( .). ko koshi no nan
92 Y: -koshi nante zenzen otte nai kedo mo
93 Y: [silence]
94 D: ee?
95 Y: kaiwa ni nannai daro?
96 [silence]
97 D: ee?
98 Y: kaiwa ni nanne: jan
99 D: kaiwa ni(...). kaiwa ni naranai desu ka
100 Y: un(.). datte kotchi ga datte [kotchi ga: datte sa: mo:( .).]
101 D: [a:::
102 Y: to:kyu:-shimakuru wake dakara=-
103 D: =un
104 Y: [silence]
105 D: :--

(J1 #8)

73 Y: I see, two CDs
74 {gap}
75 D: {laugh}
76 Y: [And(.). ‘two CDs’(.). ‘and’(.). like this(.). like
77 this
78 Y: I see:--
79 Y: [um, it’s the development of the conversation, isn’t it( .). and two CDs, and(.).
80 from my my point of view, well, what(?(.). your5 -- for the time being,
81 what can I say -- {clicks fingers} “reaction”
82 D: Yeah
83 Y: Well( .). if there is any reaction from you, =
84 D: = Yeah
85 Y: like in a game of catch ball, again the ball has come back,

5 Yamamoto uses ‘Doobayashi-kun’s’ instead of ‘your’ in the original Japanese.
In this segment of the conversation, Yamamoto states his expectation that the interactants should return responses to each other during conversation, using a couple of examples. First, Yamamoto states that he expects a certain course of development in the conversation. At the beginning of this segment in lines 73 and 76, he replays their exchange, which has happened in the previous part of this segment. Yamamoto says ‘ni-mai hodo (two CDs)’ and a silence follows. This silence seems to symbolise Doobayashi’s lack of reaction, and Doobayashi’s laughter in line 75 shows his understanding of Yamamoto indicating Doobayashi’s lack of response. Yamamoto then says ‘sorede (and)’, and again quietly ‘ni-mai hodo (two CDs)’ and ‘sorede (and)’. By this sequence of repeating ‘ni-mai hodo (two CDs)’ and ‘sorede (and)’, Yamamoto emphasises Doobayashi’s lack of reaction. In line 79, Yamamoto indicates that the reaction is crucial in the development of the conversation.

The next example which shows the expectation of involvement in the conversation is that Yamamoto describes a conversation as a game of catch ball in which both interactants return responses to each other. This use of metaphor emphasises the expectation of a contribution from both principal speaker and hearer in the conversation. Yamamoto points out that Doobayashi’s style is as if he is absorbing the ball without throwing it back from lines 88 to 90. Yamamoto even states that without some response from the partner, it simply does not constitute a conversation in lines 97 and 100.

To sum up, two examples in the segment above indicate an expectation that the interactants should return responses to each other in the conversation. This expectation seems to be strongly related to the core notion of one type of ‘politeness’, ‘positive politeness’, in which both interactants involve themselves by interacting or responding to each other.
1.2.2 LISTENING TO WHAT THE OTHER IS SAYING

Moving on to the second kind of expectation in the conversation, in the following segment, one of the interactants states that the conversational partner should listen to what the other is telling him.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

: 

20 D a: =
21 Y = soredetō: nan dakke:?(..) so: da(,) soitsu:;
22 {gap}
23 Y no hanashi ni yoru to sa:(,) ma: ano:(,) saikin:(,) ma karei:()
24 ma: tokyo:to-shokuin nan da kedō mo sa:
25 D u:n(,)(...) ano tocho: de hataraiten no?
26 Y [saikin
27 Y so: da yo
28 D sugē: na:
29 Y a: demo doboku da yo(() Tōcho: tatte deKAIn da ze:
30 {(...)
31 D dakedo(,) hora kore dame da yo mo: kono kutsu: hora hora hora:
32 Y ma: yoku hito no hanashi o kike yo
33 D u:();
34 Y [hito no hanashi wa kikinasai tten da [yo
35 D [ki:teru ki:teru

(J1 #4)

: 

20 D Er=
21 Y = Then, what was I saying?(...) Yes(,) that guy,
22 {gap}
23 Y according to that guy(,) well(,) recently(,) In fact, he is(,) a civil servant at
24 the Tokyo Metropolitan City Hall.
25 D Yeah(,)(...) Does he work at that the Tokyo Metropolitan City Hall?
26 Y [Recently.
27 Y That’s right.
28 D That’s amazing.
29 Y Well, but he works in the civil engineering section(...) the Tokyo Metropolitan
30 City Hall is big!
31 {(...)
32 D But(,) Look, this is already busted, this shoe. Look, look, look, look.
33 Y Hey, listen properly to what other people are saying.
34 D oh:::::
35 Y [Other people’s talk -- you should listen to it.
36 D [I am listening. I am listening.

In line 31, Doobayashi suddenly tells Yamamoto that his shoe is busted, and attracts Yamamoto’s attention to the shoe. This happens right in the middle of Yamamoto’s story about his friend. Yamamoto remonstrates with Doobayashi about this sudden behaviour with two consecutive utterances, saying ‘yoku hito no hanashi o kike yo (Listen properly to what other people are saying.)’ in line 32, and ‘hito no hanashi wa kikinasai tten da yo (Other people’s talk -- you should listen to it.)’ in line 34.
This example shows the expectation that an interactant should listen to what the conversational partner is saying during the conversation. This expectation has much in common with the core notion of ‘negative politeness’, in which the interactants respect each other’s will and space by listening or monitoring the reaction of the other.

1.2.3 ‘POLITENESS’ AND EXPECTATIONS

The two segments of conversation discussed above are rather rare cases in which the interactants are painfully frank with each other about their expectations in a conversation. Although the two kinds of expectations noted -- to involve oneself, and to listen to what the other is saying -- are not generally explicitly mentioned as they are in these segments, the data examined show that these expectations do seem to exist to a certain degree in every conversation.

This study focuses on phenomena by which the interactants try to satisfy each other’s ‘face’ (see 1.1.1) in casual conversation. The study finds a close relationship between the acts of satisfying ‘face’ and these expectations. There is often a close correspondence between ‘face’ wants and the two kinds of expectations discussed above.

It must be noted that, strictly speaking, expressing oneself and listening to what the other is saying are completely different acts and it is, of course, impossible to do both at once. Since the two kinds of ‘face’ wants or expectations are, in fact, mutually incompatible, subtle adjustment is constantly required in the conversation. This is because if the interactants only concentrate on achieving one type of ‘face’ wants or expectations, the other type of ‘face’ wants or expectation will be threatened or unsatisfied. Thus, the study identifies complicated combinations of ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in the conversations examined.

1.3 THE THESIS OF THIS STUDY

The present study examines a number of phenomena in naturally occurring casual conversations, by which the interactants facilitate the conversation, prevent conflict, and smooth over the after-effect of any conflicts which may occur. These phenomena can be seen as various forms of ‘politeness’ using a modified version of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory.

During casual conversation, the choice of topic, the manner of speaking and listening and the organisation of utterances are meaningful, and include ‘politeness’ phenomena. This study, therefore, pays particular attention to aspects of conversation such as collaborative activities or organisation at the level of discourse. This focus reveals some important features of the nature of casual conversation in relation to ‘politeness’ phenomena.
The study argues three main points. First, during casual conversation, i.e., non-goal-oriented interaction, the nature of ‘politeness’ phenomena can be different from that of goal-oriented interaction. This applies to ‘face threatening acts’ as well.

The second main point is that interactants are continuously adjusting the ways in which they interact, and that both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ appear in various combined patterns during casual conversation.

The final argument advanced is that, first, ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ may not be clearly separable, and that, second, ‘politeness’ phenomena and ‘face threatening acts’ may be seen as two sides of the same coin.

1.4 OUTLINE OF THIS STUDY

In this chapter, I have defined the crucial terms ‘politeness’ and ‘casual conversation’ for the purposes of this particular study, illustrated ‘politeness’ in casual conversation, and stated the thesis of the study. Here I shall outline the rest of this work.

Chapter 2 to Chapter 4 set the background for this thesis. Chapter 2 introduces Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory and then reviews the literature on Japanese politeness in order to identify gaps in the previous research. Chapter 3 discusses modifications to Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory, and then presents the theoretical framework of this study, which is a modified version of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory. It also presents the categorisation of ‘politeness’ phenomena used in this study. Chapter 4 deals with some methodological issues which are related to this study.

The main body of this study, from Chapters 5 to 7, analyses ‘politeness’ phenomena from two different perspectives: those not related to conflict and those related to conflict. Chapters 5 and 6 analyse ‘politeness’ phenomena in which the interactants facilitate the conversation and prevent conflict. These chapters state that during casual conversation, i.e., non-goal-oriented interaction, the nature of ‘politeness’ phenomena can be different from that of goal-oriented interaction.

On the other hand, Chapter 7 analyses ‘politeness’ phenomena in situations in which mild conflict occurs and the interactants smooth over the after-effects of this conflict. Therefore, through the analysis of causes of conflict and how the interactants smooth over the conflict, it finds that during casual conversation, i.e., non-goal-oriented interaction, the nature of ‘face threatening acts’ can be different from those that occur in goal-oriented interaction.

Finally, Chapter 8 and Chapter 9 conclude this thesis in two ways. Chapter 8 presents various patterns in which the two types of ‘politeness’ phenomena appear along with the tasks of the speaker and the development of the topic. In conclusion, Chapter 9 reviews the study as a whole, identifies the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part examines Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory, which this study adapts to analyse ‘politeness’ phenomena and mild ‘conflicts’ in casual conversation. The second part discusses two gaps in politeness research in Japanese linguistics: 1) the dual nature of ‘politeness’, and 2) linguistically unmarked ‘politeness’ phenomena. Finally, as a conclusion to this chapter, the third part sets out the goals of this study.

2.1 BROWN AND LEVINSON’S ‘POLITENESS’ THEORY (1978, 1987)

Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory was originally published under the title of ‘Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena’ as part of “Questions and Politeness” edited by Goody in 1978. Nine years later, it was reissued as an independent book entitled “Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage” with a new introduction, some corrections, and a new bibliography. All references hereafter in this thesis are to this 1987 edition.

The main body of Brown and Levinson’s work (1978, 1987) consists of two parts. The first part sets out their basic theory concerning the nature of ‘politeness’ and how it functions in interaction. The second part presents a list of ‘politeness’ strategies with examples from three languages: English, Tzeltal, and Tamil.

The theory presented by Brown and Levinson has been a controversial one. It has been widely acknowledged in the literature, but it has also attracted numerous criticisms (e.g., Matsumoto, 1988; Ide, 1989). It is a complex work in terms of the theoretical structure and the number of examples it provides. At the same time, it is rather inconsistent, with some gaps in the theory and in the examples.

This section discusses a number of characteristics of Brown and Levinson’s theory including its strengths and weaknesses. The main goal of this section is, through the discussion of its characteristics, to justify the adaptation of Brown and Levinson’s theory to the present study. It is divided into five parts, each part showing a particular characteristic of the theory:

1) the view of ‘politeness’ as a ‘face’ satisfying strategy;
2) the dual nature of ‘politeness’;
3) the violation of Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’;
4) the wide range of ‘politeness’ strategies; and
5) ‘politeness’ in goal-oriented interaction.

2.1.1 THE VIEW OF ‘POLITENESS’ AS A ‘FACE’ SATISFYING STRATEGY

Brown and Levinson’s basic theory begins with defining the notion of ‘face’ and ‘face threatening acts’, and moves on to argue that ‘any rational agent will seek to avoid these face-
threatening acts, or will employ certain strategies to minimise the threat’ (p. 68). In this section, I will examine the notion of ‘face’ earlier proposed by Goffman, then discuss how Brown and Levinson explain the function of ‘politeness’ using this notion of ‘face’.

The notion of ‘face’ plays a crucial role in their theory. Brown and Levinson (1987) acknowledge that the ‘notion of “face” is derived from that of Goffman (1967) and from the English folk term’ (p. 61).

Goffman (1955) defines ‘face’ as ‘the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the “line” others assume he has taken during a particular contact’ (p. 213). According to Goffman, ‘face’ is the bearer’s self image that he/she tries to maintain; he/she expects to be treated adequately by other people during a particular interaction.

Goffman’s purpose in introducing the notion of ‘face’ is to explain the ritual elements of social life. He is well aware of the existence of rituals especially at the level of interaction in a society. During interaction, the interactant has ‘two points of view -- a defensive orientation towards saving his own “face” and a protective orientation towards saving the others’ “face”’ (p. 217). He claims that these acts of self-defence and other-protection create rituals in interaction. He states that these are referred to in various ways such as ‘tact, savoir-faire, diplomacy, or social skill’ (p. 217), but he does not include the term politeness.

On the other hand, Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) define ‘face’ as having two aspects:

1) ‘positive face’, which is ‘the positive consistent self image or “personality” claimed by interactants’ (crucially including the desire that this self image be appreciated and approved of) (p. 61); and

2) ‘negative face’, which is ‘the basic claim to territories, personal preserves and rights to non-distraction’ (p. 61).

In their definition of ‘face’, Brown and Levinson distinguish two kinds of expectation that the interactants try to satisfy for each other and wish to be ensured during interaction, whereas Goffman loosely defines ‘face’ as a broad expectation of the interactants during interaction in general without defining it precisely.

As Goffman introduces the notion of ‘face’ for the purpose of explaining the rituals in interaction, Brown and Levinson introduce the notion of ‘face’ in order to explain how ‘politeness’ functions in interaction. Brown and Levinson claim that all competent adult members of a society have a strong interest in maintaining each other’s ‘face’ during interaction because of the vulnerability of ‘face’. They argue that ‘certain kinds of acts intrinsically threaten “face”’ (p. 65), and call these ‘face threatening acts’. Therefore, all

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8 First, published in 1955.
9 This does not seem to be true since the notion of ‘face’ is originated from the Chinese folk term (Mao, 1994).
10 Goffman (1955) defines ‘line’ as ‘a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself.’
‘competent adult members of a society’ deal with ‘face threatening acts’ by minimising the impact of them on each other’s ‘face’ to preserve social harmony.

Brown and Levinson call the acts of satisfying each other’s ‘face’ and minimising the effect of ‘face threatening acts’ ‘politeness’ strategies. In short, Brown and Levinson set out a theorem that there is a ‘face threatening act’ in interaction, therefore the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’ by ‘politeness’ strategies to mitigate this ‘face threatening act’.

Although Goffman (1955) and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) have a common focus based on the notion of ‘face’, Brown and Levinson emphasise the linguistic aspects of interaction, whereas Goffman deals with interaction in general. Also, Brown and Levinson’s (1978, 1987) work is rich in examples by providing precise lists of ‘face threatening acts’ and ‘politeness’ strategies.

Before concluding this section, I should raise some issues which are somewhat problematic in Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory. One of the problems is that the theory is in practice limited to a particular type of interaction, ie goal-oriented interaction. This is because Brown and Levinson present most ‘politeness’ strategies in relation to speech acts. I will discuss this point more precisely later (see 2.1.5 below).

In addition to the limitation to goal-oriented interaction, the theory involves the terms ‘face’ and ‘politeness’ which are used in everyday life and apparently have different connotations in different languages and cultures. Brown and Levinson never explicitly distinguish their use of the terms ‘face’ and ‘politeness’ from the meanings of these in their everyday sense. Therefore, these terms either generate discussion or cause criticism depending on the researcher’s point of view.

For example, Mao (1994) argues that the concept of ‘face’ in Chinese everyday vocabulary is different from the concept of ‘face’ in Brown and Levinson’s theory. On the other hand, O’Driscoll (1996) suggests a method of separating the concept of Brown and Levinson’s ‘face’ from the concept of ‘face’ in everyday ‘folk’ terms (p. 8). He supports the universality of the dual nature of ‘face’ wants: 1) ‘association/belonging/merging’, and 2) ‘dissociation/independence/individuation’ (p. 10).

At the same time, Brown and Levinson’s theory has been criticised using examples of politeness in the everyday sense and the notion of ‘face’ in a certain culture (eg Wierzbicka, 1985; Matsumoto, 1988; Gu, 1990). In fact, a different concept of the term ‘politeness’ and different kinds of polite behaviour seem to exist in different languages and cultures in terms of native speakers’ understanding. For instance, the studies of Ide et al. (1992) and Obana and Tomoda (1994) compare conceptual difference between politeness in American English and Japanese and in Australian English and Japanese respectively and find considerable differences.

Once a certain study has clarified that the terms are used purely in a theoretical sense and there is no relationship with the everyday sense, this apparent weakness becomes a
strength: Brown and Levinson’s theory can be a powerful tool. This is because the theory is based on abstract concepts such as ‘face’ or ‘face threatening acts’, and attempts to explain ‘politeness’ as a theoretical concept. This makes it possible to use the theory to identify ‘politeness’ phenomena in interaction without relying on native intuition as to what ‘politeness’ is in a specific society or a specific culture.

2.1.2 The Dual Nature of ‘Politeness’

The previous section examined the first basic principle of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory: that ‘politeness’ is seen as a ‘face’ satisfying strategy to minimise a ‘face threatening act’. The second principle of their theory, which is also fundamental is that ‘politeness’ is regarded as having a dual nature: ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’.

This dual nature of ‘politeness’ seems to be a rather common theme in Anglo-American linguistic studies. There are two ways in which it has been conceived:

1) ‘solidarity’ vs ‘restraint’; and
2) ‘approach based’ vs ‘avoidance based’.

The following discussion begins by looking at two examples of the first conception: ‘solidarity’ vs ‘restraint’, and moves on to an example of the second: ‘approach based’ vs ‘avoidance based’. The discussion leads to a further explanation of the dual nature of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ which is the combination of two concepts: ‘solidarity’ vs ‘restraint’ and ‘approach based’ vs ‘avoidance based’.

The first example of the dual nature of ‘politeness’ as ‘solidarity’ vs ‘restraint’ comes from Brown and Gilman (1960). Although they never use the term politeness, theirs is the first work to deal with two types of language usage both of which have a positive function in interaction. Therefore, it may safely be suggested that the dual nature of ‘politeness’ was originally articulated in Brown and Gilman’s work.

The focus of Brown and Gilman is the choice of personal pronouns by native speakers of European languages. They examine the relationship amongst the different types of addressees (ie those of equal status and those of unequal status), the choice between pronouns of the ‘T’ form\(^{11}\) (informal form for second person singular pronoun) and ‘V’ form\(^{12}\) (formal form for second person plural pronoun) and the meaning of ‘T’ form and ‘V’ form pronouns (ie as ‘solidarity’ and ‘power’ respectively in Brown and Gilman’s terms).

Their main finding concerns the factors which influence the choice of second person pronouns. The alternation between ‘T’ form and ‘V’ form pronouns in European languages is the result of the choice between two notions: ‘solidarity’ and ‘restraint (‘power’ in their term)’. The main goal of ‘solidarity’ is to emphasise solidarity by dealing with the addressee in an equal fashion. The main goal of ‘restraint (power)’ is to emphasise respect for the

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\(^{11}\) This is from ‘tu’ in French.

\(^{12}\) This is from ‘vous’ in French.
addressee by dealing with him/her in a special manner. Importantly, both modes are positively valued in interaction depending on the interactants.

The second example of a study which articulates the dual nature of ‘politeness’ involving ‘solidarity’ and ‘restraint’ is Lakoff’s ‘Rules of Politeness’ (1973). She introduces three rules:

Rule 1. Don’t impose
The core aim of this rule is to minimise the addressees’ load during interaction. Lakoff mentions that this rule has some ideas in common with the ‘Cooperative Principle’ proposed by Grice, since both Lakoff’s Rule 1 and Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’ refer to avoiding imposing a burden on others in interaction. There are two main methods of realising this rule: 1) by stating the propositional content clearly to facilitate easy understanding, following Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’, and 2) by not intruding on other people’s territory.

Rule 2. Give options
The core function of this rule is to leave room for the addressee to decide what he/she will do by him/herself. In order to realise this rule, people use indirect expressions such as euphemisms.

Rule 3. Make the addressee feel good - be friendly
The core aim of this rule is to indicate similarity in the relationship with the addressee for the sake of an intimate friendly atmosphere. This friendly atmosphere encourages the participants to talk actively.

Although Lakoff presents the notion of ‘politeness’ in the form of three rules, there is a line which divides the three rules into two. Rules 1 and 2 are both in the domain of ‘respect’ for the other person’s territory, with a common element of keeping a distance between the interactants. However, they imply a difference in the choice of expression. Rule 1 suggests using direct and clear expressions and Rule 2 suggests using indirect and vague expressions. On the other hand, Rule 3 is in the domain of ‘camaraderie’ between the interactants. This is realised by emphasising ‘closeness’.

The studies of Brown and Gilman (1960) and Lakoff (1973) thus share the same concept of a dual nature: ‘solidarity’ vs ‘restraint’ in interaction. Which of these two alternatives applies is determined by the relationship between the speaker and the addressee.

Moving on to the second concept of the dual nature of ‘politeness’: ‘approach based’ vs ‘avoidance based’, Goffman (1956) discusses ‘presentational rituals’ and ‘avoidance rituals’ based on the observation of hospital patients. According to Goffman, ‘presentational rituals’ involve the interactant paying specific attention to the interlocutors concerning how he/she regards them and how he/she will treat them in the on-coming interaction. Here Goffman is referring to ‘what is to be done’, such as salutations, invitations, compliments and minor assistance.
On the other hand, ‘avoidance rituals’ involve the interactant keeping distance from the interlocutors and not violating their territory or privacy. Here Goffman is referring to ‘what is not to be done’, such as not asking particular questions and not forcing the addressee to do what is not his/her choice.

Unlike the conceptions of the dual nature of ‘politeness’ in Brown and Gilman (1960) and Lakoff (1973) examined above, Goffman’s dual nature is not an alternation between two different language usages depending on the interlocutor, but rather two types of human behaviour depending on the priority in each situation. Therefore, in Goffman’s dual elements, both possibly appear even in a situation in which the interlocutor remains the same. In other words, in Goffman’s dual nature of ‘politeness’, the two types of ‘politeness’ are not mutually exclusive.

Having discussed these two concepts in the dual nature of ‘politeness’ in other studies, Brown and Levinson also claim a dual nature of ‘politeness’: ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’. ‘Positive politeness’ is expressed by satisfying ‘positive face’ in two ways:
1) by indicating similarities amongst interactants; or
2) by expressing an appreciation of the addressee’s self-image.

‘Negative politeness’ is expressed in two ways:
1) by satisfying the interlocutor’s ‘face’ (either ‘negative’ or ‘positive’) by mitigating ‘face threatening acts’, such as advice-giving and disapproval; or
2) by satisfying ‘negative face’ by indicating respect for the addressee’s right not to be imposed on.

Brown and Levinson summarise the nature of ‘positive politeness’ as being an expression of ‘solidarity’ based on similarities (p. 2) and also describe this as an approach-based strategy (p. 70). They summarise the nature of ‘negative politeness’ as an expression of ‘restraint’ based on differences (p. 2) which they also term an avoidance-based strategy (p. 70). Therefore, Brown and Levinson’s concept of ‘politeness’ seems to combine the two types of dual nature: 1) ‘solidarity’ vs ‘restraint’; and 2) ‘approach based strategy’ vs ‘avoidance based strategy’. The considerable influence of previous studies such as Brown and Gilman (1960), Lakoff (1973) and Goffman (1956) is clear:

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<th>‘solidarity’ and ‘restraint’</th>
<th>Brown and Gilman (1960)</th>
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<td>Lakoff (1973)</td>
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<td>‘approach based’ and ‘avoidance based’</td>
<td>Goffman (1956)</td>
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<td>‘approach based’ and ‘avoidance based’</td>
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On the whole, Brown and Levinson generalise the dual nature of ‘politeness’ as involving ‘positive politeness’, ‘solidarity’ and ‘approach-based’ strategy, while they see ‘negative politeness’ as a ‘restraint’ and ‘avoidance-based’ strategy. However, it is important to note that some strategies in their theory do not fit precisely into this framework. This means that there are strategies which have a complicated and mixed nature. For example, some cases of ‘positive politeness’ are approach-based strategies which are also based on difference. When the speaker praises the addressee’s beautiful rose garden, he/she shows an appreciation of a part of the addressee’s self-image which he/she may not have. Therefore, this is based on difference. However, the very act of expressing it makes this an approach-based strategy.

In addition to the simplification of the nature of ‘politeness’ strategies, Brown and Levinson demonstrate an application of their theory to the categorisation of cultural groups. Some of their claims seem to be dangerously under-researched and overly generalised. For instance, they refer to ‘positive politeness’ cultures, describing them as those cultures in which the general level of FTAs\(^\text{13}\) tends to remain low. Therefore, ‘positive politeness’ cultures are the friendly, back-slapping cultures. In this sense, Japanese society is rated as a ‘negative politeness’ culture (1987: 245). This generalisation seems to be based on stereotypes, and requires further research and analysis.

Despite some problems caused by some over simplification and generalisation in Brown and Levinson’s work, the theory itself has the potential to be adapted to analysing individual interactions in detail. It is not meaningful to correspond a certain situation, such as cultures or languages, and a certain ‘politeness’ strategy in terms of a rigid one to one relationship. Using the theory as a tool to identify ‘politeness’ phenomena, the present study observes very subtle adjustments between ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ in Japanese conversation. It is a strength of the theory that it can contribute to this kind of analysis in individual interactions.

Furthermore, another strength of Brown and Levinson’s idea of the dual nature of ‘politeness’ is that it has broadened the notion of politeness from culturally specific interpretations to a more general theory about methods of facilitating and sustaining interaction, and of minimising the nature of ‘face threatening acts’. This notion can apply across different cultures.

### 2.1.3 The Violation of Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’

The previous two sections discussed two fundamental principles in Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory. This section examines a group of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ strategies which is significantly influenced by Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’. Brown and

\(^{13}\) Brown and Levinson propose that the general level of FTAs are determined by the sum of the ‘social distance’, the relative ‘power’ and the absolute ranking of impositions in the particular culture (1987: 74).
Levinson create a category of ‘politeness’ strategy, ‘off record’, whose main characteristic is in violation of Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’.

Grice (1975) observes that ‘our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did’ (p. 45). He claims that the interactants ‘make their conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which they are engaged’ (p. 45). This is called the ‘Cooperative Principle’.

Grice further suggests certain maxims and sub-maxims in four categories: quantity, quality, relation and manner. In the category of quantity, there are the following two maxims:

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange), and
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

The category of quality has one super maxim: try to make your contribution one that is true, and two sub-maxims:

1. Do not say what you believe to be false, and
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

The category of relation involves one maxim: ‘Be relevant’.

The category of manner has four maxims:

1. Avoid obscurity of expression,
2. Avoid ambiguity,
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity), and
4. Be orderly.

Grice admits that all these maxims are only realised to some degree.

Brown and Levinson include the violation of Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’ as a criterion for ‘politeness’. This can be seen in a category of ‘off record’ in which the interaction clearly involves pragmatic communicative goals, which are ‘face threatening acts’, but the interactants hide these goals by violating Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’. For example, in an effort to be polite there may be lack of clarity or sufficiency in description.

Brown and Levinson’s theory is not the only one which considers ‘politeness’ in relation to Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’. For example, as discussed above, Lakoff regards Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’ as a part of the ‘Rules of Politeness’. She regards ‘clarity’ as an element of ‘politeness’ (Rule 1; see 2.1.2 above); the main aim of Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’ seems also to be clarity in the interaction.

Another work which is considerably influenced by Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’ is Leech’s (1983) work. In contrast to Lakoff (1973), Leech (1983) regards ‘politeness’ as a ‘bridge’ which exists between the ‘Cooperative Principle’ and the actual interaction. He establishes a set of maxims that explain the language phenomena that the ‘Cooperative
Principle’ fails to explain. Leech believes that the ‘Cooperative Principle’ and the ‘Politeness Principle’ always correlate with each other.

Leech’s theory (1983) suggests that there are the following six ‘Maxims of Politeness’ (pp. 131-139):

1) the tact maxim: minimise cost to other; maximise benefit to other;
2) the generosity maxim: minimise the benefit to self; maximise the benefit to other;
3) the approbation maxim: minimise dispraise of other; maximise praise of other;
4) the modesty maxim: minimise praise of self; maximise praise of other;
5) the agreement maxim: minimise disagreement between self and other; maximise agreement between self and other; and
6) the sympathy maxim: minimise antipathy between self and other; maximise sympathy between self and other.

Leech suggests to measure speech acts along a continuum of politeness from a negative end (impolite) to a positive end (polite) by the potential nature of the illocution. This is based on the assumption that ‘some illocutions are inherently impolite (eg orders) and others are inherently polite (eg offers)’ (p. 83). Therefore, in Leech’s theory, an act has to be measured at first, and politeness works in two ways: 1) ‘minimising the impoliteness of impolite illocutions’, and 2) ‘maximising the politeness of polite illocutions’ (pp. 83-84).

Leech’s theory has serious shortcomings when it is applied to interaction which does not involve speech acts. This is because the notion of ‘politeness’ is based on speech acts: a certain act has to be measured first to determine whether it is inherently polite or impolite, before politeness can be brought into play.

On the other hand, Brown and Levinson’s theory has more flexibility to be applied to interaction which does not involve speech acts. This is because ‘politeness’ in their theory is regarded as a ‘face’ satisfying strategy. Brown and Levinson’s theory explains how some acts may threaten ‘face’, and therefore, the interactants use ‘politeness’ strategies to satisfy each other’s ‘face’ and to minimise ‘face threatening acts’.

Although Brown and Levinson’s theory and Leech’s theory have considerable difference in their foundation as discussed above, it is true that both theories received considerable influence from Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’. At the end of this section, I would like to note again that the violation of Grice’s ‘Cooperative Principle’, such as lack of clarity or sufficiency in description, is one of Brown and Levinson’s criteria of ‘politeness’.

2.1.4 The Wide Range of ‘Politeness’ Strategies

The next characteristic of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory is that their work regards ‘politeness’ as a very wide range of phenomena in interaction. For example, they deal with linguistically well-marked strategies, which are syntactically integrated forms in language, such as address forms, honorifics or indirect speech acts. They also discuss linguistically
unmarked strategies, which are not related to the forms in language, such as in the propositional content of the utterance (eg seeking agreement), in the choice of topic (eg jokes), in the attitude of the interactants (eg be optimistic or pessimistic), or in paralinguistic features (eg exaggeration in the quality of voice).

In addition to its wide range, the theory is equipped with a large number of examples mainly from three unrelated languages: English, Tzeltal, and Tamil. These examples function as a bridge between the theory and its application in actual language usage.

This wide range of ‘politeness’ strategies and the large number of examples are a strength of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory for two reasons. First, the wide range of ‘politeness’ strategies broadens the scope of the ‘politeness’ research to include not only linguistically well-marked strategies, but also linguistically unmarked strategies. Second, the large number of examples help illustrate the theory in relation to actual instances of language use and demonstrate how the theory actually works in interaction.

2.1.5 ‘POLITENESS’ IN GOAL-ORIENTED INTERACTION

This section discusses one final characteristic of Brown and Levinson’s theory: the fact that the theory deals mainly with goal-oriented interaction. During goal-oriented interaction, at least one of the interactants has a predetermined pragmatic goal such as borrowing a book or prohibiting a certain act.14 This characteristic can be seen in both the theoretical part of their work and in the list of ‘politeness’ strategies, especially ‘negative politeness’ and ‘off record’ strategies.

Three pieces of evidence show that goal-oriented interaction is the main focus of Brown and Levinson’s study. First, in their list of ‘face threatening acts’, the examples consist mainly of speech acts. These speech acts are pragmatic goals of the interaction, which also threaten the interactant’s ‘face’. Second, in the list of ‘politeness’ strategies, the examples consist primarily of single utterances which either have or presuppose clear predetermined communicative goals. Third, the degree of clarity of communicative goals in the utterance determines to which category of ‘politeness’ strategies a given utterance belongs. For instance, the boundary between ‘negative politeness’ and ‘off record’ depends upon whether or not communicative goals are clearly mentioned in the speaker’s utterance.

In Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory, pragmatic communicative goals themselves are ‘face threatening acts’ in most cases. Non-goal-oriented interaction, on the other hand, tends to involve various kinds of ‘face threatening acts’ which are not necessarily communicative goals themselves (see 3.1.3).

14 Brown and Levinson do also mention other kinds of ‘politeness’ strategies which facilitate the interaction by satisfying ‘face’, especially in ‘positive politeness’, even if there is no trace of FTAs. FTAs are strongly related to communicative goals (1987: 101-102). However, the vast majority of ‘politeness’ strategies in their work are clearly related to goal-oriented interaction (see 2.1.5).
The fact that it does not cover non-goal-oriented interaction is a significant limitation of Brown and Levinson’s theory. This is a gap which needs to be filled in by further studies and it is one of the tasks that the present study sets out to accomplish.

2.1.6 Conclusion
The five sections above have discussed characteristics of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory, and have shown its strengths and weaknesses. In summary, the strengths of the theory can be identified in the following three points. First, Brown and Levinson’s theory can be a useful tool to identify ‘politeness’ phenomena and causes of conflict in various types of interaction. This is because the theory explains the notion of ‘politeness’ using theoretical concepts such as ‘face’ and ‘face threatening acts’ (see 2.1.1 and 2.1.2).

Second, the dual nature of ‘politeness’: ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s theory widens the scope of the notion of ‘politeness’ in linguistic research. This dual nature is particularly useful for the analysis of casual conversation, in which the interactants are continuously adjusting their relationship using both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’.

Third, Brown and Levinson’s theory is rich in terms of examples (see 2.1.4). It covers a wide range of ‘politeness’ strategies such as linguistically well-marked and unmarked strategies, and provides numerous examples which help illustrate the nature of ‘politeness’.

At the same time, a weakness can be identified in the limitation of the theory principally to one main type of interaction. Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory covers mainly goal-oriented interaction, which involves pragmatic communicative goals, but not non-goal-oriented interaction (see 2.1.5). This limitation is a gap in Brown and Levinson’s theory. This leaves room for developing the theory by applying it to non-goal-oriented interaction.

To sum up, despite its weakness, it is important to acknowledge that Brown and Levinson’s theory has significant strengths. The present study will modify the weakness of the theory in Chapter 3 and will adapt it to use in this study.

2.2 Two Gaps in Politeness Research in Japanese Linguistic Studies
The previous section discussed the strengths and weakness of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory by examining five characteristics of the theory. The section concluded that even if Brown and Levinson’s theory has a weakness, its strengths make it appealing for use in this particular study for various reasons.

This section reviews the literature of Japanese linguistic studies on politeness. It will clarify two areas in which very little work has been done in Japanese linguistic studies to date:

1) the dual nature of ‘politeness’ (see 2.2.1),
2) linguistically unmarked ‘politeness’ phenomena (see 2.2.2).

2.2.1 THE DUAL NATURE OF ‘POLITENESS’

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), ‘politeness’ is regarded as having a dual nature: ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’. Although Brown and Levinson (1987) admit that ‘when we think of politeness in Western cultures, it is negative-politeness behaviour that springs to mind’ and ‘fills the etiquette books’ (pp. 130-131), the dual nature of ‘politeness’ has been a common characteristic of Anglo-American linguistic studies such as those by Brown and Gilman (1960), Lakoff (1973) and Brown and Levinson (1987) (see 2.1.2).

In contrast to Anglo-American linguistic studies, the dual nature of ‘politeness’ has not been commonly acknowledged in Japanese linguistics. The vast majority of politeness research in Japanese linguistics has dealt with only one side of the dual nature of ‘politeness’, i.e. ‘negative politeness’.

The aim of this section is to propose some reasons why Japanese linguistic studies have tended to ignore ‘positive politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense. The following sections will discuss three issues:

1) the study of the honorific system (keigo) in politeness research;
2) the notion of ‘positive politeness’ in Japanese linguistics; and
3) Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory in Japanese linguistic studies.

2.2.1.1 The study of the honorific system (keigo) in politeness research

In this section, I will look at the study of the honorific system (keigo), since this has been the dominant focus of politeness research in Japanese linguistics. It would be safe to say that this dominance of the study seems to have shaped the characteristics of politeness research in Japanese linguistics. Three characteristics of the honorific system can be identified: 1) ‘negative politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense, 2) linguistically well-marked forms, and 3) reflection of the relationship between the interactants and the setting.

It is well known that Japanese has a grammatically integrated honorific system. This is commonly explained in the literature as a language system that indicates respect from the speaker to the addressee (or the referent) by raising the addressee’s (or referent’s) position or by lowering the speaker’s position (Ide, 1982). The acts of raising and lowering position create ‘distance’ between the speaker and the addressee (or the referent). This is the reason that the honorific system in Japanese is categorised as ‘negative politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s theory. Considering the fact that Brown and Levinson discuss the honorific system extensively in their study (pp. 178-187), it is fair to say that the study of the honorific system has also influenced their work.

The honorific system in Japanese is syntactically well-marked. It appears mainly in the verbs forms. The honorific system reflects both the relationship between the interactants
and the situation where the interaction takes place (Tsujimura, 1977). Therefore, researchers have tended to focus on the linguistic forms according to the relationship between the interactants, and the setting where the interaction takes place in detail.

The honorific system has been the core of politeness studies in Japanese linguistics for a long time (cf Yamada, 1924; Matsushita, 1924; Tokieda, 1941; Tsujimura, 1971; Oishi, 1981; Kitahara, 1989; Ogino, 1991). There are some reasons for this unbalanced attention. First of all, many Japanese scholars (cf Kindaichi, 1957; Toyama, 1978) have regarded the system as a very special, possibly unique, feature of the Japanese language, although this is not actually the case (Neustupny, 1974). Secondly, honorifics are syntactically well-marked, so they are an easily recognisable linguistic characteristic. The third reason is that honorifics are a complex system involving relations between a speaker, an addressee (or a referent), a place, and an occasion, so they have great potential as the object of linguistic studies.

However, following the publication of the “Keigo-kooza (Honorifics Study Series)” (edited by Hayashi and Minami) between 1973 and 1974, a new point of view started to receive attention in Japanese linguistics. This new approach suggested that the object of politeness research should be widened. That is to say, not only the grammatically well-marked honorific system itself, but also other features in interaction, such as routine expressions (eg greetings), or non-verbal behaviour (eg bowing), should be regarded as ways of showing politeness. For example, the studies of Neustupny (1974) and Minami (1977)15 emphasise that the honorific system is merely one of many ways to express politeness in Japanese.

Thus, studies such as the “Keigo-kooza (Honorifics Study Series)” have played a very important role in extending the study of politeness in Japanese linguistics from the honorific system itself to other features in interaction, such as routine expressions and non-verbal behaviour. However, research still seems to be largely limited to ‘negative politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense, well-marked forms in interaction, and the reflection of the circumstances of the interaction on the forms of language.

2.2.1.2 The notion of ‘positive politeness’ in Japanese linguistics

The previous section discussed the tendency of politeness research in Japanese linguistics because it stems from the study of the honorific system. In this section, I will introduce a number of works in Japanese linguistic studies which go against the trend and pay attention to phenomena in the interaction which have the nature of ‘positive politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense. It is not clear whether or not there has been influence on these works from linguistic studies outside of Japan. In some cases it is also not clear whether or not the researchers regard their studies as related to expressions of politeness at all.

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15 This is the revised version of 1973, ‘Koodoo no naka no keigo (honorifics in behaviour)’. In S. Hayashi and F. Minami (eds), Keigo-kooza 7 Koodoo no naka no keigo, Tokyo, Meiji shoin, pp. 7-30.
For example, Minami (1973) introduces the notion of ‘minus honorifics (derogatory language)’ which conveys various meanings, not only the inferiority of the addressee, but also intimacy between the interactants, and the informality of the situation (pp. 26-27). The latter two features have a positive meaning in terms of creating a relaxed and friendly atmosphere during the interaction. Despite the labelling of such language usage as ‘minus honorifics’, it can be seen actually as a form of ‘positive politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense.

Tsukishima (1973) also recognises the close relationship between derogatory language and the expression of intimacy. He claims that the use of derogatory language to the addressee who is equal in status with the speaker can indicate that the relationship between the interactants is close and intimate (p. 146). Therefore, derogatory language can be regarded as an expression of intimacy. This interpretation has much in common with ‘positive politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense. However, as with Minami, it is not clear that Tsukishima regards the use of derogatory language to intimates as an expression of politeness.

Neustupny (1974) claims that the notion of ‘solidarity’ can be a part of ‘politeness’. Neustupny points out that the role of the ‘politeness (sector)’ is to express: 1) the distance between interactants, 2) the status difference between interactants, and 3) the solidarity between interactants (degree of closeness) (p. 14). However, Neustupny clearly gives priority to the expression of status difference, i.e. ‘negative politeness’, rather than to the notion of solidarity (closeness), i.e. ‘positive politeness’ in Japanese (p. 21).

It is ironic that the notion which has been so thoroughly ignored in Japanese linguistics is taken up in a study-aid book for learners of Japanese on how to be ‘polite’. Mizutani and Mizutani (1987) describe how to express politeness to people one feels close to in a section entitled ‘the expression of friendliness and intimacy’. They refer to three ways to express friendliness and intimacy: 1) sentence-final-particles, 2) the use of kinship terms for non-family members, and 3) expressions which indicate the interactants’ shared knowledge and/or experience. However, even in this book there is the same lack of balance, with many more pages devoted to the explanation of the rules related to the honorific system and indirect speech acts, i.e. ‘negative politeness’.

To sum up, the notion of ‘positive politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense seems to have had difficulty in gaining a foothold in the study of politeness in Japanese linguistics although acknowledged in some literature, especially in the field of applied linguistics.

Above all, the influence of the study of the honorific system can still be seen in the examples above. For example, in Japanese linguistics, the researchers’ focus tends to be on the linguistic forms, especially speech levels (as in ‘minus honorifics’ and derogatory language), not on the propositional content of the speech.
In addition to the strong concern with linguistic forms, researchers also pay special attention to the circumstances in which the interaction takes place such as the relationship between the interactants or the setting of the interaction. This is also evidence that the study of the honorific system has been an enormous influence on politeness research in Japanese linguistics.

2.2.1.3 Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory in Japanese linguistic studies

This section examines some recent works which pay explicit attention to Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory (1978, 1987). These studies can be categorised into two groups. The first group criticises Brown and Levinson’s theory from the standpoint of Japanese language usage (cf Matsumoto, 1987, 1988; Ide, 1989). The second group appreciates the theory to some extent, and use it in their study (cf Mimaki, 1997; Usami, 1998; Hori et al, 2000). To sum up, initial reactions to Brown and Levinson’s theory were critical, but later work began to accept the theory and adapt it for their own purpose. The present study belongs to the latter group.

Criticisms

This section examines criticisms of Brown and Levinson’s theory. The section puts forward two main criticisms in relation to the notion of ‘face’ and the view of ‘politeness’ as a strategic device. First of all, Matsumoto (1988) claims that the notion of ‘negative face’ is not familiar to the Japanese. She uses the studies of anthropologists such as Nakane (1967, 1970) and Doi (1971, 1973) to back up her argument. Matsumoto’s argument seems to focus on the interaction in which the participants have considerable difference in age, status, and power. For example, a ‘vertical society’ involves a senior-junior relationship (Nakane, 1967, 1970), and the concept of ‘amae’ is explained in terms of a mother-child relationship as a core notion (Doi, 1971, 1973). Therefore, these examples may state that the degree of ‘face’ wants is different depending on the individual’s place in Japanese society. This means that the ‘face’ of someone who is high in status needs to be satisfied more than that of one who is low in status. This does not mean that the Japanese do not have ‘face’ considerations at all.

Next, moving on to the criticism on the view of ‘politeness’ as a strategic device, Matsumoto (1988, 1989) and Ide (1989) point out that the honorific system, which is regarded as a ‘negative politeness’ strategy in Brown and Levinson’s theory, may appear even in non-goal-oriented interaction. Matsumoto and Ide emphasise the function of the honorific system that indicates the speaker’s recognition of his/her relative position in relation not only to the addressee, but also to referents who are not even present in the current interaction.

There are two issues in this use of honorifics. First, Matsumoto and Ide suggest that the use of the honorific system in interaction is not a strategy to achieve communicative
goals, but rather a relation-acknowledging linguistic device based on who the speaker is, who the addressee is, who the referents are, and also where the interactants are.

Second, in the case of the referent honorifics, there is no direct contact between the speaker and the referents, so the interaction bears no direct relationship to the referents’ ‘face’. Therefore, a typical linguistic system in Japanese which conveys politeness does not necessarily function as a strategy to satisfy the conversational partner’s ‘face’.

Matsumoto and Ide are right in pointing out that Brown and Levinson limit ‘politeness’ to the strategies to achieve a certain communicative goal. However, with some modifications, the theory has the potential to be applied to non-goal-oriented interaction, which does not always necessarily have a communicative goal. I will argue this point later in Chapter 3 (see 3.1.2, 3.1.3).

Moreover, the function of the honorific system and the polite style speech as a dominant speech level seems to involve more than just ‘negative politeness’. This is because the act of choosing the right speech level to show the appropriate recognition of the particular situation also satisfies ‘the other’s want’ to be talked to or mentioned using the appropriate speech level. Thus, it can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’. This issue will be discussed later in Chapter 3 (see 3.1.2, 3.1.3).

**Adaptation**

The previous section has discussed the studies that criticise Brown and Levinson’s theory. This section reviews the studies which express some reservation about Brown and Levinson’s theory, but also show a certain appreciation of it and use it to some extent.

For example, Usami (1998) supports the basic framework of Brown and Levinson’s theory, but remains critical of the theory’s focus on phenomena at the level of the single sentence in which she suggests that the differences between languages are more obvious. Usami proposes the notion of ‘discourse politeness’, which focuses on phenomena at the level of discourse rather than the single sentence. She examines the frequency of speech level shift and the frequency of introduction of new topics. It is conducted with a quantitative method of data analysis. Usami utilises data from conversations between interactants who are meeting for the first time and who are different from each other in terms of age and status. The study tries to identify the relationship between differences in the attributes of the interactants (eg age, gender, status) and ‘politeness’ phenomena.

Another example of the studies which adapt Brown and Levinson’s theory to their own purpose is Mimaki (1997). She examines the data from the face to face conversation by focusing on the strategies proposed in Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory, especially the speech level shift.
The focus of Usami (1998) and Mimaki (1997) provides another piece of evidence that linguistic forms such as speech level are the primary focus in Japanese linguistic studies, rather than other issues such as the propositional content of the speech.

2.2.1.4 Conclusion
The previous sections have reviewed three fields of studies in politeness research in Japanese: 1) the study of the honorific system as the main object of politeness research in Japanese linguistics, 2) studies which pay attention to ‘positive politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense, and 3) studies which utilise Brown and Levinson’s theory. Through the examination of these fields of study, three common characteristics can be identified:

1) the overall focus on ‘negative politeness’ rather than ‘positive politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s terms;
2) its persistent concern with linguistic forms such as speech level or forms of expression in relation to the relationship between the speaker and the addressee (or the referent), and the setting of the interaction.

These characteristics seem to stem from a single fundamental point that the study of politeness in Japanese linguistics has developed from the study of the honorific system.

To sum up, although the study of politeness in Japanese linguistics has expanded its field from the honorific system itself to total behaviour during interaction, including routine expressions and non-verbal behaviour, this expansion does not seem to have changed the core characteristic of the study: the focus is on only one side of the dual nature of ‘politeness’, ie ‘negative politeness’ and on linguistic forms in relation to the circumstances in which the interaction takes place.

2.2.2 Linguistically Unmarked ‘Polititeness’ Phenomena in Japanese
The previous sections examined the first gap in politeness research in Japanese linguistics, ‘positive politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense. The discussion of this issue started with an the examination of the honorific system, and expanded to studies which utilise Brown and Levinson’s ‘polititeness’ theory. These examinations reveal another gap in politeness research in Japanese linguistics.

This second gap is the dearth of studies of linguistically unmarked politeness phenomena, especially on the propositional content of the utterance and at the discourse level. As examined in the previous section, politeness research in Japanese linguistics involves persistent concern with linguistic forms such as speech style. The amount of work which focuses on politeness at discourse level is especially small, with only a few exceptions. This lack of attention at the discourse level is also a gap in Brown and Levinson’s theory (Scollon and Scollon, 1981; Usami, 1998) (see 2.1.5).
In order to investigate linguistically unmarked ‘politeness’ phenomena, it is necessary to analyse whole chunks of discourse in great detail. In Chapter 4, I will discuss this issue further in relation to the advantages of using naturally-occurring casual conversation between ‘close friends’ as data.

2.3 The Goals of This Study
This study has three general goals. The first goal is to modify Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory in order to adapt it to the analysis of a non-goal oriented interaction, namely casual conversation between close friends in Japanese. This is because Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory focuses mainly on goal-oriented interaction, especially in the case of ‘negative politeness’ strategies. At the same time, the theory has the potential to be a powerful tool to identify and analyse ‘politeness’ phenomena in non-goal-oriented interaction. In order to further develop ‘politeness’ theory in relation to non-goal oriented interaction some modification to the theory is essential.

The second goal of this study is to investigate the characteristics of ‘politeness’ phenomena in Japanese casual conversation which are identified by this modified version of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory.

Finally, the last goal is to investigate the characteristics of ‘face threatening acts’ in Japanese casual conversation through the analysis of the causes of conflict, using the modified version of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory.
Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework

Chapter 2 discussed two main points: 1) a number of characteristics of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory (1978, 1987), which this study uses as a theoretical framework, and 2) two gaps in politeness research in Japanese linguistic studies, which this study attempts to at least partially fill in.

In order fully to adapt Brown and Levinson’s theory to this study, this chapter will begin by suggesting some modifications to the theory (3.1). Having discussed these modifications, the whole theoretical framework of the present study will then be presented (3.2). Finally, the chapter will examine the need to modify the categories in Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ strategies (3.3) and will then present the list of ‘politeness’ phenomena in this study (3.4).

3.1 Modifications to Brown and Levinson’s ‘Politeness’ Theory

In Brown and Levinson’s work (1978, 1987), the most relevant and important part for this present study is their basic theory and the list of ‘politeness’ strategies. The basic theory, with some modifications, has great potential to apply to a range of types of interaction (see 2.1.1). This section discusses the modifications necessary to adapt the theory to the analysis of casual conversation.

First of all, an issue of terminology: ‘phenomenon’ vs ‘strategy’, will be raised. Second, a fundamental difference between ‘positive politeness’ strategies and ‘negative politeness’ strategies in Brown and Levinson’s theory will be examined. This examination enables this study to identify different kinds of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena not described by Brown and Levinson (see 3.1.2). Third, different types of ‘face threatening acts’ (hereafter FTAs) not dealt with by Brown and Levinson will be distinguished (see 3.1.3). Finally, the last section will discuss an additional function of ‘politeness’ to those identified by Brown and Levinson, that is the ‘politeness’ that smooths over a conflict which has already been caused by an FTA (see 3.1.4).

3.1.1 ‘Politeness’ as a ‘Phenomenon’ in Conversation

First of all, there is the issue of terminology. Brown and Levinson use the term ‘strategy’ to refer to ‘politeness’ in interaction. They are aware of the main connotation which the term ‘strategy’ bears: ‘conscious deliberation’. They explain that ‘strategy’ is a word which infers a common rationality, but also both 1) ‘innovative plans of action, which may still be (but need not be) unconscious,’ and 2) ‘routines that are previously constructed plans whose original rational origin is still preserved in their construction, despite their present automatic application as ready-made programs’ (p. 85).

This study uses the term ‘phenomenon’ rather than ‘strategy’ to refer to ‘politeness’ in interaction. This is because the present study focuses on and analyses what has happened in
naturally occurring casual conversations. The present study will not involve itself in the theoretical issue of whether ‘conscious deliberation’ exists or not. For this reason, the descriptive term ‘phenomenon’ is more suitable in this study.

The aim of this study is to analyse ‘politeness’ phenomena in casual conversations, with Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory being used as a tool to identify these particular phenomena in the data. In contrast, the aim of Brown and Levinson’s work is theory construction, and the examples seem to be used merely to support and illustrate the theory, rather than as a basis for its formulation.\(^\text{16}\)

### 3.1.2 ‘Politeness’ Phenomena without any Relationship to Communicative Goals

Chapter 2 highlighted a strong relationship between Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory and goal-oriented interaction as one of the characteristics of the theory (see 2.1.5). It would not be going too far to say that the overall theory assumes that the speaker always has a predetermined pragmatic goal in interaction in the first place. Then, because this goal threatens the addressee’s ‘face’, the speaker employs ‘politeness’ strategies to mitigate the face threatening nature of the goal.

However, a close examination of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ strategies reveals that not all ‘politeness’ strategies exhibit this kind of strong bond with pragmatic communicative goals. In particular, ‘positive politeness’ includes a number of strategies which do not have a strong relationship with pragmatic communicative goals.

‘Positive politeness’ strategies are at least partially independent of communicative goals in three ways. First, some ‘positive politeness’ strategies simply facilitate the conversation without having any relationship to pragmatic communicative goals. For example, the speaker may call the hearer by his/her nickname (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 107-110) and thus satisfy the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by showing solidarity. This act creates a pleasant atmosphere and facilitates the conversation.\(^\text{17}\) However, the speaker may not be trying to achieve a certain communicative goal.

Second, unlike most ‘negative politeness’ strategies, some ‘positive politeness’ strategies do not reduce the seriousness of FTAs, but simply satisfy the addressee’s ‘face’. For example, the speaker may avoid disagreement (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 113-117) and thus satisfy the hearer’s ‘positive face’ by showing solidarity. Therefore, the act of avoiding disagreement is not performed to achieve pragmatic communicative goals. Nevertheless, it can still be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’.

\(^{16}\) Brown and Levinson clearly state: ‘This is an essay not in analysis, but in constructivism’ (1987, p. 58).

\(^{17}\) Brown and Levinson do not give any examples of this in their list, but they comment, ‘positive-politeness techniques are useable not only for FTA redress, but in general as a kind of social accelerator, where the speaker, in using them, indicates that he wants to “come closer” to the hearer’ (p. 103).
Third, some ‘positive politeness’ strategies create a good atmosphere in which the speaker can perform communicative goals easily. For example, before borrowing some item, which is simultaneously a communicative goal and an FTA to the addressee’s ‘negative face’, the speaker may pay a compliment to the addressee to make him/her feel good and to create an agreeable atmosphere. However, the act of making the compliment is only fairly distantly related to the act of borrowing itself.

Therefore, in spite of their overall assumption that interaction always involves a pragmatic communicative goal, which threatens the addressee’s ‘face’, and ‘politeness’ strategies are used to mitigate this face threatening nature of the goal, ‘positive politeness’ actually consists of strategies which can be at least partially independent of pragmatic communicative goals.

On the other hand, ‘negative politeness’ strategies are always performed with pragmatic communicative goals, which are FTAs at the same time. They reduce the seriousness of FTAs in two ways. First, most ‘negative politeness’ strategies mitigate FTAs themselves. For example, when the speaker disagrees with the addressee in the conversation, which threatens both the addressee’s ‘positive’ and ‘negative face’, he/she may try to alleviate the propositional contents of the utterance with ‘negative politeness’ strategies.

The second way in which ‘negative politeness’ strategies may reduce the seriousness of an FTA is to indicate that the speaker is aware of the fact that the communicative goal is an FTA, and so is trying to gain the addressee’s understanding that he/she is reluctant to perform this FTA. For example, before the speaker actually asks the addressee to do some favour, he/she may acknowledge the inconvenience.

Thus, these considerations show that in Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory, there is a difference between ‘positive politeness’ strategies and ‘negative politeness’ strategies in relation to pragmatic communicative goals or FTAs. ‘Positive politeness’ strategies are more independent of communicative goals than ‘negative politeness’ strategies. ‘Negative politeness’ strategies are always performed with communicative goals either by mitigating the seriousness of FTAs in the communicative goals or by expressing awareness that communicative goals are FTAs.

This present study proposes that not only ‘positive politeness’ strategies but also some ‘negative politeness’ strategies may simply appear to facilitate the conversation. For example, the hearer may make fewer short responses in order to let the principal speaker talk uninterrupted. This can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ (see 6.2.2).

On the basis of Brown and Levinson’s theory, the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘face’ by ‘politeness’ strategies (see 2.1.1). The present study adapts this basis of the theory and simplifies Brown and Levinson’s notion of ‘politeness’, defining it as the ways in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’. The present study proposes this simplification.
because, in order to analyse non-goal-oriented interaction, there is no need to define ‘politeness’ narrowly in relation to pragmatic communicative goals.

Although Brown and Levinson’s list of ‘politeness’ strategies focuses heavily on goal-oriented interaction, the basic theory can also be applied to non-goal-oriented interaction. Brown and Levinson, in fact, show this in their own examples of ‘positive politeness’ strategies, though not in their examples of ‘negative politeness’ strategies.

In the data collected for this study, a number of ‘politeness’ phenomena can be identified in the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening, or in the organisation of their utterances, which do not have any relationship to pragmatic communicative goals. For example, the speaker may seek the hearer’s approval to continue his/her story (see 5.2.1.1) or the speaker may gradually introduce a new topic in the conversation (see 6.1.1). Alternatively, the hearer may make fewer soft minimal responses which only occasionally overlap the principal speaker’s utterance, and in no way disturb his/her utterance (see 6.2.2.1).

In casual conversation, the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’ by expressing similarities or an appreciation of each other’s self-image and by respecting each other’s freedom to act or personal space, even though the interaction itself does not include any pragmatic communicative goals.

3.1.3 DIFFERENT TYPES OF FTAS

The previous section has proposed a simplification of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory, defining ‘politeness’ as the way in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’, rather than narrowly defining it in relation to communicative goals in interaction.

This section examines FTAs in various aspects of interaction, and identifies different types of FTAs from those considered by Brown and Levinson. In their theory, Brown and Levinson generally assume that pragmatic communicative goals themselves are FTAs in interaction. A number of researchers point out that this assumption is not sufficient. Examination of the data used in this study also reveals that there are other types of FTAs beyond those identified by Brown and Levinson. The present study cannot ignore these FTAs because they make up the majority of FTAs in the casual conversation the study analyses.

Therefore, this section explores different types of FTAs and their relationship to different aspects and types of interaction. First, even in the context of goal-oriented interaction we can find a different type of FTA from those that Brown and Levinson mainly deal with. Here, it is not only the way that the ultimate pragmatic communicative goal is expressed, but also the sequence in which the ultimate goal is presented that can constitute an FTA. Second, in the context of non-goal-oriented interaction, another type of FTA can be identified in this study. This type is not related to pragmatic communicative goals at all.
Beginning with the context of goal-oriented interaction, Conlan (in press) distinguishes two types of FTAs: 1) ‘primary face threatening acts (PFTAs)’, and 2) ‘face threatening acts (FTAs)’. He analyses the sequence of a conversation in which the speaker ultimately expresses his communicative goal after taking some steps to establish the appropriate setting for performing this communicative goal. He introduces the term ‘primary face threatening act (PFTA)’ for an FTA caused by the ultimate communicative goal in interaction. Conlan uses ‘face threatening acts (FTAs)’ for other FTAs that the interactants continuously experience while preparing the setting for performing the ultimate communicative goal.

Conlan’s suggestion to distinguish these two types of FTAs is based on two different types of ‘politeness’ phenomena. One type can be found in the way in which the speaker expresses an ultimate communicative goal in a single utterance, which Brown and Levinson mainly deal with. The other type of ‘politeness’ can be found in the sequence in which the speaker organises the utterances before he/she expresses the ultimate communicative goal.

Thus, even in the context of goal-oriented interaction, different types of FTAs exist in the process of preparing the stage for the ultimate communicative goal. Brown and Levinson focus only on FTAs which are the ultimate communicative goals in the interaction.

Moving on to the context of non-goal-oriented interaction, FTAs can be fundamentally different from those of goal-oriented interaction. This is because non-goal-oriented interaction does not always have pragmatic communicative goals such as borrowing a book or prohibiting an action, but has other kinds of goals, such as simply enjoying a conversation for the sake of building up a good relationship or having fun.

Thus, the FTAs in non-goal-oriented interaction are not always pragmatic communicative goals themselves, but can be identified by a variety of other factors. These include factors such as the choice of an appropriate speech level, the manner of speaking and listening, and the sequence of the topic development.

For example, the polite style (desu - masu verbal ending) or honorifics in Japanese, which are a type of ‘politeness’ phenomena, can appear even if there is no FTA in the propositional content of the utterance. For example, they can appear while the interactant is stating an impression regarding things which are not related to the hearer (eg ‘What a beautiful day!’) (see Matsumoto, 1989), and answering a question about him/herself (eg ‘Yes, I was born in Japan’).

The occurrence of the polite style (desu - masu verbal ending) or honorifics in Japanese is not necessarily related to a type of FTA which is a communicative goal itself. It, however, invariably is related to another type of FTA. This is associated with the interactants’ expectation of the appropriate choice of speech level. The failure to satisfy the addressee’s expectation could threaten his/her ‘face’ in two ways. First, the inappropriate choice of speech levels could threaten the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by failing to indicate
correct ‘distance’ between the interactants. Second, it could threaten the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by failing to satisfy the addressee’s expectation, such as wanting to be close, on the one hand, or highly respected, on the other.

Another example of FTAs which are not related to communicative goals at all is found in the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening. For example, a segment of the conversation examined in this study contains a mild conflict in which one of the interactants starts to become rather upset when the other asks a question about something which they had already talked about (see 7.3). This circumstance shows that asking a question about a matter which has already been talked about can be taken as an FTA. This is because it can threaten the interlocutor’s ‘positive face’ by showing lack of involvement in the conversation. Although this is not a pragmatic communicative goal, it can also be interpreted as an FTA.

These two examples of FTAs, in the choice of speech level and in the manner of participation in conversation, show that, in the context of non-goal-oriented interaction, there are other types of FTAs than those identified by Brown and Levinson’s theory. They are not related to communicative goals at all, but still threaten the interactants’ ‘face’ in one way or another. Therefore, they can be regarded as a different type of FTAs.

These kinds of FTAs are associated with the interactants’ expectations. Not satisfying the interactants’ expectations -- the absence of ‘politeness’ phenomena -- can constitute an FTA. These kinds of FTAs are not pragmatic goals of interaction, but rather are by-products of on-going interaction.

While this section has emphasised different types of FTAs in non-goal-oriented interaction from those in goal-oriented interaction, it is important to note that non-goal-oriented interaction can also involve communicative goals which are themselves FTAs (see 1.1.2). According to the data examined in this study, examples of common communicative goals in non-goal-oriented interaction are disagreeing with or criticising the conversational partner. These speech acts directly threaten both the addressee’s ‘positive’ and ‘negative face’ by stating difference or weak points, whereas the majority of the speech acts discussed in Brown and Levinson’s theory indirectly threaten the addressee’s ‘face’ by asking him/her to do or not to do some act. These can also be seen as by-products of on-going interaction.

To sum up, the present study proposes that different types of FTAs exist in non-goal-oriented interaction in addition to those in Brown and Levinson’s theory. In casual conversation, which is primarily non-goal-oriented, FTAs can be

1) not related to communicative goals at all. For example, FTAs can be found in the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening during the conversation,

2) indirectly related to communicative goals. For example, FTAs can be expressed in the organisation of utterances when the speaker tries to achieve a certain communicative goal, such as disagreeing with the conversational partner.
3) directly related to communicative goals. For example, FTAs can be constituted in the act of disagreeing itself. Brown and Levinson’s work deal with mainly the last type of FTAs.

3.1.4 SMOOTHING OVER THE AFTER-EFFECTS OF FTAs

The previous section has discussed different types of FTAs which Brown and Levinson do not deal with. This section proposes an additional function of ‘politeness’ to that identified in Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory: smoothing over the after-effect of FTAs.

Brown and Levinson claim that the speaker has a communicative goal and he/she knows this goal threatens the addressee’s ‘face’, so the speaker uses ‘politeness’ strategies primarily to mitigate the FTA, although some ‘positive politeness’ strategies also function purely to facilitate the conversation.

This function of ‘politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s theory seems to be shaped by the type of interaction they discuss, namely goal-oriented interaction. During goal-oriented interaction, at least one of the interactants is aware of his/her intention to carry out a certain communicative goal. Therefore, the main function of ‘politeness’ in the theory is that the speaker tries to minimise the seriousness of the FTA or to forecast the FTA.

However, this study finds another function of ‘politeness’ to that proposed by Brown and Levinson: in the data of casual conversations between close friends, ‘politeness’ may appear to smooth over conflict which has already been caused by FTAs. Taking into account this additional function of ‘politeness’, this study defines ‘politeness’ as the ways interactants either facilitate conversation, or prevent or smooth over conflicts in the conversation.

3.1.5 CONCLUSION

The previous four sections have dealt with some modifications to Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory. First, the term ‘phenomenon’ is going to be used instead of ‘strategy’ in this study to refer to ‘politeness’ which appears in the interaction. Second, the present study regards the notion of ‘politeness’ as the ways in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’ regardless of communicative goals in interaction. Third, this study widens the range of FTAs, including those: 1) not related to communicative goals at all, 2) indirectly related to communicative goals, and 3) directly related to communicative goals. The first two types of FTAs are ignored in Brown and Levinson’s theory. Fourth, this study introduces an additional function of ‘politeness’ phenomena to those proposed in Brown and Levinson’s theory, in which the interactants try to smooth over the after-effects of conflict caused by FTAs.
3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THIS STUDY

The previous section has proposed some modifications to Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory in order to adapt it to this study. Taking into account these modifications, this section presents the theoretical framework of this study. First of all, ‘politeness’ in this study is defined in relation to ‘face’, ‘FTAs’ and conflict. Secondly, the focuses of this study -- ‘politeness’ phenomena and conflict -- are clarified.

3.2.1 ‘POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA IN THIS STUDY

First of all, the primary premise of this study is that ‘politeness’ phenomena in casual conversation consist of linguistic devices and behaviour by which interactants try to facilitate conversation, or try to prevent or smooth over conflict in conversation (see 3.1.4 above). The word ‘conflict’ is used in a wide sense, ranging from some signs of discomfort from one of the interactants to rather serious confrontation between two.

Next, the present study explains how ‘politeness’ functions in the conversation by using two assumptions from Brown and Levinson’s theory (1978, 1987). These assumptions have been mentioned already in the discussion of the characteristics of their theory (see 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 above), but will be repeated here so as to clarify the theoretical framework in this study.

The first assumption is that during interaction, all participants of the conversation have a strong interest in satisfying and maintaining each other’s ‘face’. ‘Face’ has two aspects: 1) ‘positive face’, and 2) ‘negative face’. Following Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory, this study defines ‘positive face’ as the positive and consistent self image people have of themselves, and implies their desire for approval, and ‘negative face’ as ‘the basic claim to territories, personal preserves and rights to non-distraction’ (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 61).

The second assumption is that ‘politeness’ has a dual nature. Following Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory again, this study calls this dual nature: ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’. Note that the present study particularly regards these as ‘phenomena’ in the interaction, rather than ‘strategies’ (see 3.1.1 above).

‘Positive politeness’ can be expressed in two ways to satisfy the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’ (following Brown and Levinson):

1) by indicating similarities amongst interactants, or
2) by expressing an appreciation of the interlocutor’s self-image.

‘Negative politeness’ can be expressed to satisfy the conversational partner’s ‘negative face’ and/or ‘positive face’ (once again following Brown and Levinson) by indicating respect for the conversational partner’s right not to be imposed on.

To summarise, this study defines ‘politeness’ as the way in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’ in interaction. This is because all interactants have a strong interest
in satisfying each other’s ‘face’. ‘Politeness’ phenomena appear to facilitate the conversation or to prevent ‘face’ from being damaged. However, when ‘face’ is threatened and ‘politeness’ phenomena cannot prevent ‘face’ from being damaged, conflict may occur. ‘Politeness’ phenomena may then appear to smooth over the conflict in the conversation.

3.2.2 THE FOCUSES OF THIS STUDY
The previous section has discussed the basic nature and the function of ‘politeness’ phenomena in relation to ‘face’, ‘FTAs’ and conflict. This section clarifies the focuses of this study: ‘politeness’ phenomena and conflict in the data.

According to the nature and the function of ‘politeness’ phenomena described in the previous section, three types of circumstances can be hypothesised:

1) when ‘politeness’ phenomena can be observed in the data without any trace of FTAs, the interactants are facilitating the conversation by satisfying each other’s ‘face’,

2) when ‘politeness’ phenomena can be observed in the data with FTAs and without conflict, the interactants are trying to prevent FTAs from developing to conflict by satisfying each other’s ‘face’, and

3) when conflict can be observed in the data, there will be some kinds of FTA before the conflict and there will be ‘politeness’ phenomena after the conflict.

‘Politeness’ phenomena and conflict are both the recognisable phenomena in the data. Therefore, this study focuses on these phenomena. Regarding the first two circumstances above, ‘politeness’ phenomena themselves are analysed in Chapter 6, ‘Positive Politeness’ Phenomena and Chapter 7, ‘Negative Politeness’ Phenomena. Regarding the last circumstance, some examples of conflicts are analysed in Chapter 8.

3.3 MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF BROWN AND LEVINSON’S ‘POLITENESS’ STRATEGIES
The previous section presented the theoretical framework of this study. This section discusses some modifications to the list of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ strategies. This section and the following one (3.4) will only be of interest to those readers who are thoroughly familiar with Brown and Levinson’s analysis and who would like to know the precise differences between their classification and the one used in this study.

3.3.1 TWO TYPES OF ‘POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA
Brown and Levinson’s theory identifies five options that the speaker may take when a face threatening act (FTA) is performed (see the chart below):

1. ‘Without redressive action, boldly’ (eg the speaker communicates the FTA straightforwardly without mitigating it),
2. ‘Positive politeness’ (eg the speaker tries to make the hearer feel good by emphasising similarities between him/her and the hearer, or by showing an understanding of the hearer’s wants),
3. ‘Negative politeness’ (eg the speaker tries not to restrict the hearer’s wants by maintaining distance from him/her),
4. ‘Off record’ (eg various kinds of hints to imply the speaker’s intention), and
5. ‘Don’t do the FTA’ (eg the speaker gives up mentioning what he/she wants to do).

CIRCUMSTANCES DETERMINING CHOICE OF STRATEGY:
Estimation of risk of face loss is less

Do the FTA on record

1. without redressive action, boldly
   with redressive action
   2. positive politeness
   3. negative politeness

4. off record

5. Don’t do the FTA

Estimation of risk of face loss is greater

Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 60)

Amongst the five options above, there is no point in including ‘without redressive action, boldly’ and ‘don’t do the FTA’ as objects of this study. ‘Without redressive action, boldly’ cannot be seen as ‘politeness’ phenomena. This is because the present study uses Brown and Levinson’s basic theory that ‘politeness’ is the way in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’. In addition, ‘don’t do the FTA’ is not visible in the data since the speaker gives up performing a certain communicative goal which is an FTA.

Therefore, ‘positive politeness’, ‘negative politeness’ and ‘off record’ are the objects of the present study. During goal-oriented interaction, the line between ‘negative politeness’ strategies and ‘off record’ strategies is clear. The difference between these two is whether the communicative goals are clearly articulated or not. For example, when the speaker says, ‘Would you close the window?’, it is a ‘negative politeness’ strategy because the communicative goal: to close the window, is clearly mentioned, but the goal is mitigated by the form of request. Whereas, when the speaker just says, ‘It’s quite cold in this room’, hoping that someone will close the window, this is an ‘off record’ strategy because the communicative goal is not clearly mentioned.

However, during non-goal-oriented interaction, the line between ‘negative politeness’ and ‘off record’ tends not to be so clear. This is because non-goal oriented interaction does not necessarily involve pragmatic communicative goals. Since the present study utilises data from non-goal-oriented interaction, the line between ‘negative politeness’ and ‘off record’ is
not always clear. Therefore, only two categories: ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ (in the broad sense -- including ‘off record’), are relevant to this study.

3.3.2 CONSISTENCY IN THE CATEGORIES OF ‘POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA

Some inconsistencies in the categorisation of ‘politeness’ strategies in Brown and Levinson’s theory deserve alternation. For example, as Ide (1989) points out, behaviour strategies, such as ‘Notice, attend to the hearer’, ‘Seek agreement’ and ‘Offer promise’, and linguistic strategies, such as ‘Use in-group identity markers’, ‘Question, hedge’ and ‘Impersonalise the speaker and the hearer’, can be seen in the names of strategies.

Ide (1989) further points out that some of the expressions can be categorised under more than one category and are therefore confusing. For example, the use of plural personal pronouns for singular referents is categorised into two strategies: 1) a linguistic strategy: ‘Impersonalise the speaker and the hearer’, and 2) a behaviour strategy: ‘Give deference’.

Moreover, speech acts such as ‘Offer promise’, ‘Give (or ask for) reasons’ and ‘Apologise’, and behaviours which do not explicitly indicate a specific act, such as ‘Be optimistic’, ‘Be conventionally indirect’ and ‘Be pessimistic’ can be seen in the names of strategies.

In this study, categories of ‘politeness’ phenomena are based on actual phenomena in the data, not based on the theoretically constructed intention of the speaker. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to identify and to analyse the ‘politeness’ phenomena which actually appear in the data.

The problem, that some phenomena can be categorised in more than one category, still cannot be solved even if the categories are unified into the same type. However, consistency in the categorisation can possibly be realised.

3.4 LIST OF ‘POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA IN THIS STUDY

The previous section discussed two ways in which the list of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ strategies need to be modified in this study. Before moving on to the methodology of the study, this section presents the modified version of the main categories in the list of ‘politeness’ phenomena in this study. First of all, the original categories of Brown and Levinson’s list of ‘politeness’ strategies are shown below.

‘Positive politeness’

1) Claim common ground
2) Convey that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators
3) Fulfil the hearer’s want for some X
‘Negative politeness’
1) Be direct (ie be conventionally indirect)
2) Don’t presume/assume
3) Don’t coerce the hearer
4) Communicate the speaker’s want to not impinge on the hearer
5) Redress other wants of the hearer’s

‘Off record’
1) Invite conversational implicatures
2) Be vague or ambiguous: violate the manner maxim

(Brown and Levinson, 1978, 1987)

As discussed in the previous section, this study reduces the main categories to two: ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ (see 3.3.1.1). There will be more major modifications in ‘negative politeness’ for the purpose of grouping ‘politeness’ phenomena in this study, although the present study broadly utilises the sub-categories in Brown and Levinson’s work.

‘Positive politeness’
1) Claiming common ground
2) Conveying that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators
3) Fulfilling the partner’s want for something

‘Negative politeness’
1) Gradually getting to the core of the topic
2) Avoiding assertion
3) Dissociating the speaker and the hearer from a particular infringement
4) Claiming difference
CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

The previous chapter suggested some modifications to Brown and Levinson’s theory and introduced the theoretical framework of this study. This chapter deals with the methodological issues of the present study. First of all, I shall discuss the methods of Conversation Analysis since this discipline has influenced this study significantly in terms of the choice of data and the method of data analysis (4.1). Next, I will discuss some advantages of utilising naturally occurring casual conversation between close friends as data in this particular study (4.2). Finally, the participants of this study and the whole procedure of data collection will be described (4.3).

4.1 CONVERSATION ANALYSIS

Conversation Analysis refers to a specific discipline which was developed by a group of American sociologists such as Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, as a branch of Ethnomethodology in the 1960s. The emergence of Ethnomethodology was the result of a dilemma in ‘doing sociology’. It was revolutionary as it involved a unique method for its time (see Garfinkel, 1967; Sacks, 1984; Lee, 1987), but it is not relevant for this study to examine the history of the methodology in the field of sociology.

However, it is important to introduce the methodology of Conversation Analysis since this study has been influenced by this discipline, especially in terms of the choice of data and the method of analysis. Conversation Analysis has contributed significantly not only to sociology, but also to linguistics (Levinson, 1983; Schiffrin, 1994; Eggins and Slade, 1997).

Two main characteristics of the discipline of Conversation Analysis are relevant to this research. First, researchers in this discipline employ strictly empirical methods in data collection and analysis, and second, they focus strongly on the sequence of interaction.

The empirical methodology of Conversation Analysis has two pillars: 1) the use of data from naturally-occurring interaction, and 2) thorough description and explication of the data. Concerning the use of data from naturally-occurring interaction, the simple method of recording and transcribing the data enables researchers to study interaction empirically. As Sacks (1984) very rightly mentions, researchers can replay the data, transcribe them and analyse them extensively. The data become both the object and evidence in the research.

The present study utilises audio-recorded naturally-occurring casual conversation as data. The study values the use of this type of data which has largely been ignored in linguistic studies until recently, especially in Japanese linguistic studies.

In addition to the type of data, conversation analysts take a rigorous attitude which is thoroughly descriptive and explanatory in analysing data:

The analyst is not required to speculate upon what the interactants hypothetically or imaginably understood, or the procedures or constraints to
which they could conceivably have been oriented. Instead, analysis can emerge from observation of the conduct of the participants.  

(Atkinson and Heritage, 1984: 1)

This study also emphasises the use of an empirical and qualitative method when analysing the data. The findings are rigorously data-driven. The study aims to be ground breaking in that it does not involve any assumptions based on sociological stereo-types while dealing with ‘politeness’ phenomena. Previous studies in the field of linguistic politeness seem to be based on a strong presupposition regarding the influence of sociological variables among the interactants such as gender (cf Holmes, 1995) or social status (cf Tsujimura, 1977; Ide, 1982). Instead, this study observes the data thoroughly and extracts particular ‘politeness’ phenomena in which the interactants try to facilitate the conversation, or try to prevent and smooth over minor conflict with the help of ‘politeness’ phenomena (see Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework). While remaining open to the possible relevance of sociological variables, the study was not designed with these as a starting point.

The second characteristic of the discipline of Conversation Analysis is that it focuses mainly on the sequence of interaction, and studies in great detail how the sequence of interaction is co-ordinated or ordered. This kind of focus on the object of study is widely shared with other branches of Ethnomethodology. Garfinkel (1967), who founded Ethnomethodology, believed that everyday activities in social life have highly organised patterns, and to find these patterns by precise observation is highly valuable in accounting for social phenomena. Sacks (1984) also states that ‘it is possible that detailed study of small phenomena may give an enormous understanding of the way humans do things and the kinds of objects they use to construct and order their affairs’ (p. 24). As a result of this characteristic, most discoveries in the early stages of studies in Conversation Analysis are about the orderliness of interaction which people had previously taken for granted, but which nobody had ever formally investigated. This study also places considerable emphasis on the sequence of utterances in the data since one of its aims is to uncover ‘politeness’ phenomena at the discourse level (see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 below).

Recently, there has been an increasing number of inter-disciplinary studies which apply the empirical method of Conversation Analysis for their own purposes, such as Geluykens (1994) in the field of linguistic pragmatics, Mori (1999) regarding grammar in conversation. This study can be seen as one of these. Although this study uses Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory extensively as a tool to capture certain phenomena in the data, its purpose is not theory construction. In the next section, I will discuss advantages of the use of the naturally-occurring conversational data in the study.
4.2 CASUAL CONVERSATION BETWEEN CLOSE FRIENDS

This section examines other advantages of utilising casual conversation, specifically, that between close friends, as data in this study. The following advantages justify the use of data from this particular type of interaction. First, I shall examine the nature of casual conversation as non-goal-oriented interaction. Second, its potential for the study of linguistically unmarked 'politeness' phenomena will be discussed.

4.2.1 ‘POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA IN NON-GOAL-ORIENTED INTERACTION

Chapter 2 examined the fact that Brown and Levinson’s theory focuses mainly on ‘politeness’ strategies in goal-oriented interaction (see 2.1.5). There is clearly a gap in Brown and Levinson’s theory when it comes to non-goal-oriented interaction. The use of data from casual conversation is an effective way to address this gap.

In addition, research on casual conversation itself is relatively new in the field of Japanese linguistics. Even if we take the very narrow definition of casual conversation proposed by Eggins and Slade (1997), it must be acknowledged that casual conversation is a very common type of interaction in everyday life (see 1.1.2). However, relatively little work has actually been done on this kind of data. It is only fairly recently that casual conversations have become an object of study, not only in Japanese, but also other languages. Casual conversation is a resource for investigation in various disciplines. Eggins and Slade (1997) provide a comprehensive map of various disciplines which investigate casual conversation and of the main focus and findings of each of these disciplines (pp. 23-66).

In Japanese linguistic studies, at least until the mid-1980s, there has been little use of naturally-occurring casual conversation as data. Traditionally, Japanese researchers have had a strong tendency to make up examples or rely on their own native intuitions. Some exceptions, which use naturally occurring conversations as data, can be found in the field of sociolinguistics, such as some of the research projects of the Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyuujo (National Language Research Institute) and articles in the Journal *Gengo Seikatsu* (Language Life). However, in these studies, the data are mainly used as the basis for quantitative rather than qualitative analysis.

Since the mid-1980s, there has been a growing number of studies of Japanese which utilise naturally-occurring casual conversation as data (cf Ehara et al, 1984; Maynard, 1986; LoCastro, 1987; Saito, 1990; Okazaki, 1993; Usami, 1998; Mori, 1999; Tanaka, 1999). These studies use naturally-occurring conversations for various purposes. Most have been conducted outside of Japan, and the influence of different disciplines of Anglo-American linguistic studies, such as the Ethnography of speaking and Conversation Analysis, on these studies is obvious.

Of studies which utilise naturally-occurring casual conversation in Japanese linguistics, the number which look at such conversations between ‘close friends’ is a very
small indeed (cf Kodama, 1997; Lee, 1999). It goes without saying that the amount of work on politeness research using data from casual conversation between close friends is almost non-existent in Japanese linguistics. The value of the use of this kind of data in research on politeness is discussed further below.

4.2.2 Linguistically Unmarked ‘Politeness’ Phenomena

The discussion on politeness research in Japanese linguistics in Chapter 2 revealed that Japanese linguistic studies have paid a disproportionate amount of attention to linguistically well-marked politeness phenomena, such as the honorific system. This seems to have hindered the research from developing to deal with linguistically unmarked politeness phenomena (see 2.2.2). Therefore, they should be investigated more in politeness research.

There are two characteristics of casual conversation, particularly between close friends, that expedite the investigation of linguistically unmarked polite verbal behaviour:

1) casual conversation is an exchange of utterances between two or more interactants, and
2) casual conversation between close friends is a closed group interaction in which the interactants know each other well and the interactants tend to be equal in status.

I shall start with examining the first characteristic of casual conversation: that it is an exchange of utterances between two or more interactants. During casual conversation, the interactants create meanings through the layers of their utterances. Therefore, it is suitable to investigate ‘politeness’ phenomena that occur across the entire discourse, such as the organisation of the utterances and the manner of speaking and listening. These can be regarded as kinds of linguistically unmarked ‘politeness’ phenomena.

The fact that the interactants in casual conversation collaborate with each other enables us to investigate ‘politeness’ phenomena from the side of the hearer, a side which is often neglected. At any given moment there should be ‘politeness’ phenomena not only from the side of the speaker, but also from the side of the hearer. For example, the hearer gives short responses which indicate attention to the speaker’s talk. These can also be regarded as a kind of linguistically unmarked ‘politeness’ phenomenon.

The second characteristic of casual conversation between close friends is that it is a closed group interaction in which the interactants know each other well. This leads to some advantages for this characteristic in this study. Firstly, because of their established close relationship, the interactants do not need to pay extra attention to creating a new relationship and the conversation can thus be more spontaneous and relaxed (cf Eggins and Slade, 1997: 16).

Secondly, a closed group interaction, especially between close friends, allows more subtle linguistically unmarked ‘politeness’ phenomena, such as the negotiation of a topic or short responses, to appear (cf Watts, 1989). In Japanese, if the interactants have a difference
in age or status, or they are not familiar to each other, linguistically well-marked ‘politeness’ phenomena, such as honorifics, can be expected to be predominant. In order to exclude these linguistically well-marked ‘politeness’ phenomena as much as possible, it is effective to use data from casual conversation between close friends. In the data used in this study, most interactants speak in the plain style speech, with only one exception.

Watts (1989) notices that closed group interaction tends to decrease linguistically marked ‘politeness’ phenomena, but that there is a certain behaviour which facilitates the conversation. Watts calls this behaviour ‘politic behaviour’ which he defines as ‘socio-culturally determined behaviour directed towards the goal of establishing and/or maintaining in (sic) a state of equilibrium’ (p. 135). Watts hypothesises that the notion of verbal ‘politeness’ originates in this fundamental ‘politic behaviour’, and the differences in how to perform this ‘politic behaviour’ in closed group interaction is the cause of cross-cultural differences in ‘politeness’ behaviour. This is because he recognises that ‘politeness’ strategies in closed groups, where all interactants know each other well, tend to be linguistically unmarked. Here linguistically unmarked means that they do not employ linguistically well-recognisable ‘politeness’ features such as honorific expressions or indirect speech acts.

In his study, Watts focuses on conversation amongst adult family members as a typical closed group interaction. According to his analysis, British English shows frequent topic negotiation and respect for each participants’ right to keep the floor in a closed group conversation. On the other hand, the Swiss Germans are eager to establish individual positions and easily disagree with other participants in a closed group conversation.

It is very important to recognise a clear difference in ‘politeness’ between open-group interaction, where interactants do not know each other well, and closed group interaction. This present study focuses on closed group interaction, because closed group interaction includes more subtle verbal behaviour, as Watts mentions.

4.2.3 CONCLUSION
To summarise the issues examined in the previous sections, the use of data from casual conversation between close friends has significant advantages for this study. This is due to the fact that casual conversation between close friends is a type of non-goal oriented interaction, and closed group interaction.

The analysis of non-goal-oriented interaction at the level of discourse fills in a gap in Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory. The analysis of closed group interaction fills a gap in Japanese linguistics. This is because this kind of interaction, the interactants know each other well, so more linguistically unmarked subtle ‘politeness’ phenomena, such as the negotiation of a topic or the listener’s short responses appear. For these reasons, the choice of data from casual conversations between close friends is meaningful in this study.
4.3 The Database

The previous section has discussed advantages of the use of data from casual conversation between close friends. This section discusses the data used in this study. Approximately 13 hours of taped data were collected for this research project. The whole data set consists of face-to-face conversations between 10 pairs of native speakers of Japanese in their late twenties or thirties, who regard themselves as close friends. They come to get together for a chat. Although the interactants may be doing something else during the interaction such as eating or drinking, the primary purpose of the interaction is to talk to each other.

4.3.1 The Participants

The participants of this study vary. The single criterion is that the conversational pairs should consist of people who regard themselves as very close friends who can talk very easily. However, three commonalities amongst the participants can be identified:

1) the age difference between the participants in each pair is relatively small (the maximum difference was 6 years),
2) most of the participants are from the east part of Japan (around Tokyo or east of Tokyo), and
3) all participants are from middle class families and have had some form of tertiary education.

Related to the criterion of being ‘close friends who could talk very easily’, there were two types of relationships between the pairs at the time of recording. They had either been friends for a very long time, even if they did not have the opportunity to see each other regularly or frequently, or they were friends who saw each other very often.

Concerning the participants, it must be noted that the investigator of this thesis takes part in two conversations. However, when these data were collected, this study was still at a very early stage and the focus of the study had not been firmly decided. Therefore, it is unlikely that the participation of the investigator changed the natural flow of conversation in any way. I am confident that these data can be simply regarded as examples of casual conversation between close friends.

In the discussion and analysis of this study, family names are used for the participants who are called by variant names of their family names in the data. For example, the family name ‘Fukushima’ is used for the participant who is called ‘Fuku-chan’, which is a nickname derived from her family name. First names are used for the participants who are called by a variant of their first names in the data. For instance, first name ‘Kie’ is used for the participant who is called ‘Kiko’ in the conversation since ‘Kiko’ comes from her first name. All of the names used, in both the data and the discussion are, of course, pseudonyms, so that the anonymity of the participants is preserved. In all cases, where variant forms or
abbreviations of a participant's name occurred in the data, an attempt has been made to choose a pseudonym that had a variant form with a similar ‘flavour’.

The following is a description of the participants in each pair.

**J1**

Yamamoto: was a male postgraduate overseas student at a university in Sydney, single, and 29 years old at the time of recording. He was majoring in civil engineering. He had met Doobayashi at the dormitory where both of them lived six months prior to the time of recording.

Doobayashi: was also a male postgraduate overseas student at a university in Sydney, single, and also 29 years old at the time of recording. His major was Arts.

**Location**: Yamamoto’s room in the dormitory

**General features of the conversation**: Since both participants lived in the same dormitory, they met each other almost every day at the time of recording. The main purpose of their conversation seemed to be to share time together and to talk to each other.

**Recording time**: 2 hours

**J2**

Ube: generally worked for a department store in Tokyo as a buyer, but he was working for the parent company of the department store in order to set up their computer system at the time of recording. He was single and 36 years old, when the data were collected. He had met Tamako at the university where both of them were undergraduate students 16 years prior to the time of recording. They used to belong to the same club (a contract bridge club). Ube had entered the university one year earlier than Tamako (although their actual age difference is 2 years).

Tamako: was the investigator of this study, who was a female postgraduate overseas student in Sydney, single, and 34 years old at the time of recording. In the data, she predominantly used the polite speech style (desu or -masu verbal ending). This was likely to be due to the remnants of the senior-junior relationship she had with Ube at the club more than 10 years ago. However, their conversation is one of the most uninhibited in the data. For example, she teased Ube and even complained to him very directly at times.

**Location**: At a pub restaurant in Tokyo.

**General features of the conversation**: Ube and Tamako had not met each other for more than one year at the time of recording. This was because Ube lived in Japan and Tamako lived in Australia. This conversation involved various topics such as mutual friends and up-to-date information on how both of them had been doing.

**Recording time**: 2 hours
J3

**Kie:** was a female administrative officer at the university from which both participants graduated. She was married, the mother of one child, and 34 years old at the time of recording. She had met Tamako at the university 16 years prior to the time of recording. They used to belong to the same class and had both majored in history.

**Tamako:** was also a participant in conversation J2. She was the investigator of this study who was a postgraduate overseas student in Sydney, single and 34 years old at the time of recording.

**Location:** At a restaurant in Tokyo.

**General features of the conversation:**

Kie and Tamako had not met each other for more than one year at the time of recording, although they often exchanged correspondence. This was because Kie lived in Japan and Tamako lived in Australia. This conversation involved various topics such as Kie’s job, and mutual friends.

**Recording time:** 1 hour

J4

**Kie:** was also a participant in conversation J3. She had met Ritsuko at the university 16 years prior to the time of recording. They once belonged to the same club, a cheer squad, at the university. She was married, the mother of one child, and 35 years old at the time of recording.

**Ritsuko:** had just finished a doctoral degree in psychology and started to teach at a university in Osaka at the time of recording. She was married, the mother of two children, and 34 years old when the data were collected.

**Location:** At Kie’s place in Saitama. Ritsuko was staying at Kie’s place while visiting Tokyo for her job.

**General features of the conversation:**

Kie and Ritsuko were not able to see each other very often. This was because Kie lived in Saitama, which is situated in the eastern part of Japan, and Ritsuko lived in Hyogo, which is in the western part of Japan. Therefore, the purpose of the conversation was very similar to that of J2 and J3. Kie’s daughter (a toddler) was present during the data collection.

**Recording time:** 1 hour

J5

**Shooko:** worked at a bank, was single, and 34 years old at the time of recording. She had met Hitomi at the university 16 years prior to the time of recording. They used to belong to the same class and they both majored in history.
**Hitomi:** was a female manager of a china shop at the time of recording. She was single, and also 34 years old at the time of recording.

**Location:** At Shooko’s place in Tokyo.

**General features of the conversation:**

Shooko and Hitomi met each other about once a month and they often contacted each other on the phone at the time of recording.

**Recording time:** 30 minutes

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**J6**

**Wada:** was a male freelance editor, married and 38 years old at the time of recording. He had met Gooike at high school 20 years prior to the time of recording.

**Gooike:** was a male civil servant, married. He was 38 years old at the time of recording.

**Location:** At a pub restaurant in Tokyo.

**General features of the conversation:**

Wada and Gooike did not see each other very often. Therefore, the purpose of the conversation was very similar to that of J2 and J3. This conversation involved various topics such as their jobs, and up-to-date information on how both of them had been doing.

**Recording time:** 2 hours

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**J7**

**Chika:** was unemployed, was engaged and 33 years old at the time of recording. She had met Aiko at the university 14 years prior to the time of recording.

**Aiko:** was a female office worker. She was married and 33 years old at the time of recording.

**Location:** At a restaurant in Tokyo.

**General features of the conversation:**

Chika had recently moved back to her parents’ place in Tokyo, where not far away from where Aiko lived, at the time of recording. Therefore, they had started to see each other often. The purpose of the conversation seemed to be to share the time together and to enjoy talking.

**Recording time:** 1 hour 30 minutes

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**J8**

**Fukushima:** worked at a publishing company, was single, and 31 years old at the time of recording. She had met Norie three years prior to the time of recording. They belonged to the same orchestra.

**Norie:** worked at a publishing company, was engaged. She was 27 years old at the time of recording.

**Location:** At a restaurant in Tokyo.
General features of the conversation:
The purpose of the conversation seemed to be to share the time together.

Recording time: 1 hour

J9
Emi: was a housewife, the mother of one child, and 34 years old at the time of recording. Emi and Junko’s children went to the same kindergarten. Both participants had known each other for about 30 years at the time of recording, living as neighbours.
Junko: was a housewife, the mother of three children, and 38 years old at the time of recording.
Location: At a coffee shop in Tokyo.
General features of the conversation:
Since they saw each other very frequently, so the main purpose of their conversation seemed to be to share time together and to talk to each other.
Recording time: 1 hour

J10
Emi: was also a participant in conversation J9. She was a housewife, the mother of one child, and 34 years old at the time of recording. She had met Matsumoto three years prior to the recording time. Both participants had a child; these children went to the same kindergarten.
Matsumoto: was a housewife, the mother of one child, and was 40 years old at the time of recording.
Location: At a restaurant in Tokyo.
General features of the conversation:
The purpose of the conversation was very similar to that of J9.
Recording time: 1 hour

4.3.2 PROCEDURE
The equipment used for the data collection was a cassette tape recorder -- a small one (AIWA TR-9 or SONY TCM-39) so that it would not be visually intrusive.
The procedure was as follows.
1. Inviting the participants
First of all, I asked the potential participants whether they would consider attending in this research project. I explained that the project was about casual conversation between close friends. I also mentioned that the main focus of this project was the sequence of utterances, and that it had nothing to do with correctness\(^\text{18}\) of grammar or language usage.

\(^{18}\) One potential participant indicated her concern about having grammatical mistakes in her utterances pointed out.
On the whole, it was not easy to collect these data since participation in the project was quite time consuming, and since no funding was available to recompense participants for their time. It was almost impossible for me to ask someone whom I did not know at all to join the project. In more than half of the cases, the potential participants indicated that they were unable to participate in this project. In a few cases, potential participants explicitly expressed their unwillingness to participate. One of the potential participants, who is a close friend of mine, mentioned that she had a strong belief that conversation was not something to be recorded: we can talk about things freely because there will be no permanent record and they will most likely be forgotten.

In all cases but one, only one member of the pair was invited directly by the investigator to participate in the study. This member of the pair was asked to invite another participant: someone they considered a close friend, and whom they had the opportunity to meet with one to one. Consent to participate in the data collection was obtained from all participants, according to the procedures specified by the University of Sydney Human Ethics Committee.

2. Recording conversation with cassette tape recorder

The data were recorded by the participants in my absence except in the situation where I was the one of the participants. The data from four pairs (J1, J2, J3 and J4) were the most thoroughly transcribed. These are used as the core data in analysing the characteristic features of ‘politeness’ phenomena. On the other hand, the data from the remaining six pairs were transcribed partially. These are used as back-up data to supply more examples to illustrate some ‘politeness’ phenomena more effectively.

It must be acknowledged that the vast majority of examples in this study come from three pairs of conversants (ie J1, J2 and J3). However, it is by no means the case that these examples are exhaustive, nor is the number of examples chosen in proportion to the frequency of certain ‘politeness’ phenomena, which appeared in that pair’s conversation. Instead, these examples are chosen because they happen to be from the core data (the data that was most fully transcribed) and because they do illustrate particular ‘politeness’ phenomena in the conversations effectively.
CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS -- ‘POSITIVE POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA

As discussed in Chapter 3, ‘politeness’ phenomena appear in three ways in casual conversation. First, ‘politeness’ phenomena can appear to facilitate the conversation even if there is no trace of ‘face threatening acts’ (FTAs). Second, ‘politeness’ phenomena can appear to prevent FTAs from developing into conflict. Third, ‘politeness’ phenomena also appear to smooth over the after-effects of conflict. This chapter and the next chapter deal with ‘politeness’ phenomena in the former two cases in which they appear without the occurrence of conflict. ‘Politeness’ phenomena in the last case will be analysed in Chapter 7 after examining the causes of conflict.

‘Positive politeness’ phenomena in this study, which are described in detail in this chapter, are largely based on the ‘positive politeness’ strategies outlined in Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory. ‘Positive politeness’ phenomena can be seen as acts in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’; this is the ‘face’ which desires to be close to others and to be approved of. ‘Positive politeness’ can be expressed in two ways:

1) by indicating similarities amongst interactants, or
2) by expressing an appreciation of the interlocutor’s self-image.

However, as discussed in the previous chapter, some slight alternations to the list of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ strategies are made in this study in order to categorise ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in the data. This study relocates some categories in Brown and Levinson’s list to a different major group. I shall explain these precisely later.

This study finds three major ways that interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’:

1) claiming common ground;
2) conveying that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators; and
3) fulfilling the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’ wants for something.

5.1 CLAIMING COMMON GROUND

The first major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena is to ‘claim common ground’. In this group, Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest some strategies by which the speaker expresses common ground with the hearer by indicating that they ‘belong to some set of persons who share the specific wants, including goals and values’ (p. 103).

This section focuses on the phenomena in the data in which the interactants claim common ground in various ways, such as through use of a certain style of language or by choice of a certain topic. These phenomena can be seen as forms of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’, which consists of the desire to be treated as a group member.

The present study limits the categories of this group to direct claims of commonality between the interactants in their language use and in their choice of topic. Therefore, the study relocates two ‘positive politeness’ strategies in Brown and Levinson’s list to other
major groups. First, the phenomena in which the speaker notices the addressee’s state (such as any change in the addressee, or his/her possessions), and that in which the speaker intensifies interest for the hearer by telling a story vividly and interestingly, are relocated in the third major group entitled ‘fulfil the partner’s “positive face” want by something’. Although these acts show the speaker’s capability to realise the partner’s want, they can only indirectly be said to claim common ground. These acts more directly ‘fulfil the partner’s want’.

Second, the phenomenon in which the interactant tries to express the same opinion, such as to ‘seek agreement’ or to ‘avoid disagreement’, is relocated in the second major group entitled ‘convey that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators’. This phenomenon is about how the interactants minimise the difference between themselves, so fundamentally, these are different from phenomena which serve to genuinely ‘claim common ground’.

This study categorises such phenomena in the data into two types:

1) expressing pre-existing common background (see 5.1.1); and
2) expressing newly found commonality (see 5.1.2).

5.1.1 EXPRESSING PRE-EXISTING COMMON BACKGROUND
This section deals with the phenomena in which interactants express pre-existing common background in the conversation. The interactants express that they have something in common through the use of language, or by talking about a certain topic. These phenomena can be regarded as ‘positive politeness’ since the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ by expressing some shared background. Thus, the notion of solidarity based on a common background bonds the interactants and also helps facilitate the conversation.

This section found that the following ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in the data were related to expressing pre-existing common background:

1) using in-group identity markers;
2) presupposing common ground;
3) making a joke; and
4) teasing.

5.1.1.1 Using in-group identity markers
This section focuses on the phenomenon in the data in which the interactants use in-group identity markers. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), in-group identity markers are indicators which implicitly show that the interactants belong to the same group (p. 107). In-group identity appears in the use of language, without necessarily claiming it in the propositional content of the utterance.

This study finds a number of in-group identity markers in the conversational data:

1) address forms;
2) dialect;
3) plain style speech; and
4) jargon or slang.

**Address forms**

In colloquial Japanese, the subject of the sentence is often omitted, so it is rare that address forms appear in the position of the subject in the sentence. However, address forms appear in a vocative sense or when the speaker clarifies or emphasises the direction of the action (e.g., whether the addressee is subject or object of the sentence).

Address forms can be good indicators of how close or distant the interactants are in Japanese since Japanese is rich in address forms, particularly in personal pronouns. Each personal pronoun or address form has some connotation about the relationship between speaker and hearer.

According to the data, this study finds that the use of address forms is not very frequent in Japanese casual conversation between close friends. Most participants use address forms to the conversational partner only occasionally. A few participants never use an addressee form at all.

At the same time, some interactants actively use address forms to the conversational partner, such as to get attention or to seek agreement from the partner. A few participants even change address forms depending on the circumstances. Therefore, it is also possible to say that there is individual preference in the usage of address forms.

In the data, five kinds of address form can be identified:

1) a nickname
2) a first name only
3) a first name plus the title ‘-chan’
4) a family name plus a title such as ‘-kun’, ‘-san’, or ‘-senpai’
5) personal pronouns such as ‘kimi’ or ‘omae’.

This study involves 10 pairs’ conversations, and the number of the participants is disproportionate in terms of gender: 15 females and 5 males. These numbers may not be sufficient enough to propose any correlation between gender and the choice of address forms. However, the study finds the following patterns in the data. First, the female participants exhibit consistency in two ways:

1) the female participants never use a personal pronoun as an address form; and
2) most of the female participants use the same address form throughout the entire conversation.

Regarding the first point, Suzuki (1973) discusses the use of personal pronouns in Japanese. He makes the point that although there are so many personal pronouns, people tend to avoid using them in conversation. This data confirms his observation.
Moving on to the second point, there are only two cases where females vary the address form they use: Matsumoto is called ‘Matsumoto-san’ or ‘Iku-chan’ in conversation J10; conversant Ritsuko in J3 is called ‘Rit-chan’ or ‘mama’. These seem to be related to certain frames which the interactants temporarily try to create by means such as joking or teasing in the conversation. Therefore, address forms can be used to temporarily create different frames and to adjust the relationship between the participants. There does seem to be an individual preference for the use of this method.

On the other hand, the male participants vary widely in their usage of address forms. Of the five male participants in this study, there are: two males in conversation J1, one male in J2, and two males in J6. I shall examine these five cases individually.

In J1, both participants use address forms only occasionally. Doobayashi uses a personal pronoun: ‘kimi (‘you’, “used mainly by men to address their equals and subordinates in a friendly manner”)’ for Yamamoto. Yamamoto uses a family name plus a title ‘-kun (usually “not used for one’s superiors” and/or by one woman to another women)’: ‘Do:bayashi-kun’ for Doobayashi. This appears only when he objectively describes Doobayashi ‘Do:bayashi-kun no ba:i wa ko: bo:ru o shu:: to kyu:shu:-shite (in Doobayashi-kun’s case, the ball, like shu::: {onomatopoeia}, you absorb the ball)’. The conversation of this pair is the frankest one of all. They advise each other and express their opinions rather abruptly. Considering the general tenor of this pair’s conversation, the participants do not seem to rely on the use of address forms heavily as a vehicle for ‘positive politeness’, but they have other ways of expressing solidarity and closeness to each other.

In conversation J2, the male participant Ube uses a number of address forms to his female conversational partner Tamako. He mainly uses a nickname with the title ‘-chan (traditionally “used especially for small children [and sometimes woman to woman] to show affection”)’: ‘Arare-chan’. He also frequently uses a personal pronoun: ‘omae (‘you’ (informal), “used mainly by men to address their equals and subordinates. It carries an intimate or condescending tone”)’. Both address forms are appropriate for a junior and an intimate, so these choices clearly show their junior-senior relationship.

This participant seems to choose address forms depending on the situation in the conversation. For example, when he demands an explanation, he drops the affectionate title ‘-chan’ and uses her nickname only, ‘Arare’. When he teases the addressee, he uses the slightly condescending pronoun ‘omae’. Brown and Levinson (1987) and Hori (2000) refer to the fact that speakers tend to use variations in address forms to an intimate. Therefore, this participant is a good example of one who makes good use of a range of address forms to

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19 This definition, and the other below, come from “The AOTS Nihongo Dictionary for Practical Use”, 1993.
20 ‘Arare’ is a cartoon character who is a robot and often suddenly does rather strange things. Her name means ‘little rice cracker’. The word ‘arare’ can also be interpreted to mean ‘hail’.

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express ‘positive politeness’. Also address forms seem to effectively create certain frames temporarily in the conversation.

In conversation J6, both participants use address forms only occasionally. Wada uses nicknames: ‘ike-shan’ or ‘Go:ike-shan’ for Gooike. ‘ike’ is a short form of Gooike’s family name ‘Go:ike’. Gooike uses the family name only ‘Wada’.

On the whole, there is individual difference as to whether one actively uses address forms as a form of ‘positive politeness’ or not. Personal pronouns are not very commonly used in the data. In the case of female participants they never occur. When personal pronouns do occur only those which specifically indicate closeness (‘omae (you)’ and ‘kimi (you)’) are used.

Dialect
The next in-group identity marker is dialect. Brown and Levinson (1987) deal with dialect as a ‘positive politeness’ strategy referring to it as code-switching (p. 110). Brown and Levinson mention the situation of ‘diglossia’ (Ferguson, 1964): two varieties or dialects of one language occur within the same context -- ‘high’ prestigious language and ‘low’ domestic language.

Before discussing the occurrence of dialect in the data, I would like to raise the issue of two opposing evaluations of dialect in Japanese. This issue can be seen as a clash between ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’. In Japanese, dialect is generally thought of as evidence that the speaker is associated with a certain region. This has a positive evaluation, in that the regional dialect is considered to be ‘okuni no takara (the treasure of that region)’ in the sense that it is a vehicle of solidarity and warmth. On the other hand, dialects also have a less positive evaluation; Martin (1964) refers to some studies (eg Kokuritsu kokugo kenkyuujo (National Institute of Language) (1957), ‘Gengo-seikatsu’ (Language Life) (1957)) that the status of dialect is considered low in terms of politeness (teineisa), ie formality, in comparison with standard Japanese.

This study also finds some evidence for dialect being used as an in-group identity marker, although, in the conversational data examined, only minor traces of dialect can be observed. This is a suffix ‘(-da) be’ characteristic of two particular dialect regions, ‘kitakanto (north Kanto)’ and ‘tohoku (Northeast)’. The use of ‘(-da) be’ seems to be an example of an in-group identity marker between these interactants. I observed that, when both participants were speaking to me, they always spoke in standard language with mainly polite style speech (-desu, -masu verbal ending). In this case, the suffix ‘(-da) be’ never appeared in their speech; it only appeared when the speakers spoke in the plain style speech of their dialect. The choice of speaking in a dialect seems to be made in the particular situation where the interactants share the same dialect and are close friends. Therefore, this can be seen as a
form of ‘positive politeness’ because the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ by using an in-group identity marker, dialect.

There are two conditions for code-switching to take place. Code-switching between two types of language (e.g., a dialect and the standard language), is possible if the speakers have the ability to speak two types of language, i.e., a dialect and the standard language, and if they share a common dialect. Only when a dialect is shared can it be chosen in order to adjust the degree of closeness or formality. Therefore, for a standard language speaker who does not have control of another dialect, the choice is limited to the polite style speech (-desu, -masu verbal ending) and the plain style speech (see the next section: Plain style speech).

Plain style speech
In Japanese conversation, the choice of speech style may be the first obligatory decision which the speaker has to make when he/she talks to others (Matsumoto, 1988). Generally speaking, the speaker has a dominant speech style in a certain interaction which reflects the relationship between interactants (e.g., their familiarity, age and status difference) and the situation where the interaction takes place (e.g., informal or formal setting) (see 2.2.1.1).

Applying the phenomenon of code-switching between ‘high’ and ‘low’ language (see the discussion of dialect above) to two varieties: the polite style speech and the plain style speech, within the standard language (non-dialect), the polite style speech can be seen as ‘high’ prestigious language, and the plain style speech can be regarded as ‘low’ domestic language. Therefore, the plain style speech can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since it reduces ‘distance’ and indicates a close relationship between the interactants.

Ikuta (1983) and Usami (1998) report cases of speech level shift in which a speaker who dominantly speaks in the polite style switches to the plain style. Ikuta (1983) claims that one important mechanism of speech level shift from the dominant polite style (-desu, -masu verbal ending) to the plain style is the expression of empathy. The interactant can shorten the psychological distance with the conversational partner by switching the dominant polite style speech into plain style speech.

In the conversational data examined, all participants predominantly speak in plain style speech, with only one exception. Therefore, from the beginning of the interaction, the choice of the plain speech style by most speakers can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ desire to be regarded as an in-group member.

Even the participant who does speak predominantly in the polite style sometimes switches the speech level to the plain style. This can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by expressing solidarity and closeness.

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21 The circumstance of the dominant speech style choice of this participant is examined in Chapter 4 (see 4.3.1).
**Jargon or slang**

Jargon or slang can be also an in-group identity marker. Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that using jargon or slang, the speaker can indicate ‘shared associations and attitudes that he and the hearer both have toward that object’ (p. 111). Eggins and Slade (1997) differentiate jargon (‘technicality’) and slang (‘anti-language’) according to their functions in casual conversation. However, they also refer to the same function: both jargon and slang basically ‘create and signal solidarity’ (p. 154).

In the data, the study finds jargon appearing in reference to card game terms in conversation J2, the system and bureaucracy of universities in J4, wine and horseraces in J6, musical terms in J8. In the following conversational data, one of the interactants uses technical terms from a card game, contract bridge, and the other has no problems following the conversation.

U: Ube, T: Tamako

61 U ano:: otoshitt ochippanashi tte yatsu da yo(..) o:ba: bitto
62 [no(..) ano: so: akabane-kei no sa o:ba: bitto no(..)-
63 T [laugh
64 U -kontorakuto wa ore ga toru zo kei [no o:ba: bitto no:(..)-
65 T [laugh
66 U -sore mo shikamo ochiru tte iu yatsu yo=
67 T =honto: ni:? a: so kka
68 U demo chi:musen na no(..) chi:musen

(J2 #13)

In the data, Ube uses the technical terms: ‘otosu (to fail to make a contract)’, ‘ochiru (to down)’, ‘o:ba:bitto (an overbid)’, ‘kontorakuto (a contract)’, and ‘chi:mu-sen (a team style competition)’. These terms are not everyday vocabulary in Japanese. The interactants express their common background by using this jargon.

In addition to the technical terms in a particular card game, Ube uses an expression ‘Akabane-kei (Akabane-type)’ which requires a very specific in-group member’s knowledge. Amongst the members of the club, there was a person, Akabane, who was famous for his overbid referred to in line 62 and who tried to play rather aggressively referred to in line 64. Tamako’s laughter in lines 63 and 65 indicates that she knows exactly what Ube means. The interactants share the knowledge about how this mutual friend, Tsukamoto,
tended to behave during the game. This knowledge seems to help reinforce the interactants’ bond.

5.1.1.2 Presupposing common ground
The previous section examined various methods of expressing in-group membership in the data. This section discusses the phenomenon in which the speaker presupposes pre-existing common ground in various ways.

Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest three ways to presuppose common ground: 1) the speaker and the hearer spend some time on gossip or small talk before talking about the communicative goal (‘gossip, small talk’); 2) the speaker integrates his/her and the hearer’s point of view, eg the speaker speaks as if the hearer understands everything about him/her (‘point-of-view operations’); and 3) the speaker presupposes commonality between him/her and the hearer, eg the same wants, values, knowledge (‘presupposition manipulations’) (pp. 117-124).

The fact that Brown and Levinson deal mainly with goal-oriented interaction clearly influences their analysis of these strategies. For instance, the first strategy: ‘gossip, small talk’ is based on the point of view that at least one of the interactants has a communicative goal in mind, which involves an FTA, and in order to achieve it, he/she tries to create a friendly atmosphere.

However, all strategies in this group of Brown and Levinson’s can also be used without pragmatic communicative goals. Therefore, the main feature of this major group is that the interactants use common knowledge (such as mutual friends or shared experiences) during the interaction as a topic or as a basis of judgement.

In the conversational data, the study identifies two types of phenomena in which the interactants presuppose common ground:

1) the interactants converse using shared information; and
2) the speaker presupposes the empathy of the hearer.

Using shared information
One way of presupposing common ground is to use shared information. One major source of shared information is mutual friends. This is a very common topic in the data examined. All interactants talk at some stage about their mutual friends.

In the following example, the interactants start to talk about a mutual friend, Maiko, after having talked about another friend. In the entire conversation between Kie and Tamako, this is the first time for them to talk about their mutual friend Maiko. However, they must have talked about her on the previous occasion when they talked. Kie’s introduction of the topic of Maiko is very sudden, but Tamako follows it without any difficulty. This segment of
conversation shows how common background can enhance the bond between the interactants.

K: Kie, T: Tamako

K: so: da ne:(.) so: ka minna demo iroiro da:?{..} demo so: ka maiko ga(.) nanka: me ni ukabu yo na:(.) maiko no hanashi toka mo
T: [un]
T: ukabu desho:? (J3 #4)

K: That’s right.(.) I see, but everybody is in a different situation.(..) But, I see,
Maiko is(.) I can imagine clearly(.) how Maiko is doing from what you’ve said.
T: [Yeah.
T: You can imagine, can’t you?

Another common major source of shared information in the data is an event which the interactants engaged in together in the past. In the following segment of conversation, the interactants talk about the retreats for the Contract Bridge Club that both interactants attended. The interactants met through this club at university, so it is a crucial contact point for them. The interactants often talk about the activities of this club, which are mutual experiences, and the other members of this club, who are mutual friends.

In the previous part of this segment, Ube told Tamako that he had seen an article about a mutual friend’s hotel in a magazine. In the early part of this segment from line 26 to line 49, Ube tells Tamako about the conversation between he and his colleague. They had talked about the hotel and their conversation had moved on to the retreats for the club. This introduction to the segment shows a contrast between people who share the experience such as Ube and Tamako, and those who do not share the experience such as Ube’s colleague. The gist of Ube’s recollection is that playing a mere card game so enthusiastically for such a long time (ie more than fourteen hours a day) is so strange that Ube’s colleague could not believe it.

U: Ube, T: Tamako

U: de: nottete:(.) de sa: ‘a koko ne: ore no senpai no ryokan nan da
tte hanashi o shita wake:
T: u:n
U ‘so: nan desu ka?’ ttsutte: ‘itta koto arun desu ka?’ tte iu kara
‘iya:(.) mai(.)toshi ne:(.) toranpu no gashhuku de ittetan da[::]?’
T: [un(.)]
ima ima ja ne;
T tte itteta wake yo:
T anna rippa ni natchatte=
U ‘so:(.) sorede sa:(.) ‘ett?’
[gap]
U ‘toranpu no gashhuku desu ka?’ ‘so: da yo’ toka tte(.) ‘are desu ka
rei no burijji toka tte ima ube-san hiruyasumi yatteru yatsu?’
‘so: so: so’ tte(.) ‘sorede(.) dongurai yarun desu ka?’ ‘u:n to
ne:(..) ichinichi ju:roku jikan gurai’
[gap]
42 U え？「ほんとほんとだってはしちじにおくて：めししてきた。」
43 [はしちじくらはしちじくら。]はしちじくら：う：はじ：（|ni）でよじかん-
44 T [あ：ずっとやったてはね：]
45 U 一さんちゅ：(…)いしちじにやうすにまたに：さんし：ごろ：
46 T さんかいてやったて：(…)はしちじにやったて：はしちじにまた
47 hokute：きじくら：(…)：う：いじ：（|ni）てやるで：それまや
48 U よななこ：うじ：じ：ごろ：やるだから：(…)うそだしょう：？
49 tteはしちじにやで：[ずっと]
50 T はしちじんてしょうはね：
51 U はしちじんてはねにやな：(…)さんちゅ：おわたたまややたんジャン-
52 T [さんかいてやったて：]
53 U ぞれちっって：(…)さんちゅ：おわたたまへやかできてburyij-
54 T やったてジャン：？
55 U やったてさんちゅ：(…)でしーりとはさんし：たくやったてデ
56 U さんかいてやったて：(…)でよななこもやたなジャン：(…)よななこも
57 T さんかまもりやだって：
58 U さんかまもりやだってジャン？buryij-
59 T う：に：
60 U せんぱいたちがいたときはやったジャン？(…)けっこう：
61 [silence]
62 T デモほんとだしいはね：
63 U そ：
64 T シンジちゃんはなて：[シンジちゃんはなて：(…)ju：yojikan
65 T やったてモノ：jo：yojikanjiu：rokuji：kan
66 T やったて：う：に
67 [gap]
68 U それであはなな当てさ：ふるてなってさ：
69 T [せ：ななって(…)おはよー：
70 U せ：
71 T ございますてはなて：[て
72 U でまたやだって：
73 T う：に
74 U そうれがよっかじんねーてすゆいはんでがさんか
75 T う：に
76 [gap]
77 T デモアナリッパナニナットネットイ：
78 U もあ：(？)はね：(…)デモオレイトテナインデ：[continues]
79 （J2 #40）
80 | （J2 #40）
81 26 U And, it was in the magazine. (.) Then, ‘This is my friend’s
82 Japanese style hotel.’
83 ( . ) I said to my colleague.
84 T Yeah
85 U ‘I see’ he said, and ‘Have you been there?’ because he asked me. I answered
86 ‘Well ( . ) every year ( . ) I used to go there to attend retreats
87 for playing card games.’
88 T [Yeah ( . )]
89 U ‘Now, now,’ I said to him.
90 T ‘It has become such a magnificent place =
91 U ‘Yeah ( . ) and ( . ) he said ‘Sorry’?
92 [gap]
93 U ‘Did you say retreats for card games?’ ‘Yes, indeed’ something like that ( . ) ‘Is it
94 bridge or something that you play during the lunch break these days?’
95 ‘Yeah, yeah, yeah’ ( . ) ‘How long do you play?’ ‘Let me think,
96 er, ( . ) fourteen hours a day’
97 [gap]
98 U ‘Sorry?’ ‘It’s true, it’s true, because we’d get up at seven in the morning and have
99 breakfast ( . ) Then from eight, from eight, through nine, ten, until (twelve), we’d
100 ————
22 He uses ‘Ube-san’ instead of you in original Japanese.
We practised all day long, didn’t we?

- practise bridge for four hours.(.) Until one, we’d have a rest and again at two, through three, four, five, six and until seven, we’d play bridge.(.) We’d have dinner until eight, until half past eight we’d have dinner. From nine,(.) through ten, eleven, until twelve, we’d play bridge again. And until around twelve, midnight, we’d practise bridge.’(.)

He said, ‘You’re joking.’ ‘It’s true, we used to practise all day long.’

It was true, wasn’t it?

It’s true, isn’t it? Because(.) we’d play bridge after the official practice time.

We’d practise three times a day.

- We’d(.) play bridge again after finishing the official practice, going back to our room to play again, wouldn’t we?

Because(.) we’d play in the morning, afternoon and in the evening, wouldn’t we?

We’d have dinner until eight, until half past eight we’d have dinner. From nine,(.) through ten, eleven, until twelve, we’d play bridge again.

Then,(.) we’d play late into the night.(.) Late at night, after our drinking party.

We’d also have a drinking party.

- we’d play bridge again.

Um

[At the place where our senior members weren’t present, we’d play bridge,(.) quite (silence)

But, that’s true, It was like that, wasn’t it? =

Yeah

It’s unbelievable, isn’t it?

[It’s unbelievable.(.) We used to play bridge for around fourteen hours.(.) For about fourteen hours, sixteen hours, (we used to play bridge).

[Yeah.

[Yeah]

Then, in the morning, we’d be like this, we’d be totally exhausted

[yeah, like this(,) Good -(yeah

-morning, we’d say something like that.

And, we’d play bridge again.

Yeah

Thi, this lasted about four days.

Yeah

But, the place has become such a magnificent place.

Well, (? ), right?(. But, I haven’t been there {continue}

The use of shared information is related to the choice of topic. In this segment of conversation, this choice seems to create two significant by-products. First, a strong sympathy between the interactants can be observed. Ube and Tamako are cooperators who support one another’s recollection that this unusual experience is a true story. For example, Ube seeks agreement in lines 51, 54, 59 and 61, and he presupposes Tamako has completely the same memories about this experience as he does. On the other hand, Tamako shows agreement in lines 44 and 50 and Tamako even seems to avoid disagreement in lines 52, 55, 58 and 60. I will discuss this issue of being cooperators in regard to other ‘positive politeness’ phenomena later (see 5.2).
Second, both interactants show a high degree of involvement. Both interactants’ utterances overlap significantly in the data. For instance, Tamako’s comments, which support and agree with Ube’s talk, overlap with Ube’s speech in lines 44, 50, 52, 58 and 72. Ube’s agreement also overlaps with Tamako’s speech in lines 56, 67 and 73. However, those overlaps do not sound argumentative; rather they make this conversation sound lively. This is because both interactants are agreeing with each other and are amplifying one another’s talk.

Therefore, the topic choice of a shared experience not only claims common ground itself, which can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’, but also contributes to facilitating the conversation because of the by-products – the cooperation and involvement of both participants -- as discussed above.

Presupposing empathy
Another way of presupposing common ground is that the speaker assumes that the conversational partner is empathic to him/her and so understands what he/she is saying. The following example shows how the speaker might presuppose such empathy. In the previous part of this segment, the interactants had talked about Ube’s colleague who had answered the phone when Tamako called Ube at his office. This colleague had rather cheekily asked Tamako if she were the one Ube called ‘Arare-chan’.

T: Tamako, U: Ube

80 T arare-chan desu ka [?: nante: {laugh}]
81 U [{laugh} dakara sore wa sa:(..) demo(,) ore ga
82 mo: so:iu kyouarukata: da to omotteru kara kitto ore ni denwa ga
83 kakatte kuru hito mo:(,) so:iu no:(,) ukeire[te(,) kureru hito-
84 T [{laugh}]
85 U -nan datte no wa kare mo wakatteru wake yo:(,.) kitto: wakaru
86 desho?: sore tte:(..) ne?
87 T demo(,) demo so: janaakute(,) mo: ube-danpa no itta koto wa:(..)
88 zettai [{(?) } janaain desu ka
89 U [iya(,) sore wa(,) sonna koto nai no yo
90 T ok[kashi:: to omotchatta
91 U [sonna koto wa nail(,) chigau sonna koto wa nai tamatama(,)
92 ikanimo so:iu {cough}(,.) tabun sono(,) yoku shitteru hito nan da
93 tte iu ime:ji wa (doroshitemo) attan [janaai(,.) dakara demo-
94 T [{u::n
95 U -ore mo kiku to wa omowanakatta kara bikkuri shichatta yo {laughing}
96 arare-chan desu ka tte(,) a hontu ni ki:te yan no koitsu to omotte
97 sa:(,.) soshitara(,) nante itteta no tte ittara 'e a so: desu
98 kedo:' [tte (laughing)itteitemashita (tte)
99 T [{laugh}]
100 T {laugh}
101 U sore wa waraeru wa na:

(J2 #24)

80 T ‘Are you Arare-chan?’ that kind of question {laugh}
81 U [{laugh} Because that is(..) But(.) He knows I am
82 such a character, so surely, the person
83 who rang me(.) would understand(.) that kind of thing(.) that the person -
84 T [{laugh}
85 U -will understand, he also knows(,) definitely. You understand,
don’t you? this kind of thing(…) Right?
But(…) But, it’s not like that (…) The things you (…) ask are (…) absolute (?), don’t you think?
[Well, (…) that is (…) that’s not true.
T ↓ thought it’s funny.
[That’s not true, (…) That’s wrong, that’s not true, it just happen to be (…) as if that kind of {cough} (…) perhaps, err, (…) he must have had the impression that
T ↓ know very well (surely)? (…) So, but -
T ↓ I see::
U -I also didn’t expect he would actually ask the question, so I was very surprised at
that, too {laughing} ‘Are you Arare-chan?’ (…) I thought ‘Oh, this guy has actually
asked the question(…) Then,(…) I asked him what you said, he told me,
‘She said {laughing} “Yes, I am, but”’
T ↓ [[laugh]
T ↓ {laugh}
U This is something we can laugh about.

In this segment, there are two moves in which the interactant presupposes the conversational partner’s empathy. First, Tamako expects Ube’s empathy by seeking agreement from him that usually people would not ask a person they do not know very well a question like ‘Are you Arare-chan?’ (line 80). This is because ‘Arare-chan’ is the name of a cartoon character, so it is rather strange to ask a question like this to someone one does not know very well, especially at work which is supposed to be a formal public place.

Instead of agreeing with Tamako, Ube gives a reason why his colleague may have asked Tamako such a question. It seems he had actually asked his colleague to find out if it was ‘Arare-chan’ on the line. Ube attributes the colleague’s cooperation with this odd request to the fact that his colleague must have assumed that the caller was a very understanding person. This is because she is a friend of Ube who has a reputation for odd behaviour. This explanation can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘positive face’ by expressing closeness to her.

The second move in which the interactant presupposes the conversational partner’s empathy is that Ube seeks agreement from Tamako that she understands his explanation of the reason why his colleague asked Tamako the question in lines 85 and 86. This can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘positive face’ by presupposing her understanding.

Later in lines 93, 95, 96, and 97, Ube agrees with Tamako’s original complaint and he tells her that he did not in fact think his colleague would actually ask Tamako such a question. Therefore, the first presupposition by Tamako is eventually fulfilled. This can be seen as another form of ‘positive politeness’, albeit somewhat delayed, because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by expressing agreement (see 5.3.3). In this way, the interactants are negotiating their relationship both by expressing their own point of view and by showing understanding of the other’s point of view.

23 Tamako uses ‘Ube-senpai’ instead of ‘you’ in the original Japanese.
Final particles
The last ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon by which the speaker presupposes common ground is the use of final particles. In this section, I shall focus on the particular final particle, ‘ne’, in the data. Brown and Levinson (1987) refer to the Japanese particle ‘ne’ as a hedging device in their list of ‘negative politeness’ strategies.

On the other hand, Cook (1992) claims the function of the final particle ‘ne’ ‘directly’ indicates ‘affective common ground’ and indirectly indexes ‘various conversational functions that require the addressee’s cooperation’ by examining various context where the final particle ‘ne’ appears in conversational data.

This study finds a variety of functions of the final particle ‘ne’ in the data. However, this section just focuses on the function which clearly indicates clearly common ground. This can particularly be found while the speaker is confirming his/her understanding of the other or seeking agreement. This use of ‘ne’ occurs after predicate verbal ending or at the end of the sentence.

The following segment includes the frequent occurrence of the final particle ‘ne’, especially by one of the interactants who expresses her empathy with the conversational partner’s situation. For example, Kie confirms her understanding of Tamako’s situation (lines 4, 6, 11, 12, and 16), and seeks agreement from Tamako (lines 18, 20, and 21). In this way, the final particle ‘ne’ used after the predicate can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker presupposes common ground by using this particular particle.

K: Kie, T: Tamako

4  K demo jibun de kimenakya: dare mo kimete kurenai kara [taihen da-
5  T [u:n
6  K -yo ne:(.) watashi yoku sa:(.) so:(.) yoku sa: daigakuiin toka de
7  ne: minna benkyo: shiteru hito toka sa: senpai toka ita janai?()
8  K minna yoku yatteru na: tte omotta [kedo sa:
9  T [demo:(.) komakai koto mo subete
10  so: na no(.).) [dakara:
11  K [jibun de kimenakya dare mo kimete kurenain da yo
12  [ne:
13  T [u:n
14  T de(.). ne:(.) benkyo: no koto dake janain da yo
15  [gap]
16  K seikatau ippin tte koto [ne:
17  T [u:n(.).] zenbu(.). dakara(.).) nante iu no ka
18  K dareka ni kikitaku naru toki aru yo ne
19  T [u:n
20  K dareka ni kime kaita moraitaku natchau toki toka ne:(.) do:demo
21  i: koto hitotsu dattara sa: tatoeba ne:
22  [silence]
23  T do:demo i: koto dattara(.) (so: da) honto da yo ne:

(J3 #12)

4  K But, if you don’t decide by yourself, nobody will decide for you. So it’s hard, -
5  T [Yeah
6  K -isn’t it?() I often,(.) yeah,(.) often, in a post-graduate course or something.
all of them who are studying... There were senior students, weren’t there? (.)

I thought all of them were doing very well.

But, (.) everything including tiny things as well, (.) so

If you don’t decide by yourself, nobody will decide for you, right?

Yeah

And, (.) right?, (.) it isn’t only the things about the study.

You mean life in general, right?

Yeah, (.) everything, (.) so (.) what can I say

There is a time when we want to ask somebody, isn’t it?

Yeah

The time when we want someone to decide, right? (.) If things are something trivial, don’t you think so, for example?

If things are something trivial (.) (that’s right), that’s true, indeed.

5.1.1.3 Making a joke

In the previous section, the ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon was analysed in which the speaker presupposes common ground. This section analyses a phenomenon in which the interactants make a joke or tell a humorous story in the conversation.

Brown and Levinson (1987) state that jokes function as a ‘positive politeness’ technique in two ways: 1) they express shared background or values since jokes are often based on shared knowledge and values between the interactants; and 2) they put the hearer at ‘ease’ (p. 124). First, telling a joke itself can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by regarding him/her as someone who shares the same values or tastes. Sacks (1978) analyses the particular ‘shared knowledge’ necessary to appreciate a dirty joke.

Appreciation of the joke can also be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the hearer satisfies the joke maker’s ‘positive face’ by responding that he/she appreciates the humour and shares the same values or taste. In the conversational data examined, when the interactant makes a joke or tells a humorous story, the other interactant often responds with laughter. This sequence makes the atmosphere relaxed and friendly. Eggins and Slade (1997) also point out another function of humour, that is to reduce the seriousness of the propositional content (p. 156). This study will deal with this function in Chapter 8 (see 8.2).

The study identifies a number of common patterns that recur in jokes or humorous stories in the data: exaggerated mimicry, playing with homonyms, showing contrast, and telling something obviously not true. In the following example, one joke triggers another joke, which triggers yet another.

U: Ube, T: Tamako
In this segment, both interactants build jokes on what the other has said. First of all, in line 10, Ube uses an expression ‘nihon ichi anzen na biru (the safest building in Japan)’. This expression seems to be a humorous expression because it would be rather difficult to claim that any building as the safest in Japan. The speaker makes a claim that is clearly too ambitious and precise, and this makes the expression humorous.

Second, in line 11, Tamako uses a homophone ‘kyo: ka(ra) (from today)’ and ‘kyo:ka (strengthening)’. Maynard (1998) observes that ‘the Japanese language contains a limited number of syllables which promotes extensive homonyms (same pronunciation, different meaning)’ (p. 161). The present study also identifies the use of extensive homonyms such as the one exemplified here.

Finally, in line 13, Ube says, ‘oaiso onegaishimasu (Can I have the bill?)’, which is a routine expression used when people ask for the bill at the sushi bar in Japan such as the one where this conversation takes place. Ube says this even though he has no intention of leaving the place. Therefore, in this context, his expression means ‘that is enough’.

In addition to the point that making jokes is a form of ‘positive politeness’, it should also be noted that one of the participants seems to choose the type of joke depending on the interactant. For example, Tamako often makes jokes using homophones to this particular conversational partner Ube, but she never makes jokes of this type to the other partner, Kie. This might be regarded as resulting from the recognition of different shared values between the interactants. The interactant indicates shared values or background with each conversational partner in specific ways.

5.1.1.4 Teasing
The previous section examined jokes as a form of ‘positive politeness’ in which the speaker expresses pre-existing common ground. This section analyses teasing as a form of ‘positive politeness’. Brown and Levinson (1987) do not deal with teasing as an independent strategy,
although they briefly mention it in the strategies ‘Notice, attend to the hearer (p. 104)’ and ‘joke’ (p. 124). Straehle (1993) claims that teasing can appear in a certain frame in which the interactants acknowledge that they are playing with words, and the ‘teaser’ and the ‘teasee’ are in a close relationship.

The study identifies a number of sequences in which teasing leads to the laughter and creates a lively atmosphere in the conversation. Teasing can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because teasing:

1) is based on the belief that the relationship between the interactants is strongly established; and
2) is often based on previous knowledge about the conversational partner.

At the same time, teasing can also be taken as an FTA since it is directed at a weak point of the addressee and it can threaten the addressee’s ‘positive face’. An analysis of an example teasing which is interpreted as an FTA will be shown later (see 7.5).

Certain kinds of acts, such as teasing and jokes, seem to be a crucial component in certain interactions as a vehicle for showing solidarity, even though there is the potential for them to be taken as FTAs. They can, in fact, be regarded as types of ‘politeness’ since the interactants confirm their closeness by the speaker performing the potential FTA and the hearer allowing him/her to do so.

In the following example, teasing by one of the interactants triggers a sequence of jokes and another instance of teasing. Therefore, this is an example of teasing which clearly contributes to facilitating the conversation.

**T:** Tamako, **U:** Ube

1 T ube-senpai ro:gan desu ka?
2 U iya(.) nande?
3 {gap}
4 U ro:gan na wake ne: daro: omae:(.) mada niju:hachi da zo?
5 T (laugh) o:warai {laugh} o:warai kaisuiyokujo: tte
6 {gap}
7 U u::n sonnanja nakatta yo kimi wa:: mukashi::(.) do:shichatta no?
8 ne:(.) muko: ni itte sa:(.) kekko: ki: tsukatten da ro?:
9 o:sutorariajin ni:
10 T sonna koto
11 U ne: o:sutoraria-jin ni sonna no(.). tsu:jinai zo omae(.) o:warai
12 kaisuiyokujo: nante itta tte:

   (J2 #16)

1 T Ube-senpai, are you long sighted **due to old age**?
2 U No(.). Why?
3 {gap}
4 U I can’t be long sighted **due to old age**, you(.) I’m still twenty eight years old.
5 T (laugh) Very funny. (laugh) Owarai Beach.\(^{24}\)
6 {gap}
7 U Uhmm, you were not like this before, a long time ago(.). What’s happened?

---

\(^{24}\) There is a beach near Tokyo which is called the ‘Ooarai’ Beach. Tamako plays with a quasi-homonym: ‘o:warai (big laughter)’ and ‘O:arai (the name of the beach)’. 77
Hey. After you went over there, you must be too cautious with Australians, right?

That kind of thing wouldn’t be able to understand that kind of thing, you. If you said such kind of thing as ‘Owarai kaisuiyokujo (Owarai Beach)’.

First of all, in line 1, Tamako teases Ube saying ‘ro:gan desu ka? (Are you long-sighted due to old age?)’. If Ube is long-sighted, it can be an indication that Ube is getting old, since long-sightedness is regarded as a typical symptom of aging in Japanese culture. This is the point that Tamako is implying and, by doing so, Tamako is teasing Ube.

Ube retorts that he cannot be long-sighted, and in lines 2 and 4, he makes a joke, saying that he is still twenty eight years old, which is clearly not true. This reaction of Ube saves this segment of conversation from heading into conflict, since teasing could be taken as an FTA. This reaction also shows that Ube and Tamako are close enough for Tamako to commit an FTA without redress. Tamako is risking a threat to Ube’s ‘positive face’ by teasing.

In line 5, Tamako teases Ube again saying ‘o:warai (lit. big laugh, ie very funny)’ about his age. Tamako stresses this utterance strongly which makes it sound sarcastic, implying that it is not funny at all. Then, Tamako makes a pun with a mock homophone (‘o:warai (big laughter)’ and ‘O:arai (the name of beach in Ibaraki prefecture in Japan)’). This pun clearly assumes common knowledge, because if the interlocutor did not know there was a beach called ‘O:arai’, this joke would not make any sense at all.

In reaction to Tamako’s joke, Ube says that Tamako used not to make this kind of joke (line 7). Ube goes on to tease Tamako in return, saying that this kind of joke could never be understood by Australians. Then, Ube shows mock sympathy, suggesting that Tamako may be trying to be too good and having withdrawal symptoms as she cannot make jokes like this in Australia.

This segment of conversation involves continuous exchanges of teasing and joking between the interactants. These exchanges contribute to making the atmosphere relaxed and lively and serve to emphasise the close relationship between the participants.

5.1.2 EXPRESSING SOME NEWLY FOUND COMMONALITY

The previous sections have examined a number of ways by which participants express pre-existing common background. This section focuses on phenomena in the data in which both interactants express newly found commonality. The interactants tend to place considerable emphasis on something they have realised they have in common during the conversation. For example, they may have experienced the same kind of situation or share the same opinion. By expressing this newly found commonality, the interactants can establish common ground
which can function in the similar way to discussing pre-existing common background (see 5.1.1).

Expressing newly found commonality can be related either to the pragmatic content or to the attitudes expressed in the data. It seems to bring by-products in the conversation at the level of manner of speaking and listening. For example, on discovering some commonality, both interactants may get excited. These by-products contribute to activating the conversation and making the atmosphere lively. I will discuss these issues in regard to manner of speaking and listening elsewhere (see 5.2).

Two kinds of newly found commonality were evident in the data:
1) Having experienced a similar situation; and
2) Having the same opinion.

5.1.2.1 Expressing having experienced a similar situation
In the conversational data examined, there are some instances in which the interactants indicate that they have experienced the same situation. They connect the conversational partner’s experience and their own experience together. As well as functioning to express ‘positive politeness’, this has the additional effect of making the conversation sound lively.

In the following segment of conversation, the interactants discuss some coincidences which have occurred in their life and those coincidences stimulate the conversation. The more similarity the interactants find, the more excited they become. The topic of this segment is about two paediatricians to whom the interactants take their children. It is highly possible that this topic is chosen in the first place because both interactants have children. In this sense, this conversation develops along with these lines because the interactants are the mothers of young children, and it can be expected that they will share the same kind of experiences.

R: Ritsuko, K: Kie

R a: [uchi no soba mo so:iu kanji (yatta yo:){.} ano::{.}]-
K [yatte:]
R =tanida-sho:nika tte ne:{().} oba:san ga hitori de-
K [un]
R =yatterun da kedo=
K =so so so so:{}. oba:san ga hitori de {yatteru sho:nika
R [e: sono hito:?{.}]
K kono hito mo [so:?{.} are sho:baikke nai desho:?=]
K [un]
R =SO:
K uchi mo [zenzen nai no
R [ZENZEN sho:baikke nai no{.} dakara ne:
K suiteru desho:?]
K SUITERU [NO
R [uchi to issho {issho issho
K [soide ne:{.} zettai matanai no
R un so: uchi mo so: so: {so:}
K demo ne:=]
R =un=
In this segment, the interactants discover some coincidences about the two paediatricians during the course of interaction: both are old female doctors in practice by themselves, they do not seem interested in making a profit, the clinics are never busy, and the doctors have a poor reputation in the neighbourhood.
Through expressing that they have experienced the same situation, some characteristic phenomena which show deep involvement in the conversation can be observed in the data. First, the interactants agree with each other by repeating the conversational partner’s words frequently. For example, “oba: san ga hitori de yatteru (an old woman doctor works alone)” in line 28, “zenzen sho: baikke nai (no thought of making money at all)” in line 34, and “suiteru (it’s empty)” in line 36. This can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ in which the interactants indicate mutual participation by repeating the conversational partner’s utterance (see 5.2.1.2).

Second, the utterances of both speakers overlap significantly. This happens in lines 29, 34, 38 and 73. This can be seen as an indication that both interactants are excited.

Third, one of the interactants anticipates two of the coincidences by completing sentences which the other interactant has started. That is to say, Kie starts her utterance: ‘dakara ne: (therefore)’ in lines 34 and Ritsuko completes it in line 35: ‘suiteru desho: (it’s quiet)’. Again, Kie starts in line 65: ‘kinjo de wa ne: (in our neighbourhood)’ and Ritsuko completes it in line 66: ‘hyo: ban warui desho: (she has a bad reputation)’. This phenomenon is reported in the literature as ‘co-construction of utterance’ (cf Lerner, 1991; Hayashi and Mori, 1998). Ritsuko does not wait for Kie’s to complete her utterance and completes it herself. Kie does not seem to be annoyed at all by this. This can be seen as a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon that indicates mutual participation (see 5.2.1.2).

Ritsuko goes on to express considerable surprise and excitement. For example, in line 67, Kie says, ‘NANde NANde (Why? Why?)’ in a loud voice. This might be seen as a genuine request for a reason, but it is also very similar to the ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon of asking a continuous question whose purpose is to encourage the conversational partner to speak more (see 5.2.1.2). This is because Kie already knows, in fact, the criteria of being a popular doctor, but the most exciting point is that Ritsuko has also experienced a very similar situation.

There is a sequence at the end of this segment in which the interactants add more examples and descriptions for each other. They express their shared knowledge about doctors who gain a good reputation. First of all, Ritsuko remarks that if the doctors do not give the patients a lot of medicine, they do not gain good reputation in lines 68 and 69. Then Kie adds another characteristic feature of clinics which have a good reputation: ‘kusuri ga ki: te ne: (the medicine works well)’, ‘sugu naoru (the patients recover quickly)’ in lines 70 and 72. Next, Ritsuko also adds more descriptions of doctors, who have a good reputation ‘kondete (They are crowded)’ in line 74 and ‘chotto kirei ni shite atte (they are quite clean)’ in line 76, and Kie inserts short responses in lines 75 and 77.

---

25 This explanation can only make sense if the interactants know that the fact that ‘sho:bai kke ga nai (They are not interested in making money)’ (line 30), means that the doctors do not give the patients a lot of medicine.
This excerpt shows that while the interactants express some newly found commonality, some other kinds of ‘politeness’ phenomena also appear in the conversation and the conversation begins to sound more lively.

5.1.2.2 Expressing the same opinion (agreement)

The previous section has examined the ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon in which the interactants talk about having experienced a similar situation. This section analyses the phenomena in which the interactants express the same opinion as each other. This can again be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ by ensuring and supporting to each other’s opinion.

Previous studies in the discipline of Conversation Analysis provide an insightful analysis on the structure of the second move sequence (Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987). The second move means some kind of reaction to the conversational partner’s first move.\(^{26}\) As a general principle, it is found that agreement is preferred\(^{27}\) with some exceptions. This is because they find that the agreement is usually performed directly without delay. This study also finds a general tendency in agreement and avoidance of disagreement. The study will discuss avoidance of disagreement (see 5.2.2) and avoidance of assertion later (see 6.2.1).

Mori (1999) analyses the agreement sequence focusing on ‘causal connectors’ in Japanese such as ‘datte’, ‘dakara’ and ‘kara’. She claims that the speaker tends to not only agree with the partner but also to support by adding some reason to the speaker’s agreement using above connectors differently.

In the following segment, one of the interactants expresses her opinion and seeks agreement from the conversational partner. As a response, the conversational partner not only agrees with her but also shows strong support adding her opinion. In the previous part of this segment, Ritsuko had talked about her neighbour family in which the grandmother looked after her grandson because his parents both worked full-time base.

R: Ritsuko, K: Kie

\[
\begin{align*}
199 & \quad R \quad \text{FUTSU: dattara [ne::(.) watashi ga oba:san dattara ne} \\
200 & \quad K \quad \quad \quad ([laugh]) \\
201 & \quad K \quad so: ne[?:} \\
202 & \quad R \quad \text{[miteru no wa watashi desho: [toka tte sa:(.) anta-} \\
203 & \quad K \quad \quad [so: ne:(.) ii itakunaru-} \\
204 & \quad R \quad \text{[yo ne:]?} \\
205 & \quad K \quad \text{[shinai) desho:(.) oba:san sugoi dekita hito yo [ne:? [laugh]}} \\
206 & \quad R \quad \text{[shinai] desho:(.) oba:san sugoi dekita hito yo [ne:? [laugh]}} \\
207 & \quad K \quad [so: da} \\
208 & \quad R \quad \text{[nani ga sugoi} tte oba:san ga sugoi yo ne[?: u:n} \\
209 & \quad R \quad \text{[SO:(.) un} \\
\end{align*}
\]
199 R Usually, if I were that grandmother
200 K [(laugh)]
201 K Yes, indeed.
202 R [(I would say] something like ‘It is me who looks after the child, isn’t it? You-
203 K [Right, we would] want to say, -
204 R - are terrible saying you are his parents although you (never look -
205 K - wouldn’t we? [Yes.
206 R - after) him.’(.) That grandmother is such a great woman, isn’t she? [laugh]
207 K [Yes, indeed.]
208 What is amazing? That grandmother is, isn’t she? yeah
209 R [(Indeed, yes.]

There are two occasions in this excerpt which one of the interactants expresses the
same opinion as her conversational partner. First, in lines 203 and 205, Kie supports
Ritsuko’s opinion, that it is very natural to react as Ritsuko mentions. This can be seen as a
response to Ritsuko seeking agreement, in lines 199 and 202, to her claim that if she were
that grandmother, she would seriously complain that she had the right to join in any decision-
making concerning the child because she is the one who actually looks after her grandson
most of the time at home.

Second, in lines 207 and 208, Kie supports Ritsuko’s opinion and expresses that what
is amazing is that grandmother herself. This can be seen as a response to Ritsuko seeking
agreement, in line 206, that this grandmother is such a great person.

On both occasions, just before the expression of the same opinion, the other speaker
has sought agreement. There seems to be an expectation on the part of one speaker that the
other will agree with her. For example, Ritsuko uses the word ‘futsu: (usually)’ that implies
normality. This presupposition that the interactants have the same opinion is also ‘positive
politeness’ phenomena.

5.1.3 CONCLUSION
In this first major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena, the study has presented a
number of phenomena in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ by
expressing common ground. This is because ‘positive face’ seeks solidarity. All phenomena
dealt with in this section, therefore, convey common background and similarities between the
interactants. The phenomena include the choice of the language usage, such as in-group
identity markers (see 5.1.1.1), or the choice of certain kinds of topics (see 5.1.1.2, 5.1.1.3,
5.1.1.4, and 5.1.2). Although most of the phenomena in this major group are dealt with by
Brown and Levinson, this study extends their analysis considerably.

5.2 CONVEYING THAT THE SPEAKER AND THE HEARER ARE COOPERATORS
The previous section has analysed the first major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in
which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ with various ways of claiming
common ground. This section moves on to analyse the second major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena which convey that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators.

In this group of ‘politeness’ strategies, Brown and Levinson (1987) deal with cases in which the interactants have a mutual goal to complete, such as going to a party or cleaning up a room. They state that the interactants emphasise the need to be cooperators for the achievement of such a goal. For example, the speaker may indicate that the interactants share a similar goal, or that the interactants have a compelling reason to help each other (p. 125).

The present study, on the other hand, uses data from casual conversation which tends not include predetermined pragmatic goals, but rather whose main goal is carrying on the conversation and enjoying the time and company (see 1.1.2). Thus, this second major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena is based not on goals that are extrinsic to the conversation, but on those that are intrinsic to it. Broadly speaking the goal in this case can be characterised as facilitating the conversation. As a result, these ‘politeness’ phenomena are very different from Brown and Levinson’s strategies of the same name.

This major group consists of two categories:
1) indicating mutual participation in the conversation (see 5.2.1); and
2) minimising the difference between the interactants (see 5.2.2).

5.2.1 Indicating Mutual Participation
This section deals with ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which both interactants indicate mutual participation in the conversation. The ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in this section are based on the expectation that all interactants will be mutually involved in the conversation (Gumperz, 1982: 1), although not necessarily equally in terms of length of turn and frequency of providing a new topic. Evidence for this expectation can be found in the data where one of the interactants actually expresses his discomfort with the other’s lack of involvement, leading to a mild conflict (see 7.4).

Adapting Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory to the analysis of casual conversation, the act of indicating mutual participation can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’. For example, the principal speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘positive face’ by giving opportunities for the hearer to express his/her reaction. On the other hand, the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ by indicating his/her involvement, suggesting that the current topic is worth paying attention to.

The ‘positive politeness’ phenomena described in this section are found mainly in the manner of speaking and listening, rather than in the propositional content of utterance. Their primary function seems to be like lubricating oil for the machinery of conversation.

This section deals with the phenomena from two points of view:
1) the principal speaker invites the hearer to attend to the conversation (see 5.2.1.1); and
2) the hearer involves him/herself in the conversation (see 5.2.1.2).

Although the section deals separately with these two points of view, the phenomena in these two categories are, in fact, closely related. The study finds that the roles of each influence the other significantly. For example, the principal speaker invites the hearer into the conversation by creating opportunities for the hearer who, in turn, fills these slots and indicates his/her ongoing participation by giving some kind of feedback, such as showing interest with questions or responses.

The data also show that the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening depends on various factors in the interaction such as the stage of the topic development and the degree of familiarity of the topic. Some of the ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in this major group contradict some of the ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in the next chapter. This issue will be discussed in detail in Chapter 8 (see 8.2.1).

To sum up, this section makes two points. First, the act of the speaker inviting the hearer to give short responses and the hearer involving him/herself in the conversation can be regarded as forms of ‘positive politeness’. This is clearly different from the kind of ‘positive politeness’ Brown and Levinson deal with. Second, the acts of the speaker inviting the hearer to give short responses and the hearer involving him/herself in the conversation are closely correlated. By involving the other and oneself in the conversation, the mutual goal of casual conversation is achieved.

5.2.1.1 The speaker inviting the hearer to attend to the conversation

The first category which indicates mutual participation relates to the speaker’s concern with the hearer’s participation in the conversation. The data show that the principal speaker interacts as if he/she is inviting the hearer to give feedback in the conversation by asking questions or by inserting pauses.

All the ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in this category lead up to the hearer’s response. As a result, the hearer can show his/her participation in the conversation. Therefore, ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in this category have two functions:

1) the principal speaker can receive feedback from the hearer on the topic; and
2) the hearer can give feedback on the topic.

The study identifies following phenomena of this category in the data:

1) searching for a word;
2) seeking agreement; and
3) inserting pauses and/or rising intonation.

Searching for a word

The data include a considerable number of examples of the principal speaker asking the hearer for help to find an appropriate word. This phenomenon can be regarded as a form of
‘positive politeness’ since the principal speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘positive face’ by relying on the hearer to help him/her to continue. On the other hand, this phenomenon also could threaten the hearer’s ‘negative face’ by insisting on him/her answering the question, possibly against his/her will.

Examples from the data support the claim that the act of asking for help in searching for a word can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’. In most cases, the hearer does not react negatively to the speaker’s question. In some cases, searching for a missing word becomes the task which both interactants try to achieve together in the conversation.

The following segment of conversation includes the phenomenon of the principal speaker asking the hearer’s help in searching for a word. In this small segment of conversation, Tamako is the principal speaker who talks about her trip, and Ube is the hearer who listens to Tamako’s talk. Up to line 17, Tamako holds the floor almost exclusively. In line 18, Tamako asks for help in a missing word, the name of a railway line. The hearer is very cooperative, giving three names of railway lines in line 20.

T: Tamako, U: Ube

18 T de:(.) sore ga ne: nan dakke: nante iun desu ka asoko no sen
19 (..)
20 U yokosuka-sen?(. ) odakyu:-sen?(. ) enoden?
21 (..)
22 T ano ne:(..) je:a:ru no sen

(T2 #1)

18 T And( . ) That is... What is that? What do you call that train line?
19 ( . )
20 U Yokosuka line? (. ) Odakyu line? (. ) Enoden line?
21 ( . )
22 T Er( . ) it’s the JR line.28

Tamako’s request to search for the missing word becomes a trigger for involving the hearer in the conversation which up to this point, had become something of a monologue. In this segment, both interactants are thoroughly involved in searching for the missing word, and it becomes a mutual goal for the moment. Therefore, the act of asking for help in finding the missing word can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’.

The next example also shows cooperation between two interactants. The principal speaker relies on the knowledge of the hearer and the hearer is helpful.

S: Shooko, H: Hitomi

51 S konaida ne: kamata ni ne:( . ) (kantoku-shitsu) no shashin tori
52 ni itta no
53 H dotchi no ho:? ( . ) higashi-guchi?

28 Abbreviation for the Japan Railways.
In the segment, Shooko is a principal speaker who talks about her experience of going to a town, Kamata, where the hearer lives, and Hitomi is a hearer who listens to Shooko’s talk. In line 54, Shooko asks Hitomi for help to find the name of a shopping centre in Kamata. Hitomi mentions three names of shopping centres: ‘pario (Pario)’, ‘to:kyu: puraza (Tokyu Plaza)’ and ‘san-kamata (Sun Kamata)’ to support principal speaker Shooko in lines 55 and 57.

This segment is a good example of close correlation between the act of the speaker inviting the hearer to give short responses and the hearer involving him/herself in the conversation. Shooko’s request to search for the missing word functions as a ticket for Hitomi to help Shooko. Even though Hitomi’s prime role is that of hearer, she plays an important role in the segment. For example, she asks questions about Shooko’s experience (line 53), and helps Shooko to find the name of the shopping centre. The hearer’s act of questioning and helping the principal speaker can also be seen as forms of ‘positive politeness’ which the study will deal with in more detail later (see 5.2.1.2).

**Seeking agreement**

This section deals with the phenomenon in which the principal speaker seeks agreement from the hearer. This phenomenon can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the principal speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘positive face’ again by giving an opportunity to the hearer to contribute to the conversation.

This phenomenon also involves an expectation of the principal speaker that the hearer will agree or at least will show a certain degree of sympathy. This ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon is therefore related to the ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon in which the speaker presupposes common ground with the conversational partner (see 5.1.1).
The act of seeking agreement could, however, also threaten the hearer’s ‘negative face’ because it is not the same as asking a neutral question to which the hearer can respond objectively. The expectation of the speaker that the hearer will agree with him/her may make it awkward for the hearer to respond freely and express his/her own opinion.

The following segment of conversation is an example in which the principal speaker seeks agreement from the hearer. In this segment, Ritsuko is the principal speaker who talks about a family in her neighbourhood, and Kie has the role of the hearer who listens to Ritsuko’s talk. In the previous part of the segment, Ritsuko talked about the mother of one child, who works as a civil servant and comes back home at around 10 o’clock almost every day because of her busy job. She manages to continue to work with the support of her mother-in-law.

R: Ritsuko, K: Kie

1 R demo ne so:iu hito ga iru to ne:
2 K un
3 R ano::(...) ‘onna no hito demo nanda kodomo ite mo chanto hatarakerun janai ka’ toka itte (nattara) komaru desho?:=
5 K =so: [nan da yo ne:? :]

(J4 #7)

1 R But, if there are such kinds of people,
2 K Yeah
3 R Er.(..) ‘Oh, even women can work properly, even if they have children,’ (If)
4 the majority of people (start to) think like that, it’ll be a problem, don’t you think? =
5 K = Yes, indeed.

In line 4, Ritsuko seeks agreement for her opinion that it is problematic that if one took that household as a model, the majority of people would start to think that women can work like men while looking after their children. Ritsuko uses an expression ‘desho: (don’t you think?)’ which indicates that she takes it for granted that Kie will agree, and yet still seeks explicit agreement. In line 5, in turn, Kie agrees with Ritsuko immediately, so Ritsuko’s expectations are fulfilled.

Inserting pauses

The previous two sections discussed ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which the principal speaker invites the hearer to attend to the conversation with some form of question. This section examines the last ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon from the principal speaker’s side: inserting pauses. The basic feature of this phenomenon is that the principal speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘positive face’ once again by creating room in his/her speech to let the hearer give his/her reaction.
In the data, there are many instances in which there are very few overlaps between the principal speaker’s talk and the hearer’s minimal responses. The speaker’s speech and the hearer’s responses often come consecutively, without overlaps. This lack of overlaps suggests that the principal speaker is inserting a pause after a certain amount of talk. These pauses are often immediately filled with the hearer’s minimal responses, so the sequence tends to include neither notable pauses nor overlaps.

The phenomenon of the speaker inserting pauses is strongly related to the well known phenomenon in colloquial Japanese: fragmentation of the speech (Maynard, 1989; Mizutani, 1993). The pauses that the speaker inserts create room for the hearer’s reaction and these reactions make the whole speech appear fragmented. In fact, the pauses themselves would make the speech appear fragmented, even if the hearer did not give short responses.

The examination of the principal speaker’s utterance just before the pauses reveals a couple of characteristic features. First, there is a prosodic feature that the final syllables are often stretched, with rising intonation. Second, there is often a grammatical phrasal boundary (‘bunsetsu’) which Hashimoto (1954) defines as ‘a basic sentence-structuring unit’. Some researchers focus on the importance of these units in colloquial Japanese. For example, Maynard (1989) calls these the ‘pause-bounded phrasal units’, and Iwasaki (1993) regards them as ‘intonation units’, originally described by Chafe (1987). Both Maynard and Iwasaki reach the conclusion that in Japanese conversation the speaker tends to insert pauses at relatively short intervals. As a result, the ‘pause-bounded phrasal units’ or the ‘intonation units’ are small and a whole utterance is fragmented.

Iwasaki (1993) suggests that this phenomenon is partially due to the speaker’s preference for including only a few different components in one intonation unit. Iwasaki refers to the components as consisting of a number of functional aspects, such as ideational, interpersonal, cohesive and subjective functions.

The typology of language itself may support such breaks in the sentence. This is because word order does not have a grammatical function in Japanese, but the grammatical phrasal units are important components which create the meaning. Therefore as long as the grammatical phrasal units are kept together, the speaker can control the size of the ‘pause-bounded phrasal units’ or the ‘intonation units’.

This study proposes another reason why the speaker breaks his/her talk up in Japanese. It is the speaker’s intentional control over the organisation of the utterance. By

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29 Fragmentation of the speech is also strongly related to the phenomenon of hesitation in the conversation. The study also deals with this in the section of ‘negative politeness’ (see 6.2.1.1).

30 For example, a noun plus a particle, a standard sentence-ending form of a verb or adjective, the gerundive form of a verb (て-form), a conjunctive particle (eg ‘ba (indicating condition)’ and ‘ra (indicating condition)’), a conjunction (eg ‘dakedo (but)’), or an adverb (eg ‘konoaida (the other day)’). After a grammatical phrasal boundary, “sentence-final” particles (eg ‘ne’, ‘sa’ and ‘yo’) often follow in colloquial Japanese.
inserting pauses, the speaker gives opportunities to the hearer to give feedback and makes sure that he/she is getting the hearer’s attention.

The study regards this phenomenon as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘positive face’ by giving an opportunity to respond in the conversation. The more need there is to attract the hearer’s attention, the more frequently the principal speaker inserts pauses. The principal speaker can take the initiative for the hearer’s attention by adjusting the frequency of pauses which he/she inserts.

The following segment is the beginning of a new phase in the conversation. The potential principal speaker apparently needs to establish that she is, indeed, the principal speaker and her conversational partner is the principal hearer. This particular phase in the conversation seems to have an affect on the frequency with which the potential principal speaker inserts pauses.

K: Kie, R: Ritsuko

20 K dekinai ne(...), demo ne:: saikin yappari ne baransu ga ne::
21 (...), ichinenme tte iu ka sa::
22 R =un
23 K (chotto) yappari kyonen wa sa:
24 (...)
25 R =un
26 K kekko: kyonen ichi-nenkan wa=
27 R =un
28 K baransu no torikata ga sa:=
29 R =un
30 K kekko: muzukashikatta tokoro ga [aru
31 R = [a: honto::

(J3 #7)

20 K We can’t, can we?(...), But, recently, a balance.
21 (...), in the first year, y’know =
22 R = Yeah
23 K Well, last year, it was (a bit)... 
24 (...)
25 R = Yeah
26 K The last one year was... quite... = 
27 R = Yeah
28 K How to find a balance was... y’know... =
29 R = Yeah
30 K was a quite difficult thing.
31 R [Aa, really.

In this small segment, potential principal speaker Kie speaks slowly and inserts pauses very frequently. In lines 20 and 21, Kie’s act of inserting pauses are recognisable as pauses since hearer Ritsuko does not give short responses to fill in the slots. From line 21 to line 30, the pauses in Kie’s utterances are perceptible since there are no overlaps between Kie’s utterances and Ritsuko’s short responses.
Kie’s utterances are highly fragmented in this small segment of conversation. Kie inserts short pauses frequently at many of the boundaries of grammatical phrasal units, and creates relatively small ‘pause-bounded phrasal units’ (Maynard, 1989) or ‘intonation units’ (Iwasaki, 1993).

To a certain extent, one might say that it is the occurrence of the units itself which creates the opportunity for the hearer to respond. However in this segment the principal speaker enhances this opportunity by speaking slowly and by prolonging the final syllable before certain grammatical phrasal boundaries, such as in lines 21, 23, 26 and 28. The hearer, in turn, indicates her engagement in the interaction, by taking advantage of the opportunities created by the speaker and inserting short responses in lines 22, 25, 27 and 29. As a result of the creation of these opportunities, there are significantly fewer overlaps in this segment of conversation than elsewhere.

It is possible to relate these phenomena to the crucial stage of topic negotiation, in which the potential principal speaker has to gain the conversational partner’s support to be a principal speaker. Kie speaks very slowly and hesitantly and inserts pauses relatively frequently to receive Ritsuko’s short responses in order to confirm both Ritsuko’s attention and her position as a principal speaker.

This raises further two issues. One is that the speaker’s manner of speaking has a strong relationship with the stage of the topic development in the conversation. The study will discuss this issue later in Chapter 8 (see 8.1). The other is that it seems to be essential for the speaker to gain the hearer’s support in order to assume the role of principal speaker. This issue will be discussed in Chapter 6 (see 6.1).

In the following small piece of the conversation, the speaker’s ability to exert some measure of control over the response of the hearer is notable. In the previous part of this segment, Gooike talked about his job, which, unusually, had attracted the attention of a newspaper company.

G: Gooike, W: Wada

1 G demo
2 W un?
3 G senden ko:ka o ne:
4 W un
5 G kangaeru to:
6 W un
7 G ano:() san-nen-bun gurai shigoto shita kara kotoshi wa shigoto
8 shinakute i: yo tte() [itterun da kedo: uchi de
9 W [[laugh]

(J6 #8)

1 G But,
2 W Yeah?
3 G the effectiveness of the PR,
4 W Yeah
5 G when we think about it,
This segment shows that features of the speaker’s manner of speaking influence the hearer’s manner of response. First, Gooike inserts pauses very frequently, after ‘demo (but)’ in line 1, ‘senden ko:ka o ne: (the effectiveness of the PR)’ in line 3, and ‘kangaeru to (when we think about it)’ in line 5. Each of these pauses is filled with a minimal response from Wada. Then in lines 7 and 8, Gooike completes quite a long utterance without inserting any pauses which would provide enough room for the hearer’s responses. It is very clear in this segment that if the speaker does not insert pauses, the hearer does not give his responses.

The next example shows another possible purpose for the speaker breaking up his/her story into certain chunks. The data show semantic consistency in each chunk of the speaker’s utterance.

U: Ube, T: Tamako

9 U konaida ne:
10 T un
11 U uchi no hatagaya no soba no ne nomiya de ne:
12 T un
13 U ninniku no maruage tabeta no minna de
14 T un
15 U oishikatta kedo ne: [: oishikatta kedo sugokatta yo
16 T [u:n
17 T {laugh} [nani ga desu ka?
18 U {{laugh}
19 U yokujitsu sumimasen kono chi:mu(.) minna kusai desu
20 T {laugh}

(J2 #6)

9 U The other day,
10 T Yeah
11 U at the pub near my office in Hatagaya,
12 T Yeah
13 U we all ate fried whole garlic together.
14 T Yeah
15 U It was delicious, but, it was delicious, but it was amazing.
16 T [Yeah
17 T {laugh} What was amazing?
18 U {{laugh}
19 U The next day, ‘Sorry, this team(.) all smell bad.’
20 T {laugh}

This segment of conversation is again a significant example which includes only a few overlaps between the two interactants’ utterances. Principal speaker Ube inserts short pauses at some boundaries of grammatical phrasal units, and thus creates ‘pause-bounded
phrasal units’ (Maynard, 1989) or ‘intonation units’ (Iwasaki, 1993) and hearer Tamako gives 
short responses in the slots that Ube has created.

In addition to the speaker giving the hearer opportunities to attend to the conversation, 
the speaker breaks his utterances up according to semantic units. In the data, each chunk of 
the speaker’s utterance has semantic consistency: line 9, the time: ‘konaida (the other day)’; 
line 11, the place: ‘uchinohatatagayanosobano nomiya de (at the pub near my office in 
Hatagaya)’, line 13, the participants and the activity: ‘ninnikunomaruagetabtenominna de (We all ate garlic fries together.)’; line 15, the assessment: ‘oishikattakedo ne:: 
oishikattakedosugokatayo (It was delicious, but... It was delicious, but it 
was amazing.)’; and line 19, the punch line: ‘yokujitsu’sumimasenkonochimunainakusaidesu’ (The next day, ‘Sorry, this team, all smell bad.’)

This observation shows the correlation between the propositional content of the 
utterances and the ‘pause-bounded phrasal units’ (Maynard, 1989) or the ‘intonation units’ 
(Iwasaki, 1993). In this sense, this example shows the principal speaker’s strong control over 
the organisation of his story by the act of inserting pauses.

5.2.1.2 The hearer involving him/herself in the conversation

The previous sections have presented a number of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena from the 
side of the speaker, by which the principal speaker invites the hearer to attend the 
conversation (5.2.1.1 above). This section moves on to discuss the ‘positive politeness’ 
phenomena from the side of the hearer. All the ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in this 
category are some kinds of indications that the hearer is paying attention to the principal 
speaker’s talk and is contributing to the conversation, even if he/she is not in the role of 
principal speaker at that particular time. The hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive 
face’ by indicating his/her involvement in the conversation such as giving approval or asking 
for clarification.

The phenomena in this category give feedback such as whether the hearer is following 
the speaker’s talk or not, or whether the hearer is interested in the topic or not. Therefore, the 
phenomena have two functions:

1) the hearer can express his/her understanding or involvement in the current topic; 

and

2) the speaker can receive feedback from the hearer on the present topic.

There is a common tendency that, regardless of their frequency, the hearer’s 
responses are always ‘short’. This tendency can be regarded as a result of the hearer’s 
consideration not to violate the principal speaker’s right to continue his/her talk, ie not to take 
over the role of principal speaker and also not to disturb the flow of the principal speaker’s 
story. This consideration of the hearer belongs to ‘negative politeness’.
Therefore, the phenomena in this category involve two kinds of consideration by which the hearer tries to satisfy the principal speaker’s ‘face’ during the conversation:

1) the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ by showing that the speaker’s talk is worth listening to; and
2) the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘negative face’ by indicating the consideration that he/she will not disturb the principal speaker’s talk.

Before moving on to the data analysis, I would like to raise the issue of overlaps between the speaker’s talk and the hearer’s responses. In the data, two types of completely different attitude towards the overlaps can be observed. There are occasions in which the hearer’s minimal responses or other reactions overlap the principal speaker’s talk significantly, but the principal speaker keeps talking and does not seem to mind these overlaps. On the other hand, there are cases in which the principal speaker suddenly stops talking after an overlap (see 6.2.2.2).

As these examples show, there may be two possible interpretations of overlap in the interaction. An overlap has the potential to be taken as both ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon and ‘face threatening act’ (FTA). The overlap can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ when the hearer’s short responses encourage the speaker to talk more. On the other hand, the overlap can be taken as an FTA when the hearer’s short responses disturb the flow of speaker’s talk. This indicates that ‘politeness’ phenomena and FTAs can be seen as two sides of the same coin. The study will discuss this issue later in Chapter 8 (see 8.3).

The following sections present a number of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in this category:

1) giving minimal responses;
2) giving an assessment;
3) asking continuous questions;
4) repeating the speaker’s expression;
5) paraphrasing what the speaker means; and
6) anticipating what the speaker may be going to say.

**Giving minimal responses**

The present study identifies a number of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena by which the hearer involves him/herself in the conversation. This section deals with the hearer’s minimal responses: ‘brief mono- or bisyllabic responses of restricted number of type’ (Gardner, in press: 20), such as ‘un (yeah)’, ‘he: (I see)’, and ‘so: (I see)’. These minimal responses have little meaning in terms of propositional content, but nevertheless have a significant role in the conversation. This section does not deal with the hearer’s short responses which bear obvious meanings in terms of propositional content, such as short assessments (eg ‘shinjirarenai (I can’t believe it)’) or short questions (eg ‘doːshite (Why?)’) which Yngve (1970) regards as
forms of ‘back channel’. These phenomena are dealt with separately in the following sections.

The main focus of this section overlaps with the studies on ‘back channel’ (Yngve, 1970; Duncan and Fiske, 1977) and ‘receipt tokens’ (Schegloff, 1982; Jefferson, 1984; Heritage, 1984; Gardner, 1997). These two groups of studies have both commonalities and differences. First, the study of ‘back channel’ started with recognising the importance of the hearer’s role in the conversation. The hearer’s role in the conversation had been neglected in previous studies, so this work introduced has given a new aspect in the study of interaction. However, the researchers tended to generalise a wide range of reactions as one kind of phenomena, and did not pay attention to the complexity of the individual items of back channelling.

On the other hand, the study of ‘receipt tokens’ was originally conducted by a group of sociologists who were particularly interested in the sequence of conversation (eg Sacks, Schegloff, see 4.1). Researchers in this area have developed precise analysis of individual ‘receipt tokens’ and claim that each token functions differently by analysing the sequence in naturally occurring conversation. For example, in English, ‘uh huh’ is used as a ‘continuer’ (Schegloff, 1982) and ‘oh’ as a ‘change-of-state token’ (Heritage, 1984). It is also claimed that even with the same token, prosodic features give subtly different functions (Gardner, 1997).

Having mentioned the overlap between this section and the studies of ‘back channel’ and ‘receipt tokens’, previous research on the hearer’s minimal responses in Japanese linguistics is also important. There seems to be a consensus that the principal hearer frequently uses minimal responses in Japanese conversation (Mizutani, 1983; Maynard, 1986, 1990; LoCastro, 1987; Chen, 2001; Kubota, 2001).

However, when we look at the data examined in this study, the hearer’s frequent minimal responses do not always occur in Japanese casual conversation. Some parts of the conversation include very frequent minimal responses, but some do not. In fact, various factors such as the development or the content of the topic seem to have a considerable influence on the hearer’s manner of responding. Chapter 8 will examine this point later (see 8.1.1).

The precise functions of individual minimal responses have been studied extensively in English but not in Japanese. The present study is aware of the fact that there is a gap in Japanese linguistic studies on the hearer’s minimal responses. In addition, due to the lack of comparative studies on the hearer’s minimal responses between English and Japanese, and the fact that the goal of the present study is not to fill in this gap, the English translations for the minimal responses are fairly loose.

According to the data, the hearer seems to indicate the degree of his/her emotional involvement in the conversation, from rather neutral to high, by varying the manner of his/her
responses and their prosodic features. For example, the hearer may indicate simply that he/she is listening by giving soft minimal responses; alternatively he/she may communicate strong agreement with high volume minimal responses or by repeating the same minimal response. This issue of the hearer’s adjustments of responses will be discussed in relation to various factors in Chapter 8 (see 8.1.1).

This phenomenon also seems to be closely related to the principal speaker’s invitation to the hearer to attend to the conversation, discussed in the previous section (see 5.2.1.1). For example, in the following segment of conversation, the principal speaker Ube speaks slowly and prolongs the final syllable in lines 9, 11, 13 and 15, and the hearer Tamako inserts minimal responses, ‘un (yeah)’ just after the principal speaker’s inserting pauses, in lines 10, 12, 14, 16, as if in response to an invitation.

In addition, the speaker Ube seems to be almost inviting a request for clarification by being extremely vague in line 15, giving just an assessment: ‘oishikatta kedo ne:: oishikatta kedo sugokatta yo (It was delicious, but... It was delicious, but it was amazing.).’ It is inevitable that Tamako will ask a question in response. This sequence sounds as if Tamako is almost forced to ask the question by Ube. The speaker seems to expect the hearer to take a part, such as inserting minimal responses or asking such questions, in the conversation.

U: Ube, T: Tamako

9 U konaida ne:
10 T un
11 U uchi no hatagaya no soba no ne nomiya de ne:
12 T un
13 U minniku no maruage tabeta no minna de
14 T un
15 U oishikatta kedo ne:: oishikatta kedo sugokatta yo
16 T [un
17 T {laugh} nani ga desu ka?
18 U {{laugh}
19 U yokujitsu sumimasen kono chi:mu(..) minna kusai desu
20 T {laugh}:

(J2 #6)

9 U The other day,
10 T Yeah
11 U at the pub near my office in Hatagaya,
12 T Yeah
13 U we all ate fried whole garlic together.
14 T Yeah
15 U It was delicious, but, it was delicious, but it was amazing.
16 T [Yeah
17 T {laugh} What was amazing?
18 U {{laugh}
19 U The next day, ‘Sorry, this team(.) all smell bad.’
20 T {laugh}:
Giving an assessment

Another way to involve him/herself in the conversation is by giving an assessment of what the principal speaker has said. This can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ by indicating his/her involvement. This phenomenon includes the hearer’s judgement on the issue at hand, so the propositional content of the utterance is much clearer than in the minimal responses examined in the previous section.

In this study the interactants are constantly giving various kinds of assessments. In relation to these assessments, this study has already dealt with the phenomenon in which the speaker expresses the same opinion (see 5.1.3) and will deal with the phenomena in which the speaker avoids disagreement (see 5.2.2.1) and in which the speaker avoids assertion (see 6.2.1). This section focuses on the hearer’s short assessments inserted during the principal speaker’s talk.

The following segment of conversation involves a few examples of such assessments. In the previous part of this segment, because Tamako was studying in a foreign country, Kie asked Tamako how she managed when she was unwell. The topic was initiated by Kie’s question which encouraged Tamako to take the role of principal speaker. Tamako was talking about her health in general, and Kie was listening to Tamako’s talk, adding a short comment here and there.

T: Tamako, K: Kie

53 T u:n
54 {gap}
55 T ano: hoken wa arun da kedo ne:?(..) honto ni ne:: arigatai koto ni
56 ne:(.) kaze o hiite:(.) chotto neru gurai(;) (demo:) sugu sugu
57 kusuri nondari toka hayaku netari toka suru janai?
58 K urun(;) ma: shinpai da mon ne:
59 T so: suru to cho:shi ii no
60 K daro: ne:

(J3 #14)

53 T Yeah,
54 {gap}
55 T well, I have insurance though.(..) Really, luckily,
56(.) I only catch a cold(.) and just go to bed for a while.(..) (But)
57 ↓ always take medicine straight away or go to bed early, right?
58 K I see.(.) Well, it is worrying, isn’t it?
59 T If I do that, ↓ will get over ↓.
60 K Naturally.

In this small segment, Tamako tells Kie that luckily she does not get seriously unwell and explains how she prevents the early stage of a cold from developing to a serious one. The first short assessment by the hearer is a response to the principal speaker’s seeking
In line 58, Kie agrees with Tamako and gives her assessment, saying ‘ma: shinpai da mon ne: (Well, it is worrying, isn’t it?)’. The second short comment agrees with Tamako’s previous utterance, saying ‘daro: ne: (Naturally)’ in line 60. The hearer repeatedly gives short assessments which show understanding of the principal speaker’s talk.

**Asking continuous questions**

This study finds another way to show involvement in the conversation that the hearer asks continuous questions. This phenomenon can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since, once again, the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ by showing interest in the principal speaker’s talk.

Tannen (1981) introduces the conversational device called the ‘machine-gun questions’, which is the combination of the following features: ‘fast pacing, dramatic use of pitch shift, reduced syntactic forms, “cooperative overlap”, and a preference for personal focus topics’ (p. 387). She claims that ‘machine-gun question’ does not precisely require information, but rather serves to encourage the speaker to talk more. The data in this study also identifies the similar phenomena to ‘machine-gun questions’. They tend to occur with the above-mentioned features, but not necessarily all together.

In the following segment of conversation, one of the interactants asks continuous questions and is eventually successful in getting the other answer.

U: Ube, T: Tamako

55 U nande ru:pu tte wakatta no? sorede  
56 T nanka ko: natte ne? [ano: densha ga  
57 U [de sore nande wakatta no? nande wakatta no?  
58 sore(.) do:shite so: matteru tte wakatta no? [nottete wakatta no?  
59 T [e: chizu de chizu  
60 mite  

(J2 #23)  

55 U How did you know it was in the shape of a loop, then?  
56 T It goes like this, right? Well, the train  
57 U [And, how did you know this? How did you know  
58 this?(..) How did you know it was like a loop shape? Did you realise on the train?  
59 T [Ah, from a map. When I saw  
60 a map.  

In lines 55, 57 and 58, Ube asks the same question repeatedly to Tamako. The pace of Ube’s questioning is very fast and sounds as if he is urging Tamako to answer. Ube seems to be very interested in to know how Tamako has found out that the railway runs in the shape of loop. He is very persistent to continue to ask her until she answers his question. Therefore, Ube does seem to care about the answer in this case.
The next example shows the hearer’s strong interest to the principal speaker’s talk, evident through the questions he asks. There is a significant contrast between the hearer’s responses before the principal speaker finishes his talk and after.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

1 Y ma: ore no ko: shiriai ni wa sa:(..) daigaku:::((..) ma: shiriai
de mo ko:ko: no kurasu me:to nan da kedo yo:((..) soitsu:((..) daigaku
itte:((..) nandaka:((..) ga:rufurendo dekitan da kedo ne((..)
dekichattan da yo {laugh}
5 D gakuse:n toki ni?=
6 Y ~ou((..) niju:((..) kyuu: ka ju:hachi ka
7 D [iya: de do:shita no?
8 {gap}
9 Y shikatanaku ne:
10 {gap}
11 D [{ett chi:saku matomatte shimatta no? sonomanma
12 Y [[[
13 Y sonomanma matomatte shimatta yo
14 D E::: a: de:((..) nan do:shiten no? kare?
15 Y shirane: yo
16 D shiawase na no ka:n?
17 Y wakanne:
18 D u::n

Well, my um acquaintance,(..) university(,(...) well, an acquaintance
who was my classmate at high school though.(,(...) That guy(,(...) went to
university(,(...) like(,(...) and he got a girlfriend(,(...) and got a baby {laugh}
When he was a student? =
Yeah(,(...) twenty, nine(,(...)teen or eighteen years old
[Well, then what did he do?
For lack of alternative,
{gap}
D [{Oh, they were united in a small way? consequently
Y [[[
Consequently, they were united.
OH, NO, well, then(,(...) What, how is he doing? that guy?
I don’t know.
I wonder if he is happy.
I have no idea.

From lines 1 to 4, principal speaker Yamamoto talks about his friend whose girlfriend got pregnant after he started his university life. Doobayashi asks several questions about the fate of Yamamoto’s friend. First, in line 5, Doobayashi confirms that the time when this occurred was when Yamamoto’s friend was a student. In line 7, Doobayashi asks what the friend’s decision was. In line 14, Doobayashi asks how Yamamoto’s friend is now. All of these questions function to indicate strong interest in the topic on the part of the principal hearer.
In the following example, one of the interactants asks questions one after another in order to make her conversational partner talk.

K: Kie
1 K atto iu ma datta:?
2 {silence}
3 K nani shita:?(..) iron na hito ni aeta:?(..) ao: to omotteta hito:

   (J3 #3)

1 K Has the time gone fast?
2 {silence}
3 K What did you do?(...) Were you able to see many people?(...) who you wanted to see.

In this segment of conversation, the pace of questioning is not so fast and Kie inserts pauses as well. As Tannen (1981) discusses, Kie seems to ask questions to know how Tamako has spent her time in Japan, does not expect to get answers to each question.

Repeating the speaker’s expression
This section examines a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon in which rather than giving minimal responses or an assessment, the hearer repeats all or part of the principal speaker’s previous utterance. Repetition can be seen as a sign of attention, so the hearer satisfies the speaker’s ‘positive face’ by repeating his/her expression.

Brown and Levinson (1987) deal with the context in which one of the interactants seeks agreement and repetition occurs as a reaction (pp. 112-113). They explain that repetition indicates ‘emotional agreement’, and ‘nuances of surprise, approval or disapproval or simply emphatic assertion’ (p. 113). Their claim is insightful, but it lacks empirical support.

The studies of Tannen (1989) and Nakada (1991) also refer to the function of repetition. Tannen (1989) argues that repetition functions as a means to show involvement in discourse. Tannen refers to the functions of repetition in conversation as participatory listenership, ratifying listenership, humour, savouring, stalling, expanding, participating, evaluating through patterned rhythm, and bounding episodes (pp. 59-71). This study also finds the same function as Tannen (1989) deals with and Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest. In this section, the study presents the examples of repetition which significantly show the hearer’s involvement by enjoying the humour or by expressing surprise.

In the following segment, the hearer savours the principal speaker’s humour by repeating her conclusion. In the previous part of this segment of conversation, principal speaker Tamako introduced a general topic which was about an occasion when Tamako’s cousin had brought her future husband home in order to introduce him to her parents and to announce their plans for marriage.
T: Tamako, U: Ube

8 T hajime ni(,) ko:(,) tazunete itta toki ni(,) futari ga ne: zenzen:
9 ‘chotto kyo:: ohanashi ga atte:: u uukagatterun desu kedo::’ tte
10 hanashi o kiridashitara:(,) oka:san no ho: wa:(,) [*ma: nani -
12 U [un
13 T -kashira:: {laugh}[*wakatteru kuse ni:=
14 U [laugh]
15 U = She knew what it was, but

The characteristic feature of this segment is that humour is shared and savoured by both interactants. Tamako’s story is humorous because of two features. First, Tamako emphasises the contrast between the reactions of her uncle and aunt to the news of her cousin’s engagement. Second, Tamako copies and exaggerates her aunt’s reaction with an emphatic tone of voice as if she is playing her aunt’s role, ‘ma nani kashira (Oh, what can it be?)’.

At the end of her story, Tamako mentions that her aunt was only pretending not to be able to guess why he had come to see them, saying ‘Wakatteru kuse ni (She knew it, but)’. She speaks with a loud voice, but does not complete her utterance.

In line 15, Ube repeats Tamako’s comment ‘wakatteru kuse ni (She knew it, but)’ with a loud voice which sounds just like Tamako’s. This repetition indicates that Ube agrees with Tamako’s guess, and also enjoys savouring the humour of Tamako’s story (Tannen, 1989). A strong piece of evidence can be seen in the laughter that both interactants share in lines 13 and 14.

The next type of repetition serves as a question for clarification about what the conversational partner has said. This phenomenon also indicates the strong interest or the emotional reaction of the hearer. This small piece is part of a segment in which principal speaker Shooko talks about her experience visiting the town (Kamata) where Hitomi lives. Hitomi takes the role of a very active listener by asking questions about what Shooko did and where Shooko went, and also by providing Shooko with information about the town Kamata. This is because Hitomi lives in Kamata and knows this town better than Shooko.

H: Hitomi, S: Shooko
This segment starts with Hitomi’s description of the east side of the station in Kamata. At the beginning of line 21, Shooko repeats ‘to:gen-sha (a name of a company)’ to ask for clarification. Immediately after the first repetition, she repeats ‘to:gen-sha’ again to indicate that she is unsure whether the ‘to:gen-sha’ Hitomi is referring to is the famous company which has a bad reputation.

**Paraphrasing what the speaker means**

This section moves on to a similar ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon in which, rather than repeating the conversational partner’s expression, the hearer paraphrases what the principal speaker has said in his/her own words. This phenomenon can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ by showing his/her interest in the principal speaker’s talk, and by confirming his/her understanding of what the speaker has said. Tannen (1989) and Nakada (1991) regard paraphrasing as a type of repetition in which the hearer repeats the principal speaker’s utterance by using a different expression, but this study examines it separately.

In the next segment, the hearer paraphrases what the principal speaker has said. The interlocutors has been talking about a grandmother of Ritsuko’s child’s friend.

**R: Ritsuko, K: Kie**

221 R sono oba:san sugoi sa: nanka ne: me(.) meiji-umare demo nai
222 no ni sa meiji-umare mitai na kao shite:
223 K un(.) [honto no oba:san poi kanji na wake ne
224 R [sono
225 R so:
226 K [kitto ne:
227 R un(.) [continues]

221 R That grandmother really, although she wasn’t born in the Me(.) Meiji era,
222 she looks as if she was born in the Meiji era.
In lines 221 and 222, Ritsuko describes an old woman who is the grandmother in her neighbour’s family saying ‘meiji-umare demo nai no ni sa meiji-umare mitai na kao shite:’ (Although she wasn’t born in Meiji era, she looks as if she was born in the Meiji era).

In the next segment of the conversation, one of the interactants paraphrases what the other has said. In the previous segment, Fukushima and Norie had talked about a marriage in which the wife and the husband live together only at the weekend.

N: Norie, F: Fukushima

1 N demo shu:mat-su-kon dattara nanka suru hitsuyo: mo nai yo: na
2 ki mo shite kitanda(..) tada tsukiattete mo i: yo: na
3 F anma kawannai
4 N un

(J8 #8)

In this segment, Norie who is engaged says that she thinks if she and her fiance just live together at the weekend, they do not need to get married in lines 1 and 2. Fukushima paraphrases Norie’s utterance in line 3 saying there is not much difference. In this way, the principal hearer has expressed ‘positive politeness’ through expressing her interest and understanding.

Anticipating what the speaker is going to say

The last ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon in which the hearer shows his/her involvement in the conversation is that the hearer anticipates what the principal speaker is going to say. This phenomenon is widely reported in many studies as the phenomenon of ‘co-construction’, ‘collaborative completion of a sentence’ or ‘kyoowa (mutual speech)’ (Mizutani, 1983; Lerner, 1991; Ono and Yoshida, 1996; Akatsuka, 1997; Hayashi and Mori, 1998). This phenomenon can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ by showing involvement and understanding.

At the same time, this phenomenon could threaten the principal speaker’s ‘negative face’ by the other completing his/her utterance. This is because Ono and Yoshida (1996) propose that the speaker avoids completing the conversational partner’s utterance when the
issue is related to the conversational partner’s ‘private property’\textsuperscript{31} such as feelings or opinions.

The phenomenon of anticipation is very common in the data examined in this study, especially when the speaker has trouble finishing his/her sentence. The following segment is an example in which the hearer helps the speaker complete his utterance. In the previous part of this segment, Yamamoto expresses his opinion that Japanese people use too many loan words.

**Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi**

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

114 Y demo ore wa(..) a:iu yo: na keiko: o
115 {gap}
116 D ureu=
117 Y ~ureu ne
118 D {laugh}
119 Y (?)
120 {gap}
121 D yu:koku no to
122 Y yu:koku no to ;

(J1 #17)

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

In line 114, Yamamoto starts his utterance with the subject ‘ore (I)’ and the object ‘a:iu yo: na keiko: o (that kind of tendency)’, but does not complete his utterance and a gap occurs in line 115. In line 116, Doobayashi anticipates what Yamamoto may be going to say and completes Yamamoto’s utterance with the word ‘ureu (be concerned about something)’. It should be noted that this matter does concern Yamamoto’s state of mind, so seems to belong to what Ono and Yoshida (1996) refer to as Yamamoto’s ‘private property’. However, as Hayashi and Mori (1998) point out, through the process of the conversation, both interactants may have developed ‘mutual property’ allowing the hearer to exercise anticipation even in this case. Alternatively the interactants may be close enough to share some items of ‘mutual property’ even from the beginning of the conversation. In line 121, Doobayashi paraphrases Yamamoto’s concern about the loan words, describing Yamamoto as ‘yu:koku no to (a patriotically minded man)’; Yamamoto repeats this assessment.

\textsuperscript{31} This is from Kamio (1994)
In the next example, one of the interactants talks about his overseas trip. The hearer constantly gives comments and anticipates what the principal speaker is going to say.

W: Wada, G: Gooike

1. W: Wada, G: Gooike
   1. W: so:: so:: so:::(.) demo na nanka ne:
   2. G: un
   3. W: hotaru toka mo minna:(..) toriaezu: katakoto no eigo shaberu to:
   4. G: nantonaku tsu:ji:[ru:
   5. W: [so: muko: mo datte hora:(..) neitibu jana eigo
   6. dakara sa:: [otagai ni sore de sa:
   7. G: [a:: a:: naruhodo ne:::
   8. W: so:: so:: so:: [so::
   9. G: [ore tanaka to: chu:goku itta toki: mata:(.) sore
   10. tsu:kan shimas kita ne
   11. W: un so:: so:: so:::(.) dakara:(..) mo:: ma::mo::: nanka:(.)
   12. toriaezu hotaru mo toranaide itte:
   13. G: un
   14. W: de::(.) muko: de:(.) ‘heya aitemasu ka’ ttsu tte:::
   15. G: [he:::(.) sasuga
   16. W: iya iya iya=
   17. G: [sugoi ne:(.) so:ri no dame nan da yo na:
   18. W: iya: demo kekko: ikeba ne:(.) yaru yo kitto:
   19. G: (laughing) hitsuyo: ni semararete?:
   20. W: [{laugh}:

   (J6 #15)

   1. W: That’s right, that’s right, that’s right(.) But, well
   2. G: mm
   3. W: Speaking of hotels,(..) if we speak broken English,
   4. G: they understand us somehow or other.
   5. W: [That’s right, their English is also(,) not native speaker’s
   6. English, so we mutually, so
   7. G: [Oh, I see, naturally =
   8. W: That’s right, that’s right, that’s right, that’s right, that’s right
   9. G: [I, when I went to China with Tanaka(,) I realised this
   10. acutely.
   11. W: Yeah, that’s right, that’s right, that’s right(,) so(,) already(,) now(,) already, well(,
   12. we just go there without making a reservation
   13. G: yeah
   14. W: then(,) over there(,) we would ask ‘Are there any rooms available?’
   15. G: [I see(.)) That’s great of you.
   16. W: Well, well, well =
   17. G: That’s amazing(,) I can’t do that kind of thing.
   18. W: Well, but, if you go there, pretty much, (,) you can do that surely
   19. G: {laughing} out of necessity?
   20. W: [{laugh}:

There are two moves in this excerpt which the hearer anticipates what the principal speaker is going to say. First, in line 3, Wada starts a sentence ‘katakoto no eigo shaberu to: (if we speak broken English)’, and in line 4, Gooike completes it, saying ‘nantonaku tsu:jiru: (they understand us somehow or other)’. This is a case in which Wada gives the condition, and Gooike completes the consequence.
In line 18, Wada asserts that ‘ikeba ne: yaru yo kitto: (if you go there, you can do that surely)’, and in line 19, Gooike adds the reason for Wada’s assertion saying ‘hitsuyo: ni semararete?: (out of necessity?)’. This anticipation confirms that his understanding of what Wada means is right.

In these ways, the hearer is constantly anticipating what the principal speaker is going to say and confirming his understanding of the principal speaker’s talk. These moves can be seen as showing the hearer’s involvement and interest in the principal speaker’s talk, and thus can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’.

5.2.2 MINIMISING DIFFERENCE

The previous sections discussed ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which both interactants show mutual participation, and analysed a number of phenomena from the both side of the principal speaker and the hearer. This section moves on to the next ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which the interactant tries to minimise actual differences with the conversational partner. These ‘positive politeness’ phenomena also convey that the principal speaker and the hearer are cooperators during interaction by playing down fundamentally different opinions and by not coercing the conversational partner to agree in anyway.

The ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in this section are related to the assumption that expressions of difference, such as disagreement and disapproval, can be taken as FTAs, because they threaten the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’ which expects solidarity with the conversational partner. Therefore, when there is a difference between interactants’ opinions, they tend to try to minimise it. This act makes the interactants feel that they have some commonality or at least they are trying not to be completely opposed to each other. Therefore, the act of minimising difference can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’.

At the level of expression, this ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon has much in common with one of the ‘negative politeness’ phenomena, noted to ‘communicate without coercing the partner’ (see 6.2). This is because both ‘politeness’ phenomena involve the issue of how to communicate FTAs without seriously threatening the addressee’s ‘face’.

The difference between these ‘positive politeness’ phenomena and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena is that ‘positive politeness’ phenomena focus specifically on expressions of disagreement, but ‘negative politeness’ phenomena apply more generally to expressions of any FTA. ‘Positive politeness’ phenomena target specifically the addressee’s ‘positive face’ which expects similarities with the conversational partner. The speaker tries to minimise the actual difference in order to show he/she is a cooperator with the addressee. On the other hand, ‘negative politeness’ phenomena apply more generally to the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by expressing that the speaker tries to show respect for the conversational partner’s will by trying not to influence him/her.
When the actual phenomena in both types of ‘politeness’ are focused on, the same kinds of phenomena, such as hesitation or hedging, can be found in Brown and Levinson’s work. This is because in Brown and Levinson’s theory (1987), the categories are created in relation to ‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’ separately. Therefore, the fact that some phenomena actually appear in relation to both ‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’, is not highlighted in their study.

This section focuses on the phenomena which the interactants pretend that the difference between the interactants is not significant in two ways:

1) avoiding disagreement; and
2) avoiding negative response.

5.2.2.1 Avoiding disagreement
This section focuses on the ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which the speaker avoids expressing disagreement. Disagreement can be taken as an FTA to both ‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’. Disagreement threatens the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’ since it contradicts his/her statement and hurts his/her pride. At the same time, disagreement threatens the conversational partner’s ‘negative face’ since it implies an attempt to influence him/her and thus threatens his/her autonomy.

Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest four strategies to avoid disagreement: 1) ‘token agreement’: the interactant pretends to agree by not using the answer ‘no’ although he/she does, in fact, express something different later; 2) ‘pseudo-agreement’: the interactant pretends that there were prior agreement, eg ‘See you on Monday, then.’ 3) ‘white lie’: the interactant tells a lie to hide the disagreement; and 4) ‘hedging opinions’: the interactant intends to be vague in order not to disagree overtly (pp. 113-117).

Some of these strategies have potential to be an initial move. ‘Pseudo-agreement’ is an initial move because it introduces a completely new matter as if there were a prior agreement. A ‘white lie’ could just appear by itself to facilitate the conversation. However, in this section, the phenomena are confined strictly to second moves.

In the previous major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena entitled ‘express the same opinion’ (see 5.1.2.2), this study introduced the strong tendency for ‘preference for agreement’ in conversation (Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987). Pomerantz (1984) claims that disagreement tends to be performed with delay, and in syntactically more complicated and indirect expressions. Mori (1999) also supports the tendency to delay in disagreement, and suggests that interactants prefer ‘partial disagreement’ by adding limitations or different points of view (p.134).

In this section, this study also presents examples in which the interactant avoids expressing disagreement in various ways; this is discussed in relation to the notion of ‘face’ work. The following segment of conversation shows how one of the interactants avoids
expressing disagreement. This segment of conversation is based on a past experience that the interactants shared. Therefore, a strong consensus seems to be expected, and generally does occur, in the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening.

U: Ube, T: Tamako

51 U honto datta yo na?: datte(...) renshu: owatte kara mo yatta jan-
52 T [sankaï yatte mashita yo ne:
53 U -oretachi tte(...) renshu: owatte kara mo mata heya kaette burijji
54 yatteta janai?:
55 T datte(...) asa to hiru to ban yattetan da [mon ne?:
56 U [yatteta yatteta().
57 T [sankaï yatte:
58 U -mata yatta janai? burijji
59 T u::[::n
60 U [senpaitachi ga inai toko de yatta jana:i?(...) kekko:
61 T [silence]
62 U demo honto deshita yo ne:-
63 T =so:
64 U =shin:jirarenai desu yo ne[]:
65 T shin:jirarenai yo(.). ju:yojikan gurai
66 yattetan da mon(.) ju:yojikan ju:rokujikan gurai [{yatteta}
67 T [u::n

51 U It’s true, isn’t it? Because(.) we’d play bridge after the official practice time. -
52 T [We’d practise three times a day.
53 U - We’d(...) play bridge again after finishing the official practice, going back to our room
to play again, wouldn’t we?
54 T Because(...) we’d play in the morning, afternoon and in the evening, wouldn’t we?
55 U {silence}
56 T We did, we did.(
57 U We’d also have a drinking party.
58 T We’d play late into the night(.) Late at night, after our drinking party, -
59 T We’d also have a drinking party.
60 U Well
61 U At the place where our senior members weren’t present, we’d play bridge(.) quite
62 T But, that’s true, It was like that, wasn’t it?:
63 U = Yeah
64 {gap}
65 T It’s unbelievable, isn’t it?
66 U It’s unbelievable. We used to play bridge for around fourteen
67 hours.(.) For about fourteen hours, sixteen hours, (we used to play bridge).
68 T [Yeah.

In this segment of conversation, Ube and Tamako talk about the retreats in which both interactants would practise contract bridge for long hours. Ube states two points in the segment: 1) they practised the game for long hours, 2) they even practised voluntarily at midnight. Tamako thoroughly agrees with the first statement of Ube, that they practised long hours. However, she never gives agreement or disagreement on the second statement, that they also practised voluntarily after the official practice session.
Although Ube seeks agreement with Tamako so many times that they practised voluntarily late at night even after the official practice session in lines 51, 53, 54, 57, 59 and 61, she does not address that this is true in various ways. First, Tamako emphasises her agreement with Ube’s first statement regarding the long hours they practised. For example, in lines 52, 55, Tamako mentions that they had three practice sessions a day, i.e. morning, afternoon and evening. Second, Tamako responds unclearly. Tamako answers ‘u:::n’ in line 60. This prolonged ‘u:::n’ suggests that the speaker is not quite sure. Third, Tamako tries to shift the focus to different aspects of the incident. For example, Tamako mentions that they had a midnight drinking party in line 58. Tamako also gives a general assessment on the incident saying ‘(demo) honto deshita yo ne ((But,) it’s true, wasn’t it?)’ in line 63, and ‘shinjurarenai desu yo ne:: (It’s unbelievable, isn’t it?)’ in line 66. These responses of Tamako indicate that she is avoiding either agreeing or disagreeing with Ube.

5.2.2.2 Avoiding negative response

The previous section discussed ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which the speaker avoids disagreement. This section examines a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon where the interactants avoid negative responses.

In the following segment, one of the speaker avoids giving an extremely negative comment on the rice crackers the other has given to him, although in the previous part of this segment he mentioned that he had not eaten these rice crackers because they had no taste.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

1  Y jamu demo nutte tabetara do: ka na?
2  D hai?
3  Y jamu jamu(.), [nanka
4  D [kore ni?
5  Y un
6  [gap]
7  D ya: demo:(..) jamu(..) yaro: futari de yoru:(..) kore ni jamu nutte
8  kutteru sugata tte nakanaka
9  [gap]
10 D [(are da to omou
11 Y [(demo kore demo umaku umakunai daro?: kore(.), nanka mazuku wa nai
12 kedo:
13 [gap]

: (J1 #13)

1  Y How about putting jam on them and eating them?
2  D Pardon?
3  Y Jam, jam(.) like
4  D [On these?
5  Y Yeah.
6  [gap]
7  D Well, but,(..) jam(..) I think the figure of two men(..) putting jam on these
8  and eating them at night is like
9  [gap]
10 D [(I think it’s really something.
11 Y [(But these, but don’t you think these are not very tasty? this is(.) like, they are
12 not horrible though

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At the beginning of this segment, Yamamoto suggests that they put jam on the rice crackers to improve their taste. Doobayashi indicates that he does not agree with this suggestion by using hesitation and rather unclear expressions (see 6.2.1 and 6.2.2). Then, in lines 11 and 12, Yamamoto seeks agreement that they are not very tasty, but also adds the qualification that they are not horrible. Yamamoto seems to avoid giving an extremely negative comment, even though it is perfectly clear that he really does not like the rice crackers.

5.2.3 Conclusion

In this section, this study presented the second major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena which convey that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators. This is because it is in the nature of ‘positive face’ to seek cooperation. The phenomena described appear both in the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening and in their tendency to avoid disagreement in conversation. The data show that the interactants communicate with each other by indicating mutual participation (see 5.2.1), or by minimising difference (see 5.2.2). These can be seen as forms of ‘positive politeness’ because the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ by expressing shared goals.

5.3 Fulfilling the Partner’s ‘Positive Face’ Wants for Something

The previous two major groups of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena are based on the similarity or the solidarity between the interactants. The first major group consists of expressions of in-group markers and commonality between the interactants (see 5.1). The second major group is characterised by cooperation between the interactants in the interaction in which the interactants indicate mutual participation, and minimise difference (see 5.2).

This section analyses the third major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which the interactants fulfil the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’ wants for something. This major group is different from the previous two major groups because this is not based on similarity or solidarity between the interactants, but is about an appreciation of the interlocutor’s self-image.

Brown and Levinson (1987) regard ‘not only tangible gifts, but human-relations wants such as the want to be liked, admired, cared about, understood, listened to (p. 129)’ as features of all interactants’ wants. This study follows Brown and Levinson’s notion of ‘gift’ and regards the partner’s wants in this wider sense. ‘Notice/attend to the partner’ and ‘intensify interest to the hearer’ in Brown and Levinson’s theory (1987) are in this major group because both of them directly satisfy the conversational partner’s wants.

This study categorises this major group of ‘positive politeness’ into the following four sub-groups:
1) noticing the partner;  
2) intensifying interest for the hearer;  
3) showing understanding; and  
4) returning to the original topic.

5.3.1 NOTICING THE PARTNER  
This section examines a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon in which the interactants take notice of the conversational partner. Brown and Levinson (1987) state that the act of ‘the speaker taking notice of the hearer’s condition, such as noticeable changes or remarkable possessions’ is a ‘positive politeness’ strategy which claims common ground (p. 103). However, in this study the phenomenon of taking notice of the other is regarded as functioning more significantly to fulfil the partner’s ‘positive face’ wants.

In the data, the present study identifies the speaker’s remarks on the conversational partner’s condition such as his/her ability, health and appearance. These attentions to the conversational partner can be regarded as kinds of ‘gift’. The speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by expressing that he/she notices the addressee’s change of state or he/she cares about the addressee.

The study categorises these remarks of the speaker on the conversational partner’s condition into two types of phenomena:

1) giving positive evaluation; and  
2) expressing care about the partner.

5.3.1.1 Giving positive evaluation  
The present study identifies a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon in which the speaker gives positive evaluation, such as praise or a compliment, to the conversational partner in the data. The speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by expressing something good about him/her. The study finds a positive effect on the recipient of positive evaluation that he/she is likely to want to talk more about the current topic. Consequently, it contributes to the continuing development of the conversation. This is the main effect of any ‘positive politeness’ phenomena on the conversation.

On the other hand, this phenomenon can also be taken as a ‘face threatening act’ (FTA) because the speaker may put the addressee into the position in which he/she has to consider how to react (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 66). The recipient must decide whether to accept the praise or how to express their response. This can be a burden for the recipient of the positive evaluation.

In the data, this study finds that on many occasions the addressee (the recipient) does not deny the positive evaluation. This seems to be because the interactants are close friends with each other, so they can be relatively honest and straightforward with each other.
However, on close examination, most of the addressees (the recipients) do not just accept the compliment. Rather they reply with extra features, such as jokes or adding some negative self-evaluation. These extra features indicate the complexity of this ‘politeness’ phenomenon.

The following segment involves an example whereby one of the interactants gives a positive evaluation and the other continues to tell her story in more detail. In this segment of conversation, the act of giving a positive evaluation seems to encourage the recipient of the evaluation to talk more about the topic. In the previous part of this segment, Ritsuko talked about a general tendency in society in that nowadays children are very shocked when they are scolded by teachers at school. She explained that this was because children are not used to being scolded at home.

R: Ritsuko, K: Kie

14 R Yeah.(..) I even scold the children of my friends.
15 K {laugh} That’s the best way to be.(.) Let’s ask her to scold you today, Fu-chan? Let’s ask her to scold you.
16 R {[laugh]} [[to Kie’s child] I am scary.(.)]
17 K [{? } OK?]
18 R {(She is cute.)}
19 K [[to Kie’s child] Let’s ask MAMA]
20 R [[When I give a lift to the children of my friend, if they get out of the car without -
21 K [[Let’s ask mama]
22 R -saying anything, ‘What about “thank you”!’ {laughing} I would say.(.) ‘I am not a taxi driver’ something like that {laugh}
23 K [Excellent.(.) Well,
24 R excellent, really. That is the right thing to do, {continue}

At the beginning of this segment, Ritsuko tells Kie of her own firm attitude towards children, saying that she scolds even the children of her friends in line 14. Immediately after, Kie compliments Ritsuko in line 15, saying ‘nani yori da ne (That’s the best.)’. This is an initial assessment of Ritsuko’s attitude and actions. Kie also says to her toddler child, ‘kyo: mo okotte morao: ka? (Shall we ask her to scold you today?)’ in lines 15 and 16. This is a joking indication that Kie supports Ritsuko’s attitude towards children.
Ritsuko does not respond to Kie’s positive evaluation directly. However, she responds to Kie’s question to the child with the humorously self-deprecating comment ‘obachan kowain da yo: (I am scary.)’ in line 17. However, Kie’s compliment clearly encourages the potential principle speaker to talk more about the topic.

In addition to the initial assessment, when Ritsuko completes her talk, Kie gives another positive evaluation in lines 25 and 26 saying ‘ERAI (EXCELLENT!)’ with a loud voice and ‘tadashi: ne:? (That is right thing to do.)’. These expressions of compliment conclude Ritsuko’s story telling by giving assessment.

On the whole, in this segment of conversation, both interactants exchange playful utterances. For example, as I have mentioned above, Kie asks her child if she would request Ritsuko to scold her in line 15. Kie teases Ritsuko, calling her ‘MAma (mama)’ with strong stress in lines 20 and 22. The word ‘mama (mama)’ is a loan word, although used very commonly today, may seem rather trendy for people of Kie and Ritsuko’s generation.

In the next segment of conversation, one of the interactants gives positive evaluation repeatedly and the other accepts this, adding some negative self-evaluation as well. In the previous part of this segment, Gooike talked about his job which involves various operations design to revitalise regional commercial activities. He explained that one event he had organised attracted the attention of a newspaper company and was very successful.

G: Gooike, W: Wada

1 G demo kawaiso: da yo ne(..) kekkyoku:(..) uchi wa sa: [so:iu shigoto- |un
2 W |un
3 G -dekiru kedo mo: [so: ja nai tokoro tte kekko: aru kara ne:
4 W |un
5 W u::n ma: sorya so: daro: ne
6 [silence]
7 G demo yakusho tte iu to sugu sa:
8 W un
9 G madoguchi shika: ime:ji-shinai hito wa o:in da yo ne
10 W u::n
11 (...) 12 G sore o kangaeru to uchi wa kekko:
13 W un
14 G i: shokuba nan da to omou-
15 W -ma: sore wa so: da yo ne(.) datte:(.) kurieitibu jan
16 G kurieitibu(..) to ieba kurieitibu nan da kedo ma:(..) ma: iroiro
17 kise: ga aru kara sa: [\{laugh\]
18 W [\{laugh\} ma: sore mo so: da kedo sa{..}
19 omoshiroso: jan(\{..\}) so: l(\{..\}) so: iu(\{..\}) so: iu busho nara{..}
20 omoshiroso: da yo ne-
21 G -un{..} so: so: so: so: zutto ireru wake janai kara ne:- : 

(J6 #7)

1 G But I feel sorry.(..) After all,(..) my job situation allowed me to do that kind of work,-
2 W [Yeah
3 G -but because there are plenty of places where people are not allowed to do so.
4 W [Yeah
5 W Yeah, that seems to be the case.
6 [silence]
7 G But, considering civil servants, immediately,
there are so many people who only think of them at the customer counters.

Thinking of this, I think mine is a rather good work situation.

Yeah

Gooike mentions that his job situation allowed him to take a relatively free approach, but he is sorry for some workers who may not be so free in lines 1 and 3. Gooike also mentions that, considering all the circumstances, he thinks his work situation is good in lines 12 and 14.

Wada gives positive evaluation of Gooike’s situation saying ‘It is creative, isn’t it?’ in line 15. As a response to Wada’s positive evaluation, Gooike mentions that there are various restrictions on his job, which is a negative self-evaluation.

Wada gives positive evaluation again, suggesting that what Gooike is doing sounds interesting in lines 19 and 20. Gooike accepts this, but again adds a negative comment, saying he cannot stay in the same section for good.

Although it is Gooike who originally mentions that his work environment is good, he does not just accept Wada’s positive evaluations. Both interactants express their own point of view and show understanding to the other’s point of view.

The following segment of conversation is an example which shows some of the complexity of giving positive evaluation. In the previous part of this segment, Tamako has referred to Ube’s friend who went to the same university as Ube and Tamako. Even though this friend was not particularly close to Tamako, she remembers him well -- things such as his appearance and the job he got. In this segment of conversation, Ube gives positive evaluation to Tamako by praising Tamako’s memory of this friend. First of all, Tamako accepts it with a joke. However, when Ube repeats the positive evaluation on the same point, Tamako responds differently.
You remember very well.

Just leave it to me, please. The things I put in my mind just once, I never forget.

You have an extraordinary memory.

Once I remember anything, I never forget it.

You have an extraordinary memory.

{{laugh}} But, it isn’t something so surprising.

Well, in fact, later he resigned from the company.

At first Tamako, the recipient of the positive evaluation, does not deny the evaluation at all. On the contrary, Tamako boasts a bit about it saying ‘makashite kudasai yo ichido inputto shita koto wa wasuremasen yo (Just leave it to me, please. The things I put in my mind just once, I never forget.)’ in lines 25 and 26. This can be seen as an FTA since Tamako is not only accepting the compliment but also showing off about her ability; this could be taken as a threat to the ‘positive face’ of the conversational partner (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 68).

However, at the same time, it could also be taken as a joke because Tamako boasts about something so trivial. In addition to the trivial nature of what she is boasting about, she replies with an emphatic and loud voice, and exaggerates as if she is playing a role in a play. This joke can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by expressing common ground that both interactants enjoy the same kind of joke (see 5.1.1.3).

When Ube repeats the positive evaluation, however, Tamako starts to react differently. After the first repetition in line 28, a gap can be identified in line 29 before Tamako responds to Ube in line 30. This gap can be seen as a delay in Tamako’s response. The propositional content of Tamako’s response, when it does come, is very similar to the previous one that ‘ichido oboeta koto wa wasuremasen yo (Things I once remember, I never forget.)’. However, this time, the utterance lacks the features of a joke -- the exaggeration in the tone of voice and volume. Taking into account the slight delay and the prosodic features of Tamako’s response, Tamako does not seem to be very happy about Ube’s repetition of his evaluation.

After the second repetition of the positive evaluation in line 31, Tamako denies it by saying ‘demo sonna odoroku hodo no koto demo nai desho: (But, it isn’t something so surprising, is it?)’ in lines 32 and 33. These reactions -- the delayed response in line 29 and
the denial in lines 32 and 33 -- seem to indicate that Ube’s repeated positive evaluation is not welcomed by Tamako, and may even be taken as an FTA.

The following move of Ube reveals that Ube may have been offering those repeated positive evaluations as a way of ‘preparing the ground’ for an FTA to come. He now tells Tamako that his friend has actually resigned from his job in line 34 contrary to an earlier assertion of Tamako’s. Just after this segment, he goes on to correct the name of the company in which Tamako has mentioned that his friend first got a job. These statements can be taken as FTAs since Ube corrects Tamako in considerable detail. Thus, these repeated positive evaluation can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because Ube satisfies Tamako’s ‘positive face’ before he performs an FTA.

The segment involves three significant issues in relation to ‘politeness’ phenomena and FTAs. First, positive evaluation is accepted accompanied by a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon. This suggests that the acceptance of positive evaluation has the potential to be taken as an FTA. Second, the repeated expression of positive evaluation seems to irritate the hearer (recipient). Third, in this segment, the interactant may have given positive evaluation not only as a form of ‘positive politeness’ which facilitates the conversation, but also as a preparation for the following FTA.

5.3.1.2 Expressing care about the partner

‘Positive politeness’ wants can be met not only when the speaker gives positive evaluation to the addressee but also when the speaker expresses care for the conversational partner. The speaker satisfies the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’ by expressing that he/she notices some change in the conversational partner, such as the fact that he/she has lost weight.

There is a tension between consideration and ‘nosiness’ in this phenomenon. As in the case discussed above, this phenomenon can be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker expresses care for the partner’s condition. On the other hand, it can also be taken as an FTA because the speaker may be perceived as violating the territory of the conversational partner.

The following segment of conversation shows an example in which one of the interactants shows care of the conversational partner by asking about her weight. Weight can be a delicate topic in conversation. People can be sensitive about their weight. Consequently, talking about someone’s weight can be taken as an FTA in which the speaker may violate the addressee’s private space by asking something he/she may not want to be asked about.

On the other hand, talking about weight can also be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker can satisfy the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by expressing his/her care of the addressee. This is because weight can be a barometer of one’s health, so talking about it can be interpreted as an expression of care for the addressee’s health.
U: Ube, T: tamako

1 U taiju: toka kawatta? sukoshi wa
   [gap]
2 U chotto chotto fueta(.) nanka mae: atta toki yori chotto
   maruku natta yo: na
3 T [iso: desu ka
4 U [ki no sei?(.) chigau?
5 T soshitara gorogoro shiteta kara futot[chatta ka na:
6 U [chigau chigau so:iu imi
7 T [gap]
8 U janakute(.) chigau(?) sonna koto nai?
9 T iya futot[ta
10 U [saten de atta toki:(.) atta [desho(.)] ichido
11 T [un un(.] un un(.) sore wa
12 ieta un
13 U da yo na:(.) so: da yo an toki yori wa zetta(.) an toki daijo:bu
14 ka na: to omotta mon garigari datta kara
15 T honto ni?
16 U un
17 U [saten de hanashita desho shinjuku no chika de sa:
18 T [(?   )
19 T un
20 T [](J2 #20)
21 T un

(12 #20)

1 U Has your weight changed? A little bit
2 [gap]
3 U Have you gained a little bit, a little bit?(.) Somehow, I feel you look a little bit
4 rounder than the last time I saw you.
5 T [[Do you think so?
6 U [[Is it my imagination?(.) Am I wrong?
7 T Then, I’ve been lazy, so I might have gained weight.
8 U [No, no, I didn’t
9 mean that.(.) Am I wrong?(.) Isn’t it so?
10 [gap]
11 T Well, I’ve gained weight.
12 U [When we met at the coffee shop.(.) We met, didn’t we?(.) once
13 T [Yeah, yeah,(.) yeah,
14 yeah.(.) That’s right, yeah.
15 U It is so(.). It is so, compared to that time, definitely.(.) At that time, I was worrying
16 if you were really all right since you were so skinny.
17 T Really?
18 U Yeah.
19 U [[We talked at the coffee shop, didn’t we? In the underground at Shinjuku.
20 T [](?   )
21 T Yeah.

In this segment of conversation, the speaker seems to be aware of both of these possibilities in the act of asking about the partner’s weight. At the level of topic choice, Ube decides to raise the issue of weight as a topic. This can be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’ as long as conversational partner Tamako takes it as an expression of care and is not offended by this.

At the same time, at the level of expression, a delicate approach can be seen in the way Ube starts to ask Tamako about her weight. For example, hesitation can be seen in the form of a gap in line 2, and in the forms of hedges such as ‘sukoshi (a little bit)’, ‘chotto (a
little bit’), and ‘toka (such as)’. These phenomena can be seen as forms of ‘negative politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by mitigating the possibly delicate matter that Tamako looks as if she has gained weight.

Tamako’s response is the key to decide whether Ube’s question is interpreted as a ‘politeness’ phenomenon or as an FTA in this segment. First, Tamako seems to take Ube’s question as implying that she has been lazy, saying ‘soshitara gorogoro shiteta kara futotchatta ka na: (Then, I’ve been lazy, so I might have gained weight.)’ in line 7. This may be because Ube does not tell Tamako why he asked about Tamako’s weight straight away. However, she just responds to Ube’s question, and does not seem to mind talking about her weight.

Ube denies Tamako’s response in lines 8 and 9, but he does not still explain why he has asked about Tamako’s weight. He just keeps asking ‘chigau? (Am I wrong?)’ and ‘sonna koto nai? (Isn’t it so?)’ in line 9. Then, he starts to talk about the last occasion when both interactants met in line 12. This is the basis of Ube’s opinion that Tamako has gained weight. Tamako immediately agrees that Ube is right in lines 13 and 14. Still there is no sign in Tamako’s response that she minds talking about her weight, and both interactants reach agreement.

In lines 15 and 16, at last, Ube mentions that he has been worrying about Tamako because she looked terribly skinny the last time they met. At this stage, the purpose of Ube’s question concerning Tamako’s weight becomes clear: he is concerned about Tamako’s health. Tamako’s response does not show any signs that she minds his concern about her weight. Therefore, in this segment of conversation, talking about weight seems to be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’.

5.3.2 INTENSIFYING INTEREST TO THE HEARER

The previous sections have analysed ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which the speaker expresses that he/she notices the partner by giving positive evaluation or by showing care for the partner. The next ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon is that the speaker intensifies interest to the hearer. Brown and Levinson (1987) refer to the strategy by which the speaker tells a story in a vivid and interesting way (p. 106).

Following Brown and Levinson, this section focuses on a phenomenon in which the speaker tells a story by making it interesting. The speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by entertaining and involving him/her. In the data, some stories are told very vividly and they successfully arouse the hearer’s interest.

This ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon has much in common with a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which the speaker makes introductory remarks (see 6.1.1) in the process of introducing a new topic.
In the following segment of conversation, the story telling starts at the request of the potential principal hearer, so it is the potential principal hearer who negotiates with the conversational partner to put him in the role of principal speaker. Responding to this request, the story is told with various features which successfully hold the hearer’s interest.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

13 Y: Yeah.(..) And then,(..) now I just went to have a meal.
14 D: Yeah
15 (..)
16 Y: And, I, er,(..) was going to heat it in the microwave.=
17 D: =Yeah.
18 Y: Well,(..) well,(..) the knives and forks,
19 D: Yeah
20 Y: I was looking for them.
21 D: Yeah
22 Y: They aren’t there.(..) Strange.(..) and well (? )(..) I knock on the door.
23 D: He stays there until very late.
24 Y: Yeah.(..) Well, it doesn’t matter.
25 D: yeah
After the negotiation over the role and the topic of the conversation, the principal speaker starts to talk about his experience in line 13. Yamamoto introduces the general setting of the place in which the incident happened. The incident happened when Yamamoto went to have a meal in the dining room of the dormitory.

Next, Yamamoto explains the problem which he had in the dining room, and his need to find a solution in lines 16, 18, 20, 22, and 23. Yamamoto uses mainly the non-past tense and punctuates his descriptions of the situation with pauses in lines 18, 20 and 22. These punctuations give a rhythm to Yamamoto’s utterance. Some pauses are filled by the hearer’s soft minimal responses, as in lines 19 and 21. The use of historic present gives the impression of the event as currently relevant. These techniques help produce a sense of vividness and sequencing.

The story moves on to an initial encounter between Yamamoto and the man he had gone to borrow some cutlery from. In lines 28 and 30, Yamamoto again punctuates his descriptions of the situation by pauses, and uses, this time, the past tense for the description: ‘nokku-shita (I knocked on the door)’ in line 28, {a pause}, and ‘ore ni kizuita (he realised it was me)’ in line 30. The use of past tense gives a sense of a series of the sequential actions; one action is completed before the next one is done.

Yamamoto talks about the next stage in which he and the man encountered each other face-to-face in lines 33, 35 and 37. In line 38, hearer Doobayashi confirms with Yamamoto (‘kita (came)’) which indicates that he is following Yamamoto’s story.
The climax of Yamamoto’s story comes in lines 42, 44, 46 and 48. Yamamoto emphasises that there was no word at all from the person in the kitchen in line 42. He demonstrates this lack of words by using onomatopoeia: ‘\textipa{ba::n} (the sound of putting down a knife and a fork)’, and ‘\textipa{gacha} (the sound of shutting the door)’ in line 46. This use of onomatopoeia also gives sense of presence in this particular situation. Yamamoto concludes his story with ‘\textipa{owari yo} (That's the end)’. This statement announces two conclusions: 1) the end of the encounter between Yamamoto and the person in the kitchen, and 2) the end of Yamamoto’s story.

In this segment, we have seen that the principal speaker uses various techniques in order to hold the attention of the hearer.

5.3.3 Showing Understanding

This section deals with a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon in which the interactants fulfil the conversational partner’s wants by showing understanding to the partner. This phenomenon can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by expressing that he/she understands the conversational partner’s point of view. In the data, this phenomenon often occurs accompanied by prosodic features such as exaggerated intonation and stress.

In the following segment of conversation, one of the interactants shows understanding and sympathy about the conversational partner’s situation. In the earlier part of this segment, the interactants had talked about Tamako’s life in a foreign country as an overseas student who is conducting a research project.

K: Kie, T: Tamako

\begin{verbatim}
4 K demo jibun de kimenakya: dare mo kimete kurenai kara [taihen da-]
5 T [un]
6 K -yo ne:(.) watashi yoku sa:(.) so:(.) yoku sa: daigakuin toka de
7 ne: minna benkyo: shiteru hitok toka sa: senpai toka ita janai?(.)
8 K minna yoku yatteru na: tte omotta [kedo sa:
9 T [demo:(.) komakai koto mo subete
10 so: na no(.)) [dakara:
11 K [jibun de kimenakya dare mo kimete kurenain da yo
12 [ne:
13 T [u::n]
14 T de(:) ne:(.) benkyo: no koto dake janain da yo
15 [gap]
16 K seikatsu ippan tte koto [ne:
17 T [u:n(.).] zenbu(().) dakara(().) nante iu no ka
18 K dareka ni kikitaku naru toki aru yo ne
19 T u:n
20 K dareka ni kimete moraitaku natchau toki toka ne:(.) do:demo
21 i: koto hitotsu dattara sa: tatoeba ne:
22 [silence]
23 T do:demo i: koto dattara(().) (so: da) honto da yo ne:
\end{verbatim}

(J3 #12)

4 K But, if you don’t decide for yourself, nobody will decide \textit{for you}. So it’s hard, -
First of all, Kie expresses her understanding about the situation of research students in two places in lines 4, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12. In this context she observes that they have to conduct their own research by deciding everything themselves. Then Tamako raises the fact that there are also tiny matters which they have to deal with in lines 9 and 10, but although it is not very clear what exactly she is referring to here. In line 14, Tamako clarifies her previous statement, saying that they have to decide on things other than study as well.

There are three moves which Kie shows her understanding of Tamako. First, after a gap, Kie paraphrases Tamako’s utterance, saying ‘seikatsu ippan tte koto ne: (Life in general, isn’t it?)’ in line 16. Second, Kie anticipates what Tamako may be going to say, suggesting ‘dareka ni kikitaku naru toki aru yo ne (There are times when we want to ask somebody, aren’t there?)’ in line 18. This occurs after Tamako searches for an expression to help her add more explanation, but cannot find one in line 17. Third, Kie also paraphrases her own comment (line 18) using a very similar structure, ‘dareka ni kimete moraitaku natchau toki toka ne: (Times when we want someone to decide for us, right?)’, and she adds an example, ‘do demo i koto hitotsu dattara sa: tatoeba ne: (If it’s just one trivial thing, don’t you think so, for example?)’ in line 20 and 21.

These moves all contribute to showing understanding to the conversational partner. The former two moves: the acts of paraphrasing and anticipating what the other is going to say, will be discussed in more detail in the next major group of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena (see 5.2.2).
N: Norie, F: Fukushima

15 N tte iuka:(.) futari tomo:: kawari-banko ni: isogashi:n da kedo
16 ne:(.) hachi-gatsu niju:ku-nichi ni shiyo: to omotteta no ne:
17 F un
18 N soshitara ne: [nanka hachi-gatsu niju:nichi ni ne: ukenakute-
19 F [un
20 N ~mo i: shikaku-shiken toka mo:shikonde kichatte ne(..) mo: benkyo:
21 de isogashi: kara tte
22 (..)
23 F {laugh} nani o ima [sara
24 N                    [(mukatsuku) yo:(..) nan da yo[::
25 F          [honto::?:

(J8 #1)

At the beginning of this segment, Norie tells Fukushima that the reason why the preparations for her wedding are not going well is that either she or her fiance are always busy (line 15). However, next, she starts to reveal that actually she blames her fiance (line 16). She mentions that she and her fiance are planning their wedding for 29th of August, but her fiance has applied for an examination which is to be held on the 22nd. Norie does not think that he particularly needs the qualification, but of course her fiance is busy studying anyway.

In this segment of the conversation, Fukushima listens to Norie’s explanation and complaint rather quietly, only inserting minimal responses in lines 17 and 19. However, in line 23, Fukushima shows her sympathy with Norie’s situation, saying ‘nani o ima sara (After all, what is he thinking of now?)’. This assessment seems very supportive for Norie, especially after Fukushima has listened to Norie so quietly. As a result, Norie complains further: ‘(mukatsuku) yo: ((Annoying), isn’t it?..) Stupid bugger.’ and ‘nan da yo::::: (stupid bugger)’ in line 24.

5.3.4 RETURNING TO THE ORIGINAL TOPIC

The last ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon is a way that the hearer shows consideration towards the principal speaker’s talk. This occurs when, during the principal speaker’s talk, both interactants somehow start to talk about something else, but the principal hearer diverts the conversation back to the original topic.
The following segment of conversation is an example in which the principal hearer at first changes the direction of the principal speaker’s talk, but later suggests he return to the original topic.

T: Tamako, U: Ube

1 T tsuiteru sensei tte iu wa(.). ano::[:
2 U a: keiba ni atattari
3 takarakuji ni(.). atattari surun da ro?
4 [gap]
5 T so: desu yo::[:
6 U [na:?: so: daro?
7 T so:(.). sugoku tsuiterun desu yo:
8 U [na:?: ikkai wa kamasanai to
9 ikenain [da
10 T {{laugh}
11 U de?
12 T de ne(.). etto: {continue}:

(J2 #18)

In this segment, Tamako is the principal speaker who tells about her study in Australia, and Ube is the hearer who listens to Tamako’s talk. In lines 2 and 3, Ube makes a pun on Tamako’s utterance ‘tsuiteru sensei (the lecturer I study under)’. Ube uses a homophone, ‘tsuiteru’ (‘to study under’ and ‘to be lucky’), and kingly pretends to think that Tamako is referring to a lecturer who wins horse races and lotteries.

Principal speaker Tamako pays attention to Ube’s pun and shows her appreciation of it. Consequently, Ube’s pun stops the flow of Tamako’s talk for a while. This can be taken as an FTA since Tamako may take this joke as interruption to her talk. However, even though there is a gap in line 4 immediately following Ube’s joke, Tamako’s next utterance shows her understanding of Ube’s pun in line 5. Tamako paraphrases Ube’s joke saying ‘sugoku tsuiteru’n desu yo:: (very lucky indeed)’, and indicates her appreciation of it in line 7. Therefore, according to Tamako’s reaction, this version does not seem to have caused any damage in this segment.

As a next move, Ube asks Tamako to continue her talk in line 11. This can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s
‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’ by showing interest in listening to her talk, and by expressing consideration for the principal speaker’s right to talk.

5.3.5 CONCLUSION
In this section, as the third major group of ‘positive politeness’, this study presented a number of phenomena in which the interactant satisfies the other’s ‘positive face’ by fulfilling the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’ wants. This is because the nature of ‘positive face’ is to want to be approved of as desirable. All phenomena dealt with in this section, therefore, make the conversational partner feel good.
CHAPTER 6 ANALYSIS -- ‘NEGATIVE POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA

The previous chapter has presented ‘positive politeness’ phenomena which appear to facilitate the conversation even if there is no trace of ‘face threatening acts’ (FTAs) or to prevent FTAs from developing into conflict. This chapter deals with ‘negative politeness’ phenomena which appear to have the same purpose; that is, they appear without the occurrence of conflict in the conversation.

‘Negative politeness’ phenomena in this study are based on ‘negative politeness’ strategies in Brown and Levinson’s theory. However, as explained in Chapter 3 (3.3 above), due to significant differences in the types of interaction dealt with in Brown and Levinson’s study and in this study, some major modifications are made in this study.

The core notion of ‘negative politeness’ in Brown and Levinson’s theory is to show respect to the conversational partner’s right to decide and to act as he/she wishes. Adapting this core notion, this study identifies a number of phenomena in which the interactant satisfies the conversational partner’s ‘negative face’ by indicating respect for the conversational partner’s right not to be imposed on. For example, this study focuses on the organisation of the utterances while introducing a new topic.

In this study, ‘negative politeness’ phenomena are divided into four major groups:
1) introducing a new topic gradually;
2) communicating without coercing the partner;
3) dissociating the speaker and the hearer from the particular infringement; and
4) claiming difference.

6.1 INTRODUCING A NEW TOPIC GRADUALLY

The first major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena is that the speaker introduces a new topic gradually without forcing the conversational partner to join in. This phenomenon can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by showing respect to the addressee’s right to decide whether he/she wishes to engage in the new topic.

Focusing on who brings a new topic into the conversation, two types of patterns can be observed in the data. First, one of the interactants voluntarily starts to talk about a new topic, and the other is that one of the interactants asks questions of the other and sets out a certain direction for a new conversation.

Regardless of the way in which a new topic is introduced into the conversation, the present study finds that the process of introducing a new topic is usually gradual, characterised by fragmented utterances and negotiations.32

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32 If the process of introducing a new topic is not gradual, some signs, indicating that a new topic is coming can often be observed in the data. One of these instances, asking permission, will be discussed later (see 6.4.1).
The focus of this section has much in common with the study of sequential organisation in Conversation Analysis and the study of text organisation in discourse analysis. The literature on the organisation of texts tends to focus on narratives such as story telling (e.g., Labov and Waletzky, 1967; Sacks, 1974).

Labov and Waletzky (1967) argue that spoken narratives of personal experience have basic narrative structures involving six stages: 1) abstract, 2) orientation, 3) complication, 4) evaluation, 5) resolution, and 6) coda (pp. 32-41). Amongst these stages in the structure of narrative, this section deals with the stage of abstract and orientation. At the beginning of his/her narrative, the potential principal speaker gives some rough idea about the coming story and explains the overall background of the story.

Sacks (1974) analyses joke telling in conversation and divides it into three sequences: 1) the preface sequence, 2) the telling sequence, and 3) the response sequence. According to Sacks, the preface sequence is where the potential principal speaker indicates his/her intention to start to talk about a certain topic and negotiates with the hearers as to whether or not he/she can continue to talk about this topic.

The present study adopts Sacks’s term ‘preface sequence’ and uses it in the broader sense as the sequence which appears prior to the any topic, rather being limited to story telling or joke telling. The preface sequence has two functions: 1) to connect the previous topic with a new topic, and 2) to introduce the main body of the new topic.

In addition to the studies which examine the overall structure of narratives, some studies particularly focus on the beginning of narratives (Jefferson, 1978; Maynard, 1989; Lee, 1999). These analyse how stories are started in conversation, and find the linkage function between the preceding topic and the new topic.

In addition to the linkage and the introductory function of the preface sequence, the data show that its tendency to be a gradual process is significant. This study examines this tendency in relation to the notion of ‘face’. Some phenomena in the preface sequence can be seen as forms of ‘negative politeness’. For example, one of the interactants makes introductory remarks when he/she introduces a new topic. The interactants negotiate whether or not they will continue to engage in the new topic. These phenomena can be seen as the speaker’s consideration for the conversational partner’s ‘negative face’: he/she has the right to decide whether or not to engage in the new topic.

The following sections focus on two kinds of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in the data:

1) making some introductory remarks; and
2) negotiating the topic.
6.1.1 MAKING SOME INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This section discusses a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which one of the interactants makes introductory remarks in the preface sequence either when he/she starts a new topic by him/herself, or when he/she asks questions to the conversational partner, inviting him/her to take up a new topic. The data show that these introductory remarks function to win the interest or at least the attention of the conversational partner, and also to invite the conversational partner into the new topic without forcing him/her.

The data show that introductory remarks in the preface sequence consist of two kinds of phenomena. First, the interactant tries to draw the attention of the addressee by making the preface sequence interesting. As a typical technique to draw the attention of the addressee, the potential principal speaker makes the propositional content partially informative, or uses unclear expressions. These kinds of insufficient and unclear expressions often make the hearer ask a question which creates an opportunity for the potential principal speaker to explain or talk further about the new topic.

This technique is particularly common in an introductory remark in the preface sequence of story telling. Lee (1999) claims that the speaker uses four methods to get the conversational partner’s interest in the story by analysing the beginning of story telling. The speaker mentions: 1) the conclusion of the story, 2) the feelings or impression of the story, 3) the moral of the story, and 4) the import of the story. These introductory remarks are all partially informative about the content of story, and are likely to serve to attract the listener’s interest.

The second phenomenon in the preface sequence is that the interactant often introduces the new topic gradually in a fragmented manner. This gives the conversational partner an opportunity to decide whether he/she will engage in the new topic.

The following segment of conversation contains examples of introductory remarks in which one of the interactants successfully gains the hearer’s interest in her story. This success seems to come from the techniques she uses to introduce the new topic gradually and make it interesting.

M: Matsumoto, E: Emi

M: so: so: sugoi na: suzuki-san nanka ni mo: (.)(yoru) [(joshi-idai- 
[(sneezing)]

E: [un]

M: -tte{: bo:nenkai toka tte ge: ga atte ko: iu ge: o yaru tte 'E:: -

E: [laugh]

E: ho:nto ni:

M: [laugh]

E: e do:onna do:onna koto yan [no?:

M: [son na rokuon dekinai[laugh]

E: [{laughing}]

E: nande: (.)(.) datte: jibun dake so:zo:-shite yorokonderu:]

M: [iya:

M: dakara[: sho:kaki-geka toka tte sa]:

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[sneezing]

Yeah, yeah, it’s amazing. To someone like Mrs Suzuki (At night) at Women’s Medical School Hospital, at the end of year party, there are performances, and —{laugh}

Yeah, we do this kind of performance’, and she replied ‘Oh, gross’ like that. {laugh}

[laugh]
{laugh}
{laugh}

[laughing]

Why? But, you are imagining and enjoying it only by yourself.

Well, such as in the gastronomic surgeon department

Yeah

That is, New doctors will only read that. It is bullying the new doctors

though =

Yeah

In this segment of conversation, it is almost as if one of the interactants is going ‘fishing’. The fisherman tempts the fish with some tasty little pieces of bait, and waits for the moment when the fish bites them. Instead of chasing the game through the fields, it is rather a patient process by which the potential principal speaker gives some introductory remarks and waits for the conversational partner’s reaction.

All Matsumoto’s introductory remarks in this segment contribute to implying that the coming story is about something funny. First, Matsumoto mentions in line 32 that the story has been told to someone else who both interactants know (Mrs Suzuki). This indicates that the information is known to other people, and that Emi does not yet belong to that group of people. Therefore, Emi has a good reason to want to acquire this information. Matsumoto then mentions that it is about a performance at the year-end party in lines 32 and 34. In Japanese these parties are strongly associated with drinking and fun. Next, Matsumoto quotes the assessment of the mutual friend, ‘E: geretsu: (OH, gross)’ in line 36. Finally, Matsumoto laughs a lot in lines 36 and 39. This laughter conveys that the story will indeed, live up to its promise.

Having had her interest aroused, in line 40, Emi asks what kind of performance they do. In line 41, Matsumoto shows some apparent reluctance to talk about it saying that it is too embarrassing to record. This reluctance arouses Emi’s interest more and Emi starts to blame Matsumoto for keeping it to herself without sharing it in line 43.
In addition to these introductory remarks, Matsumoto frequently uses expressions which mitigate the propositional content of her utterance, such as ‘nanka (something like)’ and ‘toka (such as)’. This issue will be discussed later (see 6.2.1).

Moving on to another type of topic introduction, the next segment of conversation includes gradual process in which the potential principal hearer asks questions of the conversational partner in order to make her talk about her situation without forcing her to speak. Therefore, this is not a case of the potential principal speaker him/herself trying to get interest from the conversational partner. However, before principal speaker Kie starts to talk about her work situation in line 15, a gradual process can be seen in which the potential hearer introduces the new topic from line 1 to line 14.

T: Tamako, K: Kie

The characteristic feature of the sequence from line 1 to 14 is that Tamako asks very unclear questions and Kie has to clarify Tamako’s questions many times. This exchange makes the process of introducing the new topic a very gradual one in a fragmented manner. First of all, Tamako starts saying ‘kiko tte do: na no? (Speaking about you, Kiko, how are things?)’ in line 1. However, this utterance only functions to get attention from Kie, and merely conveys that the speaker is asking a question about the addressee. Kie then clarifies the topic by asking ‘nani (what?)’ in line 2. This clarification by Kie overlaps with Tamako’s specific question ‘ima no(.) shokuba wa(.) ii? (Is the present(.) work place(.) good?)’. Tamako’s utterance is characterised by short pauses indicating hesitation. Then, Kie clarifies the topic again ‘shokuba?: (work place?)’.

Kie finally talks about her work situation ‘isogashi: wa na?: (I am busy)’ in line 5. However, silence follows in line 6. There are two possibilities here. Kie may not wish to talk any more about this topic for some reason, or she may have a problem in continuing since Tamako’s question ‘ima no(.) shokuba wa(.) ii? (Is the present(.) working place(.) good?)’ is too vague.

The next move is that Tamako specifies her question a little bit more clearly ‘kyo:ryokuteki? (Are they cooperative?)’ in line 7. This is still unclear because she omits the subject of the sentence. Tamako repeats her question ‘kyo:ryokuteki? (Are they cooperative?)’ in line 10 since Tamako’s question overlapped with Kie talking. Kie asks for clarification ‘nani ga? (what is?)’ in line 11. Tamako asks the same question in a different way ‘rikai ga aru? (Are they understanding?)’ in line 12. Kie tries to clarify ‘mawari? (the people around me?)’ in line 13.

Both interactants exchange questions and clarifications many times until Kie finally starts to talk about her working situation in relation to her home life in which she has the role of mother of a child.

In the next segment of the conversation, the study discusses the case in which the potential principal hearer makes a comment to the conversational partner, and so indirectly invites the potential principal speaker to talk about her situation. Therefore, the principal speaker is given the floor to start her story by the potential principal hearer. In addition, when the principal speaker starts talking about her situation, she speaks somewhat unclearly, which causes the need for further clarification questions from the hearer. This gives further opportunity to the principal speaker to talk more about the topic.
At the beginning of this segment, potential principal hearer Fukushima mentions that Norie has not come to practice recently, and anticipates that Norie may be looking for the

\[J8 \#1\]
venue for the wedding in line 1. Although she does not ask a question directly, Fukushima invites Norie to talk about her situation by implying that Norie seems busy and by presuming what Norie may be doing.

Norie’s first response to Fukushima’s inquiry is characterised with hesitation in lines 2 and 3. She inserts some pauses and uses a filler ‘nanaka (something like, well)’ twice (see 6.2.1.1). The final particles ‘sa’ and ‘ne’ are also used. Norie then introduces the source of her problem using an expression ‘marijji-buru: (marriage blues)’ in line 3. This expression is not clear to Fukushima immediately, and Fukushima clarifies whether people are supposed to get into the ‘marriage blues’ before their marriage or after it in lines 10 and 12.

Since the expression ‘marijji-buru: (marriage blues)’ only implies in a subtle way that Norie has a problem, it provides a good reason for Norie to continue her story and clarify her problem. In this segment, the exact definition of the expression does not seem to be important for Norie, because she does not go on to clarify it. What is more important is for Norie to tell Fukushima more clearly what the expression represents in her situation. This is a very common pattern in the data. It is also found in the previous example in which the speaker uses a rather unusual word first, and then explains it by talking more about her own situation.

6.1.2 NEGOTIATING THE TOPIC

The previous section examined ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which one of the interactants introduces a new topic gradually by making introductory remarks in order to get the addressee’s attention or interest without forcing him/her.

This section examines a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which the potential principal speaker negotiates with the conversational partner to gain the status of the principal speaker on a new topic. This process can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the potential principal speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by concerning whether or not the conversational partner is interested in the coming topic.

It seems to be essential for the potential principal speaker to receive the addressee’s support. The data suggest that it is difficult for the speaker to continue to talk without the agreement of the hearer. The analysis identifies cases in which the potential principal speaker gives up talking about a topic when he/she fails to gain the hearer’s support. If the potential principal speaker insists on continuing to talk about the topic without the support of the hearer, the conversation could deteriorate into conflict (see 7.4).

The importance of the hearer’s role in the Japanese conversation is reported in some studies (Okazaki, 1993). Of course, the role of the hearer would have some importance in any language, but may be different in a language with a highly dyadic interactional style like Japanese than in one with a non-dyadic style such as many Australian Aboriginal, American native or Southeast Asian languages (see Walsh, 1994; Scollon, 1985; Nerida Jarkey (personal communication)).
It is fair to say that topic negotiation starts at the stage of introductory remarks which were examined in the previous section. The previous section discussed the cases -- the speaker successfully gaining the hearer's support for continuing his/her talk. This section focuses on the other cases in which the speaker fails to gain the hearer's support.

The following segment of conversation shows the topic negotiation resulting in the potential principal speaker giving up talking about a topic which she has tried to introduce. Tamako starts to talk about a commercial film, but she does not continue to talk about it. This seems to be because Ube does not show much interest in this topic. This topic seems to be very special to Tamako since she tries to talk about it again later, utilising another technique (see 6.4.1).

U: Ube, T: Tamako

14 U ma: demo
15 [gap]
16 U sore koso(.) obasama-tachi tte: umaku nannai yo na[:]
17 T [tanoshikereba
18 ii no
19 U so: dakara i: to omou yo sorede dakara motomoto motomoto wa ne
20 T ne: tanoshikereba i: no to ieba:() ano nan dakke ano senden i:
21 desu yo ne(.) ano kare: no senden {laugh} kare: no senden de:
22 ano:() san-nin no kodomo ga:() ko:: kare: o tsukuru desu ne(.)
23 san-nin no:() sono kareza no:() hahaoya ga taberun desu ne
24 U un
25 T de sore zore ne:(.) hitokoto hitokoto hitokoto iun desu ne
26 U un
27 T de hitokoto hitokoto hitokoto iu no(.) demo dare no kodomo ka tte
28 iu no ga yoku wakaru no(..) mita koto arima[sen?
29 U [shiranai sonna nan da
30 T [so: ka:() ube-senpai kitto terebi zenzen mite nain da
31 T sono koma:sharu shiranai
32 T nanka ne:(.) ka kare: ka nanka no kare: no nanka hausu kare:
33 T nanka wakaranai(.) kare: no senden nan desu kedo
34 U hiruma desho? sore:
35 T u:n so: ka na?:() hiruma kamo shirenai
36 U you wa ne mo: ne: tashika ni minai(.) nyu:su sute:shon dake(.)
37 T miru [no wa:() hotondo
38 T u:n
39 T nyu:su sute:shon te
40 U nyu:su sute:shon te ju: no :)

(J2 #16)

14 U Well, but
15 [gap]
16 U especially(.) middle aged ladies don’t improve their skill, do they?
17 T ['As long as it’s
18 enjoyable, it’s good'
19 U Yeah, I think it’s good. I mean, basically, basically
20 T Well, speaking of ‘As long as it’s enjoyable(.) it’s good’, er, what was it? That TV ad
21 is good, isn’t it?(.) That TV ad for curry paste. {laugh} It’s a commercial
22 for a curry paste. And, er.,(.) three children(.) make curry(.)
23 three children(.) Their(.) mothers eat the curry.
24 U Yeah
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In line 20, Tamako starts to talk about a new topic which is a commercial about curry paste. From lines 20 to 28, Tamako takes some gradual steps which can be seen as introductory remarks. First, Tamako makes a link between the previous topic and this new topic with the expression ‘tanoshikereba ii no to ieba (Speaking of ‘As long as it’s enjoyable, it’s good’)’ at the beginning of line 20. This is a widely acknowledged method of connecting a previous topic and a new topic (cf Jefferson, 1978; Lee, 1999).

Next, Tamako talks about the actual content of the new topic from line 20 to line 23 and in lines 25, 27 and 28. In lines 20 and 21, Tamako speaks as if Tamako and Ube share knowledge of this commercial. For example, Tamako uses the deictic ‘ano (that)’ as if Ube knows about the commercial. Tamako also speaks as if Tamako and Ube share a taste for commercials in general. Therefore, Tamako seeks agreement saying ‘ano senden ii desu yo ne (That commercial is good, isn’t it?)’. These phenomena can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ in which a speaker is optimistic that the interactants share a common interest (see 5.1.2). However, Ube does not respond to these moves by either agreeing or disagreeing.

At the end of line 21, Tamako stops talking as if they have a common interest, and starts to give Ube ideas about the kind of commercial it is. First, she gives an outline of the commercial, but does not talk about it in detail. This phenomenon can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ in which the speaker roughly introduces the new topic and tries to engage the conversational partner’s interest. It seems to be necessary for Tamako to persuade Ube to accept the new topic by showing what kind of commercial she is going to talk, since Ube does not indicate any sign of interest at this stage.

The remarkable point between lines 20 and 23 is that Ube does not give any short responses, even though there are reasonable opportunities to do so, since Tamako speaks relatively slowly and inserts some brief gaps. At the end of line 28, Tamako asks a question
which invites Ube to join in the conversation. In line 29, Ube answers Tamako’s question, but still he does not show any signs of interest in the story.

The topic of this segment starts to change when Tamako says to Ube, ‘ube-senpai kitto terebi zenzen mite nain da (you don’t watch TV at all, Ube-senpai)’ in lines 29 and 30. Although there is a hint in lines 33 and 34 that Tamako still wants to talk about this commercial, Ube does not show much interest in it, saying ‘sonna koma:sharu shiranai (I don’t know a commercial like that?)’ in line 32.

In lines 37 and 38, Ube agrees with Tamako’s comment that he does not watch TV at all. However, he starts to talk about a few TV programmes which he watches. This apparent contradiction can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker initially avoids disagreeing with the addressee (see 5.2.2.1).

In this segment of conversation, the potential principal speaker does not continue to talk about the new topic when it becomes apparent that she has not been successful in engaging the conversational partner’s interest.

The next segment of conversation shows an example of topic negotiation in which one of the interactants tries to talk about his trip to Italy, and the other listens to him for a while, but later tries to change the direction of the talk.

W: Wada, G: Gooike

1 W kyonen ne: torino ni(.) itta yo(.) itta yo:
2 G itta no:
3 W un:
4 G a: i: ne:
5 {gap}
6 W kyonen dakara sa:(...) kyonen wa ne: isutanbu:ru itte:
7 G un
8 W ro:ma haitte:() ro:ma wa mo: tomatta dake de: sugu isutanbu:ru
9 itte: isutanbu:ru mikka yokka gurai ite:
10 G un
11 G un:
12 W de mo ikkai modotte kite:(.) de ro:ma kara(.) ressha de zutto
13 hokujo:-shite:
14 G un
15 W pisa itte: jenoba itte:
16 G {{shaberen no:?}
17 W {{de:
18 W un?
19 G shaberen no:?}
20 W iya shaberenai yo:() demo nantoka
21 (...)}
22 G fu::n sugoi ne:
23 W nitsu itte:
24 {gap}
25 W de modotte kite: {{torino}
26 G [ore mo: kekkon shite kara zenzen().] kaigai-ryoko:
27 nante {{sa:}
28 W [{laugh}
29 G ikitai to omowanai mon
30 W [{laugh}
31 G mo: i: ya:
32 W a: so:? ryoko: toka demo ikanai no:? [{ryoko: suki datta yo ne:?}
33 G [ryoko:
34 G ryoko: wa suki de ne:
Last year, to Turin we went, we went to.
Did you go?
Yeah
Ah, that’s good.

Last year so last year, we went to Istanbul,
Yeah
we entered through Rome, we only stayed over night in Rome, then immediately went to Istanbul. We stayed in Istanbul for three or four days,

[Yeah
Yeah
and we came back to Rome once again and from Rome by train,
we headed north,
I see.

we went to Pisa and Genoa,
[[Can you speak Italian?
[[and
[Sorry?
Can you speak Italian?
No, we can’t speak Italian but we managed (..)
I see. That’s amazing.

We went to Niece,
and came back to (Turin)
[I, since getting married, not at all I haven’t been on an overseas trip
[[laugh]
I don’t even have the desire to go.

[laugh]
I’ve given it up.
Oh, really? Don’t you travel? You used to like it, didn’t you?
I like travelling.
Yeah
I went
Really?
[laugh]
I went though
Yeah
Well, an overseas trip I’m not so keen.
[laugh]
I see I see.

In an earlier part of this segment, the interactants talked about wine from Italy. From the association with wine from Italy, Wada starts to talk about his trip to Italy in line 1. Wada goes on to talk about his itinerary during the trip in line 6. For example, he and his wife flew
into Rome and went on to Istanbul first, then went back to Rome and headed north by train. They visited Pisa and Genoa. During Wada’s talk, Gooike gives short responses which indicate that Gooike is listening to Wada.

After listening to Wada’s itinerary for a while, Gooike asks whether Wada and his wife can speak Italian in line 16. This question overlaps with Gooike who is still talking. Despite Gooike’s attempt to change the direction of the conversation, Wada is still keen on talking about the itinerary of his trip in lines 23 and 25. However, in line 24, there is a gap in which Wada inserts a pause, presumably in the hope of receiving a response from Gooike (see 5.2.1.1). However, Gooike does not respond at all.

In addition to leaving the gap unfilled, Gooike says in line 26 and 27 that after getting married, he stopped going overseas. He adds that he has lost the desire to travel abroad in line 29, and he reiterates that he has given up going abroad in line 31.

After Gooike’s statements which indicate his lack of interest in overseas trips, Wada mentions that Gooike used to like travelling very much in line 32. He uses his knowledge of Gooike that he gained in the past.

These last two segments of conversation show the sensitivity of the potential principal speaker that he/she cannot go on talking about a topic without the approval of the conversational partner. The topic seems to develop only when both interactants indicate some kind of involvement in the conversation.

6.1.3 CONCLUSION
In this first major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena, I explored a number of phenomena by focusing on the issue a new topic being introduced into the conversation. The interactants satisfy each other’s ‘negative face’ by not imposing on each other. This is because the nature of ‘negative face’ desires to preserve personal space.

The ‘negative politeness’ phenomena described in this section were mainly found in the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening. For example, the interactant introduces a new topic by making some introductory remarks (see 6.1.1). The interactants also negotiate with the conversational partner over a new topic (see 6.1.2).

6.2 COMMUNICATING WITHOUT COERCING THE PARTNER
The previous section has discussed the first major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena by focusing on how a new topic is introduced into the conversation. It is characterised by the gradual process of developing the new topic, such as introductory remarks which attract the hearer’s attention or interest, and topic negotiation. This section examines the second major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the interactant communicates without coercing the conversational partner.
Brown and Levinson (1987) deal with two types of cases in this major group: 1) the speaker mitigates the propositional content of a certain pragmatic goal, or 2) the speaker gives deference, such as using honorifics or certain address forms, while again stating a certain goal.

This section also focuses on two not dissimilar issues in casual conversation that the interactants communicate without coercing the conversational partner. It is the ways how the speaker states his/her opinions or feelings, and the interactants’ manner of attending to the conversation. The present study sets out two categories in this major group:

1) avoiding assertion; and
2) avoiding disturbance.

6.2.1 AVOIDING ASSERTION

This section deals with ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the speaker avoids assertion in various ways, when he/she expresses his/her opinions or feelings. The core notion of these ‘negative politeness’ phenomena is that the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by making his/her statement less assertive or by making the propositional content of the utterance somewhat unclear. These phenomena can be seen as forms of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker gives the hearer some room to accept what he/she is saying.

An interesting fact is that these ‘negative politeness’ phenomena appear even if the speaker does not directly threaten the addressee’s ‘face’. For instance, even if the speaker offers an opinion about something which is not related to the hearer at all, the speaker may still show some signs of hesitation when he/she expresses it. This indicates that any expression of one’s opinions or feelings has the potential to be taken as a ‘face threatening act’ (FTA). This may be because expressing to one’s opinions or feelings may be interpreted as trying to influence the other party. Such influence may threaten the hearer’s ‘negative face’.

Avoiding assertion tends to have much in common with one form of ‘positive politeness’ because it involves lack of clarity. Lack of clarity in communication can be based on the confidence that the interactants can understand each other without requiring a great deal of clarity or detailed description, and thus can be interpreted as a sign of ‘positive politeness’. At the same time, the phenomena of avoiding assertion may cause FTAs, precisely because of their lack of clarity.

The ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in this section overlap with the phenomena that conversation analysts define as ‘dispreferred sequence’ in ‘preference organisation’. Pomerantz (1984) claims that in conversation there is a type of sequence by which statements tend to be indirect, structurally elaborated, and delayed. Conversation analysts call this type of sequence a ‘dispreferred sequence’.
This section focuses on the type of sequence in which the utterance is indirect, structurally complicated and delayed. It deals with both linguistically unmarked (such as hesitation) and well-marked phenomena.

In the data, this study identifies the following two kinds of methods used to avoid assertion:

1) making the expression less assertive; and
2) making the propositional content unclear.

6.2.1.1 Making the expression less assertive
This section analyses a number of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the speaker makes his/her expression less assertive. These phenomena are realised by the speaker’s manner of speaking, such as hesitation, or by linguistic devices, such as hedges, questions, modality, double negatives, and ellipsis. The speaker can control the degree of assertiveness using these methods.

- Hesitation
- Hedges
- Questions
- Modality
- Double negative
- Ellipsis

Hesitation
In the first major group of ‘negative politeness’, this study discussed the phenomenon of hesitation, which is often a feature of the gradual process by which one of the interactants introduces a new topic in a fragmented manner (see 6.1.1). This section focuses on hesitation which appears when the speaker expresses his/her opinions or feelings.

According to the data examined, hesitation is a very common phenomenon in Japanese casual conversation. Hesitation, in fact, involves a number of closely related features, such as pauses, slow articulation, and hedges. These phenomena all indicate that the speaker has some reason not to articulate his/her opinions or feelings straightforwardly.

As mentioned above, the present study finds that hesitation can appear, even if the utterance does not involve an FTA which directly threatens the addressee’s ‘face’ at the level of the propositional content. This means that the very act of expressing one’s opinions or feelings itself has the potential to be taken as an FTA regardless of the propositional content of the utterance. Therefore, the present study regards hesitation as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘negative face’ by showing reluctance to influence the hearer when expressing personal opinions or feelings.
In the following segment, hesitation can be seen when one of the interactants discusses the participants’ mutual friends from their university days. They talk about friends who have continued to meet from time to time, ever since they graduated from university.

C: Chika, A: Aiko

Those people\(^{33}\) are really quiet if they don’t drink.(..) They don’t talk right?\(^{33}\)

33 Chika and Aiko talk about their mutual friends. Even though Chika and Aiko themselves are the members of the group that continues to meet together, they talk about others as if they are different from themselves, describing them as quiet people.
19  A [Yeah
20  (..)
21  A Well, that is a little bit of an exception though.
22  C [yeah [I see {laugh}
23  (..)
24  A well,(..) so, quite
25  C [Yeah(..) Could it be that they have no friends? {laugh}
26  Yeah (       ) {laugh}
27  A [if we speak frankly
28  (gap)
29  A I think it is a good thing though

At the beginning of this segment, Chika mentions that the members of their usual ‘old girls and boys’ group are basically quiet, unless they have a few drinks (line 1). Aiko gives a reason for this, suggesting that they are just not talkative people in line 3.

In line 6, Aiko suggests that it may because they are not talkative that they all keep meeting. This is not very clear in terms of the logic of the causal relationship. Consequently, Chika tries to clarify this comment in line 7, asking, ‘Because they don’t talk, they are strange?’

Next, Aiko starts to explain what she meant by her comment (from line 8). However, she does not, or perhaps cannot seem to explain this clearly. Hesitation can be seen in the form of pauses (lines 11, 20, 23, and 24) and fillers: ‘nanka sa: (well)’ (line 12); ‘nanka: (well)’, ‘dakara (so)’, and ‘kekko: sa: (quite)’ (line 24).

In line 14, Aiko mentions that ‘They are not the type of people who can just get along with anybody’. This is again not very clear as an explanation for the fact that they keep meeting. In the end, Chika suggests ‘Could it be that they have no friends?’ in line 25, interpreting what Aiko might mean by the statement ‘They are not the type of people who can just get along with anybody’. In line 27, Aiko agrees with Chika, saying ‘if we speak frankly.’ The causal relationship seems to be that because they are neither talkative nor the type of people who can get along with anybody immediately, they are loyal to the old friends and keep meeting them.

Speaker Aiko seems to go to some lengths to avoid being direct and clear at any point during this segment of conversation. She frequently hesitates and never connects her utterances, but she seems to expect that the partner will anticipate, interpret and discover their coherence for herself. In this way, she satisfies the hearer’s ‘negative face’ by indicating reluctance to influence the hearer when expressing her opinions and feelings.

**Hedges**

In the previous section, hesitation was dealt with as a form of ‘negative politeness’. This section examines a certain type of hedges, which are commonly found in the data and which can be seen as a type of hesitation. These hedges can also be regarded as forms of ‘negative
politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by making his/her utterance less assertive.

Brown and Levinson (1987) regard a large number of phenomena in interaction as hedges which they describe as ‘a particle, word, or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or noun phrase in a set’ (p. 145). They deal with hedges as forms of both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’. Hedges as forms of ‘positive politeness’ are discussed as a strategy -- ‘avoid disagreement’ -- in Brown and Levinson’s theory. On the other hand, as forms of ‘negative politeness’, hedges have two main functions: 1) to weaken or soften the propositional content of the utterance to avoid coercing the hearer, and 2) to strengthen or emphasise the propositional content to avoid presumption or assumption that both interactants share similarities.

This study basically follows this categorisation by Brown and Levinson, but deals with hedges as a form of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena. This section examines the first function of hedges; the second function will be examined later in the section entitled ‘state as a mere personal opinion’ (see 7.4.3).

In previous studies of Japanese linguistics, some ‘hedges’ in Brown and Levinson’s sense are dealt with as fillers. Maynard (1989) refers to fillers that ‘do not carry identifiable or relevant propositional meanings’ (p. 30). She identifies two motivations behind those fillers: 1) ‘language-production-based fillers’ which are the result of the thinking process in the production of an utterance, 2) ‘socially motivated fillers’ which indicate that the conversation is still in progress even if there is no presentation of propositional content, or which convey that the speaker is hesitant or uncertain about the propositional content of his/her utterance (p. 30-31).

Cook (1993) examines a particular filler, ‘ano (well)’ in Japanese, and proposes that ‘the demonstrative adjective “ano (that)” and the filler “ano (well)” share the same relational and indexical functions’ since ‘the filler “ano (well)” aligns the speaker and addressee on the same side’ just as the demonstrative adjective (that (over there/ away from both you and me)) does (p. 22). Her analysis shows that the filler ‘ano (well)’ often occurs when the speaker ‘starts a conversation or a new turn, tries to get the attention of the addressee, highlights a proposition that immediately follows ‘ano (well)’, starts a new topic, or disagrees with others’ (p. 23). Her study does not consider the prosodic features which seem to be associated with the various meanings of this filler. The two functions of the filler -- to highlight and to disagree -- are considerably different from each other and are characterised by quite different prosodic features.

Both Maynard (1989) and Cook (1993) regard fillers as ‘positive politeness’ since fillers mitigate a certain act by emphasising common ground and by creating a casual, friendly atmosphere.

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34 Maynard (1989) also claims that it may not be clear which of these motivations is behind the use of a filler.
In the following segment of the conversation, one of the interactants states his opinion in very fragmented manner with numerous hedges. In the previous part of this segment, both interactants talked about religious ceremonies in Indonesia and other mysterious things such as children’s game. Yamamoto stated that he was not interested in these, whereas Doobayashi showed considerable interest.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

69 Y ore wa izure ni shite mo(…) ano:
70 D mizaru iwazaru kikazaru?
71 Y {? (…) ma: so:iu:: no wa::
72 {gap}
73 Y suki ja ne: na:(…) dakara i: dakara ma: nante iu no?(…)
74 saketai desu ne:
75 D ai: so:
76 Y ko:(…) shinpiteki to iu ka: ko: seishinteki (ni)(…) ore ne: are
77 kodomo kodomo-gakoro ni:
78 D {laugh}
79 Y [nanka ko:
80 D ayashi: to omotteta?
81 Y iya nantonaku ne:(…) nanka mazui to omotta na:
82 D a: so:
83 Y ou:

(J1 #25)

In this segment, Yamamoto explains the reason for the lack of his interest in such mysterious matters. His utterances are very fragmented and many fillers can be found. This gives the sense of his side of the conversation not being assertive at all.

Questions
The speaker also avoids assertion by using a form of question when expressing his/her opinions or feelings. The nature of a question, that the addressee has the choice to agree or to
disagree, helps mitigate the propositional content of the utterance. According to the data, this phenomenon is very common.

The following segment of conversation includes some questions via which, in fact, the speaker is expressing her opinion. Kie gives opinions how to choose an electric product. She presents her opinion in the form of question in lines 85, 86, 89, 90, and 92.

K: Kie, T: Tamako

85 K ato wa hora(..) kino: o toru ka tsukaiyasui (no) ka so:iu ho: ga
86 saki ni natchaun janai?
87 T u:n
88 {gap}
89 K ne:(.) onaji yatsu demo sa:(.) tsukai-gatte jibun ni totte no
90 tsukai-gatte toka sa:?             
91 {gap}
92 K an janai no? so:iu wake demo nai :)

(J3 #8)

85 K Other considerations are, well(..) whether you prefer more functions or easy handling,
86 that kind of thing may become a priority, I guess?
87 T Yeah
88 {gap}
89 K Right?(!) Even if they are the same kind of product,(!) what’s convenient,
90 what’s convenient for yourself,
91 {gap}
92 K That may be the case. Isn’t it like that?

:)

Modality (probability)

Another way in which the speaker can satisfy the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by avoiding assertion, is through the use of modality. In the following example, one of the interactants gives her opinion with a modal expression indicating uncertainty. In line 77, Kie says what she thinks about the brands and the prices of cassette recorders. She qualifies her opinion ‘onaji tte iu no ga aru (it’s the same)’ using the modal expression ‘kamo shirenai (might be/perhaps)’.

K: Kie, T: Tamako

73 K [i: mono mo i: daro: kedo [sa:(.) tatoeba sonna ni betsu ni(..)–
74 T [u::n]
75 K -chotto rajio kakeru dake dake toka [iun dattara sa: doko datte–
76 T [u:n
77 K -onnaji tte [iu no ga aru kamo shirenai ne:?
78 T [u::n

(J3 #8)

73 K [Good quality things may be good, but(,) for example, if you don’t care so much(,) –
74 T [Yeah
75 K - if you just play the radio, it is possible that any brand -
Double negatives
This section moves on to double negatives which can be seen as another form of ‘negative politeness’. This is because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by mitigating his/her propositional content by the use of double negatives. In the following segment of conversation, Kie uses a double negative ‘shinai (negative) demo nai (negative)’ to show her uncertainty.

K: Kie

86 K (wakannai)(..) sonna nameae datta yo:na ki mo
know neg that kind of name cop like ki mo
shinai de mo nai(.)
do neg too neg

86 K (I don’t know..) It’s not that I don’t have the feeling like it was that kind of name.(.)

Ellipsis
The speaker can also avoid assertion by leaving a sentence elliptical in the conversation. This is also a very common phenomenon in the data. This section deals with ellipsis which has a strong relationship with co-construction of utterance. In this case, ellipsis can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by creating room to anticipate the content of the message by him/herself.

In the literature, researchers often tend to connect the high occurrence of ellipsis in Japanese conversation to ‘the monolithic nature of the Japanese character’ and ‘the high proportion of shared expectations among Japanese speakers’ (Hinds, 1980: 264). However, Hinds’ own analysis shows how ellipsis in Japanese language is often detectable by using a range of hints which are scattered throughout the utterance.

Kabaya (1993) focuses on the effects of omitting some phrases in Japanese in terms of polite effects. He points out that there are certain topics or expressions that the speaker tends to avoid talking about or using. For example, he refers to the avoidance of the second person pronoun. He also mentions that the speaker tends to avoid evaluating the addressee, especially when the address is higher than the speaker in status.

On the other hand, it is also true that ellipsis can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ (see 5.1.1). This is because it based on the assumption that the address will understand, even if the sentence is not completed.
The following is an example that involves ellipsis; one of the interactants leaves his sentence unfinished in line 3 after he expresses his wish to reintroduce the topic of railways. His unfinished sentences suggests that he is actually asking permission from his interlocutor to talk about railways again, but this request for permission is left unstated.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

1 Y so: iu wake de:
2 {gap}
3 Y mata tetsudo: no hanashi o shitain da kedo
4 {..}
5 D do:zo:

Therefore, I would like to talk about the railways again but

D Go ahead.

6.2.1.2 Making the propositional content unclear

The previous sections have examined a number of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the speaker makes his/her statement less assertive by the manner of speaking or by linguistic devices. This section discusses ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the speaker makes the propositional content of his/her utterance less clear by ambiguous expressions, such as metaphor or sarcasm.

The core notion of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in this section is that the speaker avoids expressing his/her opinions or feelings explicitly to the addressee. These ambiguous expressions normally have some possibility of different interpretation, and the speaker relies on the hearer to make the judgement as to what this expression exactly means without clarifying it him/herself.

In Brown and Levinson’s theory, all kinds of vague expressions in which the speaker implies his/her communicative goals are categorised as ‘off record’, rather than as ‘negative politeness’. However, this study regards all these phenomena by which the speaker just implies what he/she means as forms of ‘negative politeness’ in casual conversation.

The following segment of conversation shows the use of unclear expressions. In this segment, Kie reports her impressions about a mutual friend’s wedding which she attended. Although Ritsuko did not attend the wedding, she received a card which announced the marriage of this mutual friend and included a photo of the bride and groom. Therefore, Ritsuko shares with Kie some sense of how the wedding went. Ritsuko listens to Kie’s report and also gives her impressions. According to parts of their conversation not included here, their mutual friend is in her mid 30s which is not generally regarded in Japan as a young age.
for a bride. In general, people in this age bracket tend to avoid having a typical ‘fairy tale’ wedding. However, this friend’s wedding was typical of that of a young couple, right down to the pink dress.

K: Kie, R: Ritsuko

77 K: demo sa: NANI? MATTE(..) kuro-chan sa:?: pinku no dore
78 toka [sa:]
79 R [uwa::]
80 K: mo: a(,) shashin shashin
81 R: mita [mita]
82 K: [( )] hanashita desho?(..) mo: ne:() sore wa mo:
83 o:sodokkusu na ne:
84 R: un
85 K: mo: ne:[: hatachi to niju:go no kekkon-shiki [tte iu kanji-
86 R [un] [laugh]
87 K -no kekkon-shiki datta no(,) so: itcha:(,) [ma: koko dake-
88 R [ne: watashi mo-
89 K -no hanashi da kedo:(.) [koko dake no hanashi desu kara-
90 R -sa: shashin mite: [u::n
91 K -ne:() honto ni sa:
92 R iya: watashi mo shashin de mita toki:
93 K: un
94 R: kao ga:(.) are tte omotta kke[:]
95 K [u::n
96 R [nanka futari tomo:
97 K so:(.) de: ma: kuro-chan sore: demo sa{: su:goi
98 R [kao ga (? )
99 tte iu [kanji na no
100 K [un(,) so: demo ma: sore: demo kuro-chan wa do: mite
101 mo niju:-dai ni wa mi: mieta(,) kanji wa kanji nan [da-
102 R [a so:::
103 K -kedo ne:?: u::n(,) dakedo[: yappari sa{:]
104 R [u::n [un [un
105 K sono: kan kankaku tte iu ka sa: yappari: kuro-chan wa ne:
106 R a:: ko:iu fu: ni shite kekkon-suru no o sa:
107 R: un
108 K: yume dattan da na:: tte iu fu: ni omotta
109 R: hai:[:::
110 K [honto ni(. ) un mo: ne:() datte
111 R: un

(J4#12)

77 K: But, WHAT? WAIT(...) Kuro-chan wore a pink dress,
78 like that.
79 R [Oh, no.
80 K: Really, well (,) photos, photos
81 R: I saw them, I saw them.
82 K: [( )] I’ve told you, haven’t I?(..) Really,(,) it was a really
83 typical one.
84 R: Yeah.
85 K: well, the wedding was like a wedding of people of twenty year-old and twenty five
86 R [yeah] [laugh]
87 K - year-old, something like that(,) I wouldn’t like to say so,(,) well this story is -
88 R [Right, I also -
89 K - only here between us though(,) this story is only here between us -
90 R: - saw the photos [yeah

These two words must be to her toddler daughter who was present.
K - all right? (.) Honestly.
R Well, when I saw them in the photos, too,
K Yeah
R their faces are (.) well, I thought
K [yeah::
R [well, both of them,
K Really (.) and then, even though kuro-chan, very
R [their faces are (? )
K like that,
R [Yeah ( ..) Well, but, even though, well, Kuro-chan looked as if, in any case,
K in her twenties ( .) She looked like that -
R [I see:::
K - though. Yeah ( .) But, as we expected,
R [Yeah [Yeah [yeah
K er, my impression was, as we all know, Kuro-chan,
R ah, wanted to get married in this way,
K Yeah
R I thought like it had been her dream.
K I see:::::
R I see:::::
K [Really ( .) Yeah, really ( .) because
R Yeah

The segment shows the interactants’ consideration towards the ‘positive face’ of their mutual friend, Kuro-chan, and her husband, who are not present in the current conversation. When the interactants talk about the wedding, they are trying not to use harsh or explicit words, even though they cannot resist discussing all the negative points of the wedding. It is almost as if they are trying not to threaten their friend’s ‘face’ in her absence. Even though both interactants uses unclear expressions, they both seem to understand perfectly what the other means as there is no clarification by either participant.

Kie describes the friend’s dress with an emphatic tone of voice, ‘pinku no doresu toka (a pink dress)’ in line 77. She twice tells Ritsuko that this talk is just between her and Ritsuko in line 87 and 89. Kie describes the wedding, first, using the neutral adjective ‘o:sodokkusu na (typical)’ ‘sore wa o:sodokkusu na ne: (It was a really typical one.)’, and then ‘hatachi to niju:go no kekkon-shiki tte iu kanji no kekkon-shiki datta no (the wedding was like that of a twenty year old woman and a twenty five year old man, something like that)’. Ritsuko also comments on the wedding photo, but she does not complete her sentence, saying ‘kao ga arette omotta kke: (the faces of the bride and the groom are really something)’ in line 94.

6.2.2 AVOIDING INTERRUPTION
The previous sections discussed ‘negative politeness’ phenomena by which the speaker makes his/her opinion less assertive (see 6.2.1.1) or by making the propositional content unclear (see 6.2.1.2). This section examines ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the interactants avoid disturbing the conversational partner. This can be regarded as a form of
‘negative politeness’ because the interactant satisfies the conversational partner’s ‘negative face’ and ‘positive face’ by respecting his/her floor.

The study finds two phenomena in this category in the data:

1) giving minimum verbal reaction; and
2) avoiding overlaps.

6.2.2.1 Giving minimum verbal reaction

This study identifies a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which the hearer gives minimum verbal reaction to the principal speaker. The hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘negative face’ by ensuring the opportunity for him/her to talk uninterrupted.

In Chapter 5, the study discussed a number of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which the interactants indicate their mutual participation in the conversation. Focusing on the hearer’s side (see 5.2.1.2), the phenomenon that this section deals with clashes with those ‘positive politeness’ phenomena, although the study claimed that the hearer’s responses tend to be short. This shows that ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena can contradict each other.

The following segment of conversation is an example that the hearer gives only minimum verbal responses. However, the principal speaker does not seem to be discouraged to talk by these minimum verbal responses because she continues to talk. Up to line 106, Kie speaks almost exclusively and Tamako listens to her quietly. In the previous part of this segment, the interactants talked about a mutual friend who tried to get qualifications in order to find a job.

K: Kie, T: Tamako

100 K muzukashi: yo ne?:(. ) nanka shikaku tte sa: (.) hoka itte: yoso no kuni datte: ma: so: da kedo sa: bengoshi toka(.) kaike:shi
101 kurasu(.) kaike:shi demo ima saikin muzukashi: kedo:
102 T un
103 K gurai ni nareba sa: (.) sono shikaku ga: (.) choku shigoto ni musubitsuku janai?
104 T un
105 K (aru imi de:) (.) hoka no shikaku tte sa: (.) (tatoeba) boki nanka ni shite mo ne: (.) ima keiri( .) no shigoto shiteru hito ga sa: (.) jibun no sono: (.) kyaria appu no tame ni: (.) boki no shikaku o
106 T torimashita( .) tte iu yo: na sa: (.) yo:suru ni jitsugi to
107 K setto ni nattenai to sa: (.) nakka naka sa: ( .) yo:suru ni sore ga= setto ni nattenai to sa[ : ( .) nakka naka sa: ( .) yo:suru
108 T [u:n
109 K -aru kara:
110 T 'yatotte kudasai’ [tte
111 K [ 'yatotte kudasai’ to wa ikanain da yo ne:
112 T fu::n

(J3 #7)

100 K It’s difficult, isn’t it?: ( .) Talking about qualifications,( .) it’s the same in other countries. At the level of lawyers,( .) and accountants,( .) although at the level of accountants( .) there are difficulties these days.
103 T Yeah
104 K At this level, these qualifications are directly linked
to jobs, right?
106 T Yeah
107 K (In a way,) other qualifications (for example) book-keeping,
like for the people who do the job of accounting at present.

Their own, er, to give their career a boost, they get a book-keeping
qualification. Something like that. In other words, if the qualification is not
connected to a job, it’s rather difficult. That is to say, because -

112 T I see.
113 K - I have the qualification,
114 T so ‘Please hire me’.
115 K [It’s not possible to ask ‘Please hire me’].
116 T I see.

In this segment of conversation, Kie talks about qualifications which were directly
c connected to occupations such as those for lawyers or accountants, and qualifications which
are not directly connected to occupation such as book-keeping. In lines 100 to 102 and from
107 to 111, principle speaker Kie speaks alone without short responses from Tamako for a
quite long time. Even though Tamako does not give any short response, Kie continues to talk.
There may be other non-verbal signs by which the hearer indicates her participation, such as
gazes or nods (Maynard, 1989). This study cannot deal with these phenomena because of the
limitations in the method of data collection.

The content of the principle speaker’s talk involve professional observation and
analysis. Considering the fact that Kie used to work at a section in a university which
provides students with all kinds of information about jobs, she is an expert of the field of
qualifications and jobs.

In line 111 and 113, Kie starts a sentence ‘yo:suru ni sore ga aru kara (In short,
because one has that qualification so)’ and in line 114, Tamako completes Kie’s utterance by
anticipating what Kie is going to say: ‘yatotte kudasai tte (Please employ me)’.

6.2.2.2 Avoiding overlap
The previous section has analysed a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which the hearer
gives only minimum verbal responses during the principal speaker’s talk. This section
examines a phenomenon in which the interactants avoid overlap in the conversation. The data
show a number of cases in which both interactants stop talking when they realise that they
have started to talk simultaneously. It is as if people have bumped on the street and look into
each other’s face for a second, momentarily lost for words. This phenomenon can be seen as
a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’ by clearly
trying to avoid disturbing the other’s utterance.

Sacks et al. (1974) claim that as one of the rules of turn-taking: one speaker speaks at
a time. This claim suggests that interactants would tend to avoid overlaps. The data presented
here show that this claim is applicable to Japanese casual conversation in certain circumstances.

According to the data, the phenomenon of one speaker speaking at one time seems to have strong relationship with the type of interaction, a narrative or a dyadic exchange, and the content of the conversation. For example, when the principal speaker is telling his/her story, the hearer may try not to take over the role of the principal speaker. When the interactants have different opinions, the occurrence of overlap sounds like an interruption. Therefore, the interactants seem to try not to talk simultaneously. This phenomenon also involves the contrast to the ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon that the hearer involves him/herself in the conversation (see 5.2.1.2) as just discussed in the previous section.

In the following segment, when both interactants start to talk together, they stop talking for a while. The interactants are talking about a kind of pants in this segment. In lines 11 and 12, there is an overlap, and then in line 13, silence follows.

J: Junko, E: Emi

9 J de[mo demo(..) so:iu ji:nzu no supattsu i: na: to omotte sa:
10 E ( )
11 E desho:? [supatssu no ( )
12 J [ikanimo nanka ko:iu
13 {silence}
14 J kuro-ke: no=
15 E =un(..) ne: demo: so:iu tokoro no yasui omise de utteru yo:
16 senkyu:hyaku-en kurai [de

(J9 #2)

9 J But, but(..) I think that kind of pants in denim is good.
10 E [( )
11 E Don’t you think so?( ) of pants
12 J [as if, well, this kind of
13 {silence}
14 J ln Dark tone =
15 E = Yeah(..) hey, but, at cheap shops around here they sell them,
16 around 1900 yen.

6.2.3 CONCLUSION

This second major group of ‘negative politeness’ includes phenomena in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘negative face’ by avoiding assertion or disturbance in the conversation. The ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in this section were mainly found in the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening and in their linguistic devices. For example, the interactants state their opinion by making it less assertive or even unclear (see 6.2.1). They also avoid disturbing the conversational partner (see 6.2.2).
6.3 DISSOCIATING THE SPEAKER AND THE HEARER FROM THE PARTICULAR INFRINGEMENT

The previous sections discussed the second major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the interactants communicate without coercing the conversational partner. This section examines the third major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the speaker tries to dissociate him/herself and the conversational partner from the particular infringement.

Brown and Levinson (1987) include three strategies in this group: 1) impersonalising the speaker and the hearer in the particular utterance by not using the pronouns ‘I’ and ‘you’, 2) stating the ‘face threatening act’ (FTA) as a general rule, and 3) nominalising the utterance (p. 190-209). The overall characteristic of this group is to withdraw the speaker and the hearer from a problematic situation; this is mainly achieved by grammatical devices.

Adapting Brown and Levinson’s theory to casual conversation, the phenomena in this group involve the speaker placing ‘distance’ between him/herself and the addressee or between the interactants and the problem in interaction.

This present study finds the notion of ‘frame’ very useful in explaining the phenomena in this group. Tannen (1993) reviews previous researchers’ work on how expectations and interpretations are created by past experiences in interaction. She refers to the notion of ‘frame’, which is originally used by Bateson (1972), as the interactants’ understanding of what is going on in interaction. For example, the interactants frame that this is a playful or a serious situation.

The present study focuses on the phenomena in which the interactants try to perform an FTA or avoid the problematic situation by changing ‘frame’ temporarily. These phenomena can be regarded as forms of ‘negative politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by respecting his/her right not to be imposed on.

This study identifies the following phenomena in this major group:

1) generalising the propositional content; and
2) switching into polite style speech.

6.3.1 GENERALISING THE PROPOSITIONAL CONTENT

This section discusses a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which the speaker generalises the propositional content of the utterance. The basic feature of this phenomenon is that the speaker places ‘distance’ between the utterance and him/herself by referring to the propositional content of the utterance as a generally accepted fact, rather than his/her personal opinion or feeling. This phenomenon can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the conversational partner’s ‘negative face’ by placing ‘distance’ while presenting his/her opinions as a widely accepted rule.
In the following segment of conversation, one of the interactants explains his situation. In the previous part of this segment, Ube had talked about his habit of not eating at home even on days when he did not go to work and stayed at home all day. He has had some difficulties getting the conversational partner’s understanding for this situation.

T: Tamako, U: Ube

119 T  jibun de uchi dewa tsukuranain desu ka?
120  {silence}
121 U  tsumari na:(..) uchi de tsukutte (daidokoro ni iru) to na(.)
122  dattara tsukuru(..) kara tte iwarechau wake yo(.) kekkyoku
123  {gap}
124 T  ja wazawaza [soto made tabe ni iku
125 U  [oreyo: no rezo:ko toka nain da mon(;) sho: ga nai jan
126  datte sa:(.) oreyo: no re:zo:ko [toka
127 T  [tekito: ni aru mono o(,) tsukau
128  kara ne: tte iun ja: dame nan desu ka?-;
129 ;
130 T  [tsukureba i:
131  janai desu ka:(;) jibun de:
132  U  de(.) sore
133  {gap}
134 U  {cough} dakara sa:(..) oto otoko no ko no oya tte iu no wa yappari
135  ‘so: yatte tsukutterun dattara watashi ga tsukuru kara’ tte naru
136  no yo:
137  ;
138 T  [You can just cook,
139  can’t you?(;) by yourself.
140 U  And(;) that
141  {gap}
142 U  {cough} Because,(;) speaking of a bo, a boys’ parent, she would say,
143  ‘If you are cooking like that, I will do it’. It’s the way
144  it is.
145  ;

At the beginning of this segment, Tamako asks Ube why he does not cook for himself in line 119. Ube explains that he cannot cook at home because his mother does not let him do it in lines 121 and 122. Tamako responds to Ube by confirming what Ube had said in the previous part by paraphrasing, ‘ja wazawaza soto made tabe ni iku (Then, you will go out just to eat.)’ in line 124. Then Ube raises another reason why he cannot cook at home, saying that there is no fridge for his use exclusively in lines 125 and 126. Tamako asks Ube that
whether it is possible to just tell his mother he would use some of the things in her fridge in lines 127 and 128.

Tamako is rather persistent in her insistence that Ube can cook for himself, saying again ‘tsukureba i: janai desu ka jibun de (You can just cook, can’t you? by yourself.)’ in lines 148 and 149. She must have thought that the only problem he had was that he did not like to bother his mother by asking to use the kitchen.

In the end, Ube generalises his situation as a typical household with only male children, saying ‘oto otoko no ko no oya tte iu no wa yappari ‘so: yatte tsukutterun dattara watashi ga tsukuru kara’ tte naru no yo (speaking of a boy, a boys’ parent, she would say, ‘If you are cooking like that, I will do it’. It’s the way it is.)’ in lines 152 to 154. Ube does not explicitly say that Tamako cannot understand his situation. However, by generalising his situation as typical of households with only boys, he implies that Tamako may not understand it because she is not from that type of household. By generalising in this way, he avoids assertion, and thus mitigates a potential treat to his conversational partner’s ‘negative face’.

6.3.2 SWITCHING INTO THE POLITE STYLE SPEECH

This section examines a phenomenon in which the speaker dissociates him/herself from the addressee by switching speech style temporarily from the dominant plain style to the polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending). This can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by placing ‘distance’ through the linguistic device of speech style.

The function of dominant speech style has been analysed rather extensively and explained as a “relation acknowledging system” in Japanese language (Ike, 1982; Matsumoto, 1988). The polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending) as a dominant speech style is normally used in two ways: 1) to show respect when the speaker talks to or refers to someone who has a quality which is regarded as deserving respect in Japanese society, such as being older or higher in status, and 2) to indicate unfamiliarity when the speaker talks to someone who is not well known to him/her.

Normally, there is fair degree of consistency in the use of the dominant speech style (cf Ike, 1983; Mimaki, 1997). However, the occurrence of a temporary speech level shift, which cannot be explained as a function of relation acknowledging, has also been reported in some studies. The majority of these reports have been about a temporary shift from the dominant polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending) into the plain style (Ike, 1983; Usami, 1998).

On the other hand, speech level shift from a dominant plain style speech into the polite style speech (desu, -masu verbal ending) has only been reported in a few studies (Cook, 1997; Mimaki, 1997). Cook (1997) regards the temporary speech shift to polite style
speech (desu, -masu verbal ending) as ‘the mode of self for public presentation’. This view indicates that the speaker has more than two ‘modes of self’, and that he/she chooses the appropriate mode according to the situation. The temporary speech level shift contributes to this mode shift. Cook’s analysis comes from conversations between parents and children. She finds the occurrence of the polite style speech (desu, -masu verbal ending) in the following three situations: 1) to emphasise the parents’ responsibilities, duties, and rights, 2) to play a particular social role such as a mother, and 3) to express set formulae, such as greetings.

Mimaki (1997) refers to a speech level shift from the plain style to the polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending) by using two examples. In both examples, the interactants are performing FTAs, so Mimaki claims that the interactants increase psychological distance with the polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending). She suggests that the polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending) is used to mitigate an FTA in one of her examples, and in the other example she gives, it is used as a weapon to increase the distance and to maximise the effect of the FTA.

The present study also finds a considerable number of the instances in which the speaker, who predominantly speaks in the plain style speech, uses the polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending) temporarily. In these cases, neither of the generally accepted criteria for the use of the polite style is applicable since there is no status difference or unfamiliarity between the interactants in this study. This temporary use of the polite style is clearly different from the dominant use of the polite style. However, it is also possible to say that the interactants use the effect of the speech level shift to create a different ‘frame’ in the conversation. This means that the speaker indicates that something different from usual is happening by effecting a speech level shift.

This study finds that temporary switching from the dominant plain style to the polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending) occurs both when the interactant performs an FTA and regardless of FTAs. However, the majority of cases of switching from the dominant plain style to the polite style in the data are related to FTAs.

Starting with cases when the speaker performs an FTA, the shift can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by placing ‘distance’ between him/herself and the addressee. In the following brief excerpt, one of the interactants switches style while suggesting that the addressee buy a new pair of shoes.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

1  Y nanka ko:(..) iwayuru naiki e: toka kattara do: desu ka?
2  D E:(..) kekko: desu

1  Y Well, like(..)How about buying so called Nike A or something? {in polite style}
2  D E:(..) No, thank you. {in polite style}
In an earlier part of this segment, Doobayashi had mentioned that his shoes were falling apart. Not immediately after, but some time later, when the interactants start to talk again about shoes, Yamamoto suggests that Doobayashi buy a new pair. Some characteristic features can be observed in Yamamoto’s utterance. First, he shows hesitation with hedges such as ‘nanka ko: (well, like)’, ‘iwayuru (so-called)’, and ‘toka (such as)’, and with a pause in line 1. These phenomena have been discussed as a form of ‘negative politeness’ above (see 6.2.1.1). Second, his utterance is articulated with a ‘smile’ in his voice. Finally, Yamamoto suddenly switches his normal plain style speech into the polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending). In the context of this face threatening move (ie a suggestion), Yamamoto varies his speech style, and this can be seen as a means of expressing ‘negative politeness’.

In the next segment, one of the interactants switches her dominant plain style to the polite style (desu, -masu verbal ending) when she tells the other a rule regarding the amount of medicine one should take, a rule which, evidently, the other does not know.

K: Kie, R: Ritsuko

```
1 K tametoite sa:(..) kondo(.) nani? [sore ja:
2 R [demo(.)] yuo: toka cho
3 chotto zutsu(..) chigawanai? [kekko:)
4 K [ryuo: wa ne:(..) taiju: dake nan
5 desu
6 R a:::[: so kka:
7 K [taiju: ga fueru to fueru no{(. ko:se:-busshitsu no yuo:-
8 R [a:: so kka: sore dake da ne?
9 K -ga(.) un(.) sore dake
    
    (J3 #4)

1 K I save them up(..) for the next time(.) What? then
2 R [But,(.) aren’t they different each time
3 -- the amount and so on (..) just a little bit? (quite)
4 K [The amount(..) only depends on
5 your weight.
6 R Oh, I see.
7 K [The more you weigh,(.) the more the amount of antibiotics you take increases
8 R [Oh, I see, that’s all.
9 K (. yeah(.) That’s all.
```

At the beginning of this segment, Kie talks about antibiotics from the clinic that she saves and uses for other occasions in line 1. However, Ritsuko suggests that each time there must be a slight difference in the amount of the medicine one should take (lines 2 and 3). Kie responds to Ritsuko by changing her dominant plain style speech to the polite style, ‘ryo: wa ne: taiju: dake nan desu (The amount is only according to weight)’ in lines 4 and 5.

Kie sounds very sure of what she is saying, as if she is presenting a concrete fact. This implies that she must have acquired this information from a reliable source. Her polite style
ending adds a sense of authorised correctness to the information. This sense is reinforced by the fact that she finishes her sentence in the simplest way ‘-- desu’, without any final particles, to indicate emphasis or to seek agreement. These features together give her statement an objective and slightly impersonal tone.

I have shown a few examples in which the interactant switches from the dominant plain style speech when he/she performs an FTA. Moving on to case of switching regardless of FTAs, some of the phenomena that appear also seem to be related to ‘politeness’. First, the interactants use formal set formulae for greeting, leave takings and conventional expressions (cf Coulmas, 1979; Cook, 1997). The following segment includes a typical exchange between interactants who have not seen each other for quite a long time. As they start their first drink together they toast each other. In this way, no matter how close they are, the interactants tend to use a certain formal greetings and conventional expressions, at certain points in their interaction.

G: Gooike, W: Wada

38 G do:mo
39 W do:mo=
40 G =ohisashiburi desu
41 W ohisashiburi desu :

(J6 #1)

38 G Hi
39 W Hi =
40 G =It’s been a long time.
41 W It’s been a long time.

In the next segment, one of the interactants, Gooike, switches his dominant plain style speech to the polite style. This happens when he states a principle regarding how to deal with the mass media. In this conversation, Gooike’s interlocutor Wada is a freelance editor, so he could be considered a part of mass media. Therefore, by switching his speech style, Gooike temporarily creates ‘distance’ from Wada; Gooike is presenting himself as a civil servant in contrast to Wada, a freelance editor. This is quite similar to the notion of change in ‘mode’ (Cook, 1997) and ‘frame’ (Tannen, 1993) change.

This seems to be also closely related to another ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon, give deference (see 6.4). It is, in fact, very similar to the use of honorifics to an outsider. The propositional content of Gooike’s utterance also supports the function of giving deference, since Gooike says to Wada, a member of mass media, ‘we have a principle that we deal with the mass media courteously.’
G: Gooike, W: Wada

1 G ma: toriaezu masukomi ni teinei ni o:ta-shiyo: tte iu [ho:shin-
2 W ]{{laugh}
3 G -desu kara ne:
4 W att sore: daiji da to omou na: [(honto:)
5 G [taisetsu da to omou-

J6 #9

1 G Well, for the time being, we have a principle that we deal with mass media -
2 W {{laugh}
3 G -courteously.
4 W Ah, I think that’s very important (really)
5 G [I think that’s important. =

To sum up, according to the data, this study finds that by switching style from the plain style to the polite style, the speaker tries to create a different ‘frame’ temporarily in the conversation. This different ‘frame’ seems to function in the following ways:

1) to mitigate the propositional content of the utterance;
2) to add authorised correctness to the utterance;
3) to place ‘distance’ from the addressee; and
4) to add a rather formal atmosphere.

6.3.3 CONCLUSION
In this major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena, this study presented a number of phenomena in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘negative face’ by dissociating the speaker and the hearer from the particular infringement. The ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in this section were mainly found in the linguistic devices. For example, the interactant states his/her opinion by generalising it (see 6.3.1). The interactant also presents propositional content by using polite style form (desu, -masu verbal ending) (see 6.3.2).

6.4 CLAIMING DIFFERENCE
The previous sections discussed the third major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the interactant dissociates the speaker and the hearer from the particular infringement. This section examines the last major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in which the interactant claims difference.

In contrast to ‘positive politeness’ phenomena, in which the speaker optimistically presumes that he/she and the conversational partner share the same goal or value (see 5.1 and 5.2), ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in this group indicate that the interactant may, at times, avoid presuming that he/she and the addressee share the same goal or value.

In the data, the present study finds the phenomena that the speaker claims difference between him/herself and the address in the following circumstances:
1) when asking permission;
2) when giving deference; and
3) when stating something as a mere personal opinion.

6.4.1 ASKING PERMISSION
This section examines a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which the speaker asks permission. This phenomenon can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by confirming his/her will to decide without presuming both interactants share the same wish.

In the data, the study identifies some occasions in which one of the interactants asks permission to talk about a certain topic. The following small segment is an example of this. Previously, the study has discussed the case of topic negotiation in which Tamako tried to introduce a new topic about a TV commercial for curry, but failed to do so (see 6.1.2). Some time later in this segment, Tamako tries again to talk about the same commercial. This time, she uses a different method, starting out by asking permission.

U: Ube, T: Tamako

1 U kimi(.) nanika tabema[sho:
2 T                      [ne: so: ieba sakki no kare: no hanashi
3 shite mo ii desu ka?:
4 U i: yo=

(J2 #15)

1 U You,(.) let’s eat something.
2 T [Well, by the way, can I talk about that curry ad
3 we talked about it just before?
4 U Go ahead. =

At the beginning of this segment, Ube suggests eating more food in line 1. Ube and Tamako are in the restaurant at the time of recording, so in this pair’s conversation, there is a tendency for the interactants talk about the food that they are eating quite often, especially when they finish talking about one topic and move on to a new topic. The interactants seem to talk about food as a way of avoiding silence (Tannen, 1985). Tannen (1990) claims that silence is seen as evidence of lack of rapport for speakers with a ‘high involvement’ style. She argues that many components of the ‘high involvement’ style can be understood as ways of avoiding silence in casual conversation.

At the same time, in this segment, talking about food could be an indication that the interactants are moving on to a new topic. Therefore, it signals an opportunity for one or the other interactant to volunteer a new topic.

In contrast to the last attempt (see 6.1.2), this time Tamako explicitly asks permission of Ube to talk about this topic. This can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’
because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by not presuming that both interactants share the same goal or values.

In the next example, one of the interactants also expresses his interest to talk about a certain topic. Although Yamamoto does not ask permission explicitly, he expresses his wish saying ‘mata tetsudo: no hanashi o shitain da kedo (I would like to talk about the railways again but...)’. According to Doobayashi’s response which gives permission in line 5, his utterance is interpreted as a request for permission.

Some other ‘negative politeness’ phenomena can also be identified in this segment. First, Yamamoto shows hesitation before expressing his wish with a filler ‘so: iu wake de (Therefore...)’ in line 1 and with a gap in line 2. Second, Yamamoto’s utterance is elliptical, in that the explicit request for permission is omitted.

Y: Yamakoto, D: Doobayashi

1 Y so: iu wake de:
2 {gap}
3 Y mata tetsudo: no hanashi o shitain da kedo
4 (...)  
5 D do:zo :

(J1 #17)

1 Y Therefore,
2 {gap} 
3 Y I would like to talk about the railways again but
4 (...)  
5 D Go ahead.

6.4.2 GIVING DEFERENCE
This section analyses another ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which the speaker gives deference to the addressee. This phenomenon can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ and ‘positive face’ by expressing that either the speaker respects the addressee’s part of self or humbles him/herself.

In describing this strategy, Brown and Levinson refer to the honorific system in some languages as well as to certain address forms. They specify this strategy is used when the hearer is of higher social status than the speaker. However, this study finds this phenomena even between interactants who are equal in status and close to each other.

There seems to be an overlap between this phenomenon and the ‘positive politeness’ phenomena, entitled ‘fulfil wants’. This section focuses on the phenomenon in which the speaker humbles him/herself.

In the following segment, one of the interactants humbles himself by mentioning that the topic he is introducing is trivial one in lines 1 and 2.
Y: Yamamoto

1 Y However, well, er(,) er, this is, too, again(,) it’s a trivial story
2 though(,) my mother(,) er, worked at a wedding ceremony centre
3 though:

The next excerpt includes an example of humbling oneself in which one of the interactants, Wada describes his and his wife’s work as ‘kanaise:-shuko:gyo: (a domestic manual industry)’ in line 2. This is a response to his partner Gooike’s positive evaluation of his work: ‘kurieitibu na shigoto o yattemasu ne: (You are doing creative work, aren’t you?)’ in line 1.

G: Gooike, W: Wada

1 G You are doing(,) creative work, aren’t you?
2 W Well, well, well(,) well, bits and pieces(,) it’s a domestic manual industry, with just
3 the two of us(,) she has her own work, so(,) for fashion magazines and
4 G Yeah
5 W These days, she works for mail order catalogues.

Thus although linguistically marked form of deference such as humble honorific language do not tend to occur in casual conversation between close friends, deference can still be expressed through the speaker’s humble attitude.

At the beginning of the next small segment, one of the interactants expresses her impression of a third person ‘Tsuji-senpai’, saying that he was a strange person in line 8. She adds that she should not talk about other people ‘being strange’. This implies that she herself could well be seen as strange from another’s point of view, so she is not really in a position to give an assessment of others. This is another example of which the speaker could show consideration towards someone who is not present in the conversation (see 6.2.1.2).

T: Tamako, U: Ube

8 T tsuji-senpai mo: hen na hito deshita ne:(,) anmari hito no koto
9 lenai kedo:
10 U hen na yatsu datta ne:
6.4.3 STATING AS A MERE PERSONAL OPINION

This section examines a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon in which the speaker states his/her opinion as a mere personal opinion. This phenomenon can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by not imposing his/her opinion to the addressee. This allows the conversational partner to speak out his/her opinion. This phenomenon contradicts another ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon noted as ‘generalise the propositional content’ (see 6.3.1).

In the following segment, one of the interactants expresses his opinion about the names of the trains. In the previous part of this excerpt, Yamamoto expressed opposition to the recent trend in Japan that people use a lot of loan words in everyday life, instead of original Japanese words. Yamamoto uses the examples of the nicknames of trains for his argument.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

56 Y =demo ore wa(..) i: namae da to omoun da kedo na: (...) honto ni sa:
57 (datte) ko: iu(...) roman ga aru janai? datte: (...) uwa:jima toka
58 D e uwa:jima ni roman o kanjiru no: desu ka?=
59 Y =e: dakara ko: iu(...) i: janai (no) ko: iu chiiki no sa(...) meisho: o
60 sa(...) meisho:chi no ko: namae o hora(...) att(...) shikashi(...) koko ni

(J1 #17)

56 Y = But, I (..) think they are good names(..) really,
57 (because) these kinds of(..) They are romantic, aren’t they? (...) like Uwajima,
58 D Oh, when you hear the name of Uwajima, do you feel romantic? =
59 Y = Well, so, these kinds of(...) They are good, these kinds of famous sights(...) in
60 the region,(..) names of scenic spots, see(...) oh(...) but(...) here

In this segment, Yamamoto expresses his opinion that the traditional names of trains, such as Uwajima, are good because they sound romantic (lines 56 and 57). In colloquial Japanese, the speaker often omits the first person pronoun. When the speaker does not omit it, there is usually some particular emphasis meanings. In this example, the speaker is emphasising that he is merely expressing his personal opinion. This can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker avoids imposing his opinion on the addressee.
In the next segment, one of the interactants expresses his opinion about the wines of France and Chile. However, in line 14, Gooike emphasises that this is his personal opinion. This implies that other people may have different opinions and he is not imposing his opinion on Wada.

G: Gooike, W: Wada

1. Compared to French wine, I really have the feeling it is ripe indeed. I mean wine from Chile or around there.
2. French wine has got, as we know, a little bit of an unripe taste, -
3. I think there is this kind of point. This is what I personal think though.

As presented above, the act of expressing his/her opinion as a mere personal opinion can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’. This is because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by avoiding imposing it on or by giving a choice whether he/she accepts or not.

6.4.4 CONCLUSION

In this last major group of ‘negative politeness’ phenomena, I discussed the phenomena in which the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘negative face’ by claiming that the speaker and the hearer are possibly different. This is because the nature of ‘negative face’ desires to autonomy of self. By avoiding presuming the addressee shares the commonality with him/her, the speaker respects the addressee’s will and space.

The ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in this section were mainly found in the linguistic devices. For example, the interactant relies on the decision making on the addressee by asking permission (see 6.4.1). The interactant also gives deference to the addressee (see 6.4.2). The interactant states his/her opinion as a mere personal opinion (see 6.4.3).
CHAPTER 7 ANALYSIS - SMOOTHING OVER CONFLICT

The previous two chapters examined ‘politeness’ phenomena which appear without the occurrence of conflict in the data. These are the cases in which the ‘politeness’ phenomena appear to facilitate the conversation without any relationship with ‘face threatening acts’ (FTAs) or to prevent FTAs from developing into conflict.

This chapter examines five segments of conversation which include mild conflict. These are the cases in which the ‘politeness’ phenomena could not prevent FTAs from developing into conflict. This chapter analyses the causes of the conflict and the process of smoothing over the after-effects of the conflict. As mentioned in Chapter 3, smoothing over the after-effects of conflict is an additional function of ‘politeness’ phenomena in Brown and Levinson’s theory (see 3.1.4).

The data suggest that the occurrence of conflict is, as we would expect, not a very common phenomenon in casual conversation between close friends. However, it does occur from time to time. None of the conversations breaks down because of the conflict, but rather the interactants resolve the conflict and continue the conversation.

This study regards conflict in a broad sense. The degree of seriousness of ‘conflicts’ varies, such as whether or not actual confrontation occurs or the length of confrontation. Conflicts are identified by two types of feature in the interactants’ utterances:

1) paralinguistic feature: a low or a serious tone of voice which is not accompanied by other elements such as smile which may serve to soften the voice, or
2) linguistics feature: a certain propositional content of the utterance, such as an accusation or a complaint directed towards the conversational partner, or confrontation between two different points of view.

The analysis of the sequences which involve conflict enables this study to explore two issues. First, the analysis of the causes of the conflict reveals some characteristic features of FTAs in casual conversation. Second, the analysis of how the interactants smooth over the conflict with ‘politeness’ phenomena shows how ‘positive’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena appear in interaction.

The examples quoted in this chapter come from either pair J1 or pair J2. While conflict certainly did occur between other pairs, it is also true that these examples were chosen because the conversations of J1 and J2 had somewhat more strongly confrontational elements in them. Although perhaps slightly more confrontational, these cases could certainly still be defined as mild conflict.

The question may arise as to why these pairs’ conversations are more confrontational than others. It may seem that gender could be a factor, as J1 involves male-male interaction.

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36 It must be acknowledged that no precise definition of the notion of conflict is proposed in this study. The analysis relies on the rather subjective judgement of the investigator as to whether a conflict has occurred or not. This methodology, though perhaps not ideal, does seem to be the one followed in other studies of linguistic conflict such as Grimshaw ed. (1990).
and J2 male-female interaction. However, there is no clear trend evident in the data; J6 involves male-male interaction, and this pair does not display nearly as much conflict as J1 and J2 do.

7.1 Face Threatening Questions
In the following segment of conversation, a conflict starts when one of the interactants asks a question about something which has already been mentioned in the conversation. This can be seen as simply a small blunder in the very casual atmosphere. However, it is also true that this kind of question indicates the interactant’s lack of involvement in the conversation and may threaten the partner’s ‘positive face’.

In the segment, there is no confrontation between the interactants. The interactant who has committed the blunder accepts that he was not listening carefully to the conversation. Some ‘politeness’ phenomena appear and seem to help smooth over this minor conflict.

D: Doobayashi, Y: Yamamoto

90 D  doko-sei? kore
91   [gap]
92 Y  ima itta be?:
93 D  imashita ka?
94 Y  ou
95 D  doko tte itta?:
96 Y  ato de kiite miro yo
97 D  ee?
98 Y  mare:shia ttsu tta be [mare:shia tte yo:
99 D  [(honto:) kiitemasen deshita
100 Y  de:(.) de sono tsugi no: serifu=
101 D  ={kore [tatt)
102 Y  {'are? are? konomae nanka nita yo: na no kuttenakatta kke?’
103  ‘sore taiwan-sei da yo’(.) toka ittan da yo na:? ore mo: chanto
104  kioku-shitemasu
105 D  shitsurei shimashita(.) tatt takkyu: takkyu: no ma:ku ga tsulteru
106  hora
107 Y  ou

;  
90 D  Where are they made - these ones?
91   [gap]
92 Y  I said just now, didn’t I?
93 D  Did you? (polite style)
94 Y  yeah
95 D  Where did you say it was?
96 Y  Try listening to the tape later.
97 D  Eh?
98 Y  I said Malaysia. Malaysia.
99 D  [(Really.) I was not listening. (polite style)
100 Y  And() the next thing said was...=
101 D  =(This is)
102 Y  [What was it? ‘You were eating something like this, weren’t you?’
103  ‘That was made in Taiwan.’(.) We said something like that. I remember it
The face threatening question

A problematic atmosphere starts in line 91, just after Doobayashi asks where the sweets which Yamamoto has offered him were made. A number of characteristic features signal this problematic atmosphere. First, in terms of prosodic features, Yamamoto’s utterances in lines 92, 94 and 96 are made in a low tone of voice. This is very different from the previous part. Second, in terms of the flow of the conversation, there is a delay. A short silence appears in line 91 just before Yamamoto responds to Doobayashi. Third, concerning the sequence of questions and answers, Yamamoto does not answer Doobayashi’s question immediately. Two moves intervene, showing that Yamamoto is reluctant to answer the question straight away. In line 92, Yamamoto says that he has just mentioned the place where the sweets were made, and then, in line 96, Yamamoto says that Doobayashi should listen to the tape later.

The direct cause of Yamamoto’s negative reaction can be presumed to be Doobayashi’s question in line 90. This is because the awkward atmosphere starts immediately after this question. The question is about something Yamamoto has only recently mentioned, in the previous part of this segment. This question can be seen to indicate that Doobayashi was not listening to what Yamamoto had said. Therefore, it threatens Yamamoto’s ‘positive face’.

To sum up the above analysis, in this particular segment, asking about something which has already been talked about is taken as an FTA. This is because this kind of question indicates a lack of involvement in the conversation and may threaten the conversational partner’s ‘positive face’. Therefore, this is the type of FTA which is caused by the interactant’s manner of participation in the conversation. This is different from the type of FTA related to communicative goals that Brown and Levinson mainly deal with.

Smoothing over the conflict

Yamamoto’s negative reaction has the potential to make the conflict worse, but this does not actually happen in this conversation. A number of ‘politeness’ phenomena can be observed in Doobayashi’s speech which seem to help smooth over this conflict. First, at the level of forms of expression, Doobayashi switches his speech style from the plain style to the polite style (-desu, -masu verbal ending) in lines 93, 99 and 105, whereas before his blunder in line 90 he uses the plain style almost exclusively. This style switching can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by placing ‘distance’ with the polite style (see 6.3.2).
The next ‘politeness’ phenomenon appears in the speaker’s tone of voice. Although in lines 93, 99 and 105, Doobayashi speaks in the polite style, he almost has a ‘smile’ in his voice. This ‘smiling’ voice can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by indicating closeness. This ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon helps improve the overall atmosphere of the conversation.

At the level of the propositional content of the utterance, Doobayashi accepts that he was not listening to Yamamoto in line 99, and apologises for his failure in line 105. This can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by showing acceptance of the failure on his part (see 6.3.5).

These three kinds of ‘politeness’ phenomena: speech style, prosodic features, and the propositional content, are combined in a single utterance (lines 99 and 105). The data therefore show that ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena can be combined within one utterance.

This combination can be regarded as a subtle adjustment between ‘negative politeness’ and ‘positive politeness’. Even though some ‘distance’ is asserted by the polite style in order to express the acceptance of his responsibility for the blunder, this ‘distance’ between the interactants should not be too great, in order to maintain some sense of solidarity.

Finally, the last ‘politeness’ phenomenon in this segment of conversation concerns the maintenance of the topic, or lack there of, in this case. Doobayashi tries to discontinue the problematic topic and to move on to a new topic. In line 105, Doobayashi starts to talk about the trademark on the package of the sweets. This phenomenon can be regarded as a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon since the interactant satisfies the addressee’s ‘face’ by trying to create a new atmosphere in the conversation by abandoning the problematic topic (see 6.3.3). This phenomenon is a very common way to smooth over conflict in the data examined. To avoid continuing a problematic topic has a similar effect to avoiding raising a problematic topic in the first place.

**Conclusion**

The analysis of the segment shows that the conflict is directly caused by a question about something which has already been mentioned in the previous part of the segment. This is because this kind of question indicates lack of attention and involvement in the conversation, so it causes the other speaker’s displeasure. Therefore, it can be taken as an FTA. This kind of FTA is different from those which Brown and Levinson deal with.

At the same time, a difference can be found between the interactants in terms of their initial perception of this act. There is an information gap between two. Doobayashi asks a question about something already mentioned, but he does not remember that it was been mentioned, whereas Yamamoto does. The conflict is indirectly caused by this gap. In this
way, the difference between the interactants, perceptions also contributes to the occurrence of the conflict.

This segment of conversation also shows that ‘politeness’ phenomena can appear in multiple combinations involving both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in even one utterance. In the casual conversation, there seems to be a considerable range of subtle adjustments involving both ‘positive’ and ‘negative politeness’ by the interactants (see 8.2).

7.2 MISUNDERSTANDING

A problem can be observed in the question and answer sequence in the following segment of conversation. This example of conflict can be seen to be caused by a trivial misunderstanding between the interactants. The confrontation is brief. Some ‘politeness’ phenomena occur from both sides and help smooth over the conflict.

T: Tamako, U: Ube

101 T = I guess I received it from that person. No, maybe not, maybe it was Takahashi?
102 U [What did you receive?]
103 T Ah, what was it? (..) A graduation certificate.(..) Oh, yes, it was Takahashi somebody.
104 U [I don’t know.(..) I don’t remember receiving my graduation certificate.]
105 T - wasn’t that so? (I)
106 U At the graduation ceremony, did they give them to you individually then?
107 T [silence]
108 U In the classroom
109 {gap}
110 T That’s wrong.(..) In the classroom, there was a homeroom teacher, don’t you remember?
111 U Really?
112 T In the classroom
113 {gap}
114 U Oh! (..) Were you the representative then?
115 T [silence]
But, it was neither Mr Ogata nor Mr Takahashi

In this segment of the conversation, Tamako suggests ‘ano hito (ie Ogata-so:cho:) kara sotsugyo:-sho:sho o moratta’n janai ka na: (I think I may have received my graduation certificate from that person)’ in line 101, and this suggestion causes confusion. According to Tamako’s later explanation in line 123 (see below), that by saying she thought she received her graduation certificate from Mr Ogata (the Chancellor), she meant that the certificate may have been issued with his name. However, Ube comprehends her expression to literally mean that Mr Ogata (the Chancellor) gave the certificate to Tamako in person, which would be quite unusual at a relatively large university in Japan. Therefore, a metaphorical expression, which does not have an established meaning between the interactants, hinders smooth communication.

At the same time, this metaphorical expression could be seen as an introductory remark, in which a speaker tends to use unclear expressions while he/she introduces a new topic (see 6.1.1). Such unclear expressions may cause the hearer to seek clarification and give the speaker an opportunity to talk more about them.

From line 102 to line 116, a question and answer sequence can be observed: Ube takes the initiative by asking questions of Tamako and Tamako answers each of Ube’s question. However, this sequence does not succeed in filling in the gap between Ube’s understanding and Tamako’s actual intention in using the metaphorical expression in line 101.

There seems to be a couple of reasons why this question and answer sequence does not contribute to resolving the misunderstanding. First, from the beginning, Ube is suspicious that Tamako is saying something wrong, and he does not have any idea that there is a metaphorical meaning in her expression. Therefore, his investigation is directed to establishing that the event was different from what he assumes Tamako describes, rather than to find out what Tamako by her expression with ‘ano hito (ie Ogata-so:cho:) kara sotsugyo:-sho:sho o moratta’n janai ka na: (I think I may have received my graduation certificate from that person)’.

Second, the subject of the sentence -- the one who gave the students their graduation certificates -- is continuously omitted in the conversation. For example, in line 108, Ube asks if the students were given their graduation certificates individually. However, he omits the subject of the sentence -- the one who gave the students their certificates. In line 110, Tamako tells that she was given her graduation certificate individually in the classroom, but does not mention who actually gave it. This is clearly a reason why the misunderstanding continues for so long.
Ube’s investigation completes when Tamako says ‘kurasu no naka de tannin no sensei ga ita janai desu ka (In the classroom, there was a homeroom teacher, don’t you remember?)’ in lines 115 and 116. Ube points out that the person who gave the certificate to Tamako in person was neither Mr Ogata nor Mr Takahashi in line 117. By saying this he is indicating that Tamako is contradicting herself in line 101 and in lines 115 and 116.

This question and answer sequence can be seen as an investigation to repair Tamako’s expression. Therefore, this can be taken as an FTA since such an investigation may bring about other-initiated repair. Tamako’s ‘positive face’ can be threatened by Ube claiming her expression is incorrect.

The question and answer sequence involves a confrontation from line 102 to line 118 in two ways. First, these are the prosodic features that severe tones of voice are used. In lines 102, 103, 108 and 114, Ube asks his questions with a loud tone and sharp voice quality. In lines 110, 115 and 116, Tamako answers in a loud voice; and in line 117 and 118, Ube talks back to Tamako again in the same manner.

Another prosodic feature also contributes to making the utterance sound provocative and aggressive. In line 108, Ube asks a question ‘sotsugyo:shiki tte hitori hitori kureta kke:? (At the graduation ceremony, did they give us (individually)?)’ with a rising intonation and final prolonged syllable. This is not a neutral question, but rather indicates a suspicion about what Tamako is saying.

In addition to the prosodic features, the propositional content of the utterances also show that the interactants are in confrontational mode. In lines 115 and 116, Tamako abruptly denies Ube’s question in line 114 as to whether Tamako was a representative, saying ‘chigau janai (That’s wrong)’. ‘janai (lit. is not)’ is a plain form of ‘janai desu ka (isn’t that so?)’ and makes a strong rhetorical question. Tamako also uses this expression in the polite form, ‘janai desu ka (isn’t that so?)’, again in ‘kurasu no naka de tannin no sensei ga ita janai desu ka (In the classroom, there was a homeroom teacher, don’t you remember?)’.

Smoothing over the ‘conflict’

T: Tamako, U: Ube

119 T aa: so:cho: wa kore: so:cho: wa:(..) so:cho: kara isogashikute
120 janakute (laugh) nandaka yoku wakaranai (laugh) chigau demo
121 hora=
122 U -o[mae uchi no jimusho koi yo(..) uchi no jimusho(..) ne: -
123 T [name ga kaite aru janai(..) hora (laugh)
124 U -so: suru to ne: ore no(..) ima made no rekishi ga ne: minna wakaru
125 kara(..) do:shite sonna koto son(..) ube-san wa so:ji koto bakari
126 iun desu ka? tte iwareru wake yo[(..) ne:?] sora ni wa chanto-
127 T [(laugh]
128 U -ko:lu(..) haiki ga [arun da tte koto o ne(.) ore wa oshiete-
129 T [(laugh]
130 U -agetai yo(..) ima no ore no tachiba kara iu to
131 T demo:(..) Ube-senpai ni wa maketemasu yo

171
119 T Ah, the chancellor (so:cho:) is busy from early morning (so:cho:).
120 
121 No no. (laugh) I don’t know (laugh) This is wrong, but,
122 well =
123 U = Come to my office,(..) my office(..) -
124 T [His name was written on it, wasn’t it? (.) Don’t you remember? {laugh}]
125 U ‘Why, that kind of thing, Mr Ube,(.) why do you always say that kind of thing?’
126 T ‘I’m always asked,(..) y’know.(..) about that, quite reasonably,
127 T [laugh]
128 U there is a this kind off(..) background.(..) I want to let them know about it.-
129 T [laugh]
130 U -(..) From my point of view now...
131 T But,(..) I can’t beat to you, Ube-senpai.

Tamako’s response to Ube’s statement in lines 117 and 118 (but it was neither Mr Ogata or Mr Takahashi) is significant since Tamako abruptly changes the topic. In line 119, Tamako suddenly starts to play with the homophone ‘so:cho:’ (‘a chancellor’ and ‘early morning’) saying ‘so:cho: wa so:cho: kara isogashikute (The chancellor (so:cho:) is busy from early morning (so:cho:)).’ She mitigates her abrupt topic change saying ‘janakute (No no)’ immediately afterward.

Tamako’s response can be taken in a number of ways. First, Tamako’s abrupt topic change can be taken as an FTA because by suddenly changing the topic in the conversation, she completely ignores Ube’s last words in lines 117 and 118. Therefore, it may threaten Ube’s ‘positive face’.

On the other hand, two types of ‘politeness’ phenomena can also be seen in Tamako’s response. First, by changing the topic, Tamako avoids the confrontation. This phenomenon can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by ‘dissociating him/her and the hearer from a particular infringement’ (see 6.3).

Second, in the propositional content of the utterance, humour can be seen in word play that seems to contribute to repairing the conflict. This phenomenon can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by sharing humour (see 5.1.1.3).

In this particular segment, Ube’s response to Tamako’s topic change and the word play amount to accepting the change of topic instead of pursuing the original problem. He starts to emphasise the similarity and closeness between himself and Tamako. This means that Ube agrees to stop talking about the original misunderstanding.

Ube expresses this closeness with Tamako in lines 122, 124 to 126, 128 and 130. First, Ube orders Tamako to come to his work place saying ‘omae uchi no jimusho koi yo (You, come to my office)’. Ube indicates closeness between him and Tamako by the act of
ordering. This shows that he is confident in their relationship not breaking down as a result of the FTA. The personal pronoun ‘ōmae (you)’ is used in a vocative sense which also shows closeness between him and Tamako.

In addition to this closeness, Ube also expresses similarity between him and Tamako. For example, he tells Tamako that if his colleagues will all understand his background and realise why he always jokes around (‘so: suru to ne: ore no ima made no rekishi ga ne: minna wakaru kara (Then, everybody will understand my history up to now)’). Ube also quotes what his colleagues say, “do:shite sonna koto son ube-san wa so:iu koto bakari iun desu ka?” (‘Why, that kind of thing, Mr Ube, why do you always say that kind of thing?’ I’m always asked), ie about the fact that he is always making silly jokes. This phenomenon can be regarded as ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon (see 5.1.1.2) which refers to the common background between Ube and Tamako who both enjoy making jokes.

To sum up, after the brief confrontation, the interactants agree not to talk about the conflicting topic in this segment of conversation. Tamako does not seem to want to continue the conflicting conversation and tries to change the topic, although, in line 123, Tamako briefly refers again that her original intention in saying that the Chancellor, Mr Ogata’s name was on her certificate. Ube cooperates with Tamako immediately in changing the topic, rather than persisting in trying to show that Tamako was wrong. Harmony seems to be more important than pursuing the truth in this segment of conversation.

**Conclusion**

The analysis of this segment shows that a metaphorical expression which seems to be intended as an introductory remark and which can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ (see 6.1.1), not only fails to activate the conversation but also actually causes a conflict. In the first place, the interactants do not understand this metaphorical expression in the same way. Therefore, this information gap leads to a sequence of questions and answers which then develops into conflict. This seems to be because the questions seem to be directed towards showing that what Tamako has said was wrong, but not to finding out what Tamako was trying to say with this unclear expression. This means that the questions end up making the gap bigger rather than filling it. Therefore, the information gap caused by a ‘politeness’ phenomenon indirectly causes the conflict.

At the same time, the prosodic features and the content of speech by both interactants directly contribute to the conflict. Both interactants exchange very loud utterances for a while during the question and answer sequence. These can be seen as a lack of ‘negative politeness’ since both interactants fail to satisfy each other’s ‘face’ by not trying to soften their utterances in terms of prosodic features and content.
7.3 TOPIC NEGOTIATION

The next segment of the conversation includes an example of conflict which appears during the topic negotiation by the interactants. There is no confrontation, but one of the interactants is reluctant to continue the topic and even starts to show displeasure in continuing the previous ongoing topic; negotiation becomes necessary.

U: Ube, T: Tamako

1. U mo: nani mo: (.). honto: (.). mo: eigo wa mo: (.). kanpeki ni perapera
2. nan desho?: yo:suru ni hakkiri itte [mo:
3. T [NAN desu ka: sore wa? (.).
4. sonna koto nai desu yo: (.). [demo zettai watashi
5. U [DEMO nichi]: kaiwa wa zenzen
6. komaranain desho?: hakkiri itte: (.). [MO: wakannai tango toka wa-
7. T [zet
8. U -nain desho?: (.). genjiten dewa-
9. T -sonna koto nai desu yo: (.). wakannai toki wa chan to kikanai to
10. U a yappari arun da [demo
11. T [u:n
12. U surangu toka janakute da yo?
13. {silence}
14. T un(.). chan to kikimasu yo wakannai toki wa
15. {silence}
16. U eigo ga hanaseru tte: [{sugoi} yo ne
17. T [demo ne: demo: ne: zettai ni ne: ano(.). a
18. suimasen(.). demo zettaini ne: (.). ano nante iu no ka na: (.). mo:
19. watashi wa: (.). mo: (.). nante iu no ka neityibu no hito mitai ni wa
20. hanasenai(.). [mo: zettai hanasenai
21. U [nande
22. U so: iu mon nan da yappari=
23. T -mo: hanasemasen
24. {silence}
25. U demo: i yappari:
26. T [oishii kore=
27. U =oishii daro?:=
28. T [u::n sappari shitete (continue)

(J2 #4)

1. U Already, um(.). really (.). your English is already (.). perfectly fluent,
2. isn’t it? In short, speaking frankly, already
3. T [What is this? (.).
4. U It isn’t like that (.). But, I definitely
5. T [But you have no trouble in everyday conversation,
6. U do you? Frankly speaking (.). Already there are no words you don’t understand -
7. T [[false start]
8. U - isn’t that so? (.). At this stage =
9. T = It isn’t like that (.). When we can’t understand, we have to ask.
10. U Oh, you still have to. But,
11. T [yeah
12. U other than slang?
13. {silence}
14. T Yeah (.). I make sure to ask, when I don’t understand.
15. {silence}
16. U It’s great to be able to speak English.
17. T [But, definitely um(.)
18. U Thank you (.). But definitely (.). what can I say? (.)
19. T If (.). couldn’t any more (.). what can I say, I will never be able to
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20 speak(.) like a native speaker. Definitely not.
21 U [Why?
22 T = I can’t **hope to speak like a native speaker** any more.
23 {silence}
24 U But still
25 T [This is very delicious.=
26 U = It’s delicious, don’t you think?
27 T [Yes, it is very refreshing. {continue}

**The development of the mild conflict**

At the beginning of this segment, Ube asks Tamako about her English in lines 1 and 2. Ube’s utterance involves two characteristic features, hesitation, and hedging. First, to begin with an analysis of the hesitation, in line 1, Ube inserts some short pauses with a short interval, ‘**mo: nani mo: (pause) honto (pause) mo: eigo wa mo:** (Already, um, already (pause) really (pause) already, is your English already (longer pause))’. This hesitation can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by avoiding assertion which ultimately shows reluctance to perform an FTA: asking about the other’s ability (see 6.2.1.1). Moreover, this placement of the ‘politeness’ phenomenon also providing a warning that the following utterance may contain an FTA or other sensitive matters since ‘politeness’ has a function of reducing an FTA.

Second, hedges can be seen in line 2, ‘**yo:suru ni (in short)**’, ‘**hakkiri itte (frankly speaking)**’ and ‘**mo:** (already)’. These can also be regarded as forms of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker also satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by avoiding assertion (see 6.2). Although these hedges do not have a crucial meaning at the level of the propositional content themselves, their placement at the level of discourse is very important in the conversation.

After placing at least some of the above -- mentioned ‘politeness’ phenomena in advance, Ube eventually introduces his point about whether Tamako’s English is very good or not. First, Ube seeks agreement that ‘**kanpeki ni perapera nan desho:**? (‘Your English is perfectly fluent, isn’t it?’) in lines 1 and 2. Then, he again seeks agreement ‘**nichijo: kaiwa wa zenzen komaranai n desho:**? (You have absolutely no problem at all to communicate in everyday life, do you?)’ in lines 5, 6 and 8.

There are two sides to these utterances of Ube’s. First, Ube may be genuinely asking about Tamako’s ability. In this case, they can place a burden on Tamako since she has to answer either agreeing or disagreeing. Therefore, this kind of question can be taken as an FTA. Second, Ube may be trying to pay a compliment, suggesting that Tamako’s English must be good. In this case, his questions can be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by praising her ability (see 5.3).
In lines 3, 4 and 9, Tamako’s response to Ube’s questions is negative in the following three ways. First, Tamako asks a question to Ube ‘NAN desu ka?: sore wa (WHAT’s this?)’ in line 3. It is obvious that this is not intended functionally as a question since in line 4, Tamako immediately goes on to respond further saying ‘sonna koto nai desu yo: (It is not like that)’. Tamako has clearly understood what Ube means in lines 1 and 2, but she expresses her strong disagreement with this rhetorical question.

The next negative aspect is that Tamako emphasises that what Ube said is not true: she indicates that there are indeed many things she still cannot understand saying ‘wakan’nai toki wa chan to kikanai to (When we don’t understand, we have to ask properly)’ in line 9. This can be taken as an FTA since Tamako may threaten Ube’s ‘positive face’ by correcting what he has said, but the threat is somewhat mitigated by the fact that she expresses this correction in general rather than personal term.

Third negative aspect is that, in addition to the propositional content of her utterance, Tamako’s tone of voice is different from usual. In line 3, her voice is louder and in lines 4 and 9, she is mumbling which makes it sound as if she is complaining about something.

In the light of these negative aspects of Tamako’s responses in this particular segment of conversation Ube’s attempts to discuss Tamako’s ability seem to be taken as an FTA by Tamako.

Another point which makes this segment of conversation sound awkward is that in lines 4 and 5 both interactants’ speech start simultaneously and Ube wins the floor by making his voice louder. In line 4, Tamako sounds as if she has been forced to stop talking since she had just started her utterance and could not continue it.

Smoothing over the conflict

After Tamako abruptly denies Ube’s expectation in lines 3, 4 and 9, Ube expresses two different points of view: 1) he shows understanding of Tamako’s explanation in lines 10 and 22, and 2) he tries to pay a compliment to Ube’s ability, ignoring her denial in lines 16 and 25. Both moves have the potential to be regarded as ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker tries to ‘fulfil the conversational partner’s wants’ although they have completely contrary meanings in this context. However, in this particular segment of conversation, Tamako seriously and continuously denies Ube’s expectation of her ability in English in lines 3, 4 and 9. Therefore, showing understanding of Tamako’s explanation seems to be the more promising way to fulfil Tamako’s wants.

An awkward atmosphere can be seen in the silences in lines 13 and 15. The silence in line 13 is caused by Tamako’s delay in taking her turn, and that in line 15 by Ube’s delay in taking his turn. This is because the last speaker just before the silence in line 15 is Tamako, who has finally responded to Ube’s question. It is not that Tamako has posed a question of her own, but there nevertheless seems to be some degree of expectation for Ube to contribute
next in this segment of conversation. In line 16, Ube starts paying yet another compliment which can be regarded as an FTA in this segment of conversation.

The next move by Tamako is to take the floor from Ube in line 17. She uses a loud voice and cuts into the middle of Ube’s turn. This can be regarded as an FTA since it is an apparently intentional and forceful interruption that seems to completely ignore what the other interactant is saying. After forcefully taking the floor from Ube, Tamako mentions that she cannot hope any more to ever be able to speak English like a native speaker (lines 17 to 20). Her statement is uttered at a slow pace, and its propositional content suggests resignation and acceptance of reality.

A significant point from lines 17 to 20 is that Ube gives no short responses during Tamako’s speech, even though she speaks very slowly and inserts pauses frequently. This can be seen in two different ways. It could be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’, the hearer trying to satisfy the speaker’s ‘negative face’ by giving a minimum reaction so as not to disturb the conversational partner (see 6.2.2.1). However, it could also be taken as a sign of Ube’s negative reaction to Tamako stealing the floor from him in line 17.

In line 22, Ube shows an understanding of Tamako’s comment. This seems to be a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by fulfilling the partner’s ‘positive face’ wants.

After a short silence in line 24, Ube starts to pay another compliment in line 25. However, in line 26, Tamako forcefully changes the topic by commenting on the dish they are currently having. Once again, there are two possible interpretations. First, this could be regarded as an FTA since the speaker changes the topic intentionally and forcefully. This may threatens the partner’s ‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’. Second, it could be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ since the speaker may satisfy the partner’s ‘negative face’ by ‘dissociating the speaker and the hearer from a particular infringement’ (see 6.3).

In response, Ube does not react negatively but rather joins in talking about the dish in line 27. At this point, talking about food seems to be a safe topic on which both interactants can easily agree.

**Conclusion**

In this segment of conversation, the conflict is caused by the interactants’ different ideas: Ube thinks that Tamako’s English must be very good and fluent, presumably because she is living in an English-speaking country, and Tamako thinks that her English is not very good and she cannot hope to speak like a native speaker. These two different ideas are incompatible, so both interactants have to deny the other’s idea in order to express their own. Therefore, the acts of expressing their ideas become FTAs and the direct cause of the conflict in this segment of the conversation.
At the same time, the conflict seems to be indirectly caused by the choice of a topic which one of the interactants does not wish to engage in. The topic negotiation whether the interactants continue this topic or not has been done in this segment.

Moving to the ‘politeness’ phenomena, this segment of conversation shows that ‘politeness’ phenomena and FTAs can be seen as two sides of the same coin. For example, paying a compliment can be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker tries to satisfy the address’s ‘positive face’ by making the conversational partner feel good. However, it can also be interpreted as an FTA in that the speaker places a burden on the addressee in terms of how to react. In particular, this may be a problem if the addressee thinks that the compliment is not true. The reaction of the conversational partner will decide whether this is interpreted as ‘politeness’ or an FTA.

7.4 DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TO THE CONVERSATION

This segment of conversation includes topic negotiation between the interactants. Yamamoto tries to persuade Doobayashi to engage in a new topic which he has introduced. At the same time, Doobayashi tries to refuse to engage in this topic. Both acts -- introducing a new topic and refusing to engage in the topic -- have the potential to be taken as ‘face threatening acts’. This is because, when the speaker starts a new phase of the conversation, the topic should be something that both interactants enjoy. However, there is no guarantee of this, so introducing a new topic can influence and violate the addressee’s ‘negative face’. Similarly, refusal to engage in the topic which the conversational partner has introduced contradicts the partner’s will and so could threaten the partner’s ‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’.

After some exchanges in this segment, Yamamoto starts to show irritation at Doobayashi’s lack of involvement in the conversation. This irritation causes a brief confrontation between the interactants. After a short silence, Yamamoto and Doobayashi suddenly start to talk about a completely different topic.

The segment can be divided into three parts according to the stage of the conflict. First, from lines 11 to 33, the development of the conflict, second, from lines 34 to 41, the occurrence of the conflict, and third, from lines 42 to 54, the ‘repair’ of the conflict.

Development of the conflict

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

11 Y o:(..) ano oyaji yappari nanka hen da yo na:(.) totsuzen
12 kyo: mo sakenda shi
13 {silence}
14 D hipparu ne: sono hanashi
15 Y o:(.) do:mo ki ni naru yo: ore wa:
16 {gap}
17 Y (?       ) tte iu ka: ano:(.) myo: na koto mo shiteru shi
18 D {laugh}
19 (..)
20 D dott(..) sugoku do: demo i: koto no yo: nanda kedo
21 Y iya do: demo i:n da kedo sa:(.) nanka ore issen o koeteru to
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omoun da yo
23 D Ee?
24 Y issen koeteru to omoun da yo
25 D ano futari ga?
26 Y chigau chigau chigau ano hito no ko{...} taido ga da yo
27 D [{laugh}]
28 D taido ga{...} issen o koeteru ka
29 Y un
30 D un
31 {gap}
32 Y yokunai to omou
33 D ha ha:

(J1 #10)

In Chapter 6, the analysis showed the form of ‘negative politeness’ in which the interactant introduces a new topic gradually (see 6.1). This segment is similar. At the very beginning, Yamamoto is trying to initiate some gossip about a man whom he thinks strange, by gradually starting to talk about him. However, Doobayashi does not show much interest in this topic. Although Doobayashi does not explicitly say, “I don’t want to talk about this man”, there are a number of phenomena in the data which indicate Doobayashi’s lack of interest in the topic. For example, a silence occurs in line 13. This is a place in which Doobayashi is expected to take his turn since Yamamoto has completed his utterance in lines 11 and 12. This silence can, therefore, be seen as a delay in Doobayashi’s turn, indicating that Doobayashi has some reason not to respond to Yamamoto straight away. In line 14, Doobayashi does not give any feedback on the topic itself, but teases Yamamoto’s persistence with this topic, saying ‘hipparu ne: sono hanashi (You keep on about that).’ In
line 16, a short silence again occurs. This is a place again in which Doobayashi is expected to take his turn since Yamamoto has completed his utterance in line 15. However this time, it is Yamamoto who breaks the silence in line 17 after Doobayashi fails to take his expected turn. In line 20, after laughter and a gap, Doobayashi finally gives his assessment of the topic, saying ‘sugoku do:demo i: koto no yo:nan da kedo (It seems like a really trivial thing though)’.

In the sequence in which Doobayashi shows his reluctance to engage in the topic which Yamamoto has introduced, some ‘politeness’ phenomena can be identified. These presumably appear to mitigate the ‘face threatening act’ (FTA) that Doobayashi is performing. As mentioned above, Doobayashi’s rejection of Yamamoto’s attempt to introduce a new topic can be seen as a ‘face threatening act’ because it may threaten Yamamoto’s ‘positive face’. This fits with Brown and Levinson’s theory that where there is a potential ‘face threatening act’, ‘politeness’ phenomena will appear to reduce the seriousness of it.

Three kinds of ‘politeness’ phenomena can be identified here. First, in line 14, Doobayashi teases Yamamoto for his persistence. This can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the hearer’s ‘positive face’ by expressing solidarity and closeness with humour (see 5.1.1.4).

At the same time, Doobayashi does not give any feedback on the topic itself. This can be seen as a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by avoiding a negative reaction (see 5.2.2.2).

Finally, in line 20, when Doobayashi expresses his assessment of the topic as trivial, he mitigates the impact of the propositional content of this utterance in a number of ways. For example, Doobayashi laughs and hesitates before giving this assessment. He also uses a phrasal hedge ‘yo:nan da kedo (It seems like though)’ and omits the subject of this sentence. These can be regarded as forms of ‘negative politeness’ since Doobayashi satisfies Yamamoto’s ‘negative face’ by avoiding assertion and by softening the propositional content of the utterance (see 6.2.1).

It is fairly obvious that Doobayashi is not showing much interest in the topic Yamamoto has introduced; indeed he is rejecting it. However the above-mentioned ‘politeness’ phenomena make Doobayashi’s response -- his reluctance to engage in this topic -- far less clear than it might otherwise be. Therefore it is possible to say that topic negotiation has been hindered by ‘politeness’ phenomena. This poor topic negotiation affects this segment of the conversation badly and contributes to the development of the conflict.

Despite Doobayashi’s apparent reluctance to engage in the topic, Yamamoto still continues to talk about it. Yamamoto’s statement ‘issen o koeteru to omoun da yo (I think X (?unclear) has crossed over the line)’ in lines 21 and 22, creates a comprehension problem. In line 23, Doobayashi indicates that he has a problem understanding what Yamamoto said,
using a short expression ‘E?: (Sorry?)’. In line 25, Doobayashi then anticipates and asks Yamamoto ‘ano futari ga? (Those two have crossed over the line?).

This comprehension problem is caused by the expression ‘issen o koeteru (to cross over the line)’ which is metaphorical and has a range of meanings. It can mean that something has exceeded what is normally expected or that a love relationship has gone beyond being Platonic. The ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon by which a speaker tends to introduce a new topic using unclear expressions as introductory remarks has been already discussed (see 6.1). These unclear expressions often require clarification by the hearer, so the speaker can explain them and talk more about them. Yamamoto, therefore, may have used this metaphorical expression as an introductory remark. However in this segment, the expression fails to activate the conversation. Doobayashi simply repeats Yamamoto’s answer ‘taido ga issen o koeru ka (His behaviour has crossed over the line)’ in line 28, and does no more than to insert minimal responses such as ‘un (yeah)’ in line 30 and ‘ha ha: (I see)’ in line 33. He is not making any new contribution to this conversation nor a real clarification of what he meant.

On the other hand, Yamamoto seems to wait for Doobayashi’s reaction by inviting Doobayashi into the conversation. For example in line 29, he gives Doobayashi the floor with his short response ‘un (yeah)’ without adding any further statement or comment. In line 32 he provides his own assessment of the man in his story saying ‘yokunai to omou (I think it’s no good)’ and waiting for Doobayashi’s response.

To sum up, in this first part of the segment there is a fundamental problem between the interactants. Yamamoto wants to talk about the topic which he has introduced, and Doobayashi does not want to talk about it. The ‘politeness’ phenomena used by both interactants’ fail, by contributing to poor topic negotiation and creating a comprehension problem. At the end of this first part there is an obvious difference in attitude between the interactants which seems to lead to a conflict.

The conflict

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

34 Y hora hora:(..) hora hora:(..) ko: issen o koeteru(.) ha ha:(.)
35 soredei?(..) naruhodo?(..) sore ga do:shita(,) ha::
36 D E tte Iwanakucha ikenai no?
37 Y iya so: janakute nanka(,) tsukkonde mo i: daro:?(,) 'nande
do:shite sonna hanashi do:datte i: koto do:datte i: janai'
38 D te yutt yutta yo: ore wa sore=
39 Y =so: kai(,) itta ka
40 (..)

(J1 #13)

34 Y Look, look.(..) Look, look.(..) Like, his behaviour has crossed over the line.(.) ‘I see’.(.)
35 ‘And?’.(..) ‘Of course?’(,) ‘So what?’(,) ‘I see.’
36 D Oh, do I have to respond like that?
In this segment, the short response by Doobayashi in line 33 seems to become a direct trigger for the conflict. Although this second part of the conversation involves a confrontation in the propositional content of the utterance from lines 34 to 39, it does not sound like a serious conflict. Thanks to the ‘politeness’ phenomenon of avoiding assertion, and according to the prosodic features, the conflict seems to be controlled at the level of very mild one.

At the beginning of this part, Yamamoto emphatically says ‘hora hora (Look, look)’ which attracts Doobayashi’s attention and indicates that Doobayashi has said something problematic. Yamamoto then copies Doobayashi’s previous utterance ‘ha ha: (I see)’, and continues to add short expressions: ‘sorede? (then?)’, ‘naruhodo? (naturally?)’, ‘sore ga do:shi:ta (So what?)’, and ‘ha:: (I see)’ with an emphatic manner as if he is acting a role. The intention behind Yamamoto’s short expressions are not clear in the utterance. Each expression is uttered without any connecting element between them, so these short expressions are not coherent. They could be interpreted as suggestions to Doobayashi, indicating how Yamamoto would like Doobayashi to respond. At the same time they could be taken as a question and answer sequence. This is because ‘sorede? (then?)’ and ‘sore ga do:shi:ta (so what?)’ are expressions which urge the addressee to say more and ‘naruhodo? (naturally?)’ and ‘ha:: (I see)’ are expressions which respond to the other. The lack of clarity in Yamamoto’s short expressions can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by avoiding assertion.

In response to Yamamoto, Doobayashi asks for clarification in line 36 as to whether or not he is expected to respond as Yamamoto has suggested in lines 34 and 35, saying ‘E tte iwanakucha ikenai no? (Oh, do I have to respond like that?).’ This shows that Doobayashi is left unsure of Yamamoto’s intended meaning. The function of this question can be seen as a complaint because Doobayashi is asking if Yamamoto expects Doobayashi to respond as Yamamoto indicated. If this is the case, Yamamoto is violating Doobayashi’s right to say what he wants to. However in this particular segment Doobayashi pronounces this question without any stress, so it does not convey strong sense of accusation.

In lines 37 and 38 Yamamoto answers that he does not mean Doobayashi to respond in exactly that way, and clarifies that he just expects a more enthusiastic reaction by saying ‘tsukkonde mo i: daro:? (Wouldn’t it be better to ask penetrating questions?).’ At this point the meaning of Yamamoto’s short expressions in lines 34 and 35 finally becomes clear: it is not that he expects Doobayashi to be interested in the topic for its own sake. What he wants is for Doobayashi to show more active participation in the conversation.
Yamamoto demonstrates examples of how Doobayashi might have reacted with an emphatic tone of voice as if he is acting as the ideal and attentive conversational partner he would like Doobayashi to be: ‘do:shite? sonna hanashi do:datte i: koto do:datte i: janai (Why are you interested in that stuff? Such a story is so trivial. It doesn’t matter, does it?)’ in lines 37 and 38. This emphatic manner can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by making the utterance humorous and thus showing solidarity and closeness (see 5.1.1.3).

Doobayashi’s response to Yamamoto in line 39 is that he has already said that it is a trivial matter. At this point, there is a misunderstanding between Yamamoto and Doobayashi. Yamamoto’s frustration seems not to be about the propositional content of the utterance ‘it is trivial’ but about the way Doobayashi has expressed it -- not seeming to care about Yamamoto’s interest in the issue. On the other hand, Doobayashi’s concern seems to be about the propositional content, ‘it is trivial’, so he thinks he has already said it and does not know why Yamamoto is so frustrated.

However in his next turn Yamamoto does not pursue this misunderstanding at all. He stops challenging Doobayashi and simply accepts Doobayashi’s answer. This acceptance by Yamamoto leads the conversation to a state of agreement. Yamamoto seems to prefer to avoid confrontation rather than to pursue his point. In line 40, Yamamoto just says ‘so: kai (Are you sure?)’ and he starts fiddling with something like paper and making a rattling noise in line 42.

This difference in expectations between the interactants -- with one of the interactants expecting more enthusiastic participation from the partner -- occasionally comes up elsewhere in this pair’s conversation. For example, in the previous part of this segment, Yamamoto complained that the conversation proceeded as if he was throwing a ball and Doobayashi just caught it without throwing it back (see 1.2.1). The interactants seem to have different expectations in the conversation, with Yamamoto thinking that Doobayashi does not participate in the conversation enthusiastically enough. Doobayashi, in fact, showed understanding of Yamamoto’s opinion in the previous part of this whole segment by accepting the conversation between him and the other tends not to develop well. However, in this segment the problem seems to have arisen again.

The following sequence after the conflict

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

42 {sound of paper being crumpled}
43 Y taberu?
44 D hai arigato:
45 {paper sound}
46 D a(.) ano:
47 Y [un-
48 D ~fuhyo: datta
49 Y nani?
50 D tai taimai senbe:
Y mada aru yo

[D {laugh} kue yo: hito ga sekkaku yatta noni: kino: kino:-

Y [so: [a aji ga nai

J1#13

Y Will you eat this?

D Yes, thank you.

Y Yeah =

D = unpopular

Y What?

D rice crackers made from Thai Thai rice.

Y They are still there.

D {gap}

Y [{false start} [There is no taste.

At the beginning of this last part of the segment, the after-effects of the conflict can be identified in a number of ways. First of all, both interactants’ tone of voice is rather lower and sounds more serious than usual. Secondly, Doobayashi’s choice of words is more formal than usual. In line 44, Doobayashi answers with ‘hai (yes)’ instead of ‘un (yeah)’, the form both interactants normally use. Finally, in line 45, nobody talks for a while.

After the silence, some further ‘politeness’ phenomena can be observed in the data. These ‘politeness’ phenomena seem to help the participants to smooth over the awkward atmosphere. This is an additional function of ‘politeness’ to those described in Brown and Levinson’s theory. I will examine both these ‘politeness’ phenomena and their effects in this segment of conversation.

The first move is that Yamamoto offers Doobayashi some sweets in line 43. This act has two meanings in this segment of conversation. First, Yamamoto shows hospitality to Doobayashi by offering a kind of treat. This can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘positive face’ by fulfilling the conversational partner’s wants (see 5.3). Second, Yamamoto starts to engage in a different activity than talking. This can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ in that the interactant ‘dissociates the speaker and the hearer from the particular infringement’ (see 6.3).

The next move is Doobayashi introducing a new topic. From lines 46 to 53, Doobayashi starts to talk about some savouries he had given Yamamoto before. This can be regarded as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by ‘dissociating the speaker and the hearer from the particular infringement’ (see 6.3). According to this and other data examined, ‘changing the topic’ is a very common way of smoothing over a problematic atmosphere in Japanese casual conversation.
The choice of topic introduced by Doobayashi is also meaningful in this segment. Doobayashi starts to talk about an object which he gave Yamamoto before. This can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the address’s ‘positive face’ by expressing common ground (see 5.1.1.2).

The next ‘politeness’ phenomenon lies in the way the interactants take turns. From lines 46 to 53 Doobayashi talks very slowly and his utterance is very fragmented. He creates multiple opportunities for Yamamoto to insert short responses. His manner sounds as if he is inviting Yamamoto to attend to the conversation. Indeed, Yamamoto does insert short responses as if he is responding to Doobayashi’s request. As a result, both interactants exchange very short utterances. First, in line 46, Doobayashi shows hesitation ‘a ano: (Er...); and in line 47, Yamamoto returns a short response ‘un (yes)’. Then in line 48, Doobayashi starts to say ‘fuhyo: datta (those ‘unpopular’), in line 49, Yamamoto asks ‘nani? (what?)’, and in line 50, Doobayashi adds ‘taimai senbe: (rice crackers made from Thai rice)’ to his previous turn. The manner of these exchanges can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ in which the interactants both ‘indicate their participation in the conversation’ (see 5.2).

The last move which contributes to smoothing over the awkward atmosphere is the way in which the interactants emphasise the closeness between them. In line 53, Doobayashi commands Yamamoto in an emphatic tone of voice to eat them soon and adds that he gave them especially to Yamamoto. This command has two aspects: 1) it could be taken as a ‘face threatening act’ since Doobayashi may threaten Yamamoto’s ‘face’ by ordering him; however 2) it could be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since Doobayashi is talking with a ‘smile’ in his voice and an emphatic accent which indicates that Doobayashi is joking and that their relationship is close enough to allow such a blunt ‘face threatening act’. This subtle adjustment can be observed in Doobayashi’s utterance. According to Yamamoto’s response in this particular segment, the potential ‘face threatening act’ accompanied by ‘politeness’ phenomena is not taken as face threatening.

**Conclusion**

Both the causes of conflict and the ‘politeness’ phenomena in this section show some characteristic features of non-goal-oriented interaction in relation to conflict. This discussion has identified multiple causes of conflict. First, the fundamental conflict between one partner introducing a new topic and the other refusing to engage in it has a strong influence on the development of the conversation. Second, some ‘politeness’ phenomena can be taken as ‘face threatening acts’. For example, both interactants avoid assertion by using unclear expressions. This can be regarded as a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon, but these unclear expressions actually hinder smooth interaction in this segment. Third, different attitudes between the participants during a conversation contribute to the occurrence of the conflict.
One of the interactants expects a more enthusiastic reaction from the conversational partner and displays irritation. These causes of conflict can be seen as ‘face threatening acts’ because they contribute to the occurrence of conflict. The nature of this kind of FTA is rather different from those in goal-oriented interaction, where predetermined goals themselves are ‘face threatening acts’ in most cases.

Next, the analysis has identified some ‘politeness’ phenomena which contribute to facilitating the conversation, to preventing ‘face threatening acts’ from turning into conflict and to smoothing over the conflict. Some of them are successful, but some are not. As mentioned above, some ‘politeness’ phenomena are apparently even taken as FTAs. This means that the speaker’s intention to be ‘polite’ is not necessarily interpreted as being ‘polite’ by the addressee.

7.5 DUAL NATURE OF TEASING AND HAVING A DIFFERENT INTEREST IN THE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION

The main feature of the following segment is a narrative by one of the interactants. Yamamoto is the principal speaker who introduces a new topic and talks about his friend’s experience. Doobayashi, on the other hand, is the principal hearer who listens to Yamamoto, but occasionally contributes comments which incidentally trigger some problems.

This section focuses on two problematic sequences in the segment examined. One involves a mild conflict which occurs early in the segment and the other is a disharmonious exchange which follows the early conflict. After analysing the causes of the conflicts, this section also analyses how the interactants eventually smooth over the after-effects of both conflicts.

The development of the early conflict

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

1 Y iya: sore ni shite mo da na:: ki ano:::(..) ma: kino: no
2 nichiyobi:: kino: no nichiyobi:: mo:(..) ma: tomodachi kara
3 sa:(..) nihon no: tomodachi kara:(..) i:me:ru ga kiteta kedo sa:(..)
4 yappari ano:(..) baburi: na:(.) onna no ko tte iu no ga o:irashi:
5 na:
6 D demashita:(..) nyu:wa:do=
7 Y =doko ga nyu:wa:do [nan da yo
8 D [baburi: na
9 Y o::[u
10 D [sonna kotoba o kimi kara kiku to wa omowanakatta yo=
11 Y =datte so: baburi: tte kaite atta mon
12 D att so:
13 (...) 14 Y hoka ni nante tsukaun da yo(;) [ukiashidatta ka?(.)-
15 D [([(_[u   16 Y =ukiashidatta demo i: ya(;) ukashidatta yatsu ga o:in da
17 D o:irashin da yo
18 D un
19 {silence}

(J1#4)
Y: Well, by the way, um, yest, well(...) on Sunday, well yesterday
D: on Sunday, (yesterday) on Sunday,(..)  received an e-mail from my friend,(
Y: As we can all expect, um(...) there seems to be so many young(.
D: ‘bubbly (restless)’ girls.
Y: Which one is the new expression?
D: ['BUBBLY'].
Y: yeah
D: I didn’t expect such a word from you. =
Y: Because ‘bubbly’ was written in the e-mail.
D: I see.
Y: Yeah.(.) What else can I use? ‘Restless’?(.)
D: ‘restless’ is fine.(.) There are so many restless chicks.
D: Yeah.

‘Positive politeness’ or an FTA
In this early part of the segment, a problem occurs when Doobayashi teases Yamamoto about his use of the word ‘baburi: na (restless)’. Yamamoto responds to Doobayashi to find out why Doobayashi is teasing him and to explain why he has used the word ‘baburi: na (restless)’. The study regards this sequence as a conflict.

Before analysing the development of this conflict, the study argues that one of the causes of the conflict in the segment seems to be the nature of certain ‘politeness’ phenomena which has the potential to be taken as an FTA. In Chapter 5, the study has introduced teasing as a form of ‘positive politeness’ (see 5.1.1.2). This is because teasing normally occurs amongst the interactants who have established a close relationship. In terms of the propositional content, teasing is based on the common knowledge that the interactant has a certain characteristic such as particular habits or weak points. Teasing also reinforces the bond between the interactants suggesting that they are confident in their relationship, which even allows potential FTAs to appear in the interaction.

On the other hand, because of this risky nature, teasing has the potential to be taken as face threatening. It is like a game in which the interactants enjoy trying to test the closeness of their relationship, but which may backfire. In order for teasing to be successful, the ‘teasee’ has to feel that the ‘teaser’ is just playing and is not trying to hurt him/her seriously.

The conflict develops from line 6 up to the silence in line 19. The key incident which directly triggers this conflict is teasing, when, in line 6, Doobayashi emphatically points out Yamamoto’s use of the word ‘baburi: na (restless)’ which is a recent loan word from the English ‘bubbly’. According to Doobayashi’s explanation in line 10, the reason for this teasing is that the choice of the word ‘baburi: na (restless)’ is unlike Yamamoto’s ordinary
choice of vocabulary. In addition to the propositional content of the utterance, Doobayashi’s tone of voice is loud and high-pitched in lines 6 and 8, which also indicates that Doobayashi is playing.

The response to the teasing on this occasion is not positive. According to Yamamoto’s reaction, teasing in this particular segment is taken as face threatening. One obvious sign is that Yamamoto’s voice is lower than usual in lines 7, 11, 14, 16 and 17. This conveys seriousness which shows clear contrast to Doobayashi’s tone of voice in lines 6 and 8. Another piece of evidence is that Yamamoto does not take Doobayashi’s teasing as a playful act and does not let it go, but rather he deals with it seriously. For example, he demands the explanation and later gives a reason why he has used the word ‘baburi: na (restless)’. The sequence of this is: in line 7, Yamamoto asks Doobayashi which word is a new word; in line 11, he explains that it was a quotation from his friend’s e-mail, not his own choice of expression; in line 14, he asks if there is another, more appropriate way to say it; and from line 16 to 17, he restates the sentence using the Japanese originated synonym ‘ukiashidatta (restless)’ in place of the loan word ‘baburi: na (restless)’.

Doobayashi also shows signs that he recognises that his teasing has been taken as an FTA. For example, Doobayashi’s tone of voice becomes lower and softer in lines 10, 12 and 18, whereas before this his voice has been loud and the pitch high, especially when he teases Yamamoto. In addition to the change in his tone of voice, Doobayashi’s answers becomes very brief in lines 12 and 18. Finally, in line 19, silence occurs.

To summarise, according to both Yamamoto’s reactions and Doobayashi’s subsequent responses, the teasing in this segment of conversation is taken as face threatening. However, it is not the case that the interactants, Yamamoto and Doobayashi, are in a relationship in which teasing is not allowed at all. In fact, they often tease each other in the data and this teasing facilitates the conversation in most cases. However, in this particular circumstance the potential face threatening characteristics of teasing are actualised.

The question arises as to why teasing in this particular case is taken as face threatening. As just discussed above, teasing usually does not lead to conflict when the teasee understands that the teaser is just playing and is not trying to hurt him/her seriously. In this particular circumstance, the teasee does not seem to recognise the intent as playful.

The development of the consequent conflicting atmosphere

D: Doobayashi, Y: Yamamoto

20 D a: =
21 Y -sorede: nan dakke:?(...) so: da(,) soitsu:
22 [gap]
23 Y no hanashi ni yoru to sa:(...) ma: ano:(,) saikin:(,) ma kare:(,) ma:
24 tokyo:to-shokuiin nan da kedo mo sa:
25 D u:n(...) [ano tocho: de hataraiten no?
26 Y [saikin
27 Y so: da yo
28 D suge: na:
29 Y a: demo doboku da yo(..) TCcho: ttrade deKAIn da ze:
30 (..)
31 D dakedo(.) hora kore dame da yo mo: kono kutsu: hora hora hora hora:
32 Y ma: yoku hito no hanashi o kike yo
33 D u:::
34 Y hito no hanashi wa kikinasai tten da [yo
35 D [ki:teru ki:teru

In contrast to the early conflict, it is difficult to pinpoint the next one because no single incident seems to directly trigger it. However, the after-effects of the earlier conflict seems to be exacerbated one after another like a domino effect as each interactant tries to improve the awkward atmosphere.

After the silence in line 19, the interactants resume the conversation. A number of ‘politeness’ phenomena can be identified in the data, but none of them seems to contribute to really improving the awkward atmosphere which has arisen.

The study suggests that it is necessary to analyse this disharmonious exchange on a different level, and argues two additional causes of conflict in this section. These causes can explain the occurrence of the early conflict as well. First of all, I will begin with analysing the sequence in which this second disharmonious exchange takes place.

Yamamoto breaks the silence by restarting his talk in line 21. From line 21 to 24, Yamamoto seems to be having difficulties taking up his story again. He speaks slowly, stops talking several times and seems to be searching for words. However, Doobayashi does not give any short responses. This is, in fact, not the first time this has happened; it occurred previously from lines 1 to 5. On the previous occasion, Yamamoto was trying to introduce a new topic. Hesitation can be seen in the form of pauses, fillers (‘ano: (er)’ ) and repetition of words (‘kino: no nichiyo:bi (yesterday on Sunday)’ and ‘tomodachi kara (from my friend)’
in Yamamoto’s turn. However, Doobayashi does not give any short responses to Yamamoto’s talk in this case either.

From the principal speaker’s point of view, Doobayashi may not be cooperative enough in terms of showing at least some sign of participation in Yamamoto’s talk. On both occasions, the conversation sounds disharmonious, and the interactants do not ‘tune in’ to one another.

However, the next move sees Doobayashi suddenly expressing his interest in the work place of Yamamoto’s friend. First of all, Doobayashi asks Yamamoto for clarification as to whether or not Yamamoto’s friend really works at ‘tocho: (the Tokyo Metropolitan City Hall)’ in line 25. Then Doobayashi gives an assessment showing his amazement that it is a very special place to work in line 28. This expression of interest in a part of Yamamoto’s talk can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the hearer satisfies the speaker’s ‘positive face’ by showing his active response to the topic (see 5.2.1.2).

However, Yamamoto does not show any positive response to Doobayashi’s expression of interest at all. Far from it, Yamamoto downgrades Doobayashi’s amazement by saying that there is nothing to be amazed at in working at ‘tocho: (the Tokyo Metropolitan City Hall)’ because it is such a big organisation. In other words, there are positions that do not require stiff competition.

In addition to the propositional content which downgrades Doobayashi’s amazement, the last part of Yamamoto’s utterance is pronounced in a loud voice with strong stress. This manner makes Yamamoto’s utterance sound as if he is pointing out Doobayashi’s ignorance. This can be taken as an FTA because Yamamoto may threaten Doobayashi’s ‘positive’ and ‘negative face’ by pointing out his lack of knowledge.

After Yamamoto downgrades Doobayashi’s amazement, the exchange between Yamamoto and Doobayashi gets more and more conflicting: Doobayashi abruptly changes the topic of the conversation, Yamamoto remonstrates with Doobayashi for disregarding what he is saying, and Doobayashi does not accept Yamamoto’s remonstration.

First of all, Doobayashi’s turn in line 31 is notable, as he suddenly makes a totally unexpected statement. Doobayashi opens the conversation saying ‘dakedo (but, still)’. This expression, ‘dakedo (but, still)’, indicates a contrasting or additional statement. Therefore, Doobayashi at first seems to intend to make a comment on Yamamoto’s response which presumably involves disagreement or extra comment according to the function of ‘dakedo (but, still)’. However, Doobayashi suddenly changes his original intention and starts to talk about the fact that his shoe has worn out.

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37 In Japanese society, it is widely assumed that there is very serious competition in order to get a position as a civil servant especially in a big city like Tokyo. This is the reason why Doobayashi is amazed with a Yamamoto’s friend work at the Tokyo Metropolitan City Hall.
This sudden statement by Doobayashi can be interpreted in a number of ways. First, it can be taken as an FTA because Doobayashi is likely to threaten Yamamoto’s ‘positive face’ by totally ignoring what Yamamoto is saying. Second, considering the fact that Doobayashi originally starts off his turn with ‘dakedo (but)’, it could be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ because Doobayashi may satisfy Yamamoto’s ‘positive face’ by avoiding disagreement (see 5.2.2.1). Next, it could be taken as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because Doobayashi may satisfy both Yamamoto’s and his own ‘negative face’ by changing the problematic topic (see 6.3.3). The last interpretation is that it may simply be Doobayashi’s spontaneous utterance in a very casual atmosphere. He may have only just noticed the terrible condition of his shoe and nothing can stop him telling Yamamoto about it. This can be taken as an indication of their closeness.

Even if Doobayashi may have had a reasonable explanation for his sudden irrelevant statement, as discussed above, Yamamoto’s reaction is that he remonstrates with Doobayashi for suddenly mentioning a completely an irrelevant matter, thereby ignoring what he has been talking about. According to Yamamoto’s reaction, Doobayashi’s sudden outburst is not interpreted as ‘politeness’.

Yamamoto’s remonstration is a very complicated move; it involves two consecutive utterances each with similar propositional content: ‘hito no hanashi o kike yo (Listen to what other people are saying)’ and ‘hito no hanashi wa kikinasai (Other people’s talk -- you should listen to it)’ in lines 32 and 34. First of all, at the level of its propositional content, these remonstrations can be interpreted in two ways. First, they can be taken as FTAs because Yamamoto may threaten Doobayashi’s ‘negative face’ by telling him what to do and also ‘positive face’ by damaging Doobayashi’s dignity by indicating that Doobayashi has done something inappropriate.

At the same time, it could be taken as sincere advice to a very close friend. Yamamoto may be confident in their relationship not being damaged by such a remonstration, and may be showing care for Doobayashi in that, as a close friend, he cannot help telling Doobayashi that it is inappropriate to behave as Doobayashi has just done.

Moreover, at the level of expressions, Yamamoto’s remonstration is expressed accompanied by some ‘politeness’ phenomena. This suggests that Yamamoto is aware that his remonstration has the potential to be taken as an FTA. Yamamoto uses two types of ‘politeness’ phenomena which mitigate his remonstration. One is a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon: he makes his utterance humorous (see 5.1.1.2), and the other is a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon: he generalises the content with linguistic devices (see 6.3.1).

Starting with the ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon, Yamamoto puts two contrasting expressions together and this contrast makes his utterance sound humorous. The first expression: ‘hito no hanashi o kike yo (Listen to what other people are saying)’ finishes with a command (imperative form) ‘kike (Listen)’, which is commonly used by men to
equals and/or subordinates in Japanese, plus a final emphatic particle ‘yo’. The second expression: ‘hito no hanashi wa kikinasai (Other people’s talk -- you should listen to it)’ finishes with a soft command ‘kikinasai (listen)’, which is commonly used to subordinates. In contrast to the first rather brusque expression, the second soft expression sounds as if a parent is scolding a child. Additionally, Yamamoto uses a strong stress accompanied with a smile in his voice, especially in the case of the second expression. This stress and smile conveys that Yamamoto is being playful.

Moving on to the ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon, linguistic devices (lexis and grammar) contribute to generalising the propositional content of the utterance. First, Yamamoto’s choice of the word ‘hito (other person)’ in line 32 makes his speech more general. Yamamoto uses a general noun ‘hito (other person)’ instead of using a first person pronoun such as ‘ore (me)’ or ‘boku (me)’ to refer to himself.

In the second expression, Yamamoto uses the combination of ‘hito (other people)’ and a particle ‘wa’ (topic particle) instead of using the combination of ‘hito (other people)’ and the particle ‘o’ (accusative particle). The sentence ‘hito no hanashi wa kikinasai (Other people’s talk -- you should listen to it)’ sounds more general compared to the sentence ‘hito no hanashi o kikinasai (Listen to other people’s talk)’, since the latter refers to the specific talk that has been taking place as an object of the sentence.

Despite all these ‘positive’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena in Yamamoto’s remonstration and despite the possibility that it expresses a sincere close relationship, Doobayashi’s reaction is not positive in line 35. He repeats that he is listening to Yamamoto’s talk and implies that Yamamoto’s remonstration is not necessary. According to this reaction of Doobayashi, ‘politeness’ phenomena fail to mitigate the FTA in Yamamoto’s remonstration.

In summary, although Doobayashi asks a question and gives an assessment which shows his interest in Yamamoto’s talk, Yamamoto rather severely downgrades Doobayashi’s interest and excitement. Doobayashi tries to change the direction of the conversation by mentioning a completely unrelated matter. However, Yamamoto does not accept Doobayashi’s topic change and instead remonstrates with Doobayashi for suddenly mentioning a completely irrelevant issue. Even though Yamamoto’s remonstration is accompanied with some ‘politeness’ phenomena at the level of expressions, Doobayashi responds negatively.

There must be more fundamental problems existing in this segment since ‘politeness’ phenomena keep failing to function and both interactants keep making the situation more problematic. By focusing on the maintenance of the topic and the understanding of what is actually going on in the current circumstance, it seems to be possible to explain the causes of not only the current disharmonious exchange but also the early conflict in the segment (from lines 1 to 19).
First, one of the fundamental problems seems to be lack of mutual agreement on the topic development. There is a difference in each interactant’s interest in the current topic. Yamamoto seems to be determined to complete his story. He does not allow Doobayashi to make a digression even though Doobayashi constantly gives comments which are at least partially related to Yamamoto’s topic. On the other hand, Doobayashi is also persistent in pursuing his own particular interest in Yamamoto’s talk. He continues to give his comments on these side issues even though Yamamoto always responds negatively to him.

This difference in the interest in the topic seems to have a significant effect in this segment. Yamamoto does not seem to be comfortable with Doobayashi’s questions or assessment. He continuously responds negatively (lines 11, 14, 16 and 17). From Yamamoto’s point of view, Doobayashi’s comments on side issues, such as Yamamoto’s usage of a word and the workplace of Yamamoto’s friend may not be supportive of the development of his story itself. Doobayashi’s comments may even hinder the development of the topic. In other words, Doobayashi’s comments can be taken as FTAs as they may threaten Yamamoto’s ‘negative face’ by disturbing the development of the topic.

On the other hand, from Doobayashi’s point of view, Yamamoto may not be tolerant enough to allow him to ask questions and to give assessment freely. As already shown above, showing interest in the topic by questioning and commenting can be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’ (see 5.2.1.2). Yamamoto’s negative responses may discourage Doobayashi from involving himself in the conversation. Yamamoto’s continuous negative responses to Doobayashi’s comments can be taken as FTAs since they may threaten Doobayashi’s ‘positive face’ by rejecting his own interest in the topic.

Summing up, one of the fundamental causes of the early conflict and the following disharmonious exchange between this pair seems to be the lack of mutual agreement on the topic development. Neither interactant seems prepared to accommodate the other’s interest in the conversation. Rather they seem to be frustrated by the conversational partner’s reaction and both keep committing further FTAs.

Yet another cause of conflict seems to be the participants’ understanding of what is actually going on in the segment. In this segment of conversation, both interactants keep failing to satisfy each other’s expectations. They do not seem to share the same ‘frame’ (see 7.3, Tannen, 1993) in the interaction. Most significantly, when one of the interactants is in the frame of ‘positive politeness’, the other is in the frame of ‘negative politeness’. Although this study finds that ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena are often not separable in interaction, it seems to be the case that one or the other has a certain degree of dominance at a certain time, which creates a frame of ‘positive politeness’ or ‘negative politeness’ during that stage of the interaction.

For example, when Yamamoto introduces a new topic, Doobayashi teases Yamamoto about his use of the word. As discussed above introducing a new topic can be a sensitive
procedure in which one has to negotiate with the other as to whether the new topic will be
taken up or not. According to the data, at this stage of conversation, ‘negative politeness’
phenomena often appear (see 6.1, 6.2.2). Teasing, which can be seen as a ‘positive
politeness’ phenomenon, tends to accelerate the conversation, but in this circumstance, it
could ruin the potential principal speaker’s attempt.

When Doobayashi shows his interest in Yamamoto’s talk, Yamamoto downgrades
Doobayashi’s excitement. This happens just after the early conflict occurs, so Doobayashi
may subconsciously felt the need for ‘positive politeness’ to facilitate the conversation.
However, Yamamoto apparently disapproves of this attempt of Doobayashi. All these
differences in framings seem to contribute to the deterioration of atmosphere.

To sum up, another fundamental cause of the early conflict and the following
disharmonious exchange seems to be the difference in both interactants’ framings in the
interaction. This segment of conversation lacks alignment concerning the frame.

The following sequence after the disharmonious atmosphere

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

36 Y sorede na:?  
37 D un  
38 Y saikin ano::: nan da(.). go?:(.). go:?  
39 [gap]  
40 Y go:kon ja ne: na(.). nanka atarashi: kotoba datta na:(.). ma go:kon
41 mitai na mon da yo(.). nanka nihon-ko:ku: no: suchuwa:desu no hito?  
42 D un  
43 Y to nanka gorkon shitarashin da yo  
44 D u:n  
45 [gap]  
46 Y nanka kotobazukai wa ma: yokattarashin da ga:  
47 D un  
48 Y yahari kotoba no hashibashi ni  
49 D un  
50 Y nanka ko::(.) nante iu no ka na(.). nanka ko::  
51 [gap]  
52 Y nanka nani? togetogeshii to [iu ka na  
53 D [laugh]  
54 Y nanka nante iu no ka ne: ko::(.) mi:kudashita kanji:?  
55 [gap]  
56 D a::(.) tocho::-shokuin nante shosen(.) chiho::-ko:muin datte=  
57 Y =ma NAN DA ka wAKANNAI keredomo(;) ma: do::iu are ka yu:etsukan
58 nan da ka shin wakannai keredomo sa:  
59 D un  
60 Y nanka(;) so: iu kudaran na?(..) mono ga arurashi:n da  
61 D fu::n  
62 Y chotto(;) fuyukai ni omotta (toka) chotto rippuku-shita toka tte
63 kaite atta yo  
64 D he: rippuku-shita tte kaite atta [no?  
65 Y [rippuku-shita to wa kai
66 D [laugh]  
67 Y =kaite atta yo  

(J1#4)
Recently, um, what was that joint joint

It wasn’t ‘joint party’? Well, was the same kind of thing as ‘joint party’ with stewardesses from Japan Air Lines?

They seemed to have a ‘joint party’.

Well, their general use of words seemed to be all right.

But, each word has some sort of...

They seemed to have a ‘joint party’.

Well, their general use of words seemed to be all right.

They’ve got like thorns.

Something like, what can I say, as if they look down on them?

I see, you mean the workers of Tokyo Metropolitan City Hall are mere local civil servants?

I don’t know, but Well, what kind sense of superiority,

I don’t know,

D yeah

but something like, as if there is something rubbishy there.

D I see.

A little bit he thought it was unpleasant and he was furious.

Really, did he write ‘I was furious’?

[Well, I think he didn’t write-]

‘he was furious’ Well, he wrote something

D [{laugh}]

-like he felt angry.

After Doobayashi’s negative response to Yamamoto’s remonstration, Yamamoto resumes his story. Doobayashi starts to give short responses regularly in between what Yamamoto is saying. He also responds to Yamamoto’s humorous expressions with laughter, and paraphrases what Yamamoto has said. After finally completing his story in the very last part of this segment, Yamamoto starts to accept Doobayashi’s teasing.

Two sets of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena in which the interactants ‘indicate mutual participation’ (see 5.2.1) can be seen in this segment. The first set is that 1) the speaker inserts pauses and raises the final syllable of his utterance, and 2) the hearer gives short responses. For example, just before restarting his story in line 36, Yamamoto raises the final syllable of his utterance in line 36, and Doobayashi responds to it with a minimal short response in line 37. Yamamoto’s words ‘sorede na (and so)’ in line 36 do not have any important propositional content themselves. However, they have the important function of ensuring Doobayashi’s attention. From line 37 to line 49, Yamamoto inserts pauses and
Doobayashi keeps giving short responses in the slots created. There is no overlap or latching between Yamamoto and Doobayashi’s utterance, and only occasionally a very short gap.

The second set of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena is that 1) the speaker seeks agreement, and 2) the hearer paralyses what the speaker means. Yamamoto seems to be having difficulty in describing the stewardesses’ attitude in 50, 52 and 54. He frequently says ‘nan ka (like)’ and ‘nante iu no ka (what can I say)’, both expressions which show his hesitation. Yamamoto finally tries to find out the right word with two expressions ‘togetogeshii (thorny/harsh)’ and ‘mikudashita kanji (as if they look down upon them)’.

In line 54, the latter expression ‘mikudashita kanji (as if they look down upon them)’ is uttered with rising intonation, suggesting that Yamamoto is seeking agreement from Doobayashi. Then, in line 56, Doobayashi tries to paraphrase Yamamoto’s description of the stewardesses’ attitude by giving a reason: (the stewardesses consider that) the workers of Tokyo Metropolitan City Hall are mere local civil servants, (and so not worth much respect). This set of phenomena can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ in which both interactants ‘indicate mutual participation’ (see 5.2.1).

Moreover, two sets of sequence which express ‘positive politeness’ can be identified in the data. They are the combination of humorous expressions and laughter. A humorous expression becomes meaningful in an exchange only when the hearer appreciates it or responds to it. Laughter is a positive response and a sign of appreciation of a humorous expression. These sequences of the phenomena can be regarded as a form of ‘positive politeness’ in which one interactant satisfies the other’s ‘positive face’ by ‘making a joke’ (see 5.1.1.2).

The first set is that of Yamamoto’s choice of the word he has been struggling to find and Doobayashi’s laughter. Yamamoto finally settles on a strong, bitter word ‘togetogeshii (thorny/harsh)’ in line 52 when he describes the way in which the stewardesses talked to his friend during the party. Doobayashi responds to it with laughter in line 53.

The second set is again Yamamoto’s choice of a word and his state of fluster and Doobayashi’s teasing and laughter. Yamamoto uses the word ‘rippuku-shita (got furious)’ in line 62 and Doobayashi asks whether or not ‘rippuku-shita’ was actually the word used by Yamamoto’s friend in line 64. This is because the word ‘rippuku-shita’ is rather old fashioned, something typical of Yamamoto’s word choice. In fact, this is not Yamamoto’s friend’s word and Yamamoto starts to find his friend’s exact word (‘haradatashii (be angry)’) in a state of fluster in lines 65 and 66. Then, Doobayashi starts laughing in line 67.

Summing up the last part of this segment of conversation, we can say that ‘politeness’ phenomena finally start to function successfully. The success seems to be related to the topic management and the frame. Yamamoto and Doobayashi start to agree in terms of the topic development in the conversation and the frame of the interaction and so begin to cooperate with each other. For example, Doobayashi gives short responses and lets Yamamoto finish
his story first. Once Yamamoto has completed his story, he can accept Doobayashi’s question even though it is still a side issue, and can even tolerate Doobayashi’s teasing.

Conclusion
The analysis of the segment above has shown three causes of conflict in the segment: 1) teasing, which has the potential to be taken as both a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon and an FTA; 2) the difference in the topic development in the conversation; and 3) the difference in framing in the interaction.

The common feature of all these causes of conflict can be found in a difference between the interactants. For instance, different expectations for the development of the conversation and the attitudes of the interactant can be identified in the data.

7.6 Conclusion
This chapter analysed five segments of the conversation which involved mild conflict. Through the analysis of the causes of these conflicts and the ‘politeness’ phenomena associated with them, this chapter identified some characteristic features of FTAs and ‘politeness’ phenomena in casual conversation between close friends.

The conflicts examined in this chapter are always related to expressions of difference, such as difference in ideas or expectations. For example, in the first segment examined, one of the interactants asks a question about something which had already been talked about in the previous part of the segment. He does not remember it, but his partner does. In the second segment, the interactants confront each other because of different understandings about the meaning of an unclear expression. In the last segment, the interactants do not share expectations as to how the conversation should develop and what kind of attitude is appropriate at a certain stage of the conversation. In these ways, differences between the interactants can be found in all the cases where conflict occurs.

Starting from different ideas, the difference lies in the interactants’ opinions or understandings. When the interactant expresses his/her own opinion or understanding, he/she often denies that of the other. The act of denial can be seen as an FTA, so there is always the possibility that this will develop into conflict even if the interactant mitigates the denial in some way.

Different expectations in the conversation involve two issues. First, the interactants seem to have certain expectations as to how the conversation should develop. For example, during the principal speaker’s story telling, only certain kinds of questions are welcome to ensure the principal speaker’s tracking of the story. When the interactants do not share this expectation on the development of the conversation, there is always the possibility that a conflict will occur. This is because the difference contributes not to expectations not being satisfied.
Next, the interactants also seem to have some expectations about what kinds of attitude are appropriate at a certain stage of the conversation. This study identifies that the interactants seem to be constantly adjusting the ways they interact using ‘politeness’ phenomena according to various factors. When the interactants do not share this expectation, the possibility of conflict arises.

The fact that ‘politeness’ phenomena and FTAs can be seen as two sides of the same coin makes the situation more complicated. For example, ‘positive politeness’ phenomena can be taken as FTAs if they are interpreted as being too intrusive or disturbing, and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena can be taken as FTAs if they are taken as indicating aloofness. The potential FTAs to ‘positive face’, such as only giving a minimum response, could actually be interpreted as a form of ‘negative politeness’ since the hearer may satisfy the speaker’s ‘negative face’ by showing respect for the speaker’s right to hold the floor. Likewise, potential FTAs to ‘negative face’, such as teasing can be taken as a form of ‘positive politeness’ since the speaker may satisfy the hearer’s ‘positive face’ by appearing to show solidarity and closeness. This complexity can often be seen as a possible cause of the occurrence of conflict.

Moving on to the ‘politeness’ phenomena observed in these examples, without exception the interactants change the topic after conflict has occurred in the conversation. This can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ because the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’ by dissociating themselves from the problematic topic.

Considering the point that the causes of the conflicts are all related to some kind of difference between the interactants, it is not surprising that most of the segments involve the dominance of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena for smoothing over the after-effect of the conflict. This is because the core notion of ‘positive politeness’ is solidarity, based on similarity and an appreciation of the addressee’s self-image.
Chapter 8 Discussion

Chapter 5 to Chapter 7 presented an analysis of the data in two parts. Chapters 5 and 6 analysed the data which involve ‘politeness’ phenomena but not conflict, while Chapter 7 analysed the data which involve conflict and discussed how these conflicts occur and how they are smoothed over with ‘politeness’ phenomena.

This division was made as the result of the observation that casual conversation between close friends does not always develop or continue smoothly, with both interactants happily exchanging their utterances. Rather the interactants seem to be continuously compromising and negotiating regarding their wants for the sake of the development of the conversation. The interactants are not always successful in achieving a compromise, and their wants are not always negotiable. As a result, conflict does occur from time to time in the interaction. Chapter 7 set out to examine this rather complex phenomenon of conflict in the conversation.

Chapters 5 and 6, on the other hand, emphasised the difference between the type of ‘politeness’ phenomena that tend to occur in non-goal-oriented interaction and those that occur in the goal-oriented interaction described by Brown and Levinson. These chapters presented various ‘politeness’ phenomena identified in casual conversation and showed that, in the majority of the conversations examined, the interactants seem to be quite successful in compromising and in negotiating each other’s wants. The interactants seem to have a strong motivation to continue or develop the conversation in as trouble free a manner as possible.

This chapter moves on to discuss three issues. First, different tasks and different stages in the development of a narrative seem to cause the dominance of certain ‘politeness’ phenomena at the level of the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening (see 8.1). Second, FTAs (face threatening acts), and both types of ‘politeness’ -- ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ -- can appear in sequence (see 8.2). Third, some phenomena can be seen as involving both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ at the same time (see 8.3).

8.1 The Development of the Conversation and ‘Politeness’ Phenomena

This section shows how the interactants adjust the ways they interact depending on different tasks being performed and different stages in the development of the conversation. The focus is mainly on prosodic features, and the occurrence of overlaps and pauses. These concern the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening and contribute to creating the overall atmosphere of the conversation.

38 I presented a paper on this topic at the Conference of the Australian Linguistic Society in July 2000 (Kitamura, 2001).
Two rather long segments of conversation in which a new topic is introduced into the conversation in different ways are presented. In the first segment, one of the interactants voluntarily introduces a new topic (see 8.1.1), and in the second segment, one of the interactants asks the other to talk about an incident which has just happened to him (see 8.1.2). In addition to the difference in the way the topic is introduced into the conversation, there is a difference in the tasks of the principal speakers. In the first segment, the principal speaker has to explain a rather unusual situation, so the task involves not only a description of the situation but also the need to gain the understanding of the hearer. On the other hand, in the second segment, the principal speaker recounts what has just happened to him, so the task is rather straightforward; it mainly involves simply describing the situation in a vivid and interesting way.

This section traces the whole sequence of these two segments from the point when the new topic is introduced into the conversation up to the point at which the particular narrative finishes. It analyses how particular purposes of the narrative and particular stages in the development of narrative affect the occurrence of certain types of ‘politeness’ phenomena at the level of the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening.

8.1.1
In the following example of conversation, one of the interactants starts to talk voluntarily about her situation as a full-time working mother whose job involves a lot of responsibility. She tries to explain a rather peculiar circumstance in which she has recently finally managed to balance things quite well, after having had a hard time to avoid overwork. This is because she was used to working as much as she liked without thinking of the consequences, but after the arrival of her baby, she started to modify her work habits. In this way, the principal speaker has to explain to her conversational partner the rather strange circumstance that not working very hard was very difficult for her.

The example starts rather quietly, even perhaps with some slight hesitation indicated by a short silence while both interactants negotiate their own roles in the first part of the conversation, as principal speaker and hearer. In addition to the role and topic negotiation in the conversation, the hearer is trying to figure out what the principal speaker is going to talk about. Regarding ‘politeness’ phenomena at the level of manner of speaking and listening, it is mainly ‘negative politeness’ that can be seen at the beginning of the segment.

However, the exchange gradually becomes more lively and eventually reaches a ‘chorus’ of mutual understanding, while the hearer gradually begins to understand what the principal speaker is talking about. The more ‘positive politeness’ becomes dominant, the more the impression of cooperation grows. The sequence sounds as if one person is making a tentative invitation to dance and the other accepts, shyly at first. Gradually they tune in to
each other’s rhythm and eventually start to ‘dance’ cheerfully and enthusiastically in conversation together.

Part I

K: Kie, R: Ritsuko

20 K dekinai ne(..) demo ne:: saikin yappari ne baransu ga ne::(..)
21 ichinenme tte iu ka sa:=
22 R =un
23 K (chotto) yappari kyonen wa sa:
24 (..)
25 R =un
26 K kekko: kyonen ichi-nenkan wa=
27 R =un
28 K baransu no torikata ga sa:=
29 R =un
30 K kekko: muzukashikatta tokoro ga [aru
31 R [a: honto::
32 K [kotoshi haitte kara wa ne:
33 R [a:::
34 R [un
35 K kanari(..) toreru yo: ni natta ((yo: na)
36 R [a::: un un(..) yasumu
37 toki wa yasumu (to)
38 K un(..) ato dakara shigoto-suru toki wa gyaku ni
39 R un
40 K kyonen wa dakara(.) hen ni shigoto-shinai
41 R un
42 K nante iu no ka na:(..) sutoresu ga atta no
43 (J3 #7)

20 K We can’t, can we?(..) But, recently, a balance, y’know::(..)
21 in the first year, y’know=
22 R =yeah
23 K well, last year, it was (a bit)...
24 (..)
25 R yeah
26 K the last one year was, quite...=
27 R =yeah
28 K How to find a balance was... y’know... =
29 R =yeah
30 K there were a points that were quite difficult.
31 R [Aa, really.
32 K yeah, from the beginning of this year, y’know::
33 R [aaa
34 R yeah
35 K (I think) I pretty well(..) started to find...
36 R [I see, yeah. When one has a rest,
37 one should have a rest.
38 K Yeah.(..) Then, so when one works, it’s the other way around.
39 R yeah
40 K Last year, I mean, strangely I was trying not to work too hard
41 R yeah
42 K What can I say?(..) So I was stressed.

39 This part of the example was partially analysed in Chapter 5, in which it was noted that the speaker inserts short pauses in his/her utterance (see 5.2.1.1).
At the beginning of the first part, Kie gradually gains the status of principal speaker and starts to talk about her situation; Ritsuko accepts Kie’s initiation and adopts the role of principal hearer. At this stage, therefore, topic negotiation is in progress between the interactants. It is significant that both interactants’ utterances only occasionally overlap in this first part.

The interactants satisfy each other’s ‘negative face’ by not imposing on each other. The principal speaker gives an opportunity to the conversational partner by speaking slowly and inserting short pauses to determine whether she will respond to this new topic or not (see 6.1). These pauses give plenty of room for the hearer to decide whether she engages in this topic or not. The hearer, in turn, makes soft minimal responses in lines 22, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 34, 39, and 41 which only occasionally overlap her interlocutor’s utterance, and do not disturb it in any way (see 6.2.2.1). These phenomena can be seen as forms of ‘negative politeness’.

**Part 2**

R: Ritsuko, K: Kie

43 R A::::(.) A NARUHODO NE::?:
44 K [un(..) ima wa ne:(.) konogurai nara
daijo:bu da to omotchau to ne{::
45 R [fun fun fun
46 K ma: i: ya tte omotte ne:::(.) hora watashi dochira ka tte-
47 R [un
48 K -iu to sa: chotto ko: un kibishi: ka na: tte omou tokoro o:
49 R un
50 K EI YA tte ya yari nagara yaru taipu da kara sa:-

(J3 #7)

43 R Aaaa!(.) I see, naturally!
44 K [yeah(..) Now,(.) ‘this much is okay’, y’know,
if I can only just make myself believe it.
46 R [yup, yup, yup
47 K then, I will be okay, y’know.(..) As you know, I am the type -
48 R [yeah
49 K - who tends to do things which I think are pretty difficult,
50 R yeah
51 K really exerting myself, so that’s the type Lam, I reckon. =

In the second part of the segment, the hearer starts to show a great deal of understanding. For example, Ritsuko prolongs the final syllables indicating considerable thought, ‘A::: (I see)’ and ‘NARUHODO NE::?: (Naturally)’. At this stage, Ritsuko continues to insert short responses in lines 46, 48, and 50, while listening to principal speaker Kie. Ritsuko’s short responses sound more rhythmical than they did in the first part. On the other
hand, after having gone through the initial process of tentative negotiation to assume the role of principal speaker, the pace of Kie’s speech now becomes faster and each of her utterances becomes longer than in the first part.

The more rhythmical insertion of the hearer’s short responses seems to express her more active involvement, rather than just passive attention to the principal speaker’s talk. The hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ by repeatedly expressing agreement with what she says. The principal speaker’s faster pace and longer utterances suggest that the hearer’s ‘positive politeness’ is functioning well.

Part 3
R: Ritsuko, K: Kie

52 R =un un [un un un un un un
53 K [shigoto no shikata ga(...) soko o sa: [EI YA tte
54 R [un
55 K yaranaide yatteta [kara sa:
56 R [a: a: a: kaette [yokunakatta (wake)
57 K [KEKKO: sutoresu datta no yo
58 R a: a: a: (. ) MURI [SHINAIDE OKO: TTTE [IU MURI GA ATTA [(wake) -
59 K [koko wa [so: so: so: [SO: SO: -
60 R -da ne? ( . ) fu:::[in
61 K -SO: SO: SO::(.)[masa ni sore sore

Moving on to the last part of the example, the utterances of both interactants overlap significantly and this part sounds quite noisy. The absolute dominance of ‘positive politeness’ is the main characteristic of this part. Firstly, the hearer starts to show her involvement more actively than at any stage so far. For example, Ritsuko indicates her agreement with the rigorous repetition of ‘un (yeah)’ in line 52. She tries to complete Kie’s talk (see 5.2.1.2) in line 56, saying that it wasn’t good for Kie. And in lines 58 and 60, she paraphrases Kie’s talk (see 5.2.1.2), suggesting that Kie was trying to avoid overworking and that that was such an effort for her. These phenomena can be seen forms of ‘positive politeness’: the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ since she is trying to show her understanding.

Secondly, another ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon can be observed when the principal speaker emphatically agrees with the hearer’s summary of her own talk. In lines 59
and 61, principal speaker Kie makes another rigorous repetition of the expression ‘SO: (Right)’ in a loud excited voice, and in line 61, ‘masa ni sore sore (That’s it, that’s it exactly)’. The principal speaker satisfies hearer Ritsuko’s ‘positive face’ since her comments show strong agreement with Ritsuko’s summary.

Even though both interactants’ utterances overlap significantly in the last part, this does not sound like conflict at all. This point will be further discussed in the following section with another example (see 8.2).

8.1.2

The second example occurs when one of the interactants asks the potential principal speaker to talk about an incident which has just happened to him. The incident involved an encounter between Yamamoto and a man who works at the kitchen in the dormitory. It occurred in the dining room, when Yamamoto went to have a late dinner alone. The story is told by building up the layers of events step by step.

The segment starts rather loudly with the potential principal hearer’s questions, which show his interest in the incident and also encourage the potential principal speaker to talk more about the new topic. In the first part of the segment, regarding ‘politeness’ phenomena at the level of the manner of speaking and listening, different types of ‘politeness’ phenomena can be seen in each interactant’s utterances. That is to say, ‘positive politeness’ phenomena can be seen from the hearer’s side, and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena can be seen from the principal speaker’s side.

However, in the second part of the segment, the exchange suddenly calms down, while the principal speaker starts to tell his story and the hearer concentrates on listening to what the principal speaker has to say. Mainly ‘negative politeness’ phenomena can be seen from both sides at the level of manner of speaking and listening.

The last part of the segment regains liveliness after the principal speaker has finished his story at the end of the second part, while both interactants savour the story and express the view that the outcome was somehow predictable. This is because both interactants share the idea that this man described is rather strange, and Yamamoto’s story seems to prove it. The absolute dominance of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena can again be observed in the last part of the segment, a feature that can also be seen in the previous example (see 8.2.1.1). In this example of narrative, all the excitement stemming from the findings of the narrative are condensed in this last part.

Part 1

D: Doobayashi, Y: Yamamoto

1 D nan de nan de
2 Y iya: ima sar(...)
3 D [donatteta no?
4 Y iya:(..) donari wa shinai kedo taido no mondai da yo taido no
5 mondai
At the beginning of the first part, although Yamamoto rapidly gains the status of principal speaker by being asked to talk about an incident, he still does not start to tell his story straight away. The contrast between both interactants’ manner can be observed in the data. Doobayashi continuously asks questions about what has happened to Yamamoto, whereas Yamamoto discloses his story very gradually as if he is telling his story grudgingly.

Regarding ‘politeness’ phenomena at the level of manner of speaking and listening, ‘positive politeness’ phenomena can be constantly seen in Doobayashi’s utterances. First, Doobayashi asks questions turn by turn: ‘nan de nan de (Why, why)’ in line 1; ‘donatte ta no? (Was he shouting?)’ in line 3; ‘kimi ni taido ga warukatta no (Was he rude to you?)’ in line 6. Second, Doobayashi repeats Yamamoto’s expression ‘daso: to shiteru ne (He tries to create a cheerful atmosphere)’ in line 12, by which he indicates strong agreement. These questions and repetition can be seen as forms of ‘positive politeness’ since the hearer satisfies the speaker’s ‘positive face’ by expressing involvement (see 5.2.1.2).

Moving on to Yamamoto’s manner of speaking, he does not start telling his story immediately rather he begins by speaking unclearly and hesitantly. For example, he repeats himself saying ‘taido no mondai da yo taido no mondai (it’s more about his attitude, much more about his attitude)’ in lines 4 and 5, and ‘ore ore ore tte iu wake ja nai keredomo (not to me, not particularly to me, but)’ in line 7. Next, he starts to seek agreement with hesitation and hedges saying ‘itsumo nanka hogaraka na fun’iki o kamoshidaso: to shiteru janai (always, don’t you think he tries to create a cheerful atmosphere?)’ from lines 9 to 11. Eventually, when Yamamoto receives support from Doobayashi in line 12, he starts to talk about the actual story, given below as the second part of this segment.
Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

13 Y a:(...) sorede sa:?(...) ima cho:do meshi kui ni itta no yo
14 D un
15 {(...)
16 Y de nanka ore: ano::(...) chin chin-suru kara tte sa:=
17 D =un
18 Y ma::(...). naifu to fo:ku
19 D un
20 Y mitsuketa
21 D un
22 Y nai::(...). okashii::(...). de nanka ano: (? .) ga sa::(...). nokku-
23 shite:
24 D zuibun osoku made iru ne;
25 Y ou::(...). ma: sore wa ii to shite:
26 D un
27 {gap}
28 Y de nokku-shita
29 D un
30 Y de ore ni kizuita
31 {silence}
32 D un
33 Y ko: yatte sa=
34 D =un
35 Y sorede ano::(...). betsu no iriguchi kara (? .) no iriguchi ni koi to
36 D un =
37 Y =iu yo:na ma: sain o shita yo [na:
38 D [hai:(). kita?
39 {(.)
40 Y de an:
41 {gap}
42 Y hitokoto mo naku
43 D un
44 Y ma: hoka no::(...). mo: hitotsu no iriguchi o akete da na:
45 D un
46 Y naifu to fo:ku::(...). BA::N::(...). GACHA
47 {gap}
48 Y owari yo

(J1 #1)

13 Y Yeah.(..) And then,(..) now I just went to have a meal.
14 D Yeah
15 (...) And, I, er,(..) was going to heat it in the microwave.=
17 D = Yeah.
18 Y Well,(..) well,(..) the knives and forks,
19 D yeah
20 Y I was looking for them.
21 D yeah
22 Y There aren’t any.(..) Strange.(..) and well (? .) I knock
23 on the door.
24 D He stays there until very late.
25 Y Yeah.(..) Well, it doesn’t matter.
26 D yeah
27 {gap}
28 Y And I knocked on the door.
29 D yeah
30 Y and he realised I was there.

---

40 This part of the segment was analysed in Chapter 5 the speaker intensifies interst to the hearer (see 5.3.2).
In the second part of the example, principal speaker Yamamoto tells about this incident which has just happened to him, and the hearer Doobayashi starts to concentrate on listening to Yamamoto’s story. The setting of Yamamoto’s story is the dining room in the dormitory. According to Yamamoto’s story telling, since he had missed the regular dinner hour, he and the man concerned were alone in the dining room, and both seemed to remain very quiet, with no conversation passing between them.

Two significant features can be pointed out in this part. First, hearer Doobayashi’s contribution consists almost entirely of soft minimal responses. By the act of giving minimal responses regularly, a minimum level of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena can be seen on Doobayashi’s part. Two exceptions occur, in line 24 ‘zuibun osoku made iru ne: (He stays there until very late, doesn’t he?)’ which is a comment, and in line 38 ‘ha:(.) kita? (I see, he gestured?)’ in which Doobayashi confirms what has happened in Yamamoto’s story. The principal speaker’s response to the former utterance of Doobayashi is ‘ma: sore wa ii to shite: (well, it doesn’t matter)’ which depreciates Doobayashi’s comment. This can be seen as a maintenance of the narrative from the side of the principal speaker.

Second, both interactants’ utterances rarely overlap with each other in this part. This is because Yamamoto speaks slowly and frequently pauses, and Doobayashi manages to insert a number of soft minimal responses in the gaps which Yamamoto creates in lines 14, 17, 19, 21, 26, 29, 32, 34, 36, 43, and 45. This can be seen as form of ‘negative politeness’ since both interactants satisfy each other’s ‘negative face’ by not disturbing each other’s utterances as Yamamoto finishes his story.

Part 3
D: Doobayashi, Y: Yamamoto
Moving on to the last part of the example, both Doobayashi and Yamamoto start to savour Yamamoto’s story. The absolute dominance of ‘positive politeness’ is the main characteristic of this final part of the example. This feature can also be observed in the first example examined above (see 8.2.1). Firstly, hearer Doobayashi gives a comment on Yamamoto’s story with an emphatic tone of voice. Doobayashi shows his involvement more actively than in the previous part of the segment. This can be seen as forms of ‘positive politeness’: the hearer satisfies the principal speaker’s ‘positive face’ since he is trying to express his understanding.

Another ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon can be observed when both Doobayashi and Yamamoto emphatically repeat each other’s utterances. The interactants satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ since these repeated comments show strong agreement between the interactants.

In addition to the occurrence of repetition, the propositional content of the utterances, namely, ‘yahari (just as expected)’ and ‘omottotori (as one thought)’, implies that both interactants share certain knowledge about this man. Regarding this incident, strong agreement between Doobayashi and Yamamoto can be seen in the propositional content as well.

8.1.3 Conclusion
The previous two sections have examined two different kinds of narratives. The first of these is started voluntarily by one of the interactants, and the principal speaker has to accomplish a rather complicated task in which she explains her strange circumstance (see 8.1.1). On the
other hand, the second example is started at the request of one of the interactants to the other, and the principal speaker talks about the incident (see 8.1.2).

In the analysis presented, each segment was divided into three parts according to different stages in the development of the conversation. In the first example, the overall atmosphere of the conversation is strongly influenced by the level of the hearer’s understanding of the principal speaker’s explanation. For example, in the first part, the hearer listens to the speaker carefully, in the second part she increases her understanding, and then in the last part her understanding reaches the point at which she is able to paraphrase and summarise what the principal speaker wants to say.

In the second example, the type of conversation sequence which Sacks (1974) describes can be observed clearly. First, in the ‘preface sequence’, the interactants negotiate their roles in the conversation, in the ‘telling sequence’ the principal speaker tells a story, and then in the ‘response sequence’ the hearer gives feedback on the story.

The analysis of these two segments shows that the interactants are constantly adjusting the ways they interact and that both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ appear to realise these adjustments. The type of elements which influence the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening include the different tasks of the narratives or different stages in the development of the conversation.

The first example starts rather quietly and shows dominance of ‘negative politeness’ in terms of the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening. This is because the interactants are going through the negotiation over the roles and the topic in the conversation. On the other hand, the second example starts rather noisily because one of the interactants is urging the other to tell about his experience. The middle part of the first example increases in liveliness because the hearer increases her understanding of the principal speaker’s talk, whereas that of the second example calms down dramatically because the hearer concentrates on listening to the principal speaker’s talk. Both examples finish with the excitement and agreement of both interactants, and the dominance of ‘positive politeness’ phenomena is significant.

The interactants are continuously adjusting the ways they interact according to various factors such as tasks or development of the conversation. As a result, both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ appear in the interactants’ manner of speaking and listening.

8.2 THE COMBINATION OF AN FTA, ‘POSITIVE POLITENESS’ AND ‘NEGATIVE POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA IN SEQUENCE

This section deals with another example in which an FTA, ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena occur one after another in sequence. In the data, the sequence of a speaker performing an FTA and then immediately redressing it can be found in quite a
number of instances. The act of performing an FTA can be interpreted as an indication of
closeness because the interactants are confident in their strongly established relationship. On
the basis of this confidence, interactants often add ‘politeness’ features, such as jokes or
laughter, to the act of performing the FTA, and these extra features function to mitigate the
FTA. These are the focuses of this section.

In the following segment of conversation, one of the interactants starts to talk about
the idea of getting a part-time job, and the other gives his opinions. At the starting point, both
interactants seem to feel close enough to exchange their opinion quite bluntly. Eggins and
Slade (1997) refer to the important function of humour in casual conversation. This is an
example in which humour is used to mitigate the seriousness of the propositional content.
Although Doobayashi often states his opinions very frankly which can be seen as an FTA, he
always adds ‘politeness’ features which mitigate the FTA.

Y: Yamamoto, D: Doobayashi

```
1 Y iya::: kane ga honto: ni ne: na:
2 (..)
3 D u: [n
4 Y [{(ore) mo hataraku ka
5 (..)
6 D sonna yoyu: nai tte itteru kuse ni
7 (gap)
8 Y ore mo (...) menze: ten de
9 D ett zett (...) zettai muri da yo (...) nani ka na? (.) nani nani
dekiru ka na?:
11 (..)
12 Y ma: settaigyo: settaigyo: (de ka)?
13 (..)
14 D nai yo na?:
15 Y a:iu (...) are janai desu ka?:=
16 D ~un [dekiru koto
17 Y [ (?)
18 Y ura de ko: (nanda yo)
19 D a: sara o kamomu ni arattetari
20 Y ato wa: (...) unso:gyo:
21 D a:: un un un un
22 (gap)
23 Y o:: yaku yaku
24 (..)
25 D yaku?=
26 Y ~tsuyaku
27 D iya: mui:tenai to omou yo:=
28 Y =do:shite da yo
tsu:yaku (...) tte: [
30 Y [sono hen no tsuyaku yori ore matomo [da yo?
31 D [iya iya
32 dakara (...) elgo::: wa sorya: mondainai kamo shirenai kedo::
33 Y nikoyaka ni
34 D u:n ko: [tsu:
35 Y [nikoyaka ni () [(ka:
36 D [tsuyaku tte() taihen nan da ze? ko:
37 seikaku[teki ni
38 Y [o
39 Y ore datte so: da ze () so: shita koto shita koto aru yo:
40 tsuyaku gurai
41 D iya::: dame da yo (...) DAME da yo (laughing) toka itte[
42 Y [dame da yo
tte: (...) kyu: ni () kyu: ni ko: nanka() basatto: ko: () basatto:
```
Y Well, there really is no money, is that right?
D Yeah.
Y [Should (I) work?]
D You say you don’t have such a lot of time though.
Y I may also work in a duty free shop.
D Oh, no, definitely. That’s definitely impossible. What would be good for you? What could you do?
Y Well, (in) customer service.
D There is nothing, isn’t that so?
D = Yeah, nothing you can do.
Y behind the scenes, something like, (what is it?)
D I see, you quietly wash dishes?
Y also transport businesses.
D I see, yup, yup, yup, yup.
Y Oh, translation, translation.
D translation? =
Y = interpreter.
D Well, I don’t think you are suitable for that job. =
Y = Why not?
D The interpreter is
Y = I’m more decent than the interpreters around here.
D Yeah, like, inter
Y With smiling. =
D [The job of interpreter is hard, do you know? Like in terms of character]
Y even I (.) yeah, I’ve done it before, silly interpreting
D Well, it’s impossible. I didn’t mean to say [laughing]
Y = [laughing] it’s impossible. you said suddenly suddenly, like ‘basatt’ something like (. .) basatt
D ‘kiri(kiri)’ (. .) was cut from the shoulder to the hip, something like, um (. .) was
First of all, Yamamoto states his interest in working in a duty free shop in line 8. Doobayashi’s response is that he thinks it is definitely impossible in line 9. The propositional content ‘muri (impossible)’ is modified by ‘zettai (definitely)’ which makes the assertion very strong. However, Doobayashi’s response is mitigated in two ways. First, his utterance starts with slight hesitation which can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ (see 6.2.1). Second, after giving his opinion ‘it’s definitely impossible’, Doobayashi enthusiastically starts to look for other possibilities for suitable jobs for Yamamoto in lines 9 and 10. The act of looking for other options compensates for his opinion ‘zettai muri (it’s definitely impossible)’ because he expresses care for Yamamoto by at least trying to be constructive in the situation.

Yamamoto and Doobayashi start to engage in the search for a suitable job for Yamamoto together. In line 12, Yamamoto suggests that they may focus on the idea of work in customer service sector, and then Doobayashi completes the sentence ‘nai yo na: (there isn’t any.)’ in line 14. Following Doobayashi’s comment in lines 14 and 16, Yamamoto suggests a completely different type of work which is behind the scenes (line 18), and then Doobayashi again completes the sentence with a joke ‘sara o kamoku ni arattetari (You quietly wash dishes)’ in line 19. In lines 23 and 26, Yamamoto shows his interest in the job of interpreter. Doobayashi responds to Yamamoto that he thinks Yamamoto is not at all suitable for that kind of job in line 27.

Immediately after Doobayashi’s response, Yamamoto asks the reason for Doobayashi’s answer in line 28. First, Doobayashi emphasises that it is not because of Yamamoto’s English ability in lines 31 and 32. He explains that the job of an interpreter is hard in terms of character in lines 34, 36 and 37. Doobayashi implies that the job requires not only skill in language but also a certain personality type.

Doobayashi’s core response ‘dame da yo (it is impossible)’ is sandwiched between hesitation ‘iya::: (well)’ and the expression ‘toka itte: (I didn’t really mean it)’ in line 41. Hesitation can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’ since the speaker satisfies the addressee’s ‘negative face’ by showing reluctance to mention something. The expression ‘toka itte: (I didn’t really mean it)’ softens the prior expression by suggesting that the prior expression is some kind of mistake.

Yamamoto laughs and jokes that Doobayashi’s expression ‘dame da yo (it is impossible)’ is abrupt, as if Doobayashi were cutting through him with a sword in lines 42,
43, and 44. Doobayashi joins in the joke describing what he has said using onomatopoeia, 'kiri kiri ni (chop chop)' in line 45. In lines 46 and 47, Yamamoto continues to exaggerate the effect of Doobayashi’s response using another expression ‘kesagiri (cut from the shoulder to the hip)’. Both interactants joke that Doobayashi’s expression sounds as if it has seriously injured Yamamoto.

The laughter and the frankness in pointing out the FTA can be seen as forms of ‘politeness’ in this segment. This is because both interactants satisfy each other’s ‘face’ by emphasising the closeness between them. In this way, humour can mitigate the seriousness of the propositional content.

8.3 DUALITY OF CERTAIN ‘POLITENESS’ PHENOMENA

This section discusses the case in which a certain ‘politeness’ phenomenon can be seen as a form of both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’. In Chapters 5 and 6, the study did briefly refer to this issue in the relevant places, for example, to give positive evaluation (‘positive politeness’, see 5.3.1.1) and to give deference (‘negative politeness’, see 6.4.2). However, in these chapters, ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena were analysed separately, so the analysis was not able to highlight the duality of a certain ‘politeness’ phenomenon. Thus, this section focuses on this duality of a certain ‘politeness’ phenomenon more closely.

K: Kie, R: Ritsuko

(J3 #7)

20 K dekinai ne(..) demo ne:: saikin yappari ne baransu ga ne::
21 (... ichinenme tte iu ka sa::
22 R =un
23 K (chotto) yappari kyonen wa sa:
24 (...)
25 R =un
26 K kekko: kyonen ichi-nenkan wa-
27 R =un
28 K baransu no torikata ga sa:-
29 R =un
30 K kekko: muzukashikatta tokoro ga [aru
31 R [a: honto::
32 K un [kotoshi haitte kara wa ne:
33 R [a:::
34 R un
35 K kanari(..) toreru yo: ni natta [{yo: na)
36 R [a:: so: un un[..] yasumu
37 toki wa yasumu (to)
38 K un[..] ato dakara shigoto-suru toki wa gyaku ni
39 R un
40 K kyonen wa dakara(,) hen ni shigoto-shinai
41 R un
42 K nante iu no ka na:(..) suoresu ga atta no

K: We can’t, can we?(..) But, recently, a balance, y’know::
21 (... in the first year, y’know =
For example, Kie does not mention what kind of balance she is talking about from line 20 to 35. In addition to the unclear expressions, Kie does not complete her utterance in line 38 (see 6.2.1.1).

As mentioned above (see 8.2.1.1), at the beginning of this segment, potential principal speaker Kie introduces this new topic about her situation as a working mother, her utterance is full of ellipses and inversions. The phenomena which are the focus of this section, those that can be seen both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’, appear in two places.

First, the interactants satisfy each other’s ‘negative face’ by not imposing on each other. For example, the principal speaker gradually introduces a new topic and seeks the hearer’s approval to continue her talk by speaking slowly and inserting short pauses (see 6.1). On the other hand, the hearer makes soft minimal responses which only occasionally overlap her interlocutor’s utterance, and do not disturb it in any way (see 6.2.2.1). These phenomena can be seen as forms of ‘negative politeness’.

At the same time, in addition to the aspect of ‘negative politeness’, the interactants also satisfy each other’s ‘positive face’ by showing their engagement in the interaction. The principal speaker sounds as if she is inviting the hearer into the conversation by creating opportunities for the hearer to insert short responses (see 5.2.1.1). The hearer, in turn, indicates her engagement in this topic by taking advantage of the opportunities created by the speaker and inserting short responses (see 5.2.1.2). These phenomena can be taken as forms of ‘positive politeness’.

Moving on to the second way in which this segment illustrates the duality of ‘politeness’, both interactants speak rather unclearly, and principal speaker Kie’s utterances
especially are full of ellipses and inversions. For example, Kie does not mention what kind of balance she is talking about from lines 20 to 35 and she does not complete her utterance in line 38 (see 6.2.1.1). Hearer Ritsuko is also somewhat vague, paraphrasing the speaker’s talk with a proverb-like expression in lines 36 and 37: ‘yasumu toki wa yasumu (When one has a rest, one should have a rest)’. This expression has a broad, generic reference, rather than referring specifically and directly to Kie’s situation (see 6.3.1). In these ways, both interactants satisfy each other’s ‘negative face’ by using unclear expressions, which can be seen as a form of ‘negative politeness’.

At the same time, despite the lack of clarity of their expressions, the interactants are rapidly approaching mutual understanding. Therefore, these ellipses and a proverb-like expression can also be regarded as both interactants indicating their confidence in the fact that they can understand each other without requiring a great deal of clarity or detailed description. This can be seen as a form of ‘positive politeness’ which emphasises the fact that the principal speaker and the hearer share some commonality (see 5.1.1.2).

8.4 CONCLUSION

The three sections described above presented various ways in which the two types of ‘politeness’ phenomena, ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’, appear in casual conversation. The first section argued that ‘politeness’ phenomena appear under the influence of various factors such as the task or the development of the conversation. The second section showed that ‘positive politeness’ phenomena and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena can appear in a sequence involving an FTA. Finally, the last section presented cases of the duality of certain ‘politeness’ phenomena.

Considering these observation about how the two types of ‘politeness’ phenomena appear, this study strongly supports O’Driscoll’s claim (1996) that ‘dual nature of politeness is not a binary choice but rather a matter of degree’ (p. 28).
CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude this study by summarising what I see as its achievements. In the first section below, I summarise the reasons for the choice of the theoretical framework of this study. The second section points out the aims of the study and the next section summarises its main findings. A statement of limitations of this study and recommendations for further research will follow.

9.1 THE BASIS FOR THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This study adapted Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory to analyse conversational data in Japanese for two reasons. First, this theory provides a theoretical framework consisting of abstract concepts such as ‘face’ and ‘face threatening acts’. This has enabled the study to identify what kind of phenomena can be regarded as forms of ‘politeness’ in the data without involving native speaker’s judgement as to what politeness is in a certain language or culture.

Second, Brown and Levinson’s theory widens the notion of ‘politeness’ in terms of its definition and types of strategies involved. The theory consists of the dual nature of ‘politeness’ which is a view of politeness that research in Japanese linguistics seriously lacks (see 2.2.1). It also includes a very wide range of strategies that are invaluable for analysing authentic data in a precise way which was a major requirement of this research.

9.2 AIMS OF THIS STUDY

This study had three general goals. The first goal was to modify Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory in order to adapt it to the analysis of a non-goal oriented type of interaction, namely casual conversation between close friends in Japanese. Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory focuses mainly on goal-oriented interaction. At the same time, the theory has the potential to be a powerful tool to identify and analyse ‘politeness’ phenomena in non-goal-oriented interaction as well. In order to further develop ‘politeness’ theory in relation to non-goal oriented interaction some modifications to the theory were essential.

The second goal of this study was to investigate the characteristics and the nature of ‘politeness’ phenomena in Japanese casual conversation which are identified by the modified version of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory.

The final goal was to examine the characteristics of ‘face threatening acts’ in Japanese casual conversation through the analysis of the causes of conflict in the data, by again using the modified version of Brown and Levinson’s theory.

9.3 FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

This study has made a number of important findings. First, during non-goal-oriented interaction, the nature of ‘politeness’ phenomena can be different from those in goal-oriented
interaction. For example, indicating mutual participation in various ways (see 5.2.1) and introducing a new topic gradually (see 6.1) can be taken as forms of ‘politeness’ in casual conversation. These kinds of ‘politeness’ phenomena are, understandably, not dealt with in Brown and Levinson’s theory which deals primarily with goal-oriented interaction.

Not only ‘politeness’ phenomena but also ‘face threatening acts’ in non-goal-oriented interaction differ from those in goal-oriented interaction. In casual conversation, signs of inattentiveness (see 7.1) or lack of enthusiasm (see 7.4) can contribute to the occurrence of conflict, so these can also be regarded as ‘face threatening acts’. These kinds of ‘face threatening acts’ are also not dealt with by Brown and Levinson.

At the same time, the study identified cases in which, even though ‘politeness’ phenomena can be observed in both interactants’ utterances, conflict still occurs (see 7.5). The analysis revealed three reasons for this. First of all, ‘politeness’ phenomena and ‘face threatening acts’ can actually be seen as two sides of the same coin. This is because some ‘politeness’ phenomena actually have the potential to be interpreted as ‘face threatening acts’ and vice versa. For example, a ‘positive politeness’ phenomenon can be taken as ‘face threatening act’ if it is interpreted as being too intrusive or disturbing; a ‘negative politeness’ phenomenon can be seen as a ‘face threatening act’ if it is taken as indicating aloofness.

A second reason why conflict may occur even in the presence of ‘politeness’ phenomena is that, both interactants may not share a common sense of the direction of the topic development. For example, if the principal speaker is intent on developing his/her story, the hearer’s questions about the story may be interpreted as side issues that hinder the principal speaker’s smooth topic development rather than as signs of encouragement and interest.

Yet another problem that might lead to conflict arises when the interactants do not share the same ‘frame’ in the interaction. For instance, when one of the interactants is being rather serious and trying to introduce a new topic, the other might wish to express closeness and tease him/her. Alternatively, the hearer may be too cautious, showing respect for the principal speaker’s right to hold the floor, but not giving sufficient support with short responses.

These three reasons for the occurrence of conflict suggest the following point: ‘politeness’ phenomena may only function properly in circumstances in which the interactants share an understanding of the direction of the conversation or of the ‘frame’ of what is actually happening in the conversation.

One further major finding in this study is that, according to the data examined, ‘politeness’ phenomena appear in various combinations. The analysis shows cases in which multiple ‘politeness’ phenomena can be combined in one utterance (see 7.1). This is because ‘politeness’ phenomena can appear in the prosodic features, in linguistic forms and in the propositional content of the utterance. An FTA and both ‘positive’ and ‘negative politeness’
phenomena can appear in sequence (see 8.2). ‘Politeness’ phenomena also appear under the significant influence of various factors such as the task or the development of the principal speaker’s talk (see 8.1). Some ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena may not be clearly separable in interaction (see 8.3). All these patterns suggest that the interactants are continuously adjusting the ways they interact, using FTAs along with both ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’ phenomena.

9.4 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY
It is important to recognise there are some significant limitations to this study. First, a major limitation on the data collection method should be noted. This study collected data by recording conversations on audio tape, without the added dimension of visual data. Therefore, the study dealt only with verbal interaction, and non-verbal behaviours, such as gazes or nodding, are completely ignored.

This study is also limited with regard to its focus. The study focused mainly on the type of interaction in which two roles, that of principal speaker and principal hearer, are clearly identified. However, this type of interaction is, of course, not the only kind which occurs in casual conversation.

Furthermore, the scope of the study was clearly limited by the fact that all conversations recorded involved only two interactants, all of whom were broadly similar in terms of age, educational background and socio-economic status. The findings of the study must be viewed strictly in the light of limitations such as these.

This study has dealt with a wide range of ‘politeness’ phenomena in casual conversation, occurring both with and without the occurrence of conflict. Consequently, many of the phenomena described were touched on only briefly, and there is much that remains to be investigated in this relatively under-researched area of ‘politeness’ in casual conversation in Japanese.

9.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
As a final section of this study, I would like to point to some possible directions for further research. First, this study can be seen as an attempt to show the relevance of Brown and Levinson’s ‘politeness’ theory to explaining phenomena in casual conversation. These phenomena are related to facilitating the conversation, preventing FTAs from developing into conflict, and smoothing over the after-effects of conflict in casual conversation. This study has shown that Brown and Levinson’s theory is useful to capture certain phenomena in conversation as ‘politeness’ phenomena and to explain how ‘politeness’ phenomena function. Therefore, this method should enable further studies to compare either similar kinds of phenomena or different kinds of phenomena in non-goal-oriented interaction across different languages and cultures.
Second, of course, the limitations described above should be addressed in further research. It would obviously be ideal to include visual data, so that non-verbal behaviour can be analysed along with verbal interaction in this type of research. Furthermore, a wider range of types of conversational interaction should be considered, including conversations involving more than two interactants and those in which the distinction between the principal speaker and the principal hearer is clear.

Finally, the study has shown that the potential of casual conversation as a data source is enormous. Further research on this type of interaction is highly recommended. This type of study has great potential to contribute to the development of linguistic, sociological and anthropological research, and also to the field of cross-cultural communication.
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