B.A THESIS

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON MAKING REQUESTS IN

VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH IN TERMS OF POLITENESS

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Abstract

Politeness is now such universal term that everyone can not ignore in communication, particularly in request-making. As a result, politeness strategies for requests are developed to apply in interaction depending on social contexts in each culture. This study is done for the sake of finding the differences and similarities as well in politeness strategies for requests made by English and Vietnamese native speakers under the impact of age, gender and social status so that finally some suggestions for making requests are given to Vietnamese learners of English to have suitable responses to those from the English culture. Two versions of questionnaires: one for VNS and the other for ENS are delivered to collect the data for analysis. Both group have the same number of participants (30 for each). The study’s data analysis is based on statistic method, comparison and contrast as well. Consequently, the result of the study shows that there are both similarities and differences in choosing the politeness strategies for requests made by VNS and ENS. Also, the three factors of gender, age and social status more and less affect their selection of request strategies.
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**Abbreviations**

CID   Conventional indirectness

ENS   English native speakers

VNS   Vietnamese native speakers

F-T-F Female-to-female

F-T-M Female-to-male

NCID  Non-conventional indirectness
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

1. Motivation of the study
Vietnam is entering the hectic development flow of the world in which international cooperation in general and cultural, educational exchanges in particular are strongly pushed up. In fact, learning foreign languages and specially English has been extremely important. The international language of English has been considered an effective tool to supportably proceed those activities much more easily. Traditional language learning, however, is becoming outdated in modern times because only vocabulary and grammar are focused on. In fact, today English is learnt for communicative goal, so only vocabulary and grammar is not enough.

Another important element is culture. The communicative goal may definitely fail to achieve if this element is ignored. It is believed that each country has its own distinctive features which learners should be paid much attention to. If they do not eagerly get themselves prepared for knowledge about one culture in which they are newly involved, lots of misunderstandings and embarrassments will follow when there are communications and interaction as well. Good preparation for cultural knowledge will be useful to help the speakers or anyone involved to avoid them. Maybe a good basis of culture is an advantage over others in social interactions. Therefore, language and culture have a mutual relationship. In communicative contexts, their engagement as well as involvement is easily seen. When communication among people who come from different cultures or even from the same one occurs, misinterpretations possibly leads to misunderstandings because each represents his own culture including customs, rituals and etiquettes. In cross-culture communication, a person usually imposes his individual judgments on others’ actions just based on what he had known earlier. As a result, the communicative target is impossible to obtain. Obviously cultural understandings benefit the interlocutors to become successful in communication, perceive certain ways of speaking more deeply so that they can have suitable reactions. Making requests which are observed in English and Vietnamese is a good example. It is
common and important in daily interaction. Requests show the fact that a language is not just a simple utterance at all. Many problems will certainly follow if culture and politeness factors are neglected. The two cultures have their own politeness standards, so an utterance in general and a request as well in particular may be acceptable in Vietnamese, but unacceptable in English and vice-versa or the ways people make requests are different. In some cases, people make direct requests while others make indirect requests. Obviously, it is very important to get ourselves well prepared for those matters. No matter how different they are, politeness strategy is always a desirous goal to reach. On a small scale of cross-culture communication, the study tries to make clear the contrast between the two speech acts of making requests in English and Vietnamese. Requests in English and Vietnamese share some certain similarities, but have differences, too. Vietnamese and English speakers do not have the same conceptions of what makes a polite request based on their habits and cultures.

For those reasons, the study of speech act of making requests in English and Vietnamese is made. It will provide good reference and suggestion to make a good request and avoid unwanted misinterpretations so that people have more opportunities to become successful communicators. Therefore, how to make a polite request to maintain social interactions among interlocutors from different cultures, keep conversations on and on, get the addressees to carry out what the speakers expect should be taken into account.

2. Aims of the study

The study aims to

- Make comparison and contrast between English and Vietnamese requests and discuss common strategies for requests made by both ENS and VNS to give an insight into making requests for Vietnamese learners of English.
- Provide some pedagogical suggestions for Vietnamese learners of English.
3. **Scope of the study**

The study is about comparing and contrasting the requests made by ENS and VNS; and discuss some common politeness strategies for direct and indirect requests used by Vietnamese and native English speakers under the impact of social status, age and gender.

4. **Significance of the study**

The study involves the speech act of making requests, which sets up social relationships among people in a particular culture. The speech act is a telling part in everyday communication. The findings of this study are anticipated making contribution to learning the ways English and Vietnamese make polite requests so that Vietnamese learners of English can avoid many problems that follow if they do not get themselves well prepared for those. The interlocutors in two cultures will increase more opportunities to understand each other. Hopefully they all become successful in communication.

5. **Research method**

In order to achieve the aims study mentioned earlier, the major method to be employed in the study is delivering questionnaires. Also, contrastive analysis is used. Therefore, all the considerations, remarks, comments and conclusions in the thesis are mainly used for data analysis.

For data collection, questionnaires and observations are mainly used. Firstly, questionnaires are carefully designed to find out what and how the participants in the study do with the speech act of making polite requests in English and Vietnamese. Then, the similarities and differences are analyzed and pointed out what are distinctive features of Vietnamese and English cultures in this area. In order to collect data for contrastive analysis, two types of questionnaires are required: one in English and the other in Vietnamese. The English questionnaires are delivered to thirty native speakers of English in Ho Chi Minh City, where many foreigners have been living and working and the Vietnamese version are delivered to
thirty native speakers of Vietnamese. Secondly, personal observations are also preceded in different social situations, in which people make requests. Observation work is done in three different social contexts including university campus, bookstores and parks. They are important parts in the study in terms of formulating the hypothesis and making interpretations for the statistics. The observation is useful to check the theory of making polite in the two cultures in reality.

For data analysis, statistics; comparison and contrast are involved. Firstly, statistics method in which all the data collected from questionnaires and observation are put together in one place to analyze and understand it more easily is very important in data analysis. All responses to the questions in questionnaires are listed and counted for numbers based on the different politeness strategies for requests made by ENS and VNS. The number is changed into percentage in each case observed. Secondly, for the sake of comparison and contrast, the speech act of making requests is analyzed to find similarities and differences in Vietnamese and English and indicate some common strategies for requests used by VNS and ENS. That is the big goal of the study so that all things can be made clear for the speakers and hearers to have suitable responses and avoid some misunderstandings.

6. Related previous studies
In 2nd term 2007, Dau Thi Thanh focused and emphasized on the relationship between politeness and indirectness used in the speech acts of making requests in English and Vietnamese. The study pointed some major differences in making requests in English and Vietnamese. The study mentioned above are helpful to this study in terms of providing the theoretical background for the thesis as they are closely related to making polite requests in English and Vietnamese right in the thesis.

7. Organization of the study
This study is divided into five chapters, as followed

Chapter 1 is introduction, which presents an overview of the study in which the reason for the research, the aims, the research methods, the scope, the significance
of the study, related previous study as well as the organization of the study is briefly presented.

Chapter 2 is literature review, which includes the theoretical issues relevant to the study including the theory of speech acts in general and the speech act of request in particular, politeness in making polite requests in Vietnamese and English,

Chapter 3 is methodology discussing some issues of research questions, research participants, research procedure, data collection, and method of analysis.

Chapter 4 presents an overview of results and discusses about the results of survey questionnaire about request-making in Vietnamese and English; the politeness strategies for requests made by ENS and VNS under the impact of three factors: social status, gender and age.

Chapter 5 is conclusion addressing the key issues in the study, summarizing some shortcomings revealed during the process of completing the thesis, compare, contrast and synthesize the ways people in the two culture make polite requests so that Vietnamese learners as well as teachers of English can get some suggestions to better studying and teaching.
Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Politeness theory

In everyday life, communication is the common activity of human beings. Many messages are transferred through communication. Verbal acts convey a lot of different purposes of the speakers. They are used for giving information, expressing personal viewpoints or making comments, greetings, invitations, compliments, apology, complaints, or requests. Speakers want hearers to do their intended actions. Obviously, the hearers’ willingness to follow or not follow the speakers’ wants depends on the speakers’ authority and politeness to ask them to do the actions. In this study, the politeness is referred as an important aspect observed to examine how it affects the efficiency of communication. Because people in the world always try their best to be successful communicators, politeness hence can be considered as an important communicative strategy which helps to maintain good relationships between speakers and hearers and keep the conversations going on. There have been many researchers trying to define what is politeness to apply in communication so that communicative goal can be most successfully achieved. Lakoff (1977) attempts to account for politeness phenomenon. She suggests that politeness is developed by society in order to reduce friction in personal interaction and comprises three rules of politeness:

1. Don’t impose
2. Give options
3. Make the receiver feel good

The first rule, “Don’t impose”, is associated with distance and formality. The speaker shows his/her politeness by asking for permission or apologizing in advance to lessen the imposition on the hearer when requiring the hearer to do something. The second rule, “Give options”, is associated with deference and accounts for cases in which the linguistic manifestations of politeness appear to leave the choice of
confirming or not to the addressee. Her third rule, “Make the receiver feel good”, accounts for the case in which the speaker employs devices which will make the addressee feel liked and wanted. The decrease in imposition will be obviously examined in the examples

(1) Turn the light on (imposition)
(2) Could you turn the light on? (less imposition)
(3) I wonder if you could turn the light on. (option)
(4) Darling, turn the light on. (encourage husband or wife to turn the TV off with much sweet love)

The sentence (1) indicates speakers’ want with great force as a demand in case where the speaker and the hearer are not in equal position. The speaker seems to have much more power than the hearer. However, the imposition nature of the last three examples is more and more lessened by using “Could you”, “darling” or giving option. One noticeable thing is that the last example use “darling”. Its effect to increase the politeness makes the hearer comfortable with the least imposition among that in three left examples. “Could you” is in for of a question to examine the hearer’s willingness to do the action. It makes the example 2 different from the first one. The force on the hearer seems not serious any more. In example 3, the hearer feels easy in his/her choice to do the action.

Meanwhile, the central to Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness is the concept of “face” which is defined as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 66). According to Brown and Levinson (1978: 66), “face is something that emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction” aspects of the same entity and refer to two basic desires or wants of any individual. They distinguish two components of face, “positive face” and “negative face”, which are two related in any interaction. In fact, positive face is defined as the necessity to be accepted by at least some others, whereas negative face is described
as the desire to be independent, the desire that the action is unimpeded by others. Following their theories, in communication, there is possibility of appearing some Face Threatening Acts (FTA) which are “by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or of the speaker” (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 70). To deal with those acts, they identify a set of strategies which can help either to avoid or minimize them. In their opinion, positive face threatening acts should be adjusted by positive politeness strategies in which the speakers should “claim common ground”, “convey that speaker and hearer are cooperators” and “fulfill hearer’s want for some X” (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 107). Meanwhile, negative face threatening acts should be solved by applying negative politeness strategies, some of which are: conventional and non-conventional indirectness; questions, hedge that help to minimize the imposition.

In general, those scholars agree that politeness strategies applied in utterances are paid much attention so that the speakers avoid the imposition on the hearers and then make them possible to achieve their goal.

2. Speech act theory

In reality, lots of different physical acts based on the body movements such as cooking, eating, driving, gardening and so on are performed. Besides those physical acts, verbal acts are also important and effective in communication. All of them contain messages expressing the speakers’ opinions, viewpoints, wishes or wants. It is undoubted that people can accomplish a lot of things through verbal acts. Some examples of telephone calls, letters, and reports have the value of information transfer. They may be in forms of word or sound. No matter what they are, verbal acts still work well and have certain power of information transfer themselves. It can be inferred that language is the principal tool to carry out hundreds of tasks in a typical day. In order to learn the nature of an utterance, linguists have been done many researches in this area. As a result, pragmatics in which utterances are examined from different corners appeared.
Pragmatics has been defined as the study of how utterances have meanings in speech situations with speakers and hearers involved. Utterance meaning is the main research object in pragmatics, whereas semantics focuses on sentence meaning. For instance, from a pragmatic point of view, a statement like “It is hot today” can be an assertion about the weather, a request to turn on the air conditioner, or some other speech act, depending on the intention of the speaker in specific situations. By contrast, from a semantic point of view, it has only a single meaning. By that way, it only indicates the state of the weather: hot and not comfortable. Evidently, depending on the speakers’ intention, the first or the second meaning would be aimed at. Possibly, the sentence above is a good example about the speech act if the only first one is most referred. As can be seen, a sentence is not just a simple utterance also does a specific action. As a matter of fact, the term of speech act is discussed. The theory of speech acts has been studied for ages, but it was Austin who was considered the first person to set foundation for the theory of speech acts. He postulates that many utterances do not communicate information, but are equivalent to actions. These utterances are called speech acts.

Yule (1996) agrees on Austin’s theory of speech acts: “In attempting to express themselves, people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, they perform actions via those utterances.” According to him, actions performed via utterances are speech acts. They may be given some specific labels such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise or request. Because people often do more things with words than merely convey what words encode, speech acts have to be seen from real-life interactions. For example, in a classroom situation, when a teacher says:

(5) **May I have your attention?**

The sentence is a request more than a question. The distance between what is said and what is meant, and the multiple layers of meaning between the literal meaning of utterance and the act which it performs in context are very different. Some
utterances are not statements or question about some piece of information, but are actions. In this case, it is really a request which asks the hearer to pay attention, stop making noise.

According to Austin’s theory (1962), an utterance may perform three related kinds of acts: the locutionary acts of which the meaning can be totally taken from that of individual linguistic elements forming the utterance; the illocutionary acts through which the speakers express their intention to do something in such a way that the listener can recognize them as well and the perlocutionary acts through which the utterance can produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts or actions of the audience.

3. Request as a speech act

As discussed above, what is said is not just a simple utterance. In fact, there are lots of layers of meanings which send different messages under that utterance. Therefore, realizing which intention is wanted by the speakers is rather difficult. Similarly, requests are complex speech acts which involve a relationship of different elements. These elements have been identified by Blum-Kulka (1991) as the request schema which includes requestive goals subject to a cultural filter, linguistic encoding (strategies, perspective and modifiers), situational parameters (distance, power and legitimization) and the social meaning of the request according to cultural and situational factors.

In fact, requesting is defined as an act of requiring the other(s) to do something performed through utterance(s) in interaction. As the speaker makes a request, s/he desires the hearer’s expenditure of time, energy or material resource. In other words, requests impose the speaker’s interest on the hearer. They can be regarded as a constraint on the hearer’s freedom of action. Among the three general kinds of speech acts classified by Austin: the locutionary (the linguistic utterance of the speaker), the illocutionary (what the speaker intends) and the perlocutionary (the eventual effect on the hearer), the speech act of request considered one of the most
sensitive illocutionary acts in communication. Then Searle puts forward a taxonomy of illocutionary acts which is further elaborated by Yule (1996), including directives, commissives, expressives, representatives and declarations. Among them, directives are those speech acts whose function is to get the hearer to do something. As attempts on the part of a speaker to get the hearer to perform or stop performing some kind of action, requests are therefore labeled as one type of directives.

Obviously, a request is an illocutionary act where a speaker (requester) conveys to a hearer (requestee) that he/she wants the requestee to perform an act which benefits the speaker (sometimes for someone else). Requests are intrinsical face-threatening acts for the following reason: by making a request, the speaker may threaten the hearer’s negative face by intending to impede the hearer’s “freedom of action,” (Brown & Levinson, 1987:65) and also runs the risk of losing face him/herself. In fact, in English, request can be linguistically realized with imperatives, interrogatives and declaratives. However, Lyons (1968) states that the conversation requirements of politeness usually render it awkward to issue flat imperatives for making request. Leech (1983) explains that imperatives are the least polite constructions since they are tactless in that they jeopardize compliance by the addressee. For this reason indirect means are usually sought to realize illocutionary needs. In other word, ENS prefer to employ indirect ways of requesting someone for something because the more directness there is in making request, the more imposition the requestees suffer. As a result, the face of requestees is increasingly damaged. VNS however use imperatives or direct requests with overwhelming majority. That is the problem here. Preference for direct requests made by VNS does not mean that they do not respect the requestees’ face. Their request-strategy selection is determined by their cultural norms. In the light of these “face” considerations, Brown and Levinson (1987) have developed an explicit model of politeness that they claim to have validity across cultures. The basic idea is to understand various strategies for interaction between the individuals of a certain community. The matter would be found out in the next part.
4. Politeness strategies in requests

According to Sifianou (1992), most scholars, basing on the investigation of English, have argued that the degree of indirectness determines the degree of politeness to a great extent. The main reason for this argument reasonably originates from the concept of Western individualism. It is widely accepted that most English speaking societies place a higher value on privacy and individualism (i.e., the negative aspect of face), so individual’s freedom and independence is highly respected. In other words, to Western societies in general and to most English speaking societies in particular, the principle of distance and non-imposition plays a crucial role in social interactions. Although there are some ideas that indirectness and politeness are not the same (Kasper, 1998; Holtgraves, 1986), most scholars have argued that overall, in English, indirectness and politeness are closely related, especially in request- a kind of directive speech acts. While the scale of indirectness seems to be universal, the assertion between indirectness and politeness differ across cultures. Contrary to most English societies where the display of non-imposition and concerns for distancing in speech acts are believed to help avoid face threatening acts and hence to be more polite, a number of cultures such as Vietnam prefer a show of solidarity and sincerity by directly deliver them. Sifianou (1992) has proved that Greeks request, advise and suggest structurally more directly than English because they see those acts as their duty to help and support each other without any idea about imposition or non-imposition. In another study which examines the politeness perceptions of speakers of Israeli Hebrew, Blum-Kulka (1987) finds that speakers of Hebrew favor directness rather than indirectness. Generally speaking, speakers from those mentioned cultures either seem to pay much attention to involvement and solidarity relation, i.e. the positive aspect of face, or belong to a kind of societies such as Vietnam where people depend on each other more and therefore individuals are less emphasized than interdependent social relations like English speaking societies. In other words, most of them probably correspond to positive politeness societies where indirectness will not necessarily be related to politeness.
Indirect speech acts in relation to politeness phenomenon in Vietnamese have just received some attention lately with Dau’s thesis (2007) on English and Vietnamese indirect requests. Her arguments are rather reasonable. She says that indirectness with the concept of non-imposition is not necessarily politeness in Vietnamese culture. Because politeness in requesting in Vietnamese does not only completely depend on the levels of directness-indirectness or imposition-optionality but also on other factors such as how illocutionary meaning is understood, and socio-cultural factors.

Although Vietnamese and English have different conceptions of politeness in relation to indirectness, both are highly aware of the advantages of politeness and appreciate it in making speech acts in general and request in particular. Politeness is useful to help speakers convey utterance, intentions in an effective way; increase the possibility of the action implementation then and avoid the force on the hearers. As a result, both hearers and speakers are comfortable. To have a good base for a better analysis of the politeness strategies for request-making used by Vietnamese and English native speakers and for, this study bases on the classification of requests in some cross-cultural interlingual studies of speech acts by Brown & Levinson(1987), they classify requests into nine sub-ones.
As discussed above, directness and indirectness exist in speech acts in general and the speech act of request in particular. Requests can be divided into direct and indirect ones. Both direct and indirect requests are described as types above. The first five ones belong to direct strategy and the last four ones belong to indirect strategy. Also, indirect requests are divided into two kinds: conventional and

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unconventional ones. The following sentences are good examples for politeness strategies for request according to Brown and Levinson’s classification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of requests</th>
<th>English requests</th>
<th>Vietnamese requests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mood derivable</td>
<td>Please keep it secret!</td>
<td>(Xin)Làm ơn giữ bí mật này dùm nha.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Performative</td>
<td>I request you to keep it secret.</td>
<td>Bác yêu cầu con phải giữ bí mật chuyển đổi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Hedged performative</td>
<td>I have to ask you to keep it secret</td>
<td>Tôi phải yêu cầu anh giữ bí mật chuyển nầy vụ thời.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Obligatory statement</td>
<td>You have to keep it secret.</td>
<td>Anh phải giữ bí mật chuyển nầy dùm tôi nha.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Want statement</td>
<td>I would like you to keep it secret.</td>
<td>Tôi muốn anh giữ bí mật chuyển nầy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Suggestory formulae</td>
<td>Why don’t you keep it secret?</td>
<td>Tại sao cô không giữ bí mật chuyển nầy nhei?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Query preparatory</td>
<td>Mr Brown, would you mind keeping it secret?</td>
<td>Phiền giám đốc giữ bí mật chuyển nầy dùm tôi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Strong hint</td>
<td>I am sad if you tell anyone this secret</td>
<td>Tôi sẽ buồn nếu anh nói cho ai nghe biết bí mật nầy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Mild hint</td>
<td>My wife know the truth, I will be kicked out.</td>
<td>Vợ tôi mà biết sự thật nầy chắc cô ấy dưới tôi đi khỏi nhà.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From responses for each context above, there are some common things that VNS and ENS share in terms politeness in requests. The high-frequency use of “please” is noticeable thing in both English and Vietnamese imperatives and sometimes in English indirect requests. It is undeniable that “please” plays important role to reduce force on the hearers. Its positive effect helps create comfortably communicative environment. This is really meaningful to Vietnamese direct requests because please means “xin or làm ơn”, which makes ENS believe that directness possibly creates the so-called “politeness” in Vietnamese culture.

However, one basic different thing that increases the politeness of the Vietnamese direct requests is address-term use. Depending age, gender, position of the requestees, VNS use different address-terms for the pair “I-You”. In the example (2) the pair “bác-cháu=uncle-niece/nephew”, “tôi-anh=I-brother” in (3),(4),(5),(8) or “tôi-cô=I-sister” in (6) to show their respect. As can be seen, the relationship between the speaker and the hearer can be changed if there is change in the address-term use. Therefore, daily communication, the address-terms should be taken into consideration.

In addition, ENS tend to use family name followed by Mr in (7) as a way of respect-showing in formal contexts. Nevertheless, sometimes VNS and ENS use titles before making requests, which is believed to be close to politeness. The example (7) obviously indicates relationship between the higher position and the lower one. The use of “giám đốc=manager” in (7) upgrades the level of politeness of the employer to the boss.

As listed above, some easily seen elements to increase politeness in ENS and VNS requests are more and less believed to be useful information. However, there are other factors that determine their politeness strategies for requests. Both Vietnamese and English requests will be analyzed based the classification by Brown and Levinson to investigate which strategies are most favored by each group. As can be known, a request is a someone’s speech act of asking someone else to do something...
by means what he says. It is also regarded as a face-threatening act, which involves risk to either the speaker or the hearer’s face. Therefore, finding a good strategy without face damage for keeping the conversation going on is necessary for each one in society.

5. Social variables affecting politeness strategies for request-making

Each person from each society (Vietnam or English-speaking countries) has different selection of politeness strategies for request-making. Obviously, cultural difference is the main reason for that. However in a smaller aspect, social perspective, it is believed that some social factors such as social status, gender and age more and less affect the way of speaking in general and requesting in particular. Such factors are carefully examined and discussed to discover how differently strategies for requests are used by people from each culture.

First at all, power or social status and politeness are closely related. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 77), power or social status is an asymmetric social dimension of relative power involving the degree to which hearer can impose his/her self-evaluation (face) at the expense of the speaker’s plans and self-evaluation. Brown and Levinson say that the greater the power hierarchy distance, the more redressive strategies will be used by the less powerful interactant. As a result, in situation where there is explicit hierarchical difference between participants like the relationship between a boss and an employee, a professor and a student or between people of higher and lower social status in general, the politeness strategies used is relatively predictable. The more powerful the requester is in relation to the requestee, the more polite the requester would be. Then, in situation where that difference is not clear like the relationship between close friends or between people of equal social status, participants are expected to adopt various politeness strategies in particular circumstances.

Secondly, gender is undoubtedly is also an element influencing the request-making between males and females. Nowadays it is widely accepted that women and men talk differently. Women’s speech tends to be cooperative in character in that women
acknowledge one another’s contributions and engage in more active listening. What women value is connection, intimacy and solidarity, so they are likely to insist on the commonality of their experience, not its uniqueness in talking. They seek involvement and focus on interdependencies between people. Meanwhile, men’s conversations are less social and more individualistic and aim at controlling the flow of talk. They “see the world as a hierarchy in which any individual may be one-up or one-down” and the interactive task they set themselves is to gain, assert or maintain status. As a result, their speech shows a tendency to seek independencies and focus on hierarchical relationship as Chodorou (1978) ever stated.

Concerning the differences of gender politeness in making requests, Holmes (1996) says that because they are more sensitive to the positive face needs of intimates and friends, women are much more likely than men to express positive politeness or friendliness in private interactions. Women’s requests show evidence of concern for the feelings of the people they are talking to more explicitly than men’s do. However, in public, being well aware of the fact that what they say may threaten face of other people, women tend to use the extremes of negative politeness more frequently than men do. Similarly, McKay (1996: 251) suggest that men are more likely to be polite in a way that honors the wishes of others not to be imposed upon (negative politeness) rather than polite in a way that recognizes the desire of others to be liked, admired and ratified (positive politeness).

In Vietnamese culture, it is believed that straightforwardness is one of the most typical qualities for men while women usually prefer “beating about the bush”, which is a sign of the stylistic variation in language use between females and males. Besides, like in most English speaking societies, under the influence of social, cultural and historical factors which govern the reciprocal social status between women and men as well as different social expectations on them and so on, there are obviously many empirical evidences for gender differences in other aspects of Vietnamese language use such as lexical variation, intonation contours, voice quality, etc. Gender differences in language use seem to be universal. The
difference, if there is any between males and females in English and Vietnamese cultures, will partly reflect their opinions on politeness in issuing requests. In other words, the question of how gender as a social variable affects the choice of making indirect or direct spoken invitations in English and Vietnamese is still under the need of investigation for the purpose of the study and will be discussed later.

Finally, it is really not enough if the factor of age is ignored in investigating politeness strategies for requests under the influence of social factors. Apart from gender and social status, age is also a social variable which influences significantly and differently to human behavior in different cultures. Vietnam, an Asian culture in general emphasizes the importance of age related to respect and the amount of wisdom a person has. When a person gets older, (s)he is believed to become wiser. So, elderly people are often given the right to decide important things within the family. Besides, the older a person is, the more respect (s)he would receive from the young people. As a result, when requesting the older, speech act done buy Vietnamese is considered to be high deference. As a matter of fact, age obviously has a significant impact on speech behavior in social communication. Vietnamese people always try to know the age of interlocutors to choose the appropriate terms of address for polite purpose. That explains the reason why Vietnamese often have the habit of asking the age of any people they communicate, which normally irritates many Westerners. Conversational style and politeness strategy of Vietnamese people to people of various age levels is quite different. Meanwhile, it seems that English native speakers do not take age factor into great consideration. Though they do respect elderly people, the age of addressees is not considered to be the factor that automatically decides the amount of respect. Westerners tend to demand more information and interaction before showing their respect to someone. To them, age is just as important as other social factors. A person would be respected for his own values not because of his age. Therefore, less deference and control is given to elderly people in the majority of those cultures in comparison to most Asian cultures and Vietnamese one specifically. The differences between Western and Asian ideas...
about age will surely trouble Vietnamese learners of English. The choice of politeness strategies in issuing requests is differently affected by age factor in English speaking cultures and in Vietnamese culture. Therefore, the age of participants are seriously taken into account so that the topic investigated would be fully understood.

Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY

1. Research questions

(1) How different are the ways of making requests in English and Vietnamese in terms of politeness?

(2) Do social factors such as nationalities, age, genders, social status influence on the ways people make polite requests?

2. Research participants

For finding out the similarities and differences in speech act of requests in English and Vietnamese, the participants in the thesis are native speakers of English and native speakers of Vietnamese. All participants are asked to fill in their nationalities, age, occupations, gender, levels of education which are essential to find out the factors leading similarities and differences of making requests.

There are thirty native English speakers who are living and working in Ho Chi Minh city are expected to join this study. Among them are fifteen males and fifteen females, aged between twenty and sixty. They may have different professions such as teachers of English, professors, students, businessmen. Their nationalities might not be the same as long as they all speak English language as their first language. Opinions are collected at different places such as university campus, bookstores and parks. The researcher intentionally includes their responses and comments on any differences they evidence from the perceived norms.

Thirty native Vietnamese speakers aged between twenty and sixty in Cao Lanh city are also involved to do the same jobs as thirty native English speakers do above. There is no limitation on kinds of jobs they are pursuing. All necessary information
is needed fulfilling such as nationalities, genders, age, and professions and levels of education before they are required to give their responses, assumptions to some questions or situations related to making polite requests in the questionnaires to collect data.

3. Research procedure

In order to achieve the targets mentioned earlier as well as the thesis in general the process of making the thesis goes into three major stages. Finding sources of related materials and writing the proposal are the very first stage in the process. At this time the supervisor’s opinions that suggest good advice for the researcher to decide what should and should not be done to orientate the ways to develop the thesis are also very important. This stage is anticipated lasting for nearly two months from early October to late December. Then from early January to the end of this month, the survey questionnaire and personal observation are proceeded. The questionnaires for English native speakers are expected to carry out in Ho Chi Minh city and the Vietnamese versions for native Vietnamese speakers in Cao Lanh city. The rest of time is for data analysis: comparison and contrast in making polite requests by native Vietnamese and English speakers. In this stage from early February to early May, the results from survey questionnaire and personal observation are analyzed and discussed. Of course, the supervisor’s opinions are essential in the process of making this study. This is also the stage when the thesis is completed both in form and content.

4. Method of data collection

To achieve the aims of the study with high reliability, the study employs two data collection instruments. These are survey questionnaires and personal observations.

4.1. Questionnaires

The important way to collect data for analysis is questionnaire. It is really a survey in which there are five situations necessarily responded. Most of them are related to making requests. At the beginning of each questionnaire, there is one
essential part for the participants’ background information that needs their providing such as nationalities, age, genders, professions and levels of education, which all have significant impact on their choice of politeness strategies when issuing the speech act of request in given situations. The main part includes five situations together with a number of discourse completion questions to collect data for the study. They are carefully designed to indicate similarities and differences as well in making requests in English and Vietnamese. The five situations are formulated as follows:

Situation 1: requesting someone to repeat what (s)he has just said because of her/his fast the speed of speaking.
Situation 2: requesting someone for help with the heavy stuffs.
Situation 3: requesting someone to keep the love problem secret.
Situation 4: requesting someone to turn the TV off because of its noise.
Situation 5: requesting someone to join the requester’s promotion party.

Each situation of the questionnaire is designed to serve a certain purpose. Situations 1 and 3 are to investigate the effect of gender and social status of participants when making requests. There are six discourse completion questions in each situation. Similarly, to consider the impact of gender and age of participants on the requesters’ decision whether to choose this or that politeness strategy in request-making, two situations (Situation 2 and 4) are designed with six discourse completion questions in each. However, when taking the effect of age and social status into consideration, the only situation is examined and designed with nine discourse completion questions.

In general, there are two types of questionnaires: one has five situations for native English speakers and the other has the same numbers of situations, but for native Vietnamese speakers. The data are collected in about four weeks and then analyzed according to the classification of requesting strategy by Blum Kuka (1989): Mood derivable, Performative, Hedge performative, Locution derivable, Want statement, Suggestory formula, Query preparatory, Strong hint and Mild hint to figure out
which politeness strategies for requesting are suitably employed in each culture and how social factors such as social status, age, gender do influence on the ways of making requests.

The English-version questionnaires are delivered to participants who are living and working in Ho Chi Minh city. Thirty foreigners whose first language is English are involved in this study such as those from the United States of America, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. Also the Vietnamese versions are delivered for Vietnamese speakers in Cao Lanh city. Then all of them are listed and analyzed in the light of cross culture communication to illuminate the given theoretical point

4.2. Observation

Observation is also a method that should be taken into consideration. Real interaction is said to provide lots of evidences to indicate how polite requests are really made. This is good opportunity to test what is earlier known about making polite requests in English and Vietnamese. Ho Chi Minh city is an ideal site for observation because there are many native English speakers there. Universities, bookstores, parks are expected to observe the most easily native English and Vietnamese speakers make the speech acts. In these three contexts, the ways of making polite requests by the interlocutors are carefully collected. While observing the interlocutors’ conversations, note – taking of the interlocutors’ request making is seriously taken.

5. Method of data analysis

5.1. Statistics

Statistics method in which all the data collected from questionnaires and observation are put together in one place to analyze and understand it more easily is very important in data analysis. All responses to the questions in questionnaires are listed and counted for numbers based on the different politeness strategies for requests made by ENS and VNS. The number is changed into percentage in each case observed.
5.2. Comparison and contrast
The speech act of making requests is analyzed to find similarities and differences in Vietnamese and English. That is the big goal of the study. VNS have their own ways to make polite requests and ENS do, too because each culture has different ways. Then comparison and contrast of making polite requests in the two cultures are made so that all things can be made clear for the speakers and hearers to have suitable responses and avoid some misunderstandings. After comparison and contrast, politeness strategies in making requests are pointed out and considered as good suggestions in communication.

Chapter 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
1. An overview of result
As already discussed, there are two versions of questionnaires which have the same content and quantity of questions: one for Vietnamese Native Speakers (VNS) and the latter for English Native Speakers (ENS). Each version consists of five situations which have 33 discourses totally. 30 questionnaire responses by VNS and 30 questionnaire responses are collected. Therefore, there are 990 discourses (33 discourses in a questionnaire multiplied by 30 answering participants) for each group of subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness strategies</th>
<th>VNS</th>
<th>ENS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventionally indirect</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-conventionally indirect</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Politeness strategies used by VNS and ENS for making requests
As can be seen in Table 1, the direct request strategy makes up 83% in Vietnamese, but only 22% in English. However, the percentage of indirectness strategy used by ENS is more overwhelming than that used by VNS. In conventional indirectness strategy, it is only 13% by ENS, but surprisingly 62% by ENS. Finally, 14% accounts for the use of non-conventional indirectness strategy used by ENS, but only 4% used by VNS. Generally, these results indicate Vietnamese respondents are more direct in making requests than their English counterparts. In fact, among the percentage of the politeness strategies for requests, the percentage of the conventionally indirect ones (usually in question forms) used by ENS is in the majority while direct ones (usually in imperative forms) are most favored by VNS.

This study also find some factors such as social status, gender and age affects more and less on the ways of requesting done by VNS and ENS. Gender and age of counterparts obviously influence differently on the ways of making requests by ENS VNS females. The number of those who employ indirectness to request the people of the same gender is bigger than that of males. The result shows that there are more females than males (both ENS and VNS) who try to avoid threatening the face of the requestees and their own as well. Also, when the requestee has different gender, the age has different impact on the choice of politeness strategies for requests. The result in Table 2.3.b indicates that in the setting where the requestees are younger or older, VNS females are more direct than males in their group. Meanwhile, ENS females seem to be more indirect in the first situation and employ fewer conventional indirect politeness strategies and more hints than males in the second. Besides, to the male requestees who are as young as they are, both ENS and VNS women share one thing in common: they issue fewer suggestory formulae or query preparatory strategies, employ more direct requests than men in their groups and use as hints as men. As a result, the age of the counterparts has a stronger impact on the selection of strategies employed by both ENS and VNS females than by males. Females of both groups seem to be more sensitive to age and gender of the addressees.
and always take those factors into consideration. They employ various different strategies for different groups of the requestees than males in their groups.

2. Requests made by VNS and ENS

In general, though the fact that direct strategies for VNS and indirect strategies for ENS are most favored in all cases is the common trend, the factor of age, gender and social status affect differently the ways of making requests by both ENS and VNS,

Firstly concerning the case in which social status and age in situation 5, all of the three cases of social status examined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social status</th>
<th>Direct strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.a. Direct strategies employed by VNS

Obviously, the directness is lessened when the social status of the VNS requestees is higher than the requesters. The requestees’ lower and equal status is suitable reason to cause the requesters to ask them to join the party more directly.

(6) Đi ăn tiệc mừng vào thứ sáu tuần này nhé.

(7) Hãy đi dự tiệc mừng của tôi vào thứ sáu này.

Therefore, the some sentences used for formal context is not necessary in this case such as:

(8) Anh có thể dự tiệc cũng chúng tôi chứ? (can you join the party with me?)

(9) Chị có phiền không nếu đi dự tiệc của chúng tôi vào thứ sáu này? (do you mind joining the our party on Friday?)
Such sentences above should be used in the formal context, especially in the case where the requestees are in higher status. VNS are also aware of the fact, but it is not clear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social status</th>
<th>Indirect strategies (%)</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>71/90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>77/90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>77/90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.2 Indirect strategies for request made by ENS*

On the contrary, ENS employ much more indirect than VSN. The higher status is, the more increasing the trend of using indirect strategies. Obviously, the factor of social status affects most on the request-making. ENS always respect the other’s freedom and try not to bother them. They use much more structure to ask the others to join the party in situation 5 as followed

(10) *Would you like to join the party with us?*

(11) *You are not busy tonight. Why don’t we join the party?*

(12) *We are happy to have your attendance at the party.*

(13) *I wonder if you could come the party*

“Would you like...Why don’t you…” or hints are the common ways to show their respect and politeness as well. The speakers try to avoid the imposition on the hearers and tend to give option instead in “I wonder if you could come the party tonight.”

Moreover, under the impact of the age, the case in which the younger people causes VNS to request more directly than the older or the equal-age.

(14) *Ê, tôi thứ sáu đi tiệc nhà.* (Friday, attend the party.)

(15) *Tôi bữa đó ăn tiệc đi mà ơi, việc thì đề đồ tình sau đi.* (that night, join the party. The work would be done later)
One noticeable thing is that VNS are highly respect the age factor. The older the requestees are, the more respected they are. In the case where the requestees are lower but older than the requesters, VNS requesters still employ the indirect strategies.

(16) *Anh Nam ơi! Anh có thể dự tiệc cùng với chúng tôi vào tối thứ sáu được không?* (Nam! could you join the party with us Friday night?)

ENS perceive the factor of age but not much. The age is not so important as the social status. Under the impact of age, there are not lots of changes in their strategies. ENS maintain their indirect strategies in most cases. Although the requestees are younger than the requesters but have the same status, the requesters do not change to use direct strategies completely. However, when ENS have the same age and status, directness in requesting is most used in comparison with the case where the requestees are younger and older than the requesters.

In general, VNS take the age of requestees much more seriously in their consideration than ENS but ENS do take the social status much more seriously.

Secondly, concerning the relationship between social status and gender in situation 1, 3; the percentage for direct requests made by VNS males and females dominates the ones of the other categories and is even more than that for direct ones made by ENS.

(17) *Xin  anh (làm ơn) lặp lại đùm.* (please, repeat that!)

(18) *Tôi muốn anh nói lại một lần nữa.* (I want you to repeat that.)

(19) *Bác muốn cháu lặp lại một lần nữa.* I want you to repeat that.

(20) *Con xin cô lặp lại điều đó một lần nữa.* (I want you to say that one more time)
Examples above, VNS have different ways to say one thing. All of them are direct requests. The relationship determines which the address- terms should be suitably used. The pair “I-You” in English is realized in English conversation differently by “tôi-anh, bác-cháu, con-cô”. Therefore, the address -term is also important to upgrade the politeness. Moreover, there is “please” which means “xin , làm ơn”. Its effect can be seen in both English and Vietnamese. The requesters are aware of bothering the others when they wish their “want” to be satisfied . Therefore, “xin, làm ơn” used are suitable and become very common in Vietnamese.

It seems that both VNS males and females are loyal to direct strategies and do not change much their selection in the case where the requestees have the same gender as the requesters. However, when the requestees are in higher status, VNS are aware of the social status and show respect to them by reduce indirectness, but that changes do not much occur.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Social status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>93.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.c The direct strategies for requests made by VNS to the people of the same gender (n=30)*

From the table above, VNS females are not as direct as males. It can be inferred that VNS females tend to beat around the bush to request the people of the same gender for example

(21) *Chị nói như vậy là nhanh quá . Tôi chẳng có nghe kịp đâu.* (you speak so fast. I can’t catch up with what you say )

By saying indirectly the problem, the requestees can realize the intention of the requester. Obviously, sayings which must be put in the certain contexts can be
guessed what the requesters mean easily. In the example above, “I can’t catch up with what you say” means “please repeat that”

In ENS’ data, both ENS males and females prefer indirectness in their requests. As discussed above, the higher social status is, the more indirect ENS are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Social status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.d The indirect strategies for requests used by ENS to the people of the same gender (n=30)*

From the data above, in all cases of social status, ENS males use much more indirect strategies to request the higher-status people of same gender than males for example:

(22) *Sorry Mr Edward, could you repeat that please?*

The example indicates that ENS males tend to be very polite to Mr Edward. Asking the other to repeat is a speech act of request which can put the imposition on him if there are not some politeness elements such as “sorry”, “Mr” before the family name and the structure” could you...”. In fact, saying “sorry” before asking the other people to do what the requesters want is polite way not in English but in Vietnamese. The fact that Mr Edward is the person with higher status than the requesters is the main reason for using title”Mr” to show respect to him. “could you” is also a good phrase to reduce the imposition on the hearer and make him feel good to do the wanted action. Apparently, elements making up politeness are most used to convince Mr Edward to repeat. Similarly, ENS females are also employ such politeness elements in their request to Mrs Sidsel to ask her to repeat, but fewer indirect strategies are used.
### Table 2.e The direct strategies for requests made by VNS to the people of the different gender (n=30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Equal</th>
<th>Higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>96.7%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However in the case where the requestees’ gender is different from the requesters’, the social status does not affect seriously the direct strategies used by VNS males, but its impact on requests made by VNS females is easily seen. The females employ fewer direct strategies than males such as “Giữ bí mật nhà...” (used to request VNS females of lower status). Then VNS females also realize the necessity of indirectness and say “Chỉ có thể giữ bí mật này được không...” (used to request VNS females of equal or status). The structure “anh /chị có thể...” means “could you” in English.

### Table 2.f The indirect strategies for requests used by ENS to the people of the different gender (n=30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Social status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ENS males are more indirect than males in all cases to request the people of different gender. ENS males are affected more obviously by social status than females because they tend to increase their indirectness to the people of higher status.

Finally, concerning the factor of age and gender, in general, VNS males employ fewer direct strategies for requests than females to request the people of the same gender.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Younger</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The direct strategies for requests made by VNS to the people of the same gender (n=30)

VNS females request more directly the people of the same gender in three cases.

(23) *Lan ơi!* **Giúp chị xách cái giỏ này với.**

(24) *Lan ơi* giúp mình mang cái giỏ này nhà.

(25) *Cô lan ơi!* Cô mang giúp cháu cái giỏ này với.

The examples above are in situation 2. Apparently, the address-terms are changed to have suitable responses to the requestees. “Chị-em, tôi-bạn, cô-cháu” are variation of the pair “I -You”. Using correct the address-terms indicates the respect of the requesters to requestees. It is not accepted if “tao -mày” is used in the sentence “Cô lan ơi! Cô mang giúp cháu cái giỏ này với.” If “cô -cháu” is replaced by “tao -mày”, the hearers is not willing to do the wanted actions or the hearers use violence to hit the requester who are younger.

However, in the case in which requesters and requestees have the same age, VNS males and females use the direct strategies rather equally. The examples below are in the situations 4

(26) *Nam làm ơn vặn nhỏ ti vi xuống dìm tôi*. (Nam, please turn TV down)

(27) *Tôi muốn bạn vặn bớt âm lượng dìm*. (I would like you to turn the volume down)

(28) *Lan ơi! Vặn tivi nhỏ lại nhé*. (Lan, turn down)
Maybe, the VNS requesters and requestees have the same age and gender, which is an advantage to understand each other, so they do not mind bothering each other tend to be direct to the partners.

Also, ENS females are more aware of politeness when requests the older by reducing directness than males but not much in their selection. Unlike ENS females, ENS males are much affected under the impact of age which causes them to employ more indirect strategies according to their age increase as followed in table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Younger</th>
<th>same</th>
<th>older</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2. The indirect strategies for requests made by ENS to the people of the same gender (n=30)*

(29) *Can you turn the TV down?*

(30) *I wonder if you could turn the TV down.*

(31) *Why don’t you turn the TV down?*

(32) *I can’t concentrate on my work because of that noise from the TV.*

Those sentences are indirect request used by majority of ENS males to the requestees of the same gender. Those with the politeness enclosed make the requestees feel good and are easily convinced to turn the TV down. ENS males even use hints “I can’t concentrate on my work because of that noise from the TV.” to request the older people.

However, ENS males use much more indirect strategies than males in three cases of age. To the older females perceive their age, and employ much indirect ones, but one interesting things here is that VNS males also request indirectly the younger people of the same gender with the large number.
Table 2.i The direct strategies for requests made by VNS to the people of the different gender (n=30)

In the data above, in the case where VNS males and females request the people of different gender, VNS females are apparently affected by the age because VNS females tend to reduce directness when there is age increase. They even use more direct strategies than males in the three cases of age. Particularly, males tend to use the most directness in the case where they and the partners of different gender have the same age.

Table 2.j The indirect strategies for requests made by ENS to the people of the different gender (n=30)

In the data above, ENS males are seriously affected by the age in their selection. To the requestees of different gender, the more the age increase there is, the more indirect strategies are employed. ENS females are always more indirect than males to request the people of different gender except the case where the requesters and requestees have the same age. Females use fewer indirect than females.

3. Request making influenced by some factors of social status, gender and age

3.1. Social status and age

The effect of social status and age on request-making is investigated in situation 5 in the questionnaire. The two factors of social status and age make up 9 different discourse questions which are responded by 30 people for each subject (VNS or ENS). As a result, there are 270(9x30) discourses in total. Among them are
discourses for people of lower, equal and higher status, which share the same number in each type (90 discourses). Moreover, 90 discourses for people of lower or equal or higher status are divided into 3 categories according to age: 30 discourses for the younger 30 discourses for the same aged and 30 discourses for the older

a. Participants requesting the person of lower status in relation to age

![Figure 3.1.a Percentage (%; n=90) of total politeness strategies employed to the requestees of lower status in situation 5](image)

*Figure 3.1.a Percentage (%; n=90) of total politeness strategies employed to the requestees of lower status in situation 5*

As shown in Figure 3.1.a, ENS use much more conventional indirect forms (63.5%) than the two other categories of politeness strategies when the requestee is in lower status. Numbers of direct politeness strategies (19%) are followed by and non-conventional politeness strategies (14%). Meanwhile, direct strategies (87%) are mostly employed by VNS and non-conventional forms are pretty rare in the same case (2%).
Table 3.1.a Participants choosing politeness strategies for requesting the people of lower status

In Table 3.1.a, different from VNS who tend to totally request the people of younger age direct (93.5%), 70% of request-forms used by ENS are in conventional indirect forms. ENS also employ more hints (10%) than VNS in the same case. It is evident that the younger age of the requestee influences ENS differently from VNS. Similarly, when the requestee is older than or as young as the requester, the proportion of direct strategies used by VNS is always much higher (85% and 80%) than by ENS (26.5% and 16.5%). The highest proportion of politeness strategies used by ENS in the two cases is in conventional forms (60%), mostly in the suggest formulae like “Why don’t we…? / How about ….?” Or “Would you like to….?”

(33) Would you like to join the party with us?
(34) Why don’t you attend the party?
(35) How about going to A restaurant for party?

In addition, there is an increasing tendency of ENS to employ indirect strategies to the requestee from the young to the older. Meanwhile, though VNS give more conventional indirect requests to people of older age (16.5%) than to people of the
same age (10%), the number of hints they use for both groups of requestees is few and completely equal (3.5%)

b. Participants requesting the person of equal status in relation to age

![Bar chart showing the percentage of total politeness strategies employed to the requestees of equal status in situation 5](image)

_Figure 3.1.b Percentage of total politeness strategies employed to the requestees of equal status in situation 5_

Figure 3.1.b gives an overall look at the strategies issued by both ENS and VNS when they request people of equal social status under the impact of age. Clearly, the majority of politeness strategies used by ENS was conventional indirect (76.5%). The number of direct (15.5%) and non-conventional indirect ones (9%) is not much employed. On the contrary, VNS mostly use direct forms of direct requests to this group of counterparts (88%) in comparison to only few conventional indirect strategies (approximately 11%) and only 1% hints issued. Generally, the direct politeness strategies are most used by VNS, but the conventionally indirect ones by ENS. Hints are rarely by both ENS and VNS, especially by VNS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The requestee</th>
<th>Politeness strategies</th>
<th>VNS</th>
<th>ENS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same age</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1.b Participants choosing politeness strategies for requesting the person of equal status

As shown in Table 3.1.b, when the requestee is same aged and younger, ENS rarely use hints to make requests (7%). They use this strategy more frequently (13%) when they were younger. Besides, at equal social status, the older age of the requestee still made them deliver requests less directly (7%) than when requesting people of the same age (16.5%) or of younger age (20%). In the case of same status of both the requester and the requestee, the direct strategies overwhelm the other categories of the politeness strategies to VNS, but the directness is gradually lessened when the requestee is gradually older. They only use hints when requesting people of older age but with a very small proportion (3%). Besides, the conventional indirect politeness strategies used by VNS (3.5% to younger people; 16.5% to same age people and 13.5% to people of older age) are also employed in this case, but are not as equal as those used by ENS in proportion.
c. Participants requesting the person of higher status in relation to age

![Bar chart](image)

*Figure 3.1.c Percentage of total politeness strategies employed to the requestees of higher status in situation 5*

The Figure 2.1.c indicates that VNS and ENS choose the strategy rather differently for request making in the settings where the requestee is in higher social status under the influence of age. While most ENS prefer indirect politeness strategies, the majority of VNS chose to use direct ones. To ENS, between the conventionally and non-conventionally indirect forms of requests, the use of conventional indirect ones are preferred in this case. VNS also issue both kinds of indirect strategies but few. However, in comparison to the previous two cases when the requestee is of lower or equal social status, it seems that the higher status of the addressee influences VNS to employ more indirect politeness strategies such as questions or hints.
Table 3.1.c shows that maybe there is no difference in the kind of politeness strategies VNS employed to request the people who are younger and as young as they are. 83.5% requests are direct, 10% is conventional indirect and 6.5% is non-conventional indirect. However, the case of requestee who is older than the requester, where 80% requests are direct, 13.5% is conventional, makes itself different from the other two cases. This means VNS are aware of age to the older and increase the indirect strategies in number, but few. Nevertheless, in general the age factor tends not to affect much to the choice of politeness strategy used by VNS to the requestee of higher status because direct strategies are still dominant. This factor influence significantly the terms of address they used. Because in Vietnamese culture, the use of kinship terms is closely related to age and politeness, the appropriate term according to age is taken as a way of expressing a good manner. As a result, instead of employing different politeness strategies, VNS use different terms of address to the requestee of different age ranges as a way to express their politeness. One noticeable point is that ENS take the age of the invited into account.
in this situation. ENS issue more direct requests (20%) to people of the same age, less (16.5%) to those of younger age and least (13.5%) to those who are older. Concerning the amount of conventional indirect politeness strategies used by ENS, the majority of them is for older people (70%), second position is for younger and the third is for people who are as young as they are (57.5%). The number of hints given in this case is highest to the requestee of the same age (20%) followed by the younger (20%) and the older (16.5%).

In summary, age and social status affect differently to the choice of politeness strategies employed by ENS and VNS: the majority of choices from ENS is for conventional indirectness while that of VNS is for directness. However, in ENS’ data, when the requestee is in lower status, they tend to employ most direct requests to the person of the same age, most hints to the one who is older and most conventional indirect to the younger person. Meanwhile, the answers from VNS show that the top proportion of indirectness would be for the older invited while the largest amount of directness would be for younger partners. Therefore, the major difference is that ENS saw the necessity to invite younger people indirectly whereas VNS consider direct spoken invitations suitable.

Differently, in the setting where the invited was of equal position, ENS issue more direct requests to younger people, more conventional and nonconventional indirect ones to older partners. VNS, though, use more conventional indirect politeness strategies to the same age people together with more hints to older ones while they keep issuing the largest amount of directness for the younger. In addition, though VNS are still loyal to the use of directness, the higher status and age of the addressee also made VNS request more conventional indirectly to the people of older age. Meanwhile they affected ENS to deliver more direct and hints spoken invitations to the same age people. The preference for politeness strategies used by both ENS and VNS when issuing requests under the impact of social status and gender was analyzed in the following section.
3.2. Social status and gender

The influence of social status and gender on politeness strategies of requests is examined in situation 1 and 3 in the questionnaire. The content of the two situations are totally similar. The combination of gender and social status creates 6 discourse completion questions in each situation. Two situations make up 12 discourse questions (6 for male and 6 for female requestees). 30 questionnaires are delivered to 30 people (15 males and 15 females) of each group (VNS or ENS). Therefore, there are 360 responses from each group. They are divided into 4 specific cases as followed:

- The case in which 15 males respond to 6 discourses for male requestees has 90 responses.
- The case in which 15 males respond to 6 discourses for female requestees has 90 responses.
- The case in which 15 females respond to 6 discourses for female requestees has 90 responses.
- The case in which 15 females respond to 6 discourses for male requestees has 90 responses.

In each case above, 6 discourse questions for males or females have the same number of people of each type according to their social status (2 for the lower, 2 for the equal and 2 for the higher status). Therefore, each of 4 cases above has 30 responses for each type of social status that has just been discussed. That matter is clearly shown in Table 3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social status</th>
<th>Requester to requestee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M-T-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.2 Cases of making requests by males and females of one group (VNS or ENS) according to social status in each type*
Therefore, those are believed to support investigation into the frequency of politeness strategy used by both VNS and VNS when making requests under the influence of social status and gender

**a. Participants requesting the person of the same gender in relation to social status**

![Bar Chart]

*Figure 3.2.a Percentage of total politeness strategies employed by VNS in comparing to those by ENS to the requestees of the same gender in situation 1,3*

Both Figure 3.2.a and Table 3.2.a below illustrate the requests used by ENS and VNS to their partners of the same gender in relation to status. The result reveals that both male and female ENS prefer conventional indirect politeness strategies to the other two strategies. Besides, Figure 3.2.a also indicates that females make a few more direct requests (27%) to their females counterparts than males do to their male partners (24.5%). Compared with ENS, VNS mostly employ direct strategies to the partners of the same gender. Moreover, there are pretty few people in the group who chose to deliver hints in this setting. Remarkably, Vietnamese males tend to request their male partners more directly (92% in comparing to 89%) and less indirectly (6% in comparing to 9%) than the ways females do to the requestee of the same gender.
This point seems to be different from what the ENS males and females did in the same case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The requestee</th>
<th>Politeness strategies</th>
<th>VNS</th>
<th>ENS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M-T-M</td>
<td>F-T-F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.2.a Participants choosing politeness strategies for requesting the person of the same gender in situation 1,3*

In ENS’ data, when the requestees are male and in lower social status than the requesters, the direct strategy presents 33.3%, the conventional strategy shows 50% and the non-conventional makes up 16.7%. When they are females, the data shows 33.3% for direct, 46.7% for conventional indirect strategies and 20% for hints. Similarly, in VNS data, the percentage of subjects who request directly is 93.4% (males) and 90% (females); indirectly by using suggestory formulae is 3.3% (same for both males and females); to deliver hints is 3.3% for males and 6.7% for females. It is clear that ENS and VNS share one thing in common: males employ fewer hints than females do. Another noticeable point is that ENS men use more conventional indirect strategies than women in the case. Quite contrary to the previous situation, there are not as many ENS males who employ the conventional indirect strategies to the requestees of equal status as female do (46.6 % for males and 56.6% for females). In addition, in this case, men also issue more hints than
women (26.7% and 16.7%). Meanwhile, in VNS’ data, men continue to request more directly and less indirectly than women. Neither men nor women deliver any hints in the case. The results also reveal that there are significant differences in the strategy selection employed by ENS and VNS when the requestees are of higher social status. While men in ENS group became less direct (13.3%) than women (20%), Vietnamese male native speakers continue to use more direct politeness strategy (90%) than women (86.7%). Besides, in contrast to women of ENS group who employ fewer conventional indirect requests than men (53.3% and 66.7%), in VNS’ data, the number of women who choose the same strategy nearly doubles that of men (13.3% in comparing to 6.7%). Moreover, unlike the case of female ENS who issue many hints (26.7%) even more than males (20%) to request people of the same gender and higher status, none of VNS females choose this strategy. Also, although men of both groups employ hints, ENS’s choice of this strategy overwhelms that of VNS in this situation.

b. Participants requesting the person of the different gender in relation to social status

![Graph showing percentage of total politeness strategies employed by VNS in comparing to those by ENS to the requestees of the different gender in situation 1,3]
As can be seen in the Figure 3.2.b, in general, ENS females tend to employ much more direct requests (32.2%) than ENS males (21%). However, they issue fewer both conventional and nonconventional indirect politeness strategies in the case. Meanwhile, the data of VNS group show no similarities between the two groups. The result shows that the number of VNS who request directly nearly triples that of ENS. Unlike ENS females, there are fewer VNS females who use direct politeness strategies to request males than VNS males do to request females. Moreover, different from ENS group, the number of conventional and nonconventional indirect strategies employed by VNS females is also more than by VNS males.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The requestee</th>
<th>Politeness strategies</th>
<th>VNS</th>
<th>ENS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M-T-F</td>
<td>F-T-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
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<td>Higher</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.2.b Participants choosing politeness strategies for requesting the person of the different gender in situation 1, 3*

In Table 3.2.b below, the results indicate that there are more differences than similarities in the frequency distribution of politeness strategies between ENS and VNS. In this setting where the requestees are in lower status than and different gender from the requesters, the proportion of conventional strategies employed by VNS males and females is totally equal (3.3%:3.3% = 1:1) while ENS males use
those strategies more than females (56.6% by ENS males versus 53.4% by ENS females). Moreover, the percentage of those strategies used by ENS males and females is much higher than that of VNS (53.4% or 56.6% versus 3.3%). Under the impact of status, quite contrary to ENS males who employ 26.7% direct strategies and hence fewer than ENS females (33.3%), VNS males are more direct (96.7%) than VNS females (90%). Besides, while VNS males give no hints in the case, the percentage of ENS males who employ hints (16.7%) is even more than that of females in the group (13.3%). In short, it seems that VNS females are more indirect and ENS females are more direct than males in the same circumstances.

In contrast to the previous case, the results indicate that in the situation where the requestees are of equal status, VNS males and females use the direct strategies equally in percentage (86.7%), which is much more than that of the other 2 categories. As appeared in the data, the politeness strategies used by VNS males and females make up 86.7% for direct ones, 10% for conventional indirect and 3.3% for hints. Similarly, though the preference for strategies of ENS group present different percentage, the result in ENS data also shows that ENS men tend to give fewer direct requests than ENS women. Only 26.7% ENS males respond that they would directly request the equal status females while there is 43.3% ENS females who choose the same solution to request male partners. The number of conventional indirect invitations given by ENS males is 60% (46.7% in women’s choice) and the use of hints is 13.3% by males and 10% by females.

Another noticeable point is that the higher status of the requestees affects differently the choice of politeness strategies used by both ENS and VNS of different gender when requesting the people of opposite gender in situations 1 and 3. To ENS, though the use of conventional indirect politeness strategies remains most favored, ENS females (20%) continue to be more direct than men (10%). The proportion of direct strategies used by females over males which is 2 times (20%: 10%) is still higher than the sum of both proportions of conventional and nonconventional indirect strategies used by females over males which is 1.86 (60%: 70% +
20%:20%). To VNS, even though direct requests are mostly favored by the majority, more VNS females (16.7%) prefer indirect politeness strategies when requesting males than VNS males (6.7%) in the same situation. The proportion of females using conventionally indirect politeness strategies is 2.5 times (16.7%:6.7%) as equal as that of males while the proportion of direct requests by men over by women was only 1.12 (93.3%:83.3%).

To sum up, in the setting where the requestee is of opposite gender, VNS females tend to be more indirect than males when the requestee is in higher status. Meanwhile, ENS females always use more direct requests than ENS males do in all three situations.

3.3. Age and gender

The influence of social age and gender on politeness strategies of requests is examined in situation 2 and 4 in the questionnaire. The content of the two situations are totally similar. The combination of gender and age creates 6 discourse completion questions in each situation. Two situations make up 12 discourse questions (6 for male and 6 for female requestees). 30 questionnaires are delivered to 30 people (15 males and 15 females) of each group (VNS or ENS). Therefore, there are 360 responses from each group. They are divided into 4 specific cases as followed:

- The case in which 15 males respond to 6 discourses for male requestees has 90 responses.
- The case in which 15 males respond to 6 discourses for female requestees has 90 responses.
- The case in which 15 females respond to 6 discourses for female requestees has 90 responses.
- The case in which 15 females respond to 6 discourses for male requestees has 90 responses.

In each case above, 6 discourse questions for males or females have the same number of people of each type according to their age (2 for the younger, 2 for the
same and 2 for the older status). Therefore, each of 4 cases above has 30 responses for each type of age that has just been discussed. That matter is clearly shown in Table 3.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social status</th>
<th>Requester to requestee</th>
<th>M-T-M</th>
<th>M-T-F</th>
<th>F-T-F</th>
<th>F-T-M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.3 Cases of making requests by males and females of one group (VNS or ENS) according to age in each type.*

Therefore, those are believed to support investigation into the frequency of politeness strategy used by both VNS and VNS when making requests under the influence of age and gender.

**a. Participants requesting the person of the same gender in relation to age**

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 3.3.a Percentage of total politeness strategies employed by VNS in comparing to those by ENS to the requestees of the same gender in situation 2, 4*
Figure 3.3.a shows that, like other cases, ENS mostly use the conventionally indirect politeness strategies when they request someone under the influence of age and gender. In addition, though females employ fewer numbers of conventional indirectness (61%) comparing to males (64.5%), they tend to more hints (23.4% by males versus 11% by females) and fewer direct requests (15.6% by males versus 24.5% by males). It can be inferred that ENS females are more indirect than males in this setting. VNS’ data reveal a different result. The majority of VNS make direct requests. Besides, the data also show that, unlike ENS females, VNS females are more direct than males because they employ more direct strategies (82.2% by females and 75.6% by males), fewer conventional ones (14.4% by females and 17.8% by males) and fewer nonconventional indirect strategies (3.4% by females and 6.6% by males) than men do in the same situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The requestee</th>
<th>Politeness strategies</th>
<th>VNS</th>
<th>ENS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M-T-M</td>
<td>F-T-F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger</td>
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<td>76.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>76.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.3.a Participants choosing politeness strategies for requesting the person of the same gender in situation 2, 4*

The detailed analysis of the data in Table 3.3.a presents the responses from both VNS and ENS when taking the age of the invited into account.
Firstly, in the situation where the requestees of younger age, the number of ENS males and females who choose suggestory formulae or query preparatory strategies equally make up 50% of the total strategies used. However, ENS females use much more hints (33.3%) and fewer direct strategies (16.7%) than ENS males do (10% and 40%). They tend to be more indirect than men. Meanwhile, VNS women make more direct requests (90%) than males (76.6%) and also use fewer indirect strategies.

Secondly, to the requestees of the same age, the number of both ENS males and females that use the direct strategies is rather equal, but males tend to employ more conventionally indirect strategies (60%) and fewer hints (13%) than females do in the same case (56.6% for the conventional and 16.7% for hints). In VNS’ data, males seem more indirect, but use fewer direct requests than females although direct strategies are over the indirect ones by both VNS males and females.

Finally, to the older requestees of the same gender, in ENS’ data, the number of females who employ hints doubles that of males (20% and 10%) while the percentage of direct requests used by males doubles that of females (6.7% and 3.3%). However, ENS males prefer conventional indirect strategies in comparison to females. 83.3% of males (versus 76.7% of females) respond that they would request by saying “Would you like to…” or the like to the requestees of different gender who are older. Therefore, in general, ENS females are thought to be more indirect than males. In VNS’ data, VNS males use more indirect politeness strategies, but fewer direct ones than females because 76.6% accounts for VNS males’ choice and 80% does for VNS females’ choice of direct strategies.

In summary, the result shows that the age of the interlocutors would cause an impact on the preference for politeness strategies used by both ENS and VNS. Indirect strategies are still used by majority of ENS to make requests. Under the impact of age, ENS males use fewer indirect strategies than females except the case where the ENS males request the people of same gender and age. Also, ENS males tend to use direct strategies to request the younger and older more than females, but they tend to
use more indirect strategies to request the people who are as young as them than females. In VNS’ data, VNS males and females prefer direct strategies with the majority to indirect ones in general in each case of age. Also, the percentage of direct requests used by VNS males is increasing according to age level’s increase. VNS males tend to employ fewer direct strategies than females in each case of age, to request people of the same gender but they tend to use more indirect strategies than females in each case of age. This trend of indirect politeness using is also increasing to age increase.

b. Participants requesting the person of the different gender in relation to age

![Figure 3.3.b Percentage of total politeness strategies employed by VNS in comparing to those by ENS to the requestees of the different gender in situation 2, 4](image)

As can be seen in Figure 3.3.b, there are significant differences in the strategy selection done by ENS and VNS. ENS are still loyal to the use of indirect strategies while the majority of VNS prefer the direct politeness strategies. In ENS’ data, specifically, though the percentage of direct requests made by ENS females and males (20% and 21%) are rather equal, females employ more hints and males use more conventional indirect ones. However, the gap between the selection of direct
strategies of VNS females and males seems to be big because 80% VNS females, 59% use the direct ones. Many VNS females choose to use direct requests to male partners in comparing to a much fewer number of males who do the same act to female partners. VNS females also deliver much more conventional and non-conventional indirect strategies than males in the same setting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The requestees’ age</th>
<th>Politeness strategies</th>
<th>VNS</th>
<th>ENS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M-T-F</td>
<td>F-T-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CID</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCID</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3.b Participants choosing politeness strategies for requesting the person of the different gender in situation 2, 4

As shown in Table 3.3.b, to the reuestees of different gender and age, each case is discussed as followed.

First, while VNS females favor more direct strategies than males to request the younger people of different gender because the frequency distribution of direct requests by them is 76.6% compared to 56.7% of males, males use more indirect strategies than females. Specifically, the sum of conventionally and non-conventionally indirect strategies VNS males use nearly doubles that by VNS females. Different from VNS females, ENS women (23.3%) are less direct than men (36.6%), but men (10%) use fewer more hints than women (23.3%) do. The
percentage of conventional strategies employed by both ENS males and females is equal (53.4%). Therefore, ENS females are more indirect than males when requesting younger people of different gender.

Secondly, in the setting where requestees are as young as the requesters, both ENS and VNS females issue more direct requests than males. 80% of the responses from VNS and 30% ENS females are in direct forms in comparison to 63.3% VNS and 20% ENS males. Females of both groups employ much fewer conventional indirect politeness strategies than males. 13.3% VNS males (comparing with 56.7% ENS males) is less than 30% females (comparing with 66.7% ENS females) for the use of conventionally indirect strategies. In sum, VNS (males+females) are loyal to direct strategies while ENS are in opposite circumstance in which they prefer indirect requests.

Finally, when the requestees are older than the requestees, the result is different. In ENS’ data, both ENS females and males employ direct strategies equally (6.7%), but they use fewer direct requests comparing to the cases where the requestees are younger or as young as them. The proportion of conventionally indirect politeness strategies used here makes up the majority (76.6% for females and 83.3% for males). Although ENS females employ fewer suggestory formulae or query preparatory strategies than males, they issue more hints (16.7% , more than 10% of those by ENS males). Meanwhile, in VNS’ data, to the requestees of different gender, VNS females are more direct than men. Majority of VNS males (80%) and females (63.33%) make requests in direct forms, which is more than the indirect strategies in number of percentage in the same case. However, in comparison with VNS females, males prefer indirectness in making requests. In short, both VNS males and females employ more directness than indirectness in request-making in the case.
To sum up, generally while majority of VNS employ much directness to request the people of opposite gender, ENS prefer indirectness. Age and gender of requestees affect not only different groups of subjects but also to subjects of different gender. In all cases of the requestees’ different age, VNS females are more direct than males. Similarly, this only happens in the case of male requestees who are as young as the ENS female requesters. However, ENS males use more conventionally indirect strategies than females to request the older or same-age people of different gender. Only in the cases of the younger and older, ENS males employ more conventionally indirect requests and hints than females. While ENS males make more direct requests than females to the younger people, they tend to use fewer direct ones to the people who as young as them. Also, under the impact of age, it can be easily seen that while VNS females reduce directness to request the people of the opposite gender, ENS male increase indirectness.

Chapter 5 CONCLUSION

1. Summary

A request is one of the speech acts that are done with high frequency in daily activities, both in English and Vietnamese cultures. The preferences for direct or indirect strategies for requests used by ENS and VNS in the study under the influence of social status, age and gender indicate both similarities and differences between the two groups of subjects. Coming from a society where the principles of non-imposition are widely accepted as being polite, the majority of ENS use indirect politeness strategies to deliver the speech act of request to soften the impositions. Meanwhile, VNS come from a society where solidarity relations and dependence are more appreciated than distance and independence, so most of them tend to issue direct requests.

Structurally, both requests made by VNS and ENS have both similarities and differences. Firstly, because of the high awareness that the speech act of requests put
the force on the hearers, both VNS and ENS employ the politeness strategies to reduce that imposition to maintain good social relationships between interlocutors. The elements of “please” and “sorry” are effective to send the message of politeness in English and Vietnamese. “please” means “vui lòng, làm ơn” and “sorry” means “xin lỗi” in Vietnamese. Requests is a threatening act which may damage the “face” of the hearers, so using “please” and “sorry” in making requests makes both VNS and ENS possible to reduce or delete the threatening risk. Also, there are some similar structures for requests in English and Vietnamese such as “could you… =bạn có thể…”; “would you mind…=phiền bạn…”, “why don’t we…=tại sao chúng ta lại không…”. Those are used before the head act of requesting the others to satisfy the requesters’ wants. However, there are some differences in requests made by ENS and VNS, too. Vietnamese have different address-terms for the pair “I-You” in English, which are used depending the relationship between the requesters and the requestees in Vietnamese. As examples examined, there are some Vietnamese pairs equivalent with “I-You” in English such as “tôi-anh, tôi-chị, bác-con, cô-cháu”. In Vietnamese, determining which address-terms in all speech acts in general and in requesting in particular is really important. Also, the verbs used for meaning “có thể” in Vietnamese are various in English such as would, can, may, might. One noticeable thing in Vietnamese is using “nhé, với, nha” at the end of the sentence, which doesn’t exist in English. “nhé, với, nha” upgrade the politeness to convince the requestees to do the action which benefits the requesters. Some other differences and similarities between the two groups of subjects are discovered during the process of examining the impact of social status, age and gender on the selection of politeness strategies employed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Conventionally indirect strategies used by majority of ENS</th>
<th>Direct strategies used by majority of VNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Can you repeat that please?</em></td>
<td><em>Xin chǐ lặp lại đườm đi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Could you help me please?</em></td>
<td><em>Bác(chú) ơi! Bác làm ơn giúp cháu mang bột cái giở này với.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Could you please keep it secret?</em></td>
<td><em>Xin anh đừng nói ai biết chuyện này nhá.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Could you turn the TV down?</em></td>
<td><em>Anh làm ơn vặn nhỏ tivi đưm nhé.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Would you like to join my party?</em></td>
<td><em>Anh(chị) đến dự tiệc chung vui với tôi nhé.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In those examples above, imperative for request-making used by the majority of VNS does not mean that VNS are not polite or are less polite more than ENS. That difference mainly comes from the cultural politeness standards or norms for making requests in each community. Because requesting is a threatening act, in the cultures of most English-speaking countries, ENS automatically tend reduce or avoid the force or imposition on the hearers and give indirect requests as ways of performing face saving acts. Therefore, the indirect politeness strategies for request-making, used by almost all ENS can be explained based on their cultural values in which individual’s freedom and independence are highly appreciated. However, majority of VNS tend to be direct to request their partners. Their selection may be fully explained if based on the characteristics of a solidarity-oriented society where everyone is expected to get along well with each other by hospitality, friendliness. In addition, the use of particles” đi, với, nha, nhé” or address terms : “chú, bác, anh, chị” that exist in Vietnamese culture , but not in English-speaking cultures is really effective way to soften the requests in forms of imperative and increase the politeness in the speech act. Therefore, it can be inferred that politeness is not always determined by indirectness. The VNS’ tendency of using direct strategies for requests is against the theory of politeness by Brown and Levinson (1987), which appear much more suitable to people from English speaking cultures. Because of
many cultural differences of each (VNS or ENS), everyone should get themselves well-prepared for those to avoid misunderstandings.

Generally, VNS use the direct strategies with the highest frequency in making requests while the majority of ENS prefer the indirect ones, particularly conventionally indirect strategies. Besides, this study also finds that some such factors as: social status, gender and age more and less affect the strategies to make requests.

Regarding the impact of social status and age on the participants’ choice of politeness strategies employed by both groups, the data in Table 3.1a; 3.1.b and 3.1.c show different results. It is clear that both groups see it is necessary to be indirect to the older people no matter what their levels of social status are. However, almost VNS request the younger directly though that person is a boss, an employee or a colleague. Meanwhile, ENS consider younger people as strange and hence employ negative politeness strategies to reduce the force of the requesting, especially in the case where those people are at lower position. In addition, while ENS respond differently to people of the same age accordingly to status (direct to lower status, conventional indirect to equal and most hints to higher status), VNS only tend to be indirect to people of the same age when they are in equal status. That is to say, to ENS, the power of the addressee is very important to induce the speaker to use the politeness strategies for requests. According to Brown and Levinson, the more powerful the hearer is, the more polite the speaker would be. The majority of indirect strategies employed by ENS has proved to follow their theory. However, under the effect of age, the results show that it is not correct to the requestees of lower status because ENS employ even more indirect requests than to the one of higher or equal status. Moreover, what Brown and Levinson believe is also not totally suitable in the case of VNS. Unlike ENS who consider age factor is not important as social status, VNS takes the age of the addressee in greater consideration than his/her social status in requesting. They use the same degree of directness to younger people no matter what their status is, and to same-age partners
except when they are of equal status. Therefore, social status of the participants does not affect as much to the selection of politeness strategies by VNS as their age does.

Concerning the effect of both social status and gender on the choice of politeness strategies for requests made by ENS and VNS, gender is examined together with social status. Firstly, with male partners of higher status, VNS males use more direct requests than females while ENS females use more direct requests than males. Nevertheless, to people of equal or lower status, ENS males tend to use indirect strategy while VNS males remain unchanged in their selection of direct strategy. As Chodorou (1974) said because men see the world as a hierarchy, their speech shows a tendency to seek independencies. This can explain the reason why more ENS choose to use directness to people of lower status and negative politeness to the ones of higher or equal positions. Nevertheless, if the choice of strategies by VNS is explained in such a way, VNS males would be very impolite people who always think themselves as superior, which is not true. VNS males prefer more direct patterns to their male partners as a sign of closeness and friendliness. It seems that, to VNS males, among the people of the same gender, the status is not as important as the need to show solidarity in the act of requesting. However, both ENS and VNS females employ even more negative politeness strategies to request the people of the same gender than males because they see the fact that they may threaten the other’s face.

Secondly, in the case where the requestees are of opposite gender, ENS females always request more directly than ENS males do in all three levels of social status. On the contrary, VNS females seem to be more indirect than males when the requestees are in lower and higher status except the case of equal status (with the requestees of the same gender, both VNS males and females use indirect strategy with the same quantity). While the majority of ENS women employ indirect politeness strategies to request the people of the same gender to save face, they see another need to show intimacy and solidarity to the people of different gender by
requesting directly. Meanwhile, the fact that VNS females are always more indirect to both people of same and different gender than men except for the case of equal social status proves the perception that VNS females prefer “beating about the bush” rather than talking directly.

Finally, the impact of both the requestees’ and the requesters’ age and gender on the selection of politeness strategies used for making requests will be examined. The age of the addressees would somehow make ENS males request a person of the same gender more directly than females do, but make VNS males request the person of the same sex less direct than females. To ENS males, the idea that they usually do not pay as much attention to the age of the addressee as other factors such as social status or gender again proves to be correct. It is obvious that they do not change their politeness strategy together with the change of their male partners’ age while they employ different types of strategies when the status is different. To VNS males, the reason why the majority of them issue directness may be explained by the need to show closeness and solidarity among Vietnamese peers of the same gender. Regarding the effect of social status and age, the result indicates that ENS takes the first factor much more into their account than the second while VNS’s selection is completely opposite. Moreover, under the investigation of social and gender, men and women have different selection of politeness strategies to request the people of different status. ENS females tend to be indirect to the same gender partners outnumbered that of men, but VNS males prefer indirectness to females. When the requestees are of different gender, the factor of age affects politeness strategies for requests made by VNS and ENS in different ways. When the requestee is younger or older than the requester, VNS females are more direct than males in their group. Meanwhile, ENS females tend to be more indirect. Besides, to the male requestees who are as young as the requesters, both ENS and VNS women employ more direct requests than men in their groups. As a result, the age of the counterparts had a stronger impact on the selection of strategies employed by both ENS and VNS
females than by males. Females of both groups seem to be more sensitive to age and gender of the addressees and always take those factors into consideration.

2. Pedagogical implications

Politeness more and more receives great attention of the interlocutors. This indicates that politeness proves efficient in communication, so how to be polite is really desirous. Although there are different standards of politeness across cultures, both Vietnamese and English native speakers appreciate politeness realization. As can be seen, the expression of politeness clearly falls within the speaker’s communicative rather than linguistic competence. Therefore, foreign language teachers are expected to provide language learners not only with linguistic competence but also with communicative one which enables them to select expressions both grammatically correct and appropriate in the specific context. From the findings of the study, some recommendations are believed to be useful for teaching English requests to Vietnamese learners of English with a great attention to the effect of politeness so that they become more successful in communication.

First of all, Vietnamese learners of English should take the cultural differences among Vietnamese and English cultures into consideration to decide the suitable politeness strategies between ENS and VNS. They should know that ENS often use conventional indirect forms to perform the speech act of requests while VNS prefer the direct requests. Besides, as the findings show, it is necessary for the teacher to ask the learners to pay much attention to different impacts of social status, age and gender on the request strategies used by ENS and VNS. It is hoped to help them both improve their communicative performance in English and avoid misunderstandings or unintentional rudeness in communication. Finally, for the better and deeper memorizing those notes, drills or exercises should be in various forms which are not only done in papers normally but performed in real situations such as interesting role-play or discussion activities which are extremely important in practicing the use of request strategies. Hopefully, with the teachers’ enthusiastic
help, which English politeness strategies for requests are appropriately employed and the reasons why those strategies are chosen are fully answered. Then they are compared and contrasted to the strategies in Vietnamese to find the similarities and differences so that the knowledge is deeper instilled. Moreover, for real environments outside the classroom, teacher should encourage learners to put theory into practice by making friends with foreigners who may be tourists or teachers at foreign language centers. Although this kind of practice may cost, the experience is invaluable and can make really fast progress in learning.
References


Data collection in pragmatics research. University of Hawaii Working papers in ESL 18(1). 71-107


Appendices

Appendix 1 (Questionnaire to ENS)

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out what you would naturally say in the situations listed below. Your assistance in completing the following items is highly appreciated. You can be confident that this questionnaire is for research purposes only and that you will not be identified in any discussion of the data.

Thank you very much for your assistance!

Please fill in the blanks or put a stick (✓) in the appropriate box in the following:

I. Personal information

Nationality: ………………………

Age range: □ Under 20 □ 20-30 □ 30-40 □ 40-50 □ Over 50

Gender: □ Female □ Male

Profession: ……………………………………………………………………………

Education: ……………………………………………………………………………

II. Questions

Would you please read the following questions, put yourself in given situations and then write down what you actually say in each situation:

Situation 1:

You and A are discussing about the company’s project to make a report in front of managerial staff this week. A speaks so fast that you can’t follow him or her. You want A to repeat what has just been said for your better understanding. What would you say if A were:

1. Peter, a male colleague of equal position to you?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Mary, a female colleague of equal position to you?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

3. Peter, a male colleague of lower position than you?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. Mary, a female colleague of lower position than you?
5. Mr Edward, a colleague of higher position than you?

6. Mrs. Sidsel, a colleague of higher position than you?

**Situation 2:**

On the way to come home from the market, you carry a lot of things which are rather heavy. You go on foot because your home is not far from the market. You feel a little tired and you want B to help you. What would you say if B were:

1. Mary, a female classmate of your younger brother or sister?

2. Peter, a male classmate of your younger brother or sister?

3. Mary, your female friend who is at your age?

4. Peter, your male friend who is at your age?

5. Mrs. Lisa, a friend of your parents who is much older than you are?

6. Mr. Hampton, a friend of your parents who is much older than you are?

**Situation 3:**

You are in love trouble with a girl at your company, which is known only by someone (C) there. You want C to keep secret so that you can avoid image damage in the others’s eyes. What would you say if C were:

1. Peter, your male colleague?
2. Mary, your female colleague?

3. Peter, your male employee?

4. Mary, your female employee?

5. Mr. Peterson, your boss?

6. Mrs. Laura, your boss?

**Situation 4:**
In your room, you are preparing a report for economics class next Tuesday. However; a big noise from TV which D is watching bothers you. You want to stop it. What would you say if D were:

1. your son?

2. your daughter?

3. Peter, your wife’s friend?

4. Mary, your wife’s friend?

5. Mr. Gordon, your father?

6. Mrs. Julian, your mother?
**Situation 5:**
You’ve just been promoted, so you throw a party to celebrate at a restaurant, 18 p.m. on Saturday. You want to invite E (male or female) to join with you. What would you say if E were:

1. Your boss who is younger than you?
   ............................................................................................................................

2. Your boss who is at your age?
   ............................................................................................................................

3. Your boss who is older than you?
   ............................................................................................................................

4. Your colleague of equal position to you and is younger than you?
   ............................................................................................................................

5. Your colleague of equal position to you and is at your age?
   ............................................................................................................................

6. Your colleague of equal position to you and is older than you?
   ............................................................................................................................

7. Your employee who is younger than you?
   ............................................................................................................................

8. Your employee who is at your age?
   ............................................................................................................................

9. Your employee who is older than you?
   ............................................................................................................................

*Thanks for your help!*
Appendix 2 (questionnaire to VNS)

PHIẾU KHẢO SÁT

Chào các bạn! Như các bạn đã biết, ngày nay hòa trong xu thế hội nhập chung của toàn thế giới, sự giao lưu giữa Việt Nam và các quốc gia và nhất là với các nước nói tiếng Anh như thứ tiếng mẹ đẻ, là rất lớn. Thế nhưng sự khác biệt trong văn hóa giữa các quốc gia nói chung và trong giao tiếp nói riêng chính là trở lực lớn cản quá trình đó. Việc nghiên cứu tìm ra đâu là sự khác biệt giữa tiếng Việt và tiếng Anh để ta có thể giao tiếp hiệu quả là một đối hỏi với cùng cấp thiết. Cụ thể, lời đề nghị trong tiếng Việt sẽ được sử dụng để cấp trong phiếu khảo sát này để tạo cơ sở cho việc phân tích và so sánh với tiếng Anh để tìm ra chiến lược hiệu quả trong giao tiếp.

Mọi thông tin bạn cung cấp cho phiếu khảo sát này là hoàn toàn cho mục đích nghiên cứu chứ không nhằm vào bất kỳ mục đích nào khác. Sự tham gia trả lời phiếu khảo sát sẽ góp phần cung cấp dữ liệu thực cho nghiên cứu này, mong sự hưởng ứng nhiệt tình của tất cả các bạn.

I. Thông tin cá nhân:

Tuổi: □ dưới 20 □ 20-30 □ 30-40 □ 40-50 □ trên 50

Giới tính: □ nữ □ nam

Nghề: .................................................................

Trình độ học vấn: .................................................................

II. Câu hỏi:

Tình huống 1: Bạn và một người khác tên A đang thảo luận về việc làm báo cáo trước hội đồng công ty về một dự án tuần này. Trong lúc thảo luận, A nói nhanh quá làm bạn nghe không kịp. Bạn muốn A lập lại những gì nói vừa được nói xong bởi A, bạn sẽ nói với A như thế nào nếu A là:

1. Nam, một đồng nghiệp cùng chức vụ với mình?

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2. Lan, một đồng nghiệp cùng chức vụ với mình?

3. Nam, một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ thấp hơn mình?

4. Lan, một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ thấp hơn mình?

5. Ông Nam, một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ cao hơn mình?

6. Bà Lan, một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ cao hơn mình?

Tình huống 2: Trên đường từ chỗ về nhà, bạn phải đi bộ và xách rất nhiều thứ trên tay. Những thứ nặng nề đó khiến bạn mệt và cần B giúp. Bạn sẽ nói như thế nào nếu B là:

1. Nam, một bạn học cùng lớp với em bạn?

2. Lan, một bạn học cùng lớp với em bạn?

3. Nam, một bạn học cùng lớp với mình?

4. Lan, một bạn học cùng lớp với mình?
Tình huống 3: Bạn đang gặp rắc rối trong tình cảm với một đồng nghiệp làm cùng công ty. Ở công ty chỉ có C là biết chuyện này. Bạn muốn C giữ bí mật dùm bạn, tránh để người khác biết, bạn sẽ yêu cầu C thế nào nếu C là:

1. Nam, một đồng nghiệp có cùng chức vụ với bạn?

2. Lan, một đồng nghiệp có cùng chức vụ với bạn?

3. Nam, một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ thấp hơn bạn?

4. Lan, một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ thấp hơn bạn?

5. Chú Nam, ông chủ của bạn?

6. Cô Lan, bà chủ của bạn?
Tình huống 4: Bạn đang chuẩn bị bài báo cáo môn kinh tế cho thứ ba tuần tới. Tuy nhiên, bạn chẳng thể tập trung được vì âm thanh phát ra từ chiếc tivi mà D đang xem khá ồn. Bạn muốn D phải vặn nhỏ âm lượng tivi xuống để tránh bị làm phiền. Bạn sẽ nói gì nếu D là:

1. Con trai bạn?

2. Con gái bạn?

3. Lan, một người bạn của vợ mình?

4. Nam, một người bạn của vợ mình?

5. Bà Lan, mẹ bạn?

6. Ông Nam, bố bạn?

Tình huống 5: Bạn vừa mới được thăng chức để đảm nhiệm những nhiệm vụ quan trọng của công ty. Tin vui này khiến bạn phải làm việc khai mạc mọi người một buổi tại một nhà hàng. Bạn thật sự muốn mời E đến dự cùng vui cùng. Bạn nói như thế nào nếu E là:
1. Người chủ của bạn nhưng kém tuổi hơn bạn?

2. Người chủ của bạn và bằng tuổi bạn?

3. Người chủ của bạn và lớn tuổi bạn?

4. Một đồng nghiệp cùng chức vụ nhưng nhỏ tuổi hơn bạn?

5. Một đồng nghiệp cùng chức vụ và bằng tuổi bạn?

6. Một đồng nghiệp cùng chức vụ nhưng lớn tuổi hơn bạn?

7. Một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ thấp hơn và trẻ tuổi hơn bạn?

8. Một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ thấp hơn bạn nhưng bằng tuổi bạn?

9. Một đồng nghiệp có chức vụ thấp hơn nhưng lớn tuổi hơn bạn?