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## RESEARCH

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# POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN THE CONVERSATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE COURSE BOOK “CAMPAIGN 2”

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**Abstract:** This study is to focus on positive and negative politeness strategies in conversations of the course book “Campaign 2” by Simon Mellor-Clark and Yvonne Baker de Altamirano with an aim to help students improve their awareness of politeness strategies in conversational activities in military setting, thus to apply these strategies in their everyday conversations in English. Within this scope of this study, typical conversation activities are classified into Bald-on record; Positive Strategies; Negative Strategies and Off-record Strategies and then analyzed mainly in the light of the politeness theories of Brown & Levinson (1987). The research shows that the frequency of positive and negative politeness strategies depends not only on the purpose of the interactions but also on the relationship between speakers and hearers in communication.

*Keywords:* politeness strategies, communication, conversation, relationship

## I. Introduction

Nowadays English is considered as the second language and it is the most widely used language all over the world. In Vietnam, English is one of the compulsory subjects and it is getting more and more significant not only at universities in general, but also in military schools in particular. Along with cooperation and integration in some fields such as businesses, technology, tourism and education, Vietnam also has strengthened defense cooperation in the United Nations peacekeeping operations and in exchange officers in an English-speaking country’s army. To meet these significant missions, army officers need to enhance awareness on inter-cultural communication as well as improve their language competence to avoid culture shock due to differences between Vietnamese culture and Western culture. Although army schools in Viet Nam affirm the significance of English teaching and learning as a foreign language, both teachers and students do not pay much attention to culture knowledge in English conversations in the course book “Campaign 2” which is used as the main book for military students. That leads to the fact that students sometimes appear impolite, unfriendly or even hostile. This study aims to investigate and draw out the important role of positive and negative politeness strategies in conversational activities of the course book “Campaign 2” by Simon Mellor-Clark and Yvonne Baker de Altamirano so as to improve the teaching and learning of communication in English.

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## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1. Politeness***

Politeness is not a natural phenomenon but it is made, shaped and acquired through a process of socio-cultural communication which is constituted by an interactional relationship based upon a standard shared, developed and reproduced by individuals within a social group. In Thomas' opinion (1995), there has been a good deal of different ways to define the term of politeness. Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992a, p.3) echoed the same idea in rather simple terms when they wrote, "one of the oddest things about politeness research is that the term "politeness" itself is either not explicitly defined at all or else taken to be a consequence of rational social goals such as maximizing the benefit to self and other, minimizing the face-threatening nature of a social act, displaying adequate proficiency in the accepted standards of social etiquette, avoiding conflict, making sure that the social interaction runs smoothly..."

Leech (1983) said that politeness involves making the recipient's messages feel good (polite as friendly). Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed that politeness means making the hearer not feel bad (polite as diplomatic); in Fraser's opinion (1990), politeness is "the expected state" (polite as socially correct). On the other hand, politeness is one of the fundamental socio-psychological guidelines for human to behave each other. Richard (1992) defined politeness into two notions including the first-order politeness or politeness and the second-order politeness or politeness. In the former, politeness corresponds to the different ways in which members of socio-cultural groups perceived and talked about in polite behavior, whereas in the latter, politeness is a theoretical construct which have a value within a general theory of social interaction. Furthermore, Watts also adds that the first-order politeness is action behavior and the second-order politeness is linguistic behavior. Some examples for action behavior are taken into consideration such as turning the head away when coughing; giving up one's seat in a bus to an older person; opening the door for others to enter. These are culturally specific as well as a part of the first - order politeness. By contrast, using linguistic behavior, namely saying "please"; "thank you"; "excuse me"; "I'm sorry"; "pardon me" belongs to the second-order politeness. Meanwhile, Kasper (1994, p.3206) pointed out another difficulty when mentioning the different meanings of the term of politeness in ordinary parlance and in pragmatics. Politeness in the former implies appropriate social conduct and skillful consideration for others, whereas in the latter, politeness is considered as a technical term in linguistic pragmatics aimed at a broader and more popular concept. What is being said is that in the ordinary parlance, politeness is just like "etiquette" and "manners". A person is polite when he or she has proper manners and behaves in a way that is socially suitable and takes notice of other people's feelings, while in pragmatics, politeness has rules, principles and strategies that communicators must follow if they want to make conversational activities smooth and successful.

### ***2.2. Politeness Strategies***

Linguists have stated different ways to express politeness strategies. Nevertheless, they, basically, agree to some general principles for being polite in social interactions which are Politeness Rules of Lakoff (1990), Politeness Principles-Maxims of Leech (1983) and Politeness Strategies of Brown & Levinson (1987). Among them the most influential theory of politeness is to put forward by Brown & Levinson. In Brown & Levinson's Politeness Strategies, the concept of "face" is the central of their theory. A set of five strategies to minimize risk of losing face is suggested by these two authors. The choice of strategies will be made on the basis of the speaker's assessment of the size of the face threatening acts (FTAs), which are

certain illocutionary acts liable to damage or threaten another person's face.

Brown & Levinson (1987, p.65) considers face-threatening acts (FTAs) as acts opposite the addressee's and the speaker's positive and negative 'face'. Orders, requests, threats, advice and suggestions are examples of acts which give a threat to 'negative face' because the speaker will be putting imposition on the listeners to do or refrain from doing a specific act. Expressing accepting offers and thanks could also be seen to threaten the speaker's 'negative face', as in the first case, the speaker will be compelled to accept a debt and to trespass on the addressee's negative face; in the second case, it could be understood as a way of admitting a debt and thus the speaker will be disgracing her/his own 'face' (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.67). Apologies and accepting compliments are said as face threatening acts to the speaker's 'positive face' because in the former, the speaker will be pointing out that she or he regrets doing a prior face threatening acts and therefore she or he will be damaging her or his own face; in the latter, the speaker feels that she or he has to requite the compliment in one way or another (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.68). Kasper (1990, p.195) said that Brown & Levinson consider communication as 'fundamentally dangerous antagonistic behavior'. Like Leech, Brown & Levinson (1978, p.79) put forward a scale designed to assess the degree of politeness required in a specific context including: the social distance between the speaker and addressee, where the speaker and the hearer are on a scale of different horizon; the relative power between the communicator and recipient, where the participants are sited on a scale of vertical difference; and the absolute ranking of impositions in a particular culture, the level of intrinsic imposition to a particular act.

It is assumed that politeness strategies are really important in communication. When speaker employs politeness strategies, especially positive and negative politeness strategies appropriately, he/she may get success in intra-cultural and cross-cultural communication. Therefore, positive and negative politeness strategies are highlighted in this section, in particular and in the whole study, in general.

### **3. Research Approach**

#### ***3.1. Data Source***

Campaign 2 is intended to suit both intensive and year-long courses, offering a skills-based approach to learning grammar and lexis which is immediately transferable to military exercises. Written according to NATO's STANAG language profile, Campaign Book 2 takes students from the elementary to exit intermediate level and equips them with sufficient knowledge of English to understand a wide variety of subject matters on everyday social and routine job-related topics. It meets the English language needs of military personnel on international operations, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and training exercises and it has been recognized by two English language-awarding bodies: The English-Speaking Union and the British Council. It provides an accurate and up-to-date reflection of military life and language. With the purpose of this research, Campaign 2 is chosen as a suitable material for data collection during the course of defense studies.

#### ***3.2. Research Methods***

Quantitative method is employed in this research. 402 utterances from 12 Units mainly in the listening tasks in the course book "Campaign 2" were taken into consideration and classified into types of politeness strategies between the speaker and the hearer. These politeness strategies always appear in the military context including: the speaker with lower

rank than the hearer or the hearer's inferior; the speaker with higher rank than the hearer or the hearer's commander; the speaker and the hearer with the same rank such as friends, classmates, roommates; lecturer and addressee.

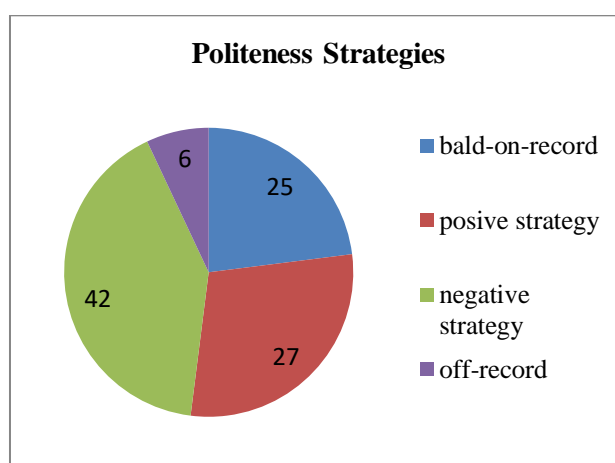
All statistics needed for this study were calculated and grouped into 4 categories of conversational relationships which were analyzed and presented in the following parts.

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

##### 4.1. Frequency of Occurrence of Politeness Strategies in Conversational Activities in the Course Book Campaign 2

###### Pie Chart 1

*The Frequency of Occurrence*



The pie chart above illustrates the percentage namely bald-on record strategy; positive politeness strategies; negative politeness strategies and off-record strategies examined in the conversational activities from Unit 1 to Unit 12. It is clear that the number of occurrences of negative politeness strategies (NPS) account for the most major percentage, whereas the off-record strategies become the least – used strategy and positive politeness as well as bald-on record strategies occupy nearly the same.

To begin with, making up 42%, negative politeness strategy employed most of the four strategies. According to Brown & Levinson (1987:129), negative politeness refers to “redressive action addressed to the addressee’s negative face: his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded”. Agreeing with Brown & Levinson on definition of negative politeness, Quang (2003) emphasizes that “negative politeness is any communicative act which is appropriately intended to show that the speaker does not want to impinge on the addressee’s privacy, thus enhancing the sense of distance between them”. Taking place in the military environment, this view really draws our attention because in the army settings, people do not usually mention about personal affairs as well as they often keep a distance in communication

Accounting for the second largest percentage with 27%, positive politeness strategy usually used in the social situation proves the fact that people know each other fairly well like friends or family. Used in close relationship, this strategy tries to minimize the distance between the speaker and the hearer and minimize the FTAs. In addition to hedging and attempting to avoid conflict, some skills of positive politeness strategy including statements of friendship,

solidarity, and compliments are also mentioned. Positive politeness strategies are used not only for the FTAs' redress, but also as a kind of social accelerator, where the speaker wants to "come closer" to the hearer.

By contrast, with only 6% of the four categories, off-record strategy becomes the least used-one in this course book. It is understandable that military setting is a special context where everything is clearly and exactly required and conversational implication seems to be avoided. Though bald-on record strategy occupied the third position of the four employed strategies under Brown and Levinson's model, it is still considered as one of the frequently used strategies, making up 25%. This result shows that, in army circumstances, both the speaker and the hearer agree that the relevance of face demands may be suspended in requests, offers or urgency. It is obvious that, in comparison with positive politeness and negative politeness strategies which attempt to minimize the FTAs, bald-on record strategy violates the hearer's face and it can make the hearer shocked or embarrassed. However, this strategy is most often utilized in military situations where the speaker is superior in power than the hearer.

From the figures above, it can be seen that the course book "Campaign 2" designed for the military environment shows a power distance between the superior and his or her inferior. Negative politeness strategies are firstly ranked and positive politeness strategies as well as bald-on record appear respectively. This seems to suggest that in military interactions, people tend to express their attention or deference to others. Besides, power and social status are also affirmed.

As presented in the previous part, the study focus on conversational activities of the four most typical and popular conversational relationships between the speaker (S) and the hearer (H) in the course book with politeness strategies including: the inferior and his/ her superior (S has lower rank than H or the hearer's inferior); the superior and his/ her inferior (S has higher rank than H or the hearer's commander); friend and friend (S & H are the same rank, classmates, roommates, friends); lecturer and addressee (...). Table 1 below presents the statistics of each strategy expressed in each conversational relationship which is carefully discussed in the next parts.

**Table 1**

*The Frequency of Politeness Strategies in Terms of Social Relationships*

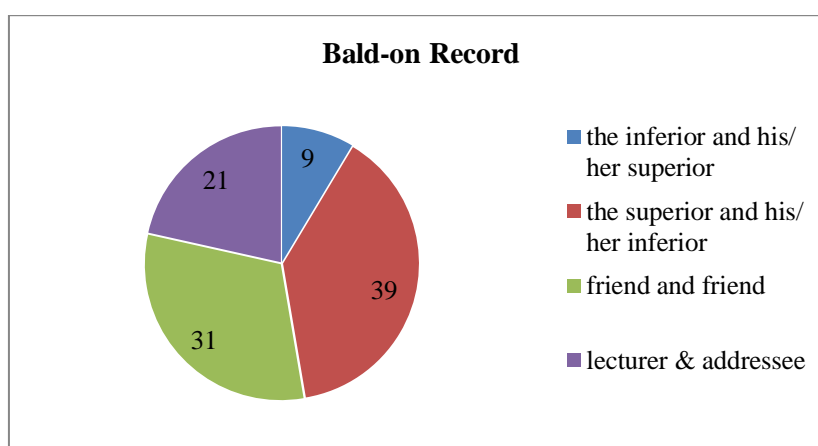
Relationship between S & H	Bald-on-record strategy (99/402)		Positive politeness strategies (109/402)		Negative politeness strategies (168/402)		Off-record strategy (26/402)	
	Sum	%	Sum	%	Sum	%	Sum	%
<b>The inferior and his/her superior.</b>	9	9%	9	8%	85	52%	3	11%
<b>The superior and his/her inferior.</b>	38	39%	39	36%	31	18%	8	31%
<b>Friend and friend</b>	31	31%	58	53%	5	2%	15	58%
<b>Lecturer and addressee</b>	21	21%	3	3%	47	28%	0	0%

#### 4.2. Bald-on-record Strategy in Conversational Activities of “Campaign 2”

The result shows a light difference between bald-on record strategy used in “Campaign 2” and its usage in other conversational relationships, in which bald-on record makes up 25% of the total. This indicates that this strategy is commonly employed among the four politeness strategies though it highly contains a face-threatening act to the hearer’s face. It is understandable that in the military settings, utterances are orders, offers, requests, suggestions and they are short, clear, exact, and informative. In particular, in urgent situations or emergencies, minimizing the threat to the hearer’s face does not occur. It can be seen from the pie-chart 1 that this strategy gets a quarter and only a bit less than 2% compared to positive politeness strategy (27%). Pie-chart 2 below shows how bald-on-record strategy is employed in conversational relationships between the speaker and the hearer.

#### Pie Chart 2

*The Frequency of Bald-on Politeness Strategy in Terms of Conversational Relationship Between the Speaker and the Hearer*



It is not surprising that bald-on record strategy is most frequently employed by the speaker whose ranking is higher than the hearer or the hearer’s commander with 39% of the total. In fact, in military interactions, the commander usually orders or requests to express his/her power to the hearer.

The second largest percentage which accounts for 31% belongs to relationship between friends; classmates; roommates or the people who have the same rank. Obviously, when the speaker and the hearer have close relationship with each other, they do not often attempt to minimize the threat to the hearer’s face. They feel free to express their interests, needs, wants and feelings without saving the hearer’s face. This makes conversations closer and friendlier in communication.

In contrast with the two relationships just mentioned above, bald-on record strategy is least employed by S and H who show the relationship between the inferior and his/her commander with 9%. This assumes that in military environment, the power distance between the inferior and the superior are really remarkable. It does not let the inferior order or impose something on his/ her superior. However, in some special cases such as great urgency, alerting or necessity for great efficiency, this strategy can be used. The following examples prove this fact.

B: Could I speak to Sergeant Cooper please?

A: Let me see if he's in, sir. (Unit2. Bravo. Task 9 – Campaign 2)

A: Let me repeat that please, sir. (Unit 2. Bravo. Task 9 – Campaign 2)

A: I need these copied by 1030. Can you make the copies for me?

B: Yes, sir. Could you complete this for me please, sir? Just put your name and the number of copies and I'll make the copies. (Unit 2: Bravo: Tasks 2 and 3)

A: Good morning, welcome to Fort Carson. State your business, please.

B: Good morning, I'm Sergeant Jones. I'm here to process in. (Unit 5: Task 2: Campaign 2)

From these examples, although the speaker used bald-on-record strategy to request or suggest his/her superior, these utterances seem to be mitigated the threat on the hearer's face by using the words "please", "sir", "just".

Accounting for 21%, bald-on-record strategy reveals the fact that the lecturer and the addressee can make questions, requests, offers, or suggestions directly with each other in the process of presentation or teaching. These following examples are typical:

Lecturer: Try to stay on your board as much as possible. (Unit 1: Charlie: tasks 3 and 4: campaign 2)

Lecturer: To load the weapon, first of all put the safety catch at the S position. Secondly, set the change level to R for Repetition. Next insert a full magazine. Have you all got that? Are there any questions? No questions? Ok! Let me ask you a few questions. Private Brice, to load the weapon, what should you do first?

Private Brice: Uhm, insert the magazine. (Unit 1: Delta: task 6: Campaign 2)

The conversations above are between a lecturer and an addressee in the meeting or in the lesson about military field. Obviously, bald-on-record strategy in this situation helps the speaker show an important content of presentation in giving regulations, rules and determination and it does not contain any threats towards the addressee. Furthermore, when using this strategy, the lecturer wants to focus on efficiency, accuracy and catch the addressee's attention.

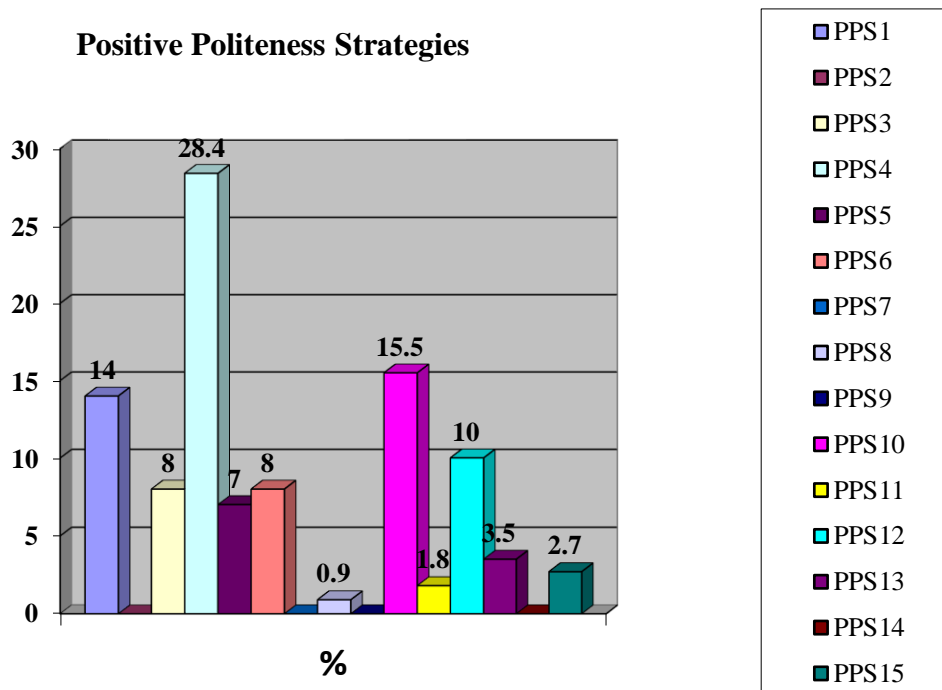
In conclusion, although bald-on-record strategy accounts for the least among the four ones, it is most employed in conversational activities of the coursebook "Campaign 2". This does not mean that the speakers want to create any strong threats to the hearers' face but it can be rules, regulations, orders in military activities which every army officer or soldier must obey, or the speaker wants to express his/her power to the hearer in some cases.

#### **4.3. Positive Politeness Strategies in Conversational Activities in the Course Book "Campaign 2"**

According to Brown and Levinson's model (1987), there are 15 positive politeness strategies listed out and based on this model, the researcher grouped the utterances in the conversations into 15 categories. The result of positive politeness strategies found out in the selected conversations is shown in the bar-chart below:

**Bar-chart 1**

*The Frequency of Occurrence of Positive Politeness Strategies in Conversational Activities in the Course Book “Campaign 2”*



The bar-chart expresses the total percentages of positive politeness strategies used in the course book “Campaign 2” which is spent for military students at Vietnamese army schools. It is clearly seen that the most preferable strategies used in the course book are strategy 4, 10 and 1. Whereas, some strategies such as strategies 7, 9, 14 are not used and strategies like 8, 11, 13, 15 are employed with a quite small rate.

Accounting for 28.4%, strategy 4 (Use in – group identity markers) becomes the most employed strategy in positive politeness strategies under Brown and Levinson’s model (1987). It is understandable that in military conversational activities, people are often called with their ranks such as Corporal; Sergeant; Major; Captain; and so on. Besides, some language or dialect, jargon or slang, and ellipsis or contraction is also used to convey in-group membership. Obviously, military context is a special environment where jargons or slangs can be used by only these people in this field. This is quite different from daily conversational activities and this is a new aspect that the researcher wants to investigate.

The strategy 10 (Offer, promise) is also considered as one of the most used strategies in positive politeness strategies with 15.5% and occupies the second largest portion. In this strategy, the speaker may choose to stress his cooperation with the hearer in another way and he/she wants to develop the relationship with his/her hearer by extending invitation and promise in order to satisfy the hearer’s needs. From the chart, it can be easy to see that the third preference is strategy 1 (Notice, attend to H) with the rate of 14%. Using this strategy helps the speaker express his/ her relationship with the hearer. He/ she wants to take notice of the hearer’s condition with noticeable changes or remarkable possessions. The following examples are typical.

A: Sounds like you're busy. (*Campaign 2: Unit 3: Task 8*)

B : I certainly am.



A: Major Pérez: I've already heard a lot about you. You're doing a great job here. (Campaign 2: Unit 3: Charlie: Tasks 2 and 3)

B: Well, let's see here, you're transferring in from the second armored cavalry at Fort Polk. Good scores on all your last exams. You have no history of disciplinary problems; that's very good. (Campaign 2: Unit 5: Task 6)

A: You seem to be lost. Do you need any help, sir? (Campaign 2: Unit 8: Charlie: Tasks 2 and 3)

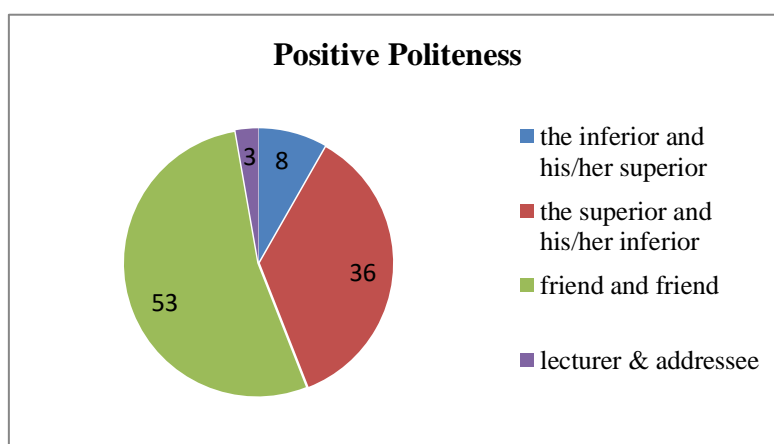
B: Yes, I'm looking for the Officers' Mess. Could you tell me where it is?

It can be seen that strategies 3, 5, 6 equally appear with the rate of 8%, 7%, and 8% for each type, respectively. To be honest, in military settings, conversational activities often happen at the Headquarter or in the field where conflict or disagreement are not frequent. The inferior always obeys his commander as a rule and the inferior always says “yes” for most of the cases. With 0.9% for strategy 8 (joke), 1.8% for strategy 11 (be optimistic), 3.5% for strategy 13 (give or ask for reasons) and 2.8% for strategy 15 (give gifts), it indicates that these strategies are seldom used in the course book. In addition, strategies namely 2, 7, 9 and 14 are not realized in the course book which asserts that military environment is a special setting. Therefore, utterances need clearness and reliance.

In brief, frequently employed in the course book, positive politeness strategies are used to express the speaker’s concern to the hearer, to avoid the disagreement and to make closer relationships between S and H.

**Pie-chart 3**

*The Frequency of Positive Politeness Strategies in Conversational Relationships Between S and H in the Course Book “Campaign 2”*

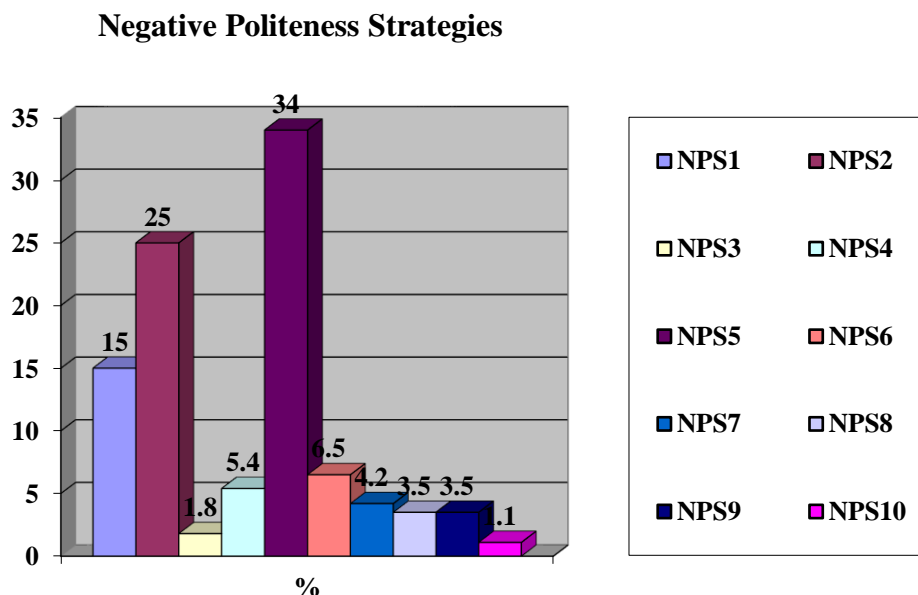


The pie chart 3 provides the fact that the majority of positive politeness strategies (53%) are used between S and H who are power-equals such as friends, classmates, roommates with the same rank. The positive politeness strategy is usually used by those who know each other rather well such friends or family (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Due to close relationship, this strategy tries to minimize the distance between S and H and minimize the FTAs. In addition to hedging and attempting to avoid conflict, some aspects of positive politeness strategy including statements of friendship, solidarity, and compliments are also mentioned. Positive politeness strategies are used not only for the FTAs’ redress, but in general as a kind of social accelerator, where S wants to “come closer” to H.

#### 4.4. Negative Politeness Strategies in Conversational Activities “Campaign 2”

##### Bar-chart 2

The Frequency of Negative Politeness Strategies in Conversational Activities in the Course Book “Campaign 2”



The bar-chart 2 shows the frequent occurrence of negative politeness strategies in the course book “Campaign 2”. It can be seen that strategy 5 (Give deference) and strategy 2 (Question, hedge) are most used strategies. Whereas, strategy 10 (Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H); 3 (Be pessimistic), 9 (Nominalize), are the strategies that S does not often use in the military context. Strategy 5 (Give deference) and Strategy 2 (Question, hedge) with 34% for the former and 25% for the latter are preferred to use. 31 times of occurrence “sir”, 6 times of “Ma’am”; 5 times “ladies and gentlemen” and some high-level words such as “escort” “excuse me”, “a vin d’honneur” are counted. This indicates that in military communication, giving deference is appreciated between S and H. Therefore, it is not surprising when strategy 5 takes up 34% of the total. In strategy 5 (Give deference), people tend to abase themselves first and raise the others before asking them to do something.

E.g.: *Excuse me, sir; I’m sorry, sir;* before asking something frequently.

Making up 25%, strategy 2 “Question, Hedge” is often employed to show little imposition on H. Therefore, strategy 2 “question, hedge” is quite effective which helps people feel more comfortable. With the rate of 15%, strategy 1 ranks the third among negative politeness strategies. Using strategy 1 (Be conventionally indirect), S wants to soften his request. S often seems to use “*Could/ Can....., (please)?*” in making request.

Besides, strategy 6 (Apologize) with 6.5% and strategy 4 (Minimize the imposition) with 5.4% are limited in the course book. The reasons arise from the fact that these strategies reduce FTA by apologizing, so the speaker can indicate his/her reluctance to impinge on the hearer’s negative face and thereby partially redress that impingement. Strategy 4 minimizes the imposition to the hearer. Both these strategies are not frequently employed in military conversational activities where utterances are always orders, requests and contents are clear and understandable. However, in some cases, these strategies are also found. The following

sentences are typical examples.

A: Can you come to my office a moment?

B: I'm sorry sir. Captain Marks told me to stay here. Strategy 6: apologize (*Campaign 2, Unit 2, Tasks 2 and 3*)

A: I'm sorry. You say that UNMOs are unarmed. So, you don't have weapons?

B: That's right. Strategy 6: apologize (*Campaign 2, unit 3, task 8*)

Looking at the bar-chart 2, strategy 7 (Impersonalize S and H), strategy 8 (State the FTA as a general rule) and strategy 9 (Nominalize) occur least and make up with 4.2%, 3.5% and 3.5% respectively. The following sentences are typical examples of these strategies.

A: It's important that the lads go over the obstacle course. Do you agree? Strategy 7: Impersonalize S and H (*Campaign 2, Unit 1: (echo): Task 2*)

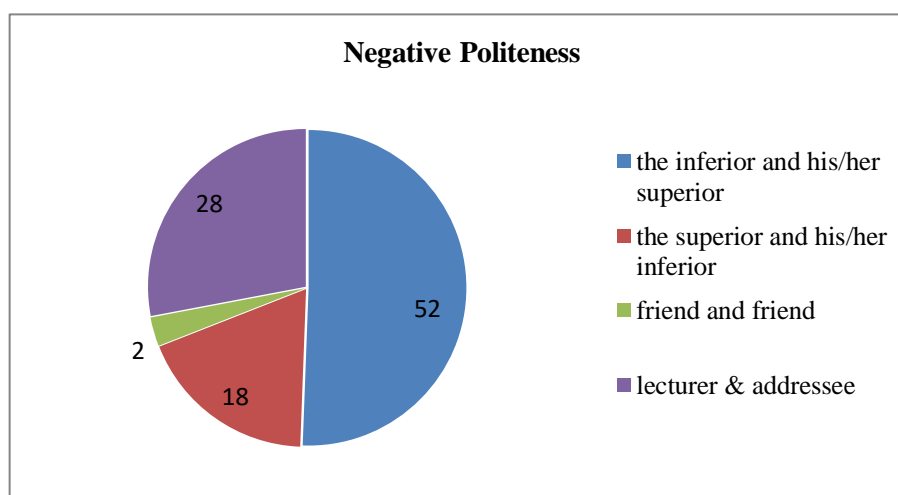
A: It's a good thing you made a reservation, I think the temporary quarters are full. Strategy 7: impersonalize S and H (*Campaign 2, UNIT 5: Task 3*)

In short, the speaker often prefers to use negative politeness strategies to positive ones in military conversational activities, in which, negative politeness strategies 5; 2; 1 are most employed while strategies 10 and 3 are least used and strategies 6; 4; 7; 8; and 9 are limited to use.

The pie chart 4 below provides a clearer view about how negative politeness strategies are employed in relationships between the speaker and the hearer.

#### Pie-chart 4

*The Frequency of Negative Politeness Strategies in Relationships Between S-H in Conversational Activities in the Course Book "Campaign 2".*



The pie-chart 4 shows the percentage of using negative politeness strategies in conversational activities in the course book "Campaign 2" in terms of the relationships between the speaker and the hearer. It can be clearly seen from the chart that negative politeness strategies are most used between the inferior and the superior, whereas, the negative politeness strategies used between friend and friend or between power-equals occupy the smallest portion of the chart.

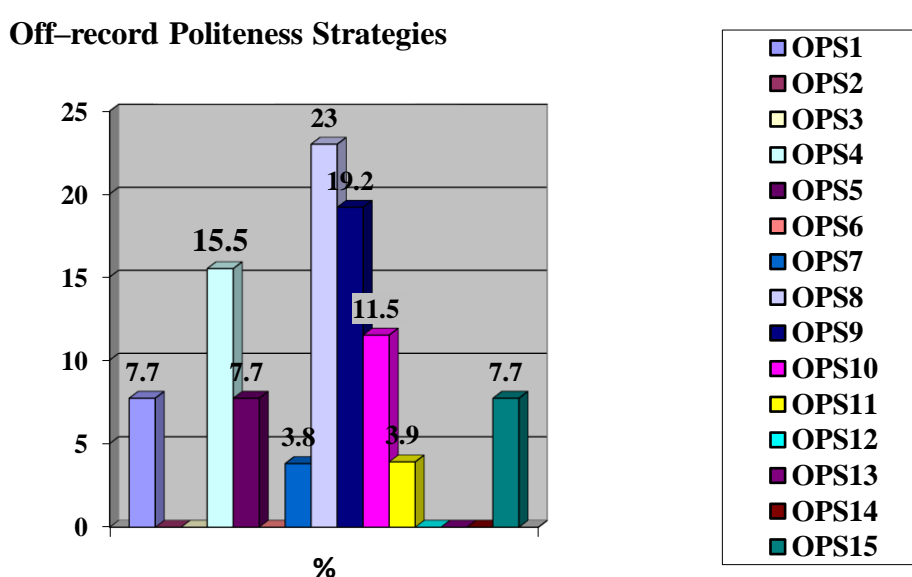
Accounting for 52%, negative politeness strategies are most used by those whose relationship is between the inferior and the superior under Brown and Levinson's model (1987).

This can be inferred from the statistic that in military field, power distance between the inferior and the superior is quite high. Thus, the inferior should express politeness and deference in communication with his/her commander as much as possible. Relationship between the lecturer and the addressee, similarly, also requires the addressee to show his politeness and keep distance, therefore it accounts for 28% in using negative politeness strategies. Making up with only 2% among the negative politeness strategies, the S and the H whose ranking is the same prefers positive politeness to negative ones as they want to express intimacy and solidarity.

**4.5. Off - record Strategies in Conversational Activities “Campaign 2”**

**Bar-chart 3**

*The Frequency of Off - record Politeness Strategies is Used in Conversational Activities in the Course Book “Campaign 2”*



The figure demonstrates the percentage of off-record politeness strategies employed in conversational activities of “Campaign 2”. It can be seen that the most and the second preferable off-record politeness strategies are strategy 8 (Be ironic) and strategy 9 (Use metaphor) while strategies 6 (Use tautologies); 12 (Be vague); 13 (Over-generalize); 14 (Displace H) do not occur in the course book. Accounting for 23% of the total 15 strategies, strategy 8 (Be ironic) becomes the most frequently used strategy in off-record ones. Applying this strategy in conversations, the speaker often says opposite to what he means, uses prosody such as nasality; kinesics like smirk to aim at ironicalness and being satiric.

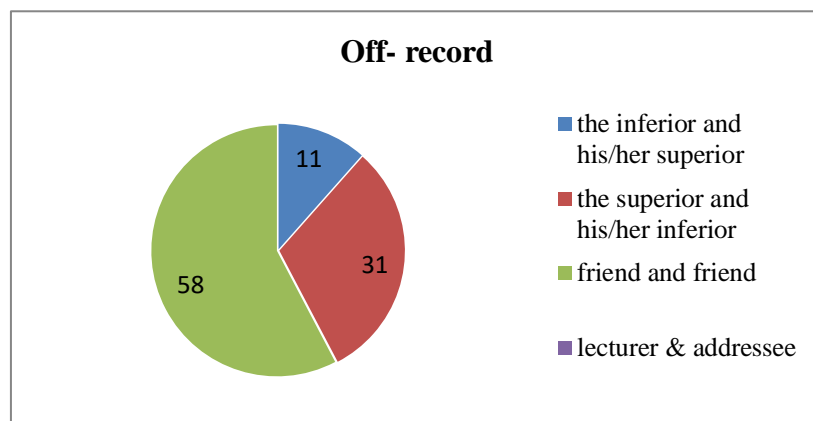
Chart 5 shows that strategies namely 6 (Use tautologies); 12 (Be vague); 13 (Over-generalize) and 14 (Displace H) are not employed. Besides, strategies 7 (Use contradictions) and 11 (Be ambiguous) are rarely used with the same rate of 3.9% for each case.

In conclusion, off – record politeness strategy can be used where speaker asks someone to do something, but does not want to bear responsibility for doing the hearer’s face threatening acts.

Considering the relationship between the speaker and the hearer in Off-record politeness strategy, it is clearly seen in the pie chart 5 below.

### Pie-chart 5

*The Frequency of Occurrence of off-Record Politeness Strategy in the S – H Relationship in Conversational Activities in the Course Book “Campaign 2”*



The pie chart 5 demonstrates the percentage of off-record politeness strategy in the relationship between S and H in conversational activities in the course book “Campaign 2”. It can be obviously seen that off-record politeness strategy used in the relationship between power-equals accounts for the highest rate. By contrast, off-record politeness strategy used in the relationship between the lecturer and the addressee is not employed in this book.

As mentioned in Pie chart 1, off-record strategy is not commonly employed in this course book. It only accounts for 6% among the four politeness strategies. This strategy is used in conversational activities among friends and friends or people with the same rank making up 58%; the inferior and the superior accounting for 11% and the commander and his/her inferior with 31%.

Using off-record strategy, the speaker can leave it up to the hearer to decide how to interpret it. The S’s utterance is too general for the H to get the meaning. Such off-record utterances are indirect uses of language. Therefore, the H must make every effort to infer what the S means.

In fact, this strategy is not suitable for military conversational activities where communication requires clearness, accuracy and explicitness. Therefore, it mainly appears in conversations between friends and friends or the people with the same rank.

From bar-chart 3 and pie-chart 5, it can be seen that the military environment is very sensible in which people always have to care about maintaining distance in social interactions. Hence, to fulfill this requirement, they are not only formal, polite, decisive but also careful about their utterances otherwise communication breakdown can easily occur.

## 5. Conclusion

The study aims at investigating positive and negative politeness strategies and examines their frequency of occurrence in some typical kinds of conversational activities in the course book “Campaign 2” on the theoretical ground of politeness proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987).

Through the data analysis of politeness strategies in the course book “Campaign 2”, it is found that the frequency of occurrence of politeness strategies in conversational activities of this material is not always the same. Further analysis suggests that negative politeness strategies were preferred to positive politeness. The highest percentage of negative politeness strategies

is examined in the relationship between the inferior and his/ her commander. Other positive politeness strategies are also employed but their rate is very small. This proves the fact that in military conversational environment, people tend to keep their distance and show their formality as well as politeness at the workplace.

Apparently, the data and classification of politeness strategies highlighted the importance of applying positive and negative politeness in communication as well as in cross-cultural communication for teachers and students of English. In order to teach and study English efficiently, it is essential to employ politeness strategies appropriately in certain situations in accordance with the purpose of communication. It would be hopeful that with the study result, the students of army schools could learn English through the course book “Campaign 2” efficiently and become good across-cultural communicators.

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## NHỮNG CHIẾN LƯỢC HỘI THOẠI LỊCH SỰ TRONG GIÁO TRÌNH “CAMPAIGN 2”

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**Tóm tắt:** Nghiên cứu này tập trung vào các chiến lược hội thoại lịch sự hòa đồng và chiến lược lịch sự lãnh địa trong giáo trình “Campaign 2” của tác giả Simon Mellor-Clark và Yvonne Baker de Altamirano với mục đích giúp sinh viên nâng cao nhận thức về các chiến lược lịch sự trong giao tiếp trong môi trường quân đội và có thể sử dụng các chiến lược này trong đàm thoại hàng ngày bằng tiếng Anh. Trong phạm vi nghiên cứu này, các hoạt động giao tiếp điển hình được phân loại thành các chiến lược: *thẳng thừng, lịch sự hòa đồng, lịch sự lãnh địa, lịch sự gián tiếp*, và được phân tích chủ yếu dựa theo lý thuyết Lịch sự của Brown và Levinson (1987). Nghiên cứu chỉ ra rằng tần suất của các chiến lược lịch sự hòa đồng và chiến lược lịch sự lãnh địa phụ thuộc không chỉ vào mục đích tương tác mà còn vào mối quan hệ giữa người nói và người nghe.

*Từ khoá:* chiến lược lịch sự, giao tiếp, hội thoại, mối quan hệ