Sociolinguistic Study of Politeness Principles and Socialization in Lingɔmbe

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Abstract
1.   French
Les principes de politesse sont une stratégie de communication que le locuteur utilise pour atteindre un but, choisir le niveau de politesse basé sur la relation entre les interlocuteurs mérite socialisation. L'usage d'un bon niveau de politesse revêt une importance capitale. Si le locuteur n'est pas assez poli, l'auditeur ou l'interlocuteur se sent imposé les choses, cependant si le locuteur est trop poli, la parole semble sarcastique.
Cet article concerne l'analyse des principes de politesse et l'usage de socialisation en Lingɔmbefondée sur trois variables sociolinguistiques : âge, sexe et éducation. Cette analyse se concentre sur les données obtenues grâce aux informateurs de la communauté Ngɔmbe, et l'interprétation de résultats est à deux volets : les principes de politesse par Brown & Levinson (1987) et la socialisation.
Les résultats montrent clairement que la politesse et la socialisation sont différemment utilisées tenant compte de l'âge, du sexe, ou du niveau d'éducation.
2.   English
Politeness principles are communication strategy the speaker uses to achieve goals, choosing the level of politeness based on the relationship between interlocutors deserve socialization. It is important to use the right level of politeness. If the speaker is not polite enough, the hearer feels imposed on, but if the speaker is too polite, the utterance may sound sarcastic.
This article is about the analysis of politeness principles, and the use of socialization in Lingɔmbe based on three sociolinguistic variables: age, gender, and education. This analysis focusses on the data obtained by the participants of Lingɔmbe speech community, and interpretations of the results focus on two scales, the politeness principles of Brown and Levinson's (1987) and socialization.
The results show that politeness principles are diffenrently used pertaining to the age, or the gender, or again the level of education.
Mots clés :*Politesse, Principe, Etude, socialisation et sociolinguistique*
Key-words: *Politeness, Principle, Study, socialization, and Sociolinguistics*
Domain de recherche: *Sociolinguistique*
Research field : *Sociolinguistics*

I.   Introduction
1.1.   Method
1.1.1. The Sample:

The sample of this study consists of ninety-three subjects, who voluntarily accepted to take part in this work. The informants were considered along the age, gender, and education dimensions. The three sociolinguistic variables, age, gender, and education were chosen because politeness principles and socialization may vary with different age group, with gender, and with education.

Regarding the age, we considered different age groups, the informants were between 15 and 70 years old, i.e. 15 and 19 years old as one group. As for the gender, there were 46 females and 47 males. We finally considered education of participants (non-educated people and educated ones). Educated people were analysed by their level of education : primary school, secondary school, and college or university.)

1.1.2. Data Collection Procedure

The data for this study is elicited from the sample through the Discourse Completion Test (DCT). The DCT is a form of questionnaire used to collect sociolinguistic data depicting some natural situations to which the respondents are expected to react making requests. This test was originally designed by

Blum-Kulka in 1982 and has been widely used since then in collecting data on speech acts realization both within and across language groups.

In the analysis of spoken language, this method has been criticised as being an ineffective tool, because of the differences between written and spoken forms (Billmyer &Varghese,2000). DCTs usually ask participants to write down what they would say in a certain setting.It has been suggested that DCTs fail "to elicit the full range of formulas in spoken data," and that the responses are "more limited in length and deficient in the level of elaboration and frequency of repetition typical of human spoken interaction" (Billmyer & Varghese, 2000: 518).

Despite criticisms, DCTs also have certain strengths. A DCT has the advantage of being able to collect large amounts of data by distributing questionnaires to a large number of subjects, and also to record information about communication, rather than relying on retrospection or second hand accounts. It also allows more data to be collected in a short period of time.The use of a DCT for this study was particularly advantageous because it allowed people to complete the task in their usual environment. Another advantage is that this method considers the variables and controls them. Sasaki (1998:458) argues that:

"Because the researcher can control variables related to a given context (e.g., the relative status and closeness of the respondent and the interlocutor) in production questionnaires, it is possible to investigate the effect of such variables."

The questionnaire used in this investigation involves three written situations, the situations vary according to a number of social variables: age, gender, and education showing the social distance between the speakers. In each situation, there is a brief description that illustrates the relations between the participants.The subjects were instructed to fill in with what they would say in each of the three contexts. The respondents were asked to put themselves in real situation and to assume that in each situation they would, in fact, say something they were asked to write down what they would say as a suitable speech.

A part from the questionnaire, we used also the interview technique consisting in asking the informants to answer a series questions (the same as in the questionnaires).
The table below shows the different variables used in the different situations.

SITUATIONS	VARIABLES
Situation 1	Age
Situation 2	Gender
Situation 3	Education

Table 1 : Combination of Explanatory Variables.

The data collected through the Discourse-Completion-Test is analyzed on the basis of an independent examination of each response. the data is analysed to identify the terms of politeness strategies used in each setting. The responses to DCT were then tabulated and analysed according to the framework of Brown and Levinson in terms of politeness strategies.
Generally speaking, request strategies are expected to be influenced by the relation between interlocutors.

II.   Definition of Key Concepts
2.1 Politeness
Politeness is seen as a foundation of social interaction in communities across the world. For that reason Leech (2006:173) defined politeness as a set of practices deployed to 'avoid communicative discord or offence, and maintain communicative concord'.

Competent speakers of a language often identify speech and behavior as being normatively polite or impolite. They also determine this social interactive phenomenon of politeness in terms of subtle and complex activity that is conveyed through verbal and nonverbal (gestural, semiotic) channels that vary across situations and communities.

The reference to appropriate or non-appropriate use of politeness can, positively or negatively, impact on inhabitants' relationship.

Politeness, as one of the social phenomena, has attracted attention across a range of fields, such as linguistics and anthropology it is echoed in some subfields of linguistics and anthropology such as language acquisition, and gender studies.

Studies across fields have examined, in particular, the use of certain speech acts (e.g. requests, apologies), indirectness, honorifics, and politeness formulas.

2.2 Socialization

Socialization is broadly defined as "a process in which an individual acquires the attitudes, behaviors and knowledge needed to successfully participate as an organizational member."

As a socialization process competent adult members in every society learn how to behave politely, linguistically and otherwise. Hence, politeness has not been born as an instinctive mankind property, but it is a phenomenon which has been constructed through sociocultural and historical processes.

Socialization is defined by Berger (1979:62) as: "the process by which an individual learns to be a member of his or her society". It is the way people learn the patterns of thought and behavior considered acceptable in theirr society.

Socialization is that process by which a living organism is changed into a person and a social being. It is with the help of this process that a younger generation learns the adult role which it has to play subsequently.

2.2.1 Language Socialization

Language socialization research has shown that language plays a crucial role in the process helping a novice become a member of a particular cultural community. Linguistic structures at every level – phonological, lexical, morphosyntactic, pragmatic, and conversational – bear social and cultural meanings for members of a speech community. In order to become active, competent members of their community, novices must learn to understand and use these linguistic structures in appropriate ways. They do so through recurrent communicative encounters with more knowledgeable community members, who interact with novices in ways that are culturally specific. These encounters shape novices' understandings not only of how and for what purposes they may use language, but also of whom they are, how they should behave, and what they should feel. That is, through participation in routine interactions with more expert members of the community, novices are socialized through the use of language and socialized to use language.

2.3 Sociolinguistics

According to Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (1989:262) Sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to social factors, that is, social class, educational level and type of education, age, sex, ethnic origin, etc. Sociolinguistics is the descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used, and the effects of language use on society.

Sociolinguistics differs from sociology of language in that the focus of sociolinguistics is the effect of the society on the language, while the sociology of language focuses on language's effect on the society, Wardhaugh R., (2006:13).

Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language use and the structure of society. It takes into account such factors as the social backgrounds of both the speaker and the addressee (i.e. their age, sex, social class, ethnic background, degree of integration into their neighbourhood, etc.), the relationship between speaker and addressee (good friends, employer–employee, teacher–pupil, grandmother–grandchild, etc.) and the context and manner of the interaction (in bed, in the supermarket, in a TV studio, in church, loudly, whispering, over the phone, by fax, etc.), maintaining that they are crucial to an understanding of both the structure and function of the language used in a situation.It also studies how language varieties differ between groups separated by certain social variables, e.g., ethnicity, religion, status, gender, level of education, age, etc., and how creation and adherence to these rules is used to categorize individuals in social or socioeconomic classes. As the usage of a language varies from place to place, language usage also varies among social classes, and it is these sociolects that sociolinguistics studies. (from Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia online).
I can say, in nutshell, that Sociolinguistics is the impact of the society on the language.

2.4 Principle
Moral rule or aspect or guiding belief.

Studies have also examined socialization practices, shedding light on the ways in which people learn to convey norms of politeness in their community. While much of the research focuses on English speakers, a growing body of research in various communities contributes to a cross - cultural perspective as the case of the present research paper.

This paper is in sociolinguistics which is a sub-branch of linguistics dealing with the impact of the society on the language. It deals with the study of relationships existing between the language (Lingɔmbe) and social structure (Ngɔmbe people). It circumscribes linguistic variation, and attitudes towards language. Within the analysis, two languages will be contrasted: English and Lingɔmbe on the use of politeness principles considered as a tool for positive socialization.

III. Major Findings and Their Interpretations

3.1 Results (Findings)

The analysis of the language under study, Lingombe as far as politeness principles and socialization are concerned has led us to some findings exposed herebelow:

a) Lingombe is a living language

Lingombe is a living language in that it underwent the linguistic brewing with the passing of the time through interactions with other people - Ngombe people divided into different group and took different directions. Some went down to the southern equator and took the direction of Bongandanga and Basankusu. Some others will appear in the "cuvette central" towards 1800 driving away before them, several Mongo groups until they settled at Bolomba where they were obliged to share the same territories with Mongo people. Ngombe people are the last comers in this territory in comparison to Ngbaka, Mongo, and especially Pygmies who normally are the first inhabitants of that entire territory.

Lingombe is spread into several dialects (in addition to standard spoken Lingombe). These are Libwela, Lidoko, Ligenza, najokobo, motembo, liyumba, wiindza-Baali, and Binza (alternatively called Binza, Libindja, or Libirija). The latter is not the same as the Binja/Binza language. Binja dialect is primarily spoken in Oriental Province and Aketi territory and shares about three-quarters of its linguistic characteristics with standard Ngombe. Maho (2009:367) lists Doko or Lidoko as a distinct language in a separate group.

Although all speak Lingombe, there we find the linguistic groups that have some prosodic particularities and again the accentuation of the maternal substratum that differentiates them. This is how one finds there: the Yumba, the Mosweya, the Doko, and the Mbenja. Depending on whether they are of the other strand of the Congo stream more close to the Mongo people. It is necessary to say that here; the Lingombe certainly underwent the linguistic brewing with the passing of the time to live together with other people. Despite their diversity and the distance between the different territories occupied by Ngombe people, they recognize having all the same origin and have in common almost the same customs and culture, and they keep the same language, "Ngombe or Lingombe"; of course with some particular slight differences. Wikipedia.Enycl. 2009.

b) Lingombe valuespoliteness expressions in different situations of life.

1. Greetings, Apologies, and Requests

Situation one: Age

Formal Greetings

The analysis of the data of this paper regarding the use of politeness strategies related to the ages of the speakers shows that 21.50% of adults use formal greetings towards others adults. 10.75% of adults use formal greetings when talking to young people, and 32.25% of young people use formal greetings between them (youngs).

Address

As far as addressing people is concerned, 22.58% of adults are formal when addressing other adults, whereas 6.45% of adults use formal speech towards young people. But69,89% of young people are formal when addressing adults, and 1.07% of young use formal address to other youngs.

Compliments and Responses

The research shows that 27.95% of adults are formal when using compliments and responses to other adults. 17.20% of formal compliments and responses for adults to youth., 32.25% of youth to adults, and 22.58% of youth to youth.

Apologies

32,25% of adults use formal apologies between them,5,37% towards the youth.38,70% young people to adults, and 23,65% of young people between them.

Giving Permission

32,25%adults use formal speech when giving permission to other adults, 3,22% when giving permission to the youth. 53.76% of young people are formal with adults, and 10.75% of the youth are formal among them.

Refusing Permission

34,40% of adults are formal when refusing permission between them, 19,35% use formal speech with the youth. 35,48% of young people are formal towards adults, and 10,75% between them as the table below presents:

Politeness strategies/formal	Adult to adult		Adult to young		Young to adult		Young to young	
Greetings	20	21,50%	10	10,75%	60	64,51%	3	32,25%
Adressing	21	22,58%	6	6,45%	65	69,89%	1	1,07%
Compliments and Responses	26	27,95%	16	17,20%	30	32,25%	21	22,58%
Apologies	30	32,25%	5	5,37%	36	38,70%	22	23,65%

Giving permission	30	32,25%	3	3,22%	50	53.76%	10	10,75%
Refusing permission	32	34,40%	18	19,35%	33	35,48%	10	10,75%

Table 2: Distribution of Politeness Strategies using Formal Speech in Situation one

Situation two: Gender
Politeness principles are differently used regardind gender. This study shows that women are likely more linguistically polite than men.
As presented in table 4,
Greetings
 24.73% of male greet formally other males, 7.52% only to female. Whereas 50.53% of female use formal greetings towards male, and 17.20% to other female.
Addressing
Only 26.88% of male address formally other male, and 7.52% to female. But 46.23% of female address male in a formal way, and 19.35% do so to other female.
Compliments and Responses
59.13% of female are formal when complimenting and answering male, 16.12% are so towards other female. But only 10.75% of male use formal speech to compliment or respond their peers male, and 13.97% towards female.
Apologie
This research depicts that 61.29% of female are more polite when apologizing to male, 15.05% towards their peers. However, 17.20% is the percetage of male apologizing formally other males, and only 6.45% towards female.
Giving Permission
54.83% of female use politeness strategies towards male and 8.60% towards other females. But 34.40% of male towards other male and 2.15% only towards females.
Refusing Permission
Only 18.27% of male refuse permission politely to other male , and 5.37% towards females. But 67.74% of females do it towards males and 8.60% towards other females.
Thus, Politeness and gender
Politeness principles are differently used regardind gender. This study shows that women are likely more linguistically polite than men.

Politeness strategies	Male to male		Male to female		Female to male		Female to female	
Greetings	23	24.73%	7	7.52%	47	50.53%	16	17.20%
Addressing	25	26.88%	7	7.52%	43	46.23%	18	19.35%
Compliments and Response	10	10.75%	13	13.97%	55	59.13%	15	16.12%
Apologies	16	17.20%	6	6.45%	57	61.29%	14	15.05%
Giving permission	32	34.40%	2	2.15%	51	54.83%	8	8.60%
Refusing permission	17	18.27%	5	5.37%	63	67.74%	8	8.60%

Table 4: Distribution of Politeness Strategies in Situation Two

Situation three: Politeness and Education
The table below using the variable education in the study of politeness among Ngombe people presents clearly that educated people are more polite, that is to say they use more politeness strategies than noneducated ones.

Politeness strategies	Educated to educated		Educated to non-educated		Non-educated to educated		Non-educated to non-educated	
Greetings	50	53.76%	23	24.73%	10	10.75%	10	10.75%
Addressing	40	43.01%	24	25.80%	9	9.67%	8	8.60%
Compliments and Response	36	38.70%	39	41.93%	7	7.52%	11	11.82%
Apologies	38	40.86%	29	31.18%	13	13.97%	13	13.97%
Giving Permission	42	45.16%	22	23.65%	15	16.12%	14	15.05%
Refusing Permission	41	44.08%	35	37.63%	9	9.67%	8	8.60%

Table 5: Distribution of Politeness Strategies in Situation Three

Greetings
53.76% educated people use formal greetings towards other educated, and 24.73% towards noneducated. But 10.75% of noneducated to educated and 10.75% other towards noeducated.

Addressing
As far as addressing people is concerned, 43.01% of educated people use positive politeness strategies towards their peers (educated) and 25.80% towards noneducated. However, 9.67% of noneducated ones use them towards educated people and only 8.60% of noneducated among themselves.

ComplimentsandResponse
38.70% is the rate of educated people using positive politeness strategies towards other educated in compliments and responses. 41.93% of educated towards noneducated, and 7.52% of noneducated people towards educated ones, and lastly11.82% of noneducated to noneducated people.

Apologies

Considering apologies, 40.86% of educated people do it in a formal way to other educated people, and 31.18% to noneducated ones. But only 13.97% of noneducated people do it towards educated, and 13.97% towards other noneducated people.

GivingPermission
The findings in the table above reveal that 45.16% of educated people are more formal towards other educated, and 23.65% towards noneducated. However, 16.12% of noneducated tend to be more polite to educated and 15.05% to other noneducated ones.

RefusingPermission
In refusing permission, 44.08% of educated people are formal towards other educated, whereas 37.63% towards noneducated. But only 9.67% of noneducated are formal to educated people, and 8.60% noneducated to other noneducated.

Thus, considering the social background of the communicator. Generally, the more educated a man is, the more he tends to show his politeness to other people. The more he knows about the suitable ways to show politeness, the better he uses them to be polite to others.

c)   Socialization favors Politeness Principles
Socialization is the process of inculcating social and cultural norms from a generation to another. It is also the process of shaping individuals into particular forms of group life, passing on established cultural traditions and transforming human organisms into social beings. Socialization not only helps in the maintenance and preservation of social values and norms but it is also the process with the help of which the younger generation is told to transmit social values and norms to the next generation. Socialization is an ongoing process that does not stop with the life of an individual but continues from generation to generation.
As the matter fact, socialization helps people learn how to fuction successfully in their social worlds.
That is to say, socialization helps people learn what is appropriate, polite in communication. So, it can be said without any doubt that socialization favors politeness principles.
For instance, among the Ngombe of Central Africa, mothers and older siblings prompt children in politeness, which includes, 'thank you's, greetings, respect to elders, and proper terms of address '.
d)   Socialization of Adults differs from the Youth Socialization
This study depict that the primary social concerns children (98.92%). It is at that moment that they learn the attitudes, values and actions appropriate to individuals as members of a particular culture.This happens in the family. They are also concerned by the secondary socialization (92.47%), (school or church or peers). Mainly teenagers who learn the norms and values of a small group in which they evolve. Whereas the other types of socialization target the adults (97.84%).

Type of socialization	Children		Adults	
Primary	92	98.92%	1	1.07%
Secondary	86	92.47%	7	7.52%
Others	2	2.15%	91	97.84%

Table 6: Distribution of socialization of adults and the youth

3.2 Interpretations

The results of this study can be interpreted sociolinguistically as follow:

- Regarding the sociolinguistic variable age, it is worth mentioning that Ngɔmbe young people use formal speech in ordder to portray politeness when it is question of greetings, address, compliments, responses, apologies, and requests. This is to say that, Ngɔmbe young people are polite towards adults.

- Concerning the sex or the gender, we can say without any doubt that females or women are more polite than man.They use more politeness expressions in their speech in order to soften their utterances.

- The results of this study also lead us to conclude that the more educated a person is, the more he is formal or polite in his speech. Less or non-educated people in Ngɔmbe community are also less or no polite at all.

- As far as socialization is concerned, we note from this study that the socialization helps Ngɔmbe people learn and apply the principles of politeness.

- The socialization of adults is likely different from that of young people. Young people are more concerned by primary and secondary socializaton occurred in the family and at school and church as well. Whereas, adults socialization happens at work places, etc.

3.3 Conclusion

To analyse of the data of our research, three sociolinguistic variables had been called on for this analysis: age, sex or gender, and education. As far as politenes principles are concerned, mainly in Lingɔmbe, the results show that those principles are differently used regarding the age, the gender,and the level of education of interlocutors.

The same thing is true concerning the socialization.

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