Face and Identity Management in Negotiation

Proefschrift

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**Transcription conventions**

( . ) bracketed full stops indicate a significant pause or silence; more full stops indicate longer pauses or silences

, comma signifies a perceptible break in the flow of speech

. full stop indicates falling tone

? question mark indicates rising tone

= equal signs indicate overlapping utterances

= across speakers

ahh:: colon indicates an extension of the sound it follows; more colons indicate longer sounds

(*** ) bracketed asterisks indicate a sound that cannot be identified (unintelligible)

((LAUGHS)) double brackets contain descriptions of relevant contextual information

/Ja/ slashes contain letters representing sounds classified as non-standard interjections or discourse (including code-switches to the L1)

Really underline indicates voice-raising on the part of the speaker
In this report, and particularly in the early chapters, we have opted at times to use the gendered male pronouns “he”, “his”, “him” when referring to people or speakers in the text, instead of "he/she", "his/her", "her/him", or gender-neutral pronouns. This has been done purely to avoid disrupting the flow of the text. Wherever possible, gender-neutral variants or plural pronoun forms have been used.

Naturally, on those occasions where “he”, “his” or “him” (and their derivatives) have been used to refer to people, or more specifically to speakers, in a general sense, the reader is to assume that the discussion is equally applicable or as relevant to female speakers, unless indicated otherwise.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

Perhaps the greatest challenge for international organisations in the new millennium is survival in a global marketplace. As companies have expanded their trade activities across continents, their workforce has become more culturally and ethnically diverse. With respect to business communication, the effect of globalisation has not been restricted to external communication but has also impacted on workflow communication. As a result, there is an ever-increasing need for business executives who are capable of operating in business settings that span both national and cultural boundaries.

Given the increasingly international character of business communication, a high level of foreign language skills continues to be regarded as a prerequisite for successful management. With respect to the Netherlands, findings from analyses of foreign language needs and foreign language use in various branches of business and industry confirm that foreign language skills, and particularly English, are indeed an important asset (Van Dale Talen 1987). In practice, the foreign languages that are used most frequently by Dutch business people in international commercial traffic are English and German, with French in third place (Van Els 1990). World export and trade figures from 1998 show that 13% of total Dutch export commodities was exported to the United Kingdom and the United States. The United Kingdom, in turn, exported around 8% of its goods to the Netherlands. Almost 29% of Dutch goods, by far the largest part, went to nearby Germany, while 13% of trade was conducted with Belgium and Luxembourg. Around 4% of goods was exported to Central and Eastern European countries (CIA Factbook: 14 November 2001). English as a lingua franca is widely used in transactional business communication between non-native speakers of English from different European countries (Van Hest & Oud-de Glas 1991; Hagen 1993; Louhiala-Salminen 1996; Nickerson 1999; Vandermeeren 1999). In light of continuing globalisation and the rapid advances in ICT that have stimulated worldwide trade and have brought cultures out of isolation, it is to be expected that intercultural business communication will only continue to become more pervasive in the future.

Intercultural business communication has been identified as one of four main areas that take up a prominent place in the existing literature on organisational communication (Nickerson 1999). Studies carried out in this area have tended to focus on written genres, including the letter of request, the fax, and the fund-raising letter (see Nickerson 1999 for an overview). More recently, however, such studies have increasingly begun to incorporate investigations into genres of oral business communication in an intercultural organisational context (see Chapter 2 for further details). The present investigation aims to contribute to the body of work generated by the latter group of studies by investigating aspects of lingua franca discourse in intercultural sales negotiations.

The rest of this introductory chapter presents the background to the investigation. Section 1.1 considers the status of English as the dominant international language of business. Section 1.2 addresses aspects of current business communication pedagogy in the light of increased
globalisation of trade and rapid advancements in communication technology. Section 1.3 presents the background to and motivation for the present investigation. Section 1.4 outlines the main objectives of this study. Finally, section 1.5 provides an overview of the remaining chapters.

1.1 English as international lingua franca

Over the past decades, and as global trade and industry have become increasingly interdependent, English has slowly but surely acquired the status of the international lingua franca of business. It is also playing an increasingly significant part in world politics and diplomacy as the international language of communication that is used to forge international bonds, formulate global regulations, and resolve intercultural conflict (Zhenhua 1999).

The spread of English as a world language seems to have been a largely natural process. Non-native speakers have been only too eager to adopt it as their medium of communication, not only in encounters with speakers of other languages than their own, but also for use within their own speech community and culture, for specific purposes such as, for example, music, education, electronic communication, and in advertising (see e.g., Myers 1994; Gerritsen 1995; Gerritsen et al. 2000). Crystal (1997) has noted that the large majority of European companies claim to use English as their primary corporate language and that the European scientific community has largely switched to publications in English. Another example of the pervasiveness of English as a world language is provided by Graddol et al. (1999) who found that the Hong Kong business community has, over the years, adopted English as the standard language of communication with its business partners in mainland China, Taiwan, and Vietnam, as well as Australia. More recently, however, since Hong Kong’s reversion to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, Mandarin and Cantonese have started to gain ground again, and are now being used alongside English (Graddol 1997).

One of the reasons why English is so readily adopted as a second language is because it continues to enjoy high status. It is associated with many positive values, such as objectivity, professionalism, trendiness, authority, and globalisation (Crystal 1997). Despite its imperialist history, English is regarded as a neutral, flexible, direct, and emotionless language, and has gradually become the language of international trade. Countries in which English is the native language “are perceived to be privileged linguistically, while non-native English-speaking countries, (…) to alleviate their disadvantage, are launching campaigns to enable more people to use English more accurately and fluently” (Zhenhua 1999: 80). The use of English has long since extended beyond the former members of the old British Empire. In some countries in Africa, including Algeria and the former Zaire, it has even begun to replace French.

English has been adopted as the official first or second language in more than 70 countries around the world. As a result, a global English-speaking community of an estimated 350 million people who spoke English as their mother tongue had emerged by the end of the twentieth century (Encyclopaedia Britannica Online: 5 April 2000). It has to be said that estimates of this latter figure vary from one source to the next; the Ethnologue database of world languages puts this figure at 332 million, and places English in third place in its list of the Top 100 Languages of the World, behind Spanish and Mandarin Chinese (Ethnologue Languages of the World: 5 April 2000), while Graddol (1997) puts estimates for native speakers of English at the turn of the century at closer to 375 million, and places English in second place in his list of major world languages, after Mandarin Chinese. Graddol also estimates that around 375 million people worldwide speak English as a second (official) language (Ethnologue puts this figure at 250 to 350 million), while a
further 750 million are speakers of English as a foreign language who have studied the language to communicate with people outside their own culture. The three major international domains in which English is used are international organisations and conferences, scientific publication, and international banking, economic affairs, and trade (Graddol 1997).

Although it is not possible to estimate how many English speakers (native or otherwise) there are across the globe, it is assumed that roughly a quarter of the world’s total population has at least some degree of competence in the English language, and that the greater part of this community are not native speakers of English (Encyclopaedia Britannica Online: 5 April 2000). The adoption of English as the language of computer-based communication technology has caused a further extension of the use of English, not only in computer software, but also on the Internet. In 1999, 54% of websites on the Internet were in English (Businessweek Online: 24 March 2000). Other sources put this figure as high as 85% (Encyclopaedia Britannica Online: 5 April 2000), and 84% (Graddol 1997).

Over the last century, driven by forces such as globalisation of trade and economy, technological advancement, and increased contact between different cultures, English has emerged as the indisputable language of international business communication. For the moment, it would seem that its nearest rivals, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese, in terms of estimated total number of native speakers, do not pose any immediate danger to its status as the world’s primary lingua franca. Therefore, it is likely that English will continue to be regarded as a major contributor to economic and social advance, and that the demand for courses in (Business) English will only increase in the future. The challenge for universities is to offer international business programmes that turn out competent business executives who, next to a thorough understanding of organisational issues, have a good command of a lingua franca (especially English), and can manage cultural diversity, both with respect to cross-cultural management and international business communication (Varner 2001).

1.2 Business communication teaching: globalisation and ICT

Globalisation and advancements in communication technology in business have had major implications for the teaching of business communication. Most higher educational institutions that offer an international business (communication) programme now incorporate courses on intercultural communication in these programmes (Varner 2001). They have come to realise that their graduates need to be better equipped to function adequately on the multicultural workfloor and in international business dealings. In recognition of the fact that awareness of different cultures and their (communication) practices can be a powerful asset in international business, many companies have developed their own in-house programmes to train managers in international business and global management (Brake et al. 1995). A decade or so ago, it seemed to be regarded as sufficient for business administration and business communication graduates to learn one or more foreign languages to prepare them for a career in international business. However, it has now come to be realised that graduates, if they are to operate successfully in international contexts, must also develop a certain degree of intercultural competence, an awareness of how different cultural factors can influence international business dealings and international communication, between people with different cultural backgrounds, often communicating in a language other than their own.
The need for interculturally competent university graduates has had dramatic consequences for business communication pedagogy. The objective for both teachers and students is no longer ‘merely’ the acquisition of communicative competence in one or more foreign languages. An equally important objective is the acquisition of a more general intercultural awareness that will allow students to recognise the relevant cultural factors that can influence behaviour and communication in business encounters around the world, not just in business encounters with native speakers of the foreign language(s) they have specialised in. Intercultural competence is achieved through intercultural learning, which is “aimed at achieving an awareness of cultural diversity and an understanding of different modes of living and behaviour” (Krück 1992: 299). In turn, intercultural competence forms the basis for intercultural communicative competence, or the ability to apply codes (verbal and non-verbal; mother tongue or foreign language) in a given intercultural communication context, in accordance with local cultural norms. Ideally, international business communication courses should offer more than an environment for students to acquire another language; circumstances should also be created to allow students to become familiar with and comfortable in other cultures. Effectively, teachers and students of international business communication face the challenge of accommodating three interrelated layers of communicative competence. They must deal with: 1) the (foreign) language code; 2) in a variety of specific business communication settings that ‘pre-experience’ business students (and most foreign language, or FL, teachers) will be largely unfamiliar with; 3) in a potentially large number of different international contexts where communication processes may be influenced and shaped by a variety of ‘other-culture’ norms and values (see e.g., Brake et al. 1995; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1998; Trosborg 1998).

Analyses of skills needs among post-graduate business students have shown that the emphasis in the higher management positions they tend to end up in is on oral skills in meetings, negotiations, interviews and presentations, rather than on the written skills which have traditionally received the bulk of attention in business communication and administration programmes, and more particularly in foreign language modules (Louhiala-Salminen 1996; Maes, Weldy & Icenogle 1997; Goby 1999). Furthermore, with the advent of more sophisticated media and the widespread introduction of ICT in all areas of business, more traditional business communication genres, such as the business letter and memo, are fast becoming obsolete. Most transactional communication, from placing orders to billing customers, now takes place by fax (Louhiala-Salminen 1995, 1996; Hedderich 1997), and increasingly online (Louhiala-Salminen 1996).

The curricula of business communication courses, particularly those that focus on international business and include a foreign language component, should clearly reflect the changes which have taken place in the business community and which have had such an impact on business communication over the past two decades. Graduates should be provided with a solid knowledge and skills base that will allow them to communicate adequately and effectively in modern-day, international business settings. Although most international business programmes now include an intercultural component of some description, usually aimed at creating general intercultural awareness of cultural factors that could influence students’ future business dealings, it is in business courses that incorporate foreign language teaching in particular that educators seem to have been slow in responding to the rapid changes in global communication. Curricula have remained largely unchanged, focusing on traditional competences and skills, and on everyday, rather than business, communication genres. Business communication teachers, particularly those who teach foreign language skills, still tend to equate the broader concept of intercultural communicative competence with (near-)native communicative competence in the foreign language.
However, business students will need a broader intercultural and functional base if they are to operate adequately in the international business community. With respect to foreign language skills, for example, (near-)native models and targets may not be the most appropriate, as post-graduates are more likely to be engaged in business communication activities where the language of choice is not native, or even near-native for that matter, to any of the parties involved (see also e.g., Louhiala-Salminen 1996; St John 1999; Van der Walt 1999). Given that there are no ‘model’ (native) communicators anyway, as “language use and communication are (...) pervasively and even intrinsically flawed, partial, and problematic” (Coupland, Wiemann & Giles 1991, cited in Kasper 1997, para. 40), teachers may in fact be placing an unrealistically high demand on L2 learners’ communicative skills by effectively requiring them to attain a degree of perfection that does not exist. Rather than emphasising the attainment of near-nativeness, language teaching in international business programmes, if it really wants to be responsive to the needs of its target groups, should ideally focus on what goes on, in terms of context, relationship, process and language, in international business communication between partners from different cultural backgrounds, involving non-native speakers of the language of choice, or lingua franca. Learning environments should be created that centre around communicative action in written or spoken genres that is relevant to recurrent communication situations in business.

In turn, to respond to the needs of the business communication teaching community, researchers in the field should incorporate relevant aspects of intercultural business communication in their analyses. In part, the present investigation is an attempt to do just that. This study focuses on aspects of communication in intercultural sales negotiations, involving English as the lingua franca. In this way, it hopes to contribute to the area of research that has focused specifically on intercultural (oral) business communication. Furthermore, the present study involves a comparison of the verbal behaviour of inexperienced negotiators (business students) versus experienced negotiators (business professionals). It is hoped that the observations from such a comparison can provide useful starting points for generating relevant business English teaching content and materials for business students aiming to work in a largely international organisational context after graduation.

1.3 Face concerns in negotiation communication

Language is not used exclusively to convey information and achieve concrete goals and objectives, relating to the transactional dimension of communication. Language is also used to attain interpersonal goals that relate to the interactional (or relational) dimension of communication (Brown & Yule 1983). Language reflects and conveys presuppositions and opinions about the situational characteristics of an exchange, and about the participants and their relationship. Interactional speech is aimed specifically at attaining the interpersonal goal in an exchange: by creating and building rapport, interlocutors can promote an agreeable and positive relationship. It is perhaps reflected most strongly in face-saving and face-giving behaviour, collectively referred to as facework (Scollon & Scollon 2001).

Face, the social recognition of the other’s positive self-image, and the speaker’s own need to be respected and liked, are salient in any type of communication, but particularly so in settings where participants may encounter potential conflict (Goffman 1972). Business negotiations

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1 Communicative action incorporates speech acts, but also “engaging in different types of discourse and participating in speech events of varying length and complexity” (Kasper & Rose 2001: 2).
constitute such a setting. Negotiators typically set out with diverging, as well as common, interests, and will need to engage in a considerable amount of facework to attain both the interactional and transactional goals of the exchange. Facework in such settings will be aimed at building the relationship between participants on the one hand, and at preventing or diffusing conflict that threatens the relationship posed by potential disagreement relating to the more concrete goals of the negotiation, such as reaching a satisfactory decision or closing a lucrative deal, on the other. Aston (1993) has suggested that interactional speech, the language geared to achieving interpersonal rapport, is as essential in any communication event as transactional speech, the exchange of information relating to the concrete goals of a given communication event. In addition, he posits that, particularly in intercultural settings, interactional speech can act as a “facilitator” for transactional speech, as it “puts into operation the ‘benevolence principle’ whereby eventual understanding failures are more likely to be interpreted as errors rather than offenses. Creating satisfactory interpersonal rapport would therefore seem to be particularly important in a NNS [=non-native speaker] communication event.” (Aston 1993: 229).

The investigation reported here was carried out in the department of Business Communication Studies at Nijmegen University. Business communication (henceforth BC) remains a relatively new area of study, although it has been gaining greater momentum over the past two decades. By necessity, much of the research that is carried out in this vein has a strong interdisciplinary character, in terms of both methodology and theoretical premise, incorporating insights from more traditional disciplines including anthropology, psychology, linguistics, communication science, and intercultural communication (see e.g., overviews in Limaye & Victor 1991; Smeltzer 1993; and a related discussion in Wardrope 2001). Primarily, the present study aims to provide insights into how, and what type of, facework is used to achieve both interactional and transactional goals in a lingua franca negotiation setting. Moreover, the study investigates whether and how communicators in intercultural negotiations, given their different cultural backgrounds, construct and negotiate a “discursive interculture” (Li 1999) that allows them to attain such goals. Finally, based on a comparison of experienced (professional) and inexperienced (student) negotiators, the study points out a number of aspects of (lingua franca) negotiation communication that would appear to deserve further attention in the BC classroom, and suggests how a learning environment might be created that is geared not only to the development of foreign language grammatical and discourse competence, but also to pragmatic competence (comprising illocutionary competence2 and sociolinguistic competence3), in relevant recurrent professional activities, such as the sales negotiation.

1.4 Research aims and scope

This investigation has two main objectives: scientific and practical. Firstly, our aim is to investigate aspects of (verbal) facework in intercultural negotiations. To this end, two corpora were collected of lingua franca negotiation discourse, involving business students on the one

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2 Illocutionary competence comprises the knowledge of communicative action (e.g., speech acts) and how to realise it (Kasper 1997).

3 Sociolinguistic competence constitutes the ability to use language appropriately: to select communicative action and the appropriate strategies to encode such action, in accordance with the “conversational contract” (regarding rights and obligations) that pertains between interactants (Fraser, 1990).
hand, and business professionals on the other. Facework is analysed primarily using the set of linguistic politeness strategies identified by Brown and Levinson (1987). Because of its cross-cultural scope and interactional approach to the study of facework phenomena, Brown and Levinson’s model currently provides the most elaborate framework for the study of face-related strategies in discourse.

The present investigation focuses on facework in negotiations from a number of different perspectives. Firstly, the focus is on facework as seen from the traditional perspective, where it is regarded primarily as a protective face-saving strategy used to tone down face-threatening acts to other (e.g., exorbitant price levels, rejections of offers and disagreements). Secondly, facework is considered in the light of relationship management. Seen from this perspective, the focus is on how facework is used in negotiation encounters to establish a favourable climate between participants. As was pointed out in the previous section, establishing and managing rapport between speakers is an important goal in any type of potentially conflictive interaction, but would seem to be particularly so in exchanges between non-native speakers. In the present investigation, it is assumed that because participants in international negotiations will differ with respect to their cultural background and will not therefore necessarily share cultural or world views, a considerable effort will have to be made on their part to establish rapport and common ground, to create a favourable climate. The professional corpus, in particular, is therefore expected to yield a rich source of information on how rapport is managed across cultures. In addition, comparative analyses of both corpora will allow us to throw light on, and compare, how both inexperienced and experienced negotiators, using English as a lingua franca, manage face in general, and rapport specifically, in business negotiations.

Although much of the existing literature on cross-cultural differences in relation to intercultural communication emphasises how such differences commonly lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding (see e.g., Brake et al. 1995; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1998; Ferraro 1998; Hofstede 2001), we have assumed in the present investigation that cultural differences, rather than exclusively bringing about miscommunication and misunderstanding in international encounters, instead offer participants an inroad for creating interpersonal rapport. In international exchanges, the negotiation of (cultural) differences between participants is often used to break the ice in the initial stages of a conversation, for example. In negotiation settings, such neutral talk might even be employed, not just to break the ice, but to provide a welcome shift to a more light-hearted topic during potentially conflictive, later stages of the negotiation process. Work on rapport management and the use of comity strategies in everyday discourse would seem to suggest that cultural differences between participants form an additional source for creating rapport in non-native speakers’ interactions (Aston 1993). It is assumed in the present investigation that acknowledging and negotiating cultural differences, and the subsequent creation of a common understanding of such differences, contributes to creating a more positive interpersonal communication climate. At the outset, it is by no means the assumption that cultural differences will always result in misunderstanding or miscommunication. Instead, it is hypothesised that, by acknowledging and negotiating observed differences between them, participants create their own interculture as members of an in-group of non-natives, whose common ground is the fact that they differ culturally.

4 ‘Experience’ here relates to the degree of familiarity with the professional communication genre under study (the sales negotiation) and with using a lingua franca (in our case English) in such a setting, rather than to the degree of mastery of that lingua franca per se.
In addition to using Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness strategies to analyse politeness in the negotiation discourse, we have used Stiles’ Taxonomy of Verbal Response Modes (Stiles 1992), a discourse analytical framework, to describe and analyse verbal behaviour in general in the negotiations. The Verbal Response Mode (VRM) system was initially developed to classify therapist responses to clients in psychotherapy sessions. In its present form, the taxonomy can be used to categorise and describe “any kind of natural discourse”. The system takes into account the intersubjective nature of talk, considering in its classification of talk both the listener(s) and speaker(s) relationship with each other, and with the topic of the exchange (Stiles 1992). The reasons for choosing this framework, in addition to Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory, as a theoretical and analytical basis for investigating face maintenance in negotiations are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Essentially, it is argued that, although Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of linguistic politeness strategies provides the most detailed tool for categorising verbal facework, the Politeness Model itself is limited because it does not accommodate or provide explanations for a number of facework phenomena that can readily be observed in interaction in general, and in the genre of business negotiation in particular (see Section 3.6).

In order to capture face-related verbal behaviour manifested in negotiations more fully in the present investigation, we have therefore decided to consider the negotiation data from other angles as well. In addition to analysing our data on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy, we use the Verbal Response Mode Taxonomy to specifically gauge (degrees of) face-threatening verbal behaviour manifested in the corpus negotiations. As we will see, the notions of face, face threat and face-threatening (verbal) behaviour is central to politeness theory (see Section 2.3.1). In addition, we use VRM analysis to investigate the degree of verbal indirectness manifested in the negotiation discourse. As such, the VRM and politeness analyses can be regarded as complementary in describing and quantifying different aspects of face-related verbal behaviour. Finally, our third perspective on the negotiation data entails two detailed qualitative analyses that zoom in on specific aspects of managing rapport. These analyses are geared primarily to gaining a greater understanding of relationship management in negotiations (the interactional dimension of negotiation communication). In short, by examining the data from a number of different perspectives, using a number of different methods, the current investigation aims to gain greater insight into the broader concept of face maintenance (which includes politeness considerations) and more specifically rapport management in negotiations (a detailed discussion of both analytical frameworks is included in Chapters 2 and 3).

The second aim of this investigation is more practical, and stems from a personal and professional interest in teaching business English and, more specifically, in trying to find out what to teach. It was said earlier that a strong emphasis continues to be placed on teaching a level of general-purpose communicative competence (in the foreign language) that is not geared specifically to recurrent communicative situations in business. Such contexts can involve many different text genres, including, for example, webcopy, advertising texts, business reports, bad news talks, product presentations, used in specific business-related communication events, such as sales negotiations, departmental meetings, job interviews, disciplinary interviews, etc. Although much work has been done in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to make teaching materials (and methods) more relevant from a practical perspective, the use of such materials on a large scale, and in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching in international business programmes, seems to have been slow to catch on. Neither has the idea been embraced universally of offering courses, whether these incorporate a foreign language or not, in a more lifelike, albeit simulated, business environment, using authentic materials, examples, and case studies, and involving
relevant tasks and skills. It is hoped that this investigation, and the comparative analyses of the student and professional negotiation corpora in particular, can provide suggestions for teaching content that is directly relevant to international business students learning business English for use as a lingua franca, in a largely international organisational context.

The two corpora that this investigation revolves around consist of negotiation discourse generated in simulated sales negotiations. The negotiations involve either experienced negotiators, active members of the business community at the time of the negotiation, or inexperienced negotiators, second year students of BC Studies at Nijmegen University. The professional negotiations all involve a Dutch negotiator and a negotiator with a nationality other than Dutch (British, German, French, Italian, or Japanese). The negotiations in the student corpus each constitute an encounter between two different Dutch speakers (students). In all the simulated negotiations, English was “the chosen foreign language of communication (..) between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture” (Firth 1996: 240). As such, the negotiation discourse, although generated in a simulated business setting, can be said, for the larger part, to constitute a collection of quasi-natural lingua franca data (for further details about the corpora, see Sections 3.11 to 3.13).

Summary of the main objectives
The current investigation was carried out within the context of what can best be described as qualitative linguistic discourse analysis. Analyses in this vein include “the accomplishment of social control, [...] the success or failure of conflict talk, [...] the presentation of identity displays, [...] the display of solidarity or the simultaneous achievement of several such ends in ongoing talk.” (Grimshaw 1987, cited in Stalpers 1993: 5). The present study has an interdisciplinary and eclectic character. It leans heavily on the fields of BC, socio-linguistics, psychology and second language acquisition, as well as hybrid disciplines, such as pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, for its method as well as its theoretical basis. The methodology used reflects both qualitative and quantitative approaches, as the phenomena under investigation are considered from different perspectives; the analytical tools we use clearly aim at quantification, but we also employ methods that can be characterised as more qualitative in nature. The main objectives of the present investigation, as they were outlined above, are repeated in the form of research questions below:

1. to investigate aspects of (linguistic) facework in lingua franca negotiations;
   • to analyse facework from the traditional perspective as a primarily protective face-saving strategy used to redress linguistic actions that threaten the hearer’s face, and aimed at maintaining the speaker’s image;
   • to analyse facework from the ‘social’ perspective as a means to establish and manage rapport (relationship management).

2. to test the usefulness of two existing theoretical frameworks (Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness strategies and Stiles’ Verbal Response Mode Taxonomy) in an analysis of (linguistic) facework in negotiation discourse;
   • to establish whether these systems can successfully be applied to analyse aspects of face maintenance that play a role in business negotiation;
   • to determine whether these systems can be applied effectively to an analysis of lingua franca discourse.
3. on the basis of a comparison of (linguistic) facework used in negotiations by experienced negotiators (the professional negotiation corpus) on the one hand, and inexperienced negotiators (the student negotiation corpus) on the other, to make recommendations regarding curriculum content that is pertinent to the intended target group: (international) BC students, learning to use business English as a lingua franca, in a professional communication setting.

1.5 Overview of the study

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides a selective overview of relevant studies that have investigated different aspects of facework in intracultural and/or intercultural negotiations, and includes an introduction to one of the theoretical frameworks that this investigation relies on for its methodology, Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Model (Brown & Levinson 1987).

Next, Chapter 3, which focuses on methodology, begins with a description of the second, lesser known, theoretical framework, Stiles Taxonomy of Verbal Response Modes, and discusses how this system can be employed in a study of verbal facework in negotiations. The chapter continues with a discussion of the term ‘facework’ in relation to ‘politeness’, ‘face maintenance’, and ‘rapport management’, and a description of two further small-scale analyses of facework that aim to investigate domains of rapport management that are only partly accommodated by Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Model. The chapter ends with a discussion of the data collection procedures, a description of the two negotiation corpora, and information about the coder training that preceded the VRM and facework analyses.

Chapter 4 reports and discusses the results of the analyses of verbal behaviour in the two negotiation corpora, using Stiles’ Verbal Response Mode Taxonomy. Next, Chapter 5 presents and discusses the results of the analyses of facework in the negotiation data, carried out largely on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Model.

Finally, Chapter 6 considers the findings reported in Chapters 4 and 5, within the context of a discussion that focuses on assessing the usefulness of the methodology used, and of the two theoretical frameworks, Stiles’ VRM system and Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Model, in particular. At the same time, based on a number of additional observations of face-related verbal behaviour in the negotiation corpora, the chapter highlights aspects of facework that at least merit mention but may also lend themselves to further investigation. In this way, Chapter 6 puts forward a number of suggestions for further research. Finally, on the basis of a comparison of the findings regarding the student and professional negotiation data, the chapter points out a number of areas that might deserve attention in (business English) course components aimed at training (intercultural) negotiation skills, and suggests how the business English classroom in general might be changed into a learning environment that promotes pragmatic (incorporating intercultural) awareness, and provides opportunities for specific communicative practice that is relevant to the target group.
Chapter 2

Previous studies on facework in negotiation

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the types of facework-related issues that have been subject to investigation in both the social-psychological and discourse-interactional traditions. A discussion that encompasses research into other aspects of the negotiation activity is beyond the scope of this review as these have been varied and numerous. As a result, the available literature on negotiation research is voluminous and cannot be treated exhaustively here (but see e.g., Rubin & Brown 1975; Putnam & Roloff 1992; Firth 1995a for extensive overviews of negotiation literature in other disciplines). Instead, the discussion will focus on matters of relevance to the present study, namely investigations in both traditions that have examined face concerns and the effect and form of facework in negotiations.

2.1 Research on facework in negotiation

Given that negotiation entails linguistic action, relatively few studies exist that have investigated the language of negotiation. In the majority of existing research, language has been given a subordinate function, or has been ignored altogether. So-called end-result research has largely prevailed, in which the main task for researchers has been to predict and explain tangible negotiation outcomes rather than to investigate the communication dynamics that bring about such outcomes. This would certainly seem to be the case for negotiation studies that have been carried out in the social-psychological tradition. With regard to facework, investigations in this discipline have explored relationships among face concerns, negotiation interaction, and negotiation outcomes. To date, however, few attempts have been made to investigate how negotiators realise facework linguistically. In other words, there have been relatively few investigations that have focused on what negotiators actually say.

In contrast, scholars working in the discourse-analytical tradition have made detailed analyses of linguistic features and sequences of language in negotiation. The majority of such studies has focused on facework in same-culture negotiation settings. However, with their general emphasis on language in use, they form a useful source in terms of methodology and theoretical background for negotiation studies with an international focus, where one or all of the parties involved are communicating in a non-native language. It is only in recent years that, in response to a demand from practitioners in the field of EFL and ESP, foreign language use and its effect on communicating facework in international negotiations has become a focus of increasing interest for applied linguists.

The remaining sections of this chapter report findings from a selection of previous studies of facework in negotiation that have used either a social-psychological or discourse-analytical approach.
2.2 Face and facework in negotiation: the social-psychological tradition

Face is an age-old concept that can be traced back to Chinese culture and has been treated at length by the sociologist Erving Goffman in various articles and books (e.g., Goffman 1967, 1972). Goffman defines face as the positive value that individuals attach to their identities. As such, face is essentially an individual’s self-esteem. It is a “social commodity” in the sense that people become anxious about losing face when situations or actions discredit what they regard as their desired identity in the eyes of others. Furthermore, face is “situated” in the sense that different identities arise from and are influenced by the context in which an exchange takes place (Goffman 1967). Face effectively denotes the social identity people claim for themselves or attribute to others. The need for face that individuals have necessitates that they engage in what Goffman termed facework. Facework is defined as “the actions undertaken by a person to make whatever he or she is doing consistent with face” (Goffman 1967). Face can be created and given by the communicative moves (linguistic facework) interactants undertake. Facework can be engaged in to maintain or enhance face, or to repair face loss. Therefore, it can be said to have a defensive or protective orientation. While defensive facework is aimed at protecting a person’s own face, protective facework prevents loss of face by the other party.

Concerns about face are particularly salient in negotiation where imposition on the other party is part and parcel of getting a deal. Negotiators must make demands on their counterpart(s); at the same time, they must cooperate in order to reach agreement. More often than not, cooperation entails concessionary behaviour that brings about the risk of image or identity loss (Pruitt 1981). After all, giving in may make negotiators seem exploitable and therefore weak. Social psychologists have emphasised the importance of face and issues related to face in negotiation for a number of decades (see e.g., Rubin & Brown 1975; Wilson 1992). Within this tradition, much of the work on face in negotiation has defined facework in terms of defensive face-threatening behaviours, including extreme initial offers, contentious behaviour, putdown statements, blocking the opponent’s goals, and refusing to make concessions. Such facework is aimed at satisfying a negotiator’s own identity concerns, rather than his counterpart’s. Studies in this discipline have been aimed at determining the effect of such behaviours on tangible negotiation outcomes, such as joint or individual profit levels, time to reach agreement, and deviation of final agreement from initial offer. Alternatively, they have examined intangible outcomes in relation to face concerns, operationalised as perceived personal strength or effectiveness by opponent (see e.g., Wilson 1992 for an extensive overview of representative studies).

Carnevale, Pruitt and Britton (1979), for example, examined the effect of constituent surveillance, a situation in which negotiators are observed by other representatives of their company, on the negotiator’s face-threatening behaviour. Their hypothesis was that negotiators would try to project their image as a ‘tough negotiator’ and would engage in more face-threatening behaviour if they were being monitored by constituent parties. In addition, Carnevale et al. attempted to link extent of face-threatening behaviour to tangible outcome variables such as joint and individual profit levels. They found that constituent surveillance encouraged the negotiator’s use of competitive tactics such as threats and putdowns, and that both individual and joint negotiation outcomes were lower when negotiators were being observed by other constituents. Based on these results, they hypothesised a “four-variable causal chain: surveillance makes bargainers feel that they should look strong, which leads to distributive (unilateral) bargaining behaviour, which interferes with the development of integrative (mutually beneficial) agreements” (Carnevale et al. 1979: 121). Carnevale et al.’s causal chain embodies the central assumption within this research tradition;
namely, that communication is a mediating process and part of a linear chain between inputs (face-threatening behaviour) and outputs (negotiation outcomes) (Wilson 1992).

Tjosvold (1974) looked at a number of face-threatening negotiating tactics that are perceived as competitive. His study focused primarily on the effect of an opponent’s threats and personal criticism on ability to reach agreement, and on degree of insult felt by the negotiator at whom the face-threatening behaviour is directed. Participants who were told explicitly in the negotiation that they were “weak” and “incapable” felt more insulted and less powerful than participants who were not criticised. Furthermore, the negotiators who were criticised often failed to reach a final agreement. Interestingly, Tjosvold also observed a positive effect of contentious tactics. Although negotiators feel insulted when opponents use threats, they subsequently express better understanding of their opponent’s priorities, and may, as a direct result, be more likely to reach agreement. Contrary to popular assumption, then, it would seem from Tjosvold’s results that defensive facework does not always have to lead to destructive or detrimental outcomes.

Social-psychological investigations into face and facework have tended, on the whole, to be oriented to end-result and have focused almost exclusively on defensive rather than protective facework (with the exception of e.g., Tjosvold & Huston 1978, who looked at the effects of complimenting behaviour on negotiation outcomes). A further limitation of these investigations is that they have almost exclusively investigated same-culture U.S. negotiations and have thus contributed little to an understanding of the mechanics of the negotiation process in other cultures, or between cultures. Finally, given that social interaction is considered to be the central element in negotiation, it is striking that systematic linguistic analyses of face-threatening tactics, such as whether initial demands and refusals to concede are performed with or without facework, have not been carried out. The patterning of the interaction itself, including, for example, the sequencing and cumulative effect of facework strategies and the distribution of such tactics at various stages of a negotiation, has also been largely ignored.

It is from a communication perspective especially that socio-psychological studies of facework in negotiation still leave many questions unanswered. Given that negotiation is essentially a linguistic act, an investigation of facework in terms of a systematic analysis of linguistic output strategies that are used to encode face-threatening or face-enhancing tactics could greatly increase knowledge of the negotiation activity. It could clarify, for example, how negotiators express willingness to cooperate, or it could give us an idea of the linguistic devices negotiators can use to make demands or turn down offers without being labelled as unreasonable or inflexible. With respect to methodological approach, investigations into language use in same-culture negotiations could easily be extended to international negotiation settings, where culture and (foreign) language use come into play. Unlike researchers in the social-psychological tradition, a number of scholars working in the discourse-interactional tradition have indeed focused their attention on detailed analyses of linguistic features of facework in negotiations. A selection of studies in this vein is discussed in the next section.

2.3  **Face and facework in negotiation: the discourse-interactional approach**

Researchers in the discourse-interactional tradition have conducted several exploratory investigations into face and facework in negotiation. Their studies have focused on protective as well as defensive facework and have produced detailed descriptions of the way in which negotiators manage face. Face is regarded as being related to discourse reciprocally rather than
linearly (Wilson 1992). In Wilson’s words “participants can threaten face via interaction, but through their interaction they can develop a new working consensus that redefines identities and hence reduces the need to save face” (Wilson 1992: 188). The context determines the interaction and at the same time, the interaction creates a (new) context. What Wilson seems to be referring to in this respect are the notion of own face-saving behaviour which relates directly to identity management (protective facework), and what was referred to earlier as interactional communication, or rapport management, which is engaged in to create a new (working) consensus. Although these phenomena are regarded by Wilson as clearly separate aspects of facework, springing from different underlying motives, they are nevertheless closely and reciprocally linked (see Section 3.6 for a further consideration of the interrelatedness of these notions).

Discourse studies of facework in negotiation have typically used Brown and Levinson’s linguistic theory of politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987) as a theoretical framework. Below, a number of such studies are reviewed. A common theme binds them together: they all aim to provide detailed analyses of how facework is encoded linguistically in negotiation discourse. In view of the fact that Brown and Levinson’s model also provides the theoretical starting point for the present study, we first outline the central ideas behind the theory here (the examples used for illustrative purposes in Section 2.3.1 are fictitious).

2.3.1 Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Theory

In 1978, Brown and Levinson published a lengthy article in which they offered an explanation for commonly occurring deviations from Grice’s cooperative norms found in three unrelated languages: Tzeltal, English, and Tamil (Grice 1975). Their explanation of non-Gricean behaviour is based on three assumptions. Firstly, extending Erving Goffman’s theme (1967), they claim that each “model person” has certain face needs that relate to the public image that individual wants to claim. Brown and Levinson distinguish two kinds of face (and concomitant face needs and claims), positive face and negative face. Positive face relates to an individual’s desire to be liked and approved of by others. Negative face concerns a person’s need to be unimpeded and free from imposition, or to act autonomously. Secondly, Brown and Levinson maintain that interactants have at their disposal a “means-ends rationality” that enables them to select an appropriate, that is, efficient and effective strategy to attain a given conversational goal. Thirdly, they posit that in an effort to maintain and enhance other’s as well as own face, a speaker will make every effort to act in accordance with that mutual sensitivity to face. The greater the risk to face anticipated by a speaker, the more dramatic will be that speaker’s divergence from the Gricean norm for maximally efficient communication. In other words, participants in an interaction will communicate in such a way that all relevant parties’ face(s) are addressed and satisfied. Certain communication strategies will be employed to achieve this end and it is these strategies, Brown and Levinson claim, that lead to the more complex, elaborate divergences from the Gricean Cooperative Principle (CP). Communication that deviates from the CP is “rational” communication that aims to protect and enhance face, and the additional message conveyed by such communication is one of politeness (Brown & Levinson 1978).

The Politeness Model uses the speech act (Searle 1976) as a basic linguistic unit of analysis. Brown and Levinson argue that many speech acts pose an inherent threat to face. These messages “by their very nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or the speaker” (Brown & Levinson 1978: 70). For example, a face-threatening act (or FTA), such as a request for action,
may threaten the hearer’s desire to be able to act freely (the request imposes on the speaker’s autonomy). A criticism, on the other hand, may threaten a hearer’s social standing within his socially significant group by causing him to feel disliked or inadequate in the eyes of group members (the criticism influences the hearer’s sense of belonging). In this way, Brown and Levinson posit, FTAs can threaten either the negative or positive face of the hearer. Note, however, that the ‘hearer-oriented’ FTAs used in the examples above (request and criticism) can simultaneously threaten the speaker’s face to some extent as well. By uttering a request, a speaker effectively compromises his own autonomy and desire to operate as a free individual (by requesting a certain action, he is admitting that he needs help from others). Similarly, in criticising another person, he may gain some degree of authority and standing in his social group (thus strengthening his own negative face), but he may also lose (positive) face in the sense that he may endanger his popularity with others by criticising a fellow group member. As we shall see later, although the FTA is central to Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness, they primarily consider hearer-oriented face threat in their discussion and do not really offer suggestions as to how the multidimensionality of face threat that is associated with multidirectional FTAs, and non-FTAs for that matter, is reflected in, and influences, the use of politeness strategies.

According to Brown and Levinson, the face threat posed by a given FTA (the ‘weight’ of an FTA) is influenced by three situational factors: social distance between hearer and speaker (SD), the relative power of the speaker compared to the hearer (P), and the intrinsic rate of imposition of the act on the hearer (R). Thus, a request to borrow a book would be more face-threatening if it were made of a stranger than a friend, a superior than a peer, and if the request were for a priceless fifteenth-century manuscript or the paperback version of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*. A combination of the three factors indicates how much face threat a given act poses, and this in turn determines which of five ‘super-strategies’ a speaker will use in communicating the FTA (see Figure 2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>estimated face threat</th>
<th>course of action</th>
<th>super-strategy</th>
<th>degree of politeness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>minimal</td>
<td>1. communicate message</td>
<td>1. ‘baldly’ on-record</td>
<td>least polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. on-record &amp; positive politeness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. on-record &amp; negative politeness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. off-record (Hint)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. remain silent.</td>
<td>most polite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2.1. Brown and Levinson’s super-strategies for communicating messages with minimal to maximal face threat*

Each of the five super-strategies reflects a concern, expressed in politeness, for the hearer’s face. The greater the estimation of threat to face, the more a speaker will diverge from the CP. The occurrence of similar realisations of polite communication across the three languages in their study led Brown and Levinson to claim that politeness considerations like those set out above are universal. Every rational individual, regardless of their cultural background, is assumed to have the ability to ‘calculate’ the amount of politeness that is required to formulate an appropriate message in accordance with the universal face considerations that underlie communication.

The five super-strategies in Figure 2.1 are regarded by Brown and Levinson as hierarchically ordered, relative to how polite they are (or to what extent they show concern for face). The least
polite super-strategy is to perform the FTA “baldly” that is, on-record (in such a way that the message unambiguously conveys the intent of the speaker), without any attention for the hearer’s face needs (“Lend me your car.”). A more polite super-strategy is to perform the FTA on-record, but with positive politeness, oriented to the hearer’s positive face, the need to be liked and appreciated (“Hey pal, you’re always willing to help out a friend. Lend me your car.”). The third super-strategy is to perform the FTA on-record, but with negative politeness, which reflects a concern for the addressee’s negative face, the wish to be respected as an individual and not be imposed upon (“I hate to bother you, but I need to run some really important errands in town, and my car’s got a flat. Could you possibly lend me your car? Only for an hour. I’d be very grateful.”).

Table 2.1. Negative politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson 1987)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>negative politeness strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N1 Be conventionally indirect (in formulating the FTA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Can/could/would/will/etc. you lend me £ 5?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N2 Hedge (the illocutionary force of the FTA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I wonder if you could lend me £ 5?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N3 Be pessimistic (about hearer’s ability or willingness to comply with FTA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I don’t suppose you can lend me £ 5?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N4 Minimise the imposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Can I just borrow £ 5?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N5 Give deference (through honorifics, respectful address terms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Sir, I wonder if you could lend me £ 5?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N6 Apologise (indicate reluctance to carry out the FTA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I hate to ask this, but could I borrow £ 5?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N7 Impersonalise speaker and hearer (‘distance’ them from the FTA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I wish people would leave me alone”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N8 State the message as a general rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Thieves will be prosecuted.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N9 Nominalise (the verb phrase in the act)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Your cooperation is urgently requested”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N10 Go on-record as incurring a debt, or as not indebted other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’d never be able to repay you if you could...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fourth super-strategy is to go off-record, that is, to merely hint at the FTA without expressing it explicitly (“What a drag. I need to run some really important errands today, but my car’s got a flat. And I really hate having to go into town by bus.”). Such formulations make it possible for the hearer not to recognise a given FTA, and thus provides the speaker with an ‘opt-out’ clause. In using option 4, the speaker effectively formulates the message in such a way that its communicative intent cannot be unambiguously determined (but see Section 3.3.1 for a discussion of the ‘on-recordness’ of off-record utterances). It is the addressee who must take responsibility for the interpretation of the message, leaving the speaker a possibility to deny its

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*This suggests that no concern for face whatsoever is reflected by the speaker in doing the FTA. Although this might be concluded on the basis of a consideration of FTAs in isolation, this conclusion seems somewhat strong when we consider FTAs in use, which are (more often than not) embedded in longer stretches of talk, and, effectively, in entire exchanges. In use, an FTA can perhaps never really be considered to be ‘completely’ bald, as the speaker might have reflected concern for face (through politeness strategies) in contributions prior to a given FTA, or might do so yet in subsequent turns.*
intent, should it be interpreted as imposing or offensive. Finally, the fifth and most polite super-strategy Brown and Levinson distinguish is not to perform the FTA at all, and to remain silent.

Super-strategies 2, and 3. (Figure 2.1) can each include any of a number of different linguistic politeness strategies, which Brown and Levinson also regard as universal (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2). Politeness strategies that show the speaker is attending to the hearer’s negative face (negative politeness strategies), express respect for the addressee and indicate that the speaker under no circumstances wants to impede on or undermine the addressee’s autonomy. Negative politeness strategies include showing respect for the hearer, being indirect when imposing on the hearer, apologising for a given imposition, expressing thanks, and being pessimistic when asking for a favour (see Table 2.1 for an overview of the different negative politeness strategies and examples of possible outputs).

Table 2.2 Positive politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson (1987))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>positive politeness strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1 Notice, attend to other’s interests, wants, needs, and goods:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You’re looking good today! Can you help me shift some boxes?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 Exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy for other (use intensifying modifiers or phrases):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“That’s really an extremely good point.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 Intensify interest to other (stress the sincerity of your good intentions for the hearer):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If it will help, I could take on a few tasks.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 Use in-group identity markers (ellipsis, slang, jargon):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“How ‘bout lending us a few quid, pal?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 Seek agreement (talk about safe topic that both hearer and speaker are likely to agree on):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: “The weather’s not very nice today, is it?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: “I know. It’s just awful, isn’t it?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6 Avoid disagreement (use token agreements: appear to agree by hedging opinions):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: “You hate meetings don’t you?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: “Well yes, sometimes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7 Presuppose, assert or raise common ground (gossip, safe topics):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Do you remember that restaurant we went to in Camden all those years ago?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8 Make jokes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Get that old frame of yours in gear and give me a hand.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9 Assert or presuppose speaker’s knowledge of and concern for other’s wants:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I know you need this money so I’ll pay you back first thing tomorrow.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10 Make offer, promise:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Do come and look us up if you’re ever in the neighbourhood”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 Be optimistic:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’m sure you’ll help me out on this one, can I borrow your car?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12 Include both speaker and other in the activity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’m sure we can work it out together.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 Give (or ask for) reasons (for FTA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’m really pushed for time, so I can’t help you right now.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Why can’t you help me out?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14 Assume and assert reciprocity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If you’ll help me with the car, I’ll give you a hand in the garden.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15 Give gifts (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation, compliments):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It must have been so difficult for you to have to defend yourself in public.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive politeness strategies basically express the belief that the speaker’s wants are similar to those of the addressee (see Table 2.2 for an overview of the different positive politeness strategies and examples of possible outputs). Primarily, they signal that the speaker and hearer are cooperators who share common ground. A speaker can employ positive politeness strategies by, for example, noticing and fulfilling the addressee’s needs (offering help, providing in concrete needs, complimenting, etc.), by avoiding disagreement, showing interest in the addressee, or claiming shared in-group membership with the hearer.

**Criticisms**

Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Model is impressive because it brings together identity management concerns, socio-pragmatic factors, and communication strategies. However, since the publication of their first article in 1978, politeness theory and the hypotheses it generates have been subject to a number of criticisms. Brown and Levinson have acknowledged many of these in a revised and more elaborate report of their politeness study (Brown & Levinson 1987). The main criticisms are briefly discussed below.

Firstly, there is a strong suggestion that positive and negative face are qualitatively different notions in Western and Eastern cultures. Whereas the notion of negative face considerations pertaining to individuals and their rights plays an important role in individualistic European and American cultures, it is far from basic to human relations in Japanese culture and other societies where face relates primarily to the desire of the individual to be accepted in a group, rather than to the desire to act autonomously. It is an individual’s position in relation to other members of a group and in relation to acceptance by that group that is important. If a person is perceived by others as having failed to understand and take into consideration the hierarchy and structure of a particular group, this constitutes face loss. In more general terms, “in a Western society where individualism is assumed to be the basis of all interaction, it is easy to regard face as the key to interaction. On the other hand, in a society where group membership is regarded as the basis for interaction, the role or status defined in a particular situation rather than face is the basis of interaction” (Ide 1989: 241). Matsumoto goes so far as to say that, although Japanese language use manifests examples of most of the politeness strategies in Brown and Levinson’s model, to the Japanese, the notion of negative face in particular “seems alien” (Matsumoto 1988). With these observations, Brown and Levinson’s claim that the two separate face needs they distinguish are universal comes under serious threat.

Secondly, consider Brown and Levinson’s claim that the super-strategies they distinguish can be ranked on a scale of politeness. According to them, silence is more polite than an off-record strategy, which is more polite than a negatively polite FTA, which is more polite than a positively polite FTA, which is more polite than an on-record strategy without any politeness (see Figure 2.1). Firstly, it should be noted that it is intuitively strange to regard silence as the most ‘polite’ communication strategy in the hierarchy, when we consider that this strategy involves no verbal politeness of any type. In addition, in many cultures, silence can bring about anxiety and awkwardness in interaction situations. Rather than being most polite, therefore, using silence as a strategy for carrying out an FTA could have an adverse effect in such cultures by creating a new face threat, or by increasing existing face threat. Secondly, in group-oriented, collectivist, cultures, avoiding what an individualistically oriented speaker might regard in Brown and Levinson’s terms as an imposition on the hearer’s negative face (for example, avoiding to offer help or to issue an invitation to the hearer for fear of imposing on the hearer’s autonomy) can be interpreted as an outright failure to be forthcoming, and is regarded as face-threatening (Spencer-
Finally, if a speaker decides not to communicate an FTA and remains silent, this may go unnoticed by the hearer. Consequently, the speaker’s (‘most polite’) super-strategy will have no politeness value attributed to it at all by the addressee.

Another problem relates to the fact that negative and positive politeness are presented as strategies whose politeness value differs inherently. According to the hierarchy, negative politeness is more polite than positive politeness. What the actual ‘value’ is of one type of politeness relative to another, and why a difference in politeness value should be assumed in the first place, is unclear (but see our comments on ‘redressive scope’ in Section 3.1). As we have seen, Brown and Levinson found that speakers in the three languages they studied have at their disposal a broad repertoire of linguistic strategies to show concern for negative or positive face, that is, to be negatively or positively polite. The questions their taxonomy of (numerous) politeness strategies raises is whether there might not also be a difference in value between different politeness strategies in a given category (are all positive politeness strategies also hierarchically ordered?), and whether the use of more than a single strategy from one category increases a message’s politeness value, or whether a combination of strategies from both categories might not lead to a more polite communication strategy for carrying out an FTA, than either super-strategy 2 or 3 (Figure 2.1), in which only one single type of politeness is used.

Brown and Levinson’s claim that the hierarchy of communication strategies for carrying out an FTA is universal has also been challenged. Blum-Kulka (1987), for example, in a cross-cultural study that was designed to determine native speakers’ perceptions of directness and politeness in English and Hebrew, found that strategy 4 (‘communicate the message indirectly, off-record’) was perceived as impolite by Hebrew speakers. To Hebrew speakers, the message required too much interpretation on the part of the hearer to arrive at the intended meaning, and thus placed too great an imposition on that hearer. The English speakers in their study perceived the same strategy more favourably, judging it to be polite. Beebe and Takahashi (1989), in a study of American and Japanese performance of the FTAs of disagreement and giving embarrassing information (in English), observed that Japanese speakers consistently formulate indirectly (or off-record) speech acts that Americans would approach more explicitly and directly. Famously, they provide the example of the Japanese waiter in a Manhattan sushi bar, who tries to warn two female American customers that their bag is in the process of being stolen, by commenting “Do you have a bag?” (as opposed to: “Watch it! That woman is stealing your bag!”). Cross-cultural differences in the perception of directness and politeness such as those suggested by these two studies go some way to falsifying the claim that the proposed hierarchy is valid in all cultures and as such universal. Such findings also demonstrate that directness cannot be equated with politeness. It does not necessarily follow that the more indirect a message is, the more polite it is.

In sum, although the five super-strategies (and their linguistic output strategies) have indeed been shown to occur in the three languages at the centre of Brown and Levinson’s investigation, it is not necessarily the case that these strategies are perceived in similar ways with regard to their relative politeness value in different cultures. In other words, although each of the strategies distinguished by Brown and Levinson seems to occur universally, they may be perceived differently from one culture to the next, and hence there may be differences across cultures with regard to their frequency, distribution, and use in particular contexts. In this respect, Beebe and Takahashi (1989) also found, for example, that Americans use compliments and praise (strategies that reflect concern for positive face in Brown and Levinson’s terms: see Table 2.2) more frequently and in more contexts than the Japanese in formulating the FTAs examined in their
study. This seems to indicate that there are indeed cross-cultural differences in the way speakers from different cultures distribute and use politeness strategies.

Another criticism of politeness theory relates to the hypothesised socio-pragmatic contextual factors (Social Distance and Power) that determine the amount of politeness that is needed to communicate a message with appropriate attendance to face. Brown and Levinson claim that the amount of facework needed is the sum of values estimated by the speaker with regard to $SD$, $P$ and the inherent rate of imposition ($R$) associated with a particular message. Linguistic variation in polite behaviour is said to result from the fact that these factors vary across different communication situations. A request to borrow a pen from a stranger may yield the following linguistic realisation “Could I possibly borrow your pen for a second?”; while a similar request to a close friend would be expected to result in a less elaborate realisation, such as “Pen please?” It is unclear, however, how the equation Brown and Levinson propose actually works. In the above examples, the $SD$ factor can be regarded to vary between the two situations (high $SD$ vs. low $SD$). However, the value of $P$ in the two contexts is not clear. Perhaps the interactants are power equals in both situations, as neither situation involves rolebound power differences (e.g., Head of Department vs. subordinate). On the other hand, perhaps the fact that the speaker in the first situation faces uncertainty in that he has to make a request of a stranger somehow temporarily affords that stranger more power in the relationship. If this is the case, $SD$ and $P$ might even be said to be related in that they appear to be functions of one another.

Another question is how the $R$ value of the request is affected. Brown and Levinson would regard the rate of imposition to be the same in both instances, as in both situations, the speaker asks for a pen (and not a pen vs. a palmtop computer, in which case rate of imposition could be considered to differ). But can rate of imposition be determined without taking into account the value of $SD$ and $P$? Rate of imposition might be expected to increase as $SD$ (and/or $P$) increases, for example. Being asked for a pen by a stranger may constitute a greater imposition on an individual than being asked for a pen by a friend. With regard to requests, at least, it looks as if the rate of imposition cannot be determined on the basis of a consideration of the value of that which is requested (an action, object, etc.) only. In short, it is likely to be the case that the socio-pragmatic factors Brown and Levinson have proposed are not independent, and may, in fact, be a function of one another (see also the discussion of Van der Wijst 1996, Section 2.3.2). Furthermore, it could well be the case that there are other situational factors that affect the perceived face threat of a speech act than $SD$, $P$ and $R$ (see also Tracy 1990).

From a cross-cultural perspective, Brown and Levinson (1987) propose that cultures may differ in the relative values given to the three factors in their ‘politeness formula’. Relative power, for example, may be more important in one culture, while social distance might be of importance in another. As a result, linguistic behaviour may vary cross-culturally (and this includes variation between ‘everyday’ and ‘professional’ business encounters) in seemingly similar situations. Findings from a number of studies (e.g., Tjosvold 1974; Charles 1996) seem to suggest that, with regard to negotiations at least, communicators in business contexts, presumed to be as “rational” in Brown and Levinson’s terms as the next “Model Person”, nevertheless engage in decidedly irrational behaviour that is not predicted by, or accommodated in, the Politeness Model (e.g., uttering threats, and showing contentious behaviour and lack of interest in the other: for a further discussion, see Section 3.6).

Despite the fact that Brown and Levinson’s model has received criticism from a number of quarters, the framework remains the most extensive theory of politeness in the literature. There
have been only few attempts to come up with alternatives or improvements. An important shortcoming of alternative proposals (e.g., Lakoff 1972; Leech 1983) is that, apart from being far less detailed than Brown and Levinson, they are based on personal observation, rather than systematic empirical research, and do not provide theoretical insights into how the relationship between context and language use might be explained (Turner 1996). Therefore, in spite of the criticisms that have been voiced, Brown and Levinson’s model continues to be used as a starting point for linguistic facework analyses. Their taxonomy of politeness strategies (see Tables 2.1. and 2.2.: not to be confused with their taxonomy of super-strategies for doing an FTA, see Fig. 2.1.) provides a detailed overview of verbal politeness, and has been adopted as an analytical tool in many linguistic studies on facework. We will now continue with our overview of previous studies that have examined facework in business negotiation. A number of these investigations, as we shall see, have also relied on insights from politeness theory.

2.3.2 Discourse studies on facework in negotiation

We have already seen that research by social psychologists has demonstrated that concern about face (identity management) is an important determinant of negotiation behaviour (see Section 2.1). Negotiators generally want the other party’s approval, thus hoping to enhance relations between themselves and their business partners (positive face). At the same time, the process of wheeling and dealing engaged in by both sides entails behaviour that endangers negative face. A number of discourse studies (Kang 1991, discussed in Wilson 1992, and Wilson et al. 1990, amongst others) have further investigated face-related issues, including how negotiators simultaneously achieve autonomy management (control over proposals, arguments and concessions), and how directives can create multiple face threats (to both the hearer and speaker). Other investigations have been more linguistically oriented and have examined the ways in which negotiators attend to face wants in negotiations using insights from politeness theory (e.g., Van der Wijst 1996; Charles 1996; Weiss 1988). Finally, in a number of studies, the focus has been on a cross-cultural investigation of facework in monolingual negotiation settings (e.g., Vilemoes 1995), or on facework in international negotiation settings (e.g., Van der Wijst & Ulijn 1995; Stalpers 1993).

Kang (1991, cited in Wilson 1992) investigated negative face concerns in a naturalistic labour negotiation and a simulated teacher’s negotiation. He found that the degree to which negotiators expand their autonomy was found to be only weakly related to the degree in which the other party’s autonomy was felt to be constrained. With regard to specific linguistic characteristics, Kang discovered that competitive strategies and intense language were used to curb the other party’s autonomy, while accommodating strategies and less intense language were used to constrain the negotiator’s own negative face.

Wilson et al. (1990) investigated intrinsically face-threatening directives in simulated labour grievance hearings and authentic labour contract negotiations. Directives are used by speakers to get the hearer to do so something (i.e. to carry out requests, orders, commands, to answer questions, etc.). Following Brown and Levinson’s line of reasoning, directives would be expected to pose an intrinsic threat to the other party’s autonomy (their negative face) and, as a result, would require some degree of politeness on the part of the speaker. After an examination of directives and their subsequent arguments in their negotiation corpus, however, Wilson et al. concluded that some directives also threaten the positive face (or want for approval) of the other party. Thus, directives effectively pose a multiple threat to face. Wilson et al. observe that Brown
and Levinson’s politeness theory offers little explanation as to when a given directive threatens both types of face.

Van der Wijst (1996) carried out an investigation of politeness used by professional negotiators in same-culture simulated Dutch negotiations. His investigation forms much of the basis and inspiration for the present study. The purpose of Van der Wijst’s study was twofold. He aimed to put to the empirical test some of the predictions that follow from Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory, and on a more practical level, to try and determine whether the use of politeness was linked to negotiation success. With regard to the primary aim of the study, Van der Wijst examined the extent to which the three factors in Brown and Levinson’s politeness formula (Rate of imposition, Social Distance and Power difference) contribute to the weightiness of a face-threatening speech act, and whether the use (in terms of type and extent) of politeness strategies can be predicted by each of these factors. In this way, Van der Wijst aimed to investigate Brown and Levinson’s assumption that the choice of facework strategy, which depends on the weight of a given face-threatening act, is a linear function of the three variables in the formula (SD, P and R).

The study centred around a corpus of 28 simulated sales negotiations (a total of 17 hours of interaction) based on a written roleplay and conducted over the telephone. The independent variables in the design, social distance and power difference, were operationalised and varied in the roleplay instructions, yielding 4 negotiation settings or experimental conditions: 1) high social distance and large power difference, 2) high social distance and small power difference, 3) low social distance and small power difference, and 4) low social distance and large power difference. In order to chart the use of politeness strategies by the negotiators in each of these settings, 40 FTAs were selected from each negotiation. The FTAs were identified and isolated on the basis of the Verbal Response Mode Taxonomy (Stiles 1992; see also Chapter 3 of the present study). Subsequently, occurrences of the different verbal strategies distinguished in Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness were identified in each of the 1120 face-threatening utterances selected. Next, two teams of three trained judges were presented with the FTAs in their interactional context. The judges listened to the entire negotiation at their own pace and were given a transcript of the conversation so they could read along during the judging task. One group was asked to judge the factors ‘social distance’ and ‘power difference’ at the time each FTA was uttered. In other words, this group was asked to decide whether the social distance between speakers was high or low at the time of the utterance and to indicate which of the two negotiators, the buyer or the seller, seemed more powerful. The second group of judges was asked to judge the ‘rate of imposition’ the FTA put on the hearer, in terms of whether it was ‘difficult’ or ‘easy’ for a speaker to carry out a given FTA. In addition, they were asked to rate the degree to which a speaker came across as ‘jovial’ or ‘prudent’ in each of the selected fragments. These two personality traits were hypothesised by Van der Wijst to be a reflection of the extent to which a speaker manifests positively polite or negatively polite behaviour respectively. A full description of the somewhat complex research design of the study and the statistical procedures used to analyse the data is beyond the scope of this overview, and the reader is referred to Van der Wijst (1996) for a more detailed explanation of these aspects.

Van der Wijst’s results showed that ‘social distance’ was the only factor that played a significant role in predicting the use of politeness strategies in his negotiation corpus. Higher social distance between negotiators resulted in the use of more politeness strategies in their discourse. The effects predicted by Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory for the factors power difference and rate of imposition were not confirmed. Although Van der Wijst concludes that his study fails to confirm the claims made by Brown and Levinson, he suggests that this might not so much reflect the
implausibility of their theory as a failure to successfully operationalise some of the predictor variables in his investigation. One hypothesis that was verified by the results of Van der Wijst’s study was that the use of negative facework in FTAs gives the impression that a speaker is ‘prudent’, while the use of positive facework enhances a negotiator’s ‘jovial’ image. This would seem to be in keeping with Brown and Levinson’s assumption that there are two different types of politeness that address two different face needs. At the same time, however, the fact that Van der Wijst consistently found both negative and positive politeness strategies in the context of one and the same FTA would seem to suggest that one particular type of strategy is not superordinate to another, but rather that these types of strategy represent two different but complementary types of politeness. One type acts as a “social accelerator” while the other acts as a “social brake” (Brown & Levinson 1987).

With respect to the investigation’s secondary aim, which concerned the question whether the use of politeness is related to negotiation success, Van der Wijst constructed a questionnaire which tapped the negotiator’s opinions regarding 1) the negotiation climate and 2) own and the other’s behaviour in the conversation. The negotiators were asked to make perceptual judgements on the basis of semantic differentials such as, for example: “competitive” versus “cooperative”, “impartial” versus “prejudiced”, “unpleasant” versus “pleasant” and “tactful” versus “clumsy”. The questionnaire data were related to each negotiator’s mean frequency use of individual politeness strategies in Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy and to a number of compound variables such as the frequency of positive politeness strategies (overall and per utterance) and negative politeness strategies (overall and per utterance). The use of politeness by the negotiators was also related to their financial success in the roleplay simulation (tangible outcome). Van der Wijst’s findings indicate that the use of negative politeness strategies would seem to be linked to higher profit levels. Strategies N2 (“Hedge”) and N7 (“impersonalise speaker and hearer”), and to a lesser extent N1 (“be conventionally indirect”) and N3 (“be pessimistic”) (see Table 2.1.), were the main sources of the positive correlation between the use of negative politeness strategies and a higher profit level. Van der Wijst concludes that the use of negative politeness strategies does not necessarily explain a negotiator’s higher profit but that there is at least “a strong indication that successful negotiators share a ‘respectful’ communicative style” (Van der Wijst 1996: 172).

Van der Wijst noted few negative correlations between individual strategy use and the negotiation variables included in the questionnaire. One positive politeness strategy that would seem to have a counterproductive effect is P8 (“joke”: See Table 2.1) which correlated negatively with “honesty” and “cooperativeness”. For the latter variable, a highly significant positive correlation was found with P14 (“assume or assert reciprocity”) which is the type of quid pro quo strategy that is commonplace in negotiations (“If you do X, I’ll do Y.”). With respect to the perception data, it is also interesting to note that the P5 strategy (“seek a [surface] agreement”) correlated negatively with “tact” and to a less dramatic extent with “honesty”.

Charles (1996) investigated the organisation and discourse of same-culture sales negotiations using methodology that draws on discourse analysis and business studies of negotiation. The primary focus of her investigation was to examine the ways in which the extralinguistic business context shapes negotiation discourse. More specifically, the study was aimed at determining how the nature of the business relationship within which a negotiation is carried out is reflected in the interaction of that event. To this end, Charles audio-recorded six authentic British negotiations. The negotiations differed with regard to their extralinguistic context; three negotiations were carried out in an old, well-established business relationship, and three negotiations were carried out between new business acquaintances.
Charles discovered that the old-new dichotomy was reflected in a number of ways in the negotiation discourse. There were differences between groups in the kinds of topic that were initiated and the rhetorical moves that were produced. Above all, there was a difference in the use of face-saving hedging devices. An analysis of these devices using Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness strategies initially suggested that the system could not be used to analyse facework in the new relationship negotiations. Face-saving strategies were used when there was no face to be saved and no FTA being done, in contexts where Brown and Levinson’s model would not predict face-saving strategies at all. Buyers, for example, would frequently refer to the interest they had towards sellers and their companies (in itself a positive politeness strategy in Brown and Levinson’s terms). Yet, they would hedge that interest, and often used indirect expressions. When direct references were made to an interest in the other party, these were downtoned by explanation and justification sequences. Charles accounts for these phenomena by extending Brown and Levinson’s concept of face, and introducing the notion of “professional face”. She sees buyers and sellers as fulfilling a status-bound role in a negotiation that manifests itself in role-bound, or proto-typical, buyer and seller behaviour. This behaviour reflects the general norms which sellers and buyers are expected to observe within their professional community.

Buyer’s behaviour, for example, will include a number of proto-typical, and expected, bargaining tactics. One such tactic is to put on a “disinterested façade”, the idea being that in a saturated buyer’s market, buyers have an abundance of goods to select from and many different suppliers to buy from. Another buyer’s tactic is to emphasise high-standard requirements for products, and to outline reasons why he should not buy from the seller. The seller, in turn, is expected to exert some degree of control over both the situation and the buyer. Charles found that proto-typical seller behaviour is geared largely to making a quick and favourable sale. Seller tactics include showing interest for the buyer and the deal in general, and highlighting own trustworthiness and willingness to cooperate. Other seller tactics include emphasising the high standards of the product and accepting a buyer’s control of the situation, while at the same time expecting some degree of reciprocity. According to Charles, these tactics reflect the professional face concerns of buyers and sellers. She regards “professional face-saving strategies” as clearly different from Brown and Levinson’s politeness strategies. To Charles, the former constitute professional moves, or bargaining tactics.

Brown and Levinson’s analytical framework could be successfully applied in Charles’ old relationship negotiations. She suggests that buyer and seller roles are less status-bound in old than in new relationship negotiations and can thus be characterised as more personalised and socially motivated. There seems to be a clear shift from status-bound behaviour in new relationship negotiations to more personal and informal discourse in old relationship negotiations. This is manifested, for example, in a strategy used by sellers in old relationship negotiations when a problem (for the seller) is introduced into the negotiation. The seller will often reduce the problem to a personal level, rather than presenting it from a company or general perspective. By emphasising the detrimental effects the problem will have on him personally, he appeals to the buyer on a personal level to help avoid such negative effects. This clearly reflects the absence of status-bound behaviour and contributes to the impression that old relationship negotiations are more ‘friendly’.

A study by Weiss (1988) on the use of linguistic mitigation aimed to conceptualise some of the linguistic options that negotiators have at their disposal to express demands, and to determine how these options influence negotiation outcomes. Weiss predicted that protective facework (aimed at
satisfying the hearer’s face) and negotiation effectiveness (in terms of successful outcomes) are related positively. Drawing on Brown and Levinson’s model, he developed a typology of mitigating devices to analyse facework in the FTA of demand. Most of the mitigators he included in his typology attend to negative face. Examples included “hedges”, “forewarnings” (i.e. “May I state my preference?”), “wh-questions” (which are a less imposing type of interrogative than closed questions), “modals of possibility, capability or permission” (which render the verb and the speech act more ‘distant’), and finally, “in-group vocabulary and idioms”. This last type is used to attend to the other’s positive face needs and includes, for example, the use of ‘inclusive we’, specific terminology or professional jargon. Weiss’s initial hypothesis was only supported in part; of the twelve mitigator types analysed, eight correlated positively, while the remainder correlated negatively with negotiation effectiveness. Nevertheless, the results go some way to support the notion that a negotiator’s request style, and use of redressive devices in particular, can affect negotiation effectiveness.

As Weiss points out, his study is one of the few investigations into negotiations where language is treated as central to interaction. He comments that negotiation research, due to its interdisciplinary basis, has failed to provide a coherent “communications paradigm” for investigating language in negotiations. He suggests that sociolinguistic research could provide useful concepts for the study of language and linguistic action in negotiation. Whereas social psychologists focus on the content of verbal interaction, sociolinguists underline the significance of context to verbal communication. They are more interested in how messages are formulated. Sociolinguistic research has demonstrated the interpersonal function of language: language usage reveals information about the speaker and relationships between participants are created and managed through verbal interaction. Weiss argues that perspectives such as these “hint at the existence of linguistic options for an individual and underscore the significance of the choices that one makes as a speaker” (Weiss 1988: 6).

Villemoes (1995) investigated three factors that might account for the perceived difference in the atmosphere of Danish and Spanish monolingual negotiations. Five Danish and five Spanish simulated negotiations were analysed with regard to: 1) preferred types of talk (small talk vs. sales talk), 2) preferred topics (relational vs. agenda-related), and 3) facework. Contrary to the author’s expectations, the Spaniards in the sample did not retreat to small talk to a larger degree than the Danes. With regard to topic preference, the data revealed that both nationalities tended to choose the same proportion of topics relating either to the agenda or to the parties involved. Villemoes next looked at similar FTAs in the Danish and Spanish data and used Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness strategies to see whether Spaniards and Danes manifest identical face-related behaviour. Her analysis showed that, in similar situations, the two nationalities seemed to behave in accordance with different facework priorities that would seem to be culturally determined. The Danes chose to redress severe FTAs with negative politeness strategies; coming as they do from a culture where autonomy and freedom are important, they seemed to be acting in accordance with their own negative face concerns. This was confirmed by the fact that, whenever an FTA intruded on the other’s territory, the Danes redressed the FTA by using negative politeness strategies, thus reflecting their concern for the other’s negative face. The Spaniards, on the other hand, preferred to go on-record with their FTAs (including attacks, lies, accusations and invasions of privacy), and to subsequently redress them using positive politeness strategies.

Villemoes concludes that the “frequent clashes to test each other’s wits” seemed to be part of the Spanish simulated negotiation game. Strategies chosen to “take the heat off” were picked from the positive politeness category. The primary concern in Spanish negotiations was mutual positive
face, while the Danes valued independence from one another and were more concerned with keeping their own and the other’s negative face intact. This leads Villemøes to conclude that the difference intuitively felt in the atmosphere of Danish and Spanish negotiations could be attributed to the different values the two nationalities attach to the two face needs of involvement and independence, and to the two face concerns of own versus opponent’s face.

Van der Wijst and Ulijn (1995) carried out an intercultural comparison of polite linguistic behaviour in simulated negotiations in French (between Dutch and French negotiators). Their study was an attempt to answer the question whether the common perception that the discourse of French and Dutch negotiators differs in directness actually holds water. In this exploratory study, Van der Wijst and Ulijn posit that indirect language is related to politeness, the assumption being that the more polite negotiators intend to be, the more they will use indirect language. Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness strategies was used to analyse the directness level of the two discourse styles (French and Dutch) in four distinct phases of three simulated telephone negotiations, namely 1) preparation, 2) taking a stand, 3) argumentation, and 4) conclusion. Their hypothesis was that the perceived differences in verbal style between Dutch and French negotiators would be due to quantitative and/or qualitative differences in the use of politeness strategies. For each speaker, indices of politeness were calculated by dividing the total number of positive politeness strategies and the total number of negative politeness strategies by the total time they were speaking (resulting in two indices of positive and negative politeness per speaker). Van der Wijst and Ulijn found no systematic quantitative differences between any of the three negotiations; in general, the positive and negative politeness indices were equal across the interactions.

The authors’ second hypothesis was that there would be qualitative differences in politeness use between speakers. This would imply that French and Dutch negotiators would use politeness strategies with the same intensity, but would prefer certain strategies over others. More precisely, it was hypothesised that the Dutch are more direct and that this directness would be reflected in their preference for positive politeness strategies. Contrary to expectations, it was in fact the French negotiators who used more positive politeness strategies than the Dutch negotiators overall. This difference was most notable in the closing stage of each of the negotiations. Although the three negotiations differed considerably with respect to outcome, no relation could be found between negotiation results and the verbal style of the negotiators. In retrospect, the authors admit that they neglected to acknowledge an important aspect of the communication context. The Dutch negotiators in their study were forced to communicate in a foreign language in which they were not fluent, at least not as fluent as native speakers of that language. This may well have affected their verbal style and politeness use.

Stalpers (1993) investigated how disagreements (FTAs in Brown and Levinson’s terms) are realised linguistically in negotiations. Although the primary focus of her study was not on facework, her investigation did involve an analysis of common structural patterns associated with disagreement acts that can be said to function as mitigation (or politeness) strategies. It is for this reason that the study is included in this section. Stalpers compared disagreements in same -culture French and Dutch negotiations and disagreements in mixed (Dutch-French) negotiations. Her corpus consisted of eleven authentic negotiations, including four mixed, three Dutch, and four French encounters. Stalpers used an adaptation of a list of characteristics associated with so-called “dispreferred acts” (FTAs) such as disagreements (Levinson 1983). She distinguished ten features that can mitigate or reduce the unwelcome effects a dispreferred act may have on the hearer. Seven strategies delay the act itself (e.g., pause, apology, hedging expression, etc.), one
accompanies the disagreement act (supporting justification, explanation or defensive sequences),
and two are internal to the act (insertion of expressions such as “maybe”, “rather” or the use of
modal verbs).

Stalpers’ analysis showed that disagreement acts in negotiations are usually mitigated, although
not to such a great extent as they are in everyday conversations. This leads Stalpers to suggest that
business negotiations may exhibit certain features that distinguish them from other types of
interaction. The relatively low degree of mitigation found in business talk might indicate that
politeness requirements are more relaxed in negotiation settings than in casual conversation. That
is to say, business people may prioritise conversational clarity over politeness considerations. Of
the ten mitigation strategies distinguished, one occurred more often in the mixed setting than in
both native settings. The strategy involved the insertion of a sequence of contentless utterances
used to delay the offensive act, and giving the hearer the chance to self-correct, so that the speaker
could avoid having to voice disagreement.

As we have seen, discourse research into the linguistic dimension of facework and face concerns
in negotiation has drawn heavily on Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness (Brown &
Levinson 1987). Research issues have included autonomy management and approval (Kang
1991), the interpretation of directives in terms of threat to negative or positive face (Wilson et al.
1990), the structure of demands and disagreements (Weiss 1988; Stalpers 1993) and overall use of
politeness strategies in same-culture negotiations (Charles 1995; Van der Wijst 1996) and across
different cultures (Villemoes 1995; Van der Wijst & Ulijn 1995). Discourse studies have tended to
be of a more exploratory nature than studies carried out in the social-psychological tradition. As a
result, they often rely on a variety of different conceptualisations or methodologies prevalent in
other disciplines. All have produced interesting findings, although their diversity with regard to
data collection methods as well as focus and analysis makes it difficult to compare or generalise
their results. With the increasing importance of cross-national commercial relationships in recent
years, a new line of research has emerged that investigates the use of a foreign language on the
negotiation process; as yet, however, there are only relatively few studies that have focused on the
possible effect of foreign language use on facework in a negotiation setting. Furthermore, there
have been few studies to date in this vein that have focused on a comparison of the linguistic
facework of inexperienced versus experienced negotiators using a lingua franca (e.g., English) in a
negotiation setting (But see e.g., Dow 1999, who compared the negotiation discourse of
inexperienced and experienced Austrian speakers of English). The present investigation was set
up, in part, to investigate such aspects.

The next chapter focuses on the methodology of the present investigation. It discusses the general
analytical approach taken and presents the second framework that is used to investigate verbal
behaviour in the two corpora, Stiles’ Taxonomy of Verbal Response Modes. Chapter 3 also
describes the simulation game and the data collection procedures used to gather the negotiation
discourse in both corpora (from student and professional negotiators). In addition, the chapter
discusses the role of politeness and facework in light of rapport management, and outlines two
further analyses that aim to investigate facework in the negotiation corpora.
Chapter 3

Analytical approach and data collection

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology of the present investigation. The chapter begins by setting out the general approach used to analyse the negotiations at the centre of this investigation. Stiles’ Taxonomy of Verbal Response Modes, the framework that was used next to Brown and Levinson’s politeness taxonomy (see Sections 2.3.1) to investigate face-related verbal behaviour manifested in the negotiations, is discussed in Sections 3.2 to 3.5. In addition to outlining the underlying principles of the Verbal Response Mode (VRM) system, these sections discuss how the VRM taxonomy can be used to categorise verbal behaviour in negotiations in general, and face-related verbal behaviour in negotiations in particular.

In section 3.6, we consider the terms ‘politeness’, ‘facework’ and ‘rapport management’ in light of the cover term ‘face maintenance’. Face maintenance is defined in this investigation as any verbal behaviour that aims to accommodate aspects of other’s and/or own face, even if this entails damaging aspects of own and/or other’s face. In this way, face maintenance, like face threat, is regarded as multi-dimensional and multi-directional. It is suggested that the concepts of politeness, facework and rapport management, although interrelated, should be seen as constituting clearly separate domains of relationship management.

In Sections 3.7 and 3.8, we outline two additional analyses of the negotiation data that will allow us to take into account a number of mechanisms aimed clearly at face maintenance that Brown and Levinson’s framework seems not to accommodate, or to accommodate only partly. In this way, it is hoped that linguistic facework in the negotiations can be captured more fully. In Section 3.9, we briefly look ahead to the comparative analyses of face-related verbal behaviour in the professional and student negotiators’ contributions.

In the final sections of this chapter (Sections 3.10 to 3.14), the focus is on the data collection procedures used, a description of the contributors and of the two negotiation corpora, and the coder training that preceded the VRM and politeness analyses.

3.1 Analytical approach: some considerations

It was said earlier that the business negotiation constitutes a genre in which face maintenance is a constant consideration (see Section 1.3). Given the fact that Brown and Levinson’s politeness framework is based on the theoretical premise that politeness will be employed in exactly those communication contexts where face is of paramount importance, it was thought that this model could provide a useful basis for an analysis of at least some aspects of face maintenance manifested in international business negotiations (see also Section 2.3.2). Although Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness strategies is limited to some extent by the fact that it is based primarily on a cross-cultural analysis of facework used to redress the single FTA of requesting, a choice that
reflects an emphasis that was generally prevalent in linguistic research at the time, it was assumed that the framework could be applied in the present investigation to analyse facework used to mitigate potentially any type of FTA manifested in negotiation discourse, including disagreement, refusal, threat, criticism, etc.

Given that the identification and isolation of different types of speech acts is notoriously difficult, we decided not to focus on an analysis of facework employed in a particular set of FTA(s). Instead, we opted to examine facework in longer stretches of negotiation that potentially incorporate many different types of speech acts, FTAs as well as non-FTAs. Brown and Levinson themselves have noted that, if discourse is regarded as a series of utterances, or units of language that are inherently contextualised, a sentence-based approach such as theirs, which relies heavily on isolated, decontextualised examples of FTAs and politeness strategies, may not be the most suitable method for an analysis of facework aimed at FTAs in longer stretches of speech or text, such as negotiation sessions (Brown & Levinson 1987: 10). By applying a broader ‘discourse approach’ to our analyses of facework in negotiations, we have attempted to extend on a consideration of facework employed exclusively in the vicinity of FTAs (see e.g., Stalpers 1993; Van der Wijst 1996; Le Pair 1997; Hendriks, 2002).

A broader approach to our data than a consideration of facework in (a) specific set(s) of speech acts also allowed us to investigate what appears to be an inherent difference in redressive scope between negative and positive politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson 1987: 101). Whereas negative politeness strategies are said to directly address the imposition (or weight) associated with a particular FTA, positive politeness strategies seem to have a more general function, as they are not aimed directly at mitigating a given FTA. Positive politeness strategies are used more generally to emphasise closeness, group membership, and common ground between interactants, and thus only indirectly redress the immediate face threat posed by an FTA. As their primary function is to create a congenial atmosphere, they would seem to be the perfect candidates for achieving the interactional goal of communication: to establish and maintain relationships by creating rapport. In order to accommodate potential differences in redressive scope associated with different types of politeness, our facework analyses focussed first and foremost on a consideration of politeness phenomena manifested in negotiators’ contributions as a whole and in each of the two corpora of negotiation data (student vs. professional data: see Chapters 4 and 5). In addition, a number of subsequent qualitative analyses of face-related verbal behaviour were applied to excerpts from those negotiations, but here again, the general analytical approach was to consider facework phenomena in a broader context than a single (set of) isolated speech act(s).

The negotiation data in our data set were all generated in dyadic negotiations, that is, in negotiations involving two negotiating parties, each represented by a single negotiator. Rather than opting for pair analyses of the negotiation data produced in the dyads, however, we chose instead to analyse our data from a largely corpus-based, and partially speaker-based, perspective (see Chapters 4 and 5). This choice was made for practical reasons that relate directly to the fact

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6 Utterances (forms) and speech acts (functions) do not necessarily have a one-to-one basis (Shiffrin, 1994). Therefore, an utterance such as “Why don’t you take a long jump off a short plank?” can be classified as any of a range of different speech acts including, for example, a question, a request for action, a suggestion or even a reproach.

7 We have referred to this perspective as a ‘discourse’ approach, only in the sense that, with respect to the results, we considered aspects of verbal behaviour, and facework in particular, in the broader context of a speaker’s contribution as a whole to a negotiation or corpus (See chapters 4 and 5). Strictly speaking, however, the actual analysis (or coding) of the speech data still took place at the level of the utterance.
that we only had a limited amount of (professional) negotiation data at our disposal. Whereas the
student negotiations involved lingua franca negotiators only, the professional negotiations were
essentially of two types: dyads involving lingua franca speakers, and dyads involving a lingua
franca speaker and a native speaker of English. Because we had a limited number of professional
negotiations to start with (nine negotiations in total), and because our research focus was on
analyses of face-related negotiation discourse produced by lingua franca speakers (see Section
1.4), this means that if we had opted for pair analyses, we could only have involved a subset of the
professional negotiations we had (five negotiations), and subsequently only a proportion of the
professional lingua franca speakers (10 out of a potential 14).

In order to make optimal use of the professional negotiations, we therefore decided to regard all
the lingua franca data collected from each of the two types of negotiators (professional vs. student)
as constituting two separate corpora of lingua franca negotiation data (a corpus of professional
negotiation discourse vs. a corpus of student negotiation discourse). This would also allow us to
compare the verbal behaviour of the lingua franca speakers in this study in terms of groups of
inexperienced (student) versus experienced (professional) negotiators, which was relevant to our
third research question relating to BC pedagogy. Of course, we fully realise that although this
approach has certain practical advantages, we have at the same time limited the scope of this
investigation, as pair-based analyses could potentially have offered insights into other highly
relevant aspects of face maintenance, such as, for example, the role of accommodation between
speakers, or the extent to which reciprocity might affect different types of facework, in
negotiation.

It should be noted that, although the verbal contributions of the four native speakers of English to
the professional negotiations were not included in our data set, their speech data nevertheless
played an important part in our analyses of the corpora. As we will see further on in this chapter, a
consideration of the surrounding discourse context, which is created in part by the verbal
contribution of the other speaker in a dyad, played an important role in identifying and
categorising face-related verbal behaviour in the present study (see Section 3.2 and 3.3). In other
words, although the negotiation data the native speakers produced could not be ‘physically’
included in our investigation of facework in lingua franca negotiations, their contributions were
nevertheless essential to our analyses in other ways.

The reasons for using Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Model and their taxonomy of linguistic
politeness strategies in this investigation have already been discussed. We would now like to
briefly explain why we chose to use an additional, complementary framework (and analytical
tool), Stiles’ VRM Taxonomy (Stiles 1992), to study aspects of face maintenance in negotiations.
As we have seen, Brown and Levinson’s analysis of verbal politeness is largely FTA-based. The
model is geared specifically to qualifying and categorising that part (or those parts) of a verbal
message (centring around a face-threatening speech act) which constitutes verbal politeness
oriented to the hearer (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2 for a general overview of politeness strategies and
examples of linguistic outputs, and Sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 for specific examples from the
negotiation corpora). In the present investigation, we attempted to increase the scale of use of
Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy by using it to qualify and categorise that part of a negotiator’s
total contribution to a negotiation that constitutes polite verbal behaviour (for a similar approach,
see Van der Wijst & Ulijn 1995). At the same time, our goal was to investigate whether the
taxonomy, which essentially describes hearer-oriented politeness, can be used successfully to
identify facework oriented to own face. In this way, we also attempted to investigate how
politeness relates to the multidimensionality of face threat, and the potential multi-orientedness of FTAs.

However, facework clearly involves more than the use of positive or negative politeness strategies to carry out an FTA. As we have seen, indirect formulation of the FTA (in the shape of off-record realisations or hints) also constitutes a communication ‘super-strategy’ in Brown and Levinson’s hierarchy. Although we thought it would be possible to identify and recognise in the negotiation data instances of the different negative and positive politeness strategies Brown and Levinson distinguish, identifying types of indirectness (degrees of off-recordness) in FTAs was expected to be more difficult, particularly given the problems that are associated with the identification and isolation of speech acts in running speech. What made VRM analysis particularly attractive in this respect is that it allows us not only to categorise (exhaustively) all verbal behaviour manifested by a speaker in a negotiation (a characteristic which facilitates our ‘discourse approach’), but that it also allows us to distinguish between verbal behaviour that poses a threat to face or not, and, finally, to determine to what extent verbal behaviour (face-threatening or not) is accomplished indirectly. Furthermore, based on the VRM categorisations, we would be able to calculate degree of face-threatening verbal behaviour and degree of indirectness per speaker, within a corpus or across groups of speakers. The methods by which the above aims can be achieved on the basis of VRM analysis, how VRM analysis deals with indirectness (or off-recordness), and how VRMs relate conceptually to the more ‘traditional’ categories of speech act are discussed in detail in Sections 3.2 to 3.5.

The remainder of this chapter provides an overview of Stiles’ Verbal Response Mode system. A number of aspects of the framework are discussed, including the theoretical principles that underlie the taxonomy, and the application of the taxonomy as a coding system. The example utterances used for illustrative purposes in the remainder of this chapter are fictitious.

3.2 The Verbal Response Mode taxonomy

The Taxonomy of Verbal Response Modes (Stiles 1992) can be used to classify utterances, or more specifically illocutionary8 acts, in terms of literal meaning as well as pragmatic meaning. It is applicable in numerous interpersonal communication contexts. Although the system originated in studies of clinical psychology and was originally developed to classify speech data from psychotherapy sessions, it has since been used to describe aspects of verbal behaviour in a range of other communication genres, including medical interviews, informal conversations, job interviews, university lectures, labour negotiations, family interactions, television advertisements, and courtroom interrogations (for a detailed overview, see Stiles 1992). Of greater interest to the present investigation is the fact that the framework has been used to describe interaction in labour-management negotiations (Hinkle, Stiles & Taylor 1988) and business negotiations (Van der Wijst 1994; 1996).

The VRM system (see Table 3.1) conceptualises communication events as situations “in which interactants are seen as centres of experience and utterances or speech acts as links between them. Every utterance from one speaker to a hearer can be considered to concern either the speaker’s or

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8 This is the act performed in making an utterance, as distinct from simply uttering the words, the locutionary act, or producing an external effect on the actions or perceptions of others, the perlocutionary act (Austin 1975).

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the other’s experience, with experience broadly thought to include thoughts, feelings, perceptions and intentional actions” (Stiles 1992: 14). Within the VRM framework, utterances constitute attempted links between two “centres of experience”, the speaker’s and the hearer’s. The VRM taxonomy effectively reflects classifications of the different types of contacts or connections that can be made between interlocutors. Thus, utterances are regarded as units of interpersonal relationships, representing “points of connection, or at least intended connection, between human centres of experience” (Stiles 1992: 59).

Table 3.1 The Taxonomy of VRMs (or intersubjective illocutionary acts)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Experience</th>
<th>Presumption about Experience</th>
<th>Frame of Reference</th>
<th>VRMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>Disclosure (D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>Advisement (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>Edification (E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>Confirmation (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>Question (Q)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>Interpretation (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>Acknowledgement (K)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>Reflection (R)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Every VRM is considered to have a sender, the speaker, and an intended receiver, the hearer or “other”. It is the distinction between sender and receiver in communicating parts of centres of experience that forms the theoretical basis for classifications in the VRM taxonomy, as well as the practical basis for VRM coding. VRM classification essentially involves a consideration of three basic principles. Each of these principles requires the coder to determine the speaker’s and hearer’s relationship to that part of the centre of experience that constitutes a given utterance’s topic. The three principles will be discussed in detail in the next section. In brief, they relate to the fact that: 1) an utterance can have either the speaker or the other as its source of experience; 2) the speaker, in making the utterance, may make presumptions about the other’s experience or not; and 3) an utterance can concern the speaker’s or the other’s frame of reference.

The principles are dichotomous because each can take on the value of ‘speaker’ or ‘other’; as a result, all eight combinations of them are possible. The ‘values’ of the three principles thus define the eight mutually exclusive VRM categories, or “families of intersubjective illocutionary acts”. (Stiles 1981).

3.3 VRM classification: underlying principles

Source of experience
The first principle of classification requires the identification of a “Source of Experience” for a given utterance or speech act. The experience (idea, information, feeling, behaviour, etc.) that an utterance concerns, its source, may be the speaker’s or the other’s. For instance, when a speaker discloses his own feelings or opinions (e.g., “I’m not happy with this deal”), or reveals information known only to him (e.g., “But I can tell you our quarterly figures are on the up”), it is the speaker’s experience, not the other’s, that forms the topic of the utterance. In contrast, if
an utterance concerns a request for information not known to the speaker, or a description or assessment of the other’s feelings (e.g., “What time can I reach you at the office tomorrow?” or “You must be very pleased with the final outcome”), the utterance clearly relates to the other’s experience (source of experience is “other”). With respect to the eight VRM categories, it can be seen from Table 3.1 that the topic of a Disclosure, an Advisement, an Edification, and a Confirmation concerns the speaker’s experience, whereas the topic of a Question, an Interpretation, an Acknowledgement, or a Reflection concerns the other’s experience.

**Presumption about experience**

The second principle of classification, “Presumption about Experience”, concerns the speaker’s presumption, or not, about some aspect of the other’s experience. In his communication, a speaker may or may not entertain certain presuppositions about the other’s experience, including their behaviour, in any given time frame (past, present or future). Utterances that require presumption about experience on the part of the speaker about the hearer are coded “other”, whereas utterances for which the speaker need only make presumptions about his own experience are coded “speaker”. For example, an utterance such as “You performed badly in that meeting” is coded “other” because it assumes knowledge, on the speaker’s part, of the other’s intended behaviour (to perform well in the meeting). An utterance such as “Take the minutes, Mr Jones” presumes to guide and influence the other’s behaviour, as the speaker attempts to impose the experience of performing a certain action (taking minutes) on the hearer. Again, it would be coded “other”. Further examples include “You probably feel disappointed”, which presumes to understand the other’s feelings, and “You and I disagree on the price of this item” which presumes to know the opinion of the other and compares that opinion with the speaker’s. Both are coded “other” with regard to the “Presumption about Experience” principle. In contrast, “I’ve had it with these endless meetings” and “What do these conditions entail?” are both coded “speaker” because they require presumptions about the speaker’s experience only.

Based on a consideration of the second principle, utterances may be characterised as either “presumptuous” or “nonpresumptuous” (Stiles 1992). To decide whether a given utterance is presumptuous or not, only presumptions that are “necessary to the meaning of the utterance” should be taken into account (Stiles 1992: 61). The speaker’s presumption to know the other’s experience may underlie utterances such as “I wish these merger talks were behind us” (implying “I do, and so do you’) or “You want to have lunch with me?” (implying ‘Of course you do’), but this is not essential for the utterances to have the meaning they have. In contrast, in the meanings of the two following utterances, “You wish these merger talks were behind you” and “Let’s have lunch”, in a normal context, the speaker does entertain presuppositions. In the first, he presumes to know what the other feels (implying ‘You feel you’ve had enough of these talks’), and in the second example, he makes an assumption about what the other should do (implying ‘You should join me for lunch’). The speaker, in uttering the latter two statements, cannot mean them without making certain presumptions about the other’s experience. With respect to the eight VRM categories, in uttering a Disclosure, Edification, Question, or Acknowledgement, the speaker does not implicitly presume to know what the other’s experience is or should be, whereas in uttering an Advisement, Confirmation, Interpretation, or Reflection, he does make such presumptions.
Frame of reference

The third and final principle underlying the VRM taxonomy relates to “Frame of Reference”. The premise is that the experience a particular utterance is concerned with is derived from the experiences with which it is linked or associated. Such constellations of experiences (including memories, ideas, and connotations) constitute the “Frame of Reference” for a particular utterance. The frame of reference is determined as either “speaker” or “other”, depending on whose perspective or viewpoint is used as a basis for that utterance’s meaning. Hence “You made quite an impression at that meeting” expresses the speaker’s viewpoint of the other’s performance or behaviour. It is therefore regarded as an utterance with speaker’s frame of reference. In contrast, “You are saying that product performance has been greatly improved since January” is coded as other’s frame of reference, because the speech act outlines (repeats or reiterates) part of the other’s experience, namely their personal viewpoint or perspective. Of course, in order for a speaker to be able to comprehend what he himself is saying, he can never exclusively take on the other’s frame of reference. Therefore, when VRMs are classified as other’s frame of reference, what is implied is that the frame of reference is effectively shared by the speaker and the other (Stiles 1992: 62).

For utterances concerning the other’s frame of reference, it is the speaker who assesses their validity, accuracy or appropriateness. Examples of utterances with a neutral, shared (objective) frame of reference are statements of fact, such as “Inflation has risen again” or “Total retail sales in the electronics department fell by 1.3 per cent this last quarter”. Such utterances are coded as other’s frame of reference as it is presumed that their felicity can be assessed directly by the other, or on the basis of some external criterion or third party (by indirect ‘others’). The next section discusses the individual VRM categories and their possible application in investigations of facework.

3.4 VRMs and the taxonomy in the present study

In applying the VRM taxonomy, an utterance can be coded twice, once with respect to its grammatical form, or literal meaning, and once with respect to its communicative intent, or pragmatic meaning. The eight possible mode names in the taxonomy are used for both form and intent coding (see Table 3.2). This results in 64 form-intent combinations that are described as either pure or mixed modes. Pure modes describe utterances in which form and intent are the same, and mixed modes describe utterances in which form and intent differ.

Table 3.2 presents the eight VRM types as they are distinguished on the basis of the three categorisation principles that were discussed above (see Table 3.1). It also briefly outlines the communicative intents that are associated with each mode. For example, Disclosures focus on the speaker’s subjective experiences, Advisements include suggesting, commanding and advising behaviour, and Interpretation qualifies an aspect of the other (the way they look, act, etc.).

On the basis of extensive testing, and wide-scale collaboration between coders involved in many different studies that used the initial versions of the VRM system to classify talk prior to 1992 (see Stiles 1992 for an overview), each of the eight modes had consistently been found to be associated

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9 Felicity conditions (sometimes referred to as success conditions) are the set of conditions that define (types of) speech act, and provide the basis by which interactants ‘evaluate’ speech acts. A speech act is regarded to be infelicitous (or unsuccessful) if one or more of those conditions (e.g., the essential, sincerity, preparatory or propositional content condition) do not hold (Searle 1969).
with a distinctive set of grammatical characteristics. These form descriptions, which are presented in Table 3.3, thus represent the consensus of a large group of researchers who used the VRM system to code interaction generated in many different types of communication genres. In the VRM system in its present form (Stiles 1992), these descriptions provide the categories on the basis of which an utterance’s grammatical form is coded.

As a notational convention in coding, the abbreviation for form is given first, followed by the intent abbreviation (in brackets after each utterance). For example, an utterance, such as, “I don’t like Mondays” would yield the following code: (DD). In this example, the form and intent codes are the same, so this mode is regarded as a pure mode; by the same token, form and intent could have been different, in which case it would have constituted an example of a mixed mode. As we will see later on, the system’s distinction between pure modes and mixed modes is of particular interest to the present investigation, because it allows us to qualify (and quantify) indirect verbal behaviour.

Table 3.2  The taxonomy of Verbal Response Modes (Stiles 1992)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mode</th>
<th>intent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure (D)</td>
<td>reveals (personal) thoughts, feelings, perceptions, or intentions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edification (E)</td>
<td>states (neutral) objective information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisement (A)</td>
<td>attempts to guide or influence behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation (C)</td>
<td>compares speaker’s experience with other’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question (Q)</td>
<td>requests information or guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement (K)</td>
<td>signals receipt of or receptiveness to other’s communication (backchannels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation (I)</td>
<td>labels, judges or evaluates the other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection (R)</td>
<td>puts other’s experience into words (repetitions; summaries)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As was said above, Stiles regards VRMs as categories of communicative act or, more precisely, illocutionary act. The grammatical form of a VRM and its communicative intent relate to each other in the sense that an utterance’s form is used “in service of” its intent (Stiles 1992). For example, an utterance such as “I wish you would stop tapping your foot” is coded as (DA), a Disclosure form in service of an Advisement intent, while “Did you know there are estimated to be 15,000 homeless youths in London alone?” is coded (QE), a Question form in service of an Edification intent.

Of particular interest to the present investigation is the fact that Stiles (1992) suggests that mixed modes, instances where a literal -grammatical- meaning is used to convey a different pragmatic meaning, would seem to reflect indirectness. According to Stiles, form-intent discrepancies signal “conflicting social pressures” that come into play when, for example, face concerns, and more particularly, face threat, becomes salient in a communication relationship. As was explained earlier (Section 3.3), the VRM taxonomy makes a distinction, on the basis of the “Presumption about Experience” principle, between so-called presumptuous and non-presumptuous VRMs. Presumptuous VRMs (Advisement, Confirmation, Interpretation and Reflection) ‘impose’ on the addressee in some way, as the speaker has to make certain assumptions about part of the other’s experience. As such, presumptuous VRMs, according to Stiles, can be regarded as instances of inherently face-threatening communication. Presumptuous VRMs can reflect, for example, assessments or evaluations of the addressee (criticism, compliments, reformulations, etc.) or influencing and persuasive behaviours (directives, threats, [dis]agreements, etc.). Given that presumptuousness is strongly associated with imposition on the other, and thus with face threat,
any form-intent discrepancies that involve the use of nonpresumptuous grammatical forms (Question, Disclosure, Acknowledgement, and Edification) to express presumptuous communicative intents (Advisement, Confirmation, Reflection, and Interpretation) can be assumed to signal facework, employed in the interests of rapport management. For instance, when a speaker uses an utterance such as “Would you consider giving us a discount?” (QA), the grammatical (nonpresumptuous) Question form attenuates its communicative (presumptuous) Advisement intent, making it a less presumptuous and relatively more polite utterance, in Brown and Levinson’s terms, than the equivalent pure, presumptuous mode “Give us a discount” (AA).

Table 3.3 Overview of Verbal Response Mode form criteria (Stiles 1992)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mode</th>
<th>form descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure (D)</td>
<td>declarative; 1st person singular or plural where other is not a referent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I definitely need a holiday”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edification (E)</td>
<td>declarative; 3rd person (e.g., ‘he’, ‘she’, ‘it’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“He missed last week’s meeting”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisement (A)</td>
<td>imperative; or 2nd person with verb of permission, obligation, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You shouldn’t work so hard”</td>
<td>prohibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation (C)</td>
<td>1st person plural (‘we’) where referent includes the other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“We [You and I] never agree”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question (Q)</td>
<td>interrogative, with inverted subject-verb order or interrogative words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Did you finish that report?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement (K)</td>
<td>nonlexical or contentless utterances; terms of address, salutations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Hello. How are you?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation (I)</td>
<td>2nd person (‘you’); verb implies an attribute or ability of the other;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You made a fool of yourself”</td>
<td>terms of evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection (R)</td>
<td>2nd person (‘you’); verb implies internal experience or volitional action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You must feel really left out”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relationship between the presumptuousness principle and indirectness in the interests of rapport management is backed up by consistent findings from a number of studies that have used the VRM system to investigate verbal behaviour in a variety of different types of interactional encounters. These findings suggest that there is a relationship between the relative status of a speaker (their Power) and presumptuous, or face-threatening, verbal behaviour. Regardless of the type of interaction, higher-status members in face-to-face dyads have been consistently found to be more presumptuous in their verbal behaviour (Stiles 1992). This was found to be the case, for example, in psychotherapy sessions, where psychotherapists were found to be more presumptuous than their clients (Stiles, Shapiro & Firth-Cozens 1988), and in interactions involving parents and children, where the parents were more presumptuous than their children (Stiles & White 1981). Stiles, Waszak, and Barton (1979) found that professors manifested more presumptuous verbal behaviour than their students in both classroom and laboratory interactions. Finally, attorneys were found to be more presumptuous than witnesses during courtroom cross-examinations (McGaughey & Stiles 1983).

Presumptuousness, therefore, “seems to reflect relative status (i.e. in relation to the other person) rather than some absolute characteristic of the speaker” (Stiles 1992: 57). The consistently low level of presumptuousness on the part of lower-status speakers suggests that the difference in use of presumptuousness between lower and higher-status members may be the result of the fact that lower-status members avoid the use of presumptuous utterances. Stiles suggests this could perhaps
“be understood as a way of being polite, to avoid giving offense to a superior” (Stiles 1992: 57). In equal-status dyads, the presumptuousness level of both members has been shown to increase with degree intimacy and to be correlated across dyads (Premo & Stiles 1983).

3.4.1 VRM intent: on-recordness versus off-recordness

VRM intent “concerns what is meant, regardless of how it is said” (Stiles 1992: 69). Coders judge what the speaker means on the basis of the three principles of VRM classification discussed earlier. According to Stiles, VRM intent constitutes the on-record, pragmatic meaning of an utterance, and as such should be regarded as “microintent” only, “an aspect of the meaning of a single utterance” (Stiles 1992: 69). For example, an utterance is coded as an Interpretation in intent if it is meant as an Interpretation. Aspects of meaning relating to the sense of an utterance, its denotative and connotative content, are not coded (Stiles 1992). VRM intent is essentially what Grice (1969) described as speaker’s occasion meaning. It classifies an interactant’s “intended meaning on a particular occasion and thus must always be considered in context” (Stiles 1992: 20, italics added).

A speaker, in order to mean something by an utterance, must go on-record as saying it (cf. Brown & Levinson 1978, 1987). Therefore, on-record messages are inherently public and informative, at least to the audience to which they are being addressed. This means that VRM coders can code VRMs without the need for “mind reading”, as long as they take into consideration the discourse context in which the utterance occurs. They are in the same position, with respect to interpretation of (on-record) meaning, as the original audience of a given utterance (Stiles 1992).

VRM intent, then, is regarded by Stiles as a categorisation of on-record meaning. It was explained above that certain categories of mixed modes (nonpresumptuous forms used in service of presumptuous intents) signal indirectness (facework applied in the interests of face maintenance). Stiles claims that other types of indirectness employed to maintain face, namely off-record meanings, such as hints, metaphor, rhetorical questions, etc., cannot be coded on the basis of the VRM taxonomy. We would like to argue that although it is true that off-recordness cannot be coded on the basis of the taxonomy -there are no special codes, as it were, to specifically indicate off-recordness- the system, in providing a way to categorise indirectness (reflected in mixed modes), can in fact take into account degrees of off-recordness. Let us consider an example to illustrate our case. Imagine a speaker who wants to stop someone from doing what the speaker regards as wrong; in our case, imagine he wants a colleague to stop fiddling the accounts. In the interests of face maintenance and identity concerns, the speaker does not actually want to go completely on-record and unambiguously suggest to the hearer to stop his behaviour. As the face threat involved is potentially high (in suggesting the other should stop, he does not merely impose on the hearer’s negative face and threaten the hearer’s positive face, but accuses him of a criminal offense in the process), he resorts to an off-record realisation of the FTA (Brown and Levinson’s super-strategy 4): “Someone in Marketing was fired last year for cooking the books”.

Let us consider the above off-record utterance from the perspective of the VRM coder. If the coder regarded this utterance in isolation, he could not possibly tell what the speaker really means to say on this particular occasion (glossed as: “You’d better stop doing this”). Considered in isolation, this utterance constitutes general, objective information and would be coded Edification in form, and Edification in intent (EE). However, remember that, in order to code VRM intent, utterances have to be considered in their discourse context. The “contextual unit” or amount of discourse that must be taken into consideration to classify an utterance usually incorporates a few surrounding (usually preceding) utterances, but may incorporate previous turns, a speaker’s contribution to a
conversation as a whole, or even to previous encounters (Stiles 1992: 19-20). Going back to our example utterance, if there were nothing in the discourse context (the conversation so far; the addressee’s contribution to the conversation; the addressee’s response to this utterance, etc.) to suggest to a VRM coder that this utterance is in fact meant by the speaker as a suggestion to stop (an Advisement), rather than as a general statement that provides objective information to the hearer (an Edification), it would indeed be coded Edification (with an Edification form). In other words, if the discourse context were to provide no clues whatsoever to allow the coder to infer the intended meaning of this utterance, the resulting interpretation would yield a pure, nonpresumptuous mode, and would not signal any degree of indirectness. In the latter interpretation, Stiles would be right in saying that VRM analysis cannot code off-recordness, as the on-record meaning would have been coded (Edification), while the off-record meaning would not (Advisement).

However, we would claim that the discourse context, which plays such a central role in categorising verbal behaviour in VRM analysis, is likely in many cases to provide the clues necessary to interpret the speaker’s off-record formulation and establish its intended, on-record meaning. We would claim that in many cases, off-record meaning is to a certain extent always on-record, or people simply would not be able to understand each other half the time. To help explain this idea further, we first need to take into account Brown and Levinson’s consideration of on-recordness versus off-recordness.

Paradoxically, although they clearly make a distinction between on-record and off-record strategies in their discussion of politeness, Brown and Levinson also claim that, despite this distinction, even off-record utterances, such as metaphor, irony, and understatement, are to a certain extent on-record. In this respect, they talk of “on-record off-recordness” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 212), noting that all utterances, regardless of the extent of their indirectness (or off-recordness), are in fact instances of on-record meaning. This is because “the clues to their interpretation (the mutual knowledge of S and H in context; the intonational, prosodic and kinesic clues to speaker’s attitude; the clues derived from conversational sequencing) add up to only one really viable interpretation in the context” (Brown & Levinson 187: 212, italics added). The above line of reasoning would imply that, in the context in which they are uttered, all utterances are in fact on-record. Brown and Levinson themselves acknowledge the importance of the discourse context in interpreting a given communication strategy in this respect, even commenting at one point in their discussion “many off-record strategies are used in contexts that render their outputs in fact unambiguously on-record” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 213: italics added). Of course the validity of such reasoning necessarily also depends on the extent to which interactants in a given communication situation are able to successfully read the interpretation clues provided. One would imagine that in intercultural encounters, for example, in which there is likely to be more than one single context at play (‘shared’ or otherwise), participants may not so easily arrive at one and the same “really viable interpretation”.

On the basis of the idea of ‘on-record off-recordness’, we would suggest that VRM analysis does take into account, or can at least signal, off-recordness. Stiles regards off-recordness and on-recordness as clearly distinct, and mutually exclusive, whereas we (following Brown and Levinson) adopt the view that in context, what may have been formulated as an off-record strategy can never have been intended as entirely off-record, or a speaker would be unintelligible; there will always be interpretation clues in the surrounding (discourse) context that make such formulations to some
degree on-record and thus interpretable\textsuperscript{10}. Effectively, we believe that what Stiles regards in his discussion of mixed modes as indirectness potentially only incorporates degrees of highly conventionalised indirectness\textsuperscript{11}. We would suggest that mixed modes in VRM analysis signal a broader category of indirectness. Take the following highlighted utterance as an example: “It’s hard to concentrate properly with all this noise. I wish you would stop clearing your throat”, which, in this discourse context, would be coded (DA) (intended on this occasion as a suggestion to stop - Advisement-, and not merely as a personal opinion -Disclosure). The utterance (mixed mode) does not strictly constitute an example of highly conventionalised indirectness (it is perhaps ‘too offf-record’), but is ambiguous enough (off-record enough) to leave the speaker with an opt-out (the following exchange might ensue: Hearer: “What do you mean?” Speaker: “Nothing. I’m just saying I wish you would.”). In other words, we would consider this mixed mode formulation as ambiguous enough to be regarded as off-record, or ‘more indirect’ (ambiguous) than (degrees of) highly conventionalised indirectness. The mixed VRM mode (DA) can be said to signal an off-record degree of indirectness. In short, we assume that at least some off-record intents will end up in the category of indirectly expressed (on-record) VRMs. Of course, we realise that in cases where a speaker has used extreme degrees of off-recordness, occasion meaning can only really be established after the fact, on the basis of specific feedback from that speaker (in a post-negotiation interview, for example). However, we would argue that speakers, on the whole, will refrain from using such extreme levels to avoid compromising clarity and expediency, particularly in primarily transactional communication activities like the sales negotiations in the present study, in which communication centres around clarifying specific aspects of a business deal.

In conclusion, we regard indirectness as constituting a sliding scale that runs from highly conventional indirectness to off-recordness (perhaps Beebe & Takahashi’s “Do you have a bag” is an extreme case in point here: see Section 2.3.1), and that potentially incorporates many (as yet undetermined) degrees in between. This is in keeping with Brown and Levinson, who regard (conventionalised) indirectness to be a “scalar concept” that involves “degrees of compromise in one direction (off-recordness) or the other (on-recordness)” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 132). Although we agree with Stiles when he says that VRM analysis cannot be used to code off-record levels of intent, we suggest that VRM analysis can potentially accommodate (or signal) off-recordness; it just does not allow, as far as we can tell at this stage, for a specification of the degree of that off-recordness (although Stiles suggests introducing a third-level code, see Stiles 1992: 67). Incidentally, it should be noted that the above line of reasoning does not clash in any way with Stiles’ characterisation of the VRM system as a tool to categorise on-record meaning (only), as we would claim that degrees of off-recordness are, in fact, degrees of ‘indirect on-recordness’.

\textsuperscript{10} Stiles, in his definition of VRM intent (pragmatic meaning), implicitly concurs with this view, when he says that to mean something by an utterance on the occasion of its use, a speaker “a) must be aware of the content, b) intend that the other become aware of the content, c) intend that the communication appear intended, and d) intend that the communication be attributable to the speaker” (Stiles 1992: 65-66; italics added).

\textsuperscript{11} Conventional Indirectness involves the use of formulations and phrases that have “contextually unambiguous meanings (by virtue of conventionalization) which are different from their literal meanings” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 132). By using them, the speaker clearly goes on-record in doing the FTA, but signals at the same time his desire to have gone off-record (to have conveyed the FTA indirectly, and thus politely), as in: “ Shut the door please” or “Could you shut the door?”, rather than “ Shut the door!”.
3.5 VRMs versus speech acts

At this point, it is perhaps useful to briefly set out how the VRM ‘compares’ to the unit of analysis that is used in the large majority of linguistic studies of politeness, the speech act (Austin 1975). In terms of Austin’s general concept of the speech act, the VRM taxonomy, as was said earlier, is a system of illocutionary acts. The VRM system is unlike the more traditional speech act systems (e.g., Searle 1969; Austin 1975) because it is based on clearly defined, systematic principles of classification. At the same time, it is comparable, because VRM principles allow many of the same distinctions made descriptively in these systems. In fact, the VRM system can be said to subsume most earlier categorisations of speech acts. Stiles (1992) used the five major speech act categories Searle (1976) distinguished to illustrate the similarities and differences between his system and Stiles’ taxonomy (see Table 3.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Searle’s classification</th>
<th>VRMs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>commissive</td>
<td>Disclosure</td>
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<tr>
<td>expressive</td>
<td>Disclosure</td>
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<tr>
<td>representative</td>
<td>Edification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>directive</td>
<td>Advisement; Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>declaration</td>
<td>Interpretation; Disclosure; Edification</td>
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In terms of VRM categories, Searle’s “commisives” and “expressives” would seem to be types of Disclosure, while “representatives” appear to be Edifications. Searle’s “directives” include both Questions and Advisements. The “declaration” category seems to be heterogeneous in VRM terms; it may include Interpretations (e.g., “You look very tired”) as well as Edifications (e.g., “A major reorganisation is underway”) and Disclosures (e.g., “I hereby resign”). Interestingly, this comparison also clearly reflects the fact that the origins of Searle’s (and other) speech act categories lies in the study of explicit performatives. Searle’s categories are subsumed under speaker-valued, rather than other-valued, VRM categories. Disclosure (“speaker” on all three VRM principles) is subsumed under commissives and expressives, and Edification, Advisement and Question (“speaker” on two principles) translate into Searle’s representative and directive categories. The remaining VRM categories (Reflection, Interpretation, Confirmation and Acknowledgement), “other” on two or all three principles, have no real equivalents in Searle’s system except for a few subcategories of declaration.

As a system for classifying language, and spoken language in particular, the VRM system would seem to offer a distinct advantage over Searle’s classification of speech acts on the basis of felicity conditions. Although felicity conditions can be successfully applied to prototypical ‘textbook’ examples of speech acts, they cannot always be applied so easily to speech acts in running speech, as these are frequently far from complete (in terms of formulation), and in many cases, are ambiguous in meaning (Thomas 1995). Indeed, it is far from straightforward, for example, to determine when ‘suggesting’ becomes ‘insisting’ (both speech acts in Searle’s “assertives” category), ‘advising’ becomes ‘directing’ (both in Searle’s “directives” category), and in turn, how these two sets of acts in themselves can be distinguished from one another in terms of speech act type. Furthermore, as was discussed earlier in this chapter, traditional speech act classification does not provide a means to determine what the physical limits of one speech act are in relation to others in the surrounding discourse. In contrast, the VRM system does provide a means to
compartamentalise running speech into distinct, manageable units of analysis (See Section 4.2). Subsequently, application of the three VRM principles allows for an exhaustive classification of all units (and to a large extent, even of units consisting of half sentences and false starts: See Section 6.2). Of course, it has to be said that, like Brown and Levinson, Searle never actually set out to develop a system that could be used as an analytical tool for running speech (See e.g., Le Pair 1997 and Hendriks 2002, for extensive discussions of the background to Searle’s taxonomy of speech acts).

3.6 Face maintenance, facework, politeness, and rapport management

So far, the terms ‘face maintenance’, ‘facework’, ‘politeness’ and ‘rapport management’ have been used more or less interchangeably. In this section, an attempt will be made to define these terms more clearly, and to explain the interrelationship between politeness and rapport management in particular, by locating them within a broader framework of facework aimed at relationship management.

It was said earlier that communication involves more than just transactional talk. Communication also involves an interactional component that is aimed at the management of social relations, or interpersonal rapport, between interlocutors. This relational element is more commonly referred to as rapport management (see also Section 1.3). Politeness theory, and the conceptualisation of positive politeness in particular, seems to be highly relevant for the study of rapport management. Positive politeness is associated with language between intimates, and positive politeness strategies are “used as a kind of metaphorical extension” of intimate relationships, in which interpersonal approval, shared wants, needs and knowledge, and “implicit claims to reciprocity of obligations or reflexivity of claims are routinely exchanged” (Brown & Levinson 1978: 103). As a result, politeness in general has been defined, amongst other things, as a means to “maintain the social equilibrium and friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place” (Leech 1983: 82). However, politeness is seen as more than diplomacy or social etiquette. Politeness has a “sociological significance altogether beyond the level of table manners and etiquette books”. It “presupposes [a] potential for aggression as it seeks to disarm it, and makes possible communication between potentially aggressive parties” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 1). From this perspective, politeness is regarded as the way language is used to minimise the risk of confrontation and conflict, in order to maintain smooth relationships, and ultimately, to prevent communication breakdown. Inherent to the above definitions is the acknowledgement that politeness is a mechanism that is clearly linked to rapport management, although not necessarily the same.

Spencer-Oatey (2000a; 2000b) has proposed a framework to describe relational management that neatly locates the concept of politeness. Simultaneously, her framework allows for a generally more complete consideration of the concept of facework, defining it as any behaviour (verbal or non-verbal) aimed at accommodating or damaging face. Her definition of facework overlaps to a large extent with the definition of face maintenance in the present study, as any verbal behaviour that is aimed at accommodating other’s and/or own face, even if this means threatening aspects of own and/or other’s face. Both definitions take into account the multidimensionality of face threat. To distinguish the terms facework and face maintenance, they will be regarded from now on as different but related in the sense that facework is the behaviour engaged in by interlocutors, in the interest of face maintenance. Facework, then, refers to the linguistic manifestations of ‘face-maintaining’ behaviour. As such, facework is effectively engaged in in service of face
maintenance. The framework Spencer-Oatey proposes for rapport management (the interactional element of communication) incorporates Brown and Levinson’s theory, but is broader because it extends beyond a consideration of politeness used to counter face-threatening acts only.

As we saw earlier, Brown and Levinson’s theory, based as it is on the central tenet of face, implies that there are certain communicative acts that intrinsically threaten face, while others do not. In their definition, politeness is used to redress the danger, in terms of threat to (hearer’s) face, that is associated with FTAs (see Section 2.3.1). Their discussion is based exclusively on the linguistic devices that mitigate such acts. By operationalising politeness in the context of a limited set of intrinsic face-threatening speech acts, Brown and Levinson give the impression that they regard all other communication as not (intrinsically) face-threatening (Spencer-Oatey 2000a, after Matsumoto 1989). It follows from this line of reasoning that all communication other than that which is intrinsically face-threatening, would therefore not seem to require their Model Person to use politeness. Nevertheless, research has shown that the politeness mechanism, as qualified in Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of linguistic output strategies, can also be observed in discourse outside FTA contexts (see the discussion of Van der Wijst 1996 and Charles 1996 in Section 2.3.2). In fact, Brown and Levinson themselves have acknowledged, albeit with some scepticism, the importance of positive politeness outside the FTA context. This acknowledgement in itself goes some way to suggesting that politeness may operate at different levels, and in different ways, certainly in relation to rapport management, but also with respect to face maintenance in general. On the one hand, when geared to mitigating face threat, politeness is used to prevent and manage potential conflict. In this way, it also contributes, indirectly, to a smooth relationship between interactants, and thus to rapport management. On the other hand, (positive) politeness, used away from the FTA context, can be aimed directly at achieving rapport management, as it can be used more generally to build the relationship between conversational partners, and to create an agreeable interaction climate.

On the basis of a discussion of the system of honorifics and speech levels in Japanese, Matsumoto (1989) has specifically challenged Brown and Levinson’s implicit assumption that only some speech acts are intrinsically face-threatening. She has argued that, in relation to Japanese, it is not only what Brown and Levinson would regard as intrinsically face-threatening speech acts but in fact all and any language that poses a potential threat to interactants’ face. No utterance in Japanese can be regarded as “neutral”, as all utterances, and not just those that are intrinsically face-threatening in their propositional content (FTAs), are ‘marked’ in the sense that they must also convey the status of the relationship between the speaker and the addressee, and between the speaker and referents in the utterance (third persons, objects, places, etc.). This social ‘marking’, which is reflected in the speaker’s morphological choices, has to be done appropriately, or the utterance in question will bring about what Matsumoto terms “interactional awkwardness” that potentially threatens interactants’ face (Matsumoto 1989: 210). She argues that “since any Japanese utterance conveys information about the social context, there is always the possibility that the speaker may, by the choice of an inappropriate form, offend the audience and thus embarrass him/herself. In this sense, any utterance, even a simple declarative, could be face-threatening” (Matsumoto 1989: 219). Thus, in contrast to English, in Japanese, no utterance, even if purely informative, such as, “Paris is the capital of France”, can be formed in a single, neutral, all-purpose sentence that would be deemed appropriate in any and all communication situations. In Japanese, as a speaker’s choice of syntactic form to encode an utterance would be expected to appropriately convey more than just its propositional content, and because that form would be partly dictated by the communication situation and the speaker’s relationship with the hearer(s), it could potentially turn out to be different from one communication situation to the next.
3.6.1 The domains of rapport management

In relation to politeness theory, Spencer-Oatey (2000a), following Matsumoto (1989), among others, observes that Brown and Levinson and Matsumoto would appear to be dealing with clearly different “domains” of politeness. Whereas Brown and Levinson’s model (1987) focuses largely on illocutionary politeness geared to deference and showing respect, Matsumoto (1989), in her discussion of Keigo (honourific language), deals mainly with socially motivated politeness. Again, this would seem to support the view that politeness should be regarded in a broader perspective than it has been in studies to date whose majority, and admittedly the present study is no exception, have tried to link facework phenomena to linguistic politeness theory, and more narrowly, to Brown and Levinson’s politeness taxonomy. Based on the assumption that there seem to be different domains of politeness, a fact Brown and Levinson have effectively acknowledged by pointing out the different role positive politeness plays in contrast to more ‘localised’ negative politeness, Spencer-Oatey posits that it follows therefore that there are different domains of rapport management as well, each of which can play an important role in the management of interactional relations (Spencer-Oatey 2000a).

In her consideration of different domains of rapport management, Spencer-Oatey assigns Brown and Levinson’s politeness a supporting role, in a separate domain. She regards politeness as part of the illocutionary domain of rapport management, and sees the mitigation of FTAs as a mechanism that operates in service of managing rapport. The immediate goal, saving face, is reached in order to achieve the eventual goal, rapport. By assigning politeness theory a specific place in the framework, at once separating it from other aspects of interactional communication, while linking it specifically to rapport management, Spencer-Oatey creates room to clarify those occurrences of facework, including facework used in other than FTA contexts, and facework that a “rational Model Person” would not be predicted to use on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s model (e.g., defensive facework), and seem to fall beyond the scope of linguistic politeness theory. She distinguishes five interrelated domains of rapport management, incorporating the traditional concept of politeness, as well as a number of other facework mechanisms that would seem to underlie interactional communication (Spencer-Oatey 2000b: 19-20):

- Illocutionary domain: concerns the expression of FTAs that need to be handled appropriately if rapport is to be created or maintained. This is the domain that Brown and Levinson (partly) deal with in their Politeness Model.

- Discourse content domain: the organisation and sequencing of interactional content, incorporating topic content, topic switch, topic transition, the inclusion or exclusion of certain topics, etc. “Topics need to be selected or avoided, and introduced, developed, and dropped appropriately” (Spencer-Oatey 2000a: 431) if rapport is to be managed successfully.

- Participation domain: concerns procedural aspects, such as turn-taking, the inclusion or exclusion of parties in group discussions, and the [non-]use of back-channels. Such procedural aspects should be employed appropriately for rapport to be created and maintained.

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12 Spencer-Oatey (2000b) uses the term “illocutionary domain” to refer to work on politeness that has used Austin’s (illocutionary) speech act as a central unit of analysis.
• Stylistic domain: involves the “stylistic aspects” of an interaction, including choice of register, choice of tone (for example, jocular or formal), and level of deference shown (honorifics and terms of address). Again, these aspects of style need to be handled appropriately by interactants if rapport is to be managed effectively.

• Non-verbal domain: relates to the non-verbal dimensions of an exchange, including proxemics, silence, eye contact and gestures. If a harmonious atmosphere is to be maintained, such non-verbal aspects need to be managed appropriately.

The framework’s view on the role of politeness in face maintenance, and more generally on mechanisms underlying rapport management, is clearly broader than, for example, Brown and Levinson’s. As can be seen above, Spencer-Oatey proposes that, although handling face-threatening acts appropriately is certainly essential to rapport management, management of the other domains distinguished in the framework is also essential if rapport is to be achieved successfully.

Given the rich discourse material we have at our disposal in the present investigation, and given that an initial consideration of part of the student corpus showed that an analysis on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s framework, although successful in describing what Spencer-Oatey would term the illocutionary domain of rapport management, does not seem to take into account sufficiently other mechanisms that manifested themselves in the corpus negotiations, it seems worth our while to extend the scope of the analysis and allow a broader perspective, incorporating other domains of rapport management. In this way, facework phenomena might be captured more fully, and an extended analysis might allow us to account for facework in non-FTA contexts, and to investigate facework employed to strengthen speaker’s “professional face” (Charles 1996). Therefore, in addition to analysing (face-threatening and indirect) verbal behaviour in negotiations (using Stiles’ VRM taxonomy), and facework in the illocutionary domain of rapport management (using Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness strategies), we investigate the following aspects of facework in the discourse content and the participation domains of rapport management:

1. The initiation of small talk (facework in the discourse content domain)
   a. (type of) topic;
   b. locus and frequency of occurrence.

2. The use of personal pronouns: indicators of aspects of the negotiator relationship (facework in the participation domain)
   a. use of pronouns ‘you’ (indicator of other-orientedness), and inclusive ‘we’ (indicator of cooperativeness) versus;
   b. use of exclusive, institutional ‘we’ (indicator of professional distance);
   c. use of ‘I’ (indicator of self-orientedness).

Each of these analyses will be explained further in the next two sections of the present chapter.
3.7 Small talk

One of the strategies Brown and Levinson (1987) identified in their taxonomy of (positive) politeness strategies is the raising of “safe”, unthreatening conversational topics, or small talk (see also Sections 2.3 and 5.1.2). Brown and Levinson claim that interactants will raise safe topics as a strategy to minimise threat to face and to enhance harmonious relations between interlocutors. Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles et al. 1991; Coupland et al. 1988) posits that speakers will use accommodation (or attuning) strategies to reduce distance between interlocutors, and to increase social attractiveness, friendliness and cooperativeness. The greater the need for the other’s social approval or acceptance, the greater the degree of accommodation will be. Giles et al. (1991) distinguished four sets of accommodation strategies. Strategies can be used to attune to the interlocutor’s communicative performance (approximation strategies), interpretative competence (interpretability strategies), conversational needs (discourse management strategies), and role relationships (control strategies). With regard to interpretative competence, Communication Accommodation Theory claims that interpretability strategies are used to adapt the “complexity of speech […], increase clarity […], and/or influence the selection of conversational topics by staying in areas that are familiar, safe, and unthreatening to the other” (Giles et al. 1991: 41). In order to include in our analysis of face maintenance an aspect of facework in the discourse content domain of rapport management, we investigate the raising of safe and non-threatening topics, also referred to as small talk, in the negotiation corpora.

The function of small talk is to indicate social solidarity as a pre-cursor to social bonding (Schneider 1988). The interactional pattern of small talk tends to be simple and formulaic, often only consisting of simple “Initiate-Satisfy pairs” (Edmondson & House 1981):

1 A: “It’s a bit quiet here today. (Initiate: Remark)”
   B: “Yes, most people have taken the afternoon off. (Satisfy)”

2 A: “Could you find this building easily? (Initiate: Request)”
   B: “Yes. I had absolutely no trouble getting here. (Satisfy)”

More typically, however, particularly in more elaborate exchanges like negotiations, such pairs are patterned, as speakers reciprocate each other’s small talk to form longer interactional chains. Reciprocation is “socially normative” in this type of talk and operates on the basis of two social maxims: “When you receive a social good, reciprocate”, and “When a free social good is requested, give more than is asked for” (Edmondson & House 1981: 223).

Edmondson and House have defined small talk as an instance of casual communication, aimed at “social-showing oneself as agreeable and basking in the agreeableness of one’s interlocutor” (Edmondson & House 1981: 200). In their view, small talk is essentially informative in nature, and can occur at any point in an interaction between other types of talk. In a business negotiation context, small talk may precede and merge with both bargaining and closing talk, to validate the social relationship between negotiators. For example, once negotiators have obtained a commitment from the other, they may go on by putting at ease or even flattering the other party via small talk, thus signalling, from a relational point of view, that obtaining the commitment was not the only goal of the interaction. At the same time, small talk may be introduced in the central bargaining phase of a negotiation specifically to ‘take the heat off’ in difficult situations: for
example, when a negotiator has just given in to a high offer, or has made a compromise. In this way, small talk may contribute more to repairing the negotiator’s own image by diverting attention from the threat to own face that has just occurred, than to ‘oiling’ the negotiator relationship in general.

3.7.1 A working definition of small talk

Small talk in the present study is regarded as any talk in the negotiation corpora that is not related directly to the central transaction, that is, the sale (and more specifically the pricing) of three products (sleeping bags, tents, and backpacks). As such, small talk in our definition can incorporate any talk on general, everyday non-business ‘safe topics’, such as the weather, sports, current affairs, heavy traffic on the way in to the office, etc. (‘traditional’ small talk), as well as any talk that is business-related (e.g., about aspects of business or the business community in general) but not directly relevant to the primary transactional goal being negotiated, the sale of three products. Such talk is expected to involve, for example, topics relating to general corporate information, general information about the market, general information about the economy, etc. Our definition of small talk, inspired in part by a taxonomy of categories of small talk in Chinese-British business meetings developed by Xing (2000), is therefore broader than the more usual definition of small talk as ‘safe topics’ in everyday communication contexts, in that it also incorporates what we regard as ‘safe’ (because general business-related) topics in the specific genre under study. Our analysis focuses on determining whether, where, and how frequently such small talk occurs. In addition, even though small talk is often referred to as “the art of talking about nothing” (Schneider 1988), we investigate which topics (in terms of content) form the basis for small talk for the inexperienced and experienced negotiators. The results of these analyses are reported in Chapter 5.

3.8 Personal pronouns: indicators of the negotiator relationship

Speakers can achieve interpersonal rapport by showing solidarity and comity in their verbal behaviour (see Section 1.4). In signalling involvement with the other party, interactants indicate that they share similar concerns and have common interests, which promotes the feeling of unity between. In a negotiation setting, showing involvement in the other party’s concerns is assumed to be a prerequisite for a cooperative (vs. conflictive) bargaining strategy (Ulijn, Lincke & Karakaya, working paper). In turn, a cooperative bargaining strategy is said to contribute to a win-win, rather than sum-zero, bargaining outcome (e.g., Fischer & Ury 1991; Mastenbroek 1989; Pruitt 1981). In other words, showing involvement and solidarity in negotiations is thought to contribute to mutually beneficial outcomes.

The solidarity dimension of relationships has been clearly shown to affect the use of personal pronouns in discourse (Brown & Gilman 1960). Based on the link between the expression of solidarity and personal pronoun use, a number of recent studies of written and spoken corpora have used personal pronouns as indicators of involvement and empathy (Yates 1996; Collot & Belmore 1996). A similar analysis was incorporated into the present study. We investigated the degree of (non-)solidarity and (non-)involvement, as expressed in the negotiators’ verbal behaviour, by examining the use of the first (‘I’) and second personal pronouns (‘you’: singular and plural), and the use of the first personal plural pronoun (inclusive vs. exclusive or institutional) ‘we’.

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The assumption is that degree of concern for and involvement with other is reflected in the degree of use of singular and plural second personal pronoun ‘you’ (indicating other-orientedness), and inclusive ‘we’ (signalling interdependence and cooperativeness). “You-attitude” has become a generally acceptable axiom in BC. It extends the “classical rhetorical focus on audience” into BC theory and practice (Shelby & Reinsch 1995: 305). In BC writing, you-attitude is regarded as “speaking directly to the reader (‘you’) in order to establish the desired connection between the author’s information and the reader’s wants” (Brockman & Belanger 1993, cited in Shelby & Reinsch 1995: 306). Intuitively, the assumption underlying the application of you-attitude is that it can make (written) messages more persuasive. Inclusive ‘we’, on the other hand, is assumed to be closely linked to the concept of ‘solidarity’. When used in combination with positive comments and suggestions, inclusive ‘we’ (as opposed to ‘I’) reflects that the speaker somehow wishes to be identified, or identifies, with the other, or wants to appear to do so, in order to convey solidarity between interlocutors (Brown & Gilman 1960). It should be noted that inclusive ‘we’ is a possible realisation of Brown and Levinson’s positive politeness strategy P12, “Include both speaker and hearer in the activity” (see also Sections 2.3 and 5.1.2).

In contrast to ‘you’ and inclusive ‘we’, it is assumed that degree of concern with own interests, issues, and outcomes (or ‘egocentricity’) will be reflected in the degree of use of first personal pronoun ‘I’ and in the use of exclusive, institutional ‘we’, referring as it does to the self as a collective. Furthermore, an analysis of the use of exclusive, or institutional, ‘we’ seemed particularly relevant in the context of the present investigation because it was thought that this pronoun might be used by negotiators to create ‘professional distance’\(^{13}\). Potentially, then, institutional ‘we’ was thought to serve two possible functions. On the one hand, it might be used as a mitigator in FTA contexts (a possible form of Brown and Levinson’s output strategy N7: “Impersonalise speaker”). On the other hand, it might be used in non-FTA contexts, as a means to strengthen the negotiator’s role-bound professional image, as a corporate representative with an entire organisation behind him. As such, institutional ‘we’ might function as a distancing device to reinforce negotiators’ “professional face” (Charles 1996).

In order to get an indication of the degree of solidarity and cooperativeness expressed by the negotiators on the one hand, and the degree of autonomy and distance on the other, all instances of personal pronouns ‘I’, ‘you’, and inclusive and exclusive ‘we’ (and their derivatives) in the transcripts of the negotiations in both corpora (student and professional) were identified and analysed. The results are reported and discussed in Chapter 5.

### 3.9 Aspects of professional communication

In the present study, it is assumed that areas of difference in performance between the two groups of negotiators (professionals vs. students) could serve as starting points for the development of business English teaching content that is directly relevant to the target group. By comparing a number of aspects of verbal behaviour manifested by the two groups, relating to negotiation communication in general and facework in negotiation communication in particular, we thus aimed to provide an answer to the third research question outlined in Section 1.4.: based on comparative analyses of the student and professional negotiation data, what recommendations can be made regarding BC teaching content for the intended target group.

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\(^{13}\) For a discussion of ‘institutional we’, ‘interactional we’ and ‘vague we’, see e.g., Lammers (2001).

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(students of BC), learning to use business English, as a lingua franca, in a multicultural and multilingual organisational context.

**Professionalism and professional communication**

The tacit assumption that underlies a comparison of verbal behaviour manifested by professionals and students as a basis for identifying potential areas of interest for BC teaching is that a professional’s verbal behaviour can somehow be regarded as a ‘target’ of behaviour in professional contexts. With respect to the present study, this implies that the professional negotiators’ behaviour was regarded as a ‘model’ of behaviour in sales negotiations in the discourse community \(^{14}\) the target group aspires to. By the same token, the verbal behaviour of the student negotiators in this investigation was regarded as representative of the behaviour of inexperienced negotiators (students) in general. Therefore, a difference in professionalism between the two groups of negotiators is assumed to have existed.

Furthermore, it was assumed that business (communication) students, in order to become successful business communicators, should aspire to develop such professionalism. In other words, they should aspire to become, in their verbal and nonverbal behaviour, like professionals. Professionalism here is essentially taken to mean communicating as a professional, to a professional standard (Boswood 1999). A person, when communicating as a professional, plays a “professional role”, rather than “presenting a private, individual persona”, which allows them to claim a “professional identity”. From a qualitative perspective, a professional communicates in accordance with “a standard of excellence that is exemplary within a field” (Boswood 1999: 115). Such professional excellence involves three elements: 1) the specific knowledge that is pertinent to a given profession, 2) the necessary skills, and 3) the responsible use of such knowledge and skills (professional ethics).

Professional communicators are likely to be members of more than one single community or group and are expected to communicate professionally across the boundaries of those communities. Each time they do so, they create a temporary, local interculture. Such “transactional cultures” (Bell 1992) are essentially dynamic by virtue of their very transience. Participants do not simply bring their own backgrounds to the encounter; they also temporarily dissociate from their cultural and organisational environment to create a completely new context for each separate exchange (Bolten 1999). As a result, transactional cultures are in continual flux as interactants negotiate what mode of communication is acceptable to their counterparts. Essentially, therefore, professional communicators continually need to manage their professional identity through communication, within ephemeral cultures whose characteristics can rarely be anticipated fully in advance.

Boswood’s definitions of “professionalism” (behaving as a professional, to a professional standard), and “professional communication” (the communication that is central to the performance of a professional role) seem to link up in part with Charles’ notions of professional face, which appears to be motivated by the need to establish and maintain a professional

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\(^{14}\) This notion has been used primarily in studies of writing where it refers to “community-based norms that influence writing”. People share expectations about a recurrent communication activity regarding how it should be carried out and who should play what role, by virtue of belonging to a specific discourse community. Such expectations are “reflected in the discourse conventions of that community, which are shaped by its work” (Beaufort 1997: 488). Swales defines discourse communities as “socio-rhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals”. What all members of such a community share is familiarity with the specific genres they use “in the communicative furtherance of those sets of goals” (Swales 1990: 9).
identity, and professional face-saving strategies, which constitute communication aimed specifically at establishing and maintaining that professional identity, and which is dictated, to some extent, by expected, role-bound professional behaviour (see Section 2.3.2). Where relevant in the discussion of the results in Chapters 4 and 5, we will point out potential areas of difference between the professional and student negotiators, in an attempt to identify aspects of professional communication within the specific context of the negotiation activity that might deserve consideration in business English courses, and specifically in components of such courses focusing on the genre of (international) negotiation. The potential implications for BC teaching that might be derived from the comparative analyses are discussed in the final chapter. In the final sections of this chapter (Sections 3.10 to 3.14), we focus on the data collection procedures, a description of the negotiation corpora, and on the coder training that preceded the VRM and facework analyses.

3.10 Data Collection: simulation

Simulation or gaming is an interdisciplinary method that is used widely to collect data in policy making research, organisation and management, and training and teaching environments (Peters, Vissers & Heyne 1995). Simulation games create a workshop environment in which participants meet to exchange information and experiences. They do so by playing roles defined by a scenario which focuses on a particular issue or issues, and leaves participants enough latitude to create their own role, within the rules of the simulation (Geurts & Vennix 1989).

A simulation session is characterised by people who interact with one another and may involve different media and genres to communicate. In the present investigation, the simulation game scenario focuses on the process of a business (sales) negotiation, and the issue at stake is the sale of a batch of three different products. The role participants are asked to take on is that of either a seller or a buyer. The simulations were either conducted face to face, or over the telephone. An important characteristic of the simulation method is that it offers participants the opportunity to communicate at a sophisticated level, and to convey messages that are rich in meaning. Because ‘simulation creates an environment in which interaction and communication play such a central role, it would seem to be an extremely suitable method for studying collaborative and participatory processes.

Simulation is a versatile data collection method because it can be tailored specifically to imitate a particular problem or process that is the focus of investigation, while still leaving maximum opportunity for spontaneous interaction. This sense of spontaneity contributes to making simulations a more true-to-life experience for participants. Spontaneity is further stimulated by the fact that a simulation offers participants a potentially ‘safe’ environment in which they are free to experiment. Their actions and behaviour are unlikely to have the long-term repercussions they might have in corresponding real-life situations. An added bonus is that, as a result, participants are less nervous about being filmed or recorded than they would be in real-life settings.

The simulation that was used in this study is an adaptation of a simulation game first introduced by Kelley (1966). The original game was adapted by Van der Wijst (1996) for his study of (Dutch language) negotiations, to include potential losses as well as profit levels in the price matrix (see Appendices C & D). The simulation game can yield as much as 60 minutes of spontaneous interaction. Despite the simple scenario of the Van der Wijst-Kelley game, the roleplay allows negotiators to engage in distributive (hostile) bargaining aimed at maximising own profit, but also
encourages integrative (collaborative) bargaining, where participants strive to find solutions which are mutually beneficial. In this way, bargainers do not have to adhere to a “sum-zero scenario” (Pruitt 1981). The Kelley roleplay and its variations have been used in a large number of earlier investigations into negotiations, and have been shown to be reliable elicitation instruments which contain all the elements of real negotiations, despite their simplicity (e.g., Li 1999; Campbell, Graham, Jolibert & Meissner 1988; Pruitt 1981). The major advantage of using this particular simulation to collect data for the present study is that it allowed us to elicit corpora of interactive discourse which would provide us with the opportunity to investigate aspects of the sequential organisation of linguistic action, discourse organisation, and, most importantly, negotiation in ongoing discourse.

In conclusion, there are considerable advantages to using simulation as a method of data collection. The use of simulation as opposed to observation in an authentic setting, for example, allows for greater control of stimulus conditions, as well as comparisons and generalisations across data produced in any number of interactions elicited by a particular simulation game. Also, simulation serves as the best alternative, in terms of data collection, in situations where access to authentic data in an authentic setting - for example, access to authentic negotiation discourse, produced in an authentic organisational environment - is difficult, because participants are protective of potentially sensitive corporate information, or because they are reluctant about being observed and recorded on the job. Within the context of the present investigation, the simulation method was thought to elicit the closest approximation to authentic talk, while allowing for maximal control of pragmatic aspects and variables under study.

For all its advantages, however, it must be admitted that the simulation setting remains an experimental one, bringing with it all the characteristic threats in terms of external and internal validity generally associated with the use of such methods of data collection. One such threat is that the success of a given simulation, in terms of tangible negotiation outcomes, is highly dependent on the participants’ experience with the simulated setting in a real-life context. Clearly, the simulation that was used in the present study provided a setting for the professional participants that could be regarded as largely experientially based. The professional participants were all employed as sales representatives by exporting companies at the time of the recordings, and regularly engaged in international sales negotiations. As a result, they were familiar with this specific type of negotiation, the process of negotiations in general, and the international setting. In addition, the professional participants all used English as a lingua franca regularly in the (real-life) international negotiations they were involved in.

These conditions obviously did not pertain for the student participants. They had little or no sales negotiation experience. However, they were certainly accustomed to using English as a lingua franca in other communication settings, and to a certain degree also in specific BC settings, as a result of their coursework activities. Therefore, despite the potential threat to validity posed by the student negotiators’ inexperience with the negotiation setting and procedure, it was felt that the use of the same simulation game to collect data from student negotiators was nevertheless justifiable. Also, the present investigation focused specifically on linguistic phenomena as and how they occur in negotiation discourse, and was not concerned explicitly with a systematic investigation of the formal and procedural aspects of the negotiation process, or the tangible outcomes of that process. The primary motive for using the simulation game as a method of data collection was not so much to simulate a near-realistic setting in which participants would arrive at a set of realistic negotiation outcomes. Instead, the simulation was thought to provide a setting that
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was realistic enough to encourage participants to engage in spontaneous, verbal negotiation behaviour.

3.11 Student corpus: participants

A group of 24 second-year students (5 male, 19 female; aged 18-22) at the Department of BC Studies of the University of Nijmegen was asked to contribute to the student corpus. The simulation sessions were incorporated as an in-class activity in the students’ regular second-year course on Business English. The recording sessions took part at the start of the second year. The students’ performance was graded by their regular course instructor, and formed part of their final grade for continuous assessment. This was thought to provide the student participants with sufficient incentive to seriously prepare for and carry out the task at hand.

3.11.1 Procedure

The participants were asked to carry out a face-to-face version of the negotiation simulation game (see Appendices C and D). The negotiation sessions took place and were recorded in the language laboratory of Nijmegen University during regular class sessions. The students were given the written roleplay instructions, in class, a week in advance, and were asked to thoroughly prepare the simulation as part of their weekly homework activities. Although the seller and buyer versions of the simulation were divided equally over the group of students the week before recording, students did not know who they would be paired off with to carry out the negotiation until the actual event. At the beginning of the workshop in which the recordings were to take place, the experimenter randomly assigned the students to different dyads, resulting in a total of 12 simulations. Prior to the negotiations, the participants were given a short comprehension task to check whether they understood and were able to use the price matrix that is central to the negotiation game. There was no real time constraint on the negotiation task; a full hour was reserved for the workshop in which the recordings were to take place.

Table 3.4 Student corpus: gender, number of words, proposals, rejections and final outcome (profit level) per negotiator (10 negotiators)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negotiation</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>total words</th>
<th>proposals</th>
<th>rejections</th>
<th>profit level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1237</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1510</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1591</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 12 negotiations were conducted simultaneously in one language laboratory. The advantage of using a language laboratory is that it offers the possibility of recording a number of interactions at
the same time, allowing a large amount of data to be collected in a single session. At the same time, any distracting noises that can result when a room is full of people is limited, as students wear headphones which allow them to hear only what is going on in the interaction they are involved in themselves, and which practically block out noise from the rest of the class. In addition, because all participants carried out the task simultaneously, they did not get to discuss the simulation with one another until after the session was finished. After completing the simulation, the researcher asked the students to comment on their impressions of the negotiation session and on their own and each other’s performance.

All the participants were given the same instructions: they were to maximise their own profits, reach an agreement, and to avoid communication breakdown at all costs. It was emphasised that creating a pleasant negotiation climate was important as they would be doing business with their negotiation counterpart in the future. They were told that the session would be finished whenever agreement had been reached as to the price of the total package deal, comprising the purchase of three products: double tents, sleeping-bags and backpacks. Furthermore, buyers and sellers were given separate lists of the profits associated with each of these three items. The prices were indicated on these lists by letters (A to I), while profit levels were given in figures (in a currency relevant to the background of the participants) for each price level (see Appendix C.). The price lists given to buyers and sellers differed with respect to the individual profit levels associated with each price level. For example, a package deal at price III would be most profitable for the seller, while the buyer could maximise profits by negotiating a deal at the AAA level. In the written instructions, negotiators were told to keep the information on their individual price lists to themselves, and to refer to the different price and profit levels in terms of the designated letters only (See Appendix D).

All the negotiation sessions were transcribed from audio tape recordings, using an Electron audio player. The verbatim transcription was orthographic. Pauses, repetitions, laughs and coughs were also marked in the transcripts. Five lingua franca negotiations (involving a total of ten speakers) were chosen from the 12 transcripts and used in subsequent analyses. The only selection criterion that was used was that we at least selected all the dyads that included male speakers. This was done for reasons of comparability; as the professional data had been produced exclusively by male negotiators (see Table 3.5), we wanted to include as many male students as possible in the student sample. Unfortunately, male students are rare within the BC programme, and only four of the 12 negotiations recorded involved males.

Table 3.4 provides an overview of the gender and role of the negotiators, total number of words per negotiator, number of proposals and rejections per negotiator, and the profit level for each negotiator (the higher the figure attained, the more beneficial the deal for that negotiator, in terms of the final outcome of the negotiation).

3.12 **Professional corpus: participants**

Initially, we wanted to collect a corpus of ten international dyadic negotiations, each involving a professional negotiator with Dutch as a first language and a professional negotiator with English as a first language. We tried to recruit these twenty participants via a number of different channels. Fifty local companies were selected from the database of the regional Chamber of Commerce (exporting companies, employing a multinational workforce), and a letter of request for participation was sent to the personnel managers at each of these organisations, together with an
information pack about the background and purpose of the study, a description of the elicitation
task (the simulation game), and appeals for participation, in the form of notices that could be put up
or circulated in relevant departments. Similar letters were sent to local language centres that
provide in-company training sessions for the Dutch business community, and to a number of BC
students in their final year on work placements in multinational companies based in the
Netherlands. Further appeals were sent to representatives of a number of expatriate organisations
that aim to look after the interests of English expatriates temporarily based in companies in the
Netherlands.

Potential candidates had to fulfil a number of requirements: they had to have considerable
experience in negotiating sales (a minimum of five years), they had to be experienced at negotiating
in English, and they had to be either native speakers of Dutch or English (or bilingual). Unfortunately, the initial recruitment round yielded only six responses from native speakers of
Dutch and none from bilinguals or professional negotiators whose native language was English. To
increase the chances of a result, the initial recruitment round was broadened to include the United
Kingdom, in an attempt to recruit native speakers of English. A further twenty companies in the
United Kingdom were contacted in the same way as companies had been contacted in the initial
recruiting round in the Netherlands (this time, addresses were suggested mainly by friends and
colleagues of the researcher). This second recruitment phase yielded a further five participants, in
addition to the six positive responses we already received from Dutch professionals. In total, both
recruiting rounds turned out to be somewhat disappointing, yielding only eleven positive responses
from experienced salespeople (five native speakers of English based in the UK, and six native
speakers of Dutch based in the Netherlands).

3.12.1 Procedure

Originally, we had wanted to collect the professional data in the same way as we had collected the
student data. In other words, we wanted to invite the professional negotiators to carry out a face-to-
face simulation of the negotiation game, either at Nijmegen University or another predetermined
location in the Netherlands, such as one of the participant’s place of work, for example. However,
this set-up turned out not to be feasible given that, during the second recruitment round, we had
received positive answers from professionals who were based in the United Kingdom at the time of
the study. To solve the problem of location, it was decided to have participants carry out the
negotiation game (in a slightly adapted form) during a three way teleconferencing session instead.

Whereas in the original design, at least one of the two participants in a given dyad was required to
travel to the location in which the recording was to take place, with a teleconferencing session as
the negotiation channel neither of the participants was required to travel to a predetermined
recording location, but could instead carry out the task from the comfort of their own office. The
simulation could easily be recorded via the third telephone line (the researcher’s). This procedure
had one further, very important, advantage, namely that the scheduling of telenegotiation settings
for a given dyad was far more flexible, as recording times could be arranged in the evenings or
even at weekends. Many of the companies contacted in the initial recruitment round had not
allowed their sales representatives to participate because they did not want them to take part in the
study during office hours. It was also thought that a teleconferencing session would provide a
relatively impersonal communication context in which participants would feel less threatened about
being monitored and recorded, and would, as a result, interact more spontaneously than in a
situation where they were aware of, or could see, the researcher, or at the very least the
microphone, recording them. To put the professionals at ease even more, and to ensure them complete anonymity, each participant was given the option of using a pseudonym during the simulation session. In the end, none of the professional negotiators who participated opted to do so.

Participants were sent the instructions for the simulation game and their role description a week in advance of the recording session. In addition to the simulation instructions, they were asked to fill in and return a short questionnaire, containing questions aimed at eliciting biodata, and information about previous negotiating experience, experience with use of foreign languages at work, and educational background. The day before the recording, participants were contacted by the researcher, reminded of the recording time, and asked whether they had any questions about the simulation instructions, their role, or the biodata questionnaire.

Table 3.5  Professional corpus: nationality, number of words, proposals, rejections and final outcome (profit level) per negotiator (14 negotiators from 9 dyads)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nationality</th>
<th>medium</th>
<th>total words buyer/seller</th>
<th>proposals buyer/seller</th>
<th>rejections buyer/seller</th>
<th>profit levels buyer/seller</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (British) - Dutch</td>
<td>Tel.</td>
<td>832/752</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>150/175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (British) - Dutch</td>
<td>Tel.</td>
<td>2518/2361</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>No agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (British) - Dutch</td>
<td>Tel.</td>
<td>6491/5557</td>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>165/70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (British) - Dutch</td>
<td>Tel.</td>
<td>2075/2381</td>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>0/2</td>
<td>170/170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 French - Dutch</td>
<td>F-to-F</td>
<td>2796/1947</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>2/0</td>
<td>No agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 French - Dutch</td>
<td>F-to-F</td>
<td>2839/3503</td>
<td>11/8</td>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>130/135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 German - Dutch</td>
<td>F-to-F</td>
<td>1715/1911</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>3/7</td>
<td>150/175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Italian - Dutch</td>
<td>F-to-F</td>
<td>2336/1610</td>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>170/170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Japanese - Dutch</td>
<td>F-to-F</td>
<td>1536/1471</td>
<td>1/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>195/25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Negotiators in brackets (native English speakers) were not included in subsequent analyses as they were not lingua franca speakers

On the day of the recording, the procedure was as follows. Five minutes prior to the predetermined time for the negotiation, a representative of *KPN’s Teleconferencing Centre* (located in Utrecht at the time) contacted each of the participants and the researcher in turn and set up a three-way teleconferencing link. The researcher participated in the negotiation only to the extent that, at the beginning of the session, she took on the role of the buyer’s personal secretary, who puts the seller’s call through (as described in the simulation instructions). For the remainder of the session, the researcher listened in on and recorded the conversation via the third telephone line, but did not take part at any stage in the conversation between the two negotiators. Once the negotiation had been rounded off, participants were ‘formally’ introduced to one another and spent some time evaluating the progress and outcome of the simulation with the researcher. This informal conversation was also recorded on audiotape. Finally, before breaking off the session, the researcher reminded the participants of the biodata questionnaire and (if they had not already done so) asked them to return their completed questionnaire by post in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.

Due to the fact that participants’ schedules were generally rather full, it took a full two and a half months to plan and record a total of four negotiations (involving eight of the original eleven participants who were willing to participate). Unfortunately, during this same period, two Dutch and one English participant bowed out, having initially responded positively, because it was impossible to arrange a recording time that suited their schedule.
3.12.2 Additional professional data

In addition to the four Dutch-English telenegotiations, the researcher was given permission to make use of an existing corpus of international negotiations between professional negotiators using English as a lingua franca that had been collected between 1992 and 1993, on the basis of the same simulation game.15 These dyadic sales negotiations, five in total, each involved a Dutch negotiator (a different negotiator in each negotiation) and a negotiator from Italy (one negotiation), Germany (one negotiation), Japan (one negotiation), or France (two negotiations: different negotiators in each encounter).

The five negotiations had been conducted on a face-to-face basis, either at Tilburg University (two negotiations) or at the place of work of one of the participants (three negotiations). The negotiations had been videotaped, using split screen, so that both participants could be observed throughout. As a result, the professional corpus that we had at our disposal consisted of nine international negotiations, involving a total of 14 professional negotiators using English as a lingua franca (see Table 3.5). Four negotiators in the telenegotiations were native speakers of English and were not involved in subsequent analyses. All the participants were male and worked as sales representatives at the time of recording. They were aged between 28 and 61, and had between 5 to 30 years of international negotiating experience.

3.13 The data: characteristics and potential weaknesses

In the present study, we investigated intercultural negotiations from a largely ‘culture-neutral’ perspective. In other words, although negotiators with different nationalities participated, we did not distinguish between them on the basis of their cultural background in the analyses. Given the fact that an important limitation to the present investigation was that it involved a relatively small number of participants, any comparison between individuals with different cultural backgrounds would not have been justified. Interculturality in the present study was not regarded as a distinguishing characteristic of the individual participants; instead it was taken to be a defining characteristic of the professional discourse community as a whole that these individuals (aspire to) belong to, which is regarded as an international community.

It was suggested in Chapter 1 that business (communication) students aspiring to become part of the global business discourse community in one capacity or another would most likely be regularly involved in communication practices that are international in nature, involving participants with different cultural backgrounds, communicating in a lingua franca (most likely to be English). As we wanted to investigate negotiation data in a context that would be directly relevant to the target group, the data were indeed collected under such circumstances (in an international setting, produced by lingua franca speakers). The reason negotiators from a range of different cultures were involved rather than one single different culture (than Dutch) was one of expedience rather than strategy; these were the professionals that were willing to take part, and our aims in any case did not involve a systematic investigation of cultural differences in the way negotiators realise facework in negotiations (see Section 1.4).

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15 The researcher would like to thank Ype Poortinga, Head of the Department of Cross-cultural Psychology at Tilburg University, the Netherlands, for making available these materials for the present study.
Similarly, in the analyses, we did not take into account the different language backgrounds of the participants. Again, what we were interested in primarily were aspects of negotiation communication in a context that is relevant to the intended target group. As was suggested in Chapter 1, it is expected that students studying international business (communication), will, in their professional career, be likely to regularly find themselves in lingua franca communication contexts that will not only be international (involving participants with different cultural backgrounds), but also potentially multilingual (involving participants with different first languages than the one being used). Again, any linguistic variety in terms of background of individual negotiators was seen as a general defining characteristic of the professional discourse community as a whole, which is multilingual, rather than as a distinguishing characteristic of one individual negotiator relative to another.

**Data collection: differences in the simulation setting**

Although we set out with the aim of collecting student and professional data in comparable settings, and under comparable circumstances, it will have become clear from the description of the data and the data collection procedures that, in some respects, the setting in which the negotiation data were collected varied nevertheless. In this respect, there were differences with respect to:

- **gender** of the participants: in the student negotiations, five of the participants were male and five were female, while in the professional negotiations, all the participants were male;

- **communication medium**: the student negotiations were all face-to-face, whereas the professional negotiations were conducted face-to-face (five negotiations) or over the telephone (four negotiations);

- ‘**eavesdropping**’: in the student negotiations, which all took place in a large language laboratory, the researcher periodically listened in on the negotiations via the central console at the front of the room, but was never present at any one dyad (the researcher did not walk around the room during the negotiation session). In the professional negotiations, the experimenter’s status was closer to that of a third party observing (in the case of the video-recorded sessions) or listening in (in the case of the telenegotiations). During the video-recorded sessions, the researcher responsible for the recordings (not the present researcher, see above) was present in the same room, operating the video camera. In the telenegotiations, the researcher very briefly played the role of secretary to the Dutch negotiators, putting through the conference call from the British counterpart at the start of each of the negotiations.

For the moment, we simply acknowledge these potential weaknesses in the data collection procedures. They will be reconsidered, where relevant, in the discussion of the results in Chapters 4 and 5, and in the concluding chapter.
3.14 Training for VRM and politeness analysis

To prepare for the analyses of the corpora, two coders, the researcher and an assistant, trained for four weeks to use the VRM system by working through the computer-assisted practice program that comes with the coding manual (Stiles 1992). The program introduces the three principles of classification, then trains coders to classify form, and finally both form and intent, on the basis of transcripts of excerpts from a large variety of everyday discussions. It also provides immediate feedback in the form of hints and corrections based on coder’s performance.

As well as working through the computer-assisted training program independently, any problematic utterances were noted down and discussed to promote overall consensus regarding coding criteria. Next, a total of five negotiation transcripts were coded separately by the researcher and the research assistant. One negotiation was part of the student corpus, two were part of the professional corpus, and the remaining negotiations were two student negotiations that were discarded later because they did not involve any male speakers (See Section 3.11.1). Cohen’s Kappa (Cohen 1960), a measure of agreement for (utterance-based) coding of nominal scales between (two or more) coders, was calculated to establish the reliability of the VRM taxonomy. The reliability for the three negotiations that were part of the corpora (a total of 948 VRMs) ranged from 0.94 to 0.97 at the form level, and 0.82 to 0.89 at the intent level. These reliability indices can be regarded as satisfactory to good.

In order to practise for the analysis of facework, the three negotiations from the corpora that were used to determine coder consistency in analysing VRMS were also analysed separately by the researcher and the research assistant in terms of Brown and Levinson’s politeness strategies. The two coders identified and classified any instance of an output strategy in the negotiation transcripts. Each time the coders had progressed halfway through a transcript, their classifications were compared and any discrepancies and problems were discussed. At the end of each discussion, criteria for classification and examples from the negotiations were recorded in an informal ‘coding manual’ that could be used for reference once the coding of the actual corpora began.

By the third negotiation, it had become clear that, although classification was progressing much faster than in the initial stages, and agreement between coders had greatly increased, it remained difficult in some instances, to identify (part of) a given utterance as a particular output strategy. In other words, it was difficult in some cases to decide, on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s description of individual output strategies and their examples of those output strategies alone, which strategy or strategies we were actually concerned with. Often, (parts of) a single utterance could be interpreted as a realisation of more than one strategy type (see also Van der Wijst 1996). Such classification problems were largely solved by fine-tuning the initial classification criteria, as we had derived them from Brown and Levinson’s descriptions of individual output strategies and their use in everyday discourse, on the basis of a consideration of how these output strategies were realised in the very specific type of discourse that made up the corpora. In this sense, it was perhaps fortunate that this study focused on a predictable and systematic genre, in terms of structure, content and objective, such as negotiations. Some examples of how we disambiguated seemingly overlapping strategies on the basis of additional criteria are described in Sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2. Two strategies, P1 (Notice and attend to hearer) and P9 (Show concern for hearer) were consistently hard to disambiguate. Based on the discourse content and context, it was impossible to decide whether a hearer was “being attended to”, “noticed”, or whether the speaker was “showing concern for the hearer”. It was therefore decided to regard discourse that reflected a
speaker doing any or all of these things as an example of one single, ‘collapsed’ strategy P1/P9 (rather than as an instance of either P1 or P9, or as an instance of P1 and P9: See also Section 5.1.2).

Although the classification of Brown and Levinson’s output strategies had clearly turned out to be more complex than coding VRMs, it was nevertheless decided that both coders were now ready to independently classify output strategies in the corpora under investigation (the student corpus and the professional corpus). Despite the difficulties, the training period and classification practice had brought about a noticeable increase in both classification speed and agreement between judges. Furthermore, as was said above, ambiguity was resolved to a certain extent by fine-tuning the initial classification criteria. Nevertheless, it was decided to plan regular feedback sessions, in which coders could discuss and decide together on any problematic cases they might still encounter, and achieve consensus regarding ambiguous or overlapping output strategies. In the end, the research assistant coded two of the five student negotiations and three of the nine professional negotiations (in terms of both the VRM and Brown and Levinson’s taxonomies). The researcher analysed the remaining transcripts.

Next, Chapter 4 reports on the results of the VRM analyses that were carried out on the two negotiation corpora. Chapter 5 discusses the results of the analyses of facework, and anticipates Chapter 6, which focuses on a discussion and comparison of the student and professional data.
Chapter 4

Verbal behaviour in the corpora: VRM analyses

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the VRM analyses of the two corpora (student and professional). In the present investigation, we wanted to establish whether the VRM Taxonomy might be used in combination with Brown and Levinson’s politeness taxonomy to investigate facework in negotiations. In addition, we wanted to test whether VRM analysis, which to date has been applied largely to native speaker discourse, could be used successfully to code and describe non-native, lingua franca negotiation discourse.

The transcripts that had been selected for analysis (five student and nine professional negotiations) were first unitised and numbered, and subsequently coded using the VRM Taxonomy (see Chapter 3). Subsequently, the frequency of occurrence of each of the VRMs was calculated for each of the lingua franca speakers (ten students and 14 professionals), as was frequency of occurrence of pure and mixed modes. Based on these frequency scores, aggregate indices were calculated per speaker, and across corpora, of overall presumptuous (face-threatening) verbal behaviour, overall indirect verbal behaviour, and indirectness used specifically in presumptuous VRMs (FTAs). The results of the VRM analyses of both corpora are presented and discussed in Sections 4.2 to 4.4. Before the results are reported, however, the next section briefly evaluates the simulation game that was used to collect the negotiation data.

4.1 Evaluation of the simulation

In a group discussion at the end of the recording session, the student negotiators were asked to give an impression of the task and their performance. In general, students felt that, if anything, it was their inexperience as negotiators rather than the fact that they had to communicate in a foreign language that sometimes made their task difficult. The participants agreed almost unanimously that they had little idea of what they referred to as “negotiation strategy” or “sales techniques”. For example, a number of them said that they had failed to set themselves secondary goals to fall back on. As a result, they did not know how to proceed when their initial offer, which they had established beforehand as their primary and often only goal, was rejected. In addition, the students admitted that they had focused first and foremost on maximising profits for themselves rather than negotiating a deal that was to both parties’ satisfaction. This is reflected to some extent in the profit levels obtained by the professionals on the one hand and the student negotiators on the other. On the whole, the profit levels obtained by the professional negotiators in the seven dyads where agreement was reached were much closer together, with the exception of only one pair (see Table 3.5). In four of the student negotiations, profit levels within dyads were clearly much further apart, with the exception of one negotiation, in which the participants negotiated equal profit levels (see Table 3.4). Another indication that the students were focused more on maximising own profit may be the fact that in two of the student negotiations the offers that were made at one stage were so extreme that conflict arose which nearly resulted in communication breakdown. Although the students used the background information provided in the roleplay and seemed to have no difficulty in using the price matrix (except when referring to the “I” and “E” levels; the Dutch for
A closer look at the bargaining process during the negotiations, in terms of the sequence of offers made in each interaction, would seem to partly confirm the above observations. It revealed that students were indeed inconsistent in their negotiation tactics. They had no qualms about reintroducing offers that had previously been rejected by the other party or about introducing a “new” offer, having rejected that same offer when it was introduced minutes earlier by their counterpart. It was also not unusual for students to continue to introduce the same offer more than once over the course of a single negotiation. On the whole, this seems to have been done inadvertently, and does not point to a rigid, inflexible stance or a refusal to yield. The above observations concerning the sequencing of offers would seem to concur with the students’ own impressions that they did not establish an agenda beforehand. They failed to set themselves alternative goals which could have been used to create greater flexibility and, more importantly, greater bargaining leverage.

As was said earlier (Section 3.10), it was felt that the threat to validity resulting from inexperience on the part of the student participants would not be an issue with regard to the professional negotiators. This seems to have been a valid assumption. The researcher only had the opportunity to talk to eight negotiators who contributed to the professional corpus about the simulation game and their experience with it (as the other negotiations in the corpus had been recorded by someone else). All eight reported, however, that they had approached the game and their preparation beforehand as seriously as they would have any real-life sales negotiation for their employer. They commented that although they “enjoyed” the game element and their taking part, they had nevertheless tried their best throughout to get as good a deal as possible, for reasons of “professional pride”. The only aspect of the game the professionals found somewhat awkward to deal with was the fact that they could only refer to price levels, rather than prices, and could refer to those levels only by means of letters, rather than figures.

The professional telemarketers commented that they soon forgot that they were involved in a simulation rather than a real-life negotiation. After a few minutes, they also forgot that they were being recorded or being listened in on. This suggests that the ‘eavesdropping’ factor that was pointed out earlier as a potential weakness in the data collection procedure (Section 3.13) is likely to have had only a minimal effect in the professional telemarketing (potentially during the first few minutes), if at all. Because the video-recorded negotiations were not collected by the present researcher, and the participants could not be contacted because we did not have information on their present whereabouts, it could not be ascertained whether, or to what extent, the eavesdropping factor played a role in the face-to-face negotiation sessions. With respect to the student negotiations, most students admitted afterwards to being unaware that the researcher had been able to listen in on their conversations (unnoticed) via the central language laboratory console. In fact, some students had not even realised that they were going to be recorded at all. This suggests that it is unlikely that the role of the researcher as eavesdropper will have affected (or restricted) the performance of the student negotiators during the simulation session.

For the student corpus, the simulation sessions yielded sales negotiations lasting between 7 and 18 minutes, with an average of 14.7 minutes. The nine negotiations in the professional corpus lasted between 17 and 71 minutes, with an average of 38 minutes. As a method for collecting lingua franca data, then, this type of extended roleplay would seem to form an adequate basis for
participants, both inexperienced and professional, to produce sustained stretches of negotiation talk, in a relevant context.

4.2 Verbal behaviour: VRMs in the negotiations

The transcripts of the contributions of the student and professional lingua franca speakers were unitised and coded in accordance with the guidelines set out in the VRM manual (Stiles 1992; see also Chapter 3). Each unit, defined as a simple sentence, an independent clause, a nonrestrictive dependent clause, an element of a compound predicate, or a term of acknowledgement, address or evaluation, was coded both for grammatical form and communicative intent. The results of the analyses are presented in Sections 4.2 to 4.3. Mann-Whitney U tests (part of the standard SPSS® package) were carried out to test for significance any differences in VRM use found between the two groups of negotiators. The results of these tests, where relevant, are reported in Sections 4.2.2 to 4.3. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results (Section 4.4). Raw VRM scores per negotiator, and for the student and professional corpora, are included in Appendix A.

4.2.1 General VRM use: student corpus

A number of general trends can be deduced from the information in Table 4.1, which presents the percentage frequency of VRM use found for individual student negotiators, and Table 4.2, which includes overall VRM percentages for the student corpus as a whole.

Table 4.1. Students: percentage VRM use per negotiator (based on intent codes)\(^{16}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>negotiator</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D = Disclosure  
E = Edification  
Q = Question  
K = Acknowledgement  
A = Advisement  
C = Confirmation  
I = Interpretation  

\(^{16}\) A comparison of overall average percentage scores on each VRM category for the male students (1, 2, 4, 8, and 10) versus the female students (3, 5, 6, 7, and 9) showed slight overall differences. The average percentage use for female students as a group was slightly higher than the average percentage use of the male students as a group for all non-presumptuous VRM categories: Disclosure (25.4% vs. 21.8%); Edification (14.6% vs. 12.5%); Question (5.4% vs. 3.6%); Acknowledgement (32% vs. 30.3%). The relative overall average percentage for the female students was also slightly higher for Interpretation (1.3% vs. 0.9%). With respect to the remaining VRM categories, the male students’ average overall percentage use was slightly higher than that of the female students: Advisement (15.3% vs. 13.3%); Confirmation (10% vs. 8.3%); Reflection (2.2% vs. 1.1%).
Acknowledgement, comprising back-channels such as “yeah”, “uhuh” and contentless lexical utterances such as “well”, “hello”, etc., was the most frequent VRM in the student corpus overall. Acknowledgements made up nearly 30% of the total number of utterances (see Table 4.2). Table 4.1 shows that the only exceptions to this general trend were student negotiators 4 and 6, who used Disclosure on a more frequent basis than Acknowledgement.

An explanation for the consistently high relative proportions of Acknowledgement may lie in the fact that the student negotiators were inexperienced in terms of both negotiating skill, and using English (in this specific setting). As a result of indecision about what to do next or awkward pauses due to production problems, the student negotiators may have been prompted to over-use contentless fillers in an attempt to at least create the impression that the interaction was still progressing. Stalpers (1993) has identified similar superfluous interaction in non-native negotiation discourse (the relative over-use of ‘alors’ by lingua franca French negotiators), referring to such verbal behaviour as “linguistic noise”, employed by non-native speakers to give them more time to plan and execute their contributions.

The next most frequently used VRM type in the student corpus overall was Disclosure (see Table 4.2). Disclosures reflect personal thoughts, feelings and perceptions about the topic of experience. It can be seen from Table 4.1 that Disclosure was the second most frequently used VRM in six student negotiators’ contributions. In fact, a general pattern that emerges (for nine out of ten negotiators) is that the two most frequently used VRMs were Acknowledgement and Disclosure, although not necessarily in that order. Only one student (negotiator 1) deviates from this pattern. Although he did use Acknowledgement most frequently, he used Advisement, rather than Disclosure, second most frequently (21.8%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presumptuous VRMs</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Non-Presumptuous VRMs</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation (C)</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Question (Q)</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisement (A)</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection (R)</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Disclosure (D)</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation (I)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Edification (E)</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In descending order of frequency, it can be seen from Table 4.2 that Advisement (14.8%) and Edification (10.7%) were the next most frequently used VRM types in the student corpus. Advisements attempt to suggest, command, prohibit or permit certain actions and thus to guide (the other’s) behaviour, while Edifications constitute statements relating to public, objective information. This general pattern is confirmed at the individual level. Either of these two VRMs was the third most frequently used response mode by nine out of the ten student negotiators. Only one negotiator deviates from this pattern. As can be seen from Table 4.1, negotiator 1 used Confirmation (agreement and disagreement) third most frequently.

Confirmation (agreements at 4.8% and disagreements at 4.2%) was the next most frequent VRM in the student corpus overall (see Table 4.2). This is confirmed to some extent by individual scores (See Table 4.1). Two negotiators used Confirmation third most frequently, four negotiators used
Confirmation fourth most frequently, three used Confirmation fifth most frequently, and only one negotiator used Confirmation sixth most frequently. Finally, Table 4.2 shows that the least frequently used VRMs in the student corpus overall, in descending order, were Question (4.7%), Reflection (4.4%), and Interpretation (1.1%). Together, their occurrence accounted for only 10.2% of all VRMs identified in the student corpus. In total, less than 2% of VRMs in the student corpus were uncodable at the intent level.

4.2.2 General VRM use: professional corpus

The results of the VRM analyses of the professional negotiation data are presented in Tables 4.3 and 4.4. The raw VRM scores per professional negotiator, and for the corpus as a whole, are presented in Appendix A. As can be seen from Table 4.4, Acknowledgement (28.3% of all utterances) and Disclosure (24.1% of all utterances) are the two most frequently used VRMs by the professional negotiators overall. As was reported in the previous section, Acknowledgement was also the most frequently used VRM in the student corpus. However, in contrast to the student corpus, in which the majority of the student negotiators (eight out of ten) used Acknowledgement most frequently, only just over half, eight out of fourteen, professional negotiators used Acknowledgement most frequently. Five professional negotiators used Disclosure and one negotiator used Edification most frequently.

Table 4.3 Professionals: VRM use per negotiator (in %: based on intent codes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negotiator</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>R</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Dutch)</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Dutch)</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Dutch)</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Dutch)</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (Dutch)</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (French)</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Dutch)</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 (French)</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
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<td>19.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (Dutch)</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (German)</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (Dutch)</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (Italian)</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (Dutch)</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (Japanese)</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D = Disclosure  
E = Edification  
Q = Question  
K = Acknowledgement  
A = Advisement  
C = Confirmation  
I = Interpretation  
R = Reflection

It can be seen from Table 4.3 that three of the highest percentages of Acknowledgement use in the professional corpus involve three of the four professional negotiators that took part in the four telenegotiations (negotiators 1-4). Only one negotiator involved in the face-to-face negotiations, negotiator 6 (a Frenchman), used a slightly higher percentage of Acknowledgement (38.4%) than one of the four negotiators involved in the telenegotiations. As the VRM of Acknowledgement incorporates verbal back-channelling behaviour, and telenegotiators, as opposed to face-to-face
negotiators, only have at their disposal verbal, rather than verbal and nonverbal backchannels, this could explain the relatively high percentages (compared to the percentages for the face-to-face negotiators) of Acknowledgement found for three of the four telenegotiators who contributed to the professional corpus. However, overall, the professional negotiators clearly used fewer backchannels and contentless utterances than the student negotiators. This would seem to support the explanation given for the high incidence of Acknowledgement in the student corpus. The professionals will not have experienced processing difficulties relating to inexperience with the negotiation setting (as was hypothesised for the student negotiators), or relating to the use of English as a lingua franca in this particular setting (to the extent student negotiators might have had). It is not surprising, therefore, that they would seem to have resorted to fewer contentless fillers to create the idea of progress in discourse than the student negotiators.

Table 4.4 Professional corpus: VRM use (in %) overall (based on intent codes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>presumptuous VRMs</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>rank</th>
<th>non-presumptuous VRMs</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation (C)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Question (Q)</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisement (A)</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection (R)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Disclosure (D)</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation (I)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Edification (E)</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six out of fourteen professional negotiators used Disclosure as their second most frequent VRM after Acknowledgement (as opposed to eight out of ten student negotiators). Finally, five professional negotiators used Edification second most frequently, while for three professional negotiators, Acknowledgement was the second most frequently used VRM.

It can be seen from Table 4.4 that the next most frequently used VRM in the professional corpus overall, after Acknowledgement and Disclosure, was Edification (17%). This contrasts with findings for the student corpus. For the student negotiators, Advisement was found to be the third most frequently used VRM at 14.8% of total VRMs, and Edification was the fourth most frequently used VRM at 10.7% of total VRMs (see Table 4.2). At the individual level, the difference in the use of Edification between student and professional negotiators is also quite pronounced. Five of the ten student negotiators used Edification in less than 10% of their total contributions to the corpus (between 4.8% and 8.3%). The remainder used Edification between 10.2% and 16.9% of the time. In contrast, 13 out of the 14 professional negotiators used Edification in more than 10% of their contributions (between 10.9% and 30.5%), with four professional negotiators using Edification in more than 20% of their contributions (between 22.9% and 30.5%). The difference in use of Edification by student and professional negotiators was found to be significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.406, p<0.05).

Table 4.4 shows that the next most frequently used VRM in the professional corpus overall was Advisement (8.5 %). If we contrast these results with those found for the student corpus, we see that the majority of the professional negotiators (eight out of fourteen) used lower proportions of Advisement than any of the student negotiators. Only three professional negotiators’ contributions contained more than 10% of Advisement (between 12.8% and 16.4%). In contrast, six student
negotiators’ contributions contained between 14.2% and as high as 21.8% of Advisement. The difference in use between the two groups of negotiators with regard to Advisement was found to be highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.763, p<0.01).

As was the case for the student negotiators (and in previous studies of negotiations on the basis of the VRM taxonomy, see Section 4.4 below), the professional negotiators used surprisingly few Confirmations (8.2% overall: agreement at 6.5% and disagreement at 1.7%). This was unexpected, given the fact that sales negotiations would, intuitively at least, seem to centre largely around agreeing and disagreeing with a series of proposals. Only professional negotiators 3, 4 and 13 used a relatively higher proportion of Confirmation than the other contributors to the professional corpus (see Table 4.3). Compared to the student negotiators, the professionals used fewer disagreements (1.7% overall, compared to 4.2% overall in the student corpus), but a greater number of agreements (6.5% overall, compared to 4.8% overall in the student corpus). The difference in use of disagreement by the two groups of negotiators was found to be highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.988, p<0.01).

Similar to the student corpus, Question was the sixth most frequently found VRM in the professional corpus. The use of Questions by the two groups of negotiators is comparable (4.7% for the students vs. 5.3% for the professionals). Reflections (restatements and reformulations) made up 3.9% of total VRMs in the professional corpus. Only professional negotiators 5 (at 6.9%), 8 (at 7.9%), 10 (at 7.1%), and 13 (at 11.2%) used a relatively higher proportion of this particular mode compared to the other professional negotiators. This relatively greater use of Reflection can be explained to some extent when we take a closer look at these professional negotiators’ actual contributions. These four negotiators consistently (re)framed proposals and suggestions from the other’s viewpoint (e.g., “You are saying that you would like to see a slight reduction on the backpacks”). This could well be a consistent negotiation strategy employed specifically to make their negotiating seem more other-oriented, and thus cooperative. On the other hand, it may simply have to do with providing themselves an opt-out clause, because it would always allow them, when challenged, to say that they were ‘only repeating’ what the other had just said.

Finally, as was the case for the student corpus, Interpretation was the least frequently used VRM in the professional corpus, accounting for only 1% of VRMs overall (Table 4.4). In total, less than 4% of VRMs in the professional corpus (as opposed to 2% in the student corpus) were uncodable at the intent level.

### 4.3 Face threat and indirectness: both corpora

In Section 3.4, it was explained how the VRM system, and a consideration of presumptuous versus non-presumptuous VRMs in particular, could be used to gauge the degree of face threatening or indirect verbal behaviour manifested in a given speaker’s contribution. The following sections focus on the next stage of the VRM analysis, in which aggregate indices were calculated from the VRM frequency data to get an indication, per negotiator, of: 1) degree of overall face-threatening verbal behaviour; 2) degree of overall indirect verbal behaviour; and 3) degree of indirectness used specifically to express inherently face-threatening VRMs (or FTAs). Aggregate indices were calculated for both groups of negotiators and are presented and discussed below.
4.3.1 Overall face-threatening verbal behaviour

As was said in Chapter 3, presumptuous VRMs (at the intent level), such as Advisement, Confirmation, Reflection and Interpretation, constitute illocutionary acts that can be regarded as inherently face-threatening to the hearer. Presumptuous VRMs are inherently face-threatening because in uttering them the speaker presumes to know something about the other’s experience (including thoughts, ideas and opinions), or presumes to influence, change or direct the other’s volitional behaviour (Stiles 1992). In uttering non-presumptuous VRMs, speakers do not presume to know anything about the other’s experience. Therefore, these VRMs can be regarded as ‘neutral’ in the sense that they are speaker-oriented with regard to presumption, and thus not inherently face-threatening in Brown and Levinson’s terms.

Table 4.5 Student corpus: percentages of presumptuous VRMs (per negotiator)\(^{17}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dyad</th>
<th>negotiator</th>
<th>% presumptuous VRMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Corpus overall = 29.8

To get an indication of the degree of face-threatening verbal behaviour manifested by a given negotiator, we calculated the overall proportion of presumptuous VRM intents to the total number of VRMs used by that negotiator (minus the number of uncodable utterances). The resulting “presumptuousness indices” (Stiles 1992), expressed in percentage of presumptuous VRMs of total contribution (in VRMs) for each of the negotiators, are presented in Table 4.5 (student corpus) and Table 4.6 (professional corpus\(^ {18}\)).

It can be seen that the percentages of presumptuous VRMs in the student negotiators’ contributions range from 20.1% to 43.4%. Some 29.8% of utterances in the student corpus overall were presumptuous VRMs. For six student negotiators, the percentage of presumptuous VRMs identified ranged between 20.1% and 26.4%. Between 30.2% and 36% presumptuous VRMs were found in three negotiators’ contributions to the corpus, while one negotiator’s contribution contained as much as 43.4%.

\(^{17}\) The average percentage use of presumptuous VRMs was found to be higher (30.3% vs. 26.9%) for the male students (1, 2, 4, 8, and 10) than for the female students (3, 5, 6, 7, and 9).

\(^{18}\) With respect to the professional negotiators referred to in the tables in this chapter and the next, note that negotiators 1 to 4 are the four lingua franca speakers that took part in the four Dutch–English telenegotiations, while negotiators 5 to 14 are the lingua franca speakers (all the participants) that took part in the five face-to-face dyads (See Section 3.12).
Table 4.6. Professional corpus: percentages of presumptuous VRMs (per negotiator)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>negotiator</th>
<th>% presumptuous VRMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Corpus overall = 21.7

Table 4.6 shows that the degree of presumptuous verbal behaviour in the professional corpus overall is lower, at 21.7%. The percentages of presumptuous VRMs in the individual negotiators’ contributions range from 13.6% to 34.6%. Six professional negotiators’ contributions contained less than 20% presumptuous VRMs (between 13.6% and 19.6%). These percentages are lower than those found for any of the student negotiators. Six professional negotiators’ contributions contained between 22% and 29.6% presumptuous VRMs, which falls within the lower range of percentages found for the student negotiators.

The remaining two professional negotiators’ contributions were found to contain a slightly higher percentage of presumptuous VRMs (30.3% and 34.6% respectively) than any of the other professionals. These percentages can be placed at the higher end of the range of percentages found for the student negotiators. The difference in presumptuous verbal behaviour between the two groups of negotiators was found to be significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.108, p<0.05).

4.3.2 Indirect verbal behaviour

In Chapter 3, it was explained how Stiles (1992) regards VRM form and intent codes as constituting different levels of utterance meaning. Whereas the form code represents an utterance’s literal meaning, the intent code represents its pragmatic meaning. According to Stiles, “both levels contribute to the psychological force of the utterance, as do other off-record levels of meaning” (Stiles 1992: 11). Therefore, mixed modes, where the form and intent codes of an utterance are not the same, constitute indirectly expressed speech acts, or utterances in which one literal meaning is used to convey a different pragmatic meaning. In order to determine the degree to which negotiators engaged in indirect verbal behaviour, the proportion of mixed VRMs to total VRMs (minus uncodable utterances) was calculated for each negotiator. The resulting indirectness indices (expressed in percentages) can be found in Table 4.7 (student corpus) and Table 4.8 (professional corpus).
It can be seen from Table 4.7 that the percentages of indirect VRMs used by the student negotiators range from 35.4% to 60.5%. Overall, some 47.1% of utterances in the student corpus were expressed indirectly. This is interesting, given the fact that, overall, only 29.8% of all VRMs in the student corpus were found to be presumptuous or face-threatening (see Table 4.5). It would seem, therefore, that the students were perhaps displaying more indirect verbal behaviour than necessary, given the actual degree of face threat they manifested in their contributions. Five student negotiators expressed between 41.2% and 46.3% of VRMs indirectly, while four negotiators indirectly expressed between 50.3% and 60.5% of all VRMs in their contributions to the student corpus. Only one student negotiator expressed less than 40% of VRMs indirectly (negotiator 8).

Table 4.8  Professional corpus: % indirectly expressed VRMs overall (per negotiator)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>negotiator</th>
<th>% indirect VRMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Corpus overall = 34.1

Table 4.8 shows the percentages of indirectly expressed VRMs in the professional corpus. It can be seen that 34.1% of all VRMs in the professional corpus were expressed indirectly. This overall percentage is considerably lower than that found for the student corpus (see Table 4.7). Again, it should be noted that the professional negotiators, like the student negotiators, would
seem to have used more indirectness than would be predicted on the basis of the overall presumptuousness index that was calculated for the professional corpus (only 22.4% of VRMs in the professional corpus were presumptuous: see Table 4.6). Individually, the professional negotiators expressed between 28.2% and 43.6% of VRMs in mixed modes. Five professional negotiators expressed between 28.2% and 30% of VRMs indirectly. Four negotiators expressed between 30.5% and 34.8% of all VRMs using mixed modes, while the remaining five expressed between 36.4% and 43.6% of VRMs indirectly.

If we compare the findings for the professional negotiators with the results for the students, it can be seen that nine professional negotiators used a lower percentage of indirect VRMs than any of the student negotiators. The five remaining professional negotiators, who expressed between 36.4% and 43.6% of all VRMs indirectly, just fall within the lower range of percentages found for the student negotiators (see Table 4.7). The difference in degree of indirect verbal behaviour displayed by the two groups in their negotiation discourse was indeed found to be very highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=3.513, p<0.001).

### 4.3.3 FTA-directed indirectness: mixed presumptuous VRMs

If presumptuous VRMs are regarded as inherently face-threatening acts, and mixed modes are regarded as constituting VRMs (or illocutionary acts) expressed indirectly, mixed modes used to express a presumptuous VRM (Advisement, Confirmation, Reflection or Interpretation) can be regarded as signalling indirectness employed specifically to counter face threat. Thus, by calculating the proportion of mixed presumptuous VRMs (and more specifically, a non-presumptuous form used to express a presumptuous intent) to total presumptuous VRMs per negotiator, we could obtain an indication of the degree of FTA-directed indirectness used by each negotiator. Table 4.9 shows the percentage of indirect presumptuous VRMs used by each of the student negotiators, and in the student corpus as a whole. For the sake of completeness, the corresponding percentages of indirectly expressed non-presumptuous VRMs (verbal behaviour that does not inherently threaten face) per negotiator, and for the corpus as a whole, are provided in brackets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>negotiator</th>
<th>% of indirect FTAs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>69.6 (vs. 25.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70.0 (vs. 45.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>72.7 (vs. 35.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>69.2 (vs. 56.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>76.2 (vs. 38.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>74.7 (vs. 27.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58.3 (vs. 42.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>56.3 (vs. 28.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69.0 (vs. 43.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>60.0 (vs. 35.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corpus overall = 70.4 (vs. 37.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19 The average percentage of indirectly expressed presumptuous VRMs for the female students (3, 5, 6, 7, and 9) as a group was higher than the average percentage for the male students (1, 2, 4, 8, and 10) as a group (70% vs. 65%).
It can be seen from Table 4.9 that the percentages of indirectly expressed presumptuous VRMs per student negotiator are substantial, ranging from 56.3% to 76.2%. Overall, 70.4% of all presumptuous VRMs in the student corpus were expressed indirectly. Only two of the student negotiators expressed indirectly less than 60% of the presumptuous VRMs they used. Five student negotiators used indirectness to express 60% to 70% of presumptuous VRMs in their contributions. Three student negotiators expressed as much as between 72.7% and 76.2% of all presumptuous VRMs in their contributions in mixed modes. As would be expected, the percentage of indirectly expressed, non-presumptuous VRMs per student negotiator (range: 25.2% to 56.3%), and in the student corpus as a whole (37.3%), was found to be considerably lower. As non-presumptuous VRMs are regarded as not posing an inherent threat to face, they would not be expected to be mitigated through indirectness as readily as presumptuous VRMs.

With regard to the professional negotiators, it can be seen from Table 4.10 that they expressed indirectly between 51% and 87.5% of presumptuous VRMs. Two professionals, negotiators 11 and 12, expressed only a relatively low percentage of presumptuous VRMs indirectly (53.2% and 51.0%). Three professional negotiators expressed between 65.7% and 68.8% of all presumptuous VRMs in mixed modes, whereas the remainder (9 professional negotiators) expressed between 74.6% and as high as 87.5% of presumptuous VRMs indirectly. Overall, with two exceptions, individual percentages for the professional negotiators fall within the range of, or are somewhat higher than, percentages for the individual student negotiators. The overall percentage of indirectly expressed presumptuous VRMs in the professional corpus is also slightly higher than that found for the student corpus (74.7% vs. 70.4%). As was the case for the student data, the percentage of indirectly expressed, non-presumptuous VRMs in the professional corpus, at 22.3% overall, was considerably lower than the percentage of indirectly expressed presumptuous VRMs. This finding was also borne out at the individual level, where the professional negotiators expressed indirectly between 17.1% and 30.1% of the non-presumptuous VRMs they used (see Table 4.10).
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Again, this finding was not surprising given that it would be predicted that non-presumptuous VRMs would not warrant mitigation through indirectness to the extent that inherently face-threatening (presumptuous) VRMs would. Any difference in degree of indirect, presumptuous verbal behaviour between the two groups of negotiators was not found to be significant.

4.4 Summary of findings

4.4.1 VRM analysis: verbal behaviour in the negotiation corpora

Table 4.11 presents the findings with respect to overall VRM use in the student and professional corpora (and frequency ranking). It shows that, in both corpora, the two most frequently identified VRMs were Acknowledgement and Disclosure. The three least frequently identified VRMs in both corpora were Question, Reflection, and Interpretation. Surprisingly, given the fact that sales negotiations would be expected, intuitively, to revolve around a series of agreements and disagreements with proposals, the VRM of Confirmation occurred relatively infrequently in both corpora, and is ranked number five. However, within the Confirmation category, there was a difference between the student and professional negotiators. Overall, the student negotiators were found to have used more disagreements, and fewer agreements, than the professional negotiators. The difference in use of disagreements by the two groups was found to be highly significant.

Further differences in the verbal behaviour displayed in the two corpora were noted for the VRMs of Edification and Advisement. Edification was found to be the fourth most frequently occurring VRM in the student corpus, but the third most frequently occurring VRM in the professional corpus. This difference in the use of Edification by the two groups of negotiators was found to be significant. With respect to the VRM of Advisement, which was the third most frequently occurring VRM in the student corpus and the fourth most frequently used VRM by the professional negotiators, the difference in use was found to be highly significant.

As the VRM taxonomy can be used to analyse any type of discourse, the VRM results from the present study can be compared directly with results from other VRM studies. Two such investigations would seem to be particularly relevant. The first focused on VRM analysis of dyadic telenegotiations, simulated on the basis of the same game used in the present investigation, involving professional, native Dutch negotiators communicating in their mother tongue (Van der Wijst 1994). The second study investigated VRM use in an authentic electricians’ negotiation (held over two sessions), involving six participants representing two parties, the labour force or management (Hinkle, Stiles & Taylor 1988). As Hinkle et al. make no mention of non-native speakers in their study, it is assumed that their negotiators were all native speakers of English. For comparison, Table 4.11 includes the relative percentage frequencies and the frequency ranking of VRM use found in the present investigation (for both corpora), Van der Wijst’s study (in the subset of 14 new relationship negotiations from his corpus), and Hinkle et al.’s investigation.

If we compare the findings from the present study with Van der Wijst’s results, it can be seen that they are partly comparable. With respect to the professional negotiations in both studies, it can be seen from Table 4.11 that, in terms of overall ranking, the findings for the VRMs of Acknowledgement (most frequent VRM), Disclosure (second frequent VRM), and Interpretation (least frequent VRM) are the same. Differences in ranking can be seen for the VRM categories of Edification, Question, and Advisement, which are all ranked one place higher in the present professional corpus than in Van der Wijst’s study. In contrast, Reflection and Confirmation can be
seen to be ranked one place lower than in Van der Wijst’s corpus. The findings for the two corpora with respect to the Confirmation category is perhaps the most striking, as it constitutes a difference of two places (fifth most frequent in the present study vs. third most frequent in Van der Wijst’s corpus).

If we compare the findings for the student corpus in the present study with those found for Van der Wijst’s corpus, it can be seen that the similarities and differences largely correspond to those outlined above for the present professional and Van der Wijst’s corpora, with two clear exceptions. Edification is ranked fourth in both Van der Wijst’s corpus and the present student corpus (as opposed to third in the professional corpus). Perhaps most notably, however, Advisement is ranked third most frequent in the student corpus, as opposed to fourth most frequent in the present professional corpus and fifth most frequent in Van der Wijst’s corpus.

Table 4.11  Comparison of findings (VRM ranking and % frequency) for present corpora, Van der Wijst (1994), and Hinkle et al. (1988)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VRMs non-presumptuous</th>
<th>Student Corpus</th>
<th>Professional Corpus</th>
<th>Van der Wijst (1994)</th>
<th>Hinkle et al. (1988)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure</td>
<td>2 (23.7)</td>
<td>2 (24.1)</td>
<td>2 (22.0)</td>
<td>2 (19.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edification</td>
<td>4 (10.7)</td>
<td>3 (17.0)</td>
<td>4 (10.5)</td>
<td>1 (34.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>1 (29.8)</td>
<td>1 (28.3)</td>
<td>1 (26.6)</td>
<td>4 (9.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>6 (4.7)</td>
<td>6 (5.3)</td>
<td>7 (3.8)</td>
<td>5 (8.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VRMs presumptuous</th>
<th>Student Corpus</th>
<th>Professional Corpus</th>
<th>Van der Wijst (1994)</th>
<th>Hinkle et al. (1988)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advisement</td>
<td>3 (14.8)</td>
<td>4 (8.5)</td>
<td>5 (8.9)</td>
<td>6 (6.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>5 (9.0)</td>
<td>5 (8.2)</td>
<td>3 (12.4)</td>
<td>3 (10.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>7 (4.4)</td>
<td>7 (3.9)</td>
<td>6 (5.4)</td>
<td>7 (2.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>8 (1.1)</td>
<td>8 (1.0)</td>
<td>8 (3.7)</td>
<td>8 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the third study represented in Table 4.11 (Hinkle et al. 1988), Edification and Disclosure dominated the negotiation (comprising 53.9% of all utterances), followed by Confirmation and Acknowledgement. The VRMs of Question and Advisement occurred less frequently, while Reflection and Interpretation were used only sparingly (a mere 4% of all VRMs in the negotiation). As can be seen from the rankings in Table 4.11, the findings from the present study, to some extent, concur with Hinkle et al.’s results. Disclosure was indeed frequently used, relative to other VRMs, in both the student and professional corpora, as it was in Hinkle et al.’s labour negotiation (and Van der Wijst’s corpus of negotiations). Interpretation and Reflection were the least frequently used VRMs in both our corpora, which Hinkle et al. also found to be the case in their negotiation. In contrast, in Van der Wijst’s corpus, Question, next to Interpretation, was the least frequently used VRM.

At the same time, however, there are a number of differences between Hinkle et al.’s findings and the results of the present investigation. It can be seen from Table 4.11 that Advisement comes higher and Confirmation lower than in Hinkle et al.’s hierarchy in both the student corpus (where Advisement ranks third and Confirmation ranks fifth) and the professional corpus (where Advisement ranks fourth and Confirmation ranks fifth). Advisement also ranks higher in Van der Wijst’s hierarchy than in Hinkle et al.’s; interestingly, however, the ranking for Confirmation is the same (third place) as in Hinkle et al.’s corpus.
A very clear difference between Hinkle et al.’s findings and the results of Van der Wijst and the present investigation is the strikingly high incidence of Acknowledgement found across the board in the latter two studies. Hinkle et al. report that Acknowledgement in their corpus ranked as only the fourth most frequently used VRM (at 10.4% and 7.9% overall for labour force and management respectively). In stark contrast, Acknowledgement was the most frequently used VRM in the student and professional corpora in the present study as well as Van der Wijst’s corpus. It was said earlier, with respect to the present corpora, that relatively high frequencies of Acknowledgement might be attributable to the over-use of fillers due to inexperience in the case of the students on the one hand, and a relatively higher degree of backchannelling by the professionals in the telenegotiations that greatly boosted the overall frequency of Acknowledgement in the professional corpus on the other. As Van der Wijst’s negotiation data were also produced in telenegotiations, a similar explanation (higher degree of back-channelling) might account for the relatively high incidence of Acknowledgement in his corpus.

At the same time, however, a high degree of Acknowledgement might be a feature that is peculiar to dyadic interactions. In dyadic communication contexts, there is likely to be greater pressure on an interactant to regularly contribute, react to the conversational partner, acknowledge receipt of information, that is, to maintain progress in discourse, than in interactions involving groups, where the responsibility to sustain interaction is shared (see Grindsted 1995). The fact that Acknowledgement was used comparatively infrequently in Hinkle et al.’s study of polyadic negotiation discourse may offer support for this explanation. It should be noted also that a high incidence of Acknowledgement occurred in both Van der Wijst’s and the present study, in other words, regardless of whether negotiators were communicating in their own tongue, or in a lingua franca.

In terms of overall VRM percentages found for the corpora in the three studies, Table 4.11 shows that there are a number of notable differences. High overall percentages of Edification were found in the present professional corpus and Hinkle et al.’s corpus (17% and a striking 34.9% respectively), relative to the student and Van der Wijst corpora (10.7% and 10.5% respectively). A higher overall percentage of Confirmation was found in Van der Wijst’s corpus (12.4%), relative to the present student and professional corpora (9% and 8.2% respectively), and Hinkle et al.’s negotiation (10.1%). Question occurred relatively more frequently overall in Hinkle et al.’s corpus (8.5%) than in the other three corpora (4.7%, 5.3%, and 3.8% respectively), while Reflection occurred relatively more frequently overall in Van der Wijst’s corpus (5.4%) than in the other three corpora (4.4%, 3.9%, and 2.3%). Finally, with respect to Advisement, a relatively higher overall frequency was found for the student corpus (14.8%) than for the three professional corpora (8.5%, 8.9%, and 6%).

In their discussion, Hinkle et al. note that, although ranked third most frequent overall, Confirmations nevertheless occurred relatively infrequently in their negotiation (comprising only 12.4% of all utterances). They comment that this is surprising because “conceptually, agreement and disagreement are at the heart of the negotiation process” (Hinkle et al. 1988: 131). In the present study, Confirmation also occurred relatively infrequently, agreements and disagreements in the student and professional corpora making up only 9% and 8.2% respectively of all VRMs (it should be noted that the overall percentage found by Van der Wijst is higher, at 12.4%). Hinkle et al. suggest that some agreements and disagreements in their data may have been expressed off-record through Disclosures. This reason is less likely to offer an explanation for the relatively low occurrence of Confirmations in the present study, however. In the previous chapter (Section 3.4.1), it was pointed out that even off-record utterances, such as hints or
understatements, when considered in their discourse context, are to a greater or lesser extent always on-record. Brown and Levinson have referred to this as “on-record off-recordness” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 212). If an utterance is not on-record to some extent at least, it would be impossible for the hearer to interpret it, even partly, as the speaker intended. In the present study, therefore, Disclosure forms of the type “I have serious reservations about that offer” or “I’m too far away from you there”, for example, when uttered as a direct response to an offer or suggestion for a given price level in a previous turn, were assigned a [C-] intent code (i.e. a disagreement) because in the interactional context of the sales negotiation, they clearly constituted an on-record disagreement with the other about the topic of the experience (the offer just made, or the suggested price level). Therefore, the low incidence of (dis)agreements in both the student and professional corpora, relative to the frequencies noted by Van der Wijst and Hinkle et al., is likely to be due to other reasons than those Hinkle et al. suggest for their findings. Note that examples such as the disagreement above provide further support for the idea outlined earlier (Section 3.4.1) that Stiles’ mixed modes can also account for and signal off-record levels (in this case, a Confirmation intent formulated as a Disclosure).

Differences in VRM use like the difference noted for Confirmation may well be due to contextual differences between the two types of negotiation. Hinkle et al.’s labour-management negotiation was authentic as opposed to simulated, and the negotiations in the three studies differed with respect to objective. The labour negotiation in Hinkle et al.’s study was aimed at presenting and evaluating a management proposal that was to be accepted or rejected in a later meeting. Furthermore, the negotiation was conducted in two separate sessions. The aim of the one-off sales negotiations in the present study and Van der Wijst’s investigation was to evaluate and augment a number of different proposals launched by both parties in an effort to finalise an agreement, in one single meeting. Differences in VRM use between Van der Wijst’s study and the present investigation may relate to the fact that Van der Wijst’s negotiations were conducted over the phone, whereas the negotiations in the present study were conducted face to face (with the exception of four telenegotiations in the professional corpus: see Section 3.11). Furthermore, Hinkle et al. have suggested that different negotiation climates, for example, distributive versus integrative bargaining climates, may also be reflected in VRM frequency, and even in differences in VRM distribution at different stages of a negotiation.

Finally, another important difference between the present investigation and Van der Wijst’s research may have resulted in the differences noted between VRM use by the professional negotiators in the two studies. The present study involved professional negotiators with a number of different cultural backgrounds, whereas Van der Wijst’s negotiations were monocultural (Dutch professional negotiators only). Although VRM studies to date have not incorporated comparisons of VRM use between speakers from different cultural backgrounds, it is not unlikely that VRM use, like other manifestations of verbal behaviour, is subject to cross-cultural variability in terms of both frequency and distribution. Therefore, it could be the case that the differences that were found in VRM use by the professional negotiators in the two studies may, in part, be a reflection of cultural differences in verbal style.

4.4.2 VRM analysis: presumptuousness and indirectness

The negotiation encounters in the present corpora were also described on the basis of three aggregate measures, regarded as indicators of: 1) overall presumptuousness; 2) overall indirectness; and 3) indirectness in presumptuous VRMs. The results for the first aggregate
measure, which characterised the negotiation encounters in the two corpora in terms of degree of face threat displayed in the discourse, showed that the student negotiators displayed a greater degree of presumptuous, face-threatening verbal behaviour than the professionals. The difference between the two groups was found to be significant.

The findings with respect to the second aggregate measure, which gauged overall indirectness in the negotiators’ contributions to the two corpora, showed that the student negotiators, on the whole, used higher degrees of indirectness than the professional negotiators. This was to be expected when we consider the relative degree of presumptuousness, or face threat, that the student negotiators manifested in their verbal behaviour, which was higher than the degree of presumptuousness manifested by the professionals. The difference in indirectness between the two groups of negotiators was found to be very highly significant. One aspect that was surprising in relation to degree of face threat and degree of indirectness displayed in the corpora was that the percentage of indirect VRMs found for negotiators in both corpora was consistently higher than the percentage of presumptuous VRMs. In other words, it would seem that, in some instances, non-presumptuous VRMs, which are regarded as not posing an inherent threat to face, were nevertheless also expressed indirectly.

Finally, with regard to the third aggregate measure, which quantified degree of indirectness used specifically to express presumptuous VRMs (FTAs in Brown and Levinson’s terms), it was found that, as would be expected, both groups of negotiators expressed indirectly a considerable percentage of presumptuous VRMs in their individual contributions (between 50% and as high as 87.5% of FTAs). Although percentages at the individual level were found to be slightly higher for the professional than for the student negotiators, this difference was not found to be significant.

The next chapter reports the results of the facework analyses that were carried out on both the student and professional corpora. The VRM analyses reported in the present chapter will be discussed further in Chapter 6, where the usefulness will be assessed of both the VRM system and Brown and Levinson’s politeness taxonomy as analytical tools in an analysis of face maintenance.
Chapter 5

Rapport management in the corpora: facework analyses

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the analyses of facework carried out on both the student and the professional negotiation corpora. As was explained in Chapter 1, the main objective of this investigation was to gain insight into the linguistic means used in negotiations to give and maintain face. Furthermore, from a practical perspective, this investigation aimed to investigate possible differences in the way inexperienced (student) negotiators and experienced (professional) negotiators realise aspects of facework in such a setting. To date, the majority of studies of facework in negotiations have been based on analyses of negotiations carried out by business students, and more rarely on data produced by professional negotiators (but see Chapter 2 for exceptions). Furthermore, to this researcher’s knowledge, very few studies on this topic exist that have incorporated a comparison of inexperienced (student) and experienced (professional) negotiators (but see e.g., Dow 1999).

The first step in the analysis involved the identification in both corpora of instances of linguistic politeness, in terms of Brown and Levinson’s output strategies (facework relating to the illocutionary domain of rapport management). In the complete transcripts, all occurrences of Brown and Levinson’s output strategies were identified and classified. As was the case for the analysis of VRM intent, categorisation in terms of Brown and Levinson’s output strategies required us to look very closely at the immediate, as well as the broader, discourse context. In this way, we tried to guarantee that we did not simply identify any occurrence of a particular linguistic form that Brown and Levinson have identified as a possible manifestation of a given politeness strategy. For example, in the case of the negative politeness strategy “Minimise the imposition” (N4), we obviously did not classify every single occurrence of phrases such as ‘a bit’, ‘sort of’, ‘quite’, etc. in the corpora as instances of N4. For example, the minimising phrases (italicised) in an utterance like “Thank you, I had quite a good journey but parking is a bit difficult” (taken from the professional corpus) were not regarded as constituting instances of negative politeness, because in the discourse context, (the initial, introductory stage of the negotiation), no FTAs had been verbalised yet, and, in fact, no FTAs would be verbalised for quite some time. The results of the politeness analyses for both corpora are presented and discussed in Sections 5.2 and 5.3.

In addition to analysing the use of positive and negative politeness strategies in the two corpora, we focused on two additional aspects of facework, aimed specifically at managing rapport. Firstly, we identified and counted instances of small talk, and logged where these occurred in the negotiations in both corpora. Also, we investigated the types of topic that were introduced as small talk. In this way, we tried to take into account aspects of facework relating to the discourse content domain of rapport management (see Section 3.6). The results of this analysis are presented in Section 5.4. Secondly, we investigated personal pronoun use in both copora. We were particularly interested in the occurrence of inclusive versus exclusive or institutional ‘we’. In this way, we aimed to take into account aspects of facework relating to the participation domain of rapport management (see Section 3.7). Inclusive ‘we’ was regarded as an indicator of ‘solidarity’ and ‘involvement’ with the interlocutor. Showing solidarity and involvement are thought to be particularly salient in a negotiation context, where cooperation and cooperative
strategy are regarded as essential to mutually beneficial, win-win outcomes. The use of exclusive ‘we’ was investigated as we were interested in its potential role as a distancing strategy used by negotiators to maintain and boost their own professional face and thus reinforce their professional role and status. By looking at the role of institutional ‘we’, then, we took into account an aspect of defensive, rather than protective, facework, aimed at maintaining own face. The results of the analysis of personal pronoun use are reported in Section 5.5. With respect to all aspects of the facework analyses, Mann-Whitney U tests (part of the standard SPSS© package) were carried out to test for significance any differences in the results found for the two groups of negotiators. The results of these tests, where relevant, are reported in Sections 5.3 to 5.5.

5.1 Brown and Levinson’s strategies: examples from the corpora

Before the findings of the facework analyses are presented, an overview of examples of possible linguistic realisations for each of Brown and Levinson’s output strategies is presented below. The examples that illustrate each of the strategies are taken from the negotiation corpora. This section is divided into two subsections, the first dealing with strategies addressed to negative face (Section 5.1.1), and the second dealing with output strategies aimed at positive face (Section 5.1.2). The discussion and examples of possible realisations of individual output strategies are not exhaustive. The examples are merely meant to give the reader an idea of the negotiation discourse in the corpora, and to illustrate some of the criteria underlying classification. At the same time, of course, the examples provide vivid illustrations of how different aspects of politeness were accomplished by the negotiators who took part in this study.

All examples have been numbered (1- 60). The contributors are referred to as follows: ‘IB’ and ‘IS’ refer to ‘Inexperienced (student) Buyer’ and ‘Inexperienced (student) Seller’ respectively (examples from the student corpus), while ‘PB’ and ‘PS’ refer to ‘Professional Buyer’ and ‘Professional Seller’ (examples from the professional corpus). The frequencies of occurrence of output strategies in the two corpora overall, and for each negotiator separately, are presented in Sections 5.2 to 5.3. Raw scores for individual negotiators (for both the student and professional corpora) are included in Appendix B.

5.1.1 Output strategies: negative politeness

Negative politeness is addressed to the hearer’s negative face, or his desire to be able to act freely and unhindered, and to have his attention unimpeded by others. This type of facework is aimed specifically at “minimising the imposition that the FTA unavoidably effects” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 129). It is also referred to as “respect politeness” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 129). Brown and Levinson distinguish ten possible output strategies (N1 to N10) geared to accommodating negative face.

N1 Be conventionally indirect
A speaker will choose this strategy when he is faced with competing concerns resulting from the desire to go on-record and be as clear as possible, and the desire to provide the hearer with an opportunity to opt out (to allow him not to act at all, without losing face). This clash between the need for directness and indirectness is reflected in conventionally indirect speech acts in which the illocutionary force perceived by the hearer deviates from its propositional content. For example,
an utterance such as “Can you make me another offer?” has the propositional content of a question for ability to do something; however, its illocutionary force is commonly interpreted as that of a request for action or a directive (e.g., “Make me another offer”). Van der Wijst (1992) has noted that because of the fact that these formulations have become so conventionalised, it may be the case that speakers are less aware, or even unaware, of the politeness value of the utterance. If this is indeed the case, it may in fact be a less polite strategy than other negative politeness strategies.

Conventional indirectness is not restricted to indirect speech acts that are formed by questioning felicity conditions, as we saw earlier (Section 3.4.1). Any indirectness that conveys more than or something different from its propositional (literal) meaning but which is unambiguous when considered in the discourse context would serve the same purpose as a conventionally indirect speech act. As Brown and Levinson point out “on-record and off-record are categories that do not precisely coincide with categories of linguistic forms but only with linguistic forms in context” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 134).

The following examples from the corpora constitute examples of the N1 strategy:

1.IB: Can you do me another offer?
2.IB: Yeah, yeah, we’ve both got (.), you know, prime interest in these.
   IS: Naturally, yes.
   IB: Why won’t you look around (.) maybe erm the F-region then.
3.PS: Could we in such a case erm increase for example the quantity of erm of of the sleeping bags or isn’t that a possibility in your case?
4.PS: Could you move to erm H for the double tents?

**N2 Hedge**

A hedge is a particle, word, or phrase that can be used “to modify the degree of membership of a predicate or noun phrase in a set” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 145). These linguistic devices serve to obscure or weaken the import of the utterance. The following are examples from the corpora:

5.IB: You could sort of lower your price.
6.PS: I’d be looking at something like I for the backpacks and A for the sleeping bags.

Alternatively, hedging devices can be used to delay an FTA and to ‘alert’, as it were, the other party of impending face-threatening behaviour.

7.IB: What kind of price did you want?
   IS: Yeah. Erm, *I think that, well*, on the research that we’ve done a price around erm (.) price packet F and G.
**N3 Be pessimistic**

With this strategy the speaker indicates that he thinks it is unlikely or doubtful that the hearer will or can comply with the FTA. A request for action, for example, might be introduced with a negated preparatory clause, as the examples below show:

8.IB: I’m afraid I can’t accept that offer. *don’t suppose you could* go any er:m (. ) lower?

9.PB: *We couldn’t possibly* go lower on the tents then.

Alternatively, the speaker may indicate in a separate utterance that he thinks it is unlikely that his FTA will have the desired communicative effect:

10.IB: I was looking erm, well, erm, you know, erm, looking towards in the region of the EF. But erm=  

IS: =Well, erm (. )  

IB: *But I realise that it’s an area where erm obviously (. ) where costs are high.*

**N4 Minimise the imposition**

This strategy entails the use of linguistic elements that somehow minimise the imposition of the FTA. These elements downplay the “intrinsic seriousness” of the FTA.

11.IS: You’d be prepared to erm maybe go *a little bit*, well, to allow us a *tiny bit*, erm ((SIGH)) a *little* more on the sleeping bags?

12.PS: We’re *just* talking about some prices here.

**N5 Give deference**

Strategies that fall within this category convey respect for the hearer’s status, or acknowledge that the hearer is of a higher status than the speaker. Instances where the speaker uses terms that confirm the other’s status (for example, personal titles) to refer to the hearer, for example, would constitute giving deference. Examples from the corpora include:

13.IB: Good morning, *Mr [X]*

14.IS: Good to hear your voice, *Mr [Y]*

Another way to give deference is for the speaker to convey that the hearer’s wants are more important than his own (if only temporarily). The following (rare) example is from the professional corpus:
15. PS: I’m willing to move on the tents. *Whatever is good for you.*

**N6 Apologise**

This strategy entails that the speaker apologises for imposing on the hearer. Regret or reluctance to do an FTA can be communicated in a variety of ways. Strategies include instances where a speaker admits an impingement, by apologising for having done an FTA. In the next example, the student seller apologises for his rejection of the offer.

16. IS: We will negotiate. I would like to have H. Because, I reduced my prices one more time for the sleeping bags so I would like to have erm H for the backpacks.

   IB: Well, that’s not possible, I think. Erm (.) The yeah, well, I have to pay G.

   IS: (..) That’s too low. I’m sorry

   IB: Yes, well, then we have a problem.

Another manifestation of the “Apologise” strategy is to give overwhelming reasons for the impingement. In both corpora there were examples of negotiators giving overwhelming reasons for having to demand high prices or reject high-priced offers. Note that, in the next example, the Dutch professional seller gives overwhelming reasons for his refusal to comply with a request, and by doing so, potentially weakens his own (professional) position. This might explain why this was not a very popular strategy to use, certainly not by the professional negotiators.

17. PB: Well, we appreciate an earlier delivery if possible. But I don’t know=

   PS: =We really cannot do that. *We are at erm (.) maximum capacity in our factory now and already we cannot always be on time. It is the season /hè/? And to get extra employees is not - just not possible for=

   PB: Uuhh

   PS: =us. *I mean finance wise.* So let’s try to go in another direction…

**N7 Impersonalise speaker and hearer**

A speaker can indicate that he is unwilling to personally impinge on the hearer by phrasing the FTA as if the agent is someone or something other than himself and/or that the addressee is someone or something other than the hearer.

18. IB: I *have to make you this offer.* *I’m under orders from my company.*

19. PB: I ask for C (..). You should give me something for my company. *They are asking for C level on everything.*

In the professional corpus, in particular, the use of exclusive ‘we’ (the use of a deliberate switch from ‘I’ to exclusive ‘we’) was widespread as an impersonalisation device. In the next example, the negotiator distances himself from the rejection of the other’s offer by switching from ‘I’ to institutional ‘we’. At the same time, of course, he confirms his professional status (as a constituent negotiator) and attends to his own professional face, conveying that he has, in fact, an entire
organisation behind him.

20.PB: I know that the season is coming very fast. But I must say that erm your price offering is not acceptable to us because well it’s very high and for such a large order of 1000 units of these three categories we cannot well we cannot make a decision for buying at this price because it’s really extremely expensive compared with other European producers.

**N8 State the FTA as a general rule**

There were few examples of this strategy in the corpora. Its use entails that the speaker dissociates himself or the hearer from the imposition that follows from the FTA by stating it as a general social rule or an official regulation. A (fictitious) example would include a sign in a theatre that reads:

(21.) *Latecomers will not be seated once the performance has started*

The following is a rare example from the professional corpus:

22.PS: We don’t pretend to be cheap. We offer good quality. It’s expensive. It’s a price. *That’s life.*

**N9 Nominalise**

This strategy involves degrees of nominalisations of the verb phrase in a sentence, to distance the FTA from the agent and/or beneficiary by avoiding active verb forms. For example, the following reproach (fictitious example) could be formulated as “I am surprised that you failed to reply”, but with redress to negative face as “I am surprised at your failing to reply”. In the latter formulation, the verb phrase has been nominalised intentionally to make the reference to the actual action that constitutes the offending act (failing to reply) less directly attributable to the hearer/agent than the use of an active verb implies. It is plausible to assume that this strategy would occur more frequently in written communication as an intentional distancing device. The following is a rare example from the professional corpus.

23.PB: So what do you- what is your thinking?

**N10 Go on-record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H**

This strategy entails that the speaker explicitly claims his indebtedness to the hearer or that he explicitly disclaims any indebtedness on the part of the hearer. Examples include phrases prefacing FTAs that convey this indebtedness. There were few instances of this strategy in the negotiation corpora.
5.1.2 Output strategies: positive politeness

Positive politeness is directed at the hearer’s positive face: the desire to be liked by others for your beliefs, values, appearance, performance, possessions, etc. Positive politeness strategies are in many respects representative of exchanges between close associates or friends. They are not used only to redress face-threatening behaviour but also serve as a “social accelerator” (Brown & Levinson 1987). Brown and Levinson distinguish fifteen possible output strategies (P1 to P15), geared to satisfying positive face. They can be said to involve three basic mechanisms, generated by three different motives. Firstly, a speaker may want to claim common ground between himself and the hearer, by indicating that they share the same specific wants, goals or values (Strategies P1 to P8). Alternatively, he may wish to convey cooperativeness by emphasising that both hearer and speaker are “cooperatively engaged in a relevant activity” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 124; P9-P14). Thirdly, he may want to directly fulfil the hearer’s want to obtain, do, feel, etc. something (P15).

P1 Notice, attend to H (interests, wants, needs, goods)
This strategy entails that the speaker makes explicit that he is aware of the hearer’s wants, needs and interests. The example below occurs after two negotiators have come to an agreement. The seller points out that there are free paragliding trials that the buyer might enjoy taking part in. With this remark he demonstrates his attentiveness toward the hearer (see also P9 below).

25.IS: You must come over to the paragliding stand in the corner over there, actually. It’s erm it’s very good, you’d enjoy it.
   IB: Not bad, is it?
26.PB: We know that it is important for you to continue to produce your own products.
27.PS: I’m willing to go to F. Does that erm does that help you?

P2 Exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy with H.
This strategy entails the use of intensifying modifiers that convey an exaggerated interest in, approval of or sympathy with the hearer (as well as his actions, beliefs, etc.).

28.IS: I’m certainly very glad to hear that all three of the new models are doing well anyway.
29.PS: I don’t want to exaggerate but I really mean it. The way you start dealing with European companies is perfect.

P3 Intensify interest to H.
The seller intensifies the interest of his own contribution to the interaction by emphasising the attractiveness of his proposal for the buyer (the first example) or by promoting the product he is
trying to sell (the second example). Within a negotiation context, therefore, this strategy doubles as a selling tactic.

30.IS: F price for the backpacks.
   IB: Let me see.
   IS: It's really a good combination for you- F. Three F.

31.PS: The quality I’m sure is familiar to you. Erm as you may have noticed from our leaflets=
   PB: Uuh.
   PS: =we did quite heavy investments in machinery so erm quality for you is guaranteed.

P4 Use in-group identity markers
In-group membership of interactors can be conveyed in a variety of ways. A speaker can use in-group address forms, employ code-switching from standard language to dialect or in-group language, use jargon or slang, or use ellipsis. In the example that follows the seller switches to a relatively informal expression (slang) in what is essentially a formal context.

32.IS: Anyway, we’ll have to come down to erm the nitty-gritty of the prices of the erm the deal.

33.IB: Sorry. No can do on that one.

In the next example, the negotiator uses ellipsis in formulating her offer:

34.IS: How about a C price on the backpacks?

P5 Seek agreement
A characteristic way of claiming and emphasising common ground is to introduce rapport-inspiring or safe topics into the conversation (e.g., the weather or sports results, or a topic previously agreed upon). The introduction of safe topics allows the speaker to emphasise his agreement with the hearer and to satisfy the hearer’s desire to be right. FTAs in everyday interactions are often preceded by small talk on safe topics (e.g., “How about those Lakers? I’ve come by to borrow the car.”: fictitious example).

The following example from the student corpus shows how a seller introduces a safe topic (she talks about aspects of the transaction that have already been agreed on) in response to the buyer’s suggestion in the preceding turn that the negotiators should “get straight to the point” (i.e. that the seller quotes a price). This constitutes an attempt by the seller to create rapport with the other party, while at the same time delaying having to make what will turn out to be a very high initial offer.
35.IB: Well I- I think we can get straight to the point. I mean I know what I want so erm I think erm the only thing we have to discuss is erm about the prices.
IS: Yes. That’s right. Because I think the size of the order and the size of the colours have already been- are already- have already been cleared. As far as I remember. So okay.
IB: Yeah. That’s right.
IS: And also delivery.
IB: Right. Yes.
IS: And colours.

It should be noted that, although safe topics are clearly instances of what is traditionally regarded as small talk, the analysis of small talk proposed for the present study involves a broader definition of what is regarded as ‘safe’ in this specific negotiation context (see Section 3.7).

P6 Avoid disagreement
There appears to be a thin line between output strategies P5 and P6. However, on the basis of instances found in the corpora, it is perhaps possible to make a somewhat broad but nevertheless relatively clear distinction between the two. Whereas P5 strategies are used by the speaker to create the overall impression that the interactants are on the same wavelength (a good example of the way in which positive politeness can function as a social accelerator), P6 strategies tend to reflect the speaker’s unwillingness to disagree with the other party; they signal the speaker’s need for “preference for agreement” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 114). Broadly speaking, in the negotiation data, P5 strategies were signalled by interaction about safe topics, while P6 strategies constituted (mostly single-word) token agreements.

Excerpt 36. includes an example of token agreement from the student corpus. The buyer appears to be agreeing to the prices that the seller has just quoted. In fact, she even reinforces the agreement when the seller double-checks (“You could? Yes, I could”). However, this is a mere surface agreement that she uses to soften the counter-offer that follows (“But...”). The strategy is a long one; this is what brings about the seller’s irritated response: “Well, sometimes there is”.

36.IB: I have to do a little bit of calculating. (MUMBLES). Well, erm, I think.. (. Well, erm, yes, I think I could agree with that.
IS: You could?
IB: Yes, I could. But, there also is of course always a ‘but’.
IS: Well, sometimes there is (SIGHS).

37.IS: The double tents are price level F.
IB: Yeah.
IS: The sleeping bags are price level E and the backpacks are of H.
IB: Uhuh. Yeah. OK. Well, I can’t go along with that-

P7 Presuppose/Raise/Assert common ground
The use of this strategy conveys that the speaker tries to bring together or somehow merge the points of view of the interactants.
38.IS: You must understand that that puts us in a very difficult position

39.IB: I’m sure you would agree that we need to look at the three items separately. To weigh them separately and make a package.

In the next examples the negotiators try to convey that both parties share similar needs and that they should aim for a mutually acceptable deal.

40.PS: The same what applies to you also applies to us. We need to negotiate a price that is good for both your company and mines.

41.PS: I would like to confirm erm what you have said erm that erm that erm indeed we we we should trust one another and erm well that we have a mutual interest in erm keep business going between our erm both companies.

**P8 Make jokes**
The use of a joke presupposes shared knowledge between the speaker and the listener’s background and functions as a politeness strategy used to express solidarity between the speaker and the hearer (in terms of a shared sense of humour, or willingness to drop a formal façade in the presence of an in-group member).

42.IS: And if I don’t do a profit for my company I will be erm I will be erm ejected.
IB: And we wouldn’t want that now, would we? ((LAUGHS))
IS: ((LAUGHS))

43.PS: (.) So you are asking me to go home with a heavily loss-giving backpack operation?
PB: I’m asking you to go home with your best profit in tents.
PS: Didn’t you say in the beginning that we hope to see each other more often again? ((LAUGHS))
PB: Yeah. ((LAUGHS))

44.PB: But it’s erm surprising that erm there’s still business going on=
PS: Yeah.
PB: =for outdoor equipment an activities. It seems that people that use our equipment today don’t bother much about the weather.
PS: Yeah.
PB: If I were selling bikinis today it would be different ((LAUGHS))
PS: Right. ((LAUGHS)) That’s true.(.) But how does the business go?

Alternatively, a joke can be used to diffuse a potentially conflictive situation, as the seller does in the following example, when he completes one of the buyer’s utterances using a catchphrase from a well-known British television sitcom (about the French resistance movement during the Second World War):
Your suggested prices are of such a low qua such a low – how do you call it – low
significance. Because with the earlier discussions with erm [company X] we
always were about levels D and E minimally – minimal so=

Yeah well that’s another story. You are now dealing with me so the history
doesn’t matter really. I will make=

=Well, we have to consider our earlier conversation of course too.

Of course, but I will make, erm, I will make a (.). I will make a final proposal. 
Listen very carefully to this=

=I will say it only once (in a heavy French accent) ((LAUGHS))

What? O::h yeah. ((LAUGHS)).

**P9 Assert or presuppose S’s knowledge of and concern for H’s (positive face) wants**

One way in which the speaker indicates that he and the hearer are cooperators is to signal that he is
aware of the hearer’s wants and demonstrates his concern for those wants. On the basis of
examples found in the student corpus the difference between this strategy and the P1 strategy
“Notice and attend to H (His interests, wants, needs, goods)” was difficult to determine. Therefore,
it was decided to regard all examples that could be either one of these strategies as instances of a
single (collapsed) category, namely P1/P9. What the following examples (46-48) have in
common, at least, is that they are all attempts on the part of the speaker to indicate that he is aware
of and concerned with the hearer’s wants, needs, interests, etc. By doing so, he also conveys
attentiveness toward the hearer.

We would like to have very quick delivery please.

That’s no problem. We can do that for you.

To go in your direction a little bit more, I can lower the price for tents.

Let me propose something. Erm (.). If I say to you erm the tents at H price=

Uuh.

=and then I make efforts for you on the others.

**P10 Offer, promise**

By using this strategy the speaker conveys that whatever the hearer wants (in terms of positive
face wants: to be a member of the group, to be liked, etc.), the speaker will help him get. Output
strategies constitute offers and promises that demonstrate the speaker’s good intention to attend to
the hearer’s positive face wants. These promises or offers are very often ‘white lies’ that do not
commit the speaker explicitly to the action or intention he promises or offers. They include such
conventionalised promises as “I’ll drop by next week” or “Come and see us next time you’re in
the neighbourhood”. There were no instances of this particular strategy in the student corpus, but a
considerable number in the professional corpus.

Why not come to Utrecht? I can pick you up if you come by plane from Amsterdam
Schiphol and show you the new models=

Uhuh.

=and the new designs let’s say after the holidays so say September, October.

/Ja./ October or so.
50.PS: /Ja/. And I will visit you for sure and  erm when I will be in England well I I’m happy to to visit your in  erm your company in  erm Birmingham  erm  erm if I will be in Manchester or not is not relevant  erm so I’m happy to visit you and your company  erm and I’m happy to make an appointment for that in the coming time.

**P11 Be optimistic**

When using this strategy the speaker assumes that the hearer wants the speaker’s wants for the speaker (or for the speaker and the hearer) and will help him obtain it. In a sense, this strategy is similar to the previous one, except that wants are considered from the point of view of the speaker. If an FTA is expressed in a hopeful manner, this constitutes positive politeness:

51.IB: I’m sure we can come to a good deal for both of us-  erm- our companies.

52.IB: I’m certain we can get an agreement today.

53.PS: Yeah it sounds simply but  erm we we will well we will discuss it and  I’m sure we will  erm come out of it and agree.

**P12 Include both speaker and listener in the activity**

This strategy entails that the speaker involves the hearer in the activity that is being undertaken. The strategy is signalled, for example, by instances in which the speaker switches to the use of inclusive ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ or by referring to the speaker and hearer as being involved in the negotiation activity together.

54.IB: I expect further to realise that trading with us we have to cooperate together to survive on the Japanese market together.

55.PS: I’m ready when you are. We have to try and discuss today to come to a good package.

**P13 Give or ask for reasons (for FTA)**

By (voluntarily) giving reasons for why the speaker wants what he wants, he includes in, or shares with, the hearer his practical reasoning behind an FTA, and emphasises the closeness between the interactants (Example 56). Alternatively, asking the other for reasons behind an FTA can also emphasise closeness between interactants; in example 57, the other is given an opportunity to justify his high price demands.

56.IB: And we’re looking to really push sales through on the sleeping bags this year. Erm and for that reason it would be  erm a good, well, for us  erm in the D price. I realise that it’s  erm that it’s quite a low price. But  erm-

57.IB: Well I’m rather surprised to see that you are asking these prices. Can you explain a little bit about that?
Chapter 5: Rapport Management in the Corpora: Facework Analyses

**P14 Assume and assert reciprocity**
By pointing out the reciprocal right of the speaker and the hearer to carry out FTAs, the speaker can downtone the face-threatening value of his own FTA. In effect, what the speaker is saying is that “If you do X for me, I will do Y for you”. This type of quid pro quo strategy was expected to occur frequently in negotiation discourse. The following example is from the student corpus:

8.IS: What I could do if you wanted was - one idea - if we could perhaps raise the actual price of the tent and perhaps lower the price of the sleeping bags and the backpacks.
IB: To what degree?
IS: Say if we took then double tents to price G.
IB: Yes.
IS: And then we could lower the sleeping bags. Say, to your F. And then D or E for the backpacks.
IB: Yeah. Okay.

Note that, although the verbalisations in these examples suggest that a promise is being made, they are not regarded as instances of P10, “Promise or Offer”. The main difference between Brown and Levinson’s definitions of the two would seem to be that P10 mostly includes instances of conventionalised white lies that do not constitute ‘real’ offers and promises but merely demonstrate the speaker’s good intentions in satisfying the hearer’s positive face wants. If a speaker says “I’ll come and see you next week” even though he does not intend to do so, he has still attended to the hearer’s positive face wants (to be liked, to be regarded as a member of the group, etc.). The P10 strategy is more non-committal and less tangible than the P14 strategy. Furthermore, the P14 strategy, unlike the P10 strategy, entails that the speaker offers or promises something in return.

**P15 Give gifts to H (goods, compliments, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)**
This strategy entails that the speaker satisfies the hearer’s positive face by referring explicitly to one of the hearer’s admirable characteristics. In the corpora, this strategy was usually signalled by complimenting behaviour.

59.IB: But I mean erm I’d like to do business with you.
IS: Of course.
IB: You’re very friendly.
IS: We offer good quality.
IB: Yeah, of course that’s why I’m here for. You have a great reputation also.

60.PB: I think you have a very neat way to produce your products erm a very special planning erm for your production.

The results of the analyses of the two corpora on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s output strategies are presented and discussed in Sections 5.2 (Student corpus) and 5.3 (Professional corpus).
5.2 Student corpus: analysis of politeness strategies

The results of the politeness analysis of the student corpus are presented in Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3. In order to take into account length of individual negotiators’ contributions, or amount of talk produced relative to other student negotiators, the individual negotiators’ results are presented in terms of the proportion of positive or negative politeness strategies used by a given negotiator to the total number of VRMs produced by that negotiator (Table 5.1). Thus, the results of the VRM analysis were used in the facework analyses to quantify the relative contribution of a negotiator to a given corpus. The raw frequency scores of individual politeness strategies used by each of the student negotiators can be found in Appendix B.

Table 5.1 presents an overview of the total number of positive and negative politeness strategies identified in each of the student negotiators’ contributions. A number of general observations can be made on the basis of these frequencies. First of all, it is clear that all the student negotiators used both types of output strategies (positive and negative). Secondly, the majority of them, eight out of ten negotiators, used a higher proportion, up to twice as high in six cases, of negative than positive politeness strategies. Only negotiators 4 and 6 used comparable proportions of negative and positive politeness strategies. The proportions of overall politeness in the student negotiators’ contributions, in terms of total number of negative and positive politeness strategies per individual contribution, ranged from 0.32 to 0.6. For six student negotiators, this proportion was around 0.5 (between 0.48 and 0.53). The proportion of overall politeness for three student negotiators was lower than 0.4 (between 0.32 and 0.39).

Table 5.1  Student corpus: use of negative and positive politeness per negotiator (raw frequency and proportion of total contribution)\(^{20}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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<tr>
<td>negative politeness</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>total (raw)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>539</td>
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<tr>
<td>proportion</td>
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<td>.32</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>positive politeness</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total (raw)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>279</td>
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<td>.18</td>
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<td>.13</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.15</td>
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<td>overall politeness</td>
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<tr>
<td>total (raw)</td>
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<td>116</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>proportion</td>
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<td>.50</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 5.2 and 5.3 provide separate overviews of the overall frequencies of the two categories of politeness strategies (negative and positive), as well as percentages and ranking (within a given category, and in the corpus as a whole). Table 5.2 presents the frequencies of individual negative politeness strategies identified in the student corpus. It can be seen that negative politeness strategies N1 to N7 all occurred, as did strategy N10, “Go on-record as incurring debt”, albeit only once. There were no instances of strategies N8, “State the FTA as a general rule”, and N9, “Nominalise”, in the student negotiator data. This is not surprising as linguistic realisations of

\[^{20}\] A comparison of the average proportion of use for the female students (3, 5, 6, 7, and 9) and male students (1, 2, 4, 8, and 10) showed that the females as a group used slightly higher proportions of politeness than the males as a group: negative politeness (0.344 vs. 0.292); positive politeness (0.154 vs. 0.148); overall politeness (0.5 vs. 0.44).
these strategies would seem to be associated more with written communication contexts (formal documents and instructional texts) than speech (see also Section 5.1.1). Furthermore, the “Nominalise” strategy, in particular, involves fairly sophisticated grammatical conversions (nominalisation of the verb phrase) that may offer too great a challenge to speakers with an, as yet, relatively low level of mastery of the foreign language.

Negative politeness strategy N2, “Question or hedge”, is clearly the most frequently identified negative politeness strategy (54.6%). It is also the most frequent politeness strategy overall, making up 35.9% of the total number of politeness strategies identified in the student corpus. Again, an explanation for the high incidence of this strategy, and particularly of “hedges”, in the corpus could be the student negotiators’ over-use of the filler “well” that was noted earlier (Section 4.2.1), although “well” was obviously not the only linguistic realisation of this particular strategy. As well as a filler, “well” seemed to be used by the student negotiators as a hedging device, to delay FTAs (e.g., “I would like a- well- a slightly higher level on the tents of- well- a level of D.”). However, the coders may have been overzealous in coding as hedges verbalisations that were essentially fillers, used to keep the conversation going when negotiators ran into production problems, or were unsure about what to do next. Note that the high incidence of N2 strategies in the student corpus clearly contributes to the general trend that this group of negotiators used more negative than positive politeness strategies overall.

### Table 5.2 Student corpus: frequency & ranking of negative politeness strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>category</th>
<th>negative politeness</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>% ( &amp; rank ) in category</th>
<th>% ( &amp; rank ) in corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N1</td>
<td>conventional indirectness</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>17.6 (2)</td>
<td>11.6 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N2</td>
<td>hedge, question</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>54.6 (1)</td>
<td>35.9 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N3</td>
<td>be pessimistic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.3 (7)</td>
<td>0.8 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N4</td>
<td>minimise imposition</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.9 (5)</td>
<td>3.9 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N5</td>
<td>give deference</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6.5 (4)</td>
<td>4.3 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N6</td>
<td>apologise</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.2 (6)</td>
<td>3.4 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N7</td>
<td>impersonalise</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>8.7 (3)</td>
<td>5.7 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N8</td>
<td>state FTA as general rule</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N9</td>
<td>nominalise</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N10</td>
<td>go on-record as incurring debt</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2 (8)</td>
<td>0.1 (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>539</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategy N1, “Use conventional indirectness”, was the next most frequently identified strategy in the category of negative strategies (17.6%), and in the student corpus overall (11.6% of all politeness strategies). Realisations of this strategy were restricted almost exclusively to the use of modals ‘can’, ‘could’, and ‘would’ in suggestions and proposals (e.g., “I would like to ask for level A on the tents” and “You could lower the levels”), and to proposals formulated as questions (e.g., “Can I do you a proposal now?”).

Strategy N7, “Impersonalise speaker or hearer”, was also identified relatively frequently, making up 5.7% of the total number of politeness strategies in the student corpus overall, and 8.7% of all negative politeness strategies. The next most frequent strategies, N4, “Minimise the imposition”, and N5, “Give deference”, constituted 3.9% and 4.3% respectively of all politeness strategies in the student corpus (and 5.9% and 6.5% of strategies in their category). “Apologise”, strategy N6, made up 3.4% of all politeness strategies in the corpus (5.2% in its category). The linguistic form
used by the student negotiators to encode this output strategy was almost exclusively the phrase “I’m sorry”, uttered prior to or following rejections or disagreements (e.g., “I can’t go along with that. I’m sorry.” or “I’m sorry. No. That’s too high.”).

Table 5.3 presents the frequencies of occurrence in the student corpus of individual strategies in the positive politeness category. All the strategies identified by Brown and Levinson (P1-P15) occurred in the corpus. Strategies P12, “Include speaker and hearer in the activity”, and P13, “Give (or ask for) reasons for the FTA”, were identified most frequently, making up 6.6% and 6.2% respectively of the total number of strategies used by the student negotiators (19.4% and 18.3% in their category). This is particularly interesting when we realise that both strategies are outputs of Brown and Levinson’s super-strategy “Convey that speaker and hearer are cooperators” (see also Section 5.1.2). In negotiation contexts, cooperativeness is regarded as an important bargaining strategy that can create rapport and increase the likelihood of a mutually beneficial outcome. Strategy P14, “Assume or assert reciprocity”, another positive politeness strategy that is an output of the ‘Cooperativeness’ super-strategy, and which was often manifested in the negotiation corpora as what was referred to earlier as a quid pro quo bargaining strategy (see Section 5.1.2), was also identified, although less frequently (2.7% of all politeness strategies, and 7.9% of all positive politeness strategies). P10, “Offer, promise”, and P11, “Be optimistic”, occurred only very infrequently, in three student negotiators’ contributions only (4 and 2 instances in the corpus overall). In all, 16.2% of all politeness strategies in the student corpus were outputs of the ‘Cooperativeness’ super-strategy.

“Claim common ground”, another one of Brown and Levinson’s super-strategies, whose outputs incorporate positive politeness strategies P1 to P8, would seem to be particularly important from the point of view of rapport-building. Claiming common ground and emphasising common interests are ways to show connectedness and solidarity between interactants. In a negotiation setting, such strategies will be important in establishing and emphasising that the bargaining relationship is interdependent, and could be mutually beneficial to both parties. In all, the output

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>category</th>
<th>positive politeness</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>% ( &amp; rank) in category</th>
<th>% ( &amp; rank) in corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1/9 notice H/ show concern for H</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13.6 (3)</td>
<td>4.6 (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 exaggerate interest &amp; approval</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13.3 (4)</td>
<td>4.5 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 intensify interest to H</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>05.0 (7)</td>
<td>1.7 (13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 use in-group identity markers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>03.2 (9)</td>
<td>1.1 (15)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 seek agreement</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>05.0 (7)</td>
<td>1.7 (13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6 avoid disagreement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00.7 (13)</td>
<td>0.2 (20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7 establish common ground</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>07.5 (6)</td>
<td>2.6 (12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8 joke</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>02.1 (10)</td>
<td>0.7 (17)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10 offer, promise</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>01.4 (12)</td>
<td>0.5 (19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 be optimistic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00.7 (13)</td>
<td>0.2 (20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12 include S and H in activity</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>19.4 (1)</td>
<td>6.6 (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 give (or ask for) reasons</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>18.3 (2)</td>
<td>6.2 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14 assume or assert reciprocity</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>07.9 (5)</td>
<td>2.7 (11)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15 give goods, sympathy, etc.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>01.8 (10)</td>
<td>0.6 (18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>279</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>34.1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
strategies of the “Claim common ground” super-strategy constituted 17.1% of the total number of politeness strategies in the student corpus. At an individual strategy level, the positive politeness strategies P1, “Notice and attend to the hearer”, P2, “Exaggerate interest in and approval of hearer”, and P7, “Establish common ground” were the most frequently identified strategies of this set, making up 11.7% of the total number of politeness strategies in the corpus (and 34.4% of all positive politeness strategies). P3, “Intensify interest to the hearer” and P5, “Seek agreement” were the next most frequently identified strategies of this set (3.4% of the total number of politeness strategies in the corpus, and 10% of strategies in its category). P8, “Joke” and P6, “Avoid disagreement” occurred very infrequently (6 and 2 instances overall). Finally, strategy P15, signalled largely by complimenting behaviour, occurred only 6 times in the student corpus (less than 1% of all politeness strategies identified). The next section reports on the analysis of politeness strategies in the professional corpus.

5.3 Professional corpus: analysis of politeness strategies

The results of the politeness analyses of the professional data are presented in Tables 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6. In order to take into account length of individual negotiators’ contributions, the individual negotiators’ results are again presented in terms of the proportion of positive or negative politeness strategies used by a given negotiator to the total number of VRMs produced by that negotiator (Table 5.4). The raw frequency scores of individual politeness strategies used by each of the professional negotiators can be found in Appendix B.

Table 5.4 gives an overview of the total number of positive and negative politeness strategies used by each of the professional negotiators. Firstly, it is clear that all the negotiators used both negative and positive politeness strategies. Secondly, it can be seen that nine professional negotiators used a higher proportion of positive than negative politeness strategies. Four negotiators used similar proportions of positive and negative politeness strategies (negotiators 1, 3, 4 and 6), while only one professional, negotiator 2, used a slightly higher proportion of negative than positive politeness strategies. Interestingly, this contrasts with the findings for the student negotiators who were found, on the whole, to have used higher proportions of negative than positive politeness strategies (see Section 5.2, Table 5.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.4</th>
<th>Professional corpus: use of negative and positive politeness per negotiator (raw frequency and proportion of total contribution)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>professional negotiators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative politeness total</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proportion</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive politeness total</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proportion</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall politeness total</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proportion</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In terms of overall politeness, or proportion of both positive and negative politeness strategies per individual contribution, the professional negotiators scored between 0.51 and 0.88. The proportions of five negotiators were at the higher end of this range, between 0.7 and 0.88 (negotiators 4, 8, 11, 12, and 13). For negotiators 1, 2, 3, 9, and 10, proportions were between 0.61 and 0.67. Finally, four proportions were at the lower end of the range, between 0.51 and 0.58 (negotiators 5, 6, 7, and 14). If we compare these values to those found for the student negotiator data, there again appears to be a marked difference. The proportions of overall politeness for the student negotiators ranged from 0.32 to 0.6, with six of the ten negotiators scoring 0.5 or even lower (see Table 5.1). In contrast, Table 5.4 shows that the proportions of overall politeness of ten of the 14 professional negotiators are higher than 0.6, which was the highest proportion reported for the group of student negotiators. On the whole, then, the professional negotiators would seem to have used more politeness relative to the student negotiators. This difference was found to be very highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=3.691, p<0.001).

It would appear that the professional negotiators’ greater use of positive politeness strategies, in particular, has attributed to the higher degree of politeness strategies in the professional corpus. If we compare the proportions of positive politeness per individual contribution reported for the student and professional negotiators, we can see that the proportions found for the student negotiators ranged between 0.07 and 0.26 (with eight proportions lower than 0.19), while the proportions of positive politeness for the professional negotiators ranged between 0.27 and 0.54. In other words, the proportions of positive politeness per contribution of the professional negotiators are all higher than the highest proportion found for a student negotiator. This difference was also found to be very highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z= 4.103, p<0.001).

The proportions of negative politeness per contribution for each of the two groups (students and professionals) were comparable. The proportions for eleven of the fourteen professional negotiators were in the range recorded for the student negotiators (0.18 to 0.46). Three proportions recorded for the professional negotiators were the same as (0.18), or slightly lower (0.17) than, the lowest negative politeness proportion reported in the group of student negotiators (see Section 5.2, Table 5.1).

Tables 5.5 and 5.6 present the frequencies, overall percentages, ranking within category (negative or positive politeness), and ranking in the corpus as a whole, of individual strategies in the professional corpus. The frequencies of negative politeness strategies in the corpus will be reported and discussed first (see Table 5.5). It can be seen that all the negative politeness strategies identified by Brown and Levinson (N1-N10) occurred in the professional corpus. Strategy N2, “Hedge, question”, was the most frequently identified negative politeness strategy, making up 36.6% of all negative politeness strategies (and 15.3% of all politeness strategies identified). N2 was also the most frequently occurring (negative) politeness strategy in the student corpus (see Section 5.2, Table 5.2). However, the percentage of N2 occurrence, relative to total number of politeness strategies, was clearly higher for the student negotiators, at 35.9% (as opposed to 15.3% for the professional corpus). This difference was found to be significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.521, p<0.05). It should be kept in mind, however, that the high frequency of N2 in the student corpus may have been attributable, in part at least, to certain linguistic realisations being identified as hedges rather than simple fillers used to cover up awkward silences (see Section 5.2). Incidentally, this will not have been the case with respect to identification of N2 in the professional corpus. Here, the use of hedges was much clearer and their linguistic realisations more easily identifiable (e.g., “How about something like I?”, “We were thinking of a price around B” or “We can perhaps talk about the three items separately?”).
Table 5.5 shows that the next most frequently identified negative politeness strategy in the professional corpus was N1, “Be conventionally indirect”, which accounted for 30.2% of all negative politeness strategies (and 12.6% of all politeness strategies). This percentage is only slightly higher than the percentage of N1 strategies identified in the student corpus, where it was also the second most frequently identified (negative) politeness strategy. Nevertheless, the difference in the use of N1 by the two groups of negotiators was found to be significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.238, p<0.05).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>category</th>
<th>negative politeness</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>% (&amp; rank) in category</th>
<th>% (&amp; rank) in corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N1</td>
<td>conventional indirectness</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>30.2 (2)</td>
<td>12.6 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N2</td>
<td>hedge, question</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>36.6 (1)</td>
<td>15.3 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N3</td>
<td>be pessimistic</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>06.0 (4)</td>
<td>02.5 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N4</td>
<td>minimise imposition</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>02.8 (7)</td>
<td>01.2 (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N5</td>
<td>give deference</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>04.7 (5)</td>
<td>02.0 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N6</td>
<td>apologise</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>03.2 (6)</td>
<td>01.3 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N7</td>
<td>impersonalise</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>15.4 (3)</td>
<td>06.4 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N8</td>
<td>state FTA as general rule</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>00.4=(8)</td>
<td>0.15=(22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N9</td>
<td>normalise</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00.2 (10)</td>
<td>0.07 (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N10</td>
<td>go on-record as incurring debt</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>00.4=(8)</td>
<td>00.2=(22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>totals</strong></td>
<td>1108</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next most frequently identified negative politeness strategy in the professional corpus was N7, “Impersonalise hearer or speaker”, which accounted for 15% of all negative politeness strategies (and 6.4% of all politeness strategies). In the student corpus, N7 only constituted 5.7% of all strategies. Strategy N3, “Be pessimistic”, which hardly occurred in the student corpus, was the next most frequently identified negative politeness strategy in the professional corpus, constituting 6% of all negative politeness strategies (and 2.5% of politeness strategies overall).

N5, “Give deference” (4.7% of negative politeness strategies), N6, “Apologise” (3.2% of negative politeness strategies), and N4, “Minimise the imposition” (2.8% of negative politeness strategies) were the next most frequently identified negative politeness strategies in the professional corpus. The percentages of N5 and N6 strategies in the student corpus were comparable, at 4.3% and 3.4% overall. With respect to N6, “Apologise”, it is perhaps interesting to note that, in contrast to the student negotiators, who realised this strategy almost exclusively by using the phrase “I’m sorry” (see Section 5.2), the professional negotiators also opted for two other possible realisations of N6. In addition to using on-record apologies, like the student negotiators, they either “indicated reluctance” to do the FTA (as in “We really don’t want to do this, but..”) or “gave overwhelming reasons” for the FTA (See Brown & Levinson 1987: 188-189). Strategy N4 made up 3.9% of all politeness strategies identified in the student corpus. The difference in use of N4 by the student and professional negotiators was found to be significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=0.296, p<0.05).

Strategies N8, “State FTA as general rule”, which did not occur at all in the student corpus, and N10, “Go on-record as incurring debt”, which was identified only once in the student data, rarely occurred in the professional corpus (four and five instances respectively). Finally, strategy
N9, “Nominalise”, was the least frequently occurring negative politeness strategy in the professional corpus (only two instances). Again, this strategy did not occur in the student corpus.

Table 5.6 Professional corpus: frequency & ranking of positive strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>category positive politeness</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>% (&amp; rank) in category</th>
<th>% (&amp; rank) in corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1/9 notice &amp; attend/ show concern for H</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>18.1 (2)</td>
<td>10.6 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 exaggerate interest &amp; approval</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>03.2 (9)</td>
<td>01.9 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 intensify interest to H</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>09.1 (5)</td>
<td>05.3 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 use in-group identity markers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>00.6 (14)</td>
<td>00.4 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 seek agreement</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>18.8 (1)</td>
<td>11.0 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6 avoid disagreement</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>06.2 (7)</td>
<td>03.6 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7 establish common ground</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>10.0 (4)</td>
<td>05.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8 joke</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>02.9 (11)</td>
<td>01.7 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10 offer, promise</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>03.0 (10)</td>
<td>01.8 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 be optimistic</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>02.8 (12)</td>
<td>01.6 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12 include S and H in activity</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>13.2 (3)</td>
<td>07.7 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 give (or ask for) reasons</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>07.3 (6)</td>
<td>04.3 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14 assume or assert reciprocity</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>03.7 (8)</td>
<td>02.2 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15 give goods, sympathy, etc.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>00.8 (13)</td>
<td>00.5 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totals</td>
<td>1549</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6 presents the frequencies of occurrence in the professional corpus of individual strategies in the positive politeness category. All the positive politeness strategies Brown and Levinson identified (P1-P15) occurred in the professional corpus. The most frequently identified positive politeness strategy was P5, “Seek agreement”, constituting 18.8% of all positive politeness strategies and 11% of the total number of politeness strategies in the corpus (the third most frequently identified politeness strategy overall). A possible realisation of the P5 strategy is to use a form of repetition to check understanding and at the same time elicit agreement from the other. The professional negotiators, for example, would frame proposals, through repetition, from the perspective of the other, resulting in outputs such as “So what you are basically saying is that you would like to see a higher price for the backpacks, is that right?”. This type of verbal behaviour was very rare in the student data. Another possible realisation of the P5 strategy is to introduce so-called safe topics, or small talk (see also Section 5.4). Small talk frequently occurred in the professional corpus, but was very rare in the student data. As a result, the number of P5 strategies identified in the student corpus was considerably lower than in the professional corpus (see Section 5.2, Table 5.3). In the student corpus, it constituted a mere 1.7% of all politeness strategies identified. The difference in use of P5 by students and professionals was found to be very highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=3.898, p<0.001).

The second most frequently identified positive politeness strategy in the professional corpus was ‘combined’ strategy P1/P9, “Notice, attend to, and show concern for hearer” (see Section 5.1.2). This strategy made up 18.1% of positive politeness strategies, and 10.6% of all politeness strategies identified in the professional corpus overall. It was the third most frequent positive politeness strategy in the student corpus (4.6% of all politeness strategies). However, it is clear that the percentage of P1/P9 was considerably higher in the professional corpus. Indeed, the difference was found to be very highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=3.829, p<0.001). The third most frequent positive politeness strategy in the professional data was P12, “Include speaker and hearer in the
activity” (13.2% of all positive politeness strategies). Note that this output of Brown and Levinson’s super-strategy “Show that speaker and hearer are cooperators” was the most frequently used positive politeness strategy in the student corpus (19.4% of all positive politeness strategies).

Strategies P7, “Establish common ground”, and P3, “Intensify interest to hearer” also occurred relatively frequently in the professional corpus, making up 10% and 9.1% respectively of all positive politeness strategies, and 5.9% and 5.3% of all politeness strategies in the corpus. One output of the P3 strategy was to highlight advantages of the deal for the other or to emphasise the quality of a particular product. This output occurred frequently in the professional corpus. It was said earlier that this strategy, in a sales negotiation setting, seems to double as a selling tactic (see also Section 5.1.1). P3 was used far less frequently (only 14 instances) in the student corpus. The difference in use was found to be highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=3.097, p<0.01). P7, “Establish common ground”, was also used far less frequently by the student negotiators, making up only 2.6% of strategies in the student corpus, than by the professionals. The difference in use of P7 by the two groups of negotiators was found to be very highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=3.357, p<0.001).

Strategies P13, “Give and ask for reasons” and P6, “Avoid disagreement” together make up 13.5% of all positive politeness strategies identified in the professional corpus. They are the sixth and seventh most frequently identified positive politeness strategies in the professional data. Interestingly, P13 was the third most frequent positive politeness strategy in the student corpus. A mere 0.2% of politeness strategies used by the student negotiators consisted of P6 strategies. The difference in P6 use by the student and professional negotiators was indeed found to be very highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=4.016, p<0.001). Strategies P14, “Assume and assert reciprocity”, P2, “Exaggerate interest and approval”, P10, “Offer, promise”, and P8, “Joke” together account for nearly 13% of all positive politeness strategies in the professional corpus, ranked eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh respectively, in their category. Interestingly, P2 and P14 were the fourth and fifth most frequent positive politeness strategies in the student corpus, while P8 and P10 were ranked ninth and eleventh most frequent. Of this set, only the difference in use of P8 by the student and professional negotiators was found to be significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.321, p<0.05).

Finally, P11, “Be optimistic”, P15, “Give goods”, and P4, “Use in-group identity markers”, occurred least frequently in the professional corpus, together accounting for just over 4% of all positive politeness strategies in the professional data. These three strategies together make up a mere 2.9% of politeness strategies in the student corpus. From this set, only the difference in use of P11 by the student and professional negotiators was found to be significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.377, p<0.05).

It was said earlier that positive politeness, in particular, was expected to play an important role in creating and maintaining rapport. The strategies of positive politeness that Brown and Levinson identify broadly involve three underlying mechanisms (Section 5.1.2). Two of these mechanisms, claiming common ground and showing that interactants are cooperators, would seem to be particularly important in negotiations. It was said earlier that cooperativeness is regarded to be an important contributor to negotiation success and mutually satisfactory outcomes. If we take a closer look at the results of the politeness analysis of the professional data, we can see that the negotiators made efforts both to “claim common ground” (strategies P1 to P8) and to “show that interactants are cooperators” (strategies P10 to P14). However, and perhaps surprisingly, far greater effort seems to have been invested overall in “claiming common ground” than “showing cooperativeness”. A total of 40.4% of all strategies in the professional corpus were aimed at
claiming common ground, while only 17.6% of all strategies were aimed at conveying cooperativeness. Less than 1% of strategies aimed at fulfilling the other’s wants directly (P15), the third mechanism underlying positive politeness.

If we contrast these figures with the findings for the student corpus, there is a marked difference. The student negotiators appear to have invested similar efforts in claiming common ground and showing cooperativeness between negotiators. In the student corpus, a total of only 17.1% of all strategies were aimed at creating common ground, while a comparable 16.2% of all strategies were aimed at showing that the negotiators were cooperators. Again, as was the case for the professional corpus, fewer than 1% of all strategies aimed to fulfil the other’s wants directly. Thus, it would seem that, with regard to positive politeness as a means to create and maintain rapport, the professional negotiators placed greater emphasis on creating common ground than showing cooperativeness. The above trends are confirmed at the individual level, both with regard to the student and the professional negotiators (see Appendix B). The difference found between the student negotiators and professional negotiators with regard to the use of Brown and Levinson’s super-strategy “claiming common ground” (incorporating strategies P1 to P8) was found to be very highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=4.077, p<0.001).

The next two sections deal with the results of analyses that were carried out to investigate aspects of facework in the discourse content and the participation domain of rapport management.

### 5.4 Small talk in the negotiation corpora

Small talk in the present investigation was defined as any talk in the negotiation corpora that is not directly related to central transaction, the sale (pricing) of three products (sleeping bags, tents, and backpacks). Thus, small talk can consist of any talk that occurs on public, ‘known’ information about neutral, safe ‘everyday’ topics, such as sports results, current news events, traffic on the way in, etc. as well as general, business-related information about the state of the economy, corporate history, recent strategic developments, etc (see also Section 3.7). The present analysis focused on determining whether, where, and to what extent such talk occurred in the corpora, and what types of topics were introduced.

To this end, the transcripts of the negotiations in the corpora were first analysed for instances of small talk; subsequently, frequency, locus, and category of topic were established per speaker, as well as for the corpora as a whole. Table 5.7 shows the findings with regard to categories of small talk topics in the student and professional corpora. The categories identified are inspired by and overlap, in part, Xing’s taxonomy of small talk strategies in Chinese-British business meetings (Xing 2000). Table 5.8 shows the occurrence of small talk in the corpora, for each negotiator, on the basis of locus (negotiation stage), and frequency.

It can be seen from Table 5.7 that eight different categories of small talk, initiator, business relationship, future business, business environment, product information, corporate information, invitation and non-business, could be distinguished in the negotiation data. Three categories that occurred in the professional corpus, business environment, product information, and corporate information, did not occur in the student corpus. Category 1, initiator, consisted mostly of simple “Initiate-Satisfy pairs” (Edmondson & House 1981; See also Section 3.6) in the initial opening stages of the negotiations, and comprised greetings (“IS: “Good morning, Mr. X.” IB: “Good morning.”), enquiries after well-being (PB: “How are you today” PS: “Fine, thank you.”),
introductions (PS: “Good morning, X is the name.” PB: “Nice to meet you. My name is Y.”), business card exchange (PS: “Let me present you my business card.” PB: “Thank you. Here’s mine”), and information about function or work history (PS: “You are not at Sports & Travel a couple of months ago, what was it, seven or eight months ago or something like that? So what have you done before you entered Sports & Travel?” “PB: “I represented a firm that was more in the sports articles like tennis rackets and table tennis bats.”). Category 1 small talk was found to occur in both corpora. It was observed that, although the negotiators in both groups exchanged initial greetings, the student negotiators did not always do so adequately, the other party in three cases failing to reciprocate (see Dow 1999 for similar findings regarding inexperienced negotiators). Similarly, students also failed to reciprocate in a number of instances to enquiries after general well-being (IS: “I’m X. How are you today?” IB: Ø. My name is X and I am here today to talk about…”).

Table 5.7 Small talk in both corpora: categories, topics, and frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Corpus</th>
<th>topics</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>categories</td>
<td>topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. initiator</td>
<td>greeting; enquiry after well-being; introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. business relationship</td>
<td>pre-negotiation contact</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. future business</td>
<td>future cooperation</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. business environment</td>
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<td>5. product information</td>
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<td>6. corporate information</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. invitation</td>
<td>lunch; drinks</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. non-business</td>
<td>hobby</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Corpus</th>
<th>topics</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>categories</td>
<td>topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. initiator</td>
<td>greeting; enquiry after well-being; introduction; business card exchange; personal work history</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. business relationship</td>
<td>pre-negotiation contact; history of corporate relationship</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. future business</td>
<td>future cooperation; future dealings</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. business environment</td>
<td>markets; target groups; competitors; the economy; EU</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. product information</td>
<td>product characteristics; manufacturing information; product range; delivery</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. corporate information</td>
<td>management; company history; core activities; distribution, promotion, personnel, or pricing policy</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. invitation</td>
<td>lunch; drinks; coffee; company/factory visit (business); private visit</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. non-business</td>
<td>travel; sports; current affairs; culture; foreign language; hobbies; holidays; family</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Category 2, business relationship, which occurred in both corpora, incorporated longer sequences of talk about pre-negotiation contact between the two companies:

5.1

IS: We had a talk last week between your company and mines, between Mr. De Vries and Mr. Canterbury and erm they reached a package deal of double tents, sleeping bags and backpacks and I suggest we go further with that.

IB: That’s correct. Shall we do it per product or as a package?
Category 2 also included talk about the history between the two companies or the two interactants, as in the following example:

5.2
PS:  *You have been a good customer of ours for many years and we would like to continue that. You are our entry into France and the French market.*
PB:  Uuhh. Well, we would be happy to assist you of course.

Category 3, future business, also occurred in both corpora. It incorporated any talk about future cooperation or future business deals (not necessarily with the counterpart’s organisation). The following is an example from one of the professional negotiations:

5.3
PS:  Promotion. We we (.) you know we have to promote to make more publicity.
PB:  Yeah.
PS:  In the magazines.
PB:  Uuhh.  
PS:  *And there were already talks between both our organisations to do it jointly. I think that is also one of the elements we should discuss tomorrow at least this week how we can do it jointly in the future.*
PB:  Uuhh.
PS:  Because that might also spare a certain amount of money for both because we share it together.

Category 4, business environment, occurred in the professional corpus, but not in the student corpus. It incorporated any talk about the market, target groups, competitors, or the economy. The following are two examples from the professional corpus. The first features talk about competitors, the second talk about a target group:

5.4
PB:  *I will tell you though that quality-wise it’s a very good standard and gives us a chance to compete against erm the big department stores who get a lot of equipment from Singapore and Korea and those places. Well it has been mentioned that the quality isn’t European standard. There have been complaints. We have our information from these places and as our shops are specialising in these things a person who wants good articles would come to us rather than go=*
PS:  Yeah.
PB:  =to the department stores.

5.5
PS:  *But there is a sort of movement in Germany that they will pay a little more for the high quality than instead of erm (.) if there is the design and so on?*
PB:  Oh yes. I think there is a general trend in Germany that people come to the conclusion that in the long run it pays to buy quality. Any article that is bought and only lasts one summer
and is then thrown away is in the end more expensive than having good quality articles like a tent that could last three or four seasons.

PS: Uhuh.
PB: I- That’s not only in sports but I think that goes for a lot of things nowadays that people say erm quality in the long run is better.

Product information, category 5, occurred frequently in the professional corpus, but not in the student corpus. This category incorporates any talk about general product delivery terms, the characteristics of the products being negotiated, the product range in general that they are part of, or the production procedures involved in their manufacture. The following is an example from the professional corpus:

5.6
PS: The tents are made of first-class textile and a big part of the price is of course is the material. The labour cost is very low because we have highly automated our production process.
PB: Uhuh.
PS: And in the old days and not so long ago most tents as I explained were made in cheap labour countries.
PB: Uhuh.
PS: But for this type of tents has no sense anymore. This is typically a European product for a European market. And we want to give the user an optional comfort and rugged light-weight tent=
PB: Uhuh.
PS: =which we can use under all European climatological conditions.

Category 6, corporate information, occurred in the professional corpus, but not in the student corpus. It included any instances of talk about management, corporate history, core activities, or the general pricing, distribution, personnel, or promotion policies of the two companies represented in a negotiation. The following are examples of small talk sequences from two of the professional negotiations (about corporate history and general pricing policy):

5.7
PS: Uhuh. Do you have to sell your marketing erm sales policy? Because before you were selling to wholesalers I suppose?
PB: No, we were always a chain of stores=
PS: Uhuh.
PB: =highly specialised and=
PS: /Ja/.
PB: =quite known I think from erm all the consumers erm the young people=
PS: Uhuh.
PB: =that travel and go camping.
5.8
PS: So well, it’s difficult. (.) You know what our European price level is nowadays. We cannot make any more of those differences between countries because people are erm going over the border. It’s not yet 92 but we are close to it and erm we cannot afford anymo re to have erm big price differentials between let’s say Italy and erm France because people will buy their products at the other side of the frontier.

PB: Uuhh.

Category 7, invitation, occurred in the student and professional corpora, usually in the closing stages of a negotiation. The following are examples from the student and professional corpora:

5.9
IS: It was nice doing business with you.
IB: Yes.
IS: We will draw up a contract later on but now, are we going to have a drink?
IB: Yes. OK. Good idea.

5.10
PS: I may suggest- have you been before in Amsterdam?
PB: Oh yes.
PS: And Utrecht?
PB: Uuhh.
PS: Why not come to Utrecht? I can pick you up if you come by plane from Amsterdam Schiphol and show you the new models=
PB: Hmm. Yeah, why not?
PS: =and the new design let’s say after the holidays so say-
PB: -September, October.
PS: /Ja/ October or so.
PB: OK. We make an appointment and we have a look and you give us an idea=
PS: Uuhh.
PB: =what’s on offer for the next year.

As was observed to be the case with respect to a number of initial greeting exchanges (see category 1 above) the students reacted to ‘taking leave’ routines inadequately as well. Excerpt 5.9 provides an example, in that IB does not adequately reciprocate the “social good” given by IS in the first turn in the excerpt. Rather than just responding with a simple “Yes” (suggesting: “Yes it was nice doing business with me, wasn’t it?”) the response might have reflected greater ‘reciprocity’ if it had been formulated as ‘Yes, and with you’ or ‘Yes, thank you for coming all the way to […]”. This example was not an isolated case of inadequate response in the student corpus.

Finally, the category non-business, which occurred in the professional and only once in the student corpus, included any talk on everyday, non-business topics, including travel, culture, language, sports, hobbies, holidays, family, or current affairs. The following example is from the professional corpus:
5.11

PB: I would like to thank you for coming and having travelled such a long time. Maybe in a few years time you will have the possibility of erms travelling high speed train?

PS: high speed train?

PB: from Amsterdam to Paris will be two hours maybe.

PS: I heard so but-

PB: -(Laughs) if erms projects are realistic

PS: I don’t think-

PB: -I don’t know on the Dutch side erms how erms how far are the erms-

PS: -It? I’m living not so far from the airport-

PB: -Oh?

PS: They are building there at the moment. The tracks. There’s a station already.

Table 5.8 Small talk in both corpora: frequency & locus (per negotiator)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>negotiator</th>
<th>1. opening</th>
<th>2. bargaining</th>
<th>3. closing</th>
<th>frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student corpus: negotiation stages (locus)</td>
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<p>| professional corpus: negotiation stages (locus) |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>negotiator</th>
<th>1. opening</th>
<th>2. bargaining</th>
<th>3. closing</th>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>totals</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>192</td>
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</table>

Table 5.8 presents frequencies of small talk, per speaker, in both the student and professional negotiations. The table also shows in which negotiation stage (opening, bargaining or closing) a given instance of small talk occurred. It can be seen that the student negotiators engaged in very little small talk overall. Relative frequencies in the professional corpus, for each professional
speaker, were considerably higher than for the student negotiators. We have already seen that positive politeness strategy P5, “Seek agreement”, whose outputs include initiating safe topics, was used significantly more frequently by professional than student negotiators (see Section 5.3). P7, “Establish common ground”, whose outputs can include small talk, also occurred considerably more frequently in the professional than the student corpus.

If the two corpora are compared, it can be seen from Table 5.8 that all of the professional negotiators engaged in small talk in their individual contributions, compared to eight out of the ten student negotiators. Furthermore, when we compare locus of occurrence, it can be seen that the professionals used small talk in all three stages of their negotiations, while the student negotiators engaged in small talk only in the opening and closing stages, usually restricting themselves to very short sequences (Initiate-Satisfy pairs).

The analysis of the topics that formed the basis of the small talk identified in the two corpora shows that the negotiators engaged only relatively infrequently in small talk on topics more generally regarded in everyday social encounters as ‘characteristic’ safe topics, such as current news events, the weather, personal background, personal interests, sports, etc. (Category 8, non-business). Instead, the topics introduced in the two corpora, and the professional corpus in particular, were largely business-related in the sense that they were effectively further instances of professional talk, although of a clearly different type than the professional transaction-related talk that these encounters generated (sequences of offers and rejections/acceptances). Generally speaking, then, the negotiators did not engage frequently in talk that was clearly external to the overall business context of their professional role as constituent negotiator, or clearly unrelated to the transactional goal of the exchange (Category non-business).

### 5.4.1 Interculturalness as a small talk topic

In seven out of the nine professional negotiations, small talk sequences occurred about the international context of the negotiation event. These sequences involved discussions of language difficulties encountered, experience with other’s culture, cultural idiosyncrasies (of own or other’s culture), cultural comparisons, and their effect on negotiating, or on doing business in general (Category 8, non-business). The following three examples are from the professional corpus. The first involves the Japanese negotiator (talking about ‘characteristics’ of Japanese business culture), the second involves one of the Dutch negotiators (talking with a French counterpart about the undesirable influx of Dutch tourists in France), and the third example is initiated by the Italian negotiator (the awkwardness of using English as a lingua franca in a negotiation between a Dutchman and an Italian):

5.12  
PB: You know I work for the company. *So in Japan the company have a big responsibility for the people.* Not only the place to get money. I also have a subordinate. Also so for them the- to some extent- not I mean in the short period but in the long period we get- we must get profit. In that meaning as I said to you quality is number one. To keep number one product must be developed. Japanese people like new product as you know I think. So in that meaning frankly speaking I have to say that we must also research what’s new- what’s new. Not only your company or other company.  
PS: That’s right.
5.13
PS: So actually I don’t know whether it’s a plus here with a French company because we know our Dutch campers are not always so loved in certain parts of France.
PB: Yes.
PS: We come with too many of us so-
PB: -Excuse me?
PS: We come with too many in certain parts of France.
PB: Oh yes.
PS: Those campers so-
PB: Right. Erm I don’t know that French people don’t like to receive Dutch tourists.
PS: Yes, but we know that certain parts of France are crowded with tourists.
PB: Yes, Ardeche and Bordeaux. (Laughs)
PS: Right. (Laughs)

5.14
PB: Could you repeat that? Actually this is really strange. I am Italian, you are Dutch and we are speaking in English. It would be difficult for everyone.
PS: Yes, it would be fine for me if we could do it in Dutch. (Laughs)
PB: (Laughs) I’m sure. OK, so you were saying…

There were no instances of small talk about ‘interculturalness’ in the student corpus. This clear discrepancy between the two groups might be due, in part, to the fact that the student negotiators were ‘playing’ at being from different cultures (British vs. Dutch), while the professional negotiators were truly international, involving participants who really did have different cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, within the group of professionals, the ten negotiators that took part in the face-to-face negotiations (the supplementary data set; See Section 3.12.2) were taking or had taken part in a course in intercultural business communication, as part of the EBCAM (European Business Communication and Management) programme that was offered by the University of Duisberg, Germany at the time of the recordings. It could be the case, therefore, that these participants may have been sensitised to cross-cultural differences and similarities and their potential effects on international encounters and may, as a result, have opted to employ this topic as a source of small talk more readily than they would have done otherwise. However, it should be pointed out that two of the four lingua franca negotiators who were not part of this sub-group and did not take part in a similar course at the time of, or prior to, the recordings (the four Dutch professionals involved in the telenegotiations) also introduced interculturalness as a small talk topic.

5.4.2 Tacit bargaining episodes

It was said above that the student negotiators spent very little time on pre-bargaining small talk in their negotiations, usually restricting themselves to greetings, and brief introductions and enquiries after general well-being. As a result, the students’ transitions from the initial pre-bargaining opening phase to the central bargaining phase can generally be seen to be very abrupt. The student negotiators consistently moved from the initial to the central negotiation phase by launching head-on into a first offer (having proffered the procedural question: IS: “Shall I go first or you?”); the professionals, on the other hand, following their initial (longer)
small talk exchanges, usually involving category 8 topics (non-business), invariably spent time on so-called “feeling out procedures” (Pruitt 1981: 5).

Feeling out procedures essentially constitute discussions that bypass the main issues at stake in a negotiation (in this case, deciding on a price for the three products), in which participants almost casually state preferences and set limits, while simultaneously showing a keen interest in the other party’s preferences. Unlike the student negotiators, the professionals only began to articulate proposals explicitly after they had tested the waters in this way. Pruitt (1981) suggests two reasons for such pre-bargaining episodes, which both reflect a reluctance to initiate ‘real’ negotiations. In this respect, feeling out procedures are clearly motivated by face concerns. On the one hand, Pruitt suggests that parties may be afraid that the conflict inherent in a competitive situation like a negotiation will disrupt their (short term and potentially long term) relationship. On the other hand, he posits that competitive relationships are subject to “a norm of mutual responsiveness” whereby parties are constrained to be “attentive to one another’s needs”. A speaker implies that his needs are genuine and essential by defending them on the basis of arguments. In doing so, he constrains the other party to agree, if at all possible. Over time, as this procedure is sustained over subsequent encounters, both parties’ greatest needs are eventually rewarded. Thus, highly beneficial outcomes are ensured for both in the long run.

In contrast to everyday relationships, this “procedural norm” in work relations between colleagues in a formal working environment is applied only to a subset of needs that are regarded as “legitimate to that relationship” (Pruitt 1981). Negotiation and bargaining undermines the procedural norm, because both parties are required in a single encounter to make demands and defend them strongly, regardless of the true strength of their needs. On the other hand, feeling out procedures are compatible with the procedural norm, because they allow both parties to tacitly weigh up their demands against those of the other party, on a reciprocal (face-giving) basis. Thus, feeling out procedures are regarded as expected, pre-bargaining behaviour, aimed not directly at reaching agreement, but at creating rapport through mutual responsiveness in the pre-negotiation stages. Whereas the professional negotiations all included a pre-negotiation episode geared, at least in part, to feeling out procedures, none of the student negotiations included tacit bargaining episodes, prior to the main bargaining phase.

The next section reports on the analysis of pronoun use in both corpora that was carried out to investigate aspects of face work in the participation domain of rapport management.

5.5  Personal pronoun use: indicators of the negotiator relationship

We investigated the degree of solidarity and involvement, as expressed in the negotiators’ verbal behaviour, by examining the use of the first (‘I’) and second personal pronouns (‘you’: singular and plural), and the use of the third personal plural pronoun (inclusive vs. exclusive or institutional) ‘we’ (see Section 3.8). To this end, instances of first personal pronoun ‘I’ (and its derivative forms ‘my’ and ‘mine’), second personal pronoun ‘you’ (singular and plural, and its derivative forms ‘your’ and ‘yours’), inclusive ‘we’ (and its derivative forms ‘us’, ‘our’, and ‘ours’), and exclusive or institutional ‘we’ (and its derivative forms ‘us’, ‘our’, and ‘ours’) were marked in the transcripts of the negotiations in both corpora. Idiosyncratic forms, such as, for example, “Your company and mines” and “You and I” (regarded as inclusive ‘we’), or direct references to a negotiator’s employer by company name (regarded as form of institutional ‘we’), were also included in the analysis. In this way, indicators of four different aspects of the negotiator relationship were
obtained: solidarity (use of inclusive ‘we’), other-orientedness (use of ‘you’), self-orientedness (use of ‘I’), and ‘professional distance’ (use of exclusive ‘we’). The frequencies of occurrence for each pronoun (and its derivatives), per negotiator and for the corpora as a whole, are presented in Table 5.9 (student negotiators) and Table 5.10 (professional negotiators). For each pronoun value, the proportion of total number of instances to absolute contribution (in VRMs) per negotiator is provided in brackets.

Although it was easy to distinguish between inclusive ‘we’ and its derivatives, and exclusive, institutional ‘we’ and its derivatives, this was not the case where the pronoun ‘you’ and its derivatives was concerned. ‘You’ can refer to the other in a negotiation (singular ‘you’) but can also refer to the other as part of a collective, a representative of his company, in much the same way that exclusive ‘we’ can be used to refer to the collective ‘behind’ a speaker. Because it was impossible to distinguish regular ‘you’ from ‘institutional you’ in many cases, instances of this particular pronoun, and its derivatives, were treated as a single category. In other words, all instances of ‘you’ (and its derivatives) were regarded as indicators of other-orientedness. It should be noted that inclusive ‘we’ is a possible output of Brown and Levinson’s positive politeness strategy P12, “Involve speaker and hearer in the activity”. In addition, exclusive ‘we’ is a possible output of negative politeness strategy N7, “Impersonalise”. In the analysis of politeness strategies (see Sections 5.2 and 5.3), instances of N7 and P12 were only said to have occurred when there was a clear switch, indicating ‘strategic’ use, to exclusive or inclusive ‘we’ on the part of a given negotiator (from personal pronouns ‘I’ or ‘you’, and in an FTA environment). It was not the case, therefore, that in our analysis of politeness strategies, every single occurrence of exclusive ‘we’ and inclusive ‘we’ was marked as an instance of either strategy N7 or P12. In the analysis of pronoun use, however, we considered every occurrence of exclusive and inclusive ‘we’ and their derivatives.

Table 5.9  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>negotiator</th>
<th>inclusive we</th>
<th>exclusive we</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>you</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7 (.04)</td>
<td>17 (.09)</td>
<td>37 (.20)</td>
<td>16 (.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14 (.06)</td>
<td>12 (.05)</td>
<td>53 (.23)</td>
<td>28 (.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11 (.07)</td>
<td>9 (.05)</td>
<td>45 (.27)</td>
<td>14 (.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9 (.08)</td>
<td>9 (.08)</td>
<td>37 (.31)</td>
<td>21 (.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15 (.05)</td>
<td>2 (.01)</td>
<td>99 (.34)</td>
<td>51 (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>18 (.07)</td>
<td></td>
<td>104 (.38)</td>
<td>52 (.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5 (.09)</td>
<td>13 (.24)</td>
<td>14 (.26)</td>
<td>8 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5 (.08)</td>
<td>6 (.09)</td>
<td>20 (.31)</td>
<td>10 (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>14 (.09)</td>
<td>7 (.04)</td>
<td>54 (.34)</td>
<td>27 (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>15 (.08)</td>
<td>8 (.04)</td>
<td>60 (.32)</td>
<td>31 (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totals</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.9 shows that the proportions of inclusive ‘we’, indicating solidarity, in the student negotiators’ individual contributions range from 0.04 to 0.09. All of them used inclusive ‘we’ in the negotiations they were involved in. With respect to the use of exclusive ‘we’, which was regarded as an indicator of professional distance, Table 5.9 shows that the proportions calculated

21 A comparison of the average proportions of the group of male students (1, 2, 4, 8, and 10) and the female students (3, 5, 6, 7, and 9) shows that the females, as a group, used slightly higher proportions of inclusive ‘we’ (0.074 vs. 0.068), pronoun ‘I’ (0.318 vs. 0.274), and pronoun ‘you’ (0.154 vs. 0.146). The average proportion of exclusive ‘we’ for the two groups was comparable, at 0.07 (males) and 0.068 (females).
per student negotiator range from 0.01 to 0.24. Nine of the negotiators used exclusive ‘we’ in their contributions; only one student (negotiator 6) did not use exclusive ‘we’ at all.

The proportions for the use of personal pronoun ‘I’, which was regarded as an indicator of self-orientedness, range from 0.20 to 0.38. The raw frequencies of personal pronoun ‘I’ in the student corpus are consistently higher for each of the negotiators than frequencies of inclusive and exclusive ‘we’. Finally, with respect to the use of personal pronoun ‘you’, which was regarded as an indicator of other-orientedness, the proportions for the student negotiators range from 0.09 to 0.19. The raw frequencies of occurrence of personal pronoun ‘you’ are consistently lower for each of the student negotiators than the frequencies of occurrence of personal pronoun ‘I’.

Table 5.10 presents the results of the analysis of personal pronoun use in the professional corpus. The proportions calculated per negotiator for inclusive ‘we’ (indicator of solidarity) range from 0.03 to 0.24. Table 5.10 shows that eight of the 14 professional negotiators used a higher proportion of inclusive ‘we’ in their individual contributions to the corpus than any of the student negotiators (see Table 5.9). This difference was not found to be significant, however.

Table 5.10 Professional corpus: absolute (& proportional) frequency of pronoun use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negotiator</th>
<th>inclusive we</th>
<th>exclusive we</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>you</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Dutch)</td>
<td>8 (.07)</td>
<td>15 (.14)</td>
<td>24 (.22)</td>
<td>16 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Dutch)</td>
<td>32 (.10)</td>
<td>23 (.07)</td>
<td>70 (.23)</td>
<td>26 (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Dutch)</td>
<td>95 (.16)</td>
<td>89 (.15)</td>
<td>135 (.23)</td>
<td>90 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Dutch)</td>
<td>31 (.13)</td>
<td>19 (.08)</td>
<td>73 (.30)</td>
<td>56 (.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (Dutch)</td>
<td>18 (.06)</td>
<td>50 (.16)</td>
<td>84 (.27)</td>
<td>69 (.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (French)</td>
<td>8 (.03)</td>
<td>39 (.15)</td>
<td>53 (.20)</td>
<td>56 (.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Dutch)</td>
<td>51 (.12)</td>
<td>26 (.06)</td>
<td>113 (.26)</td>
<td>67 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (French)</td>
<td>27 (.07)</td>
<td>110 (.28)</td>
<td>120 (.30)</td>
<td>102 (.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (Dutch)</td>
<td>36 (.14)</td>
<td>21 (.08)</td>
<td>84 (.32)</td>
<td>62 (.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (German)</td>
<td>32 (.15)</td>
<td>21 (.10)</td>
<td>48 (.22)</td>
<td>32 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (Dutch)</td>
<td>25 (.10)</td>
<td>16 (.07)</td>
<td>67 (.28)</td>
<td>52 (.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (Italian)</td>
<td>52 (.24)</td>
<td>61 (.28)</td>
<td>86 (.39)</td>
<td>60 (.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (Dutch)</td>
<td>15 (.08)</td>
<td>45 (.23)</td>
<td>59 (.30)</td>
<td>73 (.37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (Japanese)</td>
<td>8 (.03)</td>
<td>26 (.10)</td>
<td>79 (.31)</td>
<td>53 (.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totals</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>1126</td>
<td>827</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the use of exclusive ‘we’ (indicator of professional distance), it can be seen that the proportions calculated for the professional negotiators range from 0.07 to 0.38. Nine professional negotiators used a higher proportion of exclusive ‘we’ in their contributions than nine of the student negotiators (only one student, negotiator 7, used a proportion of exclusive ‘we’ that falls within the medium range noted for the professional negotiators). The remaining five professionals used a proportion of exclusive ‘we’ similar to that found for the majority (nine out of ten) of student negotiators. The difference in use of exclusive ‘we’ by the two groups negotiators was found to be highly significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=2.583, p<0.01).

With regard to the use of personal pronoun ‘I’ (indicator of self-orientedness), Table 5.10 shows that the proportions of use calculated for the professional negotiators range from 0.20 to 0.39. This range is very similar to the range found for the student negotiators (0.20 to 0.38). Again, as was
the case for the student negotiators, the professionals used a consistently higher frequency of personal pronoun ‘I’ than exclusive ‘we’.

Finally, Table 5.10 shows that the proportions of personal pronoun ‘you’ (indicator of other-orientedness) for the professional corpus range from 0.08 to 0.37. Nine professionals used a higher proportion of personal pronoun ‘you’ than any of the student negotiators. Table 5.10 shows that the remaining five professional negotiators used proportions of ‘you’ that fell within, and in one case below, the range calculated for the student negotiators (see Table 5.9). The difference in use of pronoun ‘you’ by the student and professional negotiators was found to be significant (Mann-Whitney: Z=0.2128, p<0.05).

### 5.5.1 Pronoun use in different contexts: objective vs. personalised perspective

The differences between the two groups of negotiators in personal pronoun use reported above clearly affected the perspective from which, for example, proposals and rejections were formulated in the two negotiation corpora. It was reported earlier in Section 4.2.2. that the professional negotiators, and four professional negotiators in particular, frequently (re-)framed proposals and suggestions from the perspective of the other, in such a way as to emphasise the benefits and positive aspects for their counterpart. It was suggested that framing proposals from the perspective of other may have been a tactical strategy used in the negotiation context to make a negotiator’s discourse more persuasive. In contrast, it was found that the student negotiators did not consistently reframe proposals and suggestions to emphasise benefits for the other. Instead, they frequently formulated communication strategies from the perspective of other (rather than reframing them in the second instance), which made them seem very direct. Student negotiators’ realisations of suggestions and (reasons for) rejections included, for example: “You will have to give me a D on that product.”; “You have asked too much. We cannot accept such a price level.”; “For example, you pay for the double tents an I.”; or “Do you have a proposition or anything?”.

With respect to the use of “I”, although both groups of negotiators used comparable proportions in their contributions, again, as was the case for “you”, the student negotiators were found to have used personal pronoun “I” in different discourse contexts than the professionals. For example, the students frequently formulated proposals, suggestions, and rejections from the I-perspective (e.g., “I have a proposition.”, “This is my last offer.”, “I’d like you to make me a proposal.”, “I want to hear all three before I can make my decision.”, and “I cannot accept your proposal.”). This contrasts with the professionals, who voiced fewer rejections to start with compared to the students (an average of 2.5 rejections per professional vs. an average of 4 rejections per student negotiator), and more consistently used exclusive ‘we’ in similar discourse contexts (rejections, suggestions, and proposals).

A second difference between the two groups of negotiators with respect to the locus of pronoun “I” is that the students presented argumentation in support of their responses to offers from the other party, if they did so at all, from an I-perspective (e.g., IS: “I can’t. If I don’t get this price, my management will do X to me” or IS: “I don’t want to go back to my company with this price level. It will mean the end for me.”). In contrast, the professionals tended to depersonalise such reasoning (instead involving in their argumentation issues relating to the business or economic environment in general), and avoided the I-perspective, particularly in the central Bargaining phase. The different distributions of personalised talk across the negotiations for the two groups of
negotiators was also reflected to some extent by their use of the VRM of Disclosure (statements revealing personal thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and intentions). Although both groups were found to have used comparable percentages of Disclosure overall (see Section 4.4), there was a high incidence of Disclosure in the small talk sequences of the professionals in the pre-bargaining and post-bargaining stages (personalised talk involved in category 8 ‘non-business’ topics), but a lower incidence of Disclosure in the central bargaining phase (depersonalised talk). In contrast, if only because the student negotiations incorporated very brief pre-bargaining and post-bargaining phases anyway (see Section 5.4), the lion’s share of Disclosure in the student negotiations occurred in the central bargaining phase.

By consistently using direct references to themselves and the other party in the main bargaining phase, the students produced highly subjective discourse in what is regarded as potentially the most conflictive and face-threatening phase of a negotiation. In contrast, the professionals could be seen to clearly shift away from a highly personalised perspective in the pre-negotiation opening stage, to a depersonalised, reserved, and objective perspective in the main bargaining phase, to finally return to a more personalised discourse focus in the post-bargaining closing phase of the negotiation. In the central phase, the professionals tended to avoid direct personal references to self and the other party, by consistently using distancers like exclusive “we” and, presumably, exclusive “you” (see Section 5.5 regarding the difficulty of identifying exclusive “you”) or by using ellipsis (of grammatical subject) and passive constructions. Furthermore, the professionals’ argumentation in support of proposals and counter-proposals, in contrast to that of the student negotiators (who were observed overall to have provided less argumentation in comparison to the professionals), was only rarely personalised, and when personalised arguments were used, these were more often than not meant to provide a light note in the negotiation (PS: “If we would accept this deal, I would be severely punished back home ((LAUGHS))”). The student negotiators, because they consistently negotiated from a personalised perspective and used personally oriented argumentation, came across as emotional and subjective, that is, unprofessional rather than businesslike, in their negotiations.

5.6 Summary of Findings

5.6.1 Facework in the illocutionary domain: politeness

The analysis of politeness strategies in both corpora showed that all the negotiators, students and professionals, used both positive and negative politeness strategies. Overall, the professional negotiators used significantly more politeness than the student negotiators. In terms of the two different categories of politeness, both groups of negotiators used comparable degrees of negative politeness, but the professional negotiators used significantly more positive politeness than the student negotiators. This difference seems to have been brought about in particular by the professional negotiators’ significantly greater use of positive politeness strategies aimed at ‘Claiming common ground’, and most notably their significantly greater use of P5, “Seek agreement”. Both groups of negotiators invested comparable efforts into ‘Showing the hearer and speaker are cooperators’. Surprisingly, then, it would seem that the professional negotiators placed greater emphasis on managing rapport by claiming common ground than by showing cooperativeness, despite the fact that cooperativeness is regarded as a prerequisite for successful negotiations and mutually beneficial outcomes (e.g., Fisher & Ury 1991; Mastenbroek 1989, Pruitt 1981).
Perhaps the lack of relative emphasis on ‘Cooperativeness’ in these negotiations is a reflection of conflicting face concerns brought about by the need to maintain professional rather than ‘social’ face. Demonstrating too much cooperativeness (in an effort to support other’s face concerns) may well endanger a negotiator’s professional status. Spencer-Oatey (2000b, 2001) has suggested certain facework mechanisms may reflect an aspect of what she calls “rapport neglect orientation”, a facet of rapport management characterised by a lack of concern or interest in the quality of relations between interlocutors, perhaps because of a focus on self. In the case of the professional negotiations in the present study, the relative lack of concern for showing cooperativeness may have arisen from a focus on, or concern for, negotiator’s own professional face.

Table 5.11  Individual politeness strategies: corpus rankings based on overall frequency
(‘=’ indicates shared ranking)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>category of strategies</th>
<th>negative politeness</th>
<th>students</th>
<th>professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N1 conventional indirectness</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N2 hedge, question</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N3 be pessimistic</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N4 minimise imposition</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N5 give deference</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N6 apologise</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N7 impersonalise</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N8 state FTA as general rule</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>=22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N9 nominalise</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N10 go on-record as incurring debt</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>=22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive politeness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1/9 notice &amp; attend to H/show concern for H</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 exaggerate interest &amp; approval</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 intensify interest to H</td>
<td>=13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 use in-group identity markers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 seek agreement</td>
<td>=13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6 avoid disagreement</td>
<td>=20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7 establish common ground</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8 joke</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10 offer, promise</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 be optimistic</td>
<td>=20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12 include S and H in activity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13 give (or ask for) reasons</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14 assume or assert reciprocity</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15 give goods, sympathy, etc.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With respect to the use of individual politeness strategies in the negotiation corpora, it was found that all the positive and negative strategies Brown and Levinson identified occurred in the negotiation data, although a number of negative politeness strategies, N8, “State the FTA as a general rule” and N9, “Nominalise”, did not occur in the student corpus, and only very infrequently in the professional corpus. Table 5.11 presents the differences in use of individual politeness strategies by the two groups of negotiators, in terms of the frequency ranking of individual strategies, per politeness category (positive or negative), in the corpora overall.
The most striking findings at the level of individual strategies were that N1, “Conventional Indirectness” and N2, “Hedge, Question” were the most frequent strategies in both the student and professional corpora. By the same token, P15, “Give goods, sympathy”, N8, “State FTA as general rules”, N9 “Nominalise”, and N10, “Go on-record as incurring debt” were the least frequent overall. A number of differences in the use of negative politeness by the two groups of negotiators involved strategies N2, “Hedge, Question” which was used significantly more by the students than the professionals, N7, “Impersonalise speaker or hearer”, which occurred more, although not significantly more, in the professional corpus, and N4, “Minimise the imposition” which was used significantly more by the students than the professionals. With regard to positive politeness, the most striking differences in use by the two groups of negotiators were found for strategies P3, “Intensify interest to hearer”, P5, “Seek agreement”, P6, “Avoid disagreement”, P7, “Establish common ground”, P8, “Joke”, and P1/P9, “Notice, attend to hearer, and show concern”, which were all used significantly more by the professional than the student negotiators.

With regard to a number of strategies, it was found that the professional negotiators realised politeness in a greater variety of ways (using a greater variety of linguistic outputs for a particular strategy), and often using a considerably greater amount of discourse, than the student negotiators. This was found to be the case, for example, for N1, “Conventional Indirectness”, N6, “Apologise”, P5, “Seek Agreement” and P7, “Establish common ground” (see Section 5.3). Overall, although the professional negotiators’ English was no more advanced than that of the student negotiators, they nevertheless managed to sustain progress in their discourse and in the negotiation as a whole with greater success than the students did. This is also supported by the considerable difference in word count per negotiation, for each of the two groups. The average number of words per student negotiation was found to be 1772 words, compared to an average of 4959 words for the negotiations involving professionals. This no doubt can be attributed to a large extent to the fact that the professional negotiators were far more familiar with the negotiation setting and with the negotiating activity than the student negotiators. It is less likely to be the case, judging by the fact that the proficiency of the two groups in English seemed to be largely similar, that the professionals produced more discourse than the student negotiators, as a result of a considerably greater degree of mastery of English as a foreign language.

Non-nativeness of the negotiation data: categorising politeness
Although the ‘non-nativeness’ of the negotiator’s contributions did not make the identification of politeness strategies any harder on the whole, in retrospect, some idiosyncratic characteristics of the lingua franca speech examined could have affected aspects of the facework analyses. One of these was discussed earlier when it was pointed out that the apparent over-use of fillers by the lingua franca negotiators (and the student group in particular), due possibly to processing difficulties, may have led to over-identification of the hedge strategy in the politeness analyses (see Sections 5.2 and 5.3).

Another characteristic of the speech data examined in the present study was the fact that negotiators at times spoke in ‘half-sentences’, leaving out auxiliary verbs, for example (“You agree?” or “We negotiate about all three now?” or “I ask you a question. OK?”). From the perspective of Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of illocutionary politeness strategies, these instances might be regarded as cases of ellipsis or even forms of contraction (outputs of the positive “use in-group identity markers” strategy). However, in the present study, only ‘clear’ cases of contraction (IB: “Let’s look at your proposal first” and PB: “We’re very happy to be
dealing with your company”) and ellipsis (IS: “How about an E price?”) were marked as instances of positive politeness.

5.6.2 Facework in the discourse content domain: small talk

A detailed analysis of small talk in the negotiation data showed that this type of talk was an important constituent of the professional negotiators’ discourse. Of the eight different categories of small talk topic that were distinguished in the two corpora, all occurred in the professional corpus, compared to five in the student corpus. Overall, it was found that the student negotiators engaged in small talk far less frequently than the professional negotiators.

With respect to locus of small talk, it was found that the professional negotiators engaged in small talk in all three negotiation phases (opening, bargaining, and closing), whereas the student negotiators only engaged in small talk in the opening and closing negotiation stages, if at all. Furthermore, the student negotiators’ small talk sequences were considerably shorter than those produced by the professional negotiators, consisting of simple complementary pairs. In contrast, the small talk sequences engaged in by the professional negotiators frequently extended over a number of turns. With respect to the students, it was also noted that their transitions from the (relational) pre-bargaining stage to the (transactional and potentially conflictive) central bargaining phase were unnecessarily abrupt, as they engaged in very little small talk in the initial stages of their negotiations.

With regard to choice of topic, it was found that the negotiators rarely talked about subjects more generally regarded (in everyday encounters) as characteristic safe topics, such as news events, weather, personal details, personal interests and opinions, sports, etc. Instead, the small talk topics identified in the two corpora, and in the professional corpus in particular, can be regarded as further instances of professional talk, albeit of a different nature than professional transaction-related talk (sequences of offers and rejections/acceptances). With relatively few exceptions (but see results for small talk category 8: “non-business”), the negotiators, and the professional negotiators in particular, did not engage in talk that was clearly external to the business context of their professional role as constituent negotiator, or clearly unrelated to the transactional goal of the exchange (seeking agreement on the price of the three products). As such, there is some doubt as to whether this type of ‘professional’ small talk is aimed at establishing or maintaining rapport (whether it reflects the interactional element of communication), or whether it serves to embed and develop the clearly transactional communication (offers, rejections, and agreements) that is central to these types of encounters. In other words, the question is whether this type of professional small talk, although clearly different from pure transactional communication, is aimed at creating or maintaining rapport between interlocutors (largely other face-supportive), or at maintaining and reinforcing the negotiators’ professional identity (own face-protective). Of course, these two scenarios need not be mutually exclusive: by maintaining and reinforcing their own professional identities in a negotiation setting, negotiators effectively emphasise their professional commonalities, which may contribute to the feeling of solidarity between them.

One final observation regarding the use of small talk by the (professional) negotiators in the present study relates to the use of ‘culture’ or ‘interculturalness’ as a small talk topic. It was suggested in Section 1.4 that cultural differences, rather than exclusively creating communication difficulties between interactants in an intercultural exchange, may also provide an additional source for creating rapport (Aston 1993). It was further suggested that by pointing
out, acknowledging, and negotiating cultural differences between them, participants effectively seem to create their own interculture as members of an in-group of non-natives, whose common ground is the fact that they differ culturally (See also e.g., Li 1999). It was found that seven of the nine professional lingua franca negotiations included small talk sequences relating either to the (business or national) culture of one of the two participants, a comparison between the cultures of both participants, the use of English as a lingua franca, or comparisons between the lingua franca and a participant’s own language. Thus, ‘cultural difference’ did indeed feature in the professional negotiations as an additional source for small talk.

Furthermore, these instances of small talk clearly aimed to create or maintain rapport between the negotiators. Negotiators promoted solidarity by pointing out how similar they were in their ‘non-nativeness’, or attended the other’s positive (social as opposed to professional) face wants by displaying interest in, or discussing positive experiences with, the other’s culture, or members from the other’s culture. In some instances, they distanced themselves from their cultural identity by jocularly criticising aspects of their respective cultures. Effectively, they were taking on the temporary role of “outlaws” whose common ground is created by the fact that they “occupy a no-man’s-land (…) and whose successful creation is the focus of mutual appreciation and laughter” (Aston 1993: 238). In doing so, they were clearly attempting to create, within the temporary context of the negotiation event, their own “discursive interculture” (Li 1999).

5.6.3 Facework in the participation domain: involvement and solidarity

The analysis of pronoun use in the negotiation corpora pointed out a number of similarities and differences between the student and professional negotiators. Inclusive ‘we’, regarded here as an indicator of involvement and solidarity with the other, was used by both groups of negotiators, but the majority of professional negotiators (eight out of fourteen) used higher proportions of this pronoun and its derivatives than the student negotiators. Although they were seen to have invested similar efforts in using politeness strategies showing cooperativeness between interactants as the students (see Section 5.3), they seem to have used the inclusive we perspective, indicating cooperation, more than the student negotiators.

With respect to the use of singular and plural second personal pronoun ‘you’ (indicating other-orientedness and reflecting you-attitude), the professional negotiators were found to have used significantly higher proportions than the student negotiators. With respect to pronoun ‘you’, it was also noted that because the students consistently used this pronoun in other (potentially face-threatening) discourse contexts than the professionals (e.g., in suggestions, proposals, rejections), they seemed at times extremely direct, suggesting hostility rather than reflecting the no-nonsense, businesslike approach that they might have been aiming for.

In contrast to ‘you’ and inclusive ‘we’, it was assumed that degree of concern with own interests, issues, and outcomes (or ‘egocentricity’) would be reflected in the degree of use of first personal pronoun ‘I’ and in the use of exclusive, institutional ‘we’ (‘I’ referred to as a collective). Proportions of use of ‘I’ were found to be similar for both groups of negotiators. As was the case for the use of ‘you’, however, the student negotiators were found to have used ‘I’ in other contexts than the professionals, such as in proposals, and (reasons for) rejections. The professionals, who voiced fewer rejections to start with compared to the students (an average of 2.5 rejections per professional vs. an average of 4 rejections per student negotiator), more consistently used exclusive
‘we’ in these contexts. This is reflected to a large extent in the significant difference that was found in the use of exclusive ‘we’ by the two groups of negotiators. Institutional ‘we’ seems to have been used as a distancing device to protect the professional negotiators’ face when formulating FTAs. At the same time, given the professional negotiators’ more consistent use of exclusive ‘we’ throughout the negotiations, and not only in the Bargaining stage, institutional ‘we’ would seem to have functioned as a distancing device with a much broader scope, aimed not so much at ‘locally’ distancing the speaker from a given FTA, but instead at reinforcing negotiators’ professional face (acting autonomously, as a representative of a company), by emphasising distance from the ongoing negotiation event as a whole.

The next chapter discusses the findings reported in Chapters 4 and 5 and assesses the usefulness of the methodology adopted in the present study to investigate aspects of rapport management in negotiation discourse. The chapter ends with a consideration of areas of professional communicative competence that might deserve attention in BC teaching, and suggests how these areas might be incorporated into the BC curriculum.
Chapter 6

Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction

This final chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5, within the context of Brown and Levinson’s operationalisation of politeness and Stiles’ VRM taxonomy as starting points for investigating face maintenance in negotiation discourse. The main objective of the present chapter is to arrive at answers to the research questions outlined in Section 1.4, which broadly aimed to: 1) systematically investigate aspects of (linguistic) facework in lingua franca negotiations, 2) test the usefulness of the two theoretical frameworks that were used as a basis for the linguistic analyses, and 3) offer suggestions aimed at making teaching materials more relevant for BC students learning business English for use as a lingua franca in multicultural organisational settings. Where appropriate to the discussion of the results, further aspects of verbal behaviour in the negotiation corpora are highlighted that were not incorporated into the analyses reported on in the previous two chapters, but were nevertheless regarded as relevant enough to the central research focus to at least warrant description, particularly with a view to providing suggestions for further research.

6.1 Usefulness of the Politeness Model in an analysis of facework in negotiation

The analysis of politeness strategies in the negotiation corpora (see Chapter 5) was carried out on the premise that the two types of politeness distinguished by Brown and Levinson, given that they constitute different levels of politeness in their hierarchy of communication strategies for doing an FTA, would occur in separate FTA contexts, depending on whether a given FTA posed a threat to either the negative or the positive face of the hearer. The analyses showed, however, that positive and negative strategies often overlapped, occurring in the same (FTA) discourse context. More often than not, a single FTA context included more than a single politeness strategy, and included combinations of politeness strategies of both categories. The occurrence of this type of mixed redress in the present corpora provides strong support for findings from earlier studies (e.g., Van der Wijst 1996) that have suggested that at least two of the communication super-strategies Brown and Levinson propose for doing an FTA (see Section 2.3.1) might not, in fact, have different politeness values. In Brown and Levinson’s hierarchy, positive strategies are higher up the politeness scale for doing FTAs than negative politeness strategies, but, based on the findings from this study, it would seem instead that they interact and function in combination to redress face threat, and ultimately, to manage rapport.

In discourse contexts in the corpora where different politeness outputs occurred simultaneously, identification of individual strategies was at times difficult, particularly when the strategies that overlapped were of the same category (negative or positive politeness). Individual types of positive politeness strategies in particular were at times hard to distinguish from each other when they occurred in the same context (see also Section 5.1.2). This suggests that as an analytical tool Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy (at least with regard to positive politeness outputs) may be ‘overgenerous’ in assigning different aims to different realisations of positive politeness. Therefore, with regard to positive politeness, the three broader classifications of positively polite super-strategy Brown and Levinson distinguish (“Claim common ground”;

...
Another observation with regard to the occurrence and locus of politeness strategies in the negotiation data involved instances of what seemed like politeness strategies (in terms of their linguistic realisation at least) in discourse contexts, or stages of the negotiation event, that are not potentially, let alone intrinsically, face-threatening. That is to say, these strategies did not occur FTA-externally, as would be expected, or even in close proximity to an FTA. Mostly, such instances involved the use of positive politeness strategies (including small talk, See also Section 5.4), providing further support for the suggestion that this type of politeness is not necessarily restricted to direct FTA redress but can also be used to address the broader relational or social aspect of face and to generally emphasise and enforce rapport between interactants (Brown & Levinson 1987: 101-103). However, what appeared to be negative linguistic output strategies were also found to occur outside FTA contexts (particularly in the professional data), suggesting that, if these were indeed cases of negative politeness, this type of politeness is not always 'localised' either. Further analysis of the negotiation discourse suggested that these FTA-external strategies were indeed face-related, in that they seem to serve as distancing devices, used to dissociate the negotiator, either from the other party, or from the negotiation event as a whole (in itself an FTA), or from both (see Section 5.6.3 for a related discussion of the use of institutional ‘we’ in FTA-external contexts by the professional negotiators). Even before the bargaining stage begins, from the start of a negotiation, these dissociation strategies would seem to serve to establish and reinforce the negotiator’s professional role (and status) as an autonomous, constituent negotiator. As such, they are primarily aimed at boosting aspects of the speaker’s face.

At the same time, however, by foregrounding own face concerns in favour of other’s face concerns, and by generally manifesting reserved and distant verbal behaviour, the negotiator maintains the “disinterested façade” that Charles observed in her new-relationship negotiations (Charles 1996). Charles posits that the mechanism underlying phenomena such as these, which essentially constitute ‘irrational’ verbal behaviour from the perspective of politeness theory, is a concern for professional face. Such behaviour is regarded as irrational, because Brown and Levinson’s Model Person would make every effort to attend first and foremost to aspects of the hearer’s face, “given that face consists in a set of wants satisifiable only by the actions (including expressions of wants) by others, [and] it will in general be to the mutual interest of two [Model Persons] to maintain each other’s face. So [the speaker] will want to maintain [the hearer’s] face, unless he can get [the hearer] to maintain [the speaker’s] without recompense, by coercion, trickery, etc.” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 60).

According to Brown and Levinson, interlocutors will orient politeness at all times to the face wants of the hearer. A speaker, in choosing strategies for doing FTAs, “will take into consideration three wants: a) the want to communicate the content of the FTA, b) the want to be efficient or urgent, and c) the want to maintain [the hearer’s] face to any degree” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 68). Nevertheless, in the present study there were frequent examples, particularly in the professional corpus, but even in the student corpus, of delocalised, distancing strategies which seem to have been aimed at establishing and maintaining the speaker’s professional identity. An example is the utterance “IB: I’m fairly pleased with this agreement”, in response to a question about whether the buyer was “happy” with the final agreement (which, incidentally, was
highly beneficial to that buyer). By then, the bargaining phase of the negotiation was over and the deal had been done. Given that this was the final phase of the negotiation, where interlocutors might be expected to put a certain effort into relationship-building with a view to future business contact, such ‘lukewarm’ behaviour was unexpected (but common in the professional negotiations in particular). Even when the pressure was essentially off because the deal had been closed, the negotiators maintained a neutral, non-committal exterior (PS: “We should arrange a visit for you to our factory, so you can see the new machines we have installed.” PB: “If you like, yes. Why not.”).

Similar behaviour was seen to occur in the initial pre-bargaining stage of the negotiations, and even as part of initial or final small talk sequences. Although small talk is presumed to function mainly as a rapport enhancer (see Sections 3.7 and 5.4), the fact that delocalised FTA-external politeness strategies are commonly interspersed with small talk suggests that negotiators (at least in new-relationship negotiations like those investigated in the present study) make sure that they attend to their own professional face throughout the negotiation event. This, in turn, might be a reflection of just how important this aspect of face is to them in this specific communication context. Interestingly, the fact that both types of politeness strategies, positive and negative, were used in the negotiations in other than FTA contexts might also support the suggestion that all language, and not just FTAs, is potentially face-threatening from the perspective of the hearer and/or the speaker, and requires a degree of face maintenance (as has been argued to be the case for Japanese by Matsumoto 1989).

6.1.1 Speaker-oriented facework

In competitive relationships, then, such as the relationship between participants in a sales negotiation, hearer-oriented face concerns might not weigh as heavily on a speaker’s choice of strategy as the Politeness Model suggests. As was said earlier (see Section 3.6), and as the above discussion of observations of distancing strategies used in non-FTA contexts in the negotiations would seem to confirm, the face mechanisms underlying formal, organisational communication are broader, at least with regard to the specific genre under study. These mechanisms incorporate social and professional face needs, and are manifested in a potentially different orientation (to own, as well as, or instead of, primarily to other’s face) than those suggested by Brown and Levinson for everyday social encounters (see also Spencer-Oatey 2000a, 2000b). Image-maintenance of self would seem to play a particularly important role in the negotiation relationship. Negotiators want to maintain own face and professional image as much as, or perhaps even more than, anything else. It is likely, therefore, that the need to attend to other’s face will become backgrounded, as negotiators opt instead to enhance their own image by either downplaying hearer-oriented politeness (PB: “I’ll admit we’ve been reasonably satisfied with the way you’ve handled our orders in the past”), or by explicitly aggravating hearer-oriented face threat by intensifying and emphasising the face-threatening force of a hearer-costly FTA (PS: “If that’s all you’re willing to offer we’ll definitely take our custom elsewhere”).

The negotiators in the present study boosted own face in other ways as well. For example, they would highlight the quality of the proposed deal, their efforts to accommodate the other party, the quality of the products they were offering, or the excellent reputation or performance of their company. Similarly, they boasted about, for example, personal performance levels and bringing in important orders. In communication genres that are competitive by virtue of their commercial transactional purpose, the importance of the speaker’s own face concerns would at times seem to
override, or at least equal, the importance of the other party’s face concerns. In the following excerpt, taken from the student corpus, concerns for professional face would seem to go some way to explaining some of the face-related strategies that are manifested in the negotiation discourse and cannot be explained fully on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s model of ‘rational’ polite behaviour:

Excerpt 6.1

IB: What I’m saying is your products will be sold in very good surroundings—it’s really improved the image of our shops and so therefore you are going to benefit as well. I mean we’ve gone for a very up-market image. That’s why we want to stay with your company.

IS: Yeah.

IB: But on the other hand I mean we’re not desperate. There are other suppliers you know.

IS: Yes.

IB: (...) And if you’re not prepared to give us a better deal than this then we’ll have to start looking around elsewhere.

In the above excerpt, the italicised segments constitute strategies used by the buyer to attend to his own professional face. He shows his lack of interest in the deal by saying that not only are there plenty of other suppliers he can go to, but that they would probably also offer him a better deal. In terms of Brown and Levinson’s model, these communication strategies would certainly be classified as hearer-costly in terms of face threat (they constitute a warning or even a threat). Furthermore, they do not reflect any degree of attending to the other’s face needs. In this particular discourse context, they seem to function as what Charles (1996) would refer to as tactical ‘professional moves’, used to boost the professional face of the buyer.

The most striking findings at the level of individual strategies were that N1, “Conventional Indirectness” and N2, “Hedge, Question” were the most frequent strategies in both the student and professional corpora. By the same token, P15, “Give goods, sympathy”, N8, “State FTA as general rules”, N9 “Nominalise”, and N10, “Go on-record as incurring debt” were the least frequent overall. A number of differences in the use of negative politeness by the two groups of negotiators involved strategies N2, “Hedge, Question” which was used significantly more by the students than the professionals, N7, “Impersonalise speaker or hearer”, which occurred more, although not significantly more, in the professional corpus, and N4, “Minimise the imposition” which was used significantly more by the students than the professionals. With regard to positive politeness, the most striking differences in use by the two groups of negotiators were found for strategies P3, “Intensify interest to hearer”, P5, “Seek agreement”, P6, “Avoid disagreement”, P7, “Establish common ground”, P8, “Joke”, and P1/P9, “Notice, attend to hearer, and show concern”, which were all used significantly more by the professional than the student negotiators.

From the follow-up to this excerpt of the interaction, it becomes clear that the fact that the buyer feels he has to protect his professional face is brought about by the previous turn. In that turn, in an attempt to address the seller’s positive face (we’ve improved our image to show off your products; we are both aiming for the same up-market segment; we want to do business with you), he has weakened his own professional image (note that the seller’s response in 2. is less than enthusiastic, perhaps motivated, in turn, by his concerns for own professional face). The buyer
therefore seems to feel the need to boost own professional face and does so by downplaying the
hearer-oriented face-saving strategies he used in the previous turn, and by projecting a lack of
interest. There were certainly examples of such behaviour in the present corpora, particularly in
the professional data.

6.1.2 Non-supportive facework

The analysis of the negotiation data has shown that an analysis of competitive communication
genres such as sales negotiations also offers opportunities to investigate another manifestation of
facework, namely rudeness. Rudeness is “constituted by deviation from whatever counts as
polite in a given social context, [and] is inherently confrontational and disruptive to social
equilibrium” (Kasper 1990: 208). With respect to the negotiations in the corpora, the few
instances of rudeness that occurred might again be accounted for by the notion of professional
facework, referred to and illustrated above. That is, in order to save (or boost) their own
professional face, negotiators may sometimes abandon face-supportive behaviour aimed at the
other, in favour of displaying contentious behaviour. In an attempt to account for a broader
concept of facework, and particularly for instances in which interlocutors purposely use
communicative strategies to disrupt, rather than create, harmony, Culpeper (1996) has suggested
building an “impoliteness framework” that is complementary, yet opposite, to Brown and
Levinson’s theory of politeness. The framework he proposes is parallel to Brown and
Levinson’s in that it distinguishes the same five super-strategies for doing FTAs (do not do the
FTA, or do the FTA bald on-record, with positive or with negative politeness, or go off-record),
but complementary in that it does so from the -opposite- perspective of impoliteness. Thus,
Culpeper proposes a distinction between the following five strategies: 1) bald, on-record
impoliteness; impoliteness aimed at damaging the 2) positive or 3) negative face wants of the
addressee; 4) sarcasm or “mock politeness” (off-record impoliteness); and 5) “withholding
politeness” altogether (Culpeper 1996: 356). He also demonstrates that in certain genres
(instruction sessions in army training, and literary drama), impoliteness is by no means a
“marginal activity”, and suggests, therefore, that any facework model, if it is to be analytically
coherent, and applicable to a wide range of communication genres, should aim to incorporate
and account for confrontational verbal behaviour, as well as politeness (see also e.g., Craig,
Tracy & Spisak 1986; Turner 1996).

In a number of recent publications, Spencer-Oatey (2000a, 2000b, forthcoming) has suggested
that instances of non-supportive facework are manifestations of two of four possible “rapport
orientations” interlocutors can hold towards each other in a given communication context.
Interlocutors can orient to “rapport enhancement” (motivated by the desire to boost the other’s
face in order to increase rapport); “rapport maintenance”(motivated by the need to maintain and
protect existing rapport); “rapport neglect” (motivated by the desire to project a lack of interest
in the quality of relations with the other); or “rapport challenge” (motivated by the desire to
challenge or even damage existing rapport) (Spencer-Oatey 2000b). With regard to the examples
of non-supportive facework which were discussed above, the latter two rapport management
orientations would seem to be particularly relevant, and might offer some explanation for the
seemingly irrational facework that was observed in the corpus negotiations, including face-
related verbal behaviour that either ran contrary to other’s face wants, or was manifested in non-
FTA contexts.
Although an investigation of rudeness was not incorporated systematically into the facework analyses reported in Chapter 5, there were certainly instances in the corpora in which negotiators switched from polite to rude behaviour and vice versa. Interestingly, in all the instances that could be observed, there were no immediate detrimental consequences for either the relationship or for the negotiation proceedings, such as a negotiator at the receiving end breaking off communications, for example. Whether this would also have been the case in real-life negotiations remains to be seen, but it would seem plausible that, given the fact that the sales negotiation is a genre characterised by competitive bargaining behaviour, participants will expect a certain degree of conflict and verbal duelling to occur as par for the course. As a result, they might approach and experience negotiations with a higher threshold of tolerance than other, potentially less competitive, (business) communication genres. The following excerpt from the student corpus (between a male seller and a female buyer) provides a vivid illustration of facework, bordering on rudeness (italicised utterances), that could well be motivated by one of the two non-supportive rapport management orientations Spencer-Oatey has proposed:

Excerpt 6.2

IB: Erm how about if I drop down to D for both the double tents and the sleeping bags.
IS: (Sighs) Double tents and sleeping bags. No. I mean with the sleeping bags as far as level D I’m-I just make a loss. That won’t be acceptable.
IB: Let’s look again then.
IS: Actually with the double tents which are manufactured with about sixty per cent of canvas I’m not able to go lo:wer than F. That’s one thing I can assure you. Otherwise we won’t be able to make delivery in time.
IB: (Sharply) You better make me a good offer on the others then.
IS: I’m sure I can. (.)
IB: (Sharply) Let’s hear it.
IS: So erm for the tents F then is acceptable?
IB: NO:. It most definitely isn’t. I’m just writing= IS: It’s not.
IB: =that down. You expect me to make NO:thing on the sleeping bags -at level F I make nothing.
IS: (Sighs) You make nothing.
IB: No. You’re expec-and I make a mar:ginal profit-hardly anything-on the tents. I can only accept that if I get A on the backpacks.
IS: Price A.
IB: Yes.
IS: No that won’t be acceptable at all=
IB: Well
IS: =because I I have a loss about thirty pounds each=
IB: Oh well (IRRITATED)).
IS: =so (.) I mean erm (.) Our backpacks consist of around ninety percent of canvas and the other thing is leather which is
IB: -Yeah you don’t need to tell me about the products. I’m familiar with them. I’ve actually got them myself so I know how they’re made.
IS: They’re quite good, aren’t they? ((LAUGHS sheepishly))
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IB: Well yes, they’re GREAT. Erm I mean we we want to keep working with you erm but it’s just-but you’re offering me nothing. I mean we’ve got to work together. Six years is a long time. I’m sure you don’t want to lose us.

IS: No I’m sure I don’t...

This excerpt illustrates that there is more going on in terms of facework than the reciprocal hearer-oriented face maintenance at the centre of Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory. In fact, the only reference Brown and Levinson make to the “use of non-expectable strategy to insult” (or ‘irrational’ behaviour) relates to communication encounters in which the speaker somehow overestimates one of the factors social distance, rate of imposition, or power and ends up “insulting” the other party by being overly polite (Brown & Levinson 1987: 229). Of course, Brown and Levinson need not account for other, non-supportive manifestations of facework, as their primary interest was always in what they defined as “redressive action that gives face to the addressee, that is that attempts to counteract the potential face damage of the FTA by doing it in such a way, or with such modifications or additions, that indicate clearly that no such face threat is intended or desired, and that S in general recognises H’s face wants and himself wants them to be achieved” (Brown & Levinson 1987: 69-70). Furthermore, their taxonomy of politeness strategies was never meant to serve as an analytical framework for the investigation of politeness, even though it has been adopted in many studies since, including the present investigation, as a tool for analysis. In addition, what an analysis of the discourse in the above excerpts has shown is that, although facework in negotiations would seem to be motivated by a wider range of underlying face needs than those operationalised by Brown and Levinson, the linguistic outputs that are manifested as a result of these other mechanisms may in many instances be very similar in form and realisation to those distinguished by Brown and Levinson, particularly with regard to their set of negative output strategies. They just seem to occur in different contexts (for example, in non-FTA contexts), and appear to differ in their orientation (to speaker rather than hearer).

6.1.3 Rapport-building illocutionary politeness in the negotiations

The results of the present study regarding the use of rapport-building, positive politeness strategies by the negotiators showed that the professional negotiators, in particular, invested considerably greater effort into ‘claiming common ground’ with the other party in their negotiations than in ‘showing the heater and speaker are cooperators’ (see Section 5.3), despite the fact that cooperativeness is generally regarded to be an important axiom in business negotiation. In contrast, the student negotiators invested similar efforts into claiming common ground and showing cooperativeness. Showing solidarity by claiming common ground seems to have been regarded as more important for building the negotiator relationship by the professionals than by the student. This may also account for the more frequent use of pronoun ‘you’ (regarded as an indicator of ‘other-orientedness’), relative to inclusive ‘we’ by the professional negotiators in particular (see Section 5.5). The difference in use of ‘you’ by the two groups of negotiators was found to be highly significant, but all the negotiators consistently used higher proportions of ‘you’ than inclusive ‘we’. In the professional negotiations in particular, then, you-attitude and showing solidarity by claiming common ground (also reflected in the considerable use of small talk by the professional negotiators, see Section 5.4) seem to have been used more extensively than showing cooperativeness to build rapport.

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Again, concern for professional face might offer a plausible explanation for this finding. Showing too much cooperativeness essentially threatens a negotiator’s autonomy and his independence as a constituent negotiator. It can make a negotiator seem weak; it emphasises interdependence in matters relating to the transaction at hand, in other words, dependency on other at a professional level. Ultimately then, it may endanger the negotiator’s professional identity. Strategies aimed at showing solidarity, on the other hand, such as claiming common ground, engaging in small talk, and showing interest in and concern for the other (‘you-attitude’) emphasise interdependence at a social and interpersonal, rather than at a professional, level. They may therefore be preferable as rapport-building strategies in an organisational genre like the negotiation because they pose less of a threat to the negotiator’s professional face and identity.

6.1.4 Politeness strategy versus bargaining tactic

In retrospect, some positive politeness strategies in the negotiations seem very similar in form and content to what could also be regarded as bargaining tactics or ‘sales talk’: verbal behaviour aimed more than anything else at persuading the other party to buy your products or do business with your company. Examples of positive politeness strategies that may in fact have been used in the negotiations as bargaining tactics include, for example: P3 (“Intensify interest to hearer”), whose linguistic outputs in the present study were regarded to include utterances describing the benefits of products for the other (or other’s company), or of the transaction as a whole; P14 (“Assume and assert reciprocity”) which was referred to earlier (Section 5.1.2) as a persuasive, quid pro quo strategy; and P13 (“Give or ask for reasons for the FTA”). Asking the other party in a negotiation to outline reasons for a particular action (for example, an objection, disagreement or rejection of an offer) is regarded as a ‘good’ bargaining tactic, employed by successful negotiators, because it gives a negotiator something tangible to work with, in the sense that he can then argue against the reasons given, and thus has a better chance to persuade the other party to take on his viewpoint after all (Rackham 1999). Therefore, whether such verbal behaviour, when it occurred in the corpus negotiations, should have been regarded as positive politeness (as it was) becomes questionable.

On the other hand, Firth (1995b) regards ‘accounts’, giving reasons for an FTA, as mutually accessible “discourse resources” that provide participants with “negotiable materials” that can be explored further in service of resolving work-related problems (for example, establishing price levels). As such, Firth regards accounts as an essential, defining discourse element of the genre of negotiation. Effectively, accounts and responses to accounts are what make an interaction a negotiation. At certain significant stages of a negotiation, negotiators can even be seen to engage in the accounting activity together to suggest, and ultimately attain, multilateral agreement. Through accounting, participants can move from potential conflict to mutual agreement in a manner that is “organisationally defensible”. In Firth’s definition, therefore, accounting (giving reasons for an FTA) is seen as highly significant from the perspective of rapport management, because it provides negotiators with the means to create a workable, mutually beneficial, problem-solving environment.

If the verbal strategies discussed above are indeed bargaining tactics, they will have been aimed first and foremost at the transactional, rather than the interactional, objectives of the negotiation. It should be noted that the high frequency of these strategies greatly boosted the overall percentage of politeness strategies, and the percentage of ‘claim common ground’ strategies in particular, in the professional corpus, both of which were found to be significantly higher than the percentages
found in the student corpus. At the same time, if these were indeed bargaining tactics rather than politeness strategies, they could be said to constitute examples of the role-bound behaviour that negotiators have been observed to engage in in order to reinforce and maintain their own professional face, and to live up to the expectations fellow negotiators have of them regarding their professional role in a negotiation, and the rights and obligations associated with that role (Charles 1996; Spencer-Oatey 2000b). As such, these strategies, in the negotiation context in which they were used, and regardless of whether they were used primarily as a rapport-building positive politeness strategy or a persuasive bargaining tactic, can be said to have at least constituted instances of facework, albeit triggered on the basis of potentially different underlying face mechanisms. If we are to fully understand verbal facework in negotiation discourse, then, there is clearly a need to further investigate the potential interplay between rapport-building strategies aimed at improving the relationship, and the persuasive, tactical strategies that are inherent to this type of competitive genre, where the professional role an interlocutor plays would seem to be an important determinant of verbal behaviour.

6.1.5 Facework analyses: general conclusions

In general, the results of the analyses of facework reported in Chapter 5 and discussed above, as well as the additional, more impressionistic, observations of instances of facework in the negotiation data outlined in this chapter, have largely confirmed findings relating to the occurrence of non-supportive facework from a number of earlier studies of politeness in negotiations (e.g., Charles 1996, Van der Wijst 1996). In addition, the results and observations from the present study have provided some support for the suggestion that other face mechanisms relating to negotiators’ professional role and status (apart from positive and negative face concerns) may underlie negotiation communication, and for the suggestion that interlocutors may, in certain communication contexts, choose to hold rapport orientations that are purposely non-supportive of other’s face (specifically a “rapport-neglect” or a “rapport-challenge” orientation). These perspectives on face and concomitant facework could offer possible explanations for some of the instances of irrational facework, in terms of politeness theory, that were encountered in the negotiation discourse studied here, and that have also been observed in earlier studies of negotiations.

The facework analysed in this study was generated by only a small group of negotiators. As a result, the conclusions discussed in this chapter are necessarily tentative. However, with regard to methodology, this investigation has demonstrated the value of analysing facework in discourse rather than in isolated utterances or FTAs. Although the analyses at times became complex and generated many new questions along the way, the richness of the material has provided valuable insights into how and when different types of facework are used in negotiations. It has become clear that there are additional facework mechanisms at play in competitive settings, and that the link between FTAs and illocutionary politeness is not as clearcut and straightforward as has generally been assumed in the literature. Although Brown and Levinson’s remains the most extensive framework for the study of hearer-oriented politeness, an examination of the negotiation corpora has shown that an application of Brown and Levinson’s framework only, focusing as it does on redressing hearer-oriented FTAs, fails to capture other domains of facework aimed at rapport management, and facework aimed at establishing a professional identity. A more comprehensive explanation of facework in negotiation discourse would also need to systematically investigate aspects of speaker-oriented facework.
In sum, we would like to suggest that at least the following phenomena relating to face concerns, motivations underlying facework, and face maintenance in negotiation would seem to deserve further attention:

- role-bound behaviour in negotiation (relating to associated rights and obligations): for example, it is conceivable that, in a buyer’s market, sellers may feel obligated, given their ‘dependent’ position relative to the other party (and given the threat of competition in the market in general), to invest considerable effort into the relational dimension of a business encounter in order to ensure a transaction; in contrast, buyers will not be instrumentally motivated to do so, as there are plenty of other manufacturers they can go to (See e.g., Excerpt 6.1 above).

- foregrounding speaker-oriented facework in negotiation: rather than attending at all times to the other party’s face needs, as Brown and Levinson’s model would have expected them to, the professionals in the present study at times engaged in almost ‘boastful’ verbal behaviour, aimed clearly at boosting aspects of their own face (See Section 6.1.1).

- aggravating hearer-oriented face threat in negotiation: the negotiators in the present study were at times observed to engage in brief episodes of contentious behaviour which were characterised by (reciprocal) non-supportive facework (See Section 6.1.2).

6.2 Usefulness of VRM analysis in a study of facework in negotiation

An analysis of the language material in both the student and the professional corpora on the basis of the VRM taxonomy seems to have successfully distinguished different verbal processes in negotiation discourse. On a practical level, the VRM manual (Stiles 1992) offered sufficiently clear guidelines and coding examples from a great number of previous studies of different genres of organisational communication to allow for efficient and exhaustive coding of the negotiation data. Although the coding process was slowed down considerably at times because of the fact that the negotiation discourse had been produced by lingua franca English speakers who, on the whole, spoke in incomplete, and often ungrammatical, sentences, less than 2% of all utterances in the student corpus and less than 4% of utterances in the professional corpus were ultimately classified as ‘uncodable’ at either form or intent level, or both. These ‘uncodables’ consisted of half-sentences, false starts, inaudible (mumbled), or uninterpretable, utterances. The non-nativeness of the negotiation data was expected beforehand to make the coding of VRMs, particularly at the form level, more difficult. However, in practice, it was found that the VRM coding manual (Stiles 1992) offers sufficiently clear and consistent guidelines regarding coders’ actions when faced with unclarity, for both form and intent level coding. As half-sentences, false starts and ungrammaticality are rife in any “natural language” (Stiles 1992: 135 & 198), whether it be produced by natives or non-natives, the coding manual offers many examples of ‘difficult’ utterances, and suggestions as to how to categorise them consistently. These procedures were also applied in doubtful cases encountered in the lingua franca negotiation discourse.

22 In cases of extreme difficulty, the coders could always resort to the audio-recordings (and video-recordings) of the negotiations for additional coding clues. In the end, the occasions on which they did so were few.
Nevertheless, despite the fact that the percentage of uncoded VRMs can be considered to be low in the present study, the lingua franca negotiators may still have produced idiosyncratic linguistic forms that may have affected coding to some extent, particularly at the form level. However, it should be noted that any white noise that may have been created as a result will only have affected one aspect of the VRM analyses carried out in the present study: the analysis of the use of mixed (indirect) VRMs by the negotiators, which necessarily involved a consideration of both the form and intent levels of the VRMs (see Sections 4.3.2 and 4.3.3). All other VRM analyses were based on VRM coding at the intent level only, which posed relatively few categorisation problems to the two coders.

On a theoretical level, the VRM taxonomy appears to be a useful conceptual tool, offering promising possibilities for describing and quantifying verbal behaviour in negotiations in general, and specific verbal behaviour, relevant to a consideration of face maintenance in negotiations, in particular (see Section 6.2). The system may strike linguists who have been conditioned to look at speech acts in terms of the typologies proposed by, for example, Austin (1975) and Searle (1976), as an unorthodox tool for a linguistic investigation. This is not surprising, given that Stiles distinguishes illocutionary acts on the basis of abstract psychological (rather than linguistic) principles that relate to aspects of the relationship between interlocutors at the time of speaking, rather than to aspects of the language they produce (see Chapter 3). However, it is the psychological nature of Stiles’ taxonomy that makes it a particularly suitable tool to use in a study of facework mechanisms. After all, the notion of face, which lies at the heart of both the broader concept of rapport management and the more narrow concept of politeness, is in itself a psychological concept relating to aspects of an individual’s relationship with other people.

In relation to the specific research focus of the present study, the taxonomy has been particularly useful because one of the three principles that underlie the system (the presumptuousness principle) is linked specifically to face-related aspects of an interlocutors’ relationship, and thus to the psychological mechanisms (face concerns and needs) that underlie face maintenance. As a result, the system was used to identify face-threatening verbal behaviour in the negotiation discourse (see Section 4.3). In addition, it was used to qualify face-protective (indirect) verbal behaviour (see Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2). Finally, it was used to pinpoint face-saving verbal behaviour in a specific set, or category of, VRMs (FTAs) that was particularly relevant to the research focus (see Section 4.3.3). The comparison of the verbal behaviour displayed by the experienced and inexperienced groups of negotiators showed that VRM analysis was detailed enough, encompassing a broad range of different verbal behaviours, to allow systematic comparisons to be made between different (groups of) speakers. Clear differences in verbal behaviour were found between individual negotiators, and also between the two groups of negotiators (see Section 4.4).

Furthermore, with respect to the specific research focus of the present investigation, facework in negotiation discourse, the results of the VRM analysis showed that the verbal behaviour of the negotiators largely followed the pattern that would be predicted on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory. Despite a difference in degree of face threat displayed by the two groups of negotiators (the inexperienced negotiators manifested relatively more face-threatening behaviour than the experienced negotiators), all the negotiators, as would be predicted on the basis of politeness theory, used a considerably high degree of mitigation (manifested in indirect, mixed modes) in the four categories of face-threatening (presumptuous) VRMs. As expected, in the four categories of VRMs that are not considered face-threatening, they all consistently used a considerably lower degree of indirectness (see Sections 4.3.2 and 4.3.3).
These findings would seem to support the conceptual validity of the presumptuous principle that underlies the VRM system, which Stiles claims is linked directly to that aspect of the interlocutor relationship that pertains to face threat. Conversely, the fact that a higher number of mixed (indirect) VRMs was used to express the presumptuous categories of VRMs (FTAs) offers support for Stiles’ claim that mixed modes signal conflicting interpersonal pressures that come into play when face concerns become salient in the interlocutor relationship. Again, the results of the VRM analyses showed that the VRM taxonomy is detailed and extensive enough to allow for clear distinctions between the specific face-related verbal behaviour manifested by individual, and groups of, negotiators.

6.2.1 Differences in verbal behaviour: the students versus the professionals

In the present study, some of the differences in VRM use noted between the two groups of negotiators were particularly relevant to the research focus. A number of these merit further discussion. Overall, the student negotiators displayed a significantly greater degree of presumptuous (face-threatening) verbal behaviour than the professional negotiators. At the individual VRM level, this was manifested in the student negotiators’ significantly greater use of disagreements (a subclass of Confirmation) and Advisements. Reflection and Interpretation, the remaining two categories of presumptuous VRM, were used only relatively infrequently by both groups of negotiators. Because the VRM system was initially developed on the basis of analyses of patient-doctor communication and discourse in psychotherapy sessions, it is likely that the utterance types subsumed in the latter two modes, which have indeed found to be frequently used in such medical encounters, are in fact overrepresented in the VRM system as a whole, as they certainly did not occur as frequently in the negotiation discourse (see similar findings in e.g., Van der Wijst 1994; Hinkle et al. 1988), and are perhaps used less in other than medical genres of organisational discourse in general.

With regard to level of presumptuousness in discourse, Stiles (1992) has reported that, in equal-status dyads (like the participants in the negotiations in the present study) members have been found to increase the degree of presumptuousness in their contributions with degree of intimacy. The fact that the student negotiators were found to have used a higher degree of presumptuousness in their contributions than the professional negotiators may well be due to the fact that they failed to sufficiently take on the role of new-relationship negotiators described in the simulation instructions. Whereas the students were acquainted with each other prior to the simulation session, and may have found it hard to play at being new acquaintances, this was not the case for the professional negotiators, none of whom had met before the simulations, and all of whom were therefore truly engaged in a new-relationship negotiation during the simulation sessions. A closer examination of the discourse produced by the student negotiators, and particularly the way in which they formulated proposals, rejections, and disagreements in comparison to the professional negotiators, indicated that they were indeed more presumptuous in their verbal behaviour (for related discussions see also Sections 5.2, 5.6.3, and 6.4.1).
6.2.2 Use of indirectness

Another difference between the two groups of negotiators in verbal behaviour motivated by face concerns was the degree to which they used indirectness. Overall, the student negotiators were found to have used higher degrees of indirectness in their contributions than the professional negotiators. If this finding is considered in light of the degree of presumptuousness found in both corpora, a higher degree of indirectness in the student corpus might be expected, given the fact that they also used a higher percentage of presumptuous VRMs than the professional negotiators. It might, in part, also be a reflection of overly ‘careful’ (polite) behaviour on the part of this group of non-native, foreign language learners. Such hypercorrect linguistic behaviour by language learners has also been found to occur in other areas of language acquisition, such as pronunciation (Pfaff 1976). Given the fact that the students will have been told frequently in their business language and intercultural courses that “the Dutch are generally regarded as being far too direct in their verbal behaviour, particularly in intercultural negotiations” and that the “British on the whole use far more politeness markers and polite realisations than Dutch speakers”, they may have become too sensitised to cross-cultural differences in linguistic politeness, and may have tried to overcompensate in the negotiations as a result. The same might have been the case for the professional negotiators, who may have picked up similar prescriptive guidelines from so-called ‘Do’s and Don’t’s’ books, which, judging by the evergrowing number of titles available from bookshops, still enjoy great popularity in the business community (e.g., the well-known Culture Shock Series published by the Graphic Arts Center Publication Company).

A somewhat surprising finding, with regard to the use of overall indirectness in both groups of negotiators’ discourse, was that the negotiators also used indirectness to express non-presumptuous VRMs, albeit to a lesser degree than presumptuous VRMs. Indirectness in non-presumptuous VRMs is surprising, given that non-presumptuous VRMs are not considered to be face-threatening, and would therefore, on the basis of predictions generated by the Politeness Model, not warrant facework, such as the use of indirectness. There are a number of considerations that may offer some degree of explanation for the use of indirectness in unexpected (non-FTA) contexts in the negotiation discourse. Again, overly polite behaviour on the part of the language learners might constitute one such explanation. Alternatively, the use of mitigation in discourse that is not assumed to be face-threatening may offer further support for the suggestion that all language (and not just FTAs) is potentially face-threatening and that, therefore, facework might reasonably be expected to occur in non-FTA contexts as well (see also Section 3.6). Finally, given that indirectness in VRMs is said to signal conflicting face concerns, the use of indirectness in non-FTA contexts might offer further support for the idea discussed earlier that negative politeness, which includes the use of indirectness, may have a wider scope (as also assumed for positive politeness), than was initially assumed, since it was also found to occur outside FTA contexts in the negotiation discourse in the present study (see Section 6.1).

6.2.3 Rapport-building verbal behaviour

In Chapter 3, it was suggested that the VRM system, given its emphasis on the intersubjective nature of communication, might also be used to analyse the interactional, rapport-building, element of communication, although Stiles offers no specific guidelines as to how this should be done. Analyses of verbal behaviour in different types of psychotherapy (client-centred, Gestalt and psychoanalytic) may offer a starting point. Stiles (1979) found that, in client-centred (or other-oriented) therapy, which aims to encourage the other to explore his or her own experience, the
therapist’s main role is to communicate “acceptance” (‘in-groupness’) and “empathy” (solidarity and concern) with other. The verbal behaviour of client-centred therapists was found to primarily manifest itself in VRM categories that are coded ‘other’ with respect to the Frame of Reference principle (see Section 3.4). These categories include Acknowledgement (signalling receipt of communication and willingness to listen), Reflection (reframing other’s communication), Edification (sharing information with other), and Confirmation (comparing own experience with that of the other). Verbal behaviour in client-centred psychotherapy, where establishing and maintaining rapport in the relationship is an important secondary objective in service of the main therapeutic objective was found to clearly differ from verbal behaviour manifested by therapists of the Gestalt and psychoanalytic schools. Their behaviour was generally found to be more directive, presumptuous, and confrontational in nature, reflecting the primary aims of these two methods: to recast the patient’s experience in the therapist’s frame of reference (Gestalt), or to modify the patient’s behaviour on the basis of the therapist’s interpretations (psychoanalytic method). The emphasis here is not primarily on creating a favourable client-therapist relationship. Therapists in the latter two traditions were found to most frequently use the VRMs of Disclosure, Interpretation, Advisement and Question.

Stiles’ findings suggest that verbal behaviour in therapy sessions geared to rapport-building, or the relational element of communication, is characterised by a specific set of VRMs, and clearly differs from verbal behaviour geared to transactional objectives, such as changing behaviour and probing for information. It might be surmised, therefore, that rapport-building in other genres of dyadic organisational communication, like sales negotiations, might also be reflected in the use of (at least) this set of VRMs (Acknowledgement, Reflection, Edification and Confirmation). As was reported earlier (Section 4.2), Acknowledgement (backchannels and address terms) was found to have been the most frequently used VRM by both groups of negotiators in the present study, constituting close to 30% of overall VRM use. Edification (statements of fact) constituted almost 20% of all VRMs in the professional corpus, and 11% of all VRMs in the student corpus. This difference may be due to some extent to the fact that the professional negotiators were found to have used considerably more small talk than the student negotiators (see Section 5.4). It is conceivable that small talk will have been manifested primarily in the VRMs of Edification (stating facts) and Disclosure (sharing personal information and feelings).

Confirmation constituted less than 10% overall of VRMs in both corpora. Here, it should be noted, however, that the two groups of negotiators differed in their use of disagreements and agreements (subcategories of Confirmation). The professionals used a higher degree of (rapport-building) agreements than the students, who in turn used a higher degree of (face-threatening) disagreements than the professionals (see Section 4.2). Confirmation, therefore, if polarity is not taken into account, would seem to qualify aspects of both interactional (agreement) and transactional (disagreement) communication in negotiations. Finally, a relatively small percentage of VRMs in both corpora consisted of Reflection (around 4%). The use of Reflection, especially in the professional data, to reframe proposals from the other’s viewpoint has already been discussed in Section 4.2.2, where it was suggested that it might reflect a bargaining strategy employed specifically to make the speaker seem more other-oriented, and thus appear cooperative. In the professional data, at least, Reflection might therefore be regarded as constituting an aspect of interactional communication.

Although a systematic analysis of interactional communication on the basis of the VRM system was not incorporated into the present study, it would seem, based on the above discussion, that the system might indeed offer promising inroads into identifying rapport-building verbal behaviour
aimed at the relational objective of communication, in negotiation discourse. Thus, application of the VRM model in this way could offer an interesting research focus for future investigations of rapport management in negotiations.

6.3 Face threat: presumptuous VRMs versus FTAs

It was said above that the VRM system was used successfully to identify and quantify face-threatening verbal behaviour (or FTAs) in the negotiation corpora. This subsection considers the type of face-threatening behaviour that Stiles’ taxonomy distinguishes in relation to the concept that is central to Brown and Levinson’s operationalisation of face-threatening verbal behaviour, the FTA.

All Interpretation, Confirmation, Reflection and Advisement VRMs (at intent level) are regarded as presumptuous, and thus face-threatening. If we consider the VRM of Reflection, it is clear that what Stiles regards as face-threatening does not necessarily correspond to what Brown and Levinson regard as an inherent FTA. An utterance such as “IS: You’ve been saying all along the line that you would accept E for the sleeping bags” shows that the speaker presumes to know something about the other’s experience and puts that experience into words by repeating what the other has just stated. Note that the speaker does so without expressing any additional evaluation or interpretation of the content of the original statement. In Brown and Levinson’s terms, this utterance would most probably, in the same context, constitute a harmless declarative, and would certainly not be regarded as a speech act that inherently threatens the face of the hearer. It might even be regarded, given the appropriate context, as an example of the positive politeness strategy of “seeking agreement” through repetition.

The second presumptuous VRM Stiles distinguishes is Confirmation. All Confirmations are regarded as presumptuous and therefore intrinsically face-threatening. If we regard examples of the subclasses of this category of VRM, agreement and disagreement, in terms of Brown and Levinson’s notion of FTA, disagreement would certainly qualify as an inherently face-threatening behaviour, primarily to the hearer. However, agreements would qualify as face-threatening primarily to the speaker; signalling as they do a degree of dependency on the other (shared view, belief, opinion) that could weaken the speaker’s position relative to the other party’s. An agreement might even be regarded in terms of Brown and Levinson’s framework as an output of positive politeness (the mechanism of token agreements), as would a Confirmation if it classifies an utterance in which common ground and shared experience is expressed (small talk).

Interpretations are another presumptuous VRM category that Brown and Levinson would regard as an FTA to hearer (negative evaluation) or not (positive evaluation), depending on the polarity of the VRM, that is, whether the speaker negatively or positively evaluates the hearer. In fact, Interpretations that express negative assessments of some aspect of the hearer pose an inherent threat not only to the hearer’s negative face (imposing on the hearer’s autonomy to act and do as he pleases) but also to the hearer’s positive face (it singles the hearer out from his in-group on the basis of some negative characteristic). If an Interpretation reflects a positive evaluation, it could be regarded as inherently face-threatening to the speaker. Again, as was the case for agreement, by complimenting the other party, a speaker might weaken his own position in the relationship. In Brown and Levinson’s terms, positive evaluations of other might even be regarded as positive politeness (“Give gifts”).

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusions
Finally, if we look at the fourth category of presumptuous VRM, Advisement, the two frameworks would seem to generate similar conclusions regarding type and orientation of face threat. An Advisement’s illocutionary purpose is to guide the other’s behaviour (thoughts, actions, opinions, etc.). It codes a range of traditional speech acts including suggestions, commands, advice, prohibitions, and permission, which Brown and Levinson would readily classify as inherently face-threatening because they clearly impose on the autonomy of the hearer (negative face), and clearly reflect the idea that the hearer is subordinate to the speaker, and not part of the in-group (threat to negative and positive face of hearer). Advisements, then, are clearly hearer-oriented FTAs.

The above observations about presumptuous VRMs in relation to Brown and Levinson’s notion of FTA, and in some instances, even to their notion of politeness, could point to a number of conclusions. An easy conclusion to draw would be that the VRM system, used as a tool to identify face-threatening verbal behaviour, is not compatible with Brown and Levinson’s notion of FTA and their concomitant conceptualisation of politeness. After all, based on the above observations, it might be concluded that the VRM system codes and quantifies a different dimension of the interactants’ relationship that is unrelated to the interpretation of face needs that forms the central tenet of Brown and Levinson’s theory. Van der Wijst (1996), who used the VRM Taxonomy to identify FTAs in Dutch negotiation discourse, seems to have drawn a similar conclusion. He solved the problem of potential incompatibility between the two systems by taking into account the polarity of two of the presumptuous VRM categories, Interpretation and Confirmation. Because Van der Wijst used the VRM taxonomy primarily to identify and isolate utterances in negotiation discourse that were FTAs in Brown and Levinson terms (e.g., utterances that posed a threat to hearer’s face), he only included negative Interpretations, and disagreements in his corpus. Positive interpretations and agreements were regarded in Van der Wijst’s study as not face-threatening. In other words, Van der Wijst adapted the VRM taxonomy in such a way as to make it compatible with the concept of face threat that is central to Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of politeness strategies (hearer-oriented face threat).

However, as we have seen, face threat in competitive communication settings is far from unidirectional. An alternative conclusion that might be drawn, therefore, and one which seems plausible in light of the unidimensionality of Brown and Levinson’s model, is that Stiles’ system provides a way to identify face-threatening behaviour, and subsequently contexts that require facework, in a much broader sense that takes into account the multidirectionality of face threat. As such, VRM analysis incorporates Brown and Levinson’s FTAs (as Van der Wijst 1996 has shown), but also communicative action that Brown and Levinson would not necessarily regard as face-threatening. For example, Stiles’ categorisation of presumptuous utterances also incorporates verbal behaviour that poses a threat to aspects of speaker’s face. As we saw earlier, communicative action that poses a threat to speaker’s face includes subclasses of Confirmation and Interpretation. When these are uttered, the speaker’s relative position to the other, in terms of power and social distance, is weakened as a consequence of the fact that he has ‘boosted’ the other’s face, and has thus upset the existing relational balance (these are the two subtypes of VRM that Van der Wijst 1996 excluded from his analyses). This would be the case particularly in negotiation contexts, where maintaining a professional image, as we saw earlier, appears to be of considerable importance. Such face-threatening contexts have not been explicitly incorporated into Brown and Levinson’s notion of FTA, or into their politeness taxonomy. In practice, this means that many instances where facework occurs as a result of other underlying face mechanisms (non-supportive facework geared to speaker’s face) cannot be accounted for sufficiently on the basis of politeness theory. Examples of such behaviour were presented and
discussed earlier. It is conceivable, given the complex interplay between different types of facework (defensive vs. protective), different facework orientations (speaker, hearer, or both), and underlying mechanisms relating to different face concerns (minimally including positive, negative and professional face), that politeness identified as hearer-oriented facework in earlier studies that have used Brown and Levinson’s taxonomy of strategies, might in fact have been ‘misinterpreted’ in cases where facework was defensive and speaker-oriented, or even purposely non-supportive.

In sum, Stiles’ notion of presumptuous VRM would seem to incorporate a broader concept of face threat than Brown and Levinson’s notion of FTA. Follow-up research could aim to fine-tune the system so it could be used to qualify and quantify different types or face threat and subsequently to identify discourse contexts in which (different types of) facework are likely to occur. In this way, VRM analysis could make it possible to determine how facework aimed at different types of face threat (resulting from different rapport management orientations) is realised linguistically. Subsequently, one could investigate whether there are, in fact, differences in the linguistic realisations used to counter each type of face threat. It was suggested earlier that face-related strategies motivated by concerns for professional face, for example, were similar in terms of their linguistic realisation to some outputs of Brown and Levinson’s negative politeness strategies. In addition, VRM analyses might be used to distinguish verbal behaviour aimed at the interactional versus transactional elements of negotiation communication. Consequently, complementary facework analyses could focus on determining what types of facework occur in discourse contexts aimed at transactional goals on the one hand, and interactional goals on the other.

Alternatively, quantitative analyses similar to those carried out in the present study could be used to establish the degree of facework that is used to counter specific types of face threat. As such, VRM analysis might contribute to the development of an analytical framework for investigating the different domains of rapport management (next to Brown and Levinson’s illocutionary politeness) that were discussed earlier (Section 3.6.1).

Reconsidering the verbal behaviour of the male vs. female negotiators in the student corpus

As a final comment on the conclusions about the comparative analyses, we now reconsider an obvious shortcoming in the data set that was identified earlier, namely the fact that the student corpus consisted of negotiation data produced by both male and female speakers (See Section 3.13). Much sociolinguistic research has been geared to studying potential gender differences in verbal behaviour and one aspect of verbal behaviour that has been the subject of much linguistic research into gender-based differences is politeness. First off, it must be said that the generous amount of research that has attempted to seek out gender differences in politeness is based on studies whose focus, starting point and methodological approach are so diverse as to make their results largely incomparable. Furthermore, the findings from these studies have been incongruous, to say the least. Nevertheless, it has become part of “folklinguistics” to insist that women are more polite than men (Coates 1993).

Broadly speaking, three explanations have been offered to account for gender-based differences in verbal behaviour, including the use of politeness: innate biological differences between the sexes, different socialisation patterns for boys and girls as they grow up, and the fact that power in society is distributed differently between men and women (Holmes 1995). Innate psychological differences between men and women, for example, are said to account for differences between them in their orientation to others. Thus, women are said to be more concerned with their connection and involvement with others and will therefore focus on the
interdependence in relationships, whereas men are said to be primarily concerned with autonomy and detachment, which will cause them to seek independence and to focus on control. In turn, these gender-specific concerns will be reflected in the verbal behaviour of women and men. In an extensive overview, Coates (1993) sums up the findings of a large number of linguistic studies that have confirmed gender differences in the use of polite verbal behaviour. These include, among others: women’s greater use of minimal responses, or back channels, than men to signal active listenship and support; women’s tendency to engage in more complimenting behaviour (particularly in same-sex contexts) than men; men’s tendency to interrupt more, and speak more and longer than women in mixed conversations; women’s greater use of linguistic forms associated with politeness (e.g., hedges and strengthening particles) than men in both same-sex and mixed conversational contexts; and men’s tendency to use directives and imperatives to bring about action.

The overall results of an extensive study by Holmes (1995), based on an analysis of verbal politeness in a large corpus of data collected largely from New Zealand, broadly confirm the above findings. In Holmes’ study, women engaged more in positively polite behaviour than men, stressing shared objectives and expressing solidarity with their conversational partner (regardless of the partner’s gender). This was exhibited primarily in their tendency to give supportive and encouraging feedback in a variety of conversational contexts and to agree rather than disagree; in contrast, men were found to disagree more than women and to do so ‘baldly’. In more formal conversational contexts, women exhibited more negatively polite behaviour than men by readily yielding the floor, interrupting less often than men, and appearing to be more attentive listeners, thus encouraging others to take the floor and to make contributions. In sum, the above findings taken together strongly suggest that women invest relatively more in the interactional element of communication than men, who seem to be more focused on the transactional element of communication and on exploiting the possibilities offered by what Holmes refers to as “status-enhancing” conversational contexts (Holmes 1995: 70).

If we compare the results of the analyses for the female and male student negotiators in the present study, it would appear that, even within this very small sample of speakers, similar gender-related tendencies emerge to those outlined above. For example, with respect to verbal politeness, it was reported earlier that the female negotiators, as a group, used slightly higher proportions than the group of male student negotiators of both positive and negative politeness strategies (See Section 5.2: Table 5.1). With respect to the facework-related aspects of the VRM analyses, again, the gender-related tendencies set out above seem to have been confirmed. It was reported that the five female negotiators, as a group, used slightly higher proportions of non-presumptuous VRMs than the group of male students, and slightly lower proportions than the male students of three of the four presumptuous VRMs (See Section 4.2.1: Table 4.1). In other words, in terms of overall face-related verbal behaviour, it appears that the female negotiators made slightly greater use of VRMs which, it was suggested earlier in this chapter, would seem to be associated with relational communication and rapport-building (See Section 6.2.3). Overall, the male students, as a group, produced a higher percentage of face-threatening VRMs than the female students (See Section 4.3.1: Table 4.5). Furthermore, it was found that the group of female students produced a higher percentage of indirectly expressed face-threatening VRMs than the group of male students (See Section 4.3.3: Table 4.9). Finally, with respect to the use of inclusive ‘we’ (seen as an indicator of solidarity), it was reported that the female students produced a slightly higher proportion of this pronoun than the male students (See Section 5.5: Table 5.9).
However, when we compare the results of the student negotiators as a whole (males and females) with the results of the all-male group of experienced negotiators, the potential white noise that may have been caused by the gender-based tendencies in polite verbal behaviour that were clearly manifested in the mixed-gender student group appears to have been neutralised. With respect to the verbal politeness analyses, for example, it was reported that the professional negotiators used significantly more politeness overall than the students. They were reported to have used a comparable amount of negative politeness to the student group and significantly more positive politeness, particularly those strategies aimed at emphasising solidarity, agreement and common ground, which would be regarded as reflective of ‘female’ concerns by the authors of the linguistic studies summarised above. With regard to the VRM analyses, again, any potential influence of the gender-related polite verbal behaviour of the female students on the results of the student group as a whole turns out to be negligible. Overall, the student negotiators, as a group, were shown to have used a significantly greater proportion of presumptuous (face-threatening) VRMs than the professional negotiators, and within this set of VRMs, to have used a significantly greater proportion of disagreements, and fewer agreements, than the professionals. Finally, with respect to the small talk analyses, the difference between the two groups is also quite pronounced, with the professionals initiating more varied (relationship-building) small talk than the students (males and females) and doing so considerably more frequently (See Section 5.4).

Verbiest (1996), among others, has called for a “gender-based” rather than a “sex-based” approach to the interpretation of male-female differences in verbal behaviour. Such an approach would leave room for the fact that ideas about male and female roles and related verbal behaviour change over time, and vary across cultures. Verbiest maintains that “gender, as opposed to sex, is not something you are or have, but something you do” (Verbiest 1996: 28: my translation). Given that the division between public and private life no longer runs completely parallel to the division between male and female, it is likely that the parallel between talk in the workplace and talk at home and what is typically regarded as either typically ‘male’ or typically ‘female’ verbal behaviour in these settings will be subject to shift as well. Indeed, a gender-based interpretation would be able to accommodate the ‘female’ polite behaviour reported for the professional negotiators in the present study, and some of the ‘male’ verbal behaviour displayed by the female negotiators, relative to the group of professionals. Stoker (1996) has suggested that it is not whether a person is male or female, but the relationship between interactants, and the context and type of conversation they are involved in that determines verbal behaviour. Thus, a more formal workplace context like a negotiation may well require a different mode of verbal behaviour (that does not reflect more ‘traditional’ male-female differences) than an informal, everyday conversation.

In conclusion, the gender-related white noise that ‘contaminated’ the overall results of the facework analyses of the mixed-gender student group seems to have been largely overridden by, presumably, the ‘experience versus inexperience’ factor. However, there is another factor (not gender-related) that might have played a role in bringing about the pronounced differences between the two groups of negotiators: their age. In retrospect, we acknowledge this difference between groups as another shortcoming in the data set, but one that was perhaps an inevitable aspect of the study’s design, as it is difficult to separate length of experience and increase in age.
6.4 Potential implications for teaching business communication (English)

In the remainder of this final chapter (Sections 6.4 to 6.6), we highlight a number of aspects of negotiation communication that were consistently manifested in the professional corpus (and to a lesser extent, differently, or not at all, in the student corpus). We will primarily consider communication that is pertinent to the main focus of this investigation, namely face-related communication. The starting point here, which we outlined earlier in Section 3.9, is that a difference between the two groups of negotiators with respect to these communication aspects might signal a potential ‘lack’ of (professional) communicative competence on the part of the inexperienced negotiators, and therefore a skills area that potentially deserves (more) specific consideration in business (English) courses, particularly in components of such courses focusing on the genre of (international) negotiation.

We believe that (language) learning in a BC context involves more than the accumulation of (linguistic and cultural) knowledge (sets of rules and facts). It also involves “participation”, the process of becoming a member of a particular (professional) discourse community (Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000). This process includes learning “how to communicate in the language of [the] community and act according to its particular norms” (Sfard 1988, cited in Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000). By focusing on language use in context and on issues of “belonging” and “affiliation”, language learning in this sense is seen as involving different modes of acting (participation) as well as the acquisition of sets of rules and codes (acquisition). In other words, contextualisation and interfacing with others is as important as internalising knowledge. In this sense, acquisition and participation are regarded as complementary.

In the following sub-sections we first indicate a number of potential areas of attention for BC (EFL) teaching, before considering how they might be incorporated into the broader BC curriculum, and how they might be dealt with more specifically within a BC (EFL) classroom environment. The suggestions put forward below should be regarded as tentative, as the present study involved only modest numbers of negotiators, and any ideas regarding teaching methods and content are based largely on the researcher’s own experience of teaching business English and on observations (rather than systematic analysis) of the negotiation data in the two corpora. Therefore, any suggestions put forward should be regarded in the first instance as ‘food for thought’.

6.4.1 Potential areas of attention for BC (English) teaching

Essentially, it is assumed that every difference between the two groups of negotiators which is considered relevant to the research focus and genre might potentially indicate an aspect of professional negotiation behaviour (assumed to require a degree of professional communicative competence) to which inexperienced professionals should at the very least be sensitised. In addition, a number of such areas might lend themselves as a starting point for specific teaching content that could help students to develop aspects of (professional) communicative competence, and in some instances to train what would appear to be potentially ‘problematic’ areas of professional negotiation communication.
Pragmatic competence

In this discussion, we restrict ourselves to areas that relate to pragmatic competence (and ability). It was observed earlier that, although the professionals did not seem to have had at their disposal a more extensive range of linguistic resources in the lingua franca than the student negotiators, they were clearly able to sustain general progress in their discourse, and, more specifically, to develop argumentation more successfully than the students (see Section 5.6.1). In other words, the professionals seem to have been able to deploy what appeared to be an equally limited linguistic repertoire to greater (tactical) effect, at least within the specific genre under study. At the level of pragmatic and strategic competence, therefore, they clearly surpassed the students. In terms of linguistic competence, we assume the professionals and students to have been largely comparable.

Restricting the discussion to pragmatic competence\(^{23}\) allows us to link up with the notion of professionalism that was introduced earlier (see Section 3.9). In order to be able to communicate as professionals, aspiring professionals (in our specific case, inexperienced negotiators using an L2) will need to develop knowledge about relevant communicative action and how to carry it out (illocutionary competence), and knowledge about how to use communication appropriately, according to the socio-cultural context (socio-pragmatic competence). Communicative action incorporates speech acts, but also “participation in conversation, engaging in different types of discourse and sustaining interaction in complex speech events” (Kasper 1997, para. 1). ‘Relevant’ communicative action is taken here to mean ‘relevant to recurrent communication activities in the discourse community the student aspires to’, which, in our case, is assumed to be an international and multilingual business community. Trosborg (1998) has made a useful distinction for our purposes, between “everyday pragmatics” and “business pragmatics”. What we attempt to focus on below relates to business pragmatics rather than everyday pragmatics, although sometimes these two areas of overall pragmatic competence can be seen to overlap.

On the basis of the comparative analyses (reported in Chapters 4 and 5), we outline below a number of areas within these two components of pragmatic competence (illocutionary and socio-pragmatic) that would seem to have been problematic for the aspiring professionals in this study, and that might therefore be potentially problematic for this group in general.

6.4.2 Potentially problematic areas for aspiring professionals

It was reported earlier that the student negotiators seemed to produce a relatively limited repertoire of formulations for relevant communicative action, such as, proposals, counter-proposals, and rejections. This was the case particularly with respect to the argumentation (a ‘supportive move’ in terms of facework) that, judging by the professionals’ behaviour, usually accompanies such communicative action in negotiation talk. In the student negotiations, argumentation was either very limited, both in terms of amount of discourse and informative content (“I can’t accept that. \textit{It is difficult for me if I do.”} Or “I can’t accept that. \textit{It is too low.”}), or was simply not provided.

\(^{23}\) By restricting the discussion to pragmatic competence, it is by no means implied that other components of communicative competence, and linguistic competence in particular, deserve less or no attention in the classroom. The point is that foreign language course content in BC programmes should be geared to other areas of communicative competence \textit{as well as} to linguistic competence.
With respect to two types of communicative action, proposals and counter-proposals, the students regularly formulated them as outright demands rather than tentative suggestions (“You have to give me an A on that product or I will be bankrupt.” or “You must give in on that one.”). This, in part, attributed to the students’ ‘inappropriate’ use (in an ‘inappropriate’ discourse context) of you-orientation that was noted earlier (see Section 5.6.3). Furthermore, the demands they formulated were very strong demands (“You must…”; “I have to have…”, etc.). This perhaps reflects a more general lack of overall pragmatic competence evidenced in the communication (both spoken and written) of Dutch students of English in general. Their lack of sensitivity to modality in English results in a tendency to almost exclusively restrict themselves to ‘have to’ and ‘must’ to express obligation (in everyday communication contexts as well). In contrast to the students, the professionals very rarely formulated (counter-)proposals as demands, and when they did, it seemed appropriate in relation to what had gone before in the negotiation and appropriate to the stage the negotiation was in. For example, they were observed to occasionally make such ‘demands’ towards the end of the central bargaining phase, having already discussed a number of (counter-)proposals in great detail. Perhaps they did so to emphasise that the proposal under discussion at that moment (formulated as a demand: “We really need a B level on that …’, ‘We must have…’, etc.) was really the only remaining option open to them at this stage, having explored other options during the negotiation. Alternatively, they may have done so to emphasise that the time was now ripe for an agreement, as the discussion had gone on long enough, that is, to indicate a legitimate cut-off point. In contrast to the students, the professional negotiators never formulated (counter-)proposals as demands in the initial or middle stages of the main bargaining phase.

Another observation regarding the student negotiations that seems to point to a potential area of pragmatic competence that might deserve more attention in BC teaching is that the students dealt inadequately with routine communicative actions, such as greetings and general enquiries after well-being (part of the general introduction at the start of the negotiations). In a number of instances, initial greetings (e.g., ‘Good morning, my name is X.’) and enquiries after well-being (e.g., ‘How are you today?’) were not reciprocated at all, or were not reciprocated adequately. Similarly, in the latter stage of the negotiations, students dealt with ‘leave-taking’ strategies inadequately, either reciprocating only half-heartedly or, again, failing to reciprocate altogether (see Section 5.4). Although these latter observations may not relate specifically to business pragmatics only (these routines are as ‘relevant’ in everyday communication), they are certainly relevant to the present study from the perspective of face maintenance. These types of communicative action (greetings, introductions, ‘leave-taking’ routines) all reflect the interactional element of communication, and are motivated first and foremost by face concerns (they are geared to establishing or maintaining rapport), in everyday as well as business encounters.

There are two further findings from the present study that would seem to reflect areas of pragmatic competence that might be problematic for aspiring professionals. These relate almost exclusively to the interactional element of negotiation communication, which is linked directly to rapport management. The first overall finding relates to the use of positive illocutionary politeness strategies in general, and small talk in particular. The second overall finding relates to the discourse perspective that professional negotiators would seem to adopt at various stages of a (new-relationship) negotiation. With respect to positive politeness, the professionals used significantly more positively polite strategies than the student negotiators. It was also reported that the professionals seemed to have clearly invested greater effort into creating common ground between interlocutors than the students. Furthermore, it was found that, for the professional negotiators, creating common ground was more important as a source for creating and reinforcing
rapport than showing cooperation (see Section 5.6.1). With respect to the use of small talk, regarded as an important source of rapport-building in negotiation, it was reported that small talk strategies were only negligible in the student negotiations, and were only used (if at all) in the opening and closing phases. Furthermore, the student negotiators produced a narrower range of small talk topics than the professionals, and their small talk sequences were consistently found to be much shorter (see Section 5.6.2).

The underuse of small talk as a source of rapport by the students brought about an unpleasant side effect. As the student negotiators consistently introduced only very short small talk sequences and did not engage in any tacit bargaining prior to the central bargaining phase, their transitions from pre-bargaining opening phase to central negotiation phase were extremely abrupt, and as a result needlessly confrontational, as they entered a phase that is already inherently conflictive (see Section 5.4). In general, it was observed that the students failed to structure their negotiations into clearly separate, but, from the professionals’ perspective, apparently obligatory phases, with clearly separate functions (relational vs. transaction-oriented). Effectively, their negotiations only consisted of a central bargaining phase. In this area, there would seem to be a particular need to make student negotiators aware that there is more to negotiation than bargaining (or transactional talk). In addition, they should be sensitised to how negotiators make the transition from one phase to the next, and particularly from the pre-bargaining, interactional phases to the central, transactional phase (see Dow 1999 for similar recommendations).

A clear difference discussed earlier was that the student negotiators, in contrast to the professional negotiators, manifested a highly personalised (as opposed to a depersonalised and objective) perspective in their negotiation discourse, and that this contrast between the two groups was observed particularly in the central bargaining phase (see Section 5.6.3). In contrast to the students, the professionals were seen to clearly shift between discourse perspectives as they moved through the different phases of their negotiations. In general, judging by the professionals’ behaviour, a perspective that would seem to have been appropriate in these (new-relationship) negotiations reflected their professional rather than private persona. Projecting a professional identity seems to have been particularly important in the central bargaining phase, which was geared to attaining the main goal (forging an agreement), and thus involved largely transactional communication ([counter-]proposals, rejections or acceptance, and supportive argumentation). It was concluded earlier in this chapter that professional identity was also reflected in the use of so-called ‘distancing strategies’ and other own face-supportive communication aimed at reinforcing the negotiator’s professional role in the communication event and as a representative of a company (see Section 6.1). It was primarily in the opening and bargaining phases of the professional negotiations that the professionals communicated from a more personalised perspective (also in terms of the discourse topics they introduced). Nevertheless, even in these phases, they stayed in character as professionals. It was suggested earlier that by reinforcing their own professional identities in a negotiation setting in this way, negotiators effectively emphasise their professional commonalities, which may contribute to the feeling of solidarity between them (see Section 5.6.2). In other words, establishing and reinforcing a professional identity also helps to build rapport.

In conclusion, with respect to the ‘bricks and mortar’ of negotiation communication, it would seem that problematic areas for aspiring professionals regarding the ‘bricks’ (reflecting the transactional element of communication) involve both illocutionary and sociopragmatic competence and that ‘mortar’ (talk reflecting the interactional element of communication) is greatly underused. In general, how to build rapport in professional communication contexts would
seem to be a potentially important component of BC (EFL) teaching. The next section considers how problematic areas of competence like those described above could be given a place in BC (EFL) teaching, in the BC curriculum overall, as well as in the (EFL) classroom.

6.5 Curriculum integration: creating a ‘BC-friendly’ learning environment

Following Kasper (1997), we adopt the view that pragmatic competence is not in fact ‘teachable’, as (any) competence, pragmatic or otherwise, in a first language or in a foreign language, constitutes knowledge that communicators “possess, develop, acquire, use or lose”. Although Kasper claims that pragmatic competence cannot strictly be ‘taught’ (in the sense that, for example, grammar or pronunciation can be taught explicitly), she does maintain that pragmatic competence needs to be taught about. Kasper (1997), Trosborg (1998), and Kasper and Rose (2001) have pointed out that much L2 pragmatic knowledge is in fact free, as some pragmatics are universal. For example, conversations are constructed on the basis of common organisational principles, communication activities are accomplished by means of recurrent communicative action, pragmatic intent can be conveyed indirectly, and strategies for realising communicative action vary according to the situational context. In addition, some aspects of pragmatic competence may be transferred from the L1 to the L2, if form-function mapping corresponds between the two languages, and those forms can be used in comparable contexts, with similar effects. If we extend this idea, pragmatic knowledge about everyday communication activities (everyday pragmatics) is also likely, in part, to be transferable to business communication activities (business pragmatics).

However, communicators sometimes fail to make use of the pragmatic knowledge they already have at their disposal. With respect to illocutionary politeness, for example, learners have been observed to underuse politeness markers in the L2, even though they regularly use politeness markers in the L1 (Kasper 1997). Similarly, although communicators may be sensitive to context variables in choosing appropriate communication strategies in their L1, they may underdifferentiate context variables such as social distance and power in the L2 (Fukushima 1990; Tanaka 1988). In sum, although communicators may already possess a database of pragmatic information that is applicable in an L2 and/or business communication context, they do not always access it. As such, there is a clear opportunity for pedagogic intervention in the BC (EFL) classroom. Students need to be sensitised to the relevant pragmatic knowledge they already have, in order to use it. At the same time, they need to become aware of the relevant pragmatic knowledge they lack, in order for them to acquire (and eventually use) it. The role pedagogic intervention might take on, and some types of classroom activities that might be useful in sensitising students to existing and required pragmatic knowledge are discussed in the following section.

6.5.1 Types of pedagogic intervention

Classroom activities that could help students develop pragmatic competence can be divided into two types: awareness-raising tasks, and production tasks (Kasper 1997). Awareness-raising tasks might require students to observe relevant (and preferably authentic) L2 and/or business-related communicative practices and to describe and interpret specific aspects of communication, using their L1 and/or everyday practices as a baseline for comparison. As such, awareness-raising tasks involving L2 communication in a business context could focus on
specific areas of L2 pragmatics, on relevant areas of business pragmatics, or both. For example, based on a video recording of a business negotiation, students could focus on how certain types of communicative action (offer, rejection, supportive argument, introduction, greeting, apology, etc.) are realised linguistically in the L2 (as opposed to their L1), or how these types of action are responded to by the hearer (a focus on pragmalinguistic aspects of the L2). Alternatively, students could focus on broader discourse aspects, such as turn-taking and back-channeling, or on aspects of non-verbal communication. In order to raise awareness that relates specifically to business pragmatics, such a task might focus on identifying overall characteristics of the specific genre, in terms of the different stages, moves within those stages, communicative functions of the different stages (transactional vs. interactional), the negotiator relationship (in terms of socio-pragmatic variables such as social distance, power, etc., but also the rights and obligations that pertain in the specific business context, and the communicative activities that are associated with them). In addition, students could be asked to consider whether and how negotiation in a business context differs from ‘everyday’ negotiation (e.g., who does the washing-up, what movie to go to, etc.) in terms of objectives, the tangible and intangible stakes involved, the relationship between interlocutors, immediate and long-term consequences, etc., and how these aspects influence communication in both settings (everyday vs. business).

Where awareness-raising tasks are used at the start of a BC foreign language component consisting of a series of courses spaced out across a three-year or four-year programme at university (as is the case in the Netherlands at tertiary level), the L2 speakers who provide the input for such tasks (in this case, the negotiators in the video) should be natives or near-natives. According to Kasper (1997), L2 learners should develop their own pragmatic knowledge “on the right kind of input”. In foreign language courses offered at later stages of a programme, however, once students have developed their existing pragmatic database and have become aware of and acquired ‘new’ aspects, they could be, and should be, confronted with non-native input as well. In this way, awareness-raising tasks in later stages of a foreign language component within a larger BC programme could focus on cross-cultural comparisons of relevant communicative action, and could raise students’ awareness of possible implications for intercultural communication contexts.

Awareness-raising activities could be presented to students as fairly open tasks, in which they are left to discover regularities and system in communication on their own. Alternatively, such tasks could be guided to a greater or lesser extent. For example, students could be encouraged to look at relevant aspects in greater detail, or could be made to focus specifically on what is relevant to the course syllabus at a particular moment in time, if they are provided with a checklist or questionnaire that helps them take into consideration and analyse a particular feature more systematically. Awareness-raising tasks can also be used in later stages of an academic BC programme as a classroom activity in research-oriented courses. In such courses, students can, for example, be asked to analyse and interpret aspects of communication in a particular genre (spoken or written), using a more ‘structured’ linguistic framework that requires them to apply theoretical knowledge to relevant, real-life cases. An added advantage of assignments such as these in later stages of a BC programme is that they can help students generate a research focus for their dissertation (for an example of this approach, see e.g., Nickerson & van Nus 1999).

The second type of pedagogic intervention centres around production tasks, in which students practice L2 pragmatic (and business pragmatic) ability. Ideally, production tasks should involve student-centred interaction that requires students to take on different perspectives (roles) as speaker and addressee, and should incorporate relevant genres and tasks that will require them to
engage in different types of communicative action. Roleplays and simulations of specific business genres (meeting, negotiation, product presentation, appraisal interview, etc.), for example, provide students the opportunity to practice a wide range of relevant linguistic and pragmatic abilities. A deep-end approach such as this, in which students are confronted with experiences and contexts they may not be familiar with, requires them to use their existing knowledge and skills base to carry out a particular task (chair a meeting, for example) as best they can. The teacher simply acts as a monitor and facilitator (rather than taking on the role of a ‘traditional’ teacher who provides explicit instruction to a whole class) and provides the support the students need as they work through the task. After a task has been completed, feedback (for example, on the basis of a students’ video-taped performance) is geared to an evaluation of outcomes and process, and feedback regarding language and communicative and interpersonal skills is tailored to the need revealed by the task. Although the student-centred, deep-end approach requires greater flexibility and improvisational talent from teachers, it can contribute to creating a learning environment that is more relevant (individually targeted) and efficient (geared to obvious needs) than more ‘traditional’ teaching approaches.

Finally, in order to provide a more authentic ‘real-world’ perspective to a production task, it could be afforded a practical and functional purpose within the foreign language course, or even within the BC programme as a whole. For example, students could be encouraged to plan and carry out their regular coursework (assigned in courses in other components of a programme) in the EFL classroom. They could be required to plan and discuss aspects of the assignments in formal meetings in class (this will require them to practise linguistic and pragmatic ability within a meeting context), or to give formal presentations in class about the progress and outcome of particular assignments or projects (this will require them to practise linguistic and pragmatic ability in a formal presentation context). Students are thus provided with concrete objectives they can identify with and that are relevant to them, which is likely to increase their instrumental motivation. At the same time, they practise recurrent communicative action in business-related contexts that are likely to be of greater experiential value to them in their later careers than everyday contexts alone.

6.6 Concluding remarks

In conclusion, we would like to return to the discussion we started in Chapter 1, regarding a number of existing shortcomings in BC foreign language teaching. Most of these problems were seen to relate to the ‘relevance’ of teaching content for the target group. It was noted, with respect to foreign language components of BC programmes, that such courses are more often than not based on ‘traditional’ foreign language teaching principles that centre on practising areas of linguistic competence at near-native speaker levels, in classroom activities that are relevant to everyday rather than business communication. It was also noted that where courses have incorporated a focus on business-related communication, there seems to exist an emphasis on written rather than oral genres. Furthermore, relatively new media, such as email and communication over the Internet, are generally not dealt with. We suggest that, in order to create a ‘BC-friendly’ environment in the EFL classroom (we will restrict ourselves to business English), it is necessary to shift the focus of foreign language teaching within a BC context. First of all, the overall orientation of business English curricula should become content-based, providing an orientation to real-world business English use, including English as it is used by non-natives, in business (as well as everyday) contexts. Ideally, where EFL courses are part of a larger BC programme, course content should capitalise on theoretical and practical knowledge offered in other components of the programme. This could involve knowledge that is dealt with
in, for example, programme modules on management theory, intercultural communication, marketing, personnel management, etc. In other words, the content of language courses within a BC programme should be integrated with content from other parts of the programme as a whole.

At the same time, truly realistic (and honest) objectives will have to be formulated for foreign language components in larger academic programmes in which the foreign language is not the main, and only, objective. Given that the total classroom time available for foreign language teaching as part of a larger academic programme is limited as it is, a clear choice should be made regarding what can reasonably be achieved in the time available. The objective that has been adopted in many academic foreign language course components in programmes at tertiary level (e.g., international BC, business administration, business economics, etc.) seems to be to enable students to successfully use the L2 not only in everyday contexts, but also in academic contexts, as well as professional contexts. With respect to English, this implies that we effectively promise to deliver students capable of successfully using everyday English, academic English, and business English.

Furthermore, in deciding whether a student is ‘successful’ or not, we continue to use near-native, and even native, speaker norms in teaching. Again, given the time available for language teaching within larger academic programmes, this seems a highly unrealistic objective, and an unfair evaluation criterion. Therefore, choices will also have to be made regarding what is most relevant to the target group (business English as a lingua franca, at non-native competence levels?), and to the practical situations the target group are most likely to function in once they leave university and enter the workforce (primarily organisational contexts, to some extent also informal -comparable to everyday- organisational contexts, and only very rarely academic contexts). We must also consider what is feasible, that is, what is ultimately attainable, given the motive of the target group to learn a foreign language in the first place. Ultimate attainment in the foreign language learning relies to a large extent on the learner’s “agency” (Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000). Our target group largely choose to learn a foreign language in order to attain “participant status” in a given professional discursive community, in our case, the international business community. Their motivation is therefore primarily instrumental and functional. Such “participant status” does not necessarily require or entail ultimate attainment at the level of a native in the foreign language and the other culture. As ‘short-term’ visitors to the community only (their primary cultural identity and social world will continue to be that of the culture they were born into), it may suffice for them to become functionally proficient enough in the foreign language to construct appropriate identities in recurrent communication events that are relevant to the community, while retaining their identity as a ‘non-native’ in the international environment. In short, it may simply not be relevant to them to ultimately attain a level of proficiency and cultural awareness that is ‘native’.

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24 Foreign language course components (French, German, Spanish and English) within the Business Communication programme at Nijmegen University, the Netherlands, have had a content-based and integrated orientation since 2000-2001. Student evaluations have been very positive overall; courses are perceived as more enjoyable, challenging, and satisfying than what students refer to as “old-fashioned” language courses. The experiential content of the courses in particular is regarded as an important added value.

25 Current developments in tertiary education in the Netherlands include the introduction of a Bachelor-Master system, and it is likely that even less time will become available for foreign language components, as academic programmes are broadened in content and shortened from four to three years, with an optional final MA year.
Time constraints will also mean that we have to make choices regarding other aspects of business English course content. A limited subset of relevant recurrent communicative activities or business genres, as well as a subset of relevant types of communicative action within those genres, should be selected as a focus for courses, as there is not enough time to incorporate all genres that might be relevant to the discourse community our students aspire to (which, in our definition, is a broad one, potentially incorporating many different genres). In these choices, we might again be guided at least to some extent by the needs of the target group, which would require us to involve at least some new media (email, webcopy, etc.), move away from ‘older’ and less commonly used genres (fax and some types of business letter), and to focus more attention on recurrent professional activities that involve oral rather than written business communication (job interview, departmental meeting, bad news message, etc.).

In Section 6.4, it was said that we regard language learning in a BC context to involve not only the acquisition of socio-linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge, but that it should also accommodate (as much as possible) the participatory process that allows students to become, behave and communicate (like) members of the given professional discourse community they aspire to. The notion of participation can be linked back to Boswood’s definitions of professionalism and professional communication that were introduced earlier (see Section 3.9). Boswood suggests that developing professionalism and becoming a professional (a member of a professional community) involve “rites of passage” to that target community. These rites of passage involve the acquisition of the “outward identity and personal qualities” that mark the community aspired to (Boswood 1999: 116). The findings from the present study seem to have provided at least some support for the idea that a professional discourse community’s identity is a strong determinant of its members’ communicative behaviour. The professionals in this study invested considerable effort into projecting and maintaining a professional image, while the inexperienced students, as would be expected, did so to a much lesser extent and much less consistently, providing mere glimpses of a professional identity. In order to become full-fledged members of the professional discourse community they aspire to, it would appear that these students still have much to learn about how to ‘participate’ as professionals. In light of the specific focus of the present study, they need, for example, to develop what Ting-Toomey and Kurogi have termed “facework competence”, conceptualised as the “optimal integration of knowledge, mindfulness and communication skills in managing self’s and other’s face-related concerns” (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi 1998: 201). Within a professional context, such facework competence would necessarily also incorporate management of professional identity concerns.

From a teaching perspective, therefore, we can only reiterate our earlier comments (see Sections 1.2 and 6.4), regarding not only the relevance but also the focus of business (English) communication course content and materials. As developing professionalism and learning to communicate professionally not only seem to involve acquiring relevant professional knowledge and practical skills, but also seem to require the creation of a “new, fluid identity” (Boswood 1999: 132), BC teaching should incorporate content and materials relating not only to the acquisition element, but also the participation element of becoming a professional communicator. In order to generate ideas as to which areas of professionalism are prerequisites for ‘belonging’ to a given international and multilingual professional discourse community, and to offer insight into how classrooms can become environments for learning situated communication practices in intercultural contexts, intercultural BC research should focus attention not only on culture and (foreign) language as important contextual factors in intercultural BC, but equally on the business context (Varner 2000), including business strategy, business environment, and professional practices, and how that business context influences and shapes recurrent communication practices.
in a given international discourse community. In formal organisational communication contexts, communication is not an end in itself, but has a business purpose. Therefore, it is impossible to study and teach communication in organisational settings - whether they be international or not - without taking into account the specifics of the business context.
References


References


Ulijn, J, Lincke, A., & Karakaya, Y. (working paper). Non-face-to-face international business negotiation: how is national culture reflected in this medium?


**Online sources (no author given):**


## Appendices

### Appendix A: VRM analysis: raw scores

**Table A1** Raw data student corpus: VRM intents per negotiator

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A = Advisement  I = Interpretation  C = Confirmation  R = Reflection
## Appendix B: Politeness analysis: raw scores

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Appendix D: Simulation instructions

(version: telenegotiation Dutch-English)

Seller (Dutch): Mr.................. 

During the next half hour you will take part in a sales negotiation. You are Head of the Sales Department at Everest BV.

Background

Everest BV is a manufacturing company that specialises in the production of hi-tech camping equipment. The company, whose head office is in Rotterdam, is well known for the high quality of its products. You joined the company six months ago, and are at present responsible for the Sales Department.

As a result of growing public interest in recreational activities, there has been a sharp increase in the demand for professional camping equipment. Department stores are expanding their range of leisure products and are selling more and more professional camping articles, which has meant more business for you. However, as a result of this increase in demand, a number of new manufacturers have appeared on the scene. In order to keep up with the competition, Everest has had to make several large investments. For example, the company has purchased and put into operation a number of sophisticated computer aided canvas cutting machines. A large loan had to be contracted to make these investments possible; as interest rates are high at present, hard times may lie ahead for the company. The new machines mean greater efficiency, but the investments still have to be returned. Therefore, it is important that Everest obtains as many orders as possible and maximises profits on all its business transactions.

High profits could also benefit you personally. In order to stimulate its sales representatives to make more profit, Everest has recently introduced an incentive premium system. Whenever the Sales Department contracts orders which entail high profits for their company, the salesmen in the department receive monetary bonuses. These monetary bonuses may be as much as f200 a head. However, if profitable deals do not materialise, management will not hesitate to exercise their right to reconsider present appointments and salaries. As Head of Sales at Everest, you are responsible for the results in your department. If the results are good, you will benefit. If the results are disappointing, management will hold you responsible. Last year, they demoted your predecessor because of disappointing results, and he eventually resigned from the company.

For six years now, Everest has been doing business with Sports & Travel. This company (head-office: Birmingham) runs stores throughout Great Britain and Ireland, and sells all sorts of articles in the 'sports and recreation' field. Camping equipment accounts for a significant part of their product range. Sports & Travel is a major client of Everest; a considerable part of their retail is bought from your company. Last month, one of your salesmen, Mr. de Vries, met up with a representative of Sports & Travel, Mr. ......... (Purchasing Manager of the Camping Division of Sports & Travel) to discuss the delivery of a set of three Everest products. Sports & Travel are considering the purchase of double tents, backpacks, and sleeping bags. Most of the details have already been cleared (e.g. the size of the order (100 of each article), the designs, the colours etc.). All that remains to be agreed upon before the transaction is given the go-ahead is the price of the three products. In view of the company’s present financial situation, Mr. de Vries has stated that
he prefers to leave further negotiations to his superior. This is why you are about to negotiate with Mr. ........... of Sports & Travel. As chance would have it, you were planning to attend a conference in Manchester this week and had set up a meeting with Mr. ........... at Sports & Travel’s head-office in Birmingham. However, you have sprained your ankle playing tennis and will not be able to travel to Birmingham. You have called Mr. ...........’s secretary to inform her of this fact and to cancel the meeting. However, it is imperative that you finalise the transaction as soon as possible. Therefore, you and Mr. ........... have decided to negotiate the price of the three products over the telephone. You have made an appointment to this end. Mr. ........... is expecting your call this afternoon. All outside calls are answered by his secretary; she will put you through to Mr. ...........

The only information that you have on Mr. ........... is that he is the Purchasing Manager of the Camping Division of Sports & Travel, and that he joined the Camping Division only eight months ago. As a result it is not surprising that you have never met each other before. You will have to continue to do business with Sports & Travel in the future. It is therefore important to try and develop a good working relationship.

It is not unusual for Everest to offer trade discounts for big orders (more than 75 pieces per article). However, in view of the financial situation of your company, management has indicated that trade discounts are not advisable. The management has urged you to use every effort to attain as high a profit as possible. They even reminded you of the bonus system! Therefore, it is very important that you bring in the order and negotiate a profitable deal.

**Instructions**

During the meeting with the representative of Sports & Travel, you must try to negotiate the best deal you can get. The meeting has to end in a package deal: in other words, the three articles can only be sold together in one single transaction, or otherwise not at all.

You are free to vary the prices for the different products. In other words, you are not obliged to ask the same price for each of the batches of products. The scheme gives you an overview of the profits associated with the articles. For each product a series of nine different price-levels is given. These price-levels are referred to by means of letters (A up to and including I). The actual price of the products is not given! As a result, you can only refer to a price-level by mentioning the letter associated with that price-level (e.g. "Price G for sleeping-bags" as a proposal for a certain price). In contrast to the prices, the profit levels are given in pounds sterling for each price level. You must keep the figures given on your scheme confidential!

The three products do not all yield the same profit. As you can deduce from the scheme, the double tents allow you to make the highest profit. Sleeping bags allow less profit but come in a good second, while backpacks yield relatively little profit.

Profits are not associated with all the price-levels on the scheme. For each product, price A amounts to a profit loss. For backpacks and sleeping bags this also applies to price B. For sleeping bags this even applies to price C. The possible losses that can be incurred are not the same for each product. For example, the loss associated with price A for backpacks is less than the loss associated with price B for sleeping bags. As a result, you must consider each offer for each product very carefully.

The maximum profit can be obtained at price-level I for each of the three products. This profit amounts to:
Double tents  100 x f 175 =  f 17,500  
Sleeping-bags  100 x f 75  =  f 7,500  
Backpacks  100 x f 60  =  f 6,000  

+ 
---

Total:  f 31,000

NB. If you manage to negotiate a deal resulting in a profit of f17,000,-, in total, you and your colleagues will receive a bonus of f150 each!

Summary

The negotiation you are about to take part in sets you a double task:

- Try to maximise profits
- Do not let the transaction fall through! Remember, you will have to continue to do business with Mr. ....... in the future.

The negotiation will be finished whenever agreement has been reached as to the price of the total package deal comprising the purchase of three products.

Good luck!
Buyer: Mr...............

During the next half hour or so you will be taking part in a sales negotiation. You are the Purchasing Manager of the Camping Division of Sports & Travel.

Background
Sports & Travel is a company with a chain of stores that specialise in sports and leisure products, with an emphasis on hi-tech camping equipment. Sports & Travel has commercial outlets throughout Great Britain and Ireland, but its head office is in Birmingham. You joined Sports & Travel six months ago and you are now responsible for the Purchasing Department of the Camping Division.

The holiday season is about to start and there has been an increase in the demand for professional camping equipment in your stores. There is an urgent need for Sports & Travel to replenish stocks and expand the existing product range. Of late, customers have become more and more demanding, wanting first-class products at reasonable prices. It is therefore more important than ever to strike favourable deals with manufacturers that specialise in sports and leisure equipment. Furthermore, new sources of competition have emerged over the past two years. Department stores in particular are expanding their range of leisure products. This has forced you to offer your products at highly competitive prices. The refurbishment of its stores over the past year has affected the financial position of Sports & Leisure considerably. As a result of all these factors, your company would welcome maximum profits. Since retail prices have to be highly competitive, the only way for your company to make sizeable profits is by making sure that representatives of the Purchasing Departments get as good a deal as possible when they negotiate with manufacturers about possible transactions.

High profits could also benefit you personally. In order to stimulate the representatives from the Purchasing Department, the management has recently introduced an incentive premium system. Whenever the Department places a new order, the representatives in that department receive monetary bonuses depending on how good a deal they manage to negotiate. These monetary bonuses may be as much as £200 a head. On the other hand, if profitable deals do not materialise, the management will exercise their right to reconsider present appointments and salaries. As Head of Purchasing, you are directly responsible for the results obtained in your department. If the results are good, you will benefit. If the results are disappointing, management will hold you responsible. Last year, the management demoted your predecessor because of disappointing results, and she eventually resigned from the company.

For six years now, Sports & Travel has been doing business with Everest, a Dutch manufacturing company which produces camping equipment. The company, whose head office is in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, is well known for the high quality of its products. Sports & Travel is a major client of Everest BV; a considerable part of your product range is manufactured and supplied by them. Only last week, you spoke to an Everest representative about the possible delivery of a number of Everest products; you are considering the purchase of double tents, backpacks, and sleeping bags. Most of the details have already been cleared (e.g. the size of the order-100 of each article-, the designs, the colours etc.). All that remains to be agreed upon before the transaction is given the go-ahead is the price of the three products. The sales representative you negotiated with last week said at the end of the meeting that he preferred to leave further negotiations to his superior. This is not unusual; in fact, it is common practice whenever there are sizeable orders at stake. This is why you are about to negotiate with Mr............. of Everest BV. Mr............., who
started working for Everest only recently, made an appointment with you through your secretary. He happened to be attending a conference in Manchester and wanted to come to Birmingham in person to finalize the transaction. However, he has called your secretary to inform you he will be unable to attend the meeting due to a sports injury sustained while playing tennis which has made it impossible for him to travel. He prefers not to arrange a meeting at a later date. You do not want to postpone the meeting either as it is imperative that you receive the goods as soon as possible. Therefore, you have decided to negotiate the price of the three products over the telephone. Your secretary has made an appointment to this end. You are expecting a call from Mr. . this afternoon. All outside calls are answered by your secretary; she will phone you first and put you through to Mr. 

The only thing you know about Mr. is that he heads the Sales Department of Everest and that he has been with this company for six months. It is not surprising, therefore, that you have never spoken to each other before today. You will be doing business with Mr. in future. This is why it is important to try and develop a good working relationship with him.

It is not unusual in your line of business to demand trade discounts for big orders (more than 75 articles). Management has indicated that trade discounts would be appreciated in view of the company’s present financial situation. Before you left head office in Birmingham the management urged you to use every effort to attain as high a profit as possible. They even reminded you of the bonus system! Furthermore, they re-emphasised their right to cut salaries and reconsider present appointments should a deal fall through. It is very important, therefore, that you finalise this transaction and negotiate a profitable deal.

If the transaction does fall through, you will have to buy your products from another manufacturing company. Not only will this harm your working relationship with Everest; in addition, the goods you purchase elsewhere may not be delivered in time.

Instructions

During your negotiations with the Everest representative you will try and purchase the goods at as low a price as possible. The transaction involves a so-called ‘package deal’: the purchase must include all three articles together for it to be given the go-ahead.

You are free to vary your offers for the different products. In other words, you do not have to negotiate the same price for each product. The scheme provided gives you an overview of the profits associated with the articles. For each product a series of nine different price-levels is given. These price-levels are referred to by means of letters (A up to and including I). The actual price of the products is not given! As a result, you can only refer to a price-level by mentioning the letter associated with that price-level (e.g. "Price C for double tents" as a proposal for a certain price). In contrast to the prices, the profit levels are given in pounds sterling for each price level. You must keep the figures given on your scheme confidential! The scheme is for your eyes only.

The three products do not all yield the same profit. As you can deduce from the scheme, the backpacks allow you to make the highest profit. Sleeping bags allow less profit but come in a good second, while double tents yield relatively little profit.

Profits are not associated with all the price-levels on the scheme. For each product, price I amounts to a loss of profit. For double tents and sleeping bags this also applies to price H. For sleeping bags this even applies to price G. The possible losses that could be incurred are not the
same for each product. For example, the loss associated with price I for double tents is less than the loss associated with price H for sleeping-bags. As a result, you must consider each offer for each product very carefully.

The maximum profit can be obtained at price-level A for each of the three products. This profit amounts to:

- **Backpacks**: 100 x $f175 = f17.500
- **Sleeping-bags**: 100 x $f75 = f7.500
- **Double tents**: 100 x $f60 = f6.000

Total: **f31.000**

NB. If you manage to negotiate a deal resulting in a profit of **f17.000 in total**, you and your colleagues will receive a **bonus** of **f100- each**!
Nederlandse samenvatting

“If you are planning on doing business with someone again, don't be too tough in the negotiations. But if you’re going to skin a cat, don’t keep it as a house cat.”

(Marvin S. Levin)

Inleiding
In dit proefschrift wordt verslag gedaan van een onderzoek naar aspecten van verbaal gedrag in internationale onderhandelingen. Het taalmateriaal dat de focus van het onderzoek vormde kwam voort uit een serie gesimuleerde verkoopgesprekken. Het onderzoek spitste zich voornamelijk toe op een analyse van verbaal gedrag dat gericht is op het creëren van een goede verstandhouding. Hierbij werd een vergelijking gemaakt tussen het taalgebruik van ervaren en niet ervaren onderhandelaars die Engels als lingua franca (of gemeenschappelijke handelstaal) hanteerden.

Een verkoopgesprek is inherent conflictueus van aard. Het voornaamste doel van dit type gesprek is immers transactioneel; de betrokken partijen zullen te allen tijde proberen een zo gunstig mogelijke onderhandelingsuitkomst voor zichzelf (en de organisatie die ze vertegenwoordigen) te bewerkstelligen. De conflictueuze aard van verkoopgesprekken wordt weerspiegeld en versterkt door het verbale gedrag van onderhandelaars, dat veelal wordt gekenmerkt door marchanderen en afdingen en hierdoor een bedreiging vormt voor het ‘gezicht’ (face) van de gesprekspartner(s). Het gezicht van een individu wordt gekenmerkt door twee, aan elkaar gerelateerde, behoeften: de behoefte om gewaardeerd en aardig gevonden te worden door anderen en de behoefte om autonoom te kunnen handelen en niet lastig gevallen te worden. Iemand kan zijn gezicht ‘verliezen’ wanneer deze behoeften niet in acht worden genomen. Wanneer we het begrip gezicht relateren aan verbaal gedrag in onderhandelingen, is bijvoorbeeld een uitspraak als “Die bestellingen van jullie doen er tegenwoordig heel erg lang over” voor een aangesprokene ‘gezichtsbedreigend’ omdat hij zich op dat moment minder ‘gewaardeerd’ door de spreker zal voelen. Op een vergelijkbare manier vormt een uitspraak zoals “Kan het prijsniveau wat omlaag?” een bedreiging voor het gezicht van de gesprekspartner omdat deze als het ware wordt ‘lastig gevallen’; de spreker heeft zich opgedrongen aan de aangesprokene door te veronderstellen dat deze zijn verzoek om prijsverlaging wil en zal inwilligen.

Juist omdat taalhandelingen zoals het geven van kritiek, het doen van verzoeken, maar ook bijvoorbeeld het niet eens zijn met, of het afwijzen van voorstellen, inherent gezichtsbedreigend zijn, kunnen zij de onderlinge verstandhouding (rapport) binnen de gespreksituatie, en als gevolg de relatie van de gesprekspartners op langere termijn, in gevaar brengen. Om deze redenen zoeken sprekers bij het doen van gezichtsbedreigende uitingen hun toevlucht tot talige strategieën (bijvoorbeeld beleefdheidsstrategieën) die het gezichtsbedreigende geval van uitingen kunnen minimaliseren en het bijkomende gevaar voor de onderlinge verstandhouding kunnen verminderen. Naast het ‘ter plekke’ minimaliseren van gezichtsbedreiging op het niveau van de taaluiting (door het gebruik van beleefdheidsstrategieën binnen of ‘in de beurt van’ de taalhandeling), kunnen deze strategieën tevens op globale basis binnen een gesprek ingezet worden om meer in het algemeen een goede verstandhouding tussen gesprekspartners te creëren, te behouden, of zelfs te verbeteren (rapport management). Zo zou in
Onderhandelings situaties het gebruik van bijvoorbeeld strategieën die de gelijkheid tussen gesprekspartners benadrukken (het gebruik van familiaire aanspreekvormen, het benadrukken van overeenkomsten tussen sprekers, etc.) het gevoel van solidariteit tussen gesprekspartners kunnen bevorderen en zou dit weer kunnen bijdragen tot een gunstig onderhandelingsklimaat.

Rapport management biedt de spreker zo de mogelijkheid om, middels talige strategieën (facework), vorm te geven aan de relationele dimensie van communicatie in gespreks situaties. Er is echter ook een andere kant aan rapport management. Een spreker kan er voor kiezen de mate van rapport op een gegeven moment in een gesprek juist te verminderen. Door bijvoorbeeld op globaal niveau in een gesprek en/of op het niveau van de talhandeling strategieën te gebruiken die gericht zijn op zijn eigen face behoefte, bijvoorbeeld de behoefte om autonoom te handelen en de wens met rust gelaten te worden, kan een spreker aangeven dat hij, vanuit relationeel oogpunt, juist op (professionele) ‘afstand’ wenst te blijven van de gesprekspartner. In nog extremere gevallen, kan de spreker er zelfs voor kiezen om opzettelijk het gezicht van de ander te bedreigen door taaluitingen te gebruiken die inherent gezichtsbedreigend zijn, zonder deze te verzachten.

Onderzoeksfocus en aanpak

De eerste doelstelling van het onderzoek was om inzicht te verkrijgen in welke talige strategieën onderhandelaars gebruiken om gezichtsbedreigend verbaal gedrag te verzachten wanneer ze onderhandelen in een lingua franca. Een bijkomende doelstelling was om inzicht te verkrijgen hoe rapport binnen internationale onderhandelingsgesprekken (tussen sprekers met verschillende achtergronden) tot stand komt, hoe rapport ‘beheerd’ wordt, en wat voor facework (naast het gebruik van beleefheid) hierbij een rol speelt. De tweede doelstelling van het onderzoek was om een vergelijkende analyse te maken van het verbaal gedrag en, meer specifiek, het gebruik van facework, van ervaren onderhandelaars (professionele onderhandelaars) versus onervaren onderhandelaars (studenten bedrijfscommunicatie). Deze analyse was er op gericht de verschillen tussen deze groepen in kaart te brengen om zo potentiële ‘tekortkomingen’ van de onervaren onderhandelaars te kunnen vaststellen. Voor de vergelijkende analyse werd het verbaal gedrag van de professionele onderhandelaars (de ervaren groep) als baseline beschouwd. De resultaten van de analyse zouden vervolgens de basis kunnen vormen voor suggesties en aanbevelingen met betrekking tot de samenstelling van, en aandachtsgebieden binnen, het curriculum lingua franca Engels van de opleiding bedrijfscommunicatie.
Voor dit onderzoek zijn twee corpora taalzicht uitgebreide onderhandelingsgesprekken. Een corpus bestond uit lingua franca Engels dat werd geproduceerd in verkoopgesprekken door studenten Bedrijfscommunicatie aan het begin van het tweede jaar van de studie (onervaren onderhandelaars). Het tweede corpus bevatte lingua franca Engels uit vergelijkbare gesprekken tussen professionele onderhandelaars (ervaren onderhandelaars). Binnen dit onderzoek is gekozen voor een analyse van lingua franca Engels omdat Engels doorgaans wordt beschouwd als de meest gebruikte handelstaal in het nationale bedrijfsleven (Graddol & Meinhof 1999; Graddol 1997). Het is daarom aannemelijk dat studenten internationale bedrijfscommunicatie, wanneer ze na hun opleiding terechtkomen in internationaal opererende bedrijven of multinationals, op zijn minst gebruik zullen moeten maken van ‘internationaal Engels’ (Zie hoofdstuk 1). Een onderzoek naar aspecten van communicatie in juist deze context (geproduceerd in een organisationeel genre, door sprekers met verschillende culturele achtergronden en moedertalen, die een lingua franca gebruiken) werd daarom relevant geacht binnen het huidige onderzoeksprogramma Internationale Bedrijfscommunicatie aan de universiteit van Nijmegen.

De taaldata werden in twee fasen geanalyseerd (Voor een uitgebreide beschrijving, zie hoofdstuk 3). In de eerste fase werden de afzonderlijke taaluitingen in elk van de twee corpora gecategoriseerd op basis van de Verbal Response Mode (VRM) taxonomie van Stiles (1992). Dit systeem biedt de mogelijkheid gesproken taal op basis van een systematisch en relatief snel coderingsprotocol uitputtend te categoriseren in termen van acht verschillende typen uitingen. Mede door de transparantie van het codeersysteem en het feit dat het speciaal ontwikkeld is om gesproken taal in tweegesprekken te analyseren verdient het als analyse instrument de voorkeur boven de meer klassieke -maar relatief minder doorzichtige en makkelijk toepasbare- indelingen van verbaal gedrag van bijvoorbeeld Austin (1975) en Searle (1976). Het aardige van de taxonomie van Stiles voor dit onderzoek was bovendien dat het een mogelijkheid biedt onderscheid te maken tussen gezichtsbedreigend en niet gezichtsbedreigend verbaal gedrag. Ook biedt het systeem de mogelijkheid vast te stellen in hoeverre een spreker zijn taalgebruik verzacht of niet (dat wil zeggen in hoeverre gezichtsbedreigend verbaal gedrag geminimaliseerd wordt of niet), doordat op basis van de VRM categorisatie in kaart gebracht kan worden in hoeverre een spreker binnen een gesprek ‘indirectheid’ gebruikt. Het gebruik van indirectheid is een veel voorkomende manier om gezichtsbedreigende taaluitingen te verzachten. Hoe meer indirect een taaluiting (bijvoorbeeld een verzoek om een auto te lenen) is geformuleerd, hoe minder gezichtsbedreigend deze is (bijvoorbeeld, indirecte formuleringen zoals “Kan ik misschien de auto lenen?” of “Ik wou dat ik vandaag ’s niet op de fiets naar m’n werk moest” versus directe formuleringen zoals “Leen me je auto” of “Ik leen vandaag je auto”).

In de tweede fase werden de data geanalyseerd op basis van drie van de vijf deel domeinen van het rapport management model van Spencer-Oatey (2000a, 2000b, 2002):

- Het illocutionaire domein: analyse op basis van de taxonomie van beleefheidstrategieën van Brown en Levinson, 1987);
- Het discourse content domein: analyse van zogenaamde small talk (gespreksstof die niet direct betrekking heeft op de centrale transactie - de verkoop van een drietal artikelen – maar gaat over alledaagse onderwerpen, zoals het weer, actueel nieuws, sportuitslagen, hobby's, meest recente vakantie, persoonlijke achtergronden, etc.);
Het *participation* domein: analyse van het gebruik van persoonlijke voornaamwoorden als indicatoren van de relatie tussen onderhandelaars: ‘Jij’ (als indicator van *you-orientedness*), ‘ik’ (als indicator van *self-orientedness*), ‘inclusive we’ (als indicator van mate van bereidheid tot samenwerking: e.g., “We (u en ik) zullen vandaag samen naar een oplossing moeten toewerken”), en ‘exclusive we’ als indicator van professionele afstand: e.g., “Die prijs kunnen we [=het bedrijf dat ik vertegenwoordig] echt niet accepteren”).

De analyses van beide fasen werden op spreker niveau en corpus niveau geïnterpreteerd en gerapporteerd (zie hoofdstukken 4 en 5).

**Resultaten en conclusies**

**Verbaal gedrag in onderhandelingen**

Uit de analyse van verbaal gedrag in de twee corpora op basis van de taxonomie van *Verbal Response Modes* kwamen een aantal algemene trends naar voren. Ten eerste bleek dat in beide corpora alle acht typen verbaal gedrag voorkwamen die het VRM systeem onderscheidt. De twee meest voorkomende typen verbaal gedrag in beide corpora waren uitingen die begrip en ontvangst van de boodschap aangeven, zoals “uhuh”, “ok”, “jaja”, etc. (*acknowledgements*) en uitingen van gevoelens, wensen en gedachten (*disclosures*). Er waren echter ook verschillen tussen de twee corpora, voornamelijk met betrekking tot de frequentie van gebruik van afzonderlijke categorieën. Zo bleek bijvoorbeeld dat de studenten significant meer gebruik hadden gemaakt van (gezichtsbedreigende) uitingen van gebrek aan overeenstemming (*disagreements*) dan de professionele onderhandelaars. Uitingen van overeenstemming (*agreements*) kwamen ongeveer even veel voor in de corpora. Overigens kwamen uitingen van overeenstemming en van gebrek aan overeenstemming over het algemeen relatief weinig voor, in vergelijking met de andere VRM categorieën. Dit was enigszins opmerkelijk, gezien de verwachting vooraf dat een verkoopgesprek voornamelijk zou draaien om het komen tot overeenstemming (of niet) over een serie voorstellen.

**Gezichtsbedreigend verbaal gedrag en het gebruik van indirectheid**

De analyse van verbaal gedrag in het algemeen wees uit dat de studenten, als groep, significant meer gezichtsbedreigend verbaal gedrag hadden gemanifesteerd dan de professionele onderhandelaars. Ook bleek dat de studenten in het algemeen een significant hogere mate van indirectheid hadden gebruikt in hun gespreksbijdragen dan de professionele onderhandelaars. Dit lag in de lijn der verwachting, gezien het feit dat ze in eerste instantie inderdaad ook meer gezichtsbedreigend gedrag hadden vertoond. Zoals verwacht op basis van de beleefheidstheorie van Brown en Levinson (1987), bleek binnen de groep gezichtsbedreigende VRM categorieën (versus de VRM categorieën die niet gezichtsbedreigend zijn) dat in beide corpora een aanzienlijk percentage van deze uitingen inderdaad indirect geformuleerd was. Echter, een enigszins verrassend resultaat was dat in beide corpora het percentage indirect geformuleerde uitingen in totaal aanzienlijk hoger was dan het percentage gezichtsbedreigende uitingen. Dit suggereert dat beide groepen onderhandelaars niet gezichtsbedreigende uitingen ook indirect hebben geformuleerd, hetgeen op basis van de beleefheidstheorie van Brown en Levinson (1987) niet voorspeld zou zijn.

**Rapport management op illocutionair niveau: gebruik van beleefheid**

Uit de analyse van de corpora aan de hand van de taxonomie van beleefheidstrategieën van Brown en Levinson (1987) bleek dat de professionele onderhandelaars significant meer talige
beleefdheid hadden gebruikt in hun gespreksbijdragen dan de studenten. Ook bleek deze groep een grotere variatie aan beleefdheidstrategieën gemanifesteerd te hebben dan de studenten. Bovendien kwam in het professionele corpus één groep strategieën meer voor dan in het studentencorpus. De professionele onderhandelaars, als groep, bleken significant meer gebruik te hebben gemaakt van beleefdheidstrategieën die uitdrukking geven aan de gelijkheid en de overeenkomsten tussen gesprekspartners (claim common ground). Met betrekking tot de rest van de taxonomie van Brown en Levinson, bleek dat in beide corpora op vergelijkbare basis gebruik was gemaakt van de groep beleefdheidstrategieën die is gericht op het benadrukken van samenwerking (show hearer and speaker are cooperators).

**Rapport management op ‘discourse content’ niveau: gebruik van small talk**

Een analyse van beide corpora wees uit dat in totaal acht verschillende categorieën small talk konden worden geïdentificeerd (op basis van verschillende gespreksthema’s). In het algemeen kan gesteld worden dat de small talk die zich voordeed in de corpora niet geheel gelijkensteld kan worden (voor wat betreft inhoud) aan small talk zoals die zich lijkt voor te doen in alledaagse gesprekken. Alleen categorie 8 (non-business) komt in dit opzicht overeen met de meer ‘traditionele’ definitie van small talk. Over het algemeen bleven de onderhandelaars zeer duidelijk in hun rol als onderhandelaar en vervielen ze slechts zelden in een bespreking van alledaagse thema’s zoals hobby’s, het weer, vakantie, actueel nieuws, familieachtergrond, etc. Wel introduceerden ze op regelmatige basis binnen een gesprek thema’s die, hoewel gerelateerd aan de externe organisatiecontext van het onderhandelingsgesprek (bijvoorbeeld de achtergrond van de betrokken bedrijven, de professionele achtergrond van de onderhandelaars, de staat van de markt of van de economie in het algemeen, de gedeelde voorgeschiedenis van beide partijen, etc.), niet direct te maken hadden met de centrale doelstelling van het gesprek: de transactie (de verkoop van drie artikelen). Omdat deze thema’s voor wat betreft hun inhoud dusdanig afweken van het centrale thema binnen de verkoopgesprekken, en niet gekarakteriseerd konden worden als puur sales talk, zijn ze binnen het huidige onderzoek daarom geclasseerd als verdere voorbeelden van small talk (Zie ook Xing 2000).

Terwijl alle categorieën small talk voorkwamen in het professionele corpus, kwamen slechts vijf van de acht typen voor in het studentencorpus. In het algemeen kwam small talk aanzienlijk vaker voor in het professionele corpus dan in het studentencorpus. Uit een analyse van small talk in de drie verschillende fasen van de onderhandelingsgesprekken (beginfase, onderhandelingsfase en afsluitende fase) kwam naar voren dat de professionele onderhandelaars small talk introduceerden in alle fasen van het onderhandelingsgesprek, terwijl de studenten slechts gebruik maakten van small talk in de beginfase en de afsluitende fase.

Tenslotte was het opmerkelijk dat de professionele onderhandelaars ‘interculturaliteit’ regelmatig aansneden als small talk thema (categorie 8: non-business). Interculturaliteit wordt in de literatuur vaak genoemd als een voornaam bron van onbegrip, conflict en miscommunicatie in het bedrijfsleven en in de politiek. In het huidige onderzoek leek interculturaliteit echter juist te worden gebruikt als een middel om een goede verstandhouding te creëren. Wanneer interculturaliteit als thema werd geïntroduceerd, benadrukten de onderhandelaars dat ze iets gemeen hadden en wat dat betreft ‘in hetzelfde bootje zaten’ (als non-natives). In sommige gevallen vormden de het thema’s ‘culturele verschillen’ of ‘het gebruik van een lingua franca’ zelfs de basis voor grappen.

Uit de analyses bleek ook dat onervaren onderhandelaars moeite hebben met het adequaat omgaan met wederkerige routine uitingen zoals begroetingen (“Goedemorgen Mr. X”), het
nemen van afscheid ("Dank u voor dit gesprek; ik hoop u spoedig weer te zien") en het vragen naar de anders welzijn aan het begin van een gesprek ("Geen problemen gehad op weg naar hier?"). In de meeste gevallen reageerden ze op een niet adequate manier (A: Goedemorgen. Ik ben mevrouw X. B: Ja. Zullen we maar beginnen?"). Bij een reactie geneigd (G: Zien we elkaar?), of bleef een reactie gewoonweg uit. Gezien het feit dat dit soort uitwisselingen aan het begin en einde van gesprekken (en niet alleen onderhandelingsgesprekken) kunnen bijdragen aan het creëren van een goede verstandhouding tussen gesprekspartners lijkt het adequaat kunnen uitvoeren van routine uitwisselingen zoals deze onontbeerlijk.

**Rapport management op ‘participation’ niveau**

Uit de analyse van het gebruik van de persoonlijke voornaamwoorden “ik”, “jij”, *exclusive we en inclusive we kwamen een aantal verschillen en overeenkomsten tussen de twee groepen onderhandelaars naar voren. Met betrekking tot “ik” (als indicator van egocentrisme) en *inclusive we (indicator van betrokkenheid en solidariteit met de gesprekspartner) bleek dat het gebruik door beide groepen onderhandelaars vergelijkbaar was. Echter, de studenten gebruikten “ik” in andere contexten binnen het onderhandelingsgesprek, bijvoorbeeld in afwijzingen van voorstellen en bij het geven van redenen voor hun afwijzingen, dan de professionele onderhandelaars. Wanneer de ervaren onderhandelaars genoodzaakt waren inherent gezichtsbedriegend gedrag te manifesteren, formuleerden zij deze uitingen veelal vanuit een *exclusive we perspectief (waarbij ‘we’ naar het achterliggende bedrijf refereert). Feitelijk verscholen de professionele onderhandelaars zich op deze manier achter hun bedrijf en namen ze afstand van de potentiële gezichtsbedreiging (en ook de gesprekspartner). Hierdoor werd de gezichtsbedrieging enigszins afgezwakt en werd de schuld afgeschoven (naar het bedrijf). In tegenstelling, leken de studenten door het consequente gebruik van “ik” bij het formuleren van inherent gezichtsbedriegende uitingen juist een zeer directe, en potentieel conflictieve, verbale stijl te hanteren.

Met betrekking tot het gebruik van “jij” (als indicator van *you-orientedness) bleek dat de professionele onderhandelaars een significant hoger percentage van dit persoonlijk voornaamwoord gebruikten dan de studenten. Bovendien kwam bij nadere analyse ook hier weer naar voren dat de studenten “jij” vaak in andere contexten gebruikten, namelijk bij het doen en afwijzen van voorstellen, en bij het doen van suggesties, dan de ervaren onderhandelaars (die zich vaak weer verscholen achter *exclusive we). Ook hier liepen studenten dus wederom het risico directer opgevat te worden dan wellicht in eerste instantie hun bedoeling was.

Met betrekking tot het gebruik van *exclusive we (of institutional we) bleek dat de professionele onderhandelaars significant meer gebruik hadden gemaakt van deze verwijzing dan de onervaren onderhandelaars. Dit kan gedeeltelijk verklaard worden door het feit dat de ervaren onderhandelaars, zoals reeds boven gerapporteerd, zich in gezichtsbedriegende contexten in een onderhandelingsgesprek verscholen achter het bedrijf dat ze vertegenwoordigden. Op deze manier versterkten ze tevens hun professionele identiteit binnen de gesprekscontext door vooral niet ‘persoonlijk’ te worden en het gesprek te allen tijden vanuit een objectief perspectief (=zakelijk) te benaderen. Daarentegen benadrukten de onervaren onderhandelaars door hun gebruik van ‘ik’ en ‘jij’ (en dan voornamelijk in andere contexten dan de ervaren onderhandelaars) juist hun persoonlijke, niet professionele identiteit en leken ze het gesprek vanuit een voornamelijk subjectief perspectief te benaderen.
Algemene conclusies

Op basis van de resultaten van de vergelijkende analyses tussen de twee corpora kunnen een aantal gebieden aangewezen worden waarop de studenten met betrekking tot hun verbaal gedrag in onderhandelingssituaties tekort lijken te schieten ten opzichte van de ervaren onderhandelaars en lingua franca gebruikers. Ten eerste blijken de onervaren onderhandelaars slechts een beperkt repertoire aan formuleringen voor essentieel verbaal gedrag binnen de onderhandelingssituatie ter beschikking te hebben terwijl ze niet ‘beter’ Engels spreken dan de studenten. Vooral het beargumenteren van (tegen)voorstellen en van afwijzingen van voorstellen (belangrijke supportive moves in dit type gesprek) lijkt problemen op te leveren, zowel met betrekking tot de hoeveelheid argumentatie die ze produceren (een relatief kleine hoeveelheid) en de informatieve inhoud hiervan. In veel gevallen bleef argumentatie zelfs achterwege.

Ook bleek dat de onervaren onderhandelaars potentieel moeilijke mededelingen (=gezichtsbedreigende mededelingen) zoals afwijzingen en tegenvoorstellen vaker dan niet vanuit een ander perspectief formuleerden dan de ervaren onderhandelaars (‘ik’- of ‘jij’-perspectief in plaats van exclusive we perspectief) waardoor ze veel directer en conflictueuzer overkwamen dan misschien de bedoeling was, hetgeen het creëren van een goede verstandhouding zeker niet zou vergemakkelijken. Ook de resultaten van de analyses van het verbale gedrag van de onderhandelaars in het algemeen (de VRM analyses) wijzen er op dat de studenten een significant hogere mate van gezichtsbedreigende (en dus rapport-bedreigende) uitingen hanteerden dan de ervaren onderhandelaars.

Met betrekking tot het creëren van een goede verstandhouding (rapport management) blijkt dat ervaren onderhandelaars in het algemeen significant meer beleefdheid gebruiken dan onervaren onderhandelaars. Ook blijkt dat ervaren onderhandelaars duidelijk meer de nadruk te leggen op het creëren van een goede verstandhouding door middel van het benadrukken van overeenkomsten, en relatief minder op basis van het benadrukken van samenwerking tussen gesprekspartners. De studenten lijken ongeveer evenveel te investeren in beide soorten strategieën. Vervolgens blijken onervaren onderhandelaars zeer weinig gebruik te maken van small talk als basis voor het creëren van een goede verstandhouding, en dan nog alleen aan het begin en einde van een gesprek. Als laatste lijken ze tekort te schieten als het gaat om het inzetten van strategieën en gespreksperspectieven die kunnen bijdragen tot het creëren van (professionele) afstand tussen gesprekspartners in potentieel conflictueuze situaties en, in het verlengde hiervan, het creëren van een professionele identiteit.

Vervolgonderzoek

Gezien het feit dat dit onderzoek meer vragen heeft opgeworpen dan het uiteindelijk heeft kunnen beantwoorden, zijn er nog veel aspecten van facework, rapport management en verbaal gedrag in onderhandelingen die nog nader onderzocht zouden kunnen worden.

Vervolgonderzoek zou zich bijvoorbeeld kunnen richten op:

- Het in kaart brengen van rol-specifiek verbaal gedrag in onderhandelingen. Het lijkt niet onwaarschijnlijk dat taalgewoonten hebben impact op dit verbaal gedrag in onderhandelingen.

Summary in Dutch

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Vervolgonderzoek zou zich bijvoorbeeld kunnen richten op:

- Het in kaart brengen van rol-specifiek verbaal gedrag in onderhandelingen. Het lijkt niet onwaarschijnlijk dat taalgewoonten hebben impact op dit verbaal gedrag in onderhandelingen.
Accommodatie en wederkerigheid van aspecten van rapport management. Helaas was het binnen dit onderzoek niet mogelijk (gezien de samenstelling van de corpora) om gepaarde analyses (koper-verkoper) uit te voeren. Hierdoor was het niet mogelijk inzicht te verkrijgen in de (veronderstelde) wederkerigheid van het gebruik van (vooral positieve) beleefdheidstrategieën om rapport te creëren. In dit opzicht zou vervolgonderzoek zich tevens kunnen richten op het fenomeen accommodatie (Coupland & Giles 1988) en het wederkerige gebruik van strategieën gericht op rapport management;

Het in kaart brengen van non-supportive facework in onderhandelingsgesprekken. Onderhandelaars (ook in het huidige onderzoek) stappen soms tijdelijk over op non-supportive facework, dat wil zeggen verbaal gedrag dat er opzettelijk op gericht lijkt te zijn de mate van gezichtsbedreiging voor de ander juist (tijdelijk) te verhogen. Dit gedrag gaat feitelijk tegen de voorspellingen van de beleefdheidstheorie van Brown en Levinson (1987) in. Het zou bijzonder interessant zijn om na te gaan hoe non-supportive strategieën talig worden vormgegeven, wat de onderliggende motivering zijn voor dit type verbaal gedrag voor de spreker, en hoe de ontvanger van de boodschap hiermee omgaat binnen het gesprek;

Cross-culturele toepassing van VRM analyse. Aan het einde van hoofdstuk 4 werd gesuggereerd dat subtiele verschillen in VRM gebruik tussen de groep ervaren onderhandelaars in het huidige onderzoek en VRM gebruik door vergelijkbare groepen in voorgaand onderzoek wellicht veroorzaakt zouden kunnen zijn door cross-culturele verschillen in de verbale stijl van de ervaren onderhandelaars in het huidige onderzoek. Een VRM analyse van (aanzienlijk grotere) corpora taaldata uit monoculturele gesprekken tussen moedertaalsprekers (bijvoorbeeld een Engels versus Nederlands versus Frans corpus) zou kunnen nagaan of cross-culturele verschillen in verbale stijl inderdaad weerspiegeld worden in verschillen in VRM distributie en frequentie.

In dit onderzoek is een analyse gemaakt van het verbale gedrag van mannelijke professionele onderhandelaars. Deze onderhandelaars bleken face-gerelateerd verbaal gedrag te vertonen dat in de literatuur over sekseverschillen in (beleefd) taalgebruik veelal wordt geclassificeerd als ‘typisch vrouwelijk’ verbaal gedrag, gericht op het relationele en sociale aspect van communicatie. Een vergelijkend onderzoek naar facework en rapport management door vrouwelijke professionele onderhandelaars enerzijds, en naar professionele onderhandelingen tussen mannen en vrouwen anderzijds, zou wellicht kunnen achterhalen of vrouwen en mannen in een formele, professionele context ‘ander’ face-gerelateerd gedrag (beleefd verbaal gedrag) vertonen dan het geval lijkt te zijn in informele, alledaagse gesprekken.
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